

## Panel Discussion on Alternatives to Chemical Restraint

When: March 5, 2018, 7 pm to 9 pm

Where: Traditions Fair Trade, 300 5th Ave SW, Olympia, Washington 98501

This speakers panel and community discussion is to talk about alternatives to chemical restraints in response to the recent tragedy where Vaneesa Hopson was killed by chemical restraints.

We hope to have regular events to explore this topic and there is also room for a moderator, film person, photographer, publicist, media outreach etc., so let us know how you'd like to be involved. Please spread the word and recommend speakers who have helpful information on this topic.

Current speakers are Chaya Grossberg, Ami Aika, Crystalyn Asbach (Vaneesa's sister) and John Herold who will speak from their personal experience as well as experience advocating and working for alternatives.

### About the Organizers

**Chaya Grossberg** has been working as an activist for change in the "mental health" system and provided holistic mental health alternatives for the past 15 years, starting as a Freedom Center organizer for six years in Northampton, Massachusetts. She has consulted for the Western Massachusetts Recovery Learning Community, Massachusetts PAIMI council, Windhorse Associates, and Alternative to Meds Center. She was the community organizer of the Mental Health Association of Portland, assistant director of Portland Hearing Voices and a Warm Line specialist at the Mental Health Association of San Francisco, helping to launch their Warm Line. She has taught at numerous conferences including NARPA, INTAR and Alternatives. She is a graduate of Hampshire College, and a Kripalu certified yoga instructor. She also blogs on the popular site Mad In America.

**Ami Aika** is a mother, beginning herbalist, bookkeeper, yogi and psychiatric survivor who was involuntarily committed in 2014 during an experience of postpartum psychosis. She embraces the framework of understanding this experience as a spiritual emergency, a necessary and healing process that requires facilitation not medication. Her work in creating space and resources for others undergoing similar processes has just begun.

**John Herold** is a psychiatric survivor, facilitator, consultant and speaker. He has experienced altered and extreme states of consciousness and was involuntarily hospitalized in 2012. John is the founder and director of Puget Sound Hearing Voices, now in its third year of weekly meetings. He is passionate about spreading non-pathologizing approaches to what many call "mental illness." In August John received an Inspirational Person Award from Intervoice: The International Hearing Voices Network. He recently completed a master's program in Process Work.

Learn more about John's work at [www.johnherold.net](http://www.johnherold.net) and [www.pugetsoundhearingvoices.org](http://www.pugetsoundhearingvoices.org).

### Background

Chemical restraints are pharmaceutical drugs used to sedate someone so they can be more easily controlled in a crisis or perceived crisis situation. They are usually tranquilizers, benzodiazepines such as Xanax or Attivan that are given in the form of an injection when they are not consented to. Based on Thurston County Medic One Field Protocol for chemical restraint and a public records request about Medic One's drug purchases, Vaneesa was likely given midazolam, a benzodiazepine, by injection outside of the hospital, before her medical history was investigated, and it killed her. There was no knowledge of what other pharmaceuticals, or other substances she was on before the chemical restraint was administered.