

Connections

The Newsletter of the Connections Program

A Partnership between the Health District of Northern Larimer County and the Larimer Center for Mental Health

Food and Mood

By: Anne Marie Cronin, LCSW
Connections Mental Health Specialist

Everywhere you look there seems to be somebody telling you the latest and greatest way to lose weight, and look like a Hollywood movie star. From South Beach to Atkins, The Abs Diet to The Zone, we are bombarded by information about the quickest way to banish fat. But very few of these diets focus on how food affects our mood.

As a mental health provider, part of my job is to help people figure out ways to help regulate and stabilize their mood. The way I typically approached this task was the standard therapeutic model; provide ongoing therapy and refer clients to a professional that could prescribe medication, if the client chose that option.

Over the past five years I've been working at a holistic treatment center for addictions. Their primary focus was to use nutrition and supplementation (in addition to numerous other forms of therapy) as a way of decreasing the symptoms of depression and anxiety - two major triggers for individuals with addiction issues.

Prior to working at InnerBalance I was a carb loving, sugar eating, caffeine drinking kind of girl. I felt like a hypocrite talking to my clients about the importance of following the prescribed diet when I myself had just had a Grande Americano and a chocolate chip cookie. But the more I watched my clients' anxiety, depression, and cravings for drugs and alcohol decrease, the more I became intrigued with the idea that what we eat directly effects how we feel. I also didn't like feeling like a hypocrite so I decided to eat the way my clients were eating.

I cut out caffeine, sugar and white flour from my diet. I filled half of my plate with vegetables and added lean proteins, whole grains, and healthy fats. I ate three meals and two to three protein based snacks a day. After going through some withdrawal from sugar and caffeine I actually started to feel better. I was no longer hitting my "wall" at 3:00 p.m., and my sense of well being dramatically improved. My anxiety and stress levels decreased significantly, I was less irritable and I found that I could focus, and be more present at work - a good trait to have when you're a therapist. I started reading books and learning more about how I could help myself and my clients start taking charge of how we felt.



Julia Ross, in her book "The Mood Cure", asserts that sugar and white flour are the "gruesome twosome" stirring up trouble and causing serious problems related to depression, anxiety and diabetes. Miss Ross believes that when it comes to sugar and white flour, you just "don't eat them". I'm not implying that by changing your diet you can alleviate all of life's problems - it's not that easy.

But I do believe that it is possible to become more emotionally stable by monitoring your diet so you can have the strength, ability and rational thought to deal with life's stressors as they come.

We all deserve to feel good. I believe that psychotherapy and psychotropic medication can help tremendously in the fight against depression, anxiety and other mental health issues. I also believe that we can empower ourselves, and our clients by increasing our awareness that the food you eat directly influences how you feel.

(continued on page 2)

In this issue

Food and Mood.....	1-2
Book Review.....	2-3
Job Opportunity.....	3
2007 Connections Report.....	4
Complications with Imagining Figures of Light.....	5
A BIG Thank you to all Disaster Responders.....	5

We encourage you to submit short articles (50-500 words) on therapeutic approaches, mental health topics, case studies, or therapeutic book/movie reviews, etc., & will publish them as space allows. We reserve the right to edit all submissions.

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Professional Bulletin Board online:
www.healthdistrict.org/connections

Connections is published 6 times/year. The purpose of *Connections* is to offer information on current therapy groups and services in the community; provide updates on services available through the Connections Program; and offer a place where information on community happenings of interest to mental health and human services providers can be shared.

Submissions are welcome. E-mail them to chusted@healthdistrict.org by the following deadlines:

NEXT EDITION: September/October
Article Deadline: August 15, 2008

Submissions printed in *Connections* do not necessarily reflect the views of the Connections Program. Our editorial staff do not check the credentials of individuals wishing to submit groups or other listings. If you have concerns regarding credentials or other issues, please contact the group leader or author of the article directly. Thank you.

(continued from page 1)

For more information on food and it's impact on mood, I suggest looking into the following books:

- The Diet Cure and The Mood Cure by Julia Ross
- The Food-Mood Connection by Gary Null,
- End Your Addiction Now by Charles Gant and Greg Lewis, and
- Seven weeks to Sobriety by Joan Mathews Larson

Book Review

By: Antoinette M Saunders, PhD

Harriet Porter, LCSW

Institute for Psychological and Spiritual Development

The Enneagram Field Guide

by Carolyn Bartlett, LCSW
ISBN-13 978-0-9790125-4-9
Available at Bookstores
www.insightforchange.com



Phone: (970) 484-7868

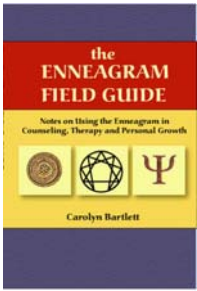
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The Enneagram Field Guide: Notes on using the Enneagram in counseling, therapy and personal growth, is all that it promised to be and more.

We teach a 9-month course in the Enneagram for mental health professionals and have been waiting anxiously for this book to be published. We have enthusiastically read and used the excerpts on the personality types that have appeared in the Enneagram Monthly. Bartlett has delivered on her promise, offering a useful guide for all of us who use the Enneagram as a model for understanding and working with human behavior.

Bartlett stresses that the Enneagram is not a model of therapy but is more like a road map that can be applied to any treatment approach. The Enneagram offers a spiritual and psychological way of understanding how humans unconsciously undermine their own happiness by getting caught in the fixation, trance, persona, or false self of their personalities.

