



At the *Heart* of Wellness With McCall & Help

Message from Maria



Maria Coutant Skinner, LCSW, CEO

Dear friends;

Carl Bernstein pursues the best obtainable version of the truth. He has used that guiding principle throughout his legendary career that facilitated the end of the corrupt Nixon administration, uncovered a secret arms agreement as well as exposed a covert operation to control the mass media. I had the marvelous privilege of hearing Carl address a group of addiction professionals at the Executive Exchange conference hosted by High Watch.

Equitable Access to Healing

Recovery and Nature are for Everyone

This past Wednesday, Give Local Greater Waterbury and Litchfield Hills came to an end. For the 10th consecutive year, the Connecticut Community Foundation gathered local non-profits in one of the biggest giving events that benefits the communities we serve. Donors rallied together for only 36 hours and raised an astonishing \$1.95 million for 288 charitable organizations.

We are grateful for the opportunity to participate again this year and are in awe of the generosity of our donors. During the campaign we raised money for adventure-based counseling at both Help, Inc. and McCall. This type of therapy has typically been reserved for those with means, and the gifts we received ensure equitable access to transformational healing.

Adventure-based counseling is more than meets the eye....

Incorporating adventure-based counseling into substance use recovery planning has many benefits. Besides the wonderful physical, emotional, and cognitive benefits, it gives people a unique

He also shared his personal truth as a person in recovery.

As Carl stepped behind the podium, he took several deep breaths and noted that he had never before spoken publicly about his recovery journey. He admitted that he was nervous and warned that he is given to circumlocutions in his story telling. He recounted being a 16-year-old copy boy in the newsroom of the Washington Star, in awe of the brilliance, intensity and magnitude of the newsroom. This included the era's norm for journalists having a few "bird bath martinis" at lunch and returning to work. He took to it all with a passion.

As important and laudable his guiding principle is, there are times when we can't obtain the full measure of the truth. The human mind has a built-in system where we allow ourselves access to glimpses of the truth, but we protect when too painful. When it's too much to bear, we deny or minimize; whether it's a medical diagnosis, the trauma of abuse, the end of a marriage or reckoning with identifying as a person with an addiction. We self-protect from painful realizations about others and ourselves. Facing the full measure of the truth can send us running for cover, not feeling as

opportunity to step out of their comfort zone and build their self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Perhaps the most transformational part of this type of therapy is its ability to bring people out of isolation and give them the confidence they need to know they can be successful in recovery. It doesn't matter their level of experience or background. For some clients, going whitewater rafting for the first time can be scary, but the sense of mastery and renewed belief in themselves is a powerful tool on their healing journey.

...it's a critical tool in recovery, that should be accessible to everyone.

Our clients arrive at treatment with access to different resources and we are passionate about providing them with the best treatment modalities available. We never turn a client away for their inability to pay for services.

The great thing about the outdoors is that it is easily accessible outside of treatment. As clients learn new skills and find connection and communion in nature, our hope is that it becomes their go-to tool as they heal and sustain a life in recovery.

Alcohol Awareness Month

How to Know if You Might Have a Problem with Alcohol

By: Joy Pendola, LMFT LADC, Chief Clinical Officer

With so much anxiety, prolonged uncertainty, loss, and isolation during the pandemic it is no surprise that alcohol consumption rose among adults over age 30 by 14%. The tragic rise of opiate use and fatal overdoses often overshadow alcohol use disorder, which is the third leading preventable cause of death in the United States. We have seen an uptick of alcohol related

though we have the strength to endure it. That is, of course, until the denial of what is true does us harm. Self-protection only lasts so long and then the erosion of the untold true story takes its toll. It can take the form of physical pain, anxiety, depression, and substance use. It shows up as misdirected anger, insomnia, or a deep loneliness.

Carl regaled us with stories of interviewing Barry Goldwater via ham radio and the moment Nixon realized that he did not have the votes in the Senate and decided to resign the presidency. He dotted his stories with mentions of his substance use and then quickly returned to his comfort zone as a reporter of history. In the end, he shared that his path led him to AA where he found fellowship and solace and he concluded with a quiet declaration; "I did it".

