



QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FALL 2019

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#### Dear Friends,

Many great things have happened this year at Retreat. This past August, we celebrated our 8-year anniversary, and since our inception have made so many positive strides in not only fighting the disease of addiction, but in also helping those who suffer from mental illness.

On August 31st, A&E's new show Addiction Unplugged featured Retreat Behavioral Health and our program that specializes in the treatment of addicted pregnant mothers. We could not be more proud of the numerous staff and alumni that both participated in and starred on this show.

On Sept 10<sup>th</sup>, Retreat at South Connecticut hosted their first job fair with over 700 people in attendance. We are looking forward to the much-anticipated addition of our Connecticut location, as well as, the addition of new and ambitious members to our ever-growing and enthusiastic team of employees.

A special thanks to all our partners in helping us to grow as a company. We still have much to do, but our wonderful staff is dedicated and at-the-ready to inspire and give hope to those suffering from mental illness and substance use disorders. Thank you.

All the best,

## **CHRISSY'S CORNER**

By Tanya Ruhl

# Addiction and Recovery: How One Family Worked Together and Never Lost Hope

"It is a life or death situation. You have to have zero tolerance for drug use." – Phil Shober

The teenage years can be difficult for many children. They might struggle with excessive schoolwork, making or connecting with friends, sometimes even having to deal with bullying. While these things seem obvious and easily identifiable, sometimes the emotional and behavioral change during these formative years can leave parents and loved ones feeling confused.

What if you are not sure what is going on with your child? What if their behavior has changed so much that you are not even sure who they are anymore? This is what Phil and Gerri Shober had to face with their daughter Grace. "We saw a downhill progression with Grace," said Gerri when asked how they became aware of their daughter's fight with addiction. They had noticed not only behavioral changes but also a change in Grace's physical appearance. These changes began in her early teens becoming more prominent by the time she was 16.

What mainly drew their attention was how much her behavior changed. They wanted her to be able to talk to someone, anyone, especially if she wouldn't talk to them. Grace's parents took the steps to retain the services of a professional mental health counselor. Grace said, "I started out seeing the counselor just to appease my parents." At times, she felt like she was going for herself because she just wanted to feel better than what she was. Convinced that there was something very wrong with her, she used the mental health angle to avoid the more serious root of the problem which was addiction. Phil and Gerri both went to sessions with Grace from time to time. The subject of drugs came up and was shut down so adamantly by Grace that she was able to make her counselor and her father believe that this was not the issue at hand, and it was dropped. "I knew if I said how depressed I was, they would feel bad instead of suspicious," was Grace's response when asked how she was able to change her parents' and counselors' thoughts about what was going on.

At the age of 17, Grace found herself pregnant. Her parents worried this would only compound her current issues. Grace



and her boyfriend decided to move in together. At the age of 19 Grace had her second son and that's when things started to spiral downward faster.

Her parents noticed that Grace was starting to lack in care for her children. More and more she would leave her two boys with their grandparents and not tell them where she was going. Phil and Gerri had also noticed money missing from their home while their daughter wasn't bringing money back from her job as a waitress.

"We were still clueless (as to what was really going on with Grace)," said Gerri. The first time they heard the word "heroin" in relation to Grace was when she was arrested around the age of 21. She was arrested for assault of a police officer. While this was not a drug charge, this was how her parents were able to get viable proof that Grace had an addiction.

When this happened, the topic of substance abuse wasn't spoken about as openly as it is today. Phil and Gerri felt lost and had no idea where to turn. Luckily, Phil had a friend who worked at a treatment center. They sent Grace to a residential treatment program and found themselves rearranging their lives and their home to accommodate her two young sons. "Within a couple days she (Grace) left the treatment program," said Phil. The treatment center was able to get her to come back and she completed 28 or 30 days. Unfortunately, this would not be her last trip to treatment.

Grace would do well for a little while but would fall back into her old ways. When asked why she though it took so many times in inpatient treatment (a total of 14), Grace answered "I'm not sure, there were times that I did not feel ready, or felt like I didn't have a problem (more in the beginning stages of

my treatment stays) but then there were times I really wanted to stay sober and then failed. I believe it had a lot to do with the people I continued to surround myself with." This caused contention between Phil and Gerri at times as well as their other children. Treatment for addiction is not free nor is it cheap. One question that Phil and Gerri had to ask themselves was, "When do we stop sending her to treatment?" Setting boundaries was difficult at times. Where do you draw the line?

