

Lakeview Beacon

*Helping People Find Solutions
Spring 2007 Edition*

Lakeview Counseling

1844 Oak Hollow Drive, Suite B

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Therapists in the News

The therapists at Lakeview Counseling are continually involved in activities to serve our community. In keeping with that goal, we provide information, support and education in various ways.

Beth will be speaking at a workshop, Facilitating The Return to School for Children with Cancer, May 10th.

Barb is coaching "Girls on the Run" a program that teaches healthy living skills to 8 to 11 year old girls.

Jill recently taught a training session for "CASA" Court Appointed Special Advocates.

Laura has been interviewed by 7 & 4 News for a segment on Eating Disorders, airing May 8 & 9.

Carol is now a regular guest on the WSRT (106.7) radio program "Mary in the Morning", which airs from 6 a.m.- 9a.m, Mon-Fri. Listen for guest spots by all of our therapists.

What To Expect In Counseling By Jill Kimball, ACSW

Many people have questions about going to counseling, also known as therapy or psychotherapy. This newsletter hopes to answer those questions and help you know what to expect once you enter counseling. Some clients are referred by a physician or an employer, while others refer themselves. Accessing counseling begins with the recognition that a situation, emotion or behavior is interfering with your happiness and well-being.

You may wonder how to choose a therapist. Asking your physician, friends or family if they can recommend a counselor or therapist is a good place to start. You could call various offices and interview therapists until you find someone who has experience addressing your specific concerns and has an approach compatible to your personality. For some, your insurance company will guide you towards choosing an "in network" provider. You can gather this information by calling a counseling office and asking if they accept your insurance.

Once you decide on a therapist, an intake (or first time) appointment will be scheduled. At your first appointment, you will complete registration forms and meet with a therapist to begin sharing information about yourself. Your therapist will provide information about your rights and responsibilities. By the end of your first session, ideally you and your therapist will have identified a focus for your counseling. This is a good time to ask questions or give input to your therapist about your readiness to address identified concerns.

There are some preconceived notions about therapy, some true others not. Hopefully the information in this newsletter will address some of those unknowns. It is valuable to understand that the client plays an active role in all parts of counseling. At Lakeview Counseling all our therapists are trained and licensed Social Workers. This means we have a commitment to social work values that we use as we work with clients. Social Workers can provide assessment, insight, reflection, information, empathy and guidance. For more information about Social Work go to helpstartshere.com, a website sponsored by National Association of Social Workers.

When to Seek Counseling By Laura Slaughter, ACSW

For some of life's struggles we can rely on the support and advice of friends or family. At other times we can find books that can be inspiring and help guide us through a difficult phase. For some people prayer, meditation, or exercise can be just the right tool to help them through a painful circumstance. There are times, however, when the distress we feel is particularly severe or persistent, and interferes with our ability to function in daily life. At these times psychotherapy can be a real benefit, providing help for a wide range of problems such as depression, anxiety, loss, trauma, relationship problems, and other types of emotional distress.

Sometimes it can be difficult to know when to seek psychotherapy, particularly if the symptoms of personal or relationship problems have been present for a long period of time. We can become accustomed to pain, and not recognize the signals that would normally alert us that something is wrong and that we need help to regain our equilibrium. Many people have been considering professional help for some time, but are uncertain how to access the help they need..

The American Counseling Association offers this rule of thumb for anyone considering seeking counseling: If someone is questioning whether to go into counseling, that is probably the best indicator that he or she should. Most people seek therapy with hopes of understanding and easing emotional distress. If you are experiencing sadness, anxiety or depression that affects your daily functioning in important areas like sleep, appetite, ability to concentrate, energy level, job or school performance and/or relationships, then therapy can certainly help to relieve the symptoms, address the underlying causes of your distress, and help you to restore emotional well-being. The bottom line in wondering when to seek professional help occurs if an individual begins to consider harming themselves or others. This is when we clearly need the support and perspective of a trained professional to help us restore a healthy level of functioning.

Therapy can also be helpful when relationship problems seem overwhelming. Research shows that many couples wait too long to seek therapy for troubled marriages. Denial, apathy, ambivalence and a fear of being vulnerable with a stranger are some of the reasons cited for delaying the start of therapy. Intense relationships can bring up our deepest insecurities, and therapy can be a valuable way to understand the root of the problem, and provide us with the understanding and tools to improve the quality of our relationships.

The experience of trauma, violence, or abuse often creates a need to seek professional mental health services. When the normal feelings of fear, anger, or helplessness begin to impede one's ability to function effectively in daily life, therapy can provide a safe setting in which to find ways to move forward through the pain.

Some people decide to seek therapy when compulsive behaviors like eating, dieting, shopping, gambling, or drinking, begin to negatively impact their lives or relationships, or when health, financial or legal problems occur as a result of these behaviors. Psychotherapy can help to address deep-rooted issues, and develop new ways of coping and managing emotions.

Therapy can also have the goal of personal growth, or developing certain life skills, like assertiveness, communication, anger management or stress management. Some people seek a therapist to help them explore obstacles that have prevented them from achieving certain personal goals, or for help in learning to balance work and personal life. You may or may not have a clinical disorder, but therapy can generally help you learn more about yourself, and help you to live your life with a deeper level of personal satisfaction.

