

Voices



PREP

Prevention and Recovery in Early Psychosis



RELIEF

"PREP has
been light in
the darkness
for me"

Words are not enough to describe what PREP has been for me. The closest I can come to in describing it is the people at PREP have been the light through a dark time in my life. PREP has been to my life and mind what a sanctuary is in a conflict zone. It has literally opened the walls around me and given me access to not only the emotion of hope, but seeing hope in action. During M.F.G. and in sessions, as well as taking the C.B.T.p., I was being taught and applying it in my life.

Prior to joining PREP I was extremely depressed, suffered from low self-esteem, was in isolation at home and had social anxiety. As soon as I became acquainted with the PREP team, I knew there was hope and I had found the source of healing. Also joining the M.F.G. at PREP, I knew the therapists and facilitators, Rosemary, Maria, Bruce, Gus, Jamie and Luzia were going to guide not only me,

but my family members through unfamiliar territory after a terrifying experience. That knowledge took off a mountain of fear for me that had built up after being diagnosed with psychosis. A major point PREP helped my family see is they were attaching stigma consciously or unconsciously to some extent onto me, because they didn't know how to respond. PREP showed my family and especially me that mental illness is an illness. It most importantly doesn't define me. I shouldn't be ostracized or discriminated against for coming down with a mental illness. Convincing my own extreme inner critic of this is something I have to work on every day. PREP has helped me fight that critic and I'm going to keep fighting on my journey to wellness.

For my mother, PREP took away despair she was feeling and not knowing if she could trust in the belief that I was going to be well again. My mom had no guide, no information about my condition and finding PREP

was an eye opening experience. M.F.G. at PREP was a safe, protected, sheltered environment. We could openly share about our problems and experiences without fear of being judged. My mother and I were both uncomfortable a little at first, but eventually we both came out of our shyness. My mom learned that there were parents just like her going through the same thing. Listening to the other parents share some of their painful experience helped my mom recognize that she wasn't alone. She had empathy and compassion for fellow PREP members and that gave her fortitude and gratitude. She recognized that even with severe illness there is still hope and continuance of life. For my mother, she took part in PREP from the perspective of a student. From each M.F.G. she learned how to interact with me on a daily basis, while I was still in the early recovery phase. She found information

that supported her maternal instincts, such as picking up on early warning signs from the Family Guidelines, Watching the therapists, facilitators during M.F.G. model behavior for us and interact with us PREP clients and family members with respect and patience really changed my mother's and my standards for my family's behavior at home. She doesn't tolerate disrespect and after going through the PREP program, I'm proud to say I'm not going to allow myself to be disrespectful of anyone else, at least that's my goal.

My youngest sister, after being part of PREP has gained insight and deeper emotional growth. She reminds me of family guidelines when I'm stepping out of line or worrying too much. She knows, thanks to PREP, that anxiety and stress are triggers for my illness. Being part of M.F.G. made

her realize how the Family Guidelines work and how when too many of them are not followed, health is at risk. She always tells me to remember, give each other space, set limits, keep it simple, keep it cool. It is because she has interactions with PREP that she is able to help me at times when I can't help myself. The most important thing my sister learned is mental illness, like all illnesses, is a biological illness and like all illnesses it needs to be treated with varying levels of medical treatment.

Everything that I have learned from being part of PREP can't be summarized in ten minutes. There is too much. The family guidelines have helped me deal with difficult times and the members of PREP have pulled me from trouble several times. Being part of M.F.G. at PREP and being a PREP patient made me feel normal and less stigmatized.

It gave me gratitude and deep appreciation for all the people who were helping me heal during the most difficult part of my life. Words are not enough for what a precious treasure the PREP experience has been for me.

A close-up photograph of two young children's faces. The child on the left is in the foreground, looking slightly to the left with a serious expression. The child on the right is slightly behind and to the right, looking towards the camera. The background is blurred.

REALITY

“imagine if
it was
your child”

DEVELOPMENT

“They helped me deal with how to solve problems and how to use coping skills to get through the day”

HOPE



“I knew he was in there and that I could get him back”

I feel that PREP helped us open up personally in a level we thought no one else understood or could relate to. They have helped support my family and helped us find sources for our needs. We need the PREP program in our life because we have longer goals to succeed and I know PREP can help us reach that goal as a family and also our own individual selves. The staff at PREP is welcoming and we would like to continue on with them with the services. Prep has been very supportive to me and my family. I have been able to cope with my psychosis not only with my counselor and staff, but other individuals that suffer with psychosis as well. My counselor is understanding and patient with me taking small steps to conquer my fears and accomplish my life goals. I still need this program to help me grow as a person and follow a better path in understanding my psychosis.