Gerri said she can remember when she "used to talk about it with everyone. I would discuss what the family and Grace were going through. Even though it was uncomfortable, talking about it can help you and might even help someone else in the process that you aren't even aware of." Both Phil and Gerri came to the realization that treatment for only 30 days was not working for their daughter. They needed something else, something that could help support their daughter longer and encourage her to stay on the right path. That is when they started looking into aftercare and recovery/halfway houses.

Through all the triumphs and setbacks they had with Grace's journey to recovery, they have found that six months to a year of aftercare can be a tremendous help to those in recovery to be able to continue building a foundation. During this time, there were not many options for housing in the Lancaster County area for those fresh out of treatment. Thus, Grace House was born as a way for Phil and Gerri to not only help their daughter

but other females looking for suitable housing in the beginning stages of recovery. The first house opened up in March of 2012.

Grace House is now up to a total of three houses. Within the three, there is availability for 16 women to reside at one time. Many of these women come to stay right after they complete treatment at a residential facility. The houses have a community atmosphere as each woman that enters can learn so much about themselves and others they live with. There are rules they have to follow so there is structure. They need to go to meetings and continue with the recommended aftercare of the facility they left. They re-learn, so to speak, how to have a fully functioning home life, cleaning, laundry, dishes, etc. Gerri and Grace work closely with the women who reside in the dwellings. When asked if her daughter ever stayed in the sober home that bears her name, Gerri laughed and said, "yes, and she was kicked out also."

Today, Grace has come a long way since those difficult and trying times. She is now part of the team at Retreat Behavioral Health working in multiple roles ,as well as continuing her work at the Grace House. I asked Gerri and Phil if they had one piece of advice or something they would like to say to other parents, Gerri responded with, "Don't give up hope. There are a lot of resources out there, along with support. Reach out and don't suffer alone."





There exists a one-and-done mentality when it comes to recovery or rehabilitation. Peaceful getaways up-state or blissful retreats atop tranquil beaches are what first come to mind. Even though fresh air and weeks of therapy are helpful and essential, they are just the beginning. A holistic recovery is both a lengthy journey and a massive transformation of one's physical, mental, and emotional health.

## Physical Recovery: Detox and the Development now you've taken [the substance] out.' Those initial symptoms of New Habits are just the body trying to learn how to function without the

"The physical body, in the first week or so, goes through really intense flu-like symptoms: chills, fevers, sweats, aches, pains and physical spasms. It's as if you've built a table, removed one of the legs and now the whole thing falls over," says Kate Ramsey, Clinical Supervisor with Retreat Behavioral Health. "The body has learned to function and is now saying, 'Wait a minute, we've redesigned the whole system just for you, and

now you've taken [the substance] out.' Those initial symptoms are just the body trying to learn how to function without the poison in its system. This process, within 5-10 days, sometimes less, is that of acute withdrawal."

Detox is an intense, oftentimes dangerous, process. The body has to reset and start over completely. Therefore, it is always urged to begin your detox process under the supervision of trained, medical professionals. However, once past that initial 5-10-day detox, the breakdown of the old and the construction of the new really begins to develop. "Treatment of chronic diseases involves changing deeply rooted behaviors, and relapse doesn't mean treatment has failed. When a person recovering from an addiction relapses, it indicates that the person needs to speak with their doctor to resume treatment, modify it, or try another treatment," say experts from the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

According to a 2012 John Hopkins study, researchers found that, "While the relapse rate post-detox is 65 to 80 percent, recovering drug addicts who remained in treatment were 10 times more likely to stay drug-free."

#### Mindful Recovery: Revolutionizing Our Thoughts

Napoleon once famously said, "The best cure for the body is a quiet mind." Our bodies want to heal themselves. We fall and scrape our knee, immediately the body is springing into action and formulating ways for how to most quickly heal itself. The same is true with addiction. The body springs into action, if even begrudgingly, to rid itself of toxins and come to a place of healing. However, a place of healing cannot happen without the quieting of the mind.

"Diagnosing a patient, depends on the context of their condition and how it's functioning in their life. For example, depression is the symptom that comes from a lot of different causes and it functions in people's lives very differently," said Dr. Brian Berman a Clinical Psychologist with Retreat Behavioral Health in a statement. "It's all very complex because depression comes from different places. In fact, depression isn't sadness."

