

# The Summit

April 2020

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FAMILY  
SERVICES

## No Place That's Home

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Two Realities

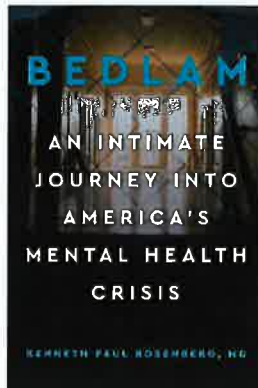
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# Mental Illness in the USA

# Two Realities

by Phil Wyzik MA



## Says Ken Rosenberg MD:

We cannot fix this problem alone. We can't fix ourselves alone. We can't fix our relatives alone. And we can't fix our broken system alone. If you're a person with serious mental illness, you need help — the help of a family, the help of a community, the help of doctors and healthcare providers you can trust. You need to reach out to support networks — the National Alliance on Mental Illness is one.

We need advocacy. We need to talk about it. It doesn't matter who you are. You could be a public official, a billionaire, the smartest person on Earth, but you can't invent new medications on your own. You can't find a hospital bed for yourself or a loved one where there is none.

What my sister taught me most of all is to be humble. I had the belief that when my parents passed away — they were loving and kind, but they were in denial — I could help my sister. I would be able to fix it. Well, I wasn't. She taught me the message of the book: You can't do it alone. You need help on every level — personally, in a family, in society.

*If anyone wanted to make an honest appraisal of the US mental health system, it's easy to think it would be about some very opposing things. Directly opposite pictures of the mental side of health care can be found in every state in the nation.*

*A new, independent film called **Bedlam** (airing on PBS on April 13, 2020) shows a tragic side, powerfully depicting the human toll taken on suffering people and their families.*

*They have been doomed to the criminal justice system and inadequate Emergency Rooms crippled by underfunding, stigma, and society's neglect. Their stories break even the hardest heart.*

## You can't get well in a cell

Psychiatrist Ken Rosenberg takes on the role of filmmaker to examine our national health crisis. *Bedlam* documents powerful stories of people grappling with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and other chronic psychiatric conditions. With symptoms impossible to hide when untreated, circumstances drive them into the path of police officers, ER doctors and nurses, lawyers, and prison guards. Shot over the course of five years, the film takes viewers inside Los Angeles County's overwhelmed and vastly under-resourced psych ER, a nearby jail warehousing thousands of psychiatric patients, homeless encampments and the homes of people suffering from severe mental illness, where alienation, stigma and shame add to the suffering. Rosenberg, emotionally marked by the death of a mentally ill sister, created a true and tragically sad message about how much our country still needs to do. *continued on next page*



*continued* > Most Americans don't realize that the country's largest psychiatric facilities are often county jails where thousands of people with an illness go untreated, shackled, isolated and unseen.

## On the other hand

This issue of the Summit gives a different picture however. In the pages that follow, you'll read about some shining examples of MFS people doing their utmost to help our clients live meaningful and healthy lives.

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Read about outreach worker, Dyllin Bates, and his compelling and humbling story of what it's like to be a homeless young adult trying to finish college. This is a testimony to the passion and dedication we see in many of the people engaged in our mission of helping our clients have a better future.

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Read about Manager Jinsook Song who is shaping our clinical efforts in Peterborough. Her personal journey and professional education, not to mention her commitment to teamwork and the professional development of her staff, make her an invaluable leader in our organization.

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Read about our wonderful collaboration with Cheshire Medical Center in the creation of a new approach to primary care that serves our clients in Keene. We're reversing some longstanding trends in healthcare with great success.



## Up to us

So which aspect, the positive or the negative, the disgraceful or the exemplary, will prevail in the years ahead? With your help, support and advocacy, the caring people behind MFS know the answer.



Phil Wyzik has been the CEO of Monadnock Family Services for the last eight years. He has worked in the community mental health field in three states since 1986.



