

# David Reville – Audio Excerpt C

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Somebody introduced me to Don Weitz probably in 72 and he was very anxious to start a self-help group. And went actually to Vancouver to stay in an MPA house, a Mental Patients Association house and he stayed there for 11 days. And he came back to Toronto and we met up at a coffee shop and he was so excited, and he was going to start a similar group in Toronto. But it took a long time because he couldn't find who actually wanted to belong to a group like that. So he used that same strategy that Lanny Beckman did. He found a journalist who wrote an article about the interest we had in starting a group. And the guy published the article in the Toronto Star and we had our first meeting in a church hall in 1977 and 150 people showed up. We were gobsmacked that there were that many people. So that's how the Ontario Mental Patients Association got started. I mean Don talks about that in *Shrink Resistant*. And in 1978 after Judy published the book *On Our Own* we changed the name of our group to *On Our Own*. And that group lasted, lurching from crisis to crisis, for 20 years and it had 3 projects. One in the traditional self-help Drop-In and we got money to pay for a co-ordinator from the provincial government, Ministry of Health. And it operated a store called the Mad Market, which was a strategy to try and address the difficulty many of us had in getting work. And then the third thing, and maybe it's the thing that became most well noted, was *Phoenix Rising*, the voice of the psychiatrized which published from 1980 to 1990 and at one point Irit Shimrat was the editor-in-chief. That was an international magazine that became highly waited for, each issue people were waited by their mailbox hoping it would come so they could read what was going on in the movement at that time.