

The Importance of Supporting Our Participants' Mental Health

Since May is Mental Health Awareness month we wanted to share that CSS provides several approaches that fall under the umbrella of supporting the mental health of our participants. These include individual and group counseling, art therapy, and behavioral supports. CSS provides counseling for nearly 30 participants, which helps as they move through life and cope with everyday stressors.

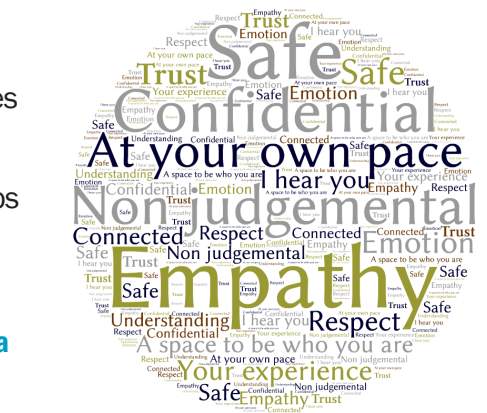
One example is CSS participant, Lynn. She was nervous about an upcoming eye surgery. When she met with Cassie Krcmar, CSS Counselor, they talked about ways that Lynn could cope with her anxious feelings. **“I realized I could turn off the TV, go for a walk, listen to music, or even search up meditations on my phone. It helped a lot,”** Lynn said.

Counseling provides a time to dive into a person's thoughts and feelings in a safe space. Individuals can process events that have happened in their lives and gain insight. Some participants felt isolated and lonely due to the pandemic. When they are unable to attend regularly scheduled activities, their sleep patterns can shift. They may miss other appointments, and this can affect motivation and self-care.

If left unresolved, mental health issues can spiral downward. In extreme cases this may require hospitalization and can limit a person's independence.

Likewise, challenges of handling life's transitions, creating healthy relationships, and coping with grief are also common. When we see themes develop, group counseling can be a good solution. In a group session, individuals relate to others. They can connect with peers, which develops self-awareness and can help build healthy relationships. They also get feedback and can find support from people who are in the group for similar reasons. **"The beautiful thing about group counseling is that it helps the person understand they are not in this alone. There are other people who are dealing with the same thing,"** said Cassie Krcmar, CSS Counselor.

Participants are usually referred to counseling through their CSS Service Coordinator. But sometimes the participant themselves, a family member, or their Direct Support Professional (DSP) suggests that counseling may be beneficial to them. Some individuals meet on a regular basis. Others have periodic maintenance appointments. **“It’s nice to know there is someone I can call and talk to when I need it, said Lynn. That makes me feel good.”**



CSS is Hiring Great People!

CSS has several open positions including Direct Support Professionals (DSP), Director of Residential Services, and part time Counselor/Social Worker. These positions are the lifeblood of our organization because they work one-on-one with our participants to ensure their safety and independence.

Bright, caring people may apply at www.CSSServices.org/careers.

Thank You Chamberlain University



Thank you to Chamberlain University volunteers for giving the the Summit group home a nice spring cleaning recently. The team, led by Alberto Galvez, (center photo, bottom left) selected CSS because Alberto worked at CSS as a Service Coordinator for several years.