IDENTITY

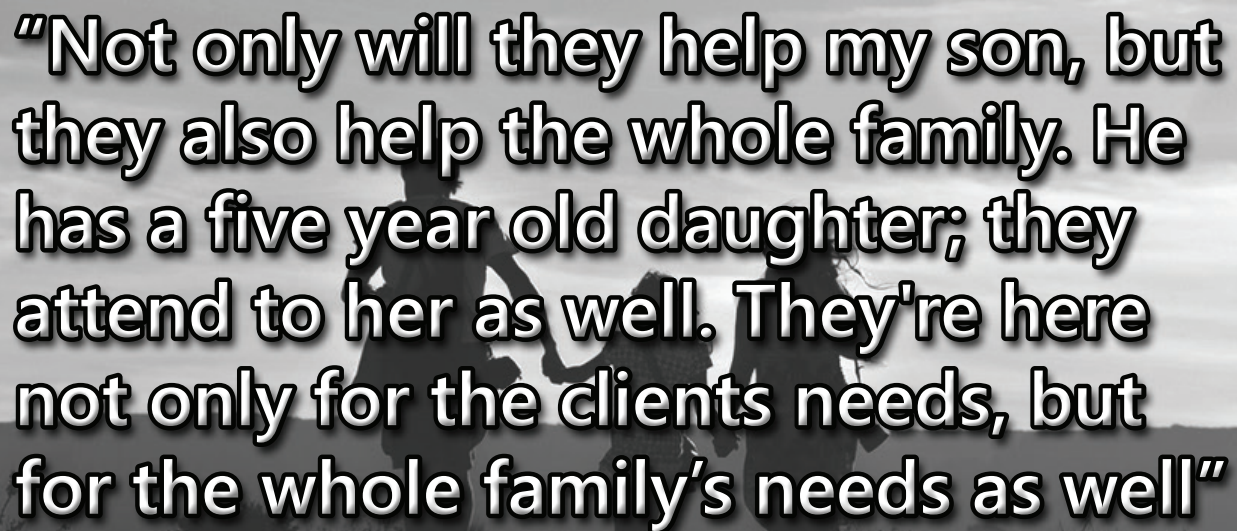


“PREP has helped
me feel more
comfortable with
who I am”

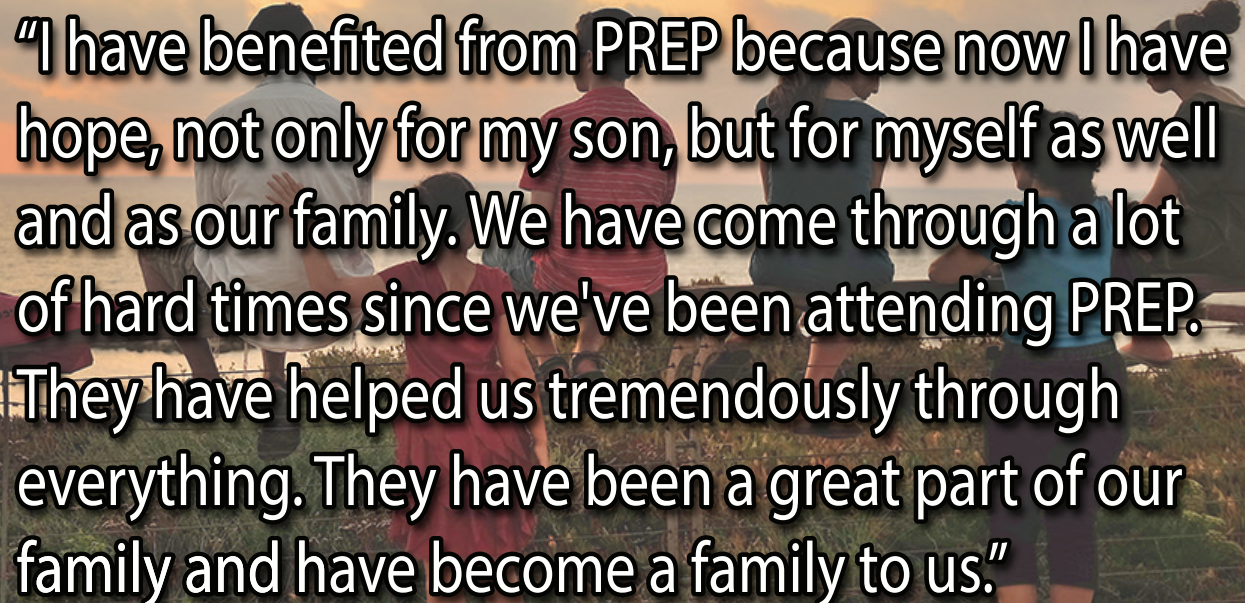
I've been going to PREP for a long while already, and you may ask if I've been benefited by this. The answer is, yes, I have. It's helped me out when I've had some crisis. I've had someone to talk about my problems with. I could easily open up to Maria, Gus and Rose. They are pretty awesome people I could call family. What I could tell the world is a piece of advice, if you have problems that affect you, feel free to get help and open up. Believe it or not PREP does help out a lot and I'm recovering a lot more. My favorite coping skill is thinking before I act, and take one step at a time. PREP is a helpful place to be at.

