



Center for Community Counseling



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SPRING 2023 NEWSLETTER

TRANSFORMING LIVES & HEALING RELATIONSHIPS

More Spring in Our Step

Spring in the Northern Hemisphere began March 20th, 2023. The warmer weather is finally here, and thanks to the sun's comforting rays, many of us are now likely to be in much better moods. Spring euphoria is not simply imaginary — it has a host of scientific underpinnings.

Spring makes us feel energized

According to Peter Walschburger, Professor Emeritus of Biopsychology at the Free University of Berlin, "Human beings are programmed to rest when it's dark, and to be active and in high spirits when it's light." He further explains that humans "react massively to light." That is why conscious experience and human behavior change radically on fine spring days. Now that the light is returning, the feeling of warm sun on our skin can make us feel generally upbeat and more positive. We can rely on spring to make us feel energized, without having to rely too much on caffeine.

More time for flowers, plants and soil

With warmer days comes more time to play in our gardens! Research has found that smelling flowers, digging your hands into the soil or even pulling up weeds can decrease blood pressure, increase brain activity and produce a sense of wellbeing. In an article from the *Journal of Environmental Horticulture*, Dr. Charles Hall, outlines the numerous psychological benefits of plants and the activity of gardening including: anxiety and stress reduction, decreased depression, increased creativity, and enhanced self-esteem. Bringing a plant from seed to sprout to fruition can create a great sense of accomplishment as well!

More time for socializing

Spending time with our loved ones can be healthy (both socially and mentally), but having to travel in the rain and snow during winter can make leaving the house to do so feel difficult. Thankfully, spring gives us more daylight and warmth to encourage us to take off those extra layers and get up and go enjoy a nice walk with friends.

Boost for mental health

The "winter blues" may be a worry for some because lack of vitamin D can trigger changes not only in mood, but also in

energy levels, sleep schedules, appetite, and social behavior. When the seasons change and we finally get prolonged access to daylight and fresh air, we feel the huge changes that the return of the sun can bring.

Spring Forward!

As author Jackee Holder elegantly puts it, "Spring is the season of hope where we see the early signs of the labor of the winter months come to life. What a good time to notice the parallels in our own lives. Whether our New Year hopes and plans have failed or stalled, spring reminds us that there's still time to start over again."

Here's to a fresh start for all this Spring! Make sure to take time to get out in nature and literally smell the roses. Spring into good health as you enjoy the season with festivities, fun and frolic.

New Ways to Give!

The Center for Community Counseling is pleased to announce new options for online donations. As of April 1st, 2023, you can donate digitally with an eCheck or with your preferred credit/debit card through DonorPerfect.

The online giving form is simple and secure to use. You can choose to make a one-time gift (for which we would be very grateful), or initiate a monthly sustaining gift on the date of your choosing (for which we would be extremely grateful)!

Check out our Giving page at:

weblink.donorperfect.com/ccceugene

If you would like more information about donation options, or would prefer to manage the transaction over the phone, please call our Administrative Assistant, Romelle Renner at 541-344-0620.

Ask Nasim

As a counselor, how do you listen to all those stories of pain, abuse, and trauma and still have hope that people will get better?

Signed, Hoping for Hope



*Nasim
Talebreza-May*

Dear Hoping for Hope,

I love this time of year as the newly forming buds on the trees and bushes give glimmers of the beauty that is about to come. However, this subtle change is not always easy to spot. On days when the wind is so cold it seems to cut through the many layers we have on and gray skies lead many of us to want to retreat back inside, it's easy to lose hope. Nonetheless, this movement towards spring continues on and the seeds that have been planted, whether months or years ago, start to come to fruition. It is often the same in the therapy room.

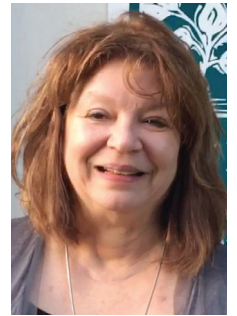
At times, the grief, trauma and pain of our clients leave us, as therapists, feeling the chill of despair, unsure that what we are doing will help. In those moments I have learned to trust the "process." To know that just as winter is always followed by spring, individuals who are seen, heard, validated, and supported will naturally move towards healing. Slowly, we gain the ability to recognize our patterns and triggers which can lead to a change in our reactions so that we may live healthier and more fulfilling lives. We learn to trust others and have more meaningful relationships with our partners, children, and our network of friends. It is with this knowledge that, just like a skilled gardener who knows the crocus will soon push through the frozen ground, that I hold that same hope for each client that enters through our door.

Research finds that this hope is contagious. As we hold it for our clients, they too are able to sense it and begin to weave it into their own selves. In having hope, we start to see the slightest signs of progress upon which additional growth is built.

Dear Debbie

Is there a way that I can do something to help CCC raise money to support the work you do?

Signed, Happy to Help



Deborah Saunders

Dear Happy to Help,

The answer is yes!

