

Journeys

The Official
Newsletter of
**Maria Droste
Counseling Center**

March 2015 | Issue #003

2014: A Monumental Year for Change

The Healthcare delivery system is changing rapidly in Colorado due to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the expansion of Medicaid in Colorado. Maria Droste Counseling Center had an excellent year in 2014 during which the major provisions of the ACA were implemented and many new Coloradans gained healthcare insurance coverage through the Colorado Healthcare Exchange or Medicaid.

In 2014, Maria Droste Counseling Center provided counseling to 2,206 non-duplicated clients with over 22,000 hours of services. These counseling services were delivered by highly trained and effective therapists with much of it being provided to our community through pro bono, intern, and licensed therapists. We continue to

broaden our reach at a very low cost through our innovative and effective delivery model. Please see detailed results for 2014 below.

We have also noticed trends to which Maria Droste is responding very effectively. Colorado saw a 46.5% or 364,146 person increase in enrollment in Medicaid. Many mental health therapists in Colorado do not take Medicaid, Maria Droste Counseling Center does!

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2014 By the Numbers

731 - the number of non-duplicated clients served in 2014 through the OPTIONS program, which serves adults, children, and families who lack health insurance, have inadequate health insurance for mental health issues, or have limited income to access counseling through the private sector.

6,038 - total number of OPTIONS client hours provided for the year.

635 - the number of non-duplicated clients served in 2014 through the CHILDREN FIRST program, which serves the unique mental health needs of children and their families with on-site counseling services at 21 local elementary schools.

6,352 - total number of CHILDREN FIRST client hours provided for the year.

152,500 - dollar value of Supervision donated in 2014.

1,234,359 - dollar value of in-kind services donated in 2014.



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Colorado's Center for Mental Health

From the CEO: Gazing into the Future



The beginning of a new year gives us the perfect opportunity to reflect on the past while making plans for what lies ahead. Last year we had the wonderful opportunity to celebrate the significant milestone of serving this community for 25 years, removing barriers and

providing mental health care for those in need! The Spring Blossoms Gala event was a magical evening for all who attended. The therapists, staff, volunteers and board were moved by the support from our community as we recalled our story and honored those who nurtured us at our birth.

In 2015, Maria Droste begins a new chapter with a continued focus on providing needed, relevant, and accessible services for the next 25 years. As a team, the Board of Maria Droste Counseling Center along with the therapists and staff are working hard to gaze into the future and set a course for the next few years.

What makes this especially challenging is the world around us is changing quickly. The Affordable Care Act is shifting the landscape for mental health care delivery and over time, it will significantly change the way services are billed and funded. We started to see some of these changes in 2014 and the impact will continue into 2015 and beyond.

In November 2014, to make sense of these changes and to create a plan for continued success, we launched a strategic planning committee comprised of great minds from our community. The committee consists of Maria Droste Board members, therapists, staff, and members of the community with expertise in areas of medicine, public policy, and health care financing. The insight from these constituents is priceless. The team intends to finalize its recommendations in May, 2015 and the board and practice will then finalize a strategy that we will communicate and begin to put into operation.

This is exciting work and I am eager to introduce the roadmap for achieving our goals later this year. In the meantime, be healthy and have a transformational 2015.

Linda E. McKinzie, LCSW
Chief Executive Officer

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Therapists Challenge Racism

While having coffee with a friend the other day, he asked me, "What interesting risks have you been taking lately, Debbie?" I told him about the study group I have co-lead for two years now at the Maria Droste Counseling Center where I am a therapist in private practice.

The group is for people who work at Maria Droste Counseling Center who want to think actively about racism and other oppression issues — and about what those issues have to do with our lives and our clients' lives.

We've shared articles, books, and YouTubes. We've had in-depth conversations about whiteness, racism, sexism, about class difference, GLBTQ issues, anti-Jewish oppression, immigrants' issues, growing up Catholic, and more. There have been tears and laughter. There is truth-telling and discomfort. It's a precious group.

At the moment, all of the participants in the study group are white. We understand this work as part of a critical process of becoming aware, as white people, to the realities of race, and the deep significance of race in public and in private life. As more therapists and professionals of color come to Maria Droste, we will evolve new ways of studying these issues together. For now, this is the work in front of us.



Friends of Maria Droste joined members of the Multicultural Study Group in Denver's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Parade on January 19th at Civic Center Park

What I most love about this group is that we do not employ shame or blame. We insist that white people, as all people, are fundamentally good. We're also learning personally, and at times painfully, what kind of inner work it takes to shift any largely white system in a more representative and racially diverse direction.

In the group, we're asking ourselves a number of questions, including these:

—How do we as white people continuously educate ourselves about how race issues shape clients' lives? Friends and family members' lives?

—How do we develop ourselves into more effective allies to people of color? What will help us be increasingly able to think clearly about people whose backgrounds and identities are different than ours?

As a white person, I was taught by the society around me to think of myself as not "having" a race. Is white identity the presence of something or the absence of something? Both? Neither? Growing up, this was not clear, or spoken about directly among white people. Like all humans do, white people absorb deep direct and indirect messages about the many meanings of race. One basic message we as white people learn is that race is something we can seemingly afford to not think about. And this message persists, even when it's excruciatingly obvious that other human beings around us are forced to contend daily with the profound effects of racism.

