

# Making Moves

IN THE NEW YEAR



RETREAT  

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REVIEW

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**Peter Schorr**  
President & CEO

Dear Family and Friends,

I would like to wish everyone a happy and healthy New Year. We are so excited about what is going on at Retreat.

December saw us open our two newest outpatient facilities in both Lansdale and Philadelphia, PA.

This January, after what seems like a lifetime, we are opening our Connecticut inpatient facility. We are so proud to bring our quality treatment to the state of Connecticut.

We would like to thank all our friends, family and community members for their continued support.

Retreat strives for excellence and we look forward to growing and helping our community by not only providing high-quality treatment, but also acting as a trusted resource for the communities we serve.

Sincerely,



Peter Schorr  
President/CEO

# CHRISSEY'S CORNER

By Tanya Ruhl

## Q&A with Maggie Hunt, Retreat's Corporate Director of Alumni and Business Development

Hi! My name is Maggie Hunt, I am 31 years old and have been sober since July 6, 2009. I am the Mom to three beautiful children, Luke (8), Jesse (4), and Rylee (3). I work at Retreat as the Corporate Director of Alumni and Business Development Manager. I have worked at Retreat since we opened in August of 2011. It has been such a joy to work in the drug and alcohol field, I love it!

### Q: How many times did you attend a treatment facility?

A: I went inpatient 10 times, and did outpatient every time I got out except for the last.

### Q: What were your thoughts the first time compared to your last stay at a treatment center?

A: The first time I went to treatment, I was court ordered to go. I did not think that I could be the same as everyone else. I thought I just got myself into some trouble, that the drugs were the problem but I could still drink. My last, I was not convinced I would stay sober, but knew my life was unmanageable and I was out of control.



Chrissy Gariano, MA  
Chief Clinical Officer

### Q: What do people mean when they suggest "working a program" after an inpatient stay? Why is this important?

A: Working a program to me, is doing the 12 steps of a fellowship, such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous. This is important not just right out of treatment. This is a way of life, anyone can work the steps. It creates purpose, meaning, and helps to build relationships through the amends process. This is not treatment. It is also important to follow up with outpatient treatment after inpatient for continuity of care.

### Q: Can you still have fun while in recovery? (What does that look like? Did you always know what it could be?)

A: If I was not having fun, I would go back to using! They talk about a life beyond your wildest dreams, but that doesn't mean sunshine and rainbows. It means something you never thought you would enjoy you will! In early sobriety fun for me was going out before and after meetings with my friends, or hanging out at recovery related events. I never thought I would enjoy that! Now fun for me is, spending time with my kids and my mom friends!

### Q: What is one piece of advice you would like to give someone going into treatment?

A: Set aside everything you think you know to allow yourself a new experience!

### Q: What is one thing you would like someone in recovery to know?

A: It gets better, but sometimes it gets worse before it gets better! Just show up and we can handle the rest! ■

# WELLNESS WEDNESDAY: PENNSYLVANIA COMMUNICATION IN RELATIONSHIPS

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# ANXIETY: CALMING THE STORM, A NATION IN CRISIS

by Ariana Lobo

## A National Crisis

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, anxiety is the most common mental health concern in the United States. Approximately 40 million U.S. adults struggle with an anxiety disorder, or 20% of the total population. With so many adults struggling, the need for answers continues to grow.

## What Anxiety Looks Like in America Today

Anxiety can manifest in peoples' lives very differently and for different reasons. For an individual battling PTSD, certain noises or physical sensations can culminate in extreme levels of anxiety. In contrast, for an individual battling Social Anxiety Disorder, certain social events or even a packed restaurant can trigger them to experience a panic attack. For reasons such as these, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services categorizes anxiety into five major categories:

- Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Panic Disorder
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Social Phobia (Or Social Anxiety) Disorder

Despite this variation, the effects of anxiety can be widely felt. With the rise of industry, increase in the average cost of living, and households having more than one working parent, Americans are now busier than ever. This level of extreme activity can operate as a breeding ground for high levels of stress and anxiety. In fact, according to a national Gallup poll on behalf of CNBC, the average American works 47 hours a week, with many reporting they have the tendency to work 50 or more.

In the year of 2019, America has also seen numerous celebrities and pop-stars open up about their own personal battles with anxiety. This past year, Ariana Grande cancelled a meet-and-greet in Belgium citing that, "After a handful of panic attacks, I feel like the wisest decision would be to not do sound check party or m&g [meet and greet] today and preserve my energy for the show." Similarly so, Justin Bieber has released a slew of posts that address his very personal journey with anxiety, and how he encourages his fans to prioritize their own mental health care.

