



THE BRIDGE

Family-centered treatment for mental illness & substance use disorders

Fall 2010

WestBridge values

WestBridge strives to be collaborative, person-centered and recovery-oriented. We have developed the following set of values that we want to be reflective of our relationships with our participants, families, co-workers and colleagues.

- Hope, respect, teamwork and direct communication are the core elements of our culture.
- We want everyone we interact with to experience our compassion, thoughtfulness, integrity and responsiveness.
- Everything we do is driven by a desire to develop authentic relationships.

We encourage you to let us know when we are living up to these values and when we are falling short. By working together, we can make treatment a positive, hopeful experience. ■

Benefits of a good night's sleep

Restorative sleep, the foundation of our health and well-being, is comprised of two stages: rapid eye movement (REM) and non-rapid eye movement (non-REM). Non-REM sleep consists of four stages, with stages 3 and 4 being "deep sleep."

A typical sleep cycle is 90 minutes, with about 20 percent REM sleep and 80 percent non-REM sleep. We process thoughts and memories from our day during REM sleep, which is when we dream. During non-REM sleep, our body restores the hormones and neurotransmitters lost during the day.

Substance use and mental illness interfere with our body's ability to get a good night's sleep.

We know there are many benefits of a good night's sleep, including stress reduction, increased energy, and decreased risk of depression. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends seven hours of sleep per night for a healthy heart.

Unhealthy sleep habits are often developed as a result of substance misuse and abuse and symptoms of mental illness. Substance use and mental illness interfere with our body's ability to get a good night's sleep, causing increased stress, mental sluggishness, greater risk of depression and relapse.

There are many reasons for non-restorative sleep: use of caffeine, nicotine, alcohol and as many as 81 different types of sleep disorders. Some of the most common sleep disorders are sleep apnea, movement disorders, narcolepsy and sleep walking.

At WestBridge, we have discovered that unhealthy sleep habits are one of the biggest challenges to success in work, school, managing symptoms, and "just plain showing up." We believe that helping people develop healthy sleep habits and treating sleep disorders is a vital part of treatment and recovery for people with co-occurring disorders. ■



WESTBRIDGE

COMMUNITY SERVICES

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inside

Participant perspective

As I entered The Commons, I was frightened of what they might think of me for getting worse and coming back, feeling shame and guilt for not succeeding on the outside. I was greeted with open arms.

When I was ready, I transitioned into the community and the WestBridge outpatient program. I began with mentors five nights a week making sure I got to one or two AA or NA meetings every day. At three months sober, I met my AA sponsor and was making tremendous progress.

I cut back on mentors and adjusted to life on the outside, learning how to live life on life's terms. I worked the AA program and kept up in therapy. I found faith and comfort in a higher power, praying to him often. A counselor said I was a man of courage and dignity. These words have kept me going ever since. It hasn't all been picture-perfect since my arrival in outpatient, but I have proceeded on my journey.

I've been blessed with many gifts and assets since coming into recovery this time. I believe I had to go through what I did to be where I am today. As much as I was full of guilt and shame, I was able to push on with my God-given ability to go to any lengths to become the person I was always supposed to be, the person that alcohol and drugs had taken from me.

Today I know what true friendship and love are because I am able to give back what was so freely given to me. WestBridge gave me a shot at life again. I was deemed to be a hopeless case by many, but because WestBridge didn't give up on me, I didn't give up on myself. ■

by David S.

Research continues to shed new light on the process of sleep and how sleep disorders affect the human body and quality of life. The International Classification of Sleep Disorders documents 81 official sleep disorders. Once the source of the problem is found, the sleep

Sleep disorders and treatment

disorder can be treated. The following outlines several possible treatment options. One may be the solution to your sleep problem!

Bright light therapy is used to help treat disorders that result from a problem with the internal clock in the body. Disorders treated with bright light therapy include jet lag and advanced sleep phase.

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) teaches people how to change actions or thoughts that hurt their ability to sleep well.

Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) is the most common and effective way to treat obstructive sleep apnea. A steady stream of air blows through a mask and into the back of the throat to keep the airway open.

Melatonin, a nutritional supplement, is most effective in the treatment of certain circadian rhythm sleep disorders, including jet lag, shift work and delayed sleep phase. ■



did you know?

As host of "One Hour at a Time," WestBridge CEO Mary Woods talked with Koren Zailckas about her new book, "FURY," on the October 18 show. In her international bestseller, "Smashed," Zailckas took readers on a journey through underage drinking. "FURY" chronicles Koren's journey through denial, rage and the consequences of unresolved emotional turmoil. She discusses why exposing the origins of anger is a necessary step in positive emotional growth and making healthier decisions as an adult.

Log on to voiceamerica.com and search the Health and Wellness Channel on Mondays to listen to past shows, or listen live Mondays from 3-4 p.m. EST. ■



What accreditation means to you

In January 2010, WestBridge received a three-year accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). CARF is a national organization that accredits behavioral health organizations for one year or three years. WestBridge was noted as having exemplary conformance for both its admissions process and Family Education and Support program.



