**Lost & Found: From Dislocation to Connection in Recovery:**

**All Signs Lead to PERMA**

**“We’ve all been removed in one way or another…”**

**~Indigo Girls**

 **Understanding Addiction: Disease or Dislocation?**

 

What if the problem of addiction resided less in the individual and more in the culture? What if substance use and abuse are ***adaptive*** responses to an impoverished social-cultural-economic-political and spiritual landscape? This would turn the focus of intervention and therapy upside down!

* Where the person was the problem, now the social-cultural-economic-political context is the problem
* Intervention is directed to social-cultural deficits: lack of meaning, identity, purpose community
* Outcomes are measured by improvements in community health, opportunity and flexibility
* Investment goes to building community recovery: welcoming & effective schools, safe & economically viable neighborhoods and town centers, opportunities for cultural, artistic, and spiritual enrichment, enriched environments, including more green space, less traffic and pollution, more beauty (natural and human-made art).

Recovery must have a PULL goal. Without this, I remain a refugee, in exile, yearning for “home” (the substance-using style of life)

* Sounds great, BUT…. Isn’t it easier and less expensive to “fix” a few marginalized individuals than our communities? What happens to big pharma and medical interventions if prescriptions look like a community gardening class rather than anxiolytics?

**PERMA:**

**Positive Emotions**

**Engagement**

**Relationships (“We inter-are,” Tich Nhat Hahn)**

**Meaning**

**Achievement & Accomplishment**

**References & Further Reading:**

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Szalavitz, M. (2016). Unbroken brain: A revolutionary new way of understanding addiction. New York: St. Martin’s Press

Seligman, M. The PERMA Model: A Scientific Theory of Happiness, Martin Seligman’s theory of well-being and Happiness, explained online at <https://postiviepsychologyprogram.gom/perma-model/>

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