TRANSFORM

"I just wasn't there. And then PREP brought me back to who I was"

A black and white photograph showing the silhouettes of a family walking away from the camera on a path. The family consists of an adult and a child, with another child slightly ahead of them. The background is a cloudy sky.

"Not only will they help my son, but they also help the whole family. He has a five year old daughter; they attend to her as well. They're here not only for the clients needs, but for the whole family's needs as well"

A color photograph of a family of five standing on a sandy beach, looking out at the ocean during sunset. The sky is filled with orange and yellow clouds. The family includes two adults and three children of various ages.

"I have benefited from PREP because now I have hope, not only for my son, but for myself as well and as our family. We have come through a lot of hard times since we've been attending PREP. They have helped us tremendously through everything. They have been a great part of our family and have become a family to us."

PREP is such an important necessity to our community. It has given my family personal insight into such a complicated, emotional process of healing caused by an illness that many have little to no idea about. PREP has given me and my family help and encouragement when we had no idea what to do, where to go, and how to react to an illness that had taken over my sister's life. We were shocked and heartbroken because we didn't know how to help her. After meeting with a doctor and therapists, my sister was told of PREP. I cannot explain how much PREP has helped my sister and my family. PREP feels like family, a home, somewhere I know we can find help and support from people who are warm, caring and seem to go beyond the normal polite behavior. So many times when I felt alone or lost, I was able to turn to one of the PREP therapists. No matter what time or day, she was there.

A photograph of a dirt path winding through a lush forest. The path is covered in fallen leaves and small stones. The forest is dense with green ferns and moss-covered tree trunks. Sunlight filters through the canopy, creating a dappled light effect.

