



# A CLOSER LOOK

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

## The Director's Desk

Before I started my job at Greenwoods, I was a full-time clinician in private practice. During my first meeting with many clients I would routinely hear, "I have to tell you, this is the best experience I've ever had." Of course, that made me feel great about my skills as a therapist and I remember thinking, "I must be better at this than I thought!"



But after hearing this statement about half a dozen times, I asked a client what their previous experiences had been like. I remember my shock when she said, "well, honestly, you're the only one who called me back." Upon further investigation with other clients, I heard a different version of the same story. With just a slightly bruised ego, I started to realize that my clients' previous experiences with therapy had been difficult and disheartening. While I do think I'm a decent therapist, I realized very quickly that the experience was better with me simply because I made a commitment to call every client back and try to help them, even if I could not treat them directly. I was amazed at how grateful people were for a phone call, even after I told them I do not have any room in my schedule for more clients. "I just appreciate the call and your willingness to help," was a common response.

This is the reality of accessing mental health services for many people of northwest Connecticut. In this newsletter, you'll hear a personal story from Lynn Curless, our Development Director, detailing her story when trying to access services. Stories like Lynn's are all too common but also show the value of what we do at Greenwoods. Above all else, we are here to help. We will always call people back, evaluate their situation, and do our very best to get them the services they need. We are reminded every day how important it is for everyone to know that someone cares. There is true value in returning that phone call and connecting with another human being.

As always, thank you for your interest and support of this important work.

## **OUR NOTICE TO PATIENTS**

*"We will help any individual or family that lives or works in Litchfield County, no matter their financial situation. At Greenwoods, NO ONE GETS TURNED AWAY!"*

**Donors make this possible --  
THANK YOU**

See all newsletters and stories at  
[www.greenwoodsreferrals.org](http://www.greenwoodsreferrals.org)

*The mission of Greenwoods Counseling & Referrals, Inc. is to provide access to high-quality and affordable mental healthcare and related social services for individuals and families living or working in Litchfield County.*



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## A Look From Both Sides



*Lynn has a practice in-take with therapist Dorothy Timmerman, LMFT.*

Like many of us involved in this field, I have my own story as to why this mission is important to me. I have struggled with depression most of my life, so I have my own stories of what can go wrong from the client's side. I remember saying, "how in the world do you SHOP for a therapist?!" I think Greenwoods offers an answer.

Let's remember up front that when you decide you need help, you're already in a fragile state of mind and you're not sure that therapy works, that it can help YOU, or that you can afford it. If you have insurance, your insurance provider will give you a list of therapists in their network – meaning, they will help you pay for a limited number of sessions. If you don't have insurance, it's daunting to think you could ever afford it out of pocket.

Then you make phone calls with nothing to go on and see how long you have to wait to get an appointment. I was once in tears and such distress that the therapist in the initial call had to ask "are you going to harm yourself?" I was not, but he couldn't see me anyway. I realized that I was simply going to have



to take whoever was available and hope that I liked them. Who wants to continue the search when you are feeling lost from the start?

Over the years I learned to take recommendations from friends. I once did that with a therapist who stopped our introduction to ask about my insurance and then bluntly replied, “then I can’t help you.” I had to convince the therapist that I was willing to pay out-of-pocket if I decided I had the right person.

At Greenwoods, that first visit can relieve you of much of the hassle that I always went through alone. A therapist will go through your situation and preferences like location, insurance/payment options, and what type of provider you want (gender, specialty). In a short time, you will be provided a list of two or three therapists who match your needs. Greenwoods may even help negotiate a rate that you can afford and provide financial help if you are eligible.

A week after your first therapy session, you’ll get a follow-up call to confirm that you are satisfied with your therapist or help making another choice. In my story, when I decided the therapist and I were a good match, we had to keep searching for another provider in the area who would do another evaluation and prescribe medication that would help me. With the addition of Dr. Newton to the staff here (see other article) we can easily connect clients with her when further assessment and medications are necessary. This is a tremendous asset for Greenwoods and our clients.