## Prevention & Treatment Options

Although treatment for anxiety varies greatly from person to person, it is treatable. One of the most commonly used forms of treatment is psychotherapy, most specifically, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). Another popular option is to treat certain forms of anxiety with medication. Beta-blockers, for example, are a popular form of antianxiety medication that lower the heart rate. Lastly, the less clinical option is to utilize relaxation techniques, yoga, and even mindfulness-based practices. With celebrities and general online content buzzing with conversation surrounding self-care and meditative practices, many are turning to more modern solutions when treating an anxiety disorder.

"I ended up looking for a therapist that had a background in mindfulness and it's made all the difference," shares Bella Mazzola, a 24-year-old who struggles with severe anxiety and now advocates for others throughout her work as a label coordinator, photographer and musician.

"My therapist diagnosed me with having 'emotional triggers,' and when one of these triggers for me gets hit—I react. So instead, she helped me set boundaries for myself to counteract the anxiety. She taught me that if a situation bothers me on a scale from 1-5, to practice meditative or breathing exercises. However, if the situation triggers me from a 5-10, I have to remove myself from the room. And it works. She also taught me to rub my hands together, create some body heat, and then cup them over my eyes. Immediately you feel this sense of warmth just rush over your body. Practices like these truly keep me sane. I spent so many years of my life thinking something was wrong with me. In the end, these kind of mindfulness practices really changed my life. Getting the right kind of help can truly make all the difference." ■



# LANSDALE OPEN HOUSE: GRAND OPENING AND RIBBON CUTTING

Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at our 4<sup>th</sup> Outpatient Facility in Lansdale, PA.



# PSYCHOLOGICAL FLEXIBILITY, SELF-COMPASSION & THE ESTABLISHMENT OF VALUES: CPM-ACT TREATMENT

By Ariana Lobo

**On average, 22.6 million Americans, aged 12 or older, use illicit drugs. And according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, 1 in 5 American adults struggle with a mental illness.**

With such a large population battling substance abuse and mental health issues, the respective treatment options must be cutting-edge and effective in addressing such a widely-spread behavioral health concern. Dr. Brian Berman [PSYD], a clinical psychologist with Retreat Behavioral Health, believes in seeking out the most cutting-edge forms of treatment when it comes to substance abuse and mental health care. Over the past four years, he and his dedicated team have conducted research on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), an evidence-based treatment for co-occurring disorders.

“As a full-time psychologist, I get to see what our patients are going through, and how we as a team can best treat their respective needs,” said Dr. Berman, in a statement. “After much investigation, and especially after reading on Kristen Neff’s research on self-compassion, I felt inspired to expand upon the currently known forms of treatment. There isn’t a ton of research available in inpatient settings, so I wanted to start there. What we found, in the end, was really encouraging.”

Dr. Berman’s study took place at Retreat Behavioral Health where 47 participants completed a 16-session group intervention using the Choice-Point Model of ACT (CPM-ACT).

In addition to being the first known application of CPM-ACT in an inpatient substance use disorder (SUD) setting, it is also a transdiagnostic, or co-occurring approach. Dr. Berman and his team utilized three unique Choice-Point Model features that had yet to be applied in the inpatient SUD setting. First,



they simplified traditional ACT terminology in order to make the intervention more user-friendly. Second, they helped participants identify “Choice Points,” or points in time where an individual must choose to move towards values or escape emotions. Lastly, they identified self-compassion as a central value rather than simply a by-product of treatment.

This innovative research developed at Retreat at Lancaster County, is now being presented across the country. Dr. Berman and his team presented their first abstract at AMERSA in November and are now set to present new findings at this year’s ASAM 2020 conference. The research team’s findings will be formally published in the Substance Abuse Journal and the Journal of Addiction Medicine.

Without the innovative minds behind substance abuse and mental health treatment, many individuals in need of care would be left without the appropriate resources. Through the work of Dr. Berman and his team, we now know that when it comes to the application of the new CPM-ACT model that patients are able to experience decreased psychological inflexibility, establish values-based actions, and embrace self-compassion. With tools such as these, individuals battling substance abuse can more easily experience lives of healing, hope and lasting sobriety. ■

# PHILADELPHIA OPEN HOUSE: GRAND OPENING AND RIBBON CUTTING

Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at our 5<sup>th</sup> Outpatient Facility in Philadelphia, PA.



