

crestwood

touch

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Recently, Jeanette, a former resident of Crestwood Manor Stockton, returned to visit the facility, bringing with her hope of recovery to current residents. Jeanette's full day visit was an inspiration to residents and staff alike as she shared her personal struggle to regain mental health and ultimately her independence. Residents were captivated by what Jeanette had to say and asked many questions about how they too might regain their independence.

PROVIDING INSPIRATION TO RESIDENTS

Jeanette credited utilizing her Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) for her successful return from a locked facility to independent living. She also shared that she continues to practice daily use of her wellness tools, including keeping a journal, taking her medications as prescribed, openly communicating with her doctor, and enjoying the support of church and family. She currently is living in a large house and recognizes that her desire to keep it clean can be a “trigger,” so she employs her wellness tool of following a schedule of cleaning one or two areas per day and leaving the rest for another day. In this way she is able to keep her stress levels down and have time for visiting friends and other activities she enjoys.

Many of Crestwood Manor Stockton’s residents were inspired by Jeanette’s story and openly shared with staff and peers that they now felt hope that they had not had since entering mental health treat-

ment. “Jeanette gave me back some hope,” said Perry, a resident at the facility. Another resident, Linda, commented, “Jeanette’s visit gave me the courage to get back in touch with my family again.”

Jeanette plans on making future visits to Crestwood Manor Stockton. She wants to remain involved with her Crestwood friends and hopes to become a peer counselor. Jeanette says, “If I have been able to help even one person, then I’m delighted.” <

Training the Next Generation of Crestwood DBT Therapists

Two years ago, seven Crestwood facilities (Bakersfield, Angwin, Pleasant Hill, Sacramento, San Jose, Solano, and Vallejo) took on the task of learning and then incorporating Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) into their treatment programs. DBT is a best practice technique that combines cognitive and behavioral therapies and includes parts of other methodologies such as Eastern mindfulness practices. DBT also complements other tools already used by Crestwood such as WRAP, Dreamcatchers Empowerment Network, the Recovery Model and therapeutic groups.

Response to DBT from Crestwood's DBT staff and clients has been overwhelmingly positive. Many staff members apply the therapy in their personal lives and as a result, have said that they are better equipped to help people achieve their goals. By using DBT skills clients feel more empowered, have more confidence to take chances, and have the ability to develop a greater perspective, allowing them to be more effective in many different situations. After seeing these positive outcomes, other staff members were inspired and asked to be trained as DBT therapists.



To meet this new demand for DBT participation, a small group of Crestwood's DBT trained staff developed a DBT Intensive Training curriculum to train those interested in becoming a DBT therapist at their facility. The DBT Intensive Training was held April 6-8, with more than 50 participants attending from the facilities of Bakersfield, Fresno Bridge, Fresno PHF, Angwin, Pleasant Hill, Sacramento, San Jose, Solano and Vallejo. The training was conducted by 16 of Crestwood's DBT trained staff, each teaching different parts of the curriculum.

The training began with an overview of the underlying principles of cognitive and behavioral therapies. From there, everything to become a competent DBT therapist in a Crestwood facility was taught. This started with assessing behaviors and how to use a behavior chain analysis and moved into the basic components of the individual and group sessions. Other topics at the training included learning about validation and the skills of mindfulness, emotion regulation, distress tolerance and interpersonal effectiveness. The training concluded with applying the DBT principles of problem solving to the obstacles and barriers of program implementation and sustainability.

The DBT Intensive Training was a big success! Participants described it as challenging, fun and informative and left excited, believing that they had learned the needed material to go back to their facilities to start using DBT.

Having more trained DBT therapists on staff and continuing to train new staff will help provide clients at Crestwood with the best recovery treatment possible.

Crestwood is proud of the work and commitment demonstrated by all our DBT trained staff. ◀



Squaring Again



The quilt that clients and staff created with social work interns from Humboldt State University is proudly displayed at the Eureka facility campus.

In November, three Social Work student interns from Humboldt State University, Alexa Stone, Brandie Jones and Erin Barker, came to the Crestwood Eureka campus to work with clients and staff on creating a quilt. This special quilt was to be the centerpiece of the students' mental health stigma awareness project. Clients from each of the three programs on the Eureka campus, the MHRC, Bridge House and Courtyard Community, as well as some of the staff, worked on designing individual squares, many of which included anti-stigma language and artwork. Alexa, Brandie and Erin then took the squares and fashioned them into a finished quilt.



Off Stigma

The quilt was put on display at community events in Arcata, McKinleyville, Eureka and Willow Creek. The three student interns were surprised and excited at the community's interest and reception of the quilt, saying that, "It really took on a life of its own." The interns have also been interviewed by the local radio station, KHSU, and the quilt was featured in the local newspaper, The Times-Standard.

"Clients and staff had a great time working on the quilt squares and were excited to be part of the students' project to reduce stigma, but we had no idea that it would be so enthusiastically embraced by the community," said Jennifer Chaffin, Program Director at Crestwood Eureka MHRC.

"It was incredible to watch clients and staff light up when they saw our quilt in the newspaper! There was a wonderful sense of not only feeling accepted, but actually celebrated by our community."

The Eureka clients were very proud when the quilt was displayed at the facility's Open House last December. After completing its community tour, the quilt is now on display at the facility.

Crestwood Eureka staff are very grateful to have had the opportunity to work with Humboldt State and are appreciative of Alexa, Brandie and Erin, who have so eloquently and beautifully displayed their philosophy about the community's inclusive nature of mental health issues. <

There is no more significant moment than the moment when you feel the greatest despair, the moment when you cannot find any controls for your emotions and actions, the moment when you find yourself lost in the streets,

homeless, hungry and frightened, the moment when you can no longer endure the life you are living. These times generally get you to the door of an ambulance, police car or crisis center. These are the crisis moments the clients who come to Crestwood's Psychiatric Health Facilities (PHFs) find themselves in the midst of. This moment is pivotal and can be the beginning of a long and dark road of hospitalizations, or an opportunity to embark on a journey of recovery, serenity and peace.