“I don’t want to talk to a therapist”, Reasons People are Resistant to Counseling **By Carol Murray, LMSW**

(1) Lack of familiarity with the counseling process--What good is it to go and talk to someone?

No one can help me with my problems.

Counseling is a relationship in which a clinically educated and trained professional helps you to better understand yourself and solve problems. Sessions take place in a private, secure, uninterrupted setting. Counseling is a collaborative process in which the therapist acts as a facilitator so that awareness and change can take place. Counseling is also referred to as “therapy” or “outpatient mental health services”.

(2) Financial-- It is too costly; I can’t afford it.

Almost all health insurance plans include coverage for counseling, referred to as “behavioral health services”. Some plans pay for the entire cost while other plans pay for a percentage of the charge and the client is responsible only for the co-pay amount. For clients who do not have health insurance coverage, a therapist is willing to discuss a reasonable fee for services.

(3) Concerns about privacy and confidentiality—This is a small town and people will know my personal business; disclosure of counseling could hurt my job or family.

Both Federal and State law dictate that the relationship between client and therapist is strictly confidential and must be protected. Information about a client cannot be shared with anyone unless the client gives specific and written permission to the therapist in the form of a “Release of Information”.

(4) Feeling fear and/or shame about talking to someone--I can’t tell anyone about my problems; no one will understand and I will be judged.

A therapist expects and understands that the process of therapy can cause a person to feel anxious. Seeking counseling is not a sign of weakness. Many people find that professional assistance is a mature and positive step toward satisfaction and success. A therapist is trained to be nonjudgmental and to use empathic understanding in helping a client.

(5) Discomfort with intimacy--I’m not comfortable talking about my feelings; why should I share personal information with a stranger?

Most people experience an initial discomfort talking about personal things with someone they do not know. A therapist is trained to develop an alliance with a client. For people who have problems with intimacy and expression of emotion, therapy offers an opportunity to address this. Therapists are also trained to set a pace and intensity of sessions that is comfortable for the client.

(6) Concern that the therapist will not be a good fit--How do I find someone I will feel comfortable with? What if I don’t feel a connection with the therapist or I am uncomfortable with her/his style?

You can talk with a therapist prior to setting up an appointment. It is reasonable to ask certain questions, such as what kind of training and specialties he or she has. If you meet with a therapist and do not feel it is a good fit, you should express this and seek a referral to work with someone else. Therapists understand that not all clients are a good fit and do not take personal offense when someone speaks up or seeks services elsewhere.

(7) Time and frequency of appointments--I can’t take time off of work or school; I don’t know how often I am supposed to attend sessions.

Therapists realize that clients have commitments and daily responsibilities and offer counseling days and times that will accommodate this. Most clients start out with weekly appointments. A therapist will discuss the treatment plan and progress along the way and expect to move to less frequent sessions until it is agreed that counseling is no longer needed.

If you would like additional information about aspects of counseling or the therapists at Lakeview Counseling, please contact us at (231) 929-0300.

Types of Therapy by Beth Boshoven, LMSW

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There are many approaches to therapy, and therapists often combine concepts from different schools of thought when working with clients. Overall, therapy is treatment for mental and emotional disorders in which a client focuses on a behavior or condition with a trained professional. Some types of therapy emphasize learning about the cause of a condition, creating a better understanding of the condition, and identifying how one's life has been impacted. In therapy, the client may explore relationships, expectations and personal history in order to improve one's ability to solve problems, or to simply cope with an experience.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy focuses on changing unhealthy or unwanted behaviors that are interfering in a person's day to day life. A client may learn techniques to confront anxiety and to overcome fear, and they may learn new healthy behaviors. This type of therapy is based on the idea that one's thoughts determine one's behavior.

Psychoanalysis is a process in which the client works with a therapist to examine how past feelings and experiences impact current behaviors and emotions. It is an interaction that looks at unconscious motivations, and how childhood events mixed with biological urges can drive how one thinks and behaves.

Family Therapy focuses on exploring family dynamics, and the roles people play in their family system. Focusing on the inner workings of the family system can help an individual examine the role they currently have, and what role they would like to have in the future. Family therapy looks at everyone involved, and what impact changing behavior has on the family's functioning.

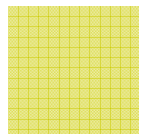
Play Therapy involves a number of techniques to encourage children and teens to process feelings at their own developmental level. Drawing, painting, and other techniques are brought into the therapeutic setting to allow children the ability to express emotion in a safe and healthy way, even if they do not yet have the language to describe what they are feeling.

EMDR, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing, is a type of therapy in which a client is able to process trauma, disturbing memories, or simply negative self concepts. EMDR looks at how memories are stored in the brain, and works with a client to move through memory networks to resolve any disturbing emotions, body sensations, thoughts or behaviors. EMDR offers clients new insight into past experiences, is often used to treat Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, chronic pain, and complicated grief.

****If you have questions or comments regarding our newsletter please contact our editor,
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