

# JULY 2021

# NEWSLETTER

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## Facing a 'New Normal'

by Josh Hubbell

I keep hearing the term “new normal” when people talk about life now compared to life before we were all aware what a pandemic could be like. I knew when things started to shut down that I would need to readjust when it all opened again, because I had done it before. I’ve suffered from social anxiety most of my adult life, and so to be a more social person I was forced to push against that boundary time and again. That wall took a lot of work to push down, and each day that I was encouraged to stay home and avoid people, one more brick got added back, or so I feared.

So, then the world started to open back up again. I waited what I felt like was a long time to get my vaccines, I had a lot of cute excuses, but it really came down to I hate doctors, I don’t trust the government and I was scared to lose the shield of being able to say I can’t go out because it’s not safe for me. Still, I went through it, because I care about the people I love and the risk to them outweighed my own fears.

Then it was gone. I no longer had the excuse, not in an honest way, of being unsafe outside. Suddenly I could go out and be around people again, and in a very short period a lot of the things I used to do before the pandemic were back.

I was thrust into this “new normal.”

It wasn’t all that new. I would say my life has never really been normal, but it’s been normal for me, but this defiantly wasn’t new.

What I did experience, as I was expecting, was a huge amount of anxiety at first that quickly melted away as I realized I had already developed the skills to deal with this before, and those skills were still neatly stacked in my toolbox. I have found that my social battery is a lot lower than it used to be, I run out of energy and patience faster than I would like, but after a few weeks of trying I’m finding that my stores are growing again, and I feel positive about that.

It is new in some ways, people have changed in the last year, learned a lot more about themselves than they knew before, but I think that's for the best. To all the peers out there feeling scared and stressed to reenter the world, I just want to say I know how you feel, and it's not going to be as bad as you dread. We've all moved into new normal time and again as symptoms emerge and change, medicines change, doctors appear and disappear in our lives, and we've survived it all. This will be one more thing we will all survive together, and I think we will all be a little stronger and wiser for it.

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## July's Calendar

[Interested in getting involved with us this month? Click here!](#)

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## Feeling down and need someone to talk to?

### Iowa Warm Line is here for you.

Open 8:00am- 2:00am daily|1-844-775-WARM (9276)

The Warm Line is a peer-run, telephone based, non-crisis, confidential listening line for anyone struggling with mental health or substance use issues. The line is staffed by people who have been through a similar journey and are in recovery themselves.

The Warm Line can...

- Give support for individuals not requiring crisis management. Those in crisis are transferred to the Crisis Line for critical services.
- Provide an empathetic, non-judgmental listener.
- Provide community resources and assistance in accessing services.
- Help empower individuals pursuing their own directives.