



Walden Connects

Summer 2008

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*Discovery consists of
seeing what everybody
else has seen and
thinking what nobody
else has thought.
- Albert von
Szent-Györgyi*

The Alcott Center At Walden Behavioral Care

Walden Behavioral Care has become well known in the eating disorder and psychiatric industry because of its capacity to treat patients with complex presentations.

Unlike residential programs, the Alcott Center provides the most acute level of eating disorder treatment focusing on medical management and medical stabilization.

The Alcott Center is the only acute hospital program in New England dedicated to the inpatient treatment of patients with eating disorders, and only one of five across the county. With twenty-two beds available, treatment includes case management, medical evaluation and management, nutrition counseling, and individual, family and group therapy. Case managers conduct individual and family therapy, and establish and coordinate care with an outpatient team.

The Alcott Center serves patients 13 years or older with advanced anorexia, bulimia, binge-eating disorder, or other eating disorders. Intensive inpatient care is appropriate for individuals who are medically and behaviorally unstable, and who cannot be treated successfully in less intensive levels of care.

Over the last few years, the Alcott Center has treated individuals throughout New England and across the country because of its reputation in the eating disorder field and because of its ability to accept and treat individuals with complex eating disorders.

The Alcott Staff includes internists, psychiatrists, psychologists, nurse practitioners, nurses, nutritionists, social workers, expressive therapists, and mental health counselors.

Walden Recognizes Significance of Sensory Modulation

An essential element of self-organization is the way one modulates sensory and motor information. According to Tina Champagne, M.Ed., OTR/L, "Sensory modulation is part of the human condition and is an ongoing process that we often pay little attention to."

Champagne, in a presentation on The Sensory Modulation Program for Adolescents & Adults, goes on to say, "When feeling well, little attention needs to be paid to the habitual strategies used to shift dynamic states. ...[H]owever, when not well, more attention is often necessary. ...[T]he relevance of sensory modulation strategies becomes increasingly apparent, particularly when working with individuals experiencing escalating symptoms and among those in dynamic crisis states."

Miller, Reisman, McIntosh & Simon in their article, "An Ecological Model of Sensory Modulation" (2001) refer to sensory modulation as "the capacity to regulate and organize the degree, intensity and nature of responses to sensory input in a graded and adaptive manner" whereas the term *sensory integration* relates to the condition, such as children affected with sensory integration disorder. (Story continues on page 4)

Research suggests that about 4% of college-aged women have bulimia. About 50% of people who have been anorexic develop bulimia or bulimic patterns.

In 2004, according to the NIMH, suicide was the eleventh leading cause of death in the United States, accounting for 32,439 deaths.

There's No "Caring" Without "Connecting"

Dr. Ned Hallowell, well-known author of *Driven to Distraction*, recently came to Walden to "preach the gospel" of what he calls "strength-based care." Ned's message was simple: People need to be recognized for what they do best; everybody needs to connect, to have frequent "human moments" in order to live a healthy life. Everyone I spoke to after his talk came away from the experience renewed. It's such a positive message; true to the core motivation of why we chose this kind of work.

When we developed our "whole health" approach to treating patients, we based it on our experience working with patients and their families. At the core of this approach is the concept of connectedness. Establishing and nurturing a connection with patients and their families is vital to their achieving lasting recovery. Connecting with other professionals who have or currently do work with the patient is also important to maintain continuity of care and to create a smooth transition when patients move from one level of care back to outpatient treatment.

This concept of connectedness extends beyond our patient relationships; it is found within our Walden family. The relationship between all members of our treatment team—from administrative assistants to medical personnel—is vital to our own professional growth and the recovery of our patients.

So how can we foster these connections and live these values on a daily basis? I will offer two suggestions. As an organization, we can create meaningful opportunities to interact with one another professionally and personally. As individuals, we should remind ourselves that it is a privilege to do the work that we do, and to communicate this attitude to our patients and their families.

By providing an innovative environment, working together as a Walden "family" unit, and treating each other with respect, we make Walden a truly healing place for our patients and an extraordinary workplace for our staff.

~ Stuart Koman, Ph.D. CEO

Drunkorexia

Eating disorders has a new buzzword: drunkorexia. Whereas drunkorexia is not an official medical term, it does aptly describe the condition: self-imposed starvation or bingeing and purging, combined with alcohol abuse.

Drunkorexics are typically female, college-age binge drinkers who starve all day to offset the caloric content of the alcohol they consume. The term is also associated with bulimic-like behavior—bingeing on food and alcohol followed by purging.

In a report in *The New York Times*, Dr. Douglas Brunnell, past president of the National Eating Disorders Association, said the obsession with being thin and the social acceptance of alcohol and drug use are "behaviors that are glorified and re-inforced. . . . Binge drinking is almost cool and hip, and losing weight and being thin is a cultural imperative for young women in America. Mixing both is not surprising, and it has reached a tipping point in terms of public awareness."

While there are no formal statistics following this particular behavior, some studies indicate that "30% of young women with alcohol problems also have some form of eating disorder," according to clinical psychologist Carrie Wilkens, co-founder and clinical director of the Center for Motivation and Change.

What's New At Walden...

- ◆ Renovations are underway in Northampton's permanent space
- ◆ Walden exhibited at 4 National Conferences: IEDAP (Orlando), NASW (Newton), AED (Seattle), and the Ben Franklin Summit (Nevada) totaling 2,400 attendees
- ◆ Walden exhibited at the Health Professional Recruitment Day in Braintree
- ◆ Walden exhibited at Springfield College with 400 attendees
- ◆ Paula Vass, LICSW, Director of Admissions and Social Work, delivered an Eating Disorder Presentation to regional MBHP ICM staff on June 26th

Meet More Walden Team Members

Walden's integrated, multi-disciplinary team of clinicians includes psychiatrists, family physicians, psychologists, social workers, nutritionists, nurse practitioners, occupational therapists, expressive-art therapists, registered nurses, educators, mental health workers, and mind-body practitioners. Below are a few of the team members.