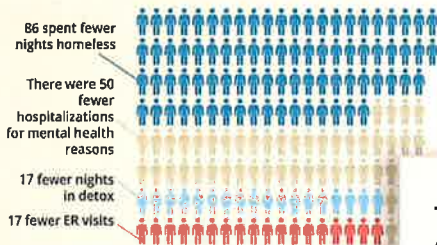
# A Healthy (Medical) Step Forward

By Eileen Fernandes MS

*"Despite the higher risk for chronic conditions such as diabetes, the way that healthcare services are organized tends to exclude people with serious mental illness from benefiting from high-quality physical health care. In particular, they are excluded from health promotion and illness prevention messages and from programs that promote self-management of chronic health conditions. This is particularly problematic in diabetes, where more than 90% of the management relies on self-management."*

Najma Siddiqi, MBChB, MRCPsych, PhD,  
Clinical Senior Lecturer, Hull York  
Medical School UK

One integration program\* enrolled 170 people with mental illness. After one year in the program, in one month:



This is **\$213,000**  
of savings per month.

That's **\$2,500,000**  
in savings over the year.

**Integration works.  
It improves lives.  
It saves lives.  
And it reduces healthcare costs.**

If someone has a mental illness, it is likely that they also have other health challenges like diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, asthma or obesity. For years, US Health Officials have known that the impact of this phenomena is the tragedy of a shorter lifespan by decades. Sadly, effective nationwide approaches to address this are the exception instead of the rule.

To the contrary, an exciting collaboration between Cheshire Medical Center (CMC) and MFS to improve access to a healthcare provider by opening a satellite primary care clinic office at our adult program on 93rd Street is underway. The goal is to reduce the burden of physical and mental illness by co-locating a primary care provider in a community mental health center. The intent is to deliver integrated primary and behavioral healthcare services that will achieve the Quadruple Aim of: Patient Satisfaction, Quality of Care, Lower Cost and Provider Satisfaction.

**CMC provider Christopher Polich, APRN** (at right) has been seeing patients since April of 2019. To date he has provided primary care to over 130 of our clients.



In February we sent out a satisfaction survey to the clients who are receiving these new medical services. The responses tell the real story. It is written best in the words of someone who is seeing Chris to address their uncontrolled diabetes: "It is so

amazing and a relief to have someone to coordinate care, help with what is next and extra time to explain treatment and options going forward. Such a blessing!" Some of our clients have not seen a healthcare provider in a very long time, often because they have had a bad experience or are fearful. One told us: "I have not had another medical health professional



who takes as much time and cares as much as Chris does. I do not know what I would do without him”.

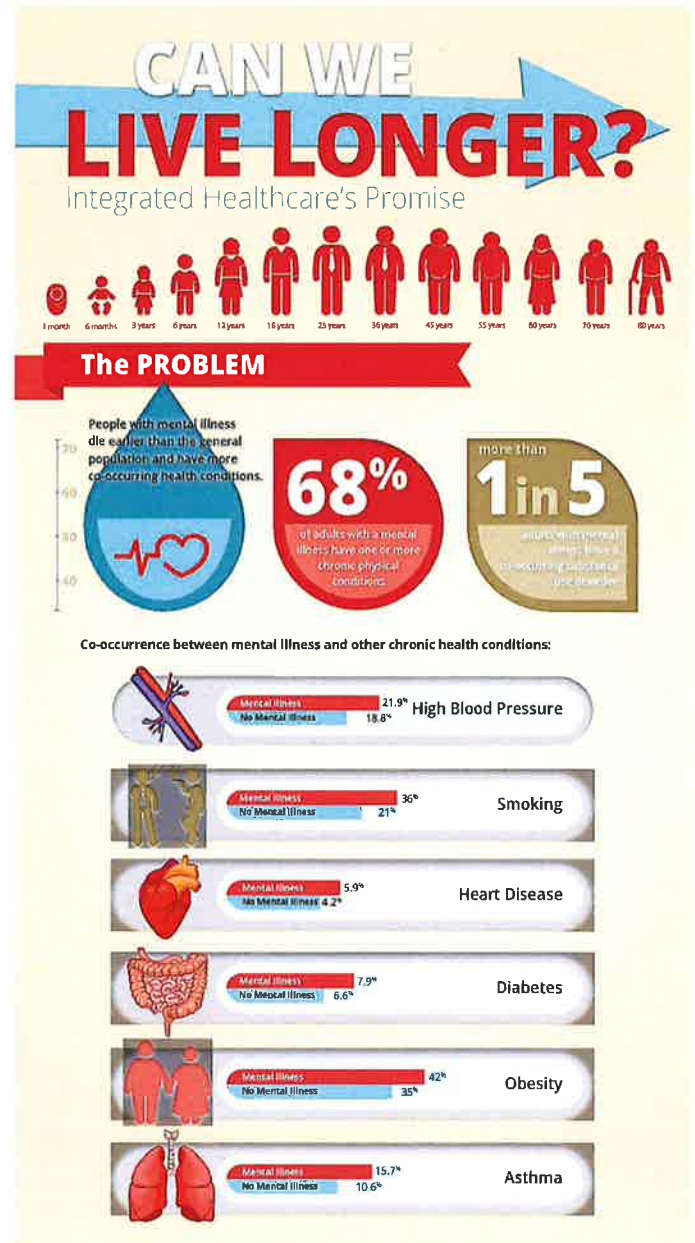
The preliminary results are positive and very exciting. This is a new way to collaborate and provide health care to individuals who are often stigmatized or forgotten. They are important, getting proper medical care for them is important. Sometimes it requires stepping away from the way the US health care system has always done it.

