



Mentis Newsletter

May 2016



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Greetings!

Since 1949, May has been declared national Mental Health Awareness Month. This month is all about raising awareness in our communities. Did you know that 15.6% (22,152 people) of adults in Napa County reported needing help for mental illness? (Napa County Comprehensive Community Health Assessment, 2013). *Mentis* is here to help by providing easy access to professional mental health therapy for our most vulnerable low-income residents all across Napa County.

You can help too by promoting acceptance for those living with mental health conditions and encourage understanding. Also, you can help by knowing where you can refer someone who needs assistance.

- *Mentis* Appointments and Referrals: (707) 255-0966 x132
- Community Connection Network (emerging crisis that is in the mild to moderate range): (707) 257-9711
- Napa County Emergency Response Team (severe crisis situation): (707) 253-4711

Sincerely,
The Staff of *Mentis*

One Mom's Success with Animal-Assisted Therapy



Victoria, a young mother came to *Mentis* to find healing from trauma and suffering caused by her husband's abusive behavior. She lived in constant fear of her husband, feeling watched and unsafe at all times. Even after he had been arrested and placed in jail, she still didn't feel safe in her own home.

She recalls the day police arrived at her home to arrest her husband. Her 6 year old son witnessed it all; he remained confused for a long time. He constantly asked questions about his father; where was he? When would he be back? Was he going to make it for his birthday? Victoria thought it best not to tell him the truth due to his age. During the year after her husband's arrest, her son became angry, resentful, and even abusive towards her. He blamed his mother for his father being taken away and for not being present in his life; causing her more pain.

Victoria heard about *Mentis* from a friend and decided to contact us for help. Through initial sessions with her *Mentis* therapist, it was clear that Victoria was suffering from acute trauma. She began therapy a bit apprehensive, not knowing exactly how to speak about the abuse she had endured. Her therapist used animal assisted therapy as part of Victoria's healing process. Bringing a trained dog into a therapy session creates an environment that is affectionate, responsive, unconditionally accepting and nonjudgmental. Victoria gradually opened up and felt more comfortable talking about the abuse she experienced and the pain it had caused both her and her children.

During the sessions, her therapist was able to help Victoria overcome her constant fear and increase her self-esteem. She was able to get some help for her son and discuss with him the truth about his father. Now she is on a path to a better life for herself and her children. She has a new job, was able to purchase a car, has more money, a new, safe home and lastly, she no longer has

nightmares.

For more information on all *Mentis* programs see www.mentisnapa.org.

If you are interested in volunteering or donating to *Mentis*, please contact Liz Marks at 707-255-0966 x153, lmarks@mentisnapa.org.

Feast it Forward's Social (responsibility) Hour, Wednesday, May 25th **5:00 - 7:30 pm**

We are excited to announce that *Feast it Forward* is holding this month's pop up Social (responsibility) Hour at *The Wine Thief* (corner of First & McKinstry streets), where a glass, awareness and funds will be raised in a simple post-work gathering benefiting *Mentis*!



Our Mission

Mentis (formerly Family Service of Napa Valley), has been in the community 65 years strong and is the only agency providing bi-lingual, professional mental health services throughout the county to people of every age, stage and income level.

At *Mentis* we believe equipping our residents with the tools necessary to live emotionally healthy and stable lives; creates a community of enduring strength.

Each day our staff of clinicians works to counsel, support and coach those who need help

overcoming the hurdles that life can throw at all of us. Everyone needs a little support at times and without us, people throughout the valley may needlessly suffer in silence.

If you are in need of help, Napa County residents can call *Mentis'* bilingual intake coordinator, at 707-255-0966 x132.

DONATE TODAY!

CLICK HERE TO SUPPORT OUR EFFORTS

