



# SMRCS

Marathon Residential and Counseling Services, Inc.

Marathon Residential and Counseling Services, Inc.

Monthly E-mail Newsletter

July, 2016

Volume 16; Issue 7

## June Social Skills Group Conflict with Neighbors and Roommates

June's Social Skills Group was on the topic of **Neighbor and Roommate Conflict**. Therapist Justin led a discussion about common problems that come up between neighbors and roommates, how to prevent conflict over those problems, and how to deal with conflict when it does come up.

We discussed how some of the biggest problems with neighbors usually revolve around noise. When someone listens to their music or television loudly, hosts a loud party, uses power tools, owns an animal that makes loud or constant noise, or regularly argues loudly, it can be very disturbing to the people who live nearby, particularly if the sleep of others is being interrupted. In apartment buildings, even walking hard, talking loudly, and cleaning at late hours of the night can be disturbing to the neighbors above, below, and to the sides. Many of the group members could relate to feeling like a "herd of elephants" lived above them when their upstairs neighbors would walk hard. We also talked about how messy yards or other "eyesores" that are visible to others can cause problems between neighbors. The group cleverly pointed out that someone not cutting their lawn not only makes their yard ugly, it can create a pest problem too. If you need a safari hat and a machete to walk out your front door, that's a sign you need to mow your lawn more often!

When we have roommates, noise can certainly be a problem, but other things can become an issue as well. Everyone in the group could relate to the ways roommates can cross boundaries with eating each other's food, invading personal space, and having visitors over too often. We also discussed how cleaning habits can cause high tension due to not everyone having the same definition of the word "clean."

So, what can we do to help prevent conflicts from even happening? Therapist Justin suggested that the most effective way was to take responsibility for our own attitudes and actions, starting with developing empathy. Empathy is when we make an effort to understand how other people feel, which can help us greatly in predicting how other people might react to our own choices. How would I feel if someone else was choosing to vacuum the hallway while I am trying to sleep? I would be annoyed and possibly angry. When I think about it this way I can predict that other people might be annoyed and angry with me if I choose to vacuum the hallway while they are trying to sleep. We also talked about building "rapport," which is when you create a positive and respectful relationship with someone, and how this can help prevent conflicts because people

find it easier to forgive the mistakes of people they like. Therapist Justin suggested that the easiest way to do this is to just be friendly towards your neighbors and roommates. It is also important to remember that a little assertiveness can go a long way to prevent problems, because other people are not mind readers and don't always know what you want.

Lastly, we talked about how to handle conflict, because no matter how hard we try, nobody is perfect and conflicts eventually end up happening. The group was quick to identify that talking to another person directly and calmly about an issue is much more effective than being aggressive or passive-aggressive. Therapist Justin pointed out that our goal would be to resolve a conflict and keep relationships good, but using aggression or passive-aggression is likely to start a revenge cycle that will actually move us further from our goal. Similarly, if we try to be calm but we use "inflammatory language," such as calling someone's yard "gross" or saying that their room is "disgusting," it may lead to conflict rather than a solution. If assertiveness doesn't work, that is when we can get staff involved to help. Maybe they will have an idea that we didn't think of, or maybe they can step in and talk to the other person for us. Therapist Justin reminded everyone that we should always talk to staff before we resort to calling the police, because staff is very wise and can help us decide whether the police are necessary.



As a very last consideration, Therapist Justin encouraged the group to take responsibility for their mistakes when someone else brings up a problem. Giving an apology and making an honest effort to do better is often all that needs to happen to make a conflict disappear.

## Hamilton News

Summer is finally here and we can't wait to dip our toes in the pool and enjoy the beautiful weather! Summer Lovin'!

**Emily, Val, and Jeff** decided that designing their own shirts for WWE would be a great way to show their appreciation of professional wrestling! Val had a great time decorating her shirt and couldn't decide whose name she wanted on it, so she put all of the guy's names on! She even threw a dedication on her shirt to John Cena. Jeff went all out and needed his shirt to represent John Cena! Jeff waved his hand in front of his face and said "You can't see me!". We are so ready for Monday Night Raw!