Re-wiring our brains to not only process trauma but form new habits is difficult. Yet we cannot heal without allowing our brains to process pain, form new neural pathways, and monitor how we react to our emotions. For addicts, practicing forgiveness and allowing hurt to be felt allows their brain the tools to heal and form healthy communication with the rest of their body.

# Emotional Recovery: The Power of Self-Compassion

"Establishing your self-worth is the most important thing in the world. We are born with it. All you have to do is be born a human being to actually be gifted with this thing called selfworth. As you extend that [your worth], you affect the people of this world, you bring healing. You expose people to the idea that there's a powerful way of being in this world," Don Joseph Goewey, former manager of the Department of Psychiatry at Stanford Medical School and author of, "The End of Stress, Four Steps to Rewire Your Brain," told Retreat in an interview.

The establishment of self-worth acts as the soil to our lives. With rich nutrients and a foundation, this soil provides the possibility for life abundant and fruitful healing. Addicts often note that their shame acts as a massive component in their addiction. Shame and fear often keep individuals from seeking help and receiving treatment. However, with a life built on self-worth and compassion, shame and fear simply cannot survive. Healing can prevail and pain is allowed to be addressed when we are practicing kindness to ourselves.

By practicing love and self-compassion, we break apart the toxic environment that addictions are often rooted in. Just as Goewey explains that we all possess a powerful way of being in this world, so every individual that struggles with addiction has the strength to find their path towards healing and hope.



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## A NECESSARY FIRST STEP: THE DETOX PROCESS, EXPLAINED

By Ariana Lobo

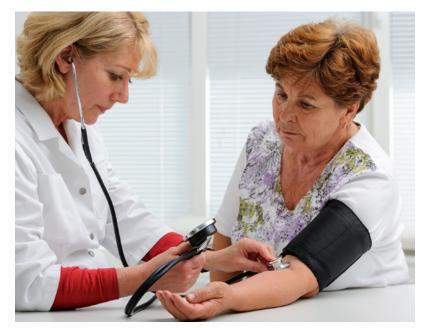
# When it comes to detoxing from drugs or alcohol the fix is never quick.

According to the Washington Circle Group, a coalition of experts in the field of alcohol and drug abuse, detox is classified as, "a medical intervention process that safely helps a substance abuser through the experience of acute withdrawal." Detoxing from an abused substance is exactly that—an experience. Nothing about the detox experience is either quick or simple, but it is that first most powerful step towards healing.

"When you are addicted, the body, at first, fights against it. We don't want it, whether it is alcohol or pills or opioids, the body says, 'this is foreign, and this is no good.' When you keep introducing [the substance] over and over, the body goes, 'okay we are fighting too hard, we are not winning.' So, the body then decides that this is the new norm," said Corporate Director of Nursing, Dr. Melissa Callahan of Retreat Behavioral Health in a statement. This acceptance of the substance, on behalf of the body, is where addiction starts. The strict removal of that foreign, yet normalized, substance from the body, is where detox starts.

"Addiction disconnects your head from the rest of your body, creating a barrier. Whatever substance is being abused, the body becomes dependent on it and therefore cannot send messages to its main center, the brain. When you detox, [the barrier] is pulled out. For example, patients detoxing from opiates can feel like the air hitting their skin hurts. They don't understand what a pain sensation is. They haven't received a message from their body [to the brain] in the whole time they have been addicted. So now every message they receive is overwhelming, the central nervous system does not know how to process it," explains Dr. Callahan on addressing her patients concerns over the detox process.

For many, the acceptance that your body will have to undergo an entire re-wiring of its system, but most specifically the brain, can be a challenge. Patients often believe that so long as the



symptoms pass or the urine is classified as clear, detoxification of the body is over. That is not the case. Just as Dr. Callahan explains, the body has to re-learn how to communicate. This process is similar to when an individual first learns how to walk. The body has to form entirely new neural pathways.

Removing toxic substances from the body can be dangerous. Therefore, it is always recommended for proper patient care, that you seek medical assistance in your detox and recovery process. "Research shows that when treating addictions to opioids (prescription pain relievers or drugs like heroin or fentanyl), medication should be the first line of treatment, usually combined with some form of behavioral therapy or counseling," say experts at the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Through this powerful combination of medical supervision, appropriate medication, and time, do those in the detox process begin to experience safe, healthy paths to a holistic recovery. The journey is neither short or easy, but it is so worth the fight. For those battling addiction, detox is that inspiring first step towards a new life of healing.