(continued on page 3)



Many therapists are looking for models that help integrate spirituality and psychotherapy. Most of us do not have the language or the training to integrate the two. To paraphrase Bartlett, a therapist who understands how to use the Enneagram in a spiritual way can help clients recognize their deep gifts and their essential nature. Learning how to live with fewer defenses and learning how to endure the void that opens up after the collapse of the old defenses, supports the clients spiritual and psychological transformation

As clinicians, we are looking for a model that has:

1. A way of organizing behavior
2. Has suggestions about pathology, (DSM IV)
3. Offers ways of looking at healthy and unhealthy behavior without pathologizing that behavior
4. Treatment suggestions that include how to form a relationship with the client and understand their view of the world
5. How to recognize defense mechanisms
6. How to help your client recognize their anger and express it constructively, and
7. How to handle stress and relationship issues.

The Field Guide has nine chapters, each devoted to a personality type. The chapters offer helpful comments and insights on such topics as how the personality type presents itself in therapy, childhood experiences and adult defenses, what works and doesn't work with each type, suggestions about transference and countertransference, in-depth explorations and illustrations of treatment issues that are particularly relevant to that type, connecting points, suggestions about the use of dreams and what she refers to as "good enough therapy." Bartlett bases her suggestions on in-depth interviews with individuals of each type who have been in therapy as well as her own clinical experience over 20 plus years.

The Enneagram is a dynamic system and using the connecting points in therapy offers yet another way of exploring aspects of self. The Field Guide to the Enneagram is a necessary reference book for any clinician, counselor, coach or spiritual director if they are using the Enneagram model. We are using it as a required text for our training program.

This review was edited from a longer version. To view the unedited version, and other comments regarding this book please visit www.insightforchange.com.

Licensed Psychologist Wanted.....



Looking for a Licensed Psychologist interested in a guaranteed 2-4 hours per week with flexibility for additional hours providing vacation coverage. Duties include assessment and triage of acute mentally ill patients involved in the criminal justice system. If interested, please contact Janice Ort, Psy.D. for more information at (970) 377-9443 or j.ort@comcast.net.

Connections 2007 Annual Report

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he Connections Program annual report provides statistical information regarding the Connections program, the Pro Bono program, and other services provided to the community. Following are the highlights of the Connections 2007 Annual Report:

The total number of services provided by Connections was 10,414; the total number of individuals served was 3,762.

The number of staff referrals made (which includes referrals to Larimer Center for Mental Health, private providers and other agencies) was 4,865; there were 55,947 hits for mental health providers and agencies made on Healthinfosource.com.

There were 4,882 direct client services provided, this includes assessment, crisis intervention, brief intervention therapy, care coordination, consumer advocacy services and self screening.

Pro Bono Program:

- * The Connections staff matched 491 consumers to Pro Bono providers; of those, 75% followed through with the referral.
- * The percentage of clients reporting having been helped by the Pro Bono counseling was 100%.
- * The percentage of clients satisfied with the Pro Bono counseling was 100%.
- * There were 84 volunteer providers on our Pro Bono Network; in 2007 they provided 2,516 sessions; the average number of sessions per provider was 30.
- * The total amount paid out to Contracted Pro Bono providers was \$34,920.
- * The percentage of Pro Bono providers satisfied with the Pro Bono program is 98%.

Low-Cost Psychiatric Services:

- * There were 125 clients referred to the Pro Bono Psychiatric Specialty program.
- * There were 426 low-cost psychiatric sessions provided to consumers.

If you would like a copy of this report and answers to the Frequently Asked Questions and concerns that were raised on the satisfaction survey completed by providers, please contact Carrie Husted by email at chusted@healthdistrict.org or by phone at (970) 494-4370.



Complications with Imagining Figures of Light

Submitted By: Daniel A. Anderson, Ph.D.

As I mentioned in last issue's article "Imagining Figures of Light," complications can arise when the fruits of such practice aren't used to make "the darkness conscious." Let me explain. There is a psychosynthesis exercise of dialoguing with one's higher self in the image of a "wise person." People love this exercise, but experienced psychosynthesists use it sparingly because with frequent use the wisdom of this "wise person" tends to degrade.

Unless one is highly developed (less than 10% of the population), upon returning to one's habitual level of development after accessing a higher state of consciousness, that experience will be translated down to one's general level of understanding. One will lose the higher perspective of that state as its wisdom is transmuted into one's "common sense." Then when one re-imagines the same "figure of light," one will actually imagine a preconception of that image and the dialogue becomes a dialogue with one's preconception, not with an actual manifestation of the higher self. Unless one is highly developed, one will habituate (to some extent) any action that is repeated, degrading the potential fruits of the experience in the process. This process also occurs with repeated contemplation of positive qualities.

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To view the article: "Imagining Figures of Light" in the May/June edition of the Connections newsletter, please visit www.healthdistrict.org/connections.



THANK YOU

DISASTER RESPONDERS!

Thank you to all of the Mental Health Disaster Responders who helped out in Windsor following the May 22, 2008 tornado. Your assistance was greatly needed and deeply appreciated. The outpouring of help and caring was truly amazing!

If you are interested in becoming a Mental Health Disaster Responder we would love to hear from you! Each responder is required to complete a Mental Health Disaster Responder training. Please contact Carrie Husted at Connections either by phone at (970) 494-4370 or by email at chusted@healthdistrict.org. If you are interested in attending the next scheduled Disaster Response training, she will contact you when that training has been scheduled.

• c o n n e c t i o n s •

mental health & substance abuse resources

525 W. Oak Street
Fort Collins, Colorado 80521



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