How do you describe success? For the insurance industry it is often about the dollar, “does this program save any money”? The preliminary results say yes. Though small in number, savings are occurring because there is a 50% reduction in emergency room visits for the individuals that are getting their healthcare needs met by Chris. The average cost for an ER visit ranges from \$327 to \$2,291 versus the average charge for a primary care office visit is between \$102 and \$488. That is just one part of the Quadruple Aim.

With Chris embedded at MFS, it is easy to coordinate care with the clients’ treatment providers. It is much easier to ask a question about a psychiatric medication when the prescriber of that treatment is just down the hall. If Chris has a question about a client’s housing or job, he brings it to the treatment team meeting. Sitting around the table at this meeting is the psychiatrist, the Behavioral Health ARNPs, nurses, therapists, case managers, supported employment coordinators – all eager to engage with Chris on issues brought before the team.

One client reports:

“He **listens** to everything I have to say he gives me **positive** feedback and suggests **new approaches** to my care and always makes me **smile**”.



© Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



While some people think that the number of homeless individuals has slightly declined in the last year or so, four counties in New Hampshire report an increase in the number of people needing help; Cheshire County is one of them.

Across the State, shelters everywhere are at or over capacity. Estimates are that about 1400 NH people face housing insecurity but getting the full picture is difficult.

Monadnock Family Service gets federal funding through the State to support one Outreach Worker, a responsibility currently being carried out by Dyllin Bates BA. This support declined by 10.8% since July 2019 to \$33,000 per year.

# No Place That's Home

**That's where making friends with the light comes in.**

**You embrace the idea that the future can be better and that you can be happy.**

## The Hopeful Journey

By Dyllin Bates

The personal experience that I bring to work is having been a chronically homeless youth. I experienced homelessness at 16 for almost a year and then again when I was 19 for 22 months. In that rough span of three years I experienced various forms of housing instability: I slept in my car, tents, couches and libraries. All the while, I was attending college full time and trying to finish a double major in Psychology and Sociology.

### My breaking point

I moved over 1,000 miles, walked from one state to another and met people who changed my life. I watched as I lost friends, family and my own personal sanity. This experience left me with a valuable lesson of the difference between knowing you are safe and thinking you are safe.

There was a moment in 2015 when I reached my breaking point. I had woken up in a frosted car, shivering and fearing the worst. My left foot had gone numb. I started to cry. I turned the car on and began to warm up. As I thawed my leg,

feeling and positivity came to me. I thought about all I had, my car, my dad and my education and how it might not have been a lot but it was enough and I was going to do whatever it took to keep going. I was going to utilize my resources and find more as I went. It wasn't easy to do without having the safety, and the other things many take for granted on a daily basis. Things that make us feel good like a shower that I don't have to sign up to use, or waiting for the manager of the store parking lot you're sleeping in to leave so they don't see you.