All of these details are critical to client success. I am pleased to report that everyone I have met who has come to Greenwoods has had a positive experience. The entire community benefits when its citizens are healthy and productive. The truth is, every community also has people like me, who may not be entirely broken, but need a tune-up every now and then.

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## A New Client Benefit

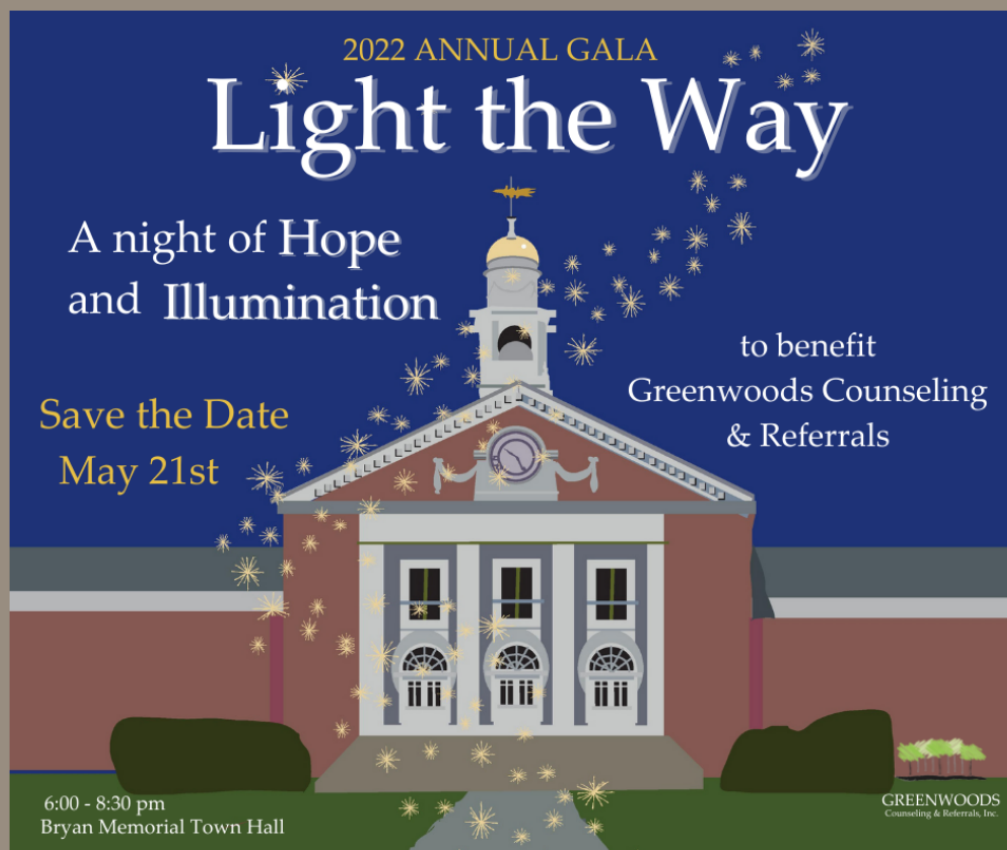


In the article “A Look From Both Sides,” you hear how difficult it is to reach out for help, only to find out that in many cases your therapist cannot prescribe the medications that they suggest for you. Greenwoods has addressed that issue with the recent addition of a psychiatrist and prescribing doctor to its staff, funded in part by a grant from the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation.

Dr. Caroline Robertson Newton is licensed and board certified in Psychiatry and Addiction Psychiatry by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology. “The addition of Dr. Newton to our team is significant. Clients who need a thorough mental health evaluation and medication can now do so in-house without the delay of trying to find an outside prescriber,” explains Executive Director John Simoncelli. “The need for mental health services in our area, as seen everywhere, is at crisis levels. The better we can respond to client needs, the faster our community can start to heal.”

Dr. Newton grew up in Sharon and has recently returned with her husband and two young children. She has degrees from Colgate University, Georgetown University, the University of Connecticut and served her

residency at the University of Southern California and an addiction psychiatry fellowship at Greater Los Angeles VA/UCLA.



High quality and affordable services are available at Greenwood's, thanks in part to funds raised through events like the Annual Gala. Please join us and support this important cause.

Keep current on the event and more at  
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