

An alternative approach to recovery: Choose your own adventure!

Iudita Trifa-Schmidt¹,

Out Doors Inc. 231 Napier Street Fitzroy Vic 3065

For more than 20 years, Out Doors Inc. has been helping people get 'out the door of home or hospital to participate in the life of their community'. Based in Melbourne, Out Doors provides psycho-social rehabilitation and planned respite services for people living with a mental illness.

Recovering from mental illness and its often disabling effects can be a long and complex process. People living with a mental illness may require a range of supports and encouragement to reach their potential and take up a fulfilling place in their community. What makes Out Doors unique is that we use the medium of outdoor adventure with its emphasis on action, challenge and risk-taking which makes us radically different from other mental health services. We provide leisure, recreation, adventure and personal development programs. All our programs are conducted in the natural environments. At Out Doors, we challenge stereotypes about the ability of people living with a mental illness to participate in activities that are 'adventurous' and 'risky', and the notion that outdoor activities are too hard or too expensive. These adventures have helped them to connect with family, friends and the community.

Key Words

Adventure, recovery, mental illness, outdoor environment.