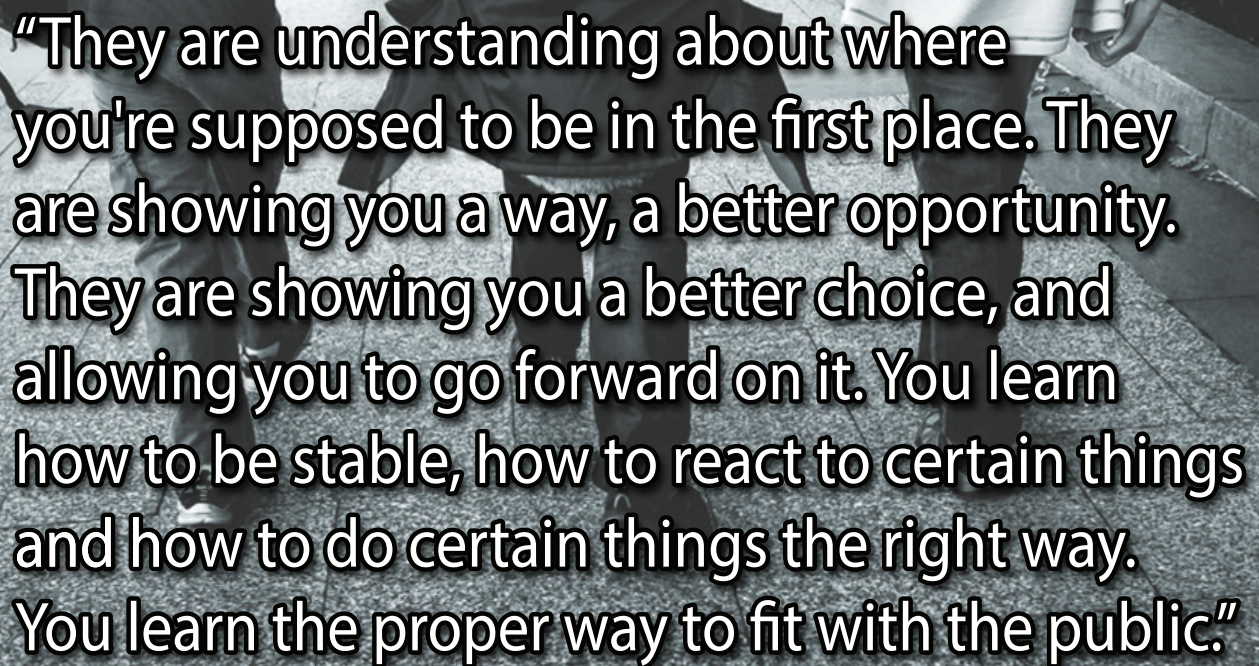
FREEDOM

"Through PREP,
a lot of
paths open"

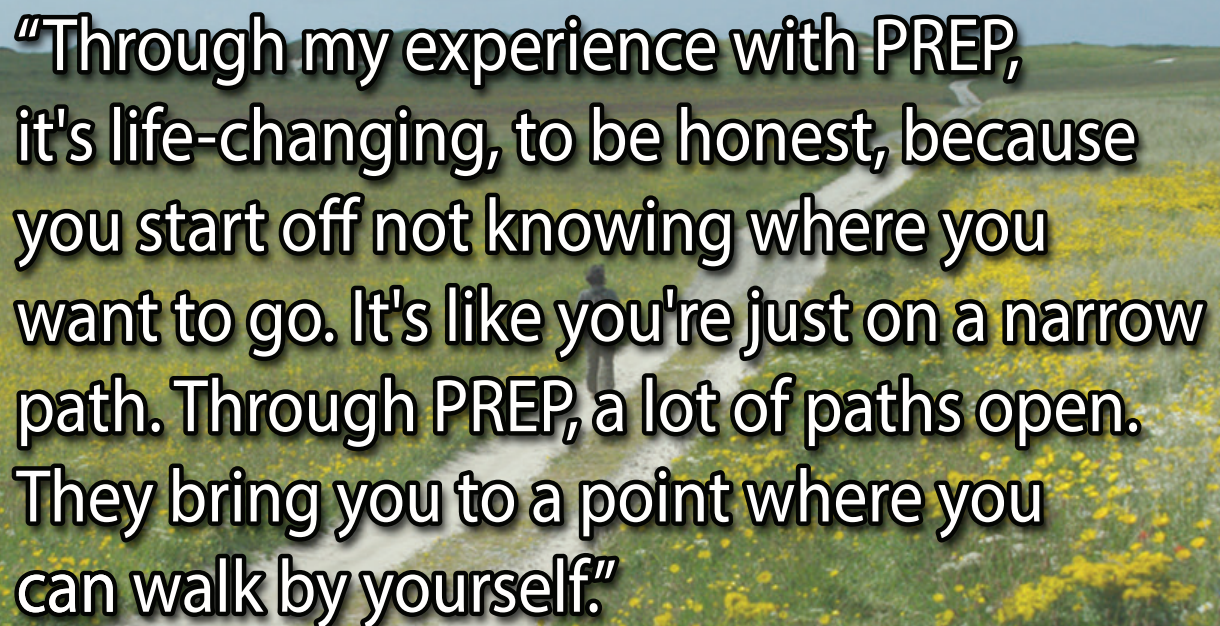
PREP has benefited me in many ways. For example, at first I refused from getting help with my symptoms, until I stepped in the doors of PREP. The staff was nice and easy to talk to.

If I could say something about PREP to the world, I would say come to PREP because it will change your life completely for the better.

My favorite coping skill would have to be "communication". I feel communication is a big part of life. We need it to have good relationships and receive information. PREP is a wonderful place. You really can't compare it to any other program on Earth.



"They are understanding about where you're supposed to be in the first place. They are showing you a way, a better opportunity. They are showing you a better choice, and allowing you to go forward on it. You learn how to be stable, how to react to certain things and how to do certain things the right way. You learn the proper way to fit with the public."



"Through my experience with PREP, it's life-changing, to be honest, because you start off not knowing where you want to go. It's like you're just on a narrow path. Through PREP, a lot of paths open. They bring you to a point where you can walk by yourself."

SUCCESS

"He finished
high school"



CONFIRMED

"Recovery

is

real"





Voices of PREP is possible as a result of consumers and their family members who told the story of their recovery while utilizing PREP services. Thank you for your participation in this project and your tireless dedication to achieving and maintaining recovery.

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