Crestwood has become the largest provider of PHFs in the state with programs at our American River, Bakersfield, Fresno and San Jose campuses. The PHFs are designed by and for individuals who are in the middle of crisis moments and need a soft place to land. The PHF environments are cozy, with soft wall paint hues of welcoming color and are decorated with carpet and home furnishings to eliminate the sterile hospital environment feel. When a client first arrives at one of Crestwood's PHFs they are greeted in a comfortable welcoming room and are provided with snacks and drinks. Each client's initial assessment occurs in this welcoming room and is conducted as a soft inquiry interview, rather than a long list of yes and no questions, which helps to calm the client and put them at ease.

*Crestwood's
Psychiatric
Health Facilities
Providing a
Beacon of Light
in the Darkest
Moments*

Once a client has been welcomed, they are then provided with a tour of the rest of the environment. The PHFs are small programs, accommodating 10 to 16 individuals, yet each has a large, relaxing living room; dining room and kitchen; group rooms; sitting areas for visiting; and a serenity room with chaise lounges, walls painted darker soft hues, art and music for contemplation, meditation and peace of mind. The bedrooms have homelike beds with comforters and enough space to allow freedom of movement and privacy. This soothing environment is based on the best practice of the Living Room model from Recovery Innovations. Lori Ashcraft, Executive Director at Recovery Innovations Recovery Education Center, teaches that if we hold love in our hearts and actually bring it in our programs and environment, that healing will occur.

The PHF programs are designed to be open, enabling clients to choose classes each day, as well as to take the time they need for individual healing rituals such as journaling, sharing stories and laughter. The evidenced-based classes available to clients include Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) skills, Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP), and cognitive behavioral skills training in anger management, self-soothing, assertiveness training, medication awareness, and life-skills training. The creative arts are also provided as another recovery tool that each person can bring with them as they transition back to their home or community.

The support offered at Crestwood's PHF programs is exceptional. The psychiatrists are well-versed in recovery methods and a variety of recovery tools, including medication. The licensed clinical staff and nursing staff are trained in WRAP and have extensive training to avoid coercive treatment. The relationship each staff member has with each client is viewed as one of the most healing recovery tools. Another significant support that is available for clients is peers helping peers.

Clients are also provided with transition training to help prepare them to return home or to a new environment. Linkage to community-based providers is vital at this time, as well as family support and education. With the support of the PHFs' service coordinators, each client is linked to services, understands their aftercare plan and has an idea of where to get help should another crisis arise.

So it is only with love, compassion, hope and ongoing support that the darkest moments can be transformed into the beginning of a sacred healing journey of recovery and peace. The Crestwood PHFs provide clients who are in this time of crisis with a safe environment that is warm and welcoming and surrounded by others who have been in their shoes and who can hold hope until they are ready to hold it for themselves. ◀



Wrapping Up the Week

Crestwood Wellness and Recovery Center in Redding has created a very popular weekly Friday event for their clients and staff known as the Wrap Up. After a long week of work for the clients and staff, the Wrap Up begins in the afternoon with music being piped over the loud speakers, serving as a calling for all to report to the dayroom.

As the staff and clients gather together in the dayroom, a client assumes the role of emcee and initiates the forum to introduce and welcome all the new clients to the facility, offers announcements of upcoming events, and voices congratulation to those who have completed their recovery program and soon will be discharged. Then, after the initial announcements are made, the microphone is handed off to staff and clients who wish to provide an account of particular events of the past week and voice appreciation for a charitable gesture or action that occurred. The Wrap Up provides a wonderful forum to

publicly thank another person for their kindness and who in some way did something that affected another person in a positive way. Paula, a client at the facility, said, "I love how we end the week, reflecting on what was good and thanking those who have helped us."



The weekly Friday Wrap Up has instilled a realization in those who attend that the world is full of people who act daily in charity and kindness. Pat Kearns, RN-BC, Director of Nursing at the facility, reflected, "Watching the clients formulate and verbalize profound and heartfelt thankfulness for what might seem to others as minor acts of kindness, not only inspires and nourishes the staff for what they do, but is also a significant reminder that the most meaningful acts in life are usually just a small giving of oneself to another in need."

Recently, weekly themes, such as kindness, fashion or perseverance, were added to the Wrap Up. Then that week's theme is highlighted throughout the week by taking photographs and interviewing clients who are supporting or demonstrating the theme in some way. A movie and slideshow is then created and shown to the Wrap Up group. The interviews are often the highlight of the presentation, when clients get a chance to express themselves with exceptional insight and depth.

The weekly Friday afternoon Wrap Up event has become an important part of the culture at Crestwood Wellness & Recovery Center and truly reflects their philosophy of recovery. Nicoletta Groff, Administrator, said, "The Wrap Up gives both staff and clients the opportunity to share a kind word, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around." ◀

Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc.

Crestwood Behavioral Health, Inc. is proud to be California's leading provider of mental health services, assisting thousands of clients from across the state. Our focus is on creating strong relationships with counties in which we both have a financial commitment, providing the services which are tailored to meet clients' specific needs, and reinforcing a common set of values that guide our practices and policies.



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Spotlight

“People are so much more than the challenges they face. It is an honor to support people as they reacquaint themselves with hope, strength and individuality.”

– Nancy M. Soncrant, Administrator
Crestwood Eureka Campus

Touch Editor Kari Friesen

