

mental health WORKS

The following is an excerpt from an e-mail sent by an employee who was part of the consultation process. Permission to use this has been given by the employee and only identifying information has been removed. This employee had experienced serious clinical depression and difficult life circumstances that made coping in the workplace very strained. His manager had tried to help, but problems continued. The manager simply did not know what to do to improve the situation.

This correspondence speaks to what is possible through this process and is inspirational to those experiencing mental health issues, especially when hopelessness is often part of the illness. Hopelessness, like the illness itself, can be overcome.

Dear Mary Ann:

I had a thought to drop you a line, and I wanted you to know I just had my annual performance review with [my manager] earlier this week - and it couldn't have gone much better!

In fact, your name came up during my review, and [my manager] stated again how valuable the process you helped to implement has been in improving things for me - and for her, too. (I had to give myself a "pat on the back", for having taken my own initiative to get things started, by going to Human Resources in the first place!) [My manager] told me she really relies on me in the office now, because she knows that I will meet - and often exceed - her expectations. This is a marked and dramatic change, and has done wonders for the working relationship I have with her and the others in the group.

I even took on duties outside our department, including taking an editorial role on our newsletter, and volunteering as a committee member for a workshop that was hosted by the Ontario government.

Not only that, but I graduated from [a university] with an Honours B.A. in June - - and I made the Dean's List!!

So there's much tangible evidence that I'm doing more than merely coping - it feels like I am back on top again in many, many ways!

I was sure you would want to know how well things have been going for me, and that I continue to feel gratitude for the effort and genuine care you put in to your work in helping me earlier this year.

I hope you are doing well, and that you have a wonderful holiday.