

**May, 2020**

**Heritage Center**

**SOCIAL SERVICES RESOURCES  
UPDATE**

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# You Are Not Alone!

During this pandemic, many of us are experiencing a wide range of emotions such as fear, dread, anxiety, grief, sense of loss from normalcy, sense of being overwhelmed or maybe even numbness. It is also a time when many, especially seniors and children, are experiencing a range of psychological losses. We normally discourage isolation, and encourage people to seek out activities, and spend time with peers. Now we are advising: you must be isolated or practice social distancing for your own health and safety. From a psychological or emotional perspective this is not a “normal” suggestion or advice. So as times goes on, feelings of confusion, loneliness, instability, and even depression may set in for seniors, children, and even for the rest of us.

Then we have those who may have experienced a loss during this pandemic and that experience in itself is an arduous and painful journey. Those who may be ill in a hospital, but can't have their loved ones physically near them; Missing a hug from a dear friend during trying times; Not having your support system sitting with you as you grieve your loved one.

Without access to a support system such as the schools, community clubs, friends or relatives, stress for families increases. Here in Redding, following what is happening nationally, our police department has reported a 50% increase in domestic or family violence. While every case is different, there is a common thread of anxiety, frustration, anger, fear, and scars of trauma for each of the family members. So as we look at this overall picture, how do we navigate these uncharted and unknown territories?

One way is through mindfulness or meditation. While we are living in moments of uncertainty, it's important to pay close attention to

how we view our thoughts and our reactivity. Anxious thoughts may convert into thousands of tragic stories in our mind causing panic. A simple exercise that we can do is to sit down with our spine straight and simply take a few deep breaths. If that seems too hard to do at the moment, try to practice some grounding exercises in which we pay attention to the "body senses." For example, you can tell yourself I can feel my feet touching the ground, I can feel my hands touching my knees, I can hear the song birds, and I can see the tree (*there are plenty of trees to practice this*). This helps with getting all of the anxious energy in the body to slowly calm down and remember to breathe. If possible, let the thoughts and the emotions come and go. Try not to dive into the thoughts and create a story. By doing that sometimes, our thoughts can become a wildfire. It is important to breathe and let the thoughts or emotions come and go.

People think meditation or mindfulness has to be done in a "zen spa" set up. That is far from true; You can try these exercises even with kids creating chaos.

Another common problem that people have is struggling with sleep. As you lie down in bed, put one hand on your heart and the other on your belly and take slow deep breaths and just feel the breath (*go with the flow*).

The best gift you can give yourself is the gift of rest and refuge during this difficult time. Please note that you are not alone and there is help out there. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my team. Please look below for various resources and support.

Angelica Fontanez, LCSW  
Director of Social Services  
for Town of Redding  
203-938-3580



## Things to Reduce Stress

*(Practicing these things just a few minutes a day can make a huge difference)*

Here are some resources on meditation and mindfulness that could be useful at this time. Feel free to share. These are all *free* and only require payment if you want premium features. *(Click on the names for links.)*

There are several Apps you can install on your phone including:

- [Calm](#)
- [Headspace](#)
- [Abide](#) (*Christian Meditation App*)
- [Mindbody](#)
- [Insight Timer](#)
- [Sleep Cycle](#)
- [10% Happier](#)

**The Breathing Room** in New Haven is also offering meditation sessions via zoom, some of them are free, others have a fee. They offer Yoga and Meditation.

For those of you on **Instagram**, you're welcome to follow Social Services' own Dev Patel at *Aspire Mental Performance*, where he will be sharing weekly guided meditations, tailored specifically to the pandemic.

Visit **Insight Meditation Society** via website or Facebook page (*daily teachings and guided meditation*).

