Message from Maria

Dear friends;

In the coming days and weeks, many of us will be gathering with friends and family, listing all that we have to be grateful for and allowing the joy of Thanksgiving to wash over us. This month’s topic may seem in sharp contrast to that image. We have a cultural expectation that the holidays will be the idyllic portraits we see portrayed on television and perpetuated on social media. But, for many struggling with mental health issues, addiction, loneliness, or other

Question, Persuade, and Refer

In 2017, 14 out of every 100,000 Americans died by suicide, according to an analysis released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Center for Health Statistics. That’s a 33% increase since 1999, and the highest age-adjusted suicide rate recorded in the U.S. since 1942. According to a research letter published in June 2019 in the Journal of American Medicine Association (JAMA) studies show that youth suicide is becoming an especially pressing problem, with rates rising more rapidly among boys and girls ages 10 to 14 than in any other age group. Other populations that are at increased risk of suicide include veterans, members of the LGBTQ community, and those with a history of trauma.

The best way to prevent suicide is to recognize the warning signs and know how to respond if you spot them. If you believe that a friend or family member is considering suicide, you can play a role in suicide prevention by showing that you care and enlisting the support of social worker, psychologist, or physician. Major warning signs for suicide include talking about killing or harming oneself and talking or writing a lot about death or dying. A more subtle but equally dangerous warning sign of suicide is hopelessness. Studies have found that hopelessness is a strong predictor of suicide. People who feel hopeless may talk about “unbearable” feelings, predict a bleak future, and state that they have nothing to look forward to.

So, what can we, as a friend, loved one, and community member do about it? Suicide touches us all and as such we all have a responsibility, and the capacity, to talk about it. Talking about suicide is hard, talking to a friend or loved one about changes you see in them that make you question if they are having suicidal feelings is particularly difficult. Becoming more knowledgeable about the questions to ask and the observations
challenges, those struggles can be amplified during this time of year. We have a few sayings around McCall...among them is – 'we are capable of saying the hard things, and hearing the hard things – and, indeed, doing the hard things'. Talking about suicide can be hard. Having the feelings that can so overwhelm you to the point where you’re considering suicide as an option is unbearably hard. But – hearing from someone, “are you thinking of harming or killing yourself?”….well, that’s a relief. We worry that by saying those words, we may put an idea is someone’s head that wasn’t there, but this is not true. Another myth is that someone who talks about suicide isn’t really serious. Talking about suicide may be a way for the person to indicate just how badly they feel. If you have seen warning signs, engage the person in a discussion about your observations. If you’re concerned about someone, the very best thing you can do is to notice. To notice and speak those concerns can make all the difference. My hope for each of you is for a Thanksgiving filled with connection, peace, and the assurance that you are noticed – and capable of doing the hard things.

My best to you always,
Maria

Suicide is always complicated, but help is available. Experts encourage those struggling with suicidal thoughts to confide in a trusted friend or family member, speak with a health care provider, or seek care at an emergency room in cases of immediate danger. At McCall we have numerous staff trained in QPR training. QPR stands for Question, Persuade, and Refer, the three simple steps anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide. Once trained in QPR, you learn how to recognize the warning signs of suicidality and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help. For more information or to talk to someone please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-8255 or visit their website at https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org. If you would like to become trained in the QPR suicide prevention program, please call our Prevention Department at 860-496-2139 or visit our website at www.Mccallcenterct.org.

McCall's Heart
The McCall Center for Behavioral Health is fortunate to have a remarkable group of staff members who are dedicated to our clients, our community and our agency. Beginning this past January, and continuing throughout the year, we will be featuring a staff member. We know how amazing our staff is and we think it is important for you, our readers, to get to know a little bit about them as well. For McCall staff this is not just a job, they love this agency, believe in its mission, have hope for their clients (even when those clients feel lost and hopeless) and know that their work is critically important to turn the tide of the ravages of addiction toward the journey of health. Our staff are the HEART of McCall and this month we are featuring Jillian Yard.
Our mission is to provide comprehensive integrated substance abuse and mental health treatment to help people lead healthier and more productive lives.

Your donation will directly support our prevention, recovery and community programs and help us provide clients with the support they need—regardless of their ability to pay. Click here to donate today!

Hometown: Litchfield

Position: Outpatient Clinician Canaan and Winsted Satellite Offices

Quote: "We are all broken. That's how the light gets in." Ernest Hemmingway

Something I love: My favorite thing about working at McCall is the comradery of the staff and working with our wonderful clients.