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2014: A Monumental Year for Change

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"Maria Droste's intake department saw a surge in calls from patients with Medicaid who have needed services for years. Previously they may not have called because they knew they had no way to pay for counseling. Maria Droste is working hard to meet unmet demand and serve this important community" said Linda McKinzie, CEO of Maria Droste Counseling Center. In 2014, Maria Droste Counseling Center saw an increase in Medicaid clients of 278% (49 clients) over 2013.

Our ability to serve these additional Medicaid clients is a huge service to the Colorado community and allows Maria Droste Counseling Center to further its mission of providing counseling to those Coloradan's who have significant barriers to receiving care.

We had an excellent 2014 and are poised to continue to thrive in 2015 by adapting to the changing healthcare landscape in the United States and Colorado. Thanks to all of you who make this happen through volunteer hours, events, grants, and donations. This would not happen without you!

David Brunick, LMFT

Therapists Challenge Racism

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As educator Shelly Tochluk writes in her book "Witnessing Whiteness: The Need to talk about Race and How to Do It," "...racial identity for white people is a very blurry topic, and we are not very good witnesses of our own whiteness. Our relationship with race involves a great deal of anxiety, and we ignore our racial identity for some very understandable reasons. But this neglect allows the ways race affects us to remain within the shadows of our unconscious."

As our group conversation expands and deepens, we've started exploring these themes:

—What does oppression have to do with emotional health or illness? Are people "down-pressed" or "de-pressed?" Are our emotional difficulties public problems, related to social inequities? Or are our problems private, located "inside" our heads or families? Being in this group has me asking questions not just about myself but about some of the most basic assumptions in our field.

—Where has our professional training let us down? How do we learn about the experience of people who labor under oppressions that we don't experience personally? How do we learn when it can feel too charged and too risky to ask?

Our group's premise has been that it's far more dangerous to not ask. Risk is part of any real conversation. And white people's anxiety about race and racism is a key and fundamental piece of the heartbreak playing out now in racial justice struggles on the local and national stage.

As therapists, we know a lot about anxiety. We frequently work to help people overcome it. We don't blame people for the anxiety they feel about the unknown, or about learning new things. Instead, we focus on their strengths, and encourage them to acknowledge the places they've been confused or hurt. And finally, we remind them to reach out to others as they change and heal.

Debbie Zucker, MSW, LCSW

Jake's Story

Jake had created a life for himself, attaining licensure as a home inspector and developing a broad knowledge of home construction and appraisal. On the surface, he was 'fine' as so many people are. He went to work and stayed out of trouble. But Jake was experiencing great trouble sleeping. His dreams could be difficult to handle. Jake felt worthless as a human being, and in the past had tried to take his own life.

He had overcome some serious challenges since that attempt. Jake's family dealt with mental illness since before his birth, and it affected each family member differently. One sibling developed a serious substance abuse issue. Others suffered from schizophrenia and depression. Jake witnessed the impact of untreated mental illness since his childhood.

Jake had managed to succeed in so many ways, but the trauma of mental illness was still a daily reality. That trauma did not let him see his life as a story of progress. He did not see himself as a valuable person. For



all that he had accomplished despite difficult circumstances, he did not see his successes for what they were.

Jake came to Maria Droste Counseling Center because he wanted to get a grasp on his past. He 'couldn't let it eat up any more of his life.'

The perseverance Jake had shown throughout his life applied to his work in therapy. A compassionate therapist accompanied him and helped him gain insights about his experiences. He finally had a grasp of the landscape in his own mind. He could navigate the memories and powerful dreams with new tools rather than 'live around them'.

Jake's story is just beginning. He approaches his future now applying his strong character and lessons in therapy to process his troubles and take control of his own narrative.

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We want to thank all of the foundation and corporation major donors who contributed to Maria Droste Counseling Center in 2014!

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The Therapist Group
At Maria Droste Counseling Center.

Excellence In Psychotherapy & Personal Growth

Upcoming Events

Golf Classic

The third annual Charity Golf Classic, benefiting Maria Droste Counseling Center, will be held **Thursday, September 10, 2015 at Fossil Trace Golf Club in Golden, Colorado**. The event will include a 4-person scramble, silent auction, lunch and an awards reception. If you are interested in participating, please contact David Brunick at 303-867-4609 or david_brunick@mariadroste.org.

Rock n Roll Marathon

Team Mind Body and Sole was formed in 2012 to highlight the connection between physical and mental health.

Benefiting Maria Droste Counseling Center, Team Mind Body and Sole will be participating in the Rock'n' Roll Denver Marathon and 1/2 Marathon on **Sunday, October 18, 2015**.

If interested in running, walking, volunteering or sponsoring, contact Derek Linscott at 303-867-4609 or derek_linscott@mariadroste.org. Stay tuned for more info!

Two Men Talking Growing Up Different: Transforming Hearts through Theater

This fall Maria Droste will welcome Paul Browde, MD, & Murray Nossel, PhD, in their globally acclaimed performance, *Two Men Talking*. This two day event features a workshop based in narrative therapy on **Friday, November 13th**, followed by the feature performance on **Saturday, November 14th**. Paul and Murray will utilize storytelling as it pertains to making sense of growing up in a world of difference. *You will not want to miss this event!* More information to be announced. For questions, please contact Institute@mariadroste.org or 303-756-9052 x176.



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Taken at Spring Blossoms Gala, April 2014

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Maria Droste participates in Community Shares of Colorado, allowing you to give through your workplace giving program. Employees of private companies as well as state, local, and federal agencies can contribute directly from their paychecks using our ID numbers:

- Private Company Employees #5194
- State Employees #5152
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