## **Heritage Center Virtual Tai Chi & Yoga**

*Prior to the class please connect with the instructor via the listed email so you can join the Zoom session.*

### **Mondays:**

9:00 a.m. **Beginner Tai Chi:** \$5/session  
Instructor: Deby Goldenberg  
Email: [karateyogagirl@yahoo.com](mailto:karateyogagirl@yahoo.com)

10:00 a.m. **Intermediate Tai Chi:** Pay instructor directly  
Instructor: June Fagan  
Email: [kemposenseijune@gmail.com](mailto:kemposenseijune@gmail.com)

### **Tuesdays:**

5:00 p.m. **Yoga for the Rest of Us:** No fee  
Instructor: Jean Rexford  
Email: [jeanreford@aol.com](mailto:jeanreford@aol.com)

### **Thursdays:**

11:15 a.m. **Intermediate Tai Chi:** Pay instructor directly

Instructor: June Fagan

Email: [kemposeijune@gmail.com](mailto:kemposeijune@gmail.com)

1:45 p.m. **Yoga Nidra - complete relaxation:** \$8/session

Instructor: Deby Goldenberg

Email: [karateyogagirl@yahoo.com](mailto:karateyogagirl@yahoo.com)



## **Crisis Resources**

### **Mobile Crisis Intervention Services for Youth**

**LOCATION: WELLMORE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH - DANBURY  
CLINICAL SERVICES**

#### *DESCRIPTION*

Mobile crisis intervention team for children and youth will go to homes, community sites, and emergency rooms to assess psychiatric emergency and to provide emergency intervention and brief in-home follow up when indicated for children and adolescents ages 0 through 17 - Will also take 18 and 19 year old adolescents who are still in school.

Mobile response is provided M-F: 6am-10pm; Sat, Sun, Holidays: 1-10pm. Phone response is provided 24 hr/7.

*LOCATION:* 72 West Street, Unit 402, Danbury, CT 06810  
*PHONE:* 203-797-9778

## **Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services for Adults**

**DANBURY HOSPITAL - WESTERN CONNECTICUT HEALTH NETWORK**

**LOCATION: DANBURY HOSPITAL - PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCY SERVICES/CRISIS INTERVENTION CENTER**

### *DESCRIPTION*

Emergency psychiatric outreach for adults in Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield, Roxbury, and Sherman.

### *ELIGIBILITY*

Age 18+; Resident of Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield, Roxbury, Sherman

*LOCATION:* 24 Hospital Avenue, Danbury, CT 06810

*PHONE:* 203-739-7799

Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services Provided

## **First Responders and Healthcare Workers**

**Support Group.** This service is free and open to the general public. Click here: **[Virtual First Responders and Healthcare Workers Support Group](#)**

**High Watch:** With the COVID-19 pandemic spreading rapidly and AA meetings shutting down or becoming harder to access, **High Watch** will be providing a remote access online meeting

every day of the week. This way friends and alumni can still get the recovery they need from the comfort of their own home. It is important to stay connected despite social isolation, and we must work together to protect our sobriety.

**Redding Police crisis phone number:** non-emergency phone number is **203-938-3400** or **911** for emergencies

**Please note** there is always help at the **Redding Food Pantry** (203) 938-3580) and **United Way** program ([application here](#))

**For parents and caregivers** who need someone to listen, to understand and to talk your feelings out. Call: **1-833-258-5011**, Visit: [www.talkitoutct.com](http://www.talkitoutct.com), Watch: [TalkITOutCT.com](http://TalkITOutCT.com) - PSA



Despite the challenging and trying times that we are going through, it has been amazing to see the compassion, generosity, and creativity that has risen from the community. In the past few weeks, we have received an outpouring of donations and people

wanting to volunteer. At the moment, the number of volunteers surpasses the number of residents requesting help.

Thanks to your generous donations, our food pantry has been consistently full. We are thrilled that a local volunteer has been able to coordinate delivery of fresh fruit and produce to those with compromising health issues. In a future Blast, we will mention all of the civic groups, churches, school groups, and other organizations that have put all of their energy and effort to helping their fellow neighbor in need.

I would like to share one lovely story in which you see the strength and impact of community collaboration. A Redding police officer reached out to me (*late on a Friday afternoon*) regarding a wellness concern about a vulnerable senior couple. I was able to pack up items from the food pantry and on short notice have a volunteer deliver it to them. As it turned out, this young volunteer lived on exactly on the same street as the couple. They did not know each other prior to this so it was heart-warming to see a youth and a senior developing an important connection through this pandemic.



**For donations to the Redding Food Pantry,  
Redding Shares the Warmth, Salvation Army**

**Redding Unit or United Way Alice Program** to help your friends and neighbors, please click [here](#).  
Donations in this time of need are greatly appreciated!



For access to the Redding home page on Facebook, click here **Redding CT on Facebook**

**Above all, stay home, stay safe, be well!**