Life trained me in emotional resilience, problem solving and negotiation. It taught me how to think on my feet and how to navigate resources.

### Misunderstood

Many people have a deep misunderstanding about the issue of housing instability. I was no different. My mind was once filled with the stereotypes seen on TV and throughout popular culture. It took these many months to learn how to let go and adapt a beginner's mind – looking at things



without preconceived judgements. I began to see that the community of people experiencing housing insecurity is no different than any one of us. They want freedom and independence. They value their individuality and have a powerful voice. In my work at MFS I see the most resilient people I have ever met. They make the best from the worst and walk through situations many of us can't even envision ourselves being in. They are truly the invisible warriors of our community. Any one of us could become homeless and face housing insecurity.

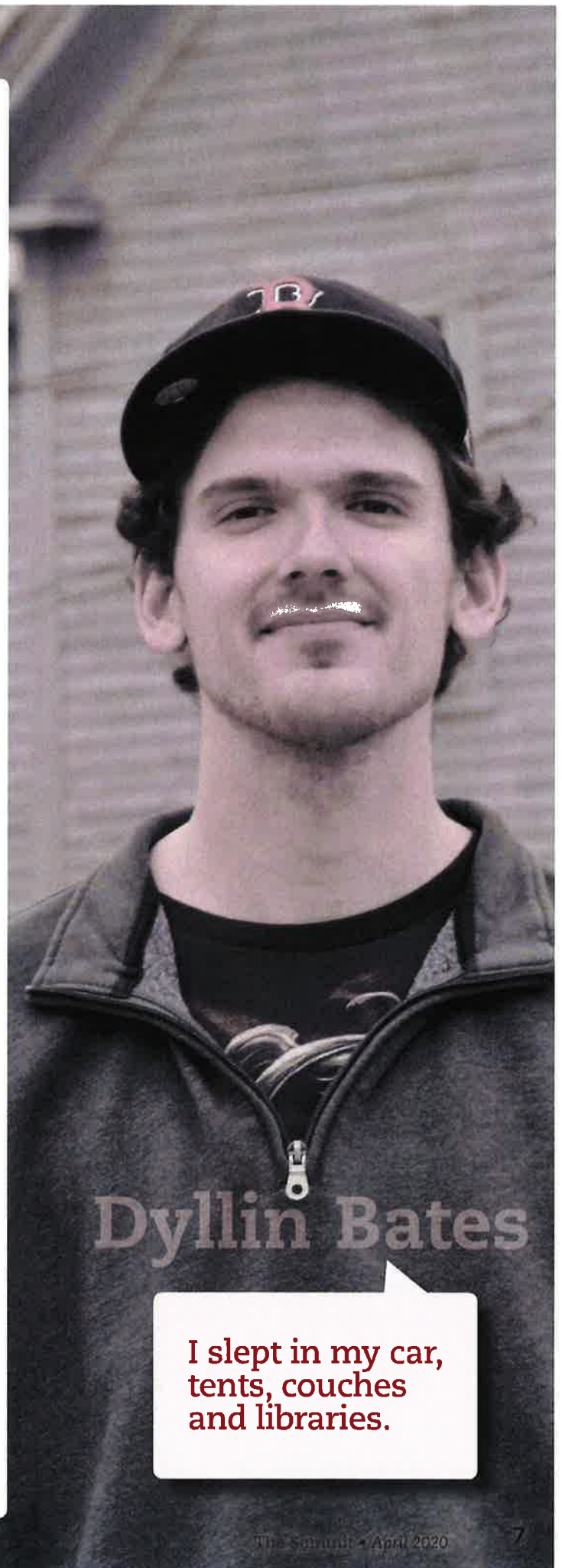
On any given night in Keene, in my opinion, there are at least 60 people without a place they can call their own. They are children, mothers and grandmothers, young men and seniors, even veterans. Some people think that this is because of Hundred Nights Inc. and Southwestern Community Services offering assistance, shelter and resources; they think that other communities send people to Keene. This is not the case. Other communities across the state and beyond also have organizations like ours but, since every program and shelter is stretched thin, they look to each other for help when they have to.

