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*At NorthStar Regional, our purpose is to help those struggling with mental health or substance use disorders **move forward in hope.***

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A Few Weeds In The Garden

by Hal Baumchen, PsyD, LP, LADC, President of NorthStar Regional

Free Weeds. U Pick 'Em. ~ Unknown

Life is not as easy as most of us would like. We endure pain and suffering, both large and small. Listening to a television newscast recently reminded me how strong language characterizes the daily news report. Words such as horrendous, catastrophic, horrific, unfathomable, and unbelievable were so heavily used, I briefly lost sight of what the story was about. Ordinary events don't make news. "Newsworthy" implies superlative-worthy.

Our lives, and our challenges, are not superlative-worthy, and our pain and suffering are not extraordinary. Rather, for most of us, life is filled with small, almost insignificant, minor difficulties, annoying nuisances, and mundane inconveniences. These minor challenges do not take us violently by storm, but soak us over time, like a steady drizzle on a cold, dark night.

Everyday Challenges

Sitting in traffic, waiting in line, arriving just after the store closes, dropping a call, and being knocked offline are a few of the many

bumps on life's road. Don't be surprised by these almost never-ending inconveniences.

In Spite of Difficulties

Most of us handle the challenges of life amazingly well, without ill will or fuss. These small interruptions are common to us all, are part of life, and understood as such. Don't consider yourself a martyr and unfairly treated when there are weeds in your garden, ants at your picnic, and the weather grows cold.

These ordinary trivialities of life are distressing, but not catastrophic. The wise person, in spite of weeds, ants, and bitter cold, harvests the bounty of a garden, enjoys the picnic, and learns to ice skate in winter. The content person has learned to tolerate frustration and endure life's plentiful array of inconveniences.

Inaccurate Over-Reactions

When difficulties and disappointments arrive unannounced and unexpected, many people respond to minor inconveniences with

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NSR's August Shining Star

The NorthStar Regional Shining Star Employee of the Month program

recognizes exceptional service by NSR staff members to the organization and to our clients. Employees are nominated by their managers, and the Shining Star for each month is then chosen by the management team.

Congratulations to the August 2020 NorthStar Regional Shining Star Employee of the Month, **Melissa Luangsingotha!**

Melissa exceeds expectations while performing her role as Admissions Coordinator for the Men's Residential Treatment Center (MRTC). She is the first point of contact for new clients arriving to our facility and communicates effectively, empathetically, and with a professional demeanor. She provides necessary information to future and returning clients to ensure they are prepared when entering the MRTC program.

Melissa is humorous, productive, and always willing to lend a helping hand. Before transitioning to the Admissions Coordinator position, Melissa spread positivity and solidarity among the clientele and staff with her infectious smile and pragmatic approach as an administrator.

Today, she continues to be a team player, while also stopping by the MRTC building to interact with fellow colleagues and clients. Melissa is prompt to answer emails and schedule intakes to keep the MRTC running at its best capacity.

Melissa is a true asset to NorthStar Regional!

Thank you Melissa for all that you do for NorthStar Regional and for our clients!

Dealing with COVID-19 at NorthStar Regional

Like many organizations, NorthStar Regional has adapted to the reality of COVID-19. During the pandemic, we have remained open and we continue to accept new clients.



At NSR, we care deeply about our clients and our staff, and we continue to take steps to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 within our facilities. We have implemented social distancing and the use of masks at all of our facilities. Most outpatient services are being conducted through telehealth, although in-person counseling sessions incorporating our COVID-19 protocols are now available.

The mental health and recovery of our clients has never been more important. We are dedicated to helping our clients stay physically safe and emotionally well. Free downloadable mental health resource materials to provide help in facing the emotional challenges of COVID-19 are available on the Journey to Recovery page on our website, northstarregional.com (under the Resources tab).

NorthStar Regional COVID-19 FAQ

Q: Are telehealth services available for mental health counseling?

A: Yes! Telehealth services are being used for individual mental health and for Cornerstone group counseling sessions. Call the office where you receive services for more information and to schedule an appointment. Directions to use telehealth systems to see your therapist can be emailed to you and are available on our website under the Resources tab.

