

Thanks to the Productivity Commission for examining Mental Health. The attached book, *Real-life solutions to Living with a Mental Illness*, examines comprehensively what it means to live with mental health problems from the point of consumers, including economic issues. It exposes the real issues behind mental illness and provides real-life solutions that work. Based on the extensive experience, insight and wisdom of people diagnosed with a mental illness solutions are revealed, on a personal level, on how to handle signs and symptoms, on how to deal with memories of childhood abuse, on how to conquer the urge to commit suicide, on how to develop a positive opinion of oneself, on how to manage relationships with other people including health services, on how to find meaning in life, to ultimately reaching a point of inner peace and life satisfaction. Even more importantly, real-life solutions are given for how society needs to change so that people with a mental illness are treated with justice and are provided with effective help. Disempowerment is at the core of the real issues behind mental illness and empowerment fundamental to their resolution. Therefore, surprisingly, it was found that these real-life solutions are best implemented using the framework of a mental health rights movement with empowerment as its central message. Other civil rights movements already used successfully by other groups of people are examined. It is established that a mental health rights movement has the capacity to permanently counter the profound disempowerment suffered by people with a mental illness and will lastingly improve their lives.

With ever increasing numbers of people diagnosed with a mental illness and with no effectual answers in sight, finding real-life solutions that work becomes urgent. What you can do as a family member, health professional, government agency and as a member of the general population is detailed.