## Our neighbors

Ninety percent of the people I work with report that they had a Keene address within the last 18 months or previously if their experience in housing instability has been longer than that. If not from Keene, they are from somewhere in the Monadnock region; some even have worked in Keene and lost their jobs for various reasons. In my work, helping people from another state, or from another region of care, is the exception not the rule.

Housing insecurity is something that affects us as a community and it's only as a community that we begin to solve this ongoing issue of filling the

*continued on page 9*



Dyllin Bates

**I slept in my car,  
tents, couches  
and libraries.**

# A Wise Perspective

## *from a Passionate Leader*

by Phil Wyzik MA



Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist Jinsook Song will soon be a PhD. This soft spoken and influential leader at MFS is directing our efforts in the greater Peterborough area, bringing her global perspective, learning, talents, and heart-warming style to a resilient community. She will walk proudly into the Commencement ceremonies at Antioch University New England this May.

Song came to MFS three years ago to lead our Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team in Keene. From her first days there, she demonstrated that she valued reaching out, visiting clients where they lived, helping them with daily essentials and leading her colleagues in every aspect of the essential work. Today, she directs the work of therapists, case managers and others in fulfilling everything clients and the community expects of our busy office, bringing her many skills to task.

**“I love to see that my work makes a small difference in clients’ lives,”**

she said recently. “For example, a small child with trauma experiences had a hard time to trust anyone, making no eye contact in the beginning, denying her feelings, and acting out; but working hard together with caregivers in play therapy, gradually she came out from her shell, began to tell me her stories. Little by little through play or directly, the story she shared was a heart breaking one. It was my privilege to witness her journey and growth.”

Bringing a unique perspective to our services, Song came to the US from many experiences of Asian cultures starting from her upbringing in Seoul.

“My undergraduate study was South Asia studies in South Korea,” she said. Before working in many cities and regions in the US, she had employment in four countries abroad. This, the modest woman discloses, “taught me adaptation, different perspectives, and multiple possibilities. I have worked with clients with different intersectionality including different socio-economic status, religions, gender identity, and race/ethnic backgrounds. Once I had to learn Cantonese to provide therapy to Chinese children and families in Hong Kong.



# The Hopeful Journey

*continued from page 7*

cracks in which our youth, families and the most vulnerable of individuals are falling through. It doesn't take just a grand gesture of money or donations.

It starts with how we treat ourselves, our families and others. We must be aware and welcoming to our housing-unstable population. Then once we welcome them with open arms we have to give them a voice. Not just sound bites, but actually a voice in everything from town hall meetings to business to board meetings. We must accept that they are the true experts on this.

## Great advice

While homeless, I once met a man who gave me some great advice. He said that it is important to be kind to our fellow humans because we don't know what they are going through, they could be going through a tough time, they could be trying to cope with cancer, or -- who knows -- they could be the person that saves your life. That's the same when we interact with those who have no place to call home. The future potential is endless.

My experience allows me to be effective at MFS because it gives me hope for our clients. A lot of the time we hear that our "social problems" are unsolvable but I don't believe that. Having this experience allows me to effectively communicate, from firsthand knowledge, that there is a way out, there is a light at the end of the tunnel, and we all are deserving of a quality of life that is physically and mentally safe and secure.



Many of my clients were from different backgrounds and circumstances but they shared the same desire and yearning to be loved and accepted."

She'll tell you that no matter the culture, gender, economic background or educational achievements, human beings world-wide share, at their core, more things in common than one might think. We all want a sense of belonging and connection to others.

One difference, however, is an important one. Song observes that other cultures place a higher emphasis on "we". By this she means that the family, extended family, the family created through friendships, and the local community are much more prized and emphasized in Asian nations than in the States. Her work in Peterborough gives her more to add to her fund of knowledge.

