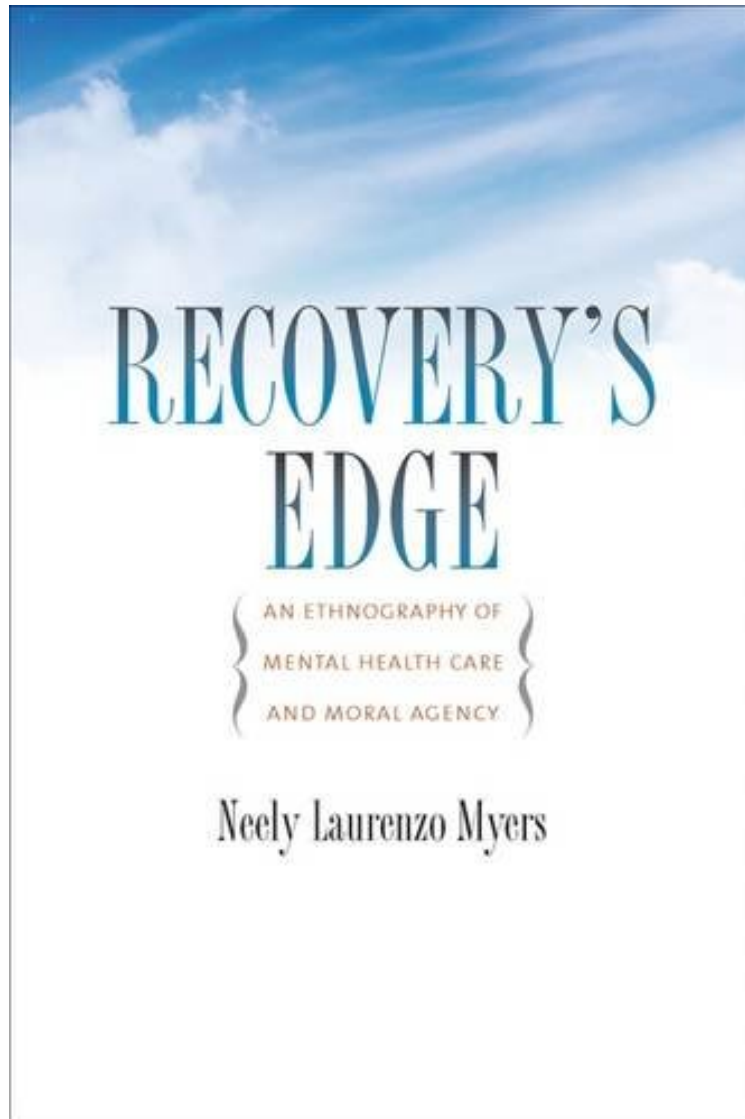


# Recovery's Edge: An Ethnography of Mental Health Care and Moral Agency

*Neely Laurenzo Myers*

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#833080 in Books Myers Neely Laurenzo 2015-12-18Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 .90 x 5.90 x 8.90l, .0 #File Name: 0826520804208 pagesRecovery s Edge An Ethnography of Mental Health Care and Moral Agency | File size: 21.Mb

**Neely Laurenzo Myers : Recovery's Edge: An Ethnography of Mental Health Care and Moral Agency** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Recovery's Edge: An Ethnography of Mental Health Care and Moral Agency:

3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Mental illness up close and personal- a 250 page 'candle of hope'By