Q: Are new individual therapy appointments available?

A: Yes, we have therapists available who are conducting both telehealth and in-person appointments. New clients are being accepted. Call 952-974-3999 to get started.

Q: Can I see a therapist in person?

A: Some of our therapists are conducting counseling sessions in-person while following our COVID-19 protocols. These include a screening upon arrival at our offices, appropriate social distancing, and the wearing of masks by both the therapist and client.

Q: Is the Men's Residential Treatment Center in Shakopee taking new clients?

A: Yes. Call 952-297-8665 to make a referral. We are doing everything we can to provide a positive atmosphere and to meet the health challenges of our clients during this time. Some meetings and client services are being conducted via telehealth.

Q: Is the Women's Residential Treatment Center taking new clients?

A: Yes. Call 952-297-8665 to make a referral. We are doing everything we can to provide a positive atmosphere and to meet the health challenges of our clients during this time. Some meetings and client services are being conducted via telehealth.

Q: Are in-person group treatment programs open?

A: Our co-occurring intensive outpatient programs at Sugar Creek in Chaska and Maple Grove are open. These group meetings are being conducted via telehealth. Attendance is still expected as part of any treatment program.

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major reactions. They treat a misdemeanor like a felony and attempt to remove a sliver with a garden shovel.

These attempted remedies are over-reactions and are also inaccurate. This is someone who says too much, does not have the facts, gets too loud, becomes too angry, and attacks the wrong person. These inaccurate and over-reactive intrusions only encourage defensiveness and counter-attack.

Tolerating Frustrations

Life is like hockey—you are going to get bumped. Don't be shocked or upset if someone runs into you, is inconsiderate, or your move is perceived as a careless action. "Why not be offended and upset?" the uninformed person asks. Because life is like hockey. Getting bumped is part of the game. Just keep skating.

Being jostled and bumped is part of what happens when you play, both in life and hockey. Tolerate the frustrations of life and just keep going. Being needlessly offended only hurts the team. As your own character develops, you'll be increasingly able to overlook offenses, cover over sins, and resist keeping a record of wrongs. Weeds, ants, storms, and the hundreds

of other minor irritations do not ruin the quality of your life. Rather, they reveal the quality and depth of your character.

Enjoying the Pleasures of Life

As you go through treatment and begin a life of recovery, consider how you respond to the small bumps that will come your way. It's easy to carelessly complain about food, lectures, medicine, counselors, and the



treatment center. As you get healthier, you'll be less likely to find and point out every flaw. Instead, hopefully you'll identify the beauty of nature, the charm of your friends, the wonder of the universe, and appreciate the smile of a child.

In the meantime, keep your stick on the ice and keep skating.



Dr. Hal Baumchen is the president and clinical director of NorthStar Regional. A licensed psychologist and licensed alcohol and drug counselor with over 30 years of counseling experience, he is the author of the Journey to Recovery curriculum series.

Christian Counseling Services at NorthStar Regional

We Respect Your Faith

NorthStar Regional provides Christian counseling services for those seeking faith-based therapy. Our goal is to provide help and healing to each and every client. If your Christian faith is important to you, the therapists listed below will work with you to integrate your faith into your therapy at whatever level is comfortable for you.

What to Expect When You Call

Our front desk staff will treat you with kindness and respect, and will help you find a therapist who best fits your situation. If you're seeking a Christian counselor, please tell us that when you call. Some other pieces of information we'll need are your insurance coverage, age, and the issue(s) for which you are seeking help. Any information you provide will be kept private and confidential.

Appointments & Fees

Appointments are available Monday through Saturday, with day and evening hours. Telehealth sessions are also available. Your services are always handled in a caring and confidential manner. We accept most major insurance plans, and will work with you to set up a payment plan if you are not covered by insurance.

