

# RECOVERY SYSTEMS

March 15, 2013

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
Washington, DC

Dear President Obama,

I know that you are hearing from many people about my father Fred Ross Sr. Please allow me to add a daughter's view.

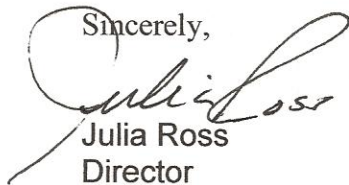
I was raised twined around both my parents' social consciences, their vision, and their activism. Early on, we lived in the Los Angeles barrio where my father organized and I spoke perfect Spanish by the age of four. I attended organizing meetings with my father, and I rode in the bullhorn cars to get out the vote. Much later, I worked with my mother, who pioneered the community mental health movement in California, trying to assist the people on whom Ronald Reagan's policies had closed the door.

In the 1970s, combining my parents' vocations, I became an addiction treatment specialist. In 1982, I founded the first-ever treatment programs for addicted adolescents in the San Francisco Bay Area. Desperately needed, our intensive counseling model was very effective, but our kids lived in communities rife with drug use and parental ignorance. They were unsafe because they had *no* drug-free social lives. So I began to organize. Using my father's house-meeting format, with the help of one dedicated mother, I set up parent-child meetings all over the county via the Boy Scouts, whose county head was my cohorts husband. This model was so successful that the county adopted it and introduced it into most of our schools.

By the end of a year, the local teen 12-step meetings were bulging with kids (many of whom were *not* addicted), because they were *the* places to go. Sober events sprang up all over the county. It was an extraordinary transformation made possible by the techniques and the confidence that Fred Ross Sr. instilled in me, as he did in so many hundreds of organizers throughout the country.

Thank you for considering my father as recipient of the Medal of Freedom.

Sincerely,



Julia Ross  
Director

Author of *The Diet Cure* and *The Mood Cure*