

## WRCR ISSUES/PROGRAMS

### Q-1 2023 PART 2

Another program of interest to general public is "The Beat of Behavioral Health" a monthly 50-minute program dealing with mental health issues. It is hosted by Rockland Behavioral Health Response Team and it airs first Thursday of the month adjacent to the Morning Drive show.

BHRT has an experienced team of mental Health professionals capable of responding immediately to requests for assistance or intervention with any behavioral health issue. The issues can range from serious emotional crisis to seeking guidance for behavioral health support. The Team will conduct a basic needs assessment, which is an essential part of the outreach process. We provide referrals to mental health providers and agencies to ensure that individuals and families receive the on-going care they need. In their **January** program they focused on the issue of stress and how to recognize and contain it. Recommendations are based on International Stress Management Association ([ISMA.org](http://ISMA.org)) recommendations.

Stress comes from "fight or flight" situations. That is a normal, protective response, however, when it is repeated frequently, it becomes stress. It can then result in depression, anxiety, insomnia, mood swings, all kinds of somatic symptoms, increase in alcohol or drug use, etc.

Therefore some advice was given to the audience about stress management and containment. The measures include:

Increasing physical activity, walking in nature,

Consuming a healthy diet

Learning to meditate,

Meeting with friends and talking,

Having a sense of humor,

Volunteering for a worthy cause,

Improving time management and finding time for yourself, etc.

In February, the team presented the issue of domestic violence and abuse. They first defined the issue, which is not only physical abuse, but can be verbal and just as harmful. It includes, for example, withdrawing medications from an elderly parent, etc. In causes analysis, it was mentioned that abusers have learned that behavior, but that it can also be a sign of mental illness. Frequently, abusers were victims of abuse themselves. As for victims, in US 30% of women become victims as well as 25% of men.

Prevention measures include: Spotting controlling behavior, attempts to isolate the victim from friends and family, excessive jealousy, destroying victims property, belittling them, etc. They advised victims to remove themselves from the situation. Resources available include National Domestic violence hotline at 800-799-7233, or locally, New City Center for Safety and Change. Their number is: 845-634-3344.

Another topic discussed was the grief after a loss of child. Friends close to the grieving parent should simply just “be there”, be present and available to help.

In their **March** program they touched upon the issue of post-partum depression and its symptoms of feeling overwhelmed, feeling guilt, having depressed mood, losing appetite, withdrawing, etc. If left untreated for longer than 2 weeks they can have consequences. The most urgent symptom is suicidality or ideas of harming the baby. BHRT teams connect people to resources and make appropriate referrals. [gocklandgov.com](http://gocklandgov.com) has a list of available resources and so does the state.

Keeping up with therapeutic regimen is important. Risk factors for PPD are underlying depression, stressful event during pregnancy, COVID pandemic, relationship issues and financial problems.

Treatment includes simple measures like breastfeeding, which reduces stress and inflammation, taking vitamin supplements, exercising, resting and sleeping.