"I see many families in pain. The traditional family with mom, dad and children is no longer the norm. I see more families such as blended families, step families, kinship families, foster families or single parent families in my work. Their pain may be from cut off or broken relationships, poverty, family secrets, unprocessed emotional injuries, or intergenerational transmission of poverty, domestic violence, trauma, or substance use. At the same time, I see tremendous strengths and resilience from families. Families with so many adversities and challenges work hard to stay together, to meet financial obligations at the end of each month, to support their family in the best way they can or they know. I admire their strength and faith."

# 2019 MFS Monadnock Summer Gala Honors Bob and Dita Englund

by Mary Delisle

The setting couldn't have been more beautiful on Saturday evening, July 20, 2019 as family and friends from across the country gathered at **Lakefalls Lodge** in Stoddard to honor **Bob and Dita Englund** for their decades of service to MFS and myriad other nonprofits throughout our community.

Our hosts, **Don and Joyce Healy**, provided us with everything we needed to make this a truly memorable evening for Bob and Dita by sprinkling magic everywhere, including lighting up the skies with a stunning fireworks display at dusk! Thank you both for your gracious hospitality and generous spirit.

Following a delectable feast prepared by **Denise Meadows** and her amazing team at **Charcoal Charlie Productions**, our guests generously participated in our live auction, led by **Laura Gingras**. They bid on fabulous paintings donated by **Jeanne Thieme** and **David Bulger**, a fireworks display donated by **Atlas Pyrovision**, and a house concert donated by the **Apple Hill String Quartet**. Laura then guided a very robust round of bidding that raised **\$13,000** to purchase new beds & mattresses, bedding, dressers, mirrors, chairs, and lamps for the 10 bedrooms at Emerald House, our transitional home in Keene. We also raised enough to purchase a new dining room table and 12 chairs. **Thank you to everyone whose donation made this dream a reality.**

Silent Auction items were donated by **Sharman Howe**, **Jet Set Candy**, and **Jim Merritt** – thank you all for rounding out the auction fun.



MFS CEO Phil Wyzik (L) and Dita Englund (R) look on as Bob Englund addresses Gala guests.

Also contributing to the financial success of the evening were personal donations from over 60 friends of Bob and Dita along with our generous corporate sponsors: **Genoa Healthcare, LLC, Belletetes, Cheshire Medical Center, Harrisville Designs, Keene Senior Center "Super Senior Friends", Elegant Settings, Savron Graphics, Apollo Steele, Bar Harbor Bank & Trust, Dublin School, GFA Federal Credit Union, The Kingsbury Fund, Monadnock Community Hospital, Rivermead, Bellows-Nichols Insurance, Hill Family Insurance Agency, Jellison Funeral Home, Performance Health & Fitness and St. James Episcopal Church.**

And to our enthusiastic, creative, and thoughtful planning committee – **Sally Bulger, Sarah Clough, Ann Conway, Sue Doyle, Julie Farhm, Donna Garner, Ann Heffernon, Christine Houston, Sharman Howe, Megan Burke Kidder, Suzy Krautmann, Jane Larmon, Angel Nicoletti, Richard (Nick) Nicoletti, Judith Putzel, Lucy Shonk, Sally Shonk, Nancy Vincent, and Louise Zerba.** Special thanks to **Linda Singer**, who created dozens of beautifully unique floral centerpieces to brighten all of the tables – thank you! My heart is full and my spirit is lifted by your dedication, support and friendship.

No matter how often we say thank you it will never feel like enough. Please know how deeply grateful we are for the role you all played in helping us to honor Bob and Dita and for making this another extraordinary Summer Gala success for Monadnock Family Services!

## See you again in 2021!



MEN  
WHO  
didn't  
COOK



## Dear Friends,

All of us on the Men Who Cook committee want to say how saddened we were to have to cancel our 18th annual event scheduled for Saturday, March 14th due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was difficult to make this decision at the very last minute and we want to take this opportunity to thank the following groups of individuals and businesses who stood by our decision with their strong spirit of community and warm understanding.