In fact, we have a really fun and innovative event coming up in October. We are going to be having a Vintage to Fifth Avenue Fashion Show featuring items from local consignment shops and boutiques as well as larger stores like Macy's. The fashion show will be at the Shedd Institute on Saturday, October 14th, and we will need some help leading up to the event. Maybe you'd like to participate by doing set design or table decor? Maybe you would like to help procure silent auction items like wine, gift cards for restaurants or tickets to unique adventures? If you would like to lend a hand on the night of the event we will have a variety of volunteer opportunities available. There are some wonderful folks involved already and we would love to add your name to the list! Just email me at debbie@cceugene.org and I'll get you set up doing something fun and worthwhile!



**An Evening in New York
...from Vintage to 5th Avenue
a Fashion Fundraiser for
The Center for Community Counseling
October 14th at the Shedd Institute**

Don't wait for someone to bring you flowers. Plant your own garden and decorate your own soul.

- Luther Burbank



A Fond Farewell

After over 9 years of service, Dr. Patricia Hasbach, is retiring as Board President in June of this year. We asked her to reflect over the time she has spent at CCC and share some moments of her journey with us.

How were you first introduced to CCC?

I was first introduced to CCC when Melissa Thomas, the ED/CD at the time, asked me to present a program on 'An Introduction to Ecopsychology' to the Wednesday meetings held for community practitioners. This was somewhere around 2012, just as my first book *Ecopsychology: Science, Totems, and the Technological Species* was published.

When did you become board president?

I became a member of the Board in 2014. I became the Board president in July 2017.

What are some of the changes that you have seen over your tenure?

The growing demand for mental health services in our community has been the biggest change I've seen. This has led to challenges in recruiting community practitioners and has contributed to growing the internship program – changing the volunteer pool considerably. As an organization, we have become much more financially sustainable, especially as CCC has become more visible in the



Dr. Pat Hasbach

community and to funders. There have also been great strides made in incorporating technology into every aspect of the operation of CCC, thanks to our current Executive Director and staff.

As you look back, what are the things that you are most proud of?

I'm proud of the services that CCC offers our community. Our interns, volunteers, and staff work hard to create a warm, welcoming atmosphere to clients while offering professional mental health services at a very low cost. During the pandemic, everyone worked together to continue to offer these services remotely, utilizing all available resources. We have successfully transitioned to a hybrid-model of services where counseling sessions and group meetings are offered in-person or online. I'm also very proud of the staff we have at CCC. Debbie Saunders, our Executive Director, has moved the organization into the 21st Century in terms of integrating technology into the operations of the Center. That has improved our data reports that our donors and funders rely on. She has also been creative in recruiting non-clinical volunteers to help with fundraising, grant writing and research. I'm also proud of our Board of Directors who work together to keep the organization functioning and moving forward into the future.

What were some of the biggest challenges you and the board faced?

There were certainly times in the past that CCC faced fiscal challenges that the Board had to address and make hard decisions about. Operating with a very small staff, there are times when Board members had to step up and take on tasks related to fundraising, set up for community education programs, and even paint walls and replace doors in the office. When our former ED left, she moved out of the area and that happened sooner than we anticipated. The Executive Committee and I had to assume operations responsibility until we had our new ED onboard. That felt like a very big challenge.

What do you see in the future for CCC?

I'm very optimistic about the future of CCC. We have strong, capable leadership on the Board and some wonderful new Board members with fresh ideas. Our staff is dedicated, talented, and innovative. The organization is fiscally strong and our model for volunteering is unique, exciting, and sustainable.

What would you like your CCC legacy to be?

I deeply care about people. I would like to think that people who worked with me at CCC felt heard, valued, and appreciated. I'm proud of the atmosphere I fostered on our Board. We got a lot of work done and had fun doing it.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

I'm grateful to have had the opportunity to serve as the Board President for so long. CCC is a vital part of the Eugene community, and I'm proud to have been a part of it.

A Budding Partnership

CCC and WellMama have partnered to provide low-cost mental healthcare to new and expectant parents in Lane County. WellMama is a local nonprofit that serves people experiencing challenges around pregnancy, postpartum, adoption, infertility, loss, and other journeys to and through parenthood. WellMama's mission is to provide resources, peer support, and wellness services to people affected by or at risk for mental health conditions related to parenthood.

The Center for Community Counseling recognizes the additional barriers new and expectant parents face in accessing care and has worked with Wellmama to decrease these obstacles. Those interested simply need to fill out a quick form on the WellMama website or with their WellMama volunteer or staff member. Once the referral comes in, as long as they are appropriate for our level of care, we connect clients to a therapist. If you or someone you know is in need of peripartum or postpartum counseling please reach out to WellMama by visiting www.wellmama.help or calling (541) 525-0495.



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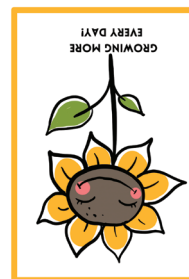
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