

Open.



More than 20 years ago, a handful of parents of people with mental illness opened a clubhouse where their adult children could get support in managing their illnesses. The organization they started was called WilPower, a name meant to capture the value of a “powerful” idea in Wilmette. Since then, WilPower has grown and changed. We’ve become an organization serving hundreds of members, helping them live, work, and be well. Among the families we serve, our purpose is well-known. But in the larger community, the name WilPower is often misunderstood. That’s why we’ve decided on a new name.



new foundation center

My daughter can't manage her medications
without help.

My son needs a safe place
to live.

We help
members live
independently,

with dignity and self-respect. Forty-nine live in housing we manage; together, they gain the security that comes from companionship, healthy meals, a schedule, continuity, and predictability. Other members, needing support with their on-going recovery, are visited in their homes by New Foundation Center case managers. We work with other organizations — such as The National Alliance on Mental Illness, Housing Opportunity Development Corporation, Youth Services of Glenview/Northbrook, and Connections for the Homeless — to respond to the needs of our member, the families, and the communities we serve.

In 2006 I was homeless and depressed.
Now, in the Church Street House, I live
with nice, interesting people - we're like
a big family. We help each other.
Paul.

I grew up around here. Moving
into the Morton House here was
like coming home. Using that helps
me do all the right stuff for my
health.
Drew

Am the custodian here
I love my job every day
I look forward to coming to work
I can make big decisions
Bill

Our members
tell us they
want to work.

More than one-third are employed in the community, many for several years with the same employer. Others work in the clubhouse — tidying up, tending the garden, doing fix-it jobs, or cooking in the kitchen. Our supported work program is designed to help members gain the skills and disciplines they need to find and keep jobs. At the New Foundation Center, we follow a psychosocial approach to recovery: work is all about living with purpose and pride.

People with mental illness are twice as likely to have an additional medical disorder:

I've learned to THINK
AHEAD - to TAKE CARE
of my health - TO START OUR
WELLNESS a series of small
STEPS
ERNIE

cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, infectious disease, and diabetes. Our members asked for help in managing their health. So, we put into practice a new service delivery model: Wellness Management Recovery. Members participate in one-on-one, cognitive behavioral therapy and motivational interviewing to capitalize on their strengths, rather than dwell on their limitations. And in health education classes, members learn how to improve their physical health. Recovery is more than a relief of symptoms; it's a holistic integration of mind and body, of self and community.

At the New Foundation Center, recovery takes many forms

— our programs contribute to a “whole person” approach to recovery. In support groups, members focus on wellness, whether that means sharing in group, getting substance abuse under control, or choosing a healthier lifestyle. Skill training gives them the ability to live independently — to find and keep a job, to manage their medication, and to eat balanced meals. Through expressive arts — music, art, writing, and dance — members nurture their creativity, while social activities, such as theater and sports, stimulate their minds and bodies. Finally, case managers help with the “ins and outs” of everyday life.

Through the programs, I've defined my goals - and my caseworker is helping me achieve them. Here, members can be themselves, without stigma.

Spud

Here, I've learned how to manage my illness. As a result, I'm getting my GED and I've even taken a class at Calleton Community College.

Henrietta

The New Foundation Center
responds to the needs of
people with mental illness so
they can recover and pursue
lives of meaning and purpose.

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