



April 2014

Stepping Out-Stepping Up is a monthly, community-oriented newsletter of the Department of Psychiatry published by the Office of Mental Health Promotion.



The Power of Group to Effect change in Inpatient Treatment

**By: Sherrie Smith, LCSW, CGP
Director Group Therapy Services**



As our health system strives to maintain high quality health care, Strong Behavioral Health is taking more steps toward helping our patients through group therapies. An inpatient therapy group has been implemented on 2-9200 called Discovering Connections. The group is run by certified group therapists and meets daily for an hour in the Solarium. All patients on the unit are encouraged to attend. Given the fact that isolation, alienation and dysfunctional interpersonal behaviors are normative in the lives of these patients, the safety of the group affords a unique experience for identifying with others who similarly struggle and for connecting emotionally with a small group of people whom they feel cares about them and wants to support them. You may wonder what group therapy can accomplish in the course of an inpatient stay. The Discovering Connections Group is not aimed at resolving symptoms, which is the job of other treatments. It does however help engage the patient in a therapeutic process that he or she sees as constructive or supportive and will want to continue after discharge from the hospital. It accomplishes this by demonstrating that talking helps, and that there is relief to be had in sharing pain, being heard, being understood and accepted by others.

Patients also discover they are not unique in their suffering. The group also can help them spot what they need to work on. Helping patients find a discrete focus makes other therapies more efficient. In addition, it helps participants identify problems in relating to others and is an ideal setting for them to learn about problematic interpersonal behavior. It helps sharpen communication skills which decreases isolation. Participants get feedback on how others perceive them and sometimes discover their blind spots. Perhaps most significantly, the group offers opportunity for patients to be helpful to others, which affirms

Community-Oriented News

How Tearing up Neighborhoods Hurts America: "Root Shock"

A presentation with Mindy Thompson Fullilove will be held on April 30th 7-9pm at Gleason Works Auditorium (1000 University Ave). Dr. Thompson is a Columbia University Professor of Clinical Psychiatry and Professor of Clinical Sociomedical Sciences, and Co-Director, Community Research Group. Tickets available to purchase at <http://www.rrcdc.org/reshapingrochester.html>

Race, Privilege and Poverty: Advancing Equity in Our Community

A presentation with Tim Wise on April 30th at 6pm. As part of their effort to support the YWCA's Stand Against Racism, and the Facing Race, Embracing Equity initiative, Coordinated Care Services, Inc. (CCSI) is pleased to invite you to a special presentation at the Ingle Auditorium on the RIT campus at 1 Lomb Memorial Drive. Registration is required at www.ccsi.org/timwiseeventregistration.aspx

"Young Black Male" America's Promise or America's Problem is a community wide collaboration event between IN Control, Utchat Vision and WDKX on Thursday, May 8th at 5pm at The Little Theatre. This powerful and thought provoking film about race, class and opportunity in America will be discussed following the film among community leaders and the youth from the City of Rochester on the problems facing Young Black Males and the solutions available to them. Contact Liliana M. Ruiz at WDKX for more information (585) 262-2050 or email Liliana.ruiz@wdkx.com

The annual **Got Dreams Award Night**, sponsored by the Monroe County System of Care Values, is on May 8th, 6 - 8:30pm at the Harro East Ballroom on 155 N. Chestnut Street. This year's event will feature a special youth performance, as well as our keynote speaker, ROCKSTAR SUPERSTAR, who will be talking about his own challenges and how he overcame

their self-worth. The process of hospitalization can be anxiety provoking because of shame, stigma, effects on jobs, families, and friends, and the behavior of other patients. The Discovering Connections Group helps to alleviate this anxiety and gives testimony to the group's inherent potential to effect change and be an instrument of healing, even in the most acute treatment settings.

April is Stress Awareness Month
By: Nancy Talbot, PhD, Director of BHP



We all welcome April as a sign of spring, especially after the long winter that we've endured in Rochester. Even as we enjoy the first signs of warm weather to come, it's a good time to think about the role of stress in our lives. April is National Stress Awareness Month. Not all stress is bad, of course. Stress is our body's "fight or flight" response, and we need that alert system. After all, without stress would we pull out all the stops to study for that big exam or complete that important project? But short-term stress can turn into chronic stress. When that happens, the toll of stress on our bodies can cause physical and emotional health problems.

Wellness programs and meeting with a mental health professional can make a big difference in how we manage our challenges at work and home. The University's Well-U programs and Behavioral Health Partners want to remind you that we are here. If you would like to know more about University resources, check out the Well-U website and the Behavioral Health Partners website.

- Well-U: <https://www.rochester.edu/working/hr/wellness/>
- Behavioral Health Partners: <http://www.urmc.rochester.edu/behavioral-health-partners.aspx>
- The National Institute of Mental Health has some helpful information and tips for managing stress (<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/stress/index.shtml>)
- Click on the link to read a terrific interview that Leading Edge did with Dr. Michael Privitera of the Department of Psychiatry about stress and burn-out in the workplace (<http://webblog.urmc-sh.rochester.edu/leadingedge/2014/03/05/where-theres-smoke-there-just-may-be-fire-how-to-id-and-beat-burnout/#comments>).

them to lead a new life filled with positivity and a commitment to changing the lives of others. The event is FREE but registration is REQUIRED at <http://bit.ly/1dHAx8R>.

Health Happens Where You Live...Did You Know?

The warm weather is coming and bike riding becomes more frequent along with children learning to ride. Encourage bike riding fun and safety. For instance, the 7th Annual iCan Bike Camp will be held July 7-11, 2014 at the Rochester Institute of Technology. This camp will teach individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other disabilities how to ride a conventional bike without training wheels. "Lose the Training Wheels" program provide specialized bicycle riding equipment, as well as, a team of experts.

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