I asked Carl what, at 42, after making a career of courageously telling the truth to the world, made him decide to find recovery and tell the truth to himself? I asked if there were steps that we, in our industry, can take to create environments where people feel safe enough to take that step? He simply said he had to, that it was time, and the drinking wasn't working for him anymore. His safe place was in the

referrals in our own treatment programs, particularly among women.

Alcohol is normalized in our culture and has routinely been highlighted as an appropriate coping strategy for stress, anxiety, and loneliness. Unfortunately, if alcohol use becomes problematic it can exacerbate the very issues that led to drinking in the first place. Below are a few questions you can ask yourself to determine if drinking alcohol has become a concern.

- Are you spending a significant amount of time either drinking alcohol or recovering from it?
- Are you prioritizing drinking over previously enjoyable or important activities?
- Have you had instances where you drank more for longer than you wanted?
- Do you have cravings for alcohol?
- Have you ended up more than once in dangerous situations due to drinking such as driving, swimming, or unsafe sex while under the influence?
- Do you have to drink more to get the same effect?
- Are you having trouble meeting family, work, or school obligations?
- Do you continue to drink after memory blackouts and despite alcohol worsening mental and physical health challenges?
- Are you experiencing withdrawal symptoms such as irritability, anxiety, depression, insomnia, shakiness, nausea, or sweating?

If you find yourself answering yes to more than a few of these questions, there are a wealth of supports and treatments available within our organization and beyond.

rooms of AA. The truth is not neutral, Carl reminds us, both in the shaping of history and in what we learn about ourselves. It is a courageous act and the pursuit is our highest calling. There is freedom and healing there, as well as fellowship, acceptance, authenticity, and love.

All my best,

Maria

My friends – thank you all ever so much for the outpouring of support. My husband Greg is on the healing side of his surgery and is doing very well. I appreciate your prayers and love, they have all helped!

Give Local 2022

Thank you to everyone who donated during Give Local! We are grateful for all of donors, because of you we are able to make treatment modalities such as adventure-based counseling available to our clients.

If you are concerned about your alcohol use or that of a loved one, give us a call or visit our websites for more information:

[McCall Center for Behavioral Health](#)

(860)496-2100

[CNV Help, Inc.](#)

(203)756-8984

Find more resources here:

[Fact sheets/brochures](#)

[Treatment options/resources](#)

Genoa Healthcare Pharmacy

Now Open at our Renato Outpatient Clinic in Waterbury!

We have partnered with Genoa Healthcare® to offer on-site pharmacy services to our consumers and staff, and their families.

Dedicated to serving those in behavioral health communities, Genoa Healthcare strives to improve the quality of life for individuals living with behavioral or other complex health issues. This partnership helps us deliver on our mission by providing a higher level of pharmacy services, specific to the population we serve.

For our consumers, Genoa Healthcare can:

- Fill all medication on site, saving them multiple pharmacy stops
- Assist with insurance plans and questions, including Medicaid and Medicare
- Provide medication delivery options at no additional cost



*Thank you for helping
our clients with the gift of
recovery through adventure.*



Did you miss our WZBG Interview?

Click on this [link](#) to hear this month's interview on WZBG 97.3! This month Dale Jones interviewed Melanie Vaverchak, Residential Counselor at Carnes Weeks Center. She spoke about her experience and the wonderful benefits of adventure-based counseling. Visit McCall's press room to listen!

Tune in on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 8:20 to hear us in real-time.



- Organize medications in convenient pre-filled pill packaging to help keep them on track
- Provide prior authorization assistance
- Personalize services to fit their needs
- Transfer prescriptions from existing pharmacies to Genoa Healthcare

A ribbon cutting and open house will be announced soon – please stay tuned!

Genoa Healthcare Pharmacy

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To hear what their clients have to say [click here!](#)



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