### PIPPIN PRODUCTION

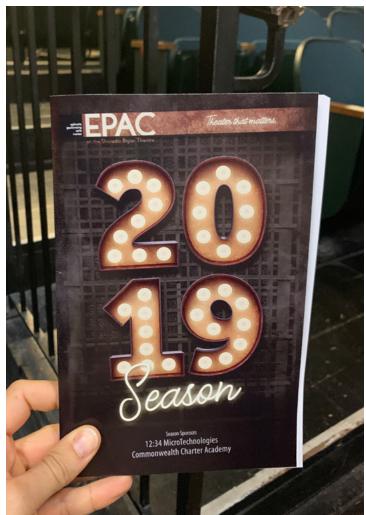
Retreat enjoys giving back to the community. One way we do this is by sponsoring a show for a small community theater, Ephrata Performing Arts Center. Working with local partners allows us to reinvest our energy and resources back into our community. EPAC is one of those community partners whose passion and hard work create opportunities and exciting experiences for neighboring towns and locals.











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# WELLNESS WEDNESDAY: PAIN MANAGEMENT USING ALTERNATIVES TO TRADITIONAL MEDICINE





# ADDICTION UNPLUGGED SCREENING

In August, Retreat was honored to be a part of the A&E show, *Addiction Unplugged*. We were able to have a private screening before the episode aired that included a Q&A panel.









#### "My First Year"

If you or a loved one has ever wondered what that first year in recovery looks like, here are some snippets of voices who have been through the process.

#### JOHN B.

"Initially, I was actually a liaison at work between the union and the company to get people into treatment. When I myself relapsed due to an injury, I went to the company and they were not happy with me. I told them I need to get somebody into treatment and it turns out that it's me. I ended up having to leave that company and it was never the same when I came back. The workplace did hold [the relapse] against me. I ended up losing that job, I had it for 13 years."

#### **EDWIN**

"Year one was dealing with a lot of legal issues, and dealing with addressing that process ...

... My first year of sobriety, I went to a meeting every single day ... The age difference of the group I was attending made a massive difference. The younger crowd was focused on different things, things I had already experienced. I needed to feel more connected. But the first year was definitely the hardest. Getting into the routine of life was hard, everything was new ... Getting your brain back to normal was hard. I would question myself, 'I have all this knowledge in my head, but do I?""

#### "What Made A Difference For Me"

Recovery is the birth of a new life, a new you. Finding the things that make you who you are, that make you happy, and that keep you sober-can make all the difference in the world.

#### **JENNA**

"For me, it was a really great sober-living program. Every three months, they provided you with more responsibility to get your life back. They took care of literally everything, so all I had to concentrate on was recovery. I would recommend that to anybody, everywhere. To not have all those added stresses, I don't know that I could have done it."

#### JOHN B.

"I took care of my body, I took care of my spirit, and then going to meetings was the equivalent of someone taking their blood pressure medicine if they had blood pressure, it was my medicine.

What's crazy is, what I started doing right from day one, I still do to this day. Part of my recovery is regular meetings, a gym membership."

#### "Advice"

The path to healing is no easy path, but it is possible. Here are some words that address the hope in healing and the lessons learned.

#### **EDWIN**

"My addiction got me to my knees, but it did not get me on my back."

#### IOHN

"If you never get away from the basics, you never have to worry about getting back to them.

If you think you are going to go to a few meetings a week and go and stare at the four walls and stay clean-it's not going to happen. You have to have joy in your life. You have to get back to the things that make you, you. Recovery is not a punishment.

Don't keep your recovery secret like you kept your addiction secret. Make your loved ones aware and a part of your journey."

#### **JENNA**

"AA is huge in finding good people to surround yourself with and good role models. Absolutely.

I had an awesome opportunity to go that program. The right sober-living program can really teach you and prepare you for getting back into society. And I definitely recommend it to anyone who can do that."



### PA COMPANY PICTURE



## FLORIDA COMPANY PICTURE

### **VULNERABILITY**

By Ariana Lobo

"We are the most in-debt, obese, addicted, and medicated adult cohort in U.S. History," says Brené Brown in her viral TEDTalk on vulnerability. And the statistics speak for themselves. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, "Every year, illicit and prescription drugs and alcohol contribute to the death of more than 90,000 Americans, while tobacco is linked to an estimated 480,000 deaths per year."