This month had some action packed movies to be seen! **Jeff** saw the Xmen movie and loved all the super heroes and villains. **Val, Ellen,** and **Justin** saw the new Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles movie and they thought the crime fighting was out of this world.



**Sean** saw *Alice Through the Looking Glass* and thought there was just enough action and loved all the creativeness that went into it! Brittney and Val went the last Tuesday of the month and saw Central Intelligence. Brittney reported it was a great movie.



We had a *pawtastic* visitor at Hamilton House. **Mya, Emily's dog**, came and visited for a day. **Val, Jeff, Sean, Heather, Justin, TJ, Lee, and Aaron** all enjoyed sitting outside in the beautiful weather and played with her. Val loved getting her to do tricks, Jeff and Sean loved throwing her ball and watching her search for it when they faked her out! Heather loved seeing her jump for her toys, TJ, Aaron, and Justin sat in the grass and played with her till she was all pooped out. Mya had a great time and she can't wait to come back again!

One of **Ellen's** favorite things to do is travel. Ellen doesn't mind where she ends up because the journey to get there is what she

likes best. This month Ellen was able to go with Progressive Travel and tour the Mississippi River from Wisconsin to Iowa. She rode a Ferry, visited the Niabi Zoo, checked out the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium, hitched a ride on the Celebration Belle paddleboat, stopped at the Rochelle Railroad Park, and toured the John Deere Pavilion. If you ask Ellen about her favorite trips she will tell you that she enjoys visiting other states the best, but won't hesitate to ride along on other adventures. We hope you enjoyed your vacation Ellen!



**Jeff, Val, Ellen, Jackie, and Crystal** were moving and grooving at the Concert on the Square at the 400 Block. Everyone bopped their heads to the music. Crystal went up in front of the stage and danced with some friends. Jeff, Val, Ellen, and Jackie enjoyed the music from their chairs in the grass. We can't wait for the next Concert on the Square!

### Prospect Place News

It has been all fun in the sun at Prospect Place. **TJ and Justin** are busy doing planting at Monk Gardens on Thursdays for Gardening Club. Also during the month, Monk Gardens had a special exhibit called Raptors in the Park where the Raptors Education Group, Incorporated (REGI) provided information regarding a variety of birds in Wisconsin such as how much food different birds eat and how far away a bird can smell things from. There were live birds that were there with their trainers. The group was able to see a turkey vulture, barn owl, and falcon along with some other fun birds. The turkey vulture they had come to live with REGI because there was a barn fire and he was burned badly. **Heather, Justin and TJ** enjoyed the different booths and planting

their own sunflowers. **Jackie, Crystal** and **Shawn** from Seventh Street Suites also went to Raptors in the Garden. This was their second year going. They enjoyed going to eight different stations, one of the stations measured their arms compared to a bird's wing span. Shawn's and Crystal's arm's length was the length of an eagle and Jackie's was the length of a large owl. Crystal and Jackie enjoyed getting a temporary tattoo and their face painted along with planting some seeds in a pot. Shawn enjoyed socializing and getting ice cream afterwards. They learned some things about the raptors and enjoyed seeing them in person.



There have been other fun activities in the sun other than gardening. **Heather, Justin** and **TJ** enjoyed a day at **Kaiser Pool** for some swimming, splashing, going down the slides, and lying in the sun. They got the football out and threw it around. Heather went on several bike rides throughout the month. **Justin** was able to get in some walking as well.

When it comes to getting the singing on, no house does it better than Prospect Place! This is typically an every Friday activity. This month we had Seventh Street clients accompany us to a night of singing. Some of them hadn't been to karaoke in a while. Shawn H and Jeff danced to some songs. We even got a picture to prove it! Terra, Crystal, Jeff, and Justin enjoyed a couple games of pool. Todd enjoyed visiting with everyone and listening to all the singers. Heather and Rachel sang more than one song. Everyone had a blast.



