

North Shore Center LLC

April 2019 Newsletter



This month we are very happy and excited to welcome Samantha Shams to the North Shore Center team! Samantha is a Licensed Professional Counselor and a Substance Abuse Counselor. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin- Eau Claire and her masters in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at the University of Wisconsin- Whitewater in 2015. Samantha is now working to complete her PhD in Counseling Psychology with the University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee. She looks forward to working with adolescents and young adults who struggle with addiction.

Starting in June, the North Shore Center will be offering an engaging and fun social skills camp for children. Within this camp, children will learn about self-image, self-control, anger management, respect for others, eye-contact, accepting differences, and many other informative topics. This camp will be held for about an hour every Thursday morning at 10 a.m.. Insurance will be accepted. If you are interested in this great opportunity for your child or have any further questions, please contact Dr. Craig Abrams at (414) 628-4848.



Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD):

As we find ourselves in the midst of the transition from winter weather to more sunny, spring feeling days (hopefully), our mood begins to positively shift. It is not uncommon for an individual to have feelings associated with major depressive disorder during the late fall and winter months, this is known as Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD. Seasonal Affective Disorder is a type of depression that comes and goes with the seasons. This disorder normally starts in the late fall or early winter and persists until the early spring. SAD is not considered a separate disorder from depression, however, instead it is when an individual meets full criteria for major depression that coincides with specific seasonal changes.

Symptoms of Major Depressive Disorder:

- Feeling depressed for most of the day, almost everyday
- Feeling hopeless or worthless
- Low energy
- Lost interest in activities
- Problems with sleeping
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Fatigued or agitated
- Difficulty concentrating
- Frequent thoughts of death or suicide.

Symptoms of the Winter pattern of SAD

- Low energy
- Hypersomnia
- Overeating
- Weight gain
- Craving carbohydrates
- Social withdrawal (feeling of hibernating)

How To Treat SAD:

The specific causes of SAD are unknown, however research has found information linking it to biological differences. Individuals who experience SAD may have a harder time regulating serotonin levels (a neurochemical in the brain, responsible for our moods.) Those who experience SAD have 5% more serotonin transporter protein in the winter months compared to the summer. This causes there to be less serotonin available in the brain. Those with SAD also overproduce melatonin because the winter days are shorter and darker, leaving them feeling more lethargic. These biological imbalances can be altered through different types of treatment.

- Light Therapy
 - This bright artificial light is used to replace the natural sunlight that may be diminished during the fall and winter months.
- Psychotherapy
 - Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is used to treat SAD by having the individual identify their negative thoughts and replace them with more positive thoughts.
- Vitamin D
 - Individuals with SAD present with low levels of vitamin D in their blood due to insufficient sunlight exposure or insufficient dietary intake. It is beneficial to pair a vitamin D supplement with other forms of SAD treatment.

**If you have any questions, or would like to request a topic for future newsletters, please contact us at Admin@northshorecenterllc.com or (262) 241-5955.

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References:

Seasonal Affective Disorder. (n.d.). Retrieved from
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/seasonal-affective-disorder/index.shtml>