We are facing a substance abuse crisis never seen before. Whether it is pills, alcohol, food, work, or relationships, Americans have developed a great deal of self-deprecating habits. According to some very recent studies and new-age experts, the power of vulnerability is being seen as the long-denied antidote to processing our pain, living a life of healing, and becoming courageous in all we do.

Addiction is an everyday, unrelenting battle. Getting past the initial phase of detox is only the beginning. The real work then begins by uncovering the trauma or pain that often underlies our behavior. Although we know that addiction is a disease, one can develop rather self-destructive and man-made behaviors during the process. These self-destructive habits or behaviors must be addressed for true growth to take place-and that requires vulnerability.

Vulnerability is an act of self-compassion and self-love that allows an individual to take the largest most beneficial step to eternal healing. Without vulnerability, we cannot lead lives of bravery and courage. Two things we must have when addressing our deepest, darkest scars or breaking our deepest, most destructive habits–such as addiction or substance abuse.

Brené Brown, a renowned researcher, has dedicated her life's work to the study of both shame and vulnerability. In one of the most-viewed TEDTalks of all time, with more than 11 million views on YouTube, Brown reveals some of the rarest truth of all, that without vulnerability there is no such thing as courageous living. In fact, Brown boldly states that, "We cannot selectively numb emotions. So, when we numb [bad emotions], we also

numb joy, we numb gratitude, we numb happiness and then we are miserable. We are left looking for purpose and meaning, and then we feel vulnerable so then we have a couple of beers and a banana nut muffin. And it becomes this dangerous cycle." This cycle is a trademark for those that struggle with addiction. There is in an inherent push to numb what hurts, and abusive substances take that place.

In an article entitled, "8 Habits of Actively Vulnerable People," by Lindsey Holmes, the Senior Wellness Editor for the Huffington Post, describes that vulnerable people are not only more open to new experiences but that they are actually kind to themselves. One of the biggest triggers for addiction and substance abuse is shame. Shame propels the user to remain quiet, not seek help, and continue on their destructive cycle of habits. However, when we practice kindness to ourselves, we are breaking apart the environment in which shame thrives. We are on a path to healing.

"Toxic shame is no longer the belief that I've made so many mistakes, but I am a mistake. My goal, as a therapist, is to get people re-programmed for self-acceptance," says Clinical Specialist Paul Kurlancheek of Retreat Behavioral Health when working with his patients. Similarly so, Brené Brown ends her inspiring talk by calling her listeners to action. Brown states that, "When we work from a place that says, 'I'm enough,' then we stop screaming and start listening. We are kinder and gentler to the people around us, and we are kinder to ourselves."

Understand that there is no shame in seeking help, guidance, or a shoulder to lean on. We are creatures designed to be vulnerable. Without vulnerability, there is no room to build a life of courage. And without courage, there is no room to address our pain, one of the most important factors when healing from addiction. Only by living lives built on vulnerability, self-love, and acceptance can one begin to heal from the pain that often spurs addiction and substance abuse.



You will be lost and unlost, over and over again. Relax love. you were meant to be this glorious. epic. story.

NAYYIRAH WAHEED

"Studies suggest that approximately half of all individuals who try to get sober return to heavy use, with 70 to 90 percent experiencing at least one mild to moderate slip," according to Dr. David Sack in his article, "Why Relapse Isn't A Sign of Failure" in Psychology Today. We are hard-wired to avoid failure. Yet the stats show that we are also hard-wired to experience failure. So, what really works? And what part does this fear of failure play when it comes to addiction?

In a recent article from the Harvard Business Review entitled, "Learning from Success and Failure," by Robert I. Sutton, an

experiment was conducted on behalf of the Israeli Defense Forces to clarify the part "failure" played in their training. The company was split into two groups. One group underwent a four-day period of event reviews that focused solely on the mistakes the soldiers made. The second group underwent the same four-day review period, but they focused uniquely on both their successes and their failures. The results showed that those soldiers who discussed both aspects learned at higher rates and even learned faster. The inclusion of failure to their discussion on success actually balanced the way in which they learned. Therefore, including failure in your learning isn't such a bad thing, it's actually a great thing.

Including failure in the conversation is essential, but dwelling on it is not. In fact, according to a Forbes article entitled, "This Is What Happens to Your Brain When You Fail (And How To Fix It)," author Caroline Beaton touches on the ever-so-destructive 'Loser Effect.' This effect is your brain absorbing the hit of failure, holding on to it, and then allowing it to drag you down further. Studies show that in certain instances, the failure of a specific event or project actually leads participants' performances to plummet. The brain holds on so tightly to a specific plan that when an unexpected failure throws it off, we abort mission.