Prospect Place had some exciting things occur on the work fronts for several people this month. Rachel reported that she wanted to apply at a local thrift store and is working with the Community Clubhouse to put her application in. Heather applied at a local fast food restaurant and had an interview. Though the position got filled, Heather did a great job of filling out an application, calling about her application and interview, and attending the interview itself. Hopefully this will lead to more opportunities for her. TJ was offered an additional day at work at his job as his work performance is stellar. He is one of the top performers at his job! Justin has started volunteering two days a week at Stable Hands instead of just one. Way to go Prospect Place!

## Seventh Street Suites Updates

Everyone at Seventh Street has been busy. **Juan** has been attending summer school and biking around the neighborhood. He has also been a great help with keeping the lawn mowed. **Mike P.** has gone camping with his father, hitting up Kaiser Pool on a regular basis and riding his bike. **Mike S.** purchased himself a new bike and has put on the most miles so far this summer. He has ridden to Rib Mountain, Ringle, Weston, and Schofield. He loves his new bike. He also took in the Shopko Carnival and is looking forward to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Festival at Marathon Park. **Shawn** went to a local car show at Weston Lanes and is busy keeping track of the upcoming car shows. **Matt** remains busy with work, video games and checking out the latest electronics. **Brittney** celebrated her birthday and went out to lunch on a few occasions. **Crystal** has been busy, busy, busy all month and her favorite thing has been the **Concerts on the Square**. **Jackie** has been getting out and going for a lot of walks in the neighborhood. **Terra** has made an employment change and is happy to back at the hotel she used to work at. She also remains busy training her and her boyfriend's new puppy Sherlock.



The **Garden Club** is meeting every Thursday. Seventh Street Suites has many members who attend including: **Mike S., Shawn, Crystal, Jackie, Juan and Brittney**. This month they planted tomatoes, potatoes, onions, watermelon and a small herb garden along with the pumpkin patch. The garden club had a party in the garden where **Mike S., Juan, TJ and Justin** went and had fresh watermelon and juice. We looked to see how everything is growing and checked out other group's gardens. The plants are doing very well. Great job everyone and thanks for all your help.

## Reynolds Place News

Summer is here and we are taking advantage of it here at Reynolds. On one of the hotter days we all took off to go to the public pool in town and stayed for the whole day. It was just what was needed to keep cool. We also did another waterpark trip later in the month, but this was slightly bigger. We went to Mt. Olympus to visit their waterpark. **Lee and Aaron** took part in this trip.

**Karen** has been doing some cooking lessons with the guys. So far she has showed the guys how to do Lasagna Rolls and some different chicken recipes. **Lee, Aaron, and Todd** are being big helpers. They have been able to use the herb garden that was started on the porch. It has been a great addition to our culinary experience. We will have to see if Karen will share one of her recipes in upcoming newsletters.

MRCS was invited to a special night at Mt. Olive Church. They provided a nice dinner and a few games of bowling at Dale's Weston Lanes. **Arron, Colton, Todd, Lee, Justin, Heather, TJ, Crystal, Shawn, Mike P, Juan, Sean, Val, Ellen and Jeff** attended and met up with a lot of people they knew. It was a great experience and we send our thanks to Mt. Olive for the invitation.

**Karaoke** is still going strong and **Todd** is a big fan. He joined a group that went out this month. Still no solos from him, but he was more than willing to cheer on the ones who did. Todd has also been enjoying the racing season. He has been able to go to one or two races at the speedway and loves to go every time he gets a chance to.



**Lee and Aaron** have been the “go to” people for lawn mowing this season. They are not just satisfied with doing our lawn and have branched out to other ones as well. We all really do appreciate their work. They do a good job and it all looks nice.