BookieRecovery's *Edge* is a powerful testament to all who suffer from mental illness and their struggle to find autonomy and respect in a system of care that is designed, by necessity, to be disempowering and paternalistic. The author leads us to explore the concept of 'moral agency' -the ability to live, love, and work in a community that value's one's contributions- and it's untapped potential as the missing link to the recovery process. Our system is currently designed to offer the mentally ill a model of recovery based on measurable outcomes. Food, shelter and water, so to speak. This model completely overlooks the critical nature of belonging to a community that offers friendship, understanding, and love. There is a reason why the mad who are surrounded by a supportive loving family have more successful outcomes. Even at their sickest, they are treasured and belong. Enter the peer-led recovery movement. Where the mentally ill 'in recovery' can help one another with love, companionship, and community. A place where you know you are understood and valued for who you are, rather than defined by your madness. Ms. Myers engaging and passionate exploration of mental illness and its collateral damage carries sorrow and hope. As mother to a mentally ill son, I am grateful. 3 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Innovative and Beautifully Written Scholarship By Customer In this book, Myers achieves a striking combination of clarity and poignancy. Her research is thorough and deeply personal, which lends an incomparable humanity to her text. In this ethnography of mental illness and moral agency, Myers demonstrates that the barriers to achieving recognizable personhood are especially difficult for this psychiatric population. She documents how the stigmatization of people diagnosed with mental illness conditions their capacity to have intimate relationships with others, and this is similarly reflected in the distance care providers deliberately maintain in these relationships. This book is an important contribution to the anthropological literature on mental illness and care, as Myers argues that the boundaries of psychiatric care work are imposed not just to limit economic waste and cost-containment (though they are), but they also involve a socially conditioned maintenance between normal and "crazy" persons that limits clients' capacities for meaningful interpersonal relationships. In addition to being intellectually innovative, this book is a wonderful resource for individuals experiencing mental illness or the mental illness of a friend or family member. Myers' multi-level ethnographic portrayal exposes this difficult way of being in the world from a multitude of perspectives, and this generates new spaces and opportunities for understanding. 2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. At the Edge of Recovery By user Neely Myers's beautifully written ethnography is a detailed look at one organization's attempt to follow the Bush Administration's 2004 unfunded mandate to make mental health care services more "recovery-oriented." Broadly speaking, recovery-oriented care means eschewing the traditional focus on symptom reduction and relapse prevention in favor of finding ways to reintegrate individuals with serious mental illnesses as valuable members of their chosen communities. Myers explores what recovery-oriented care looks like at Horizons, a rehabilitation organization serving over six thousand "members" (mental health care service users) throughout a large city. Myers's writing is notable for its literary quality, and she does an admirable job of interweaving research literature and ethnographic artistry. Rather than presenting a chronologically linear narrative arc, the stories (often mere snippets rather than complete tales) ricochet in time and space, a rhetorical maneuver that seems to mimic the fragmented and chaotic existence of Horizons members. With its compelling writing, this book is essential reading for anyone with an interest in social justice and the American mental health care system. (Read the full review at Somatosphere.net.)

In 2003 the Bush Administration's New Freedom Commission asked mental health service providers to begin promoting "recovery" rather than churning out long-term, "chronic" mental health service users. Recovery's *Edge* sends us to urban America to view the inner workings of a mental health clinic run, in part, by people who are themselves "in recovery" from mental illness. In this provocative narrative, Neely Myers sweeps us up in her own journey through three years of ethnographic research at this unusual site, providing a nuanced account of different approaches to mental health care. Recovery's *Edge* critically examines the high bar we set for people in recovery through intimate stories of people struggling to find meaningful work, satisfying relationships, and independent living. This book is a recipient of the Norman L. and Roselea J. Goldberg Prize from Vanderbilt University Press for the best book in the area of medicine.

"Recovery's *Edge* is a stunningly compelling read, infused with a fierce energy, inspired by the author's family experience with "the chaotic mental health system of "care" in America. Neely Myers's ethnographic study of mental health care and the current American Recovery Movement takes readers to the very centers of the recovery revolution where patients once in care have become the charismatic leaders in charge. Passionate advocates, they draw on their charismatic talents and the support of some visionary mental health professionals to transform public mental health care from traditional rehabilitation models to practices promoting recovery as advocated care including peer empowerment programs." --Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good, Harvard Medical School, author of *Shattering Culture: American Medicine Responds to Cultural Diversity* "A beautiful and riveting ethnography. Neely Myers provides a powerful argument for the necessity of examining madness in relation to fundamental human processes of recognition and belonging. With fierce compassion and in exquisite detail,

Myers demonstrates that one need not travel to the global south to encounter the structural violence and inadequacy of mental health care. Essential reading for students of the social and health sciences, persons struggling toward recovery, and all interested in extraordinary conditions. --Janis H. Jenkins, University of California at San Diego, author of *Extraordinary Conditions: Culture and Experience in Mental Health*

Choice, moral agency, empowerment, patient-centered care, user-run services, peer staff, recoveries! All so easily envisioned on paper, in mental health policies, and at conferences. As Myers shows us, doing the work to make these ideas happen in daily life is inestimably trying, unpredictable, unruly, and tumultuous for all concerned. --Sue E. Estroff, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, author of *Making It Crazy: An Ethnography of Psychiatric Clients in an American Community*

Well written and morally compelling, this rich ethnography details both the new promise of recovery from schizophrenia and its pitfalls in an American context. In the process, it explains how the experience of schizophrenia is shaped for so many by American values of individualism, independence, and work. The book vividly illustrates the way social expectations shape psychiatric experience. --Tanya M. Luhrmann, Stanford University, author of *Of Two Minds: An Anthropologist Looks at American Psychiatry*

This gripping account shows how the ideals of recovery are reshaping the moral world of US mental health services. In a warm and intimate tone, Neely Myers explores the personal experience of severe symptoms and the human stakes of psychiatric reform. *Recovery's Edge* is a crucial intervention into policy debates, but one based in ordinary people's stories of loss and resilience. --Paul Brodwin, University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, author of *Everyday Ethics: Voices from the Front Line of Community Psychiatry*

About the Author Neely Laurenzo Myers is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Southern Methodist University.