"In short, resist dwelling on your failure once you've extracted the necessary lessons. Choose optimism: research shows that when people work with positive mindsets, performance in nearly every aspect improves," states Beaton. And she's not wrong. In the field of addiction and substance abuse, therapists often work to get their patients off of their shame and focused on the possibilities of the future. Art therapist, Megan Miller of Retreat Behavioral Health encourages, "being mindful while being mindless," to the patients that participate in her therapy-based art classes. By allowing patients to participate in an activity that allows them not to dwell on their heartbreak, pain, or wrongdoings, they begin to open to the idea of a new life.

"In the first stage, the reward functions of the brain are hyper-stimulated-taking drugs makes users feel good, which encourages a repeat performance. In the second stage, repeated overstimulation of the reward centers causes long-term changes in how other areas of the brain function, including areas involved with memory, impulsivity, and decision-making," states Dr. David Sack, prominent CEO of Elements Behavioral Health in his Psychology Today article. This damaging of the brain that comes with long-term addiction and substance abuse helps us to better understand the biological hold this disease places on addicts. "Failure" and relapse are normal. In fact, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, those that suffer with chronic illnesses, such as asthma and hypertension, relapse at the same rate as those with substance use disorders.

"Mistakes are part of the dues one pays for a full life," states acclaimed actress Sophia Loren. In the world of addiction and substance abuse, to make mistakes is a part of the journey. In fact, including our failures alongside our successes in the learning process actually helps us grow by leaps and bounds. Furthermore, building strong mental barriers to not fixate on our shortcomings actually increases our positive outcomes. Our learning process is designed to include both failure and success, trial and error, and both are just as powerful and necessary in becoming who we are meant to be.









# TUNE IN TO 1210 WPHT AM OR LISTEN LIVE @: www.RetreatBehavioralHealth.com/Podcasts



# SPONSORED BY: RETREATBEHAVIORALHEALTH.COM



Check out our weekly show **Recovery Radio**, is now available to download on iTunes, Spotify, Google Play. The show also airs every Saturday from 6-7pm EST on WPHT 1210 in Philadelphia. Hosted by veteran radio journalist Steve Martorano, we explore new topics pertaining to the world of substance abuse, and inspiring stories of recovery, on each episode.







### **UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS**

#### **EVENTS IN OCTOBER**

#### **Fall Festival**

A family-friendly time for Retreat to give back to the community, as well as our Alumni. Fun, food and games open to the public and it is all free!

Sunday, October 6th | 12-3 pm ET

Retreat at Lancaster County 333 South 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Akron, PA 17501

#### The Heart to Head Connection

This presentation will both introduce and explore the relationship between emotional and physical health. More specifically the relationship between heart disease and forms of mental health.

Friday, October 11th | 10:30 am-1:30 pm ET

Retreat at Palm Beach-Outpatient Center 6426 Melaleuca Lane, Greenacres, FL 33463

#### **EVENTS IN NOVEMBER**

#### Medicated Assisted Treatment-Current Trends

This session will provide an overview of Medicated Assisted Treatment for the management and treatment of substance use disorders, intended for mental health providers who may or may not have a background in the biological sciences. We will discuss available MAT resources, indications for use and potential downfalls.

Friday, November 1th | 8:30 am-12 pm ET

Retreat at Lancaster County-Outpatient Center 333 South 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Akron, PA 17501

# Wellness Wednesdays: Communication in Relationships

Healthy communication in relationships is a key factor in contributing to mental well-being and teamwork between you and your loved one. But what are some of the common roadblocks people face in pursuing healthy, successful communication, and how do we overcome them? We'll learn the principles of good communication—and how to put them into action—in this helpful presentation.

Wednesday, November 6th | 12-1 pm ET

Retreat at Lancaster County-Outpatient Center 333 South 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Akron, PA 17501



Contact us today for more information:

855.859.8810

Or visit us online at:

## RetreatBehavioralHealth.com

Retreat Behavioral Health offers addiction services, from medically monitored detox to outpatient rehabilitation, providing a full continuum of care. We work with most commercial insurers, offer 24/7 admissions and complimentary transportation. We have locations in Lancaster County, PA and Palm Beach County, FL. At Retreat, we pride ourselves on providing a compassionate and spiritual environment for those struggling with addiction in a secure and comfortable setting with dedicated and caring staff.