# ANIMAL THERAPY: THE HEALING POWER OF ANIMALS

By Ariana Lobo

## What Is Animal Therapy?

Animal therapy was designed to provide patients with a unique alternative to traditional forms of counseling. In fact, the Mayo Clinic defines this form of therapy as, “A field that uses dogs or other animals to help people recover from or better cope with health problems, such as heart disease, cancer and mental health disorders.”

Many often think of “animal therapy” and cuddling cute puppies comes to mind. However, there are set categories, rules, and procedures when it comes to including animals in therapeutic practice. For instance, there exist three main categories for including animals in formalized treatments: Animal-Assisted Intervention (AAI), Animal-Assisted Activities (AAA), and Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT). Through Animal-Assisted Therapy, patients can experience a form of treatment alongside an animal that is goal-oriented, individualized per participant, and most importantly, conducted on behalf of a licensed healthcare professional.

## How It Works

As free-spirited and unreserved as animals can be, there must exist a great deal of structure when it comes to administering this unique form of therapy. The treatment can vary according to the number of individuals involved in a session, as well as, the kind of disorder the therapist may be looking to address. However, a typical Animal-Assisted Therapy session can begin with a simple directive on behalf of the instructor that the participants then have to execute alongside the animal.

“For a session, I might have anywhere from 5-8 people and I will place them in the arena with horses,” shares Cynthia Cruz a licensed Equine Therapist, in a statement, about her work with patients battling mental health and substance abuse. “The horses will be walking along and I will give a directive and say, ‘See if you can get those three horses to walk and join your group. How will you do that?’ Some feel the need to manipulate

or bribe the animal and it doesn’t work. Horses use heart-rate pulse and respiration to determine safe environments. So once you are truly and authentically at a peaceful energy, only then will the horses come to you.”

## The Benefits

All living beings are undeniably connected. And just as horses possess the innate ability to confront unsafe energy, so can Animal-Assisted Therapy inform patients about their own internal trauma. The uninhibited nature of animal therapy is a break from the more formalized environments of a therapist’s office or a group therapy room. There is fresh air, companionship, and a being that accepts your presence in an unconditional fashion.

In fact, when asked about the greatest benefit to animal therapy Cruz adamantly shares that, “The results are immediate. You don’t have to take seven sessions to talk about someone’s story, it happens right then and there in the arena. They are unconditionally accepted. The animal has no agenda. You can get a lot done in one session and it’s addressed right on the spot. It’s not psychoeducational it’s right in that moment, just you learning about yourself.” ■



# PA HOLIDAY PARTY: ASPIRE OF THE YEAR AWARD

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PA employees always enjoy getting together for the annual holiday party held at Retreat in Lancaster County. Good food and fun times are had by all. Congratulations to Yannick H. for being this year's Aspire of the Year Award Winner!



# FL HOLIDAY PARTY: ASPIRE OF THE YEAR AWARD

FL employees get together on the holidays to celebrate the year coming to an end. Lots of laughs were had, great food, as well as fun conversations. Congratulations to Alicia S. for being this years Aspire of the Year Award Winner!





# DEAR JUDGY LADY ON FACEBOOK: I HOPE YOU NEVER LEARN ABOUT ADDICTION THE WAY I HAVE.

————— *Introduction to the letter written by Tanya Ruhl*

**There are some who have never had any form of addiction affect their lives. It can be difficult for them to understand the complexity of addiction and, at times, they may say things that can be hurtful. Not only can those words affect someone in the throes of addiction, but they can also impact the family members who see the person struggling as their husband, wife, sibling, and even as their child. Elizabeth Grundy is one of these people. She lost her husband to an overdose and decided to let others know the hurt they can cause by their words to help bring awareness to the pain that those who love someone struggling with an addiction go through, always hoping that they will be able to find recovery. Here is what she wrote to one woman on Facebook.**

Dear Judgy Lady on Facebook,

I read the article you shared on narcan. Your opinion and commentary made my pulse pound and my face flush. I was angry, but after a few minutes passed, I didn't want to punch you in the face anymore. My heart softened towards you, because I know you just don't get it. You are so lucky, and I am envious of that. I wish more than anything else that I didn't get it either. I never wanted to and as much as I think you suck for saying what you did, I hope you never have to.

You see, I know something you don't know. I have lived it, walked it, and most importantly survived it, while you sit on the other end of a computer content in your ignorance. I hear that it is bliss.

