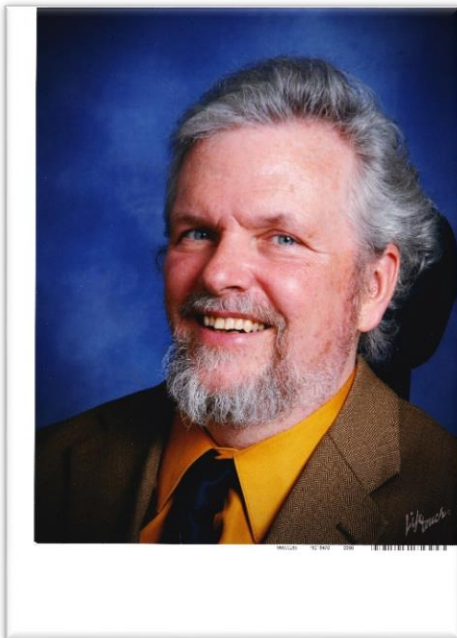


## *My Open Personal Letter about Mental Health Justice, Climate Crisis & Unitarians*

*Everyone everywhere is welcome to share your ideas about mental health justice.*

*Please post your public comments on this blog entry you can find at [www.davidwoaks.com](http://www.davidwoaks.com) I especially would love to hear personally from other survivors of psychiatric abuse, people with disabilities and Unitarian Universalists. You may also email me at: [davidwoaks@gmail.com](mailto:davidwoaks@gmail.com)*

*Earth Week 2014: Are you ready to peacefully take on the Goliath of normality, the climate crisis?*



Dear friend,

Your ideas for mental health justice are truly welcomed by me. For example, what briefly is your story or experience? What is your biggest issue regarding mental health? What is your vision for a changed mental health system?

Important disclaimer: I only speak for myself in this open letter. I do not speak for any church, corporation, or non-profit.

My story in brief: Loving Lithuanian-Americans raised me in working class South Side Chicago. I won scholarships, including from my father's union, to attend Harvard. I experienced extreme mental and emotional problems that psychiatrists called severe mental illness including schizophrenia, bipolar and extreme depression.

They locked me up in psychiatric facilities at least 5 times. There I was forcibly injected with powerful psychiatric drugs which I was told I would need my whole life. They were wrong.

(Turnover to keep reading)

Harvard could have thrown me out. To their credit, instead they placed me as a community organizer in a little known social change movement led by psychiatric survivors. I wrote about their peer support, recovered, and graduated with honors in 1977. For almost 40 years I have been an activist in mental health. I co-founded MindFreedom, which I ran for 25 years.

Then 16 months ago I had an accident that is testing my ideals. I fell, broke my neck, and have the new label of quad in a power chair. Even my voice is very disabled. I have tremendous family and friend support, especially my true love and spouse Debra. While I am retired I am still an activist. Debra and I, after years of thought, have chosen to officially join our UU church because of their love of free thinking and change

I would like to hear from you. Here is my vision on mental health justice.

My top 5 tips for peacefully taking on the Goliath of normality: climate crisis.

1. We are the 100 percent. Every person deals with extreme, overwhelming, even life-threatening mental and emotional problems.

2. There is no normality! I love much of what is falsely called "normal." But much of what is called normal, such as human-caused climate crisis, is the worst behavior to visit Earth since that big asteroid 65 million years ago destroyed the dinos. Normal is not.

3. What is your creative maladjustment? MLK talked about this idea more than a dozen times over a decade. He called for an International Association for the Advancement of Creative Maladjustment. You are a leader in this IAACM if you wish, and follow MLK peaceful principles. Yes, IAACM is real. Find us on Facebook! MLK's main vision is for everyone to be in a Beloved Community.

4. The sound of silence may be your warm invitation! As an activist you often face a wall of silence. I have learned that silence is a message that is just hard to understand. Since it is a mystery, why not see silence as a true welcome?

5. You are the human spirit! When I was so-called crazy I had a vision of the human spirit. I was right. As an activist I have seen people survive poverty, electroshock, discrimination, psychosurgery, lock-ups in solitary, forced drugs. Yet many of these folks have peacefully forgiven the unforgivable, and are helping build a nonviolent revolution every day. Your human spirit is beautiful, unconquerable, and brilliant.

Let us hear your public comments on this blog entry. What is your mental health justice? You may e-mail me directly, if you wish, to davidwoaks@gmail.com. As I said, I especially would love to hear from other psych survivors, quads, and my beloved allies in UU globally.

Thank you very much, David W. Oaks