For a program or organization to become accredited, it needs to demonstrate to CARF that it has effective systems, policies and procedures, and improvement strategies in several key areas, including health and safety, leadership, risk management, quality management, human resources and service delivery. CARF surveyors conduct an on-site and documentary review of an organization's conformance to dozens of standards relating to these areas. The core of the accreditation process is the focus on the needs of persons being served by the organization.

While there are many benefits to accreditation, including credibility with insurance companies and licensing authorities, WestBridge decided to pursue accreditation for one main reason: to convey to the rest of the world that it is dedicated to providing the highest quality of care possible to individuals and families who experience co-occurring mental illness and substance use. We are proud to be counted among many organizations that have made this commitment.

For more information about CARF, visit carf.org. ■

Family perspective

My son Jake* was feeling helpless and not in control of his life before arriving at The Commons. His mental illness and substance use made it hard to control himself.

WestBridge staff has treated Jake with respect and he has responded. Through one-on-one counseling and group meetings, he has opened up. The beauty of WestBridge is families are part of the healing process. During early Family Education and Support (FES) meetings we had some conflicts, but gradually we've been able to discuss issues we haven't been able to discuss before. He has also recognized that he has a mental illness and needs to take care of himself.

When Jake first arrived, he wasn't interested in the transition program, but he now sees its value and is working toward getting his own apartment near The Commons and taking a college class. He realizes what it will take to gain control of his life: not using drugs and alcohol and lots of patience. At a recent FES meeting, Jake said he is getting back more control of himself.

This process takes hope. Jake's hope for his life and future has been restored. And thanks to WestBridge, so has mine. ■

**not his real name*

in the news

- To better accommodate our referent's needs, The Commons, WestBridge's men's residential facility, has expanded to 12 beds.
- WestBridge co-hosted "Co-occurring Disorders and Conflict Resolution in Recovery and Relapse Prevention Trainings" on October 28-29, 2010 in Vero Beach, Florida. WestBridge supported the conference with NAADAC, Florida NAADAC, The Caribbean Court Boutique Hotel, Hazelden, Alkermes, and The Gonzalez Recovery Residences. Trainers were Mary Woods, CEO of WestBridge, and Cynthia Moreno Tuohy, executive director of NAADAC.
- The annual fundraising walk of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), "For the Mind of America," took place October 3 in Concord, N.H. A WestBridge team walked and raised money for this very important cause. ■





ask the nurse

Lisa Williams, RN, MSN, ARNP

How medications affect sleep

Sleep and wakefulness are influenced by different neurotransmitter signals in the brain. Foods and medicines that change the balance of these signals affect whether we feel alert or drowsy and how well we sleep.

For people with mental illness, adequate sleep quantity and quality is vital. Psychiatric medications affect sleep in many ways. Many antidepressants suppress REM sleep. Some medications prescribed for psychosis can worsen excessive sleeping by sedating people.

Mood stabilizer medications have varying effects on sleep. Lithium may increase stage 3 (the deepest stage) sleep, and increase overall sleep time. Depakote helps somewhat with insomnia. Lamictal may create sleep problems, such as insomnia and tiredness. Neurontin is a medication often used to treat insomnia, anxiety and mood stabilization.

Understanding factors that affect sleep is important. In mental health treatment, sleep is an important focus and key to good mood regulation and symptom control. ■


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wellness

Understanding sleep

- Sleep is essential to performing daily tasks. Getting 7 to 9 hours of sleep a night helps your mind and body function well the next day. Sleep loss builds over time and can affect appetite, mood and risk for chronic diseases.
- Consistently sleeping fewer than 5 hours a night or more than 9 hours can increase your risk for cardiovascular disease.
- Fatigue after sleeping 7 to 9 hours may indicate a sleep disorder, which can decrease sleep quality. Moderate-intensity aerobic exercise 4 to 8 hours before bedtime can improve sleep.
- A consistent daily sleep schedule provides better quality sleep than sleeping in on the weekend.
- Frequent, loud snoring can indicate a serious sleep disorder such as sleep apnea.
- Short naps can help you function better and perform cognitive tasks faster. ■

Sources: American Academy of Sleep Medicine and Mark Stibich, PhD, About.com

creative corner

Comments

We welcome your comments about this issue of *The Bridge* and invite you to submit ideas for future stories.

To contact us and for more information on our services, visit

WESTBRIDGE.ORG

or call us at

800.889.7871

Editor: Melissa Westerman

We invite our readers to share their artwork, essays, photos and poems.

Falling Up

Fall approaches

It's a kiss of a chill in the air

A moth fluttering near a warm light bulb

The smell of mothballs on old ladies' coats

And smells of wood burning stoves and fireplaces aglow

Those 1970's colors revisited, rust, olive and harvest gold

Color, lots of color

Then, bare, grey, chalkboard skies

It's crunches of dry, fallen leaves

It's whistles through bare trees

It's the promise of hibernating

It's cozy

It is quiet.

Anonymous