



Life Transition Newsletter

April 2007

you could call them directly at **1-888-AHA-CARES**.



Dear Clients,

I am starting this monthly newsletter to keep you informed on new developments in the field of mental health as well as recommend resources that you might find valuable.

It is my hope that something in this newsletter will help you in your specific life transition. It is a honor to work with each of you.

Many blessings, Penny

Mental Health Updates

by Penny Blazej, LCSW, BCD

Getting reliable information

Not everything on the internet is valid or good information. That is especially true with regard to mental health information. One reliable resource that I would like to pass onto you is the MayoClinic's website at www.mayoclinic.com. They have a weekly newsletter that you can sign up for by contacting newsletters@mayoclinic.com.

Another good source is the American Heart Association at www.americanheart.org or

Update on Sleeping Pills

International Herald Tribune published an article that cites a link of sleeping pills to night driving, binge eating and hallucinations. These warnings were put out by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. They recommend that the warnings be placed on the labels of 13 drugs which include Ambien and Lunesia. What are the warnings: *“they range from fairly benign sleepwalking episodes to hallucinations, violent outbursts, nocturnal binge eating and – most troubling of all – driving while asleep”*. For more information go to: www.ihf.com/articles/2007/03/15/business/pills.php

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Treatment

Britain's National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) commissioned a study to determine what was the best treatment for *Chronic Fatigue Syndrome*. The conclusions: cognitive-behavioral therapy and a careful exercise program are the most effective treatments. The study also finds that the adverse side effects of the most commonly used medications outweigh their limited efficacy. This study was published in the October 2006 Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine.

For a good resource on *Fibromyalgia*, I recommend the second edition of Fibromyalgia & Chronic Myofascial Pain – A Servival Manual by Devin Starlanyl and Mary Ellen Copeland.

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Updates on Depression

Harvard Medical School has recently published a special health report called Understanding Depression by Dr. M. Miller. I have ordered a copy for the office and you are more than welcome to check it out. However, if you want to order your own copy send \$16.00 to Harvard Health Publications; P.O. Box 9306, Big Sandy, TX 75755-9306.

New Antidepressant

The Psychotherapy Networker featured an article on the new more powerful antidepressant ketamine hydrochloride.

“In a small clinical trial (18), a single injection of the drug significantly alleviated treatment resistant major depression within two hours, and the effects lasted at least a week.”

Important note: Ketamine is already in use illegally and has caused much damage --it's better known as the club drug Ecstasy. The study used much lower doses and purer chemicals than the street drug.

This small study was published in the Archives of General Psychiatry 2007. More research is needed with a much larger clinical trial before these preliminary test results can be believed. However, how wonderful it would be to have an antidepressant that works in hours vs. weeks or months. For more information go to: www.psychotherapynetworker.org.

An excellent book on depression is Breaking the Patterns of Depression by Dr. Michael D. Yapko. This uplifting easy to read book gives sound recommendations on how to take control of your depression and provides outstanding assignments to apply the new knowledge.

Book Reviews

For those of you thinking about or going through a divorce, I recommend 3 “must reads”:

We're Still Family – What Grown children Have to Say About Their Parents' Divorce by Dr. Constance Ahrons.

The Good Divorce – Keeping Your Family Together When Your Marriage Comes Apart by Dr. Constance Ahrons.

Should You Leave? By Dr. Peter D. Kramer.

For those of you struggling with body image issues I recommend:

Bodies and Souls – The Centry Project by Frank Cordelle and Dr. Naomi Weinschenker, MD.

These are beautiful nude untouched images of females from birth to over ninety years of age. These photos were taken over 25 years and each one is accompanied by a powerful story - strongly emphasizing the beauty in the different body types of women.

Your Comments

Remember, this is your newsletter so I would like to hear from you. Any good books you can recommend? Any comments on the newsletter? How about some good internet resources. Just e-mail at pblazej@vcweb.org.