Therapists Who Provide Christian Counseling

- **Andrea Bohmbach**, MA, LMFT
- **Carmen Barnes**, MSW, LICSW, LADC
- **Melissa Doucette**, MA, LMFT
- **Cynthia Gill**, MA, LMFT
- **Karissa Godel**, MS, LPCC, LADC
- **Carrie Gustafson**, PsyD
- **Linda Johnson**, MA, LP
- **Lisa Logelin**, MA, LPCC
- **Corey Palmer**, MA, LPC
- **Jeremy Stapel**, MA, LMFT
- **Afton Steinhoff**, MSW, LGSW
- **Steven Witmer**, MA, PhD, LPCC

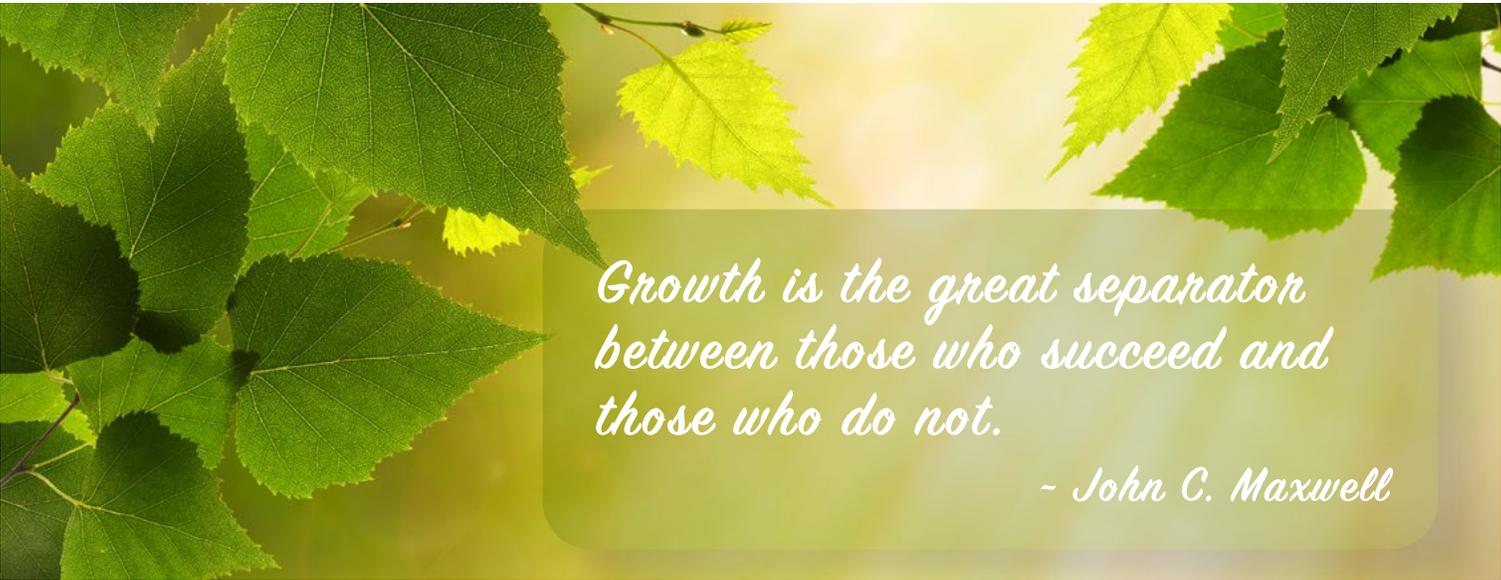
To read more about these therapists, visit our website, northstarregional.com. To make an appointment, call **952-974-3999**. For mental health resources from a Christian perspective, visit northstaregional.com/publications/inspiration-series.





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If you received this newsletter from a friend or colleague and would like to be added to our mailing list, or if you would like to receive it electronically, please email your name and address (or email address for an electronic version) to marketing@northstarregional.com.

A background image of vibrant green leaves, likely maple or similar, with sunlight filtering through them, creating a soft, natural glow.

*Growth is the great separator
between those who succeed and
those who do not.*

- John C. Maxwell

We would love to hear from you!

Pleased with your experience here at NorthStar Regional?



Or please feel free to give us a review on