I made a decision early on in life not to use drugs or alcohol. It wasn't because I was a saint, it was because I was scared

of it. Not having my wits about me at all times terrified me, so I abstained. I left parties early, I just said no. That old Dare pledge may have been one of the only things I have ever truly followed through with in my life. Well, the second ...

I have always wanted the same thing we all want, "True love." The heart racing, soul fucking stuff that roll-of-the-eye inducing movies are made out of.

Lucky for me, I found it and I cherished it, I protected it, I stood by it through thick and thin. It was mine, and I was never letting go no matter the cost. Unlucky for me, I lost the human form of the person it was attached to. It went defunct in a rundown apartment five minutes from my house, surrounded by people who did not give a shit about that love. I lost the most precious person to me, other than my children, without a "goodbye" or a last "I love you." I lost the keeper of my secrets, my duet partner, the finisher of my sentences and the other half of my heart. I lost my financial stability, my security blanket, my hope, my sanity, my will to live, my plus-one, and my emergency contact. I lost my home with narcan a truck door open away.

I get it, you think it was his "choice". You think he didn't love me or anyone else enough. You think he was selfish, stupid and weak. You think he didn't deserve your tax dollars even though he worked harder than anyone I have ever known in my life. If I told you how wrong you are, you probably will not be convinced. He is the face of a million "junkies" to you. You might not care that he poured ketchup all over his fries and ate them with a fork or that he always gave money to the homeless. That he smelled like wood chips, soap and just the tiniest hint of a hotel swimming pool or that he could draw a blue print with his eyes closed. You won't be moved to hear that he loved my feet,

put my coat on me on our first date, and ended every text with "I love you more than all the stars in the sky," but all of these things mattered to ME. You are basing his worth on an image you have in your head. It just feels so important to me that you know this; there are good and bad drug addicts, just like there are good and bad NON drug addicts. He would never judge you for being such an asshole. If I had gone to him all fired up and read to him what you wrote, he would chuckle and tell me to calm down. He was a better person than you or I combined.

My question to you is simply, what about me? Do I deserve your sympathy and your compassion? Is my pain any less because the person I loved was a heroin addict? Do I deserve to suffer for loving someone you don't deem worthy? Did he for making one poor choice that led him down the road to hell? Do the obese deserve insulin or a defibrillator? Do smokers deserve chemotherapy? Where does it stop when we start making these kind of calls?

Still, I know I probably haven't changed your mind. It seems pretty set, all I can ask is that you honor my pain, just like I would honor yours if your husband dropped dead because he ate a good too many cheeseburgers. I ask that you do because we are all human and we are all in this together.

Sincerely,

The junkies wife.

- Elizabeth Ann Grundy

*Posted on September 9, 2016 - <https://stophesilencespeakthetruth.wordpress.com/2016/09/09/dear-judgy-lady-on-facebook-i-hope-you-never-learn-about-addiction-the-way-i-have/?fbclid=IwAR3hRc3AG6rvpW5zXL2CRhK3qasSyqAZ3757G0xIsAoKOGGqciFDAvM6Wdo>*



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Check out our weekly show **Recovery Radio**, is now available to download on iTunes, Spotify, Google Play. The show also airs every Saturday from 6-7pm EST on WPHT 1210 in Philadelphia. Hosted by veteran radio journalist Steve Martorano, we explore new topics pertaining to the world of substance abuse, and inspiring stories of recovery, on each episode.



# SELF-CARE: THE NEW-AGE FORM OF MEDICINE

By Ariana Lobo

**From news headlines to social media platforms, the self-care movement is gaining attention and quickly becoming the new, hip thing to do. Whether through TEDTalks, books, blogs, or new products that promote proper self-care, many are tuning in to the power of this self-love and acceptance. But is it just a fad? Or is self-care the new-age form of medicine that we've been missing?**

According to PEW Research Center, a nationally recognized, nonprofit research foundation, millennials have reported to making more personal improvement commitments than any other generation before them. They also found that millennials spend twice as much on wellness-based lifestyle products such as gym memberships, yoga, life-coaching, therapy or even mobile applications to improve well-being. So what's the catch? Why such a transition from one generation to the next on the significance of self-care?

"Historically, something like self-care was looked at as a luxury or something that might be considered extra," shared Dr. Kendall Ritz [MD] a Lifestyle Medicine practitioner, in a statement. "Our culture historically has been focused on producing tangible results, but when you aren't balancing that with the natural rhythms of rest or being, that's where an imbalance is created and exhaustion sets in."

