

A communication periodical for our clients, staff & the community at large

The Chronicle

A Paterson Counseling Center Newsletter

Special points of interest:

- PCC can treat you for primary illnesses unrelated to your addiction if required
- PCC has a fully operational medical office on-site
- PCC is open 7 days a week
- PCC provides coordination of medication with vacation and travel schedules

Laughter Helps You Stay Healthy

Laughter makes you feel good. And the good feeling that you get when you laugh remains with you even after the laughter subsides. Humor helps you keep a positive, optimistic outlook through difficult situations, disappointments, and loss.

More than just a respite from sadness and pain, laughter gives you the courage and strength to find new sources of meaning and hope. Even in the most difficult of times, a laugh—or even simply a smile—can go a long way toward making you feel better. And laughter really is contagious—just hearing laughter primes your brain and readies you to smile and join in on the fun.

- **Laughter dissolves distressing emotions.** You can't feel anxious, angry, or sad when you're laughing.
- **Laughter helps you relax and recharge.** It reduces stress and increases energy, enabling you to stay focused and accomplish more.
- **Humor shifts perspective, allowing you to see situations in a more realistic, less threatening light. A humorous perspective creates psychological distance, which can help you avoid feeling overwhelmed.**
- **The social benefits of humor and laughter**
- Humor and playful communication strengthen our relationships by triggering positive feelings and fostering emotional connection. When we laugh with one another, a positive bond is created. This bond acts as a strong buffer against stress, disagreements, and disappointment.

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Laughing with others is more powerful than laughing alone

Shared laughter is one of the most effective tools for keeping relationships fresh and exciting. All emotional sharing builds strong and lasting relationship bonds, but sharing laughter and play adds joy, vitality, and resilience. And humor is a powerful and effective way to heal resentments, disagreements, and hurts. Laughter unites people during difficult times.

Using humor and laughter in relationships allows you to:

- **Be more spontaneous.** Humor gets you out of your head and away from your troubles.
- **Let go of defensiveness.** Laughter helps you forget judgments, criticisms, and doubts.
- Just remember to laugh and be funny

Signs & Symptoms of Bipolar Depression

Signs and symptoms In the past, bipolar depression was lumped in with regular depression. But a growing body of research suggests that there are significant differences between the two, especially when it comes to recommended treatments. Most people with bipolar depression are not helped by antidepressants. In fact, there is a risk that antidepressants can make bipolar disorder worse—triggering mania or hypomania, causing rapid cycling between mood states, or interfering with other mood stabilizing drugs.

Despite many similarities, certain symptoms are more common in bipolar depression than in regular depression. For example, bipolar depression is more likely to involve irritability, guilt, unpredictable mood swings, and feelings of restlessness. People with bipolar depression also tend to move and speak slowly, sleep a lot, and gain weight. In addition, they are more likely to develop psychotic depression—a condition in which they’ve lost contact with reality—and to experience major disability in work and social functioning.

Common symptoms of bipolar depression include:

- Feeling hopeless, sad, or empty.
- Irritability
- Inability to experience pleasure
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Physical and mental sluggishness
- Appetite or weight changes
- Sleep problems
- Concentration and memory problems
- Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
- Thoughts of death or suicide

How to Reduce Prevent & Cope with Stress

It may seem that there’s nothing you can do about your stress level. The bills aren’t going to stop coming, there will never be more hours in the day for all your errands, and your career or family responsibilities will always be demanding. But you have a lot more control than you might think. In fact, the simple realization that you’re in control of your life is the foundation of stress management.

Managing stress is all about taking charge: taking charge of your thoughts, your emotions, your schedule, your environment, and the way you deal with problems. The ultimate goal is a balanced life, with time for work, relationships, relaxation, and fun – plus the resilience to hold up under pressure and meet challenges head on.

Stress management starts with identifying the sources of stress in your life. This isn’t as easy as it sounds. Your true sources of stress aren’t always obvious, and it’s all too easy to overlook your own stress-inducing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Sure, you may know that you’re constantly worried about work deadlines. But maybe it’s your procrastination, rather than the actual job demands, that leads to deadline stress.

- Go for a walk.
- Spend time in nature.
- Call a good friend.
- Sweat out tension with a good workout.
- Write in your journal.
- Take a long bath.
- Light scented candles
- Savor a warm cup of coffee or tea.
- Play with a pet.
- Work in your garden.
- Get a massage.
- Curl up with a good book.
- Listen to music.
- Watch a comedy