The annual Golden K Picnic took place. **Lee, Shawn, TJ, Jackie, Crystal, Justin, Jeff and Todd** attended. It was a fun time of games, music and food. A lot of visiting took place because many of the people know each other through the different programs they are involved in. It was a fun afternoon. **Thank you Kiwanis Club for hosting such a great party.**

### WWE Raw Trip

The month started with **Justin Jeff, Val, Mike S, and TJ** taking over Green Bay when they went to see **WWE Raw**. The group went to a delicious dinner at Applebee before heading out to the wrestling event. Everyone couldn't wait to see John Cena step into the ring for the first time in five whole months! We are John Cena's number one fans around here! All the matches were nail biters and no one was one hundred percent sure who would win each match!



Everyone's favorite match was the 6 man tag team at the very end. TJ, who is a huge Seth Rollins fan, got his tee shirt. Thomas has a love/hate feeling when it comes to John Cena. His favorite part was watching Cena get beat up by AJ Styles and The Club. Justin commented that the women wrestlers look some on TV but they are actually not. Val is now telling everyone with her hat “You can't see me”, which is John Cena's favorite line.



### Mt. Olympus Trip

The last fun in the sun outing for the month of June was a trip to Wisconsin Dells to Mt Olympus waterpark. **Justin, TJ, Heather, Lee, Aaron, and Jeff** all went. When we arrived, we had a picnic lunch. Everyone was excited to get to the water. The favorite attraction was The Poseidon Rage. This is a 9ft tidal wave that comes every 90 seconds. Heather was sitting in the pool on her back, superman style and pretzel leg. When the wave came, she got swept away no matter how she sat! TJ and Justin spent time in the Lost City of Atlantis riding the bowl and tube slides looking for mermaids. Arron and Lee both liked the wave pool there, but Aaron was a bit more adventurous and had to hit all the slides. It was a very fun day.

### Special Olympics News

To help kick off summer games, everyone gathered at the **400 Block to support Special Olympics for the 2016 Torch Run**. **Val, Jeff, Crystal, Lee, Todd and Ellen** cheered on all the runners and walkers as they left the 400 Block with the burning torch! **Sean** ran the torch run with a few of his friends from Special Olympics and got in a great work out for an even better cause! We are always happy to support Special Olympics every chance we get and are so thankful to have this resource.

This month **Sean, Crystal, Jackie, and Justin** started off their month in full swing. They attended a bocce tournament in Marshfield. They had fun participating in playing bocce and cheering on their peers. Bocce athletes also got to enjoy some yummy watermelon and ice cold popsicles while at the tournament. **Jeff and Juan** had a great time cheering on their fellow housemates and peers in their tournament as well as catching some beautiful sun rays. It was a gorgeous, perfect day to spend outside, but it was a hot one. The athletes also continue to have weekly practices.

Flag Football has also started this month. **Mike P., Crystal, Sean, Heather, TJ, Justin and Arron** are all participating this summer. Aaron has been looking forward to this since last season.

Wausau Metro Special Olympics had the annual summer party at the Knights of Columbus hall. **Heather, TJ, Justin, Crystal, Jackie, Juan, Sean** attended a spaghetti dinner. The party was to celebrate the end of the season for soccer and track.

In one final item this month, **Terra** wanted to share a picture of her new puppy, which she is very proud of.



**Marathon Residential and Counseling Services** has long enjoyed a staff second to none in the business of providing personal care services. We are dedicating this space to honoring our employees as they reach longevity milestones with MRCS.

We offer our sincere thanks and recognition to:

**Cailin Jones – 1 year**

6/9/15

**Dave Jones – 1 year**

6/9/15

### **Vacancy Announcements**

Please call Sue (715-551-8568) or Pam (715-432-2818) to discuss your placement and supportive home care needs. Additional information regarding our programs is available on our website or by brochure upon request.

[www.mrcs.us](http://www.mrcs.us)

If at any time you would like to be removed from this mail list, please click REPLY and simply enter UNSUBSCRIBE and your address will be immediately removed from the mailing list.