When introducing her patients to the practices of self-care Dr. Ritz begins by setting a foundation. In fact, she believes that there must be a formal decision of acceptance before any other steps can be taken. This acceptance, she describes, operates as the personal turning point for the patient, and it says, "I matter, and I am worthy of care." Dr. Ritz also makes clear to her patients that only by allowing themselves to receive the benefits of care can they truly begin to practice those skills and be present in the moment.



Melanie Santos, an NYC-based, self-care expert with a diverse following of thousands, also advocates for the acceptance of self-care but especially for women and minority communities. In her years of practice, as an advocate, writer, public speaker, and online personality she believes that by practicing wellness and breaking down barriers are we truly able to grow as a society. However, she gained even further insight into self-care after a recent family tragedy revealed how past ways of thinking can be detrimental to the progressive growth of the self-care movement.

"So much of the past is rooted in trauma," shared Santos, in a statement. "I mean, it's often celebrated for a woman or a man to work and work, not take days off. However, after a recent loss in my family, it resulted in a time that we as a family really learned what it meant to stop and practice care for ourselves and for one another. It was interesting to see my mother, a woman who works and works and works to realize, 'We are living in trauma. If I don't stop now and rest, this is going to kill me.'"

With current generations remaining alert to the lessons of the past and open-minded to the possibilities of the future, can we as a society practice better self-care in the moment. One thing is sure; self-care is an individualized, highly personal practice. However, by encouraging one another to know that we are worthy of acceptance, love, and care, can we truly become free to practice self-care in all we do-across all age groups. ■

# UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

## EVENTS IN FEBRUARY

### **Dare To Self-care Women's Expo**

Join us for an exciting women's self care expo. Swag Bags, Raffles, Zumba, Krav Maga Self Defense classes, Yoga, art therapy, journaling, Vegan & organic cuisine, essential oils, skin care demos and more! All proceeds for this event will go to the PBC 211 Crisis Hotline!

**Sunday, February 9 | 1-4 pm**

**Live360 Studio at the Mall at Wellington Green  
799 Cedar Cove Road, Wellington, FL 33414**



## EVENTS IN MARCH

### **Wellness Wednesday: Dealing With Toxic People Personally and Professionally**

**Wednesday, March 4 | 12-1 pm**

**Retreat Behavioral Health Outpatient Center  
333 South 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Akron, PA 17501**



## EVENTS IN MAY

### **Wellness Wednesday: Medicinal Marijuana and the Workplace**

Wednesday, May 6 | 12-1 pm

Retreat Behavioral Health Outpatient Center  
333 South 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Akron, PA 17501

## EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER

### **Wellness Wednesday: Recovery in the Workplace—Supporting Employees and Legally What Needs to Happen**

Wednesday, September 2 | 12-1 pm

Retreat Behavioral Health Outpatient Center  
333 South 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Akron, PA 17501

## EVENTS IN JULY

### **Wellness Wednesday: Can You Cope? Understanding Music Therapy**

Wednesday, July 1 | 12-1 pm

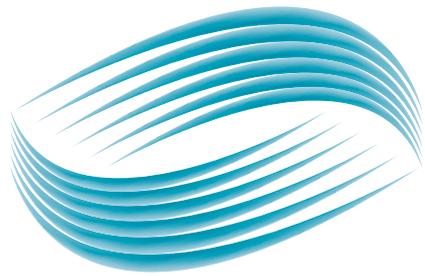
Retreat Behavioral Health Outpatient Center  
333 South 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Akron, PA 17501

## EVENTS IN NOVEMBER

### **Wellness Wednesday: Mental Health in the Workplace**

Wednesday, November 4 | 12-1 pm

Retreat Behavioral Health Outpatient Center  
333 South 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Akron, PA 17501



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Contact us today for more information:

**855.859.8810**

Or visit us online at:

**[RetreatBehavioralHealth.com](http://RetreatBehavioralHealth.com)**

Retreat Behavioral Health offers addiction services, from medically monitored detox to outpatient rehabilitation, providing a full continuum of care. We work with most commercial insurers, offer 24/7 admissions and complimentary transportation. We have locations in Lancaster County, PA and Palm Beach County, FL. At Retreat, we pride ourselves on providing a compassionate and spiritual environment for those struggling with addiction in a secure and comfortable setting with dedicated and caring staff.

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