Thank you to the 120+ chefs for your commitment to cook, to the dozens of business sponsors and raffle donors who provided us with generous donations, to the individuals who made personal donations, and to so many of our ticket holders who told us to "keep the money as a donation." Because of these generous friends, we will still be able to offer financial support to the America Reads program this spring.

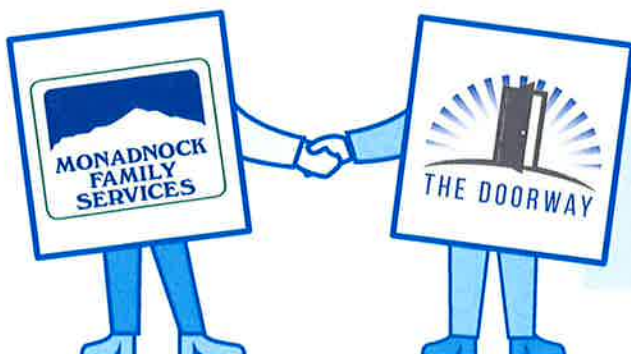
Our goal is to be able to reschedule our fundraiser as soon as we are able. Thank you all again for your unwavering support and commitment to Monadnock Family Services. Wishing you all excellent health in the weeks and months to come.

The Women Behind the Men Who (wanted to) Cook

## Joint Effort

*In a creative solution to more than one problem, two programs from Monadnock Family Services will be sharing a common location with the Doorway operated by Cheshire Medical Center.*

Completed in April, the new offices will house the MFS Emergency and Substance Abuse counselors and the Doorway program. Funded a year ago by the Federal Government, the Doorway offers easy assessment and access services for people who want to obtain addiction treatment services and start their road to recovery. Under one roof at 24 Railroad St, Keene, this joint effort brings to our community the critical crisis mental health and substance abuse services our region needs.



**Call** the MFS emergency service department at 357-4400 or the Doorway at Cheshire Medical Center at 211 to find out how we can help you.






The campaign to  
**changedirection™**  
A Give an Hour Collective Impact Effort

# CORONAVIRUS: HEALTHY HABITS FOR EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

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It's just a small step.



## TAKE CARE OF YOU

- Tune in to how you're feeling daily.
- Take regular breaks from the news.
- Go for a walk or hike.
- Learn and practice meditation each day.
- Keep a food journal and plan ways to eat healthily.
- Get 8 hours of sleep and/or take a nap during the day!
- Listen to an inspirational podcast.



## CHECK IN WITH OTHERS

- While maintaining social distance, use technology to stay connected with people in your life.
- Call or video chat a loved one, family member, or friend to check in on them and let them know you care.
- Write a letter to a loved one letting them know how much they mean to you.
- Take time to connect with an old friend via phone or email.



## ENGAGE AND CONNECT WISELY

- Video chat your loved ones and "join" them for meals.
- Review your social media and screen time habits; follow positive people and messages.
- Create an online photo album to share with friends and loved ones.
- Learn a new hobby! Go online and learn how to paint or make a delicious meal!
- Pull out board games, puzzles, and cards.



## RELAX AND REDUCE STRESS

- Listen to your favorite playlist.
- Weather permitting, work in your garden.
- Open that book you have been wanting to read and escape into its pages.
- Indulge in a hot bath.
- Catch-up on your favorite TV series.
- If you find it relaxing, tackle that junk drawer, pantry, or closet.

**We wash our hands for our physical health, learn the Five Signs of Emotional Suffering to keep up with your mental health.**



**Not Feeling Like U?**



**R U Withdrawn?**



**R U Agitated?**



**Caring 4 U?**



**Feeling Hopeless?**



*Our Mission is to be a source of health and hope for people and the communities in which they live, particularly as it pertains to mental illness.*

*We create services that heal, education that transforms, and advocacy that brings a just society for everyone.*

[www.mfs.org](http://www.mfs.org) • 64 Main Street, Keene, NH 03431 (603) 357-4400