



**COMMUNITY
SUPPORT
SERVICES**

LIFE CHAT

A publication spotlighting CSS clients

January 2021

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New clinic addition



We want to hear from you!

Contact Danya Bailey at 330-253-9388, ext. 238, or Narkeetah Brazil, at ext. 165, for the next Recovery Advisory Council (RAC) meeting or to contribute your art-istry or recovery story to Life Chat.

(See back page for RAC information.)

2021 brings new year, new hope

Life Chat unveils new look

This issue of Life Chat comes with a new design, kicking off what we hope is a year full of other refreshing changes. 2020 was a year filled with unexpected challenges and uncertainty, but now we look ahead with a sense of hope: hope that life will return to something that resembles the “normal” we used to know, hope that we can safely gather with loved ones again, and hope that the future brings better things for so many in so many ways. Welcome to 2021!



2020: A year we will never forget

It was a tough year
Bringing us a lot of fear
Now we can move forward with hope
With our eyes ready with new ways to cope

Some of us never left home
Others spent most of their time alone
Whatever your situation may be
Hope lies waiting for us to see

We can certainly say we have learned a lot
With all that the year brought
We've given adequate time to rest
Now it's time to continue to do our very best

May you enjoy this new year
May you wash away the old fears
And spend time with family and friends
2020 has come to an end

-Lori Hackney

“New Beginnings”

By Lacy Vitko, MA, ATR-BC, Expressive Arts Administrator

The staff at CSS and other social service organizations have been working overtime - but with a restored sense of gratitude and appreciation, not only for our health and ability to be there for others but because adversity inspires us to face our own existential fears and connect with what is most meaningful. This is also true for art therapy clients who have continued to engage in therapeutic art making as a source of meaning and healing. In a time of uncertainty and groundlessness, art therapy continues to offer clients a tangible release for thoughts and feelings, creating an opening for fresh beginnings.

Reflecting on the past year one client stated, “Art and writing have brought me to a point in my life I never thought I would get to. It’s allowed me to see my healing instead of just projecting it. This brings a feeling of hope and inspires me to continue moving forward in my recovery.” Another said, “Art for me provides a space to let go and purge what no longer serves me. It’s an opportunity to tear down and build back up, allowing better things into my life.”

To overlook the enormous misfortune imposed from this devastating virus would be impossible, but looking towards a brighter future is always available and can give us a feeling of hope. Leaning on the aspects of our lives that enrich our health and vitality are more important than ever. Engaging our senses by walking in nature, listening to music, and expressing our creativity can awaken new connections with our essence. We could all use a good reset. Let’s move ahead with fresh eyes and renewed spirits, remembering all that we’ve endured, and connect with a sense of stillness in the here and now.



Artwork by Joan Ahlstrom

Art note: Lacy recently was invited to write a guest blog post for ArtsNow, an organization supporting the arts and culture in Summit County. Her post explores how art therapy helps CSS clients express themselves, grow, and connect. It is featured as part of ArtsNow’s “The Arts and Healing” series. Read it at: <https://artsnow.org/the-arts-and-healing-part-2-of-6/>



Art of Recovery to return as virtual event

Art of Recovery will be held online on the evening of Thursday, March 11, 2021. The talent and creativity of CSS clients will continue to shine through, with original artwork for sale during the online auction. A preview of art will begin several days before the event. Please stay tuned for more details as the event date gets closer!

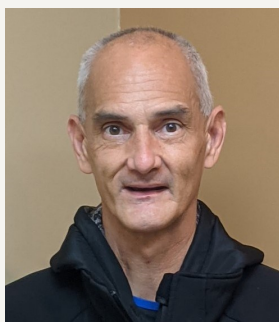
Supported Employment Services Success Story

By Joel Voorman, SE Recovery Specialist

Longtime CSS client Ed Trimble has been receiving services from the agency since he was 18 years old. He has been through Supported Employment several times in the past decade.

2020 may have been a lousy year for most of us, but for Ed, it was a year that he has celebrated great success! For the first time in more than a decade, Ed has been able to string together consistent work.

Through his hard work and perseverance, and with the tireless efforts from his Supported Employment Specialist, Charles Millward, Ed has been working as a dishwasher at Denny's since July. He glows with pride when he discusses his work.



Ed Trimble

"It helps me feel good about myself. It challenges me to deal with stress in different ways," he says. "It gives me responsibilities and I'm willing to accept those responsibilities."

Ed says that he finds the work rewarding, but his favorite part of the day is interacting and socializing with his co-workers.

In addition to the help he has received from the Supported Employment department, Ed gives credit to his other services at CSS, adding that CET coaches AJ Brown and Krystal Kubeck have been instrumental in his success. He says they "help me apply the skills I have learned and help hold me accountable."

As for Ed's future? "I want to keep the job on a long-term basis and not go backwards to where I used to be."



Because of COVID-19, Supported Employment is not having open employment orientation currently.

Individual face-to-face orientations are being held by appointment only with Joel Voorman. If preferred, phone orientations are available by appointment. Staff should send an electronic referral to Susan Ritz. If a self-referral is being done, the client can call Joel at ext. 317 or Susan at ext. 416, at which time client's information will be taken, an electronic referral will be created and the orientation will be scheduled.

A New Beginning

A new beginning, a fresh start
Changing all of you, or a single part

One year has passed by
And a new one is in the sky

Taking a step forward can be a scary thing
But moving forward is better than doing nothing

Every step I take is a sense of pride
Even if I fail, at least I tried

For it doesn't matter how old you are
You are a shining star

So jump and shout
The world is yours, you are a budding sprout

-Joan Ahlstrom

Community resource corner

United Way of Summit & Medina offers assistance with food, housing, legal, & financial concerns, such as unemployment, filing taxes, paying credit card bills, paying mortgage/rent, paying utilities, making your car payment, and paying student loans or financial aid.

Visit www.uwsummit.org/financialresources, or call 2-1-1, or text your ZIP code to 898-211.

Summa Health Community Services offers ZIP-code-specific resources with links to free and reduced-cost services, such as:

- Food assistance
- Job training
- Education
- Legal
- Transportation
- Clothing
- Pet care

Visit summahealthcommunity.auntbertha.com and enter your ZIP code to find resources.



Roses are red
Violets are blue
I'm so very blessed
And so are you

-Ray Thomas



COMMUNITY SUPPORT SERVICES

150 CROSS ST., AKRON, OH 44311

New exam space opens at CSS

Recent renovations at the Cross Street building created three new exam rooms for dental and podiatry services. The revamped space, which includes a new waiting area, also can host a clinic for flu shots and other future wellness events.

Previously, the space was used as the Consumers Education Outreach Center and was staffed by volunteers from Choices.



Left: The new exam rooms include a table that is larger than a regular exam table and chairs for podiatry and dentistry.

Mission Statement

Community Support Services: Helping you achieve a healthy mind and body while supporting you to live and work in your community.

Recovery Definition

Recovery is the continuous process of empowering an individual so he or she may live a satisfying and contributing life. It is a shared responsibility among the individual, the treatment staff, family, friends, and the community to:

- Discover or rediscover strengths and abilities
- Pursue personal goals
- Develop a sense of self-identity that allows the person to grow beyond his or her diagnosis

The Recovery Advisory Council is a collaborative effort with clients & family members to continuously improve the satisfaction of services for all Community Support Services clients.