Debra Foti-Flynn, MS, RN, CPNP, Nurse Practitioner, Alcott Center is a former pediatric unit Charge Nurse at Deaconess Waltham Hospital. She also served as a full-time Visiting Professor of Nursing at Regis College. Debra received her MS from Regis College. She presented her thesis on *Disordered Eating Attitudes and Behaviors in High School Adolescents: A School-Based Study*.



Marc Larmand, RN, BSN, Staff Nurse, Thoreau Center, is an experienced clinical psychiatric RN specializing in acute adult psychiatry including substance abuse, eating disorders, and medically compromised patients. He received his BS in Nursing from the University of Lowell.



Emily Slager, M.Ed, LMHC, Social Worker, works in the Inpatient Programs at Walden's Alcott and Thoreau Centers. In addition to her duties at Walden, Emily is a co-leader of a weekly MEDA support group for family and friends of people suffering from eating disorders. Emily received her Master's in Counseling from Boston College.



Rebecca Libitz, Administrative Assistant, Admissions Department, brings enthusiasm and excellent customer service, organizational, and human relation skills to her position at Walden. Rebecca received BA in Psychology from Framingham State College.

From the Education Center

- ◆ Walden has held 3 additional Grand Round Presentations
 - April: DBT (Dialectical Behavior Therapy)...presented by Liz Simpson, MD
 - May: Binge Eating Disorder and Night Eating Syndrome...presented by Laurel Watt Aldredge, Ph.D. and Roberta Pearle Lamb, RD, MPH
 - June: Termination and Loss...presented by Beth Mayer, LICSW
- ◆ Work Terrain has finalized the Stress Management training program. 92 Walden staff members participated in this training program provided under a grant from the Commonwealth of MA Department of Industrial Accidents.

Expansion of Services

- ◆ Northampton's permanent office is due to open mid-September
- ◆ Walden is looking at space on the South Shore for PHP and IOP EDS services

Walden in the News...

Walden Executive Discusses Whole Health Approach To Care

New England Psychologist
May 1, 2008

Like a phoenix rising from the ashes of financial collapse, Walden Behavioral Care, located in what was once Waltham Deaconess Hospital, has built itself into a powerful new player in the field of eating disorder treatment. Invited by the Commissioner of Mental Health to save the 45 mental health beds that would be lost when the hospital closed in August 2003, Stuart Koman, Ph.D., and David Fassler, M.D., joined forces to create Walden Behavioral Care, a facility that would incorporate both the inpatient psychiatric facility and its eating disorder program. Read the full article at http://www.waldenbehavioralcare.com/news_article.asp?id=42.

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Sensory Modulation Program (cont. from page 1)

The Sensory Modulation Program (SMP) was organized to “serve as a guide when beginning to employ sensory modulation concepts and strategies.” The SMP includes the “integration of the therapeutic use of self, sensory-related assessment processes, integrative therapies, treatment approaches, programming and environmental modifications.” (Champagne)

Increasingly, mental health and developmental disability facilities are exploring the benefits of sensory rooms. These therapeutic spaces are designed to promote sensory modulation and facilitate the learning and practice of stress management skills. They offer opportunities for self-discovery and meaningful therapeutic activities.

Champagne, an occupational therapist from Western Massachusetts, was the first to expand the idea of using sensory rooms in inpatient mental health facilities. Her quality improvement studies into the effectiveness of sensory rooms reported “positive responses from patients and a significant decrease in their perceived levels of stress.” The rooms can provide “a bridge linking skills learned in the hospital environment to the use of helpful sensory strategies in the discharge environment.”

Potential Benefits of Sensory Modulation Strategies

The following is a list of examples of some of the potential benefits of the mindful and individualized use of sensory modulation strategies:

- ◆ Increased self-awareness
- ◆ Increased ability to self-nurture
- ◆ Increased resilience
- ◆ Increased self-esteem and body image
- ◆ Increased ability to engage in therapeutic activities
- ◆ Increased ability to engage in self-care activities
- ◆ Increased ability to engage in meaningful life roles
- ◆ Increased ability to engage in social activities
- ◆ Increased ability to cope with triggers

New Appointments at Walden

- ◆ Jesine Arsenault, Psy.D. has been appointed the new Director of the Adolescent Intensive Outpatient Program
- ◆ Janelle Miller, LICSW, has been hired as the Clinical Leader for the Adult IOP Eating Disorder Program

Did You Know...

- ◆ Stu Koman, Ph.D, CEO and Roberta Pearle Lamb, RD, MPH presented to the Pediatric Harvard Vanguard Medical Associates (HVMA) group in Watertown
- ◆ Jim Greenblatt, MD presented to the Braintree HVMA PCP group
- ◆ Jim Greenblatt, MD presented a poster on referenced EEG/EDS at the APA in Washington, DC
- ◆ Jim Greenblatt, MD presented to the North River Collaborative in Rockland, MA
- ◆ Jennifer Smith, LICSW, Director at Walden–Northampton and Maggie Moran, RN, MS, SVP, Marketing and Contracting, interviewed by Channel 40 at the NOHO site
- ◆ Ned Hallowell, MD was the guest speaker at the Medical Staff dinner held on June 9th