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Mindful Gig Harbor Therapist Pitches R and R for Relief

By Scott Turner (Contact)
Thursday, March 26, 2009

Saturday Meditation Classes

- Gig Harbor: 7700 Pioneer Way, Suite 201 from 8 to 9:15 a.m.
- Key Peninsula: Key Fitness, 8908 Key Peninsula Highway, Lakebay from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.



Photo by Scott Turner

Ned Bratspis has a busy therapy practice in Gig Harbor and has been helping folks find solutions to problems for close to 20 years.

"When we started getting serious with other, she said 'if you're really interested in getting closer and seeing what we can do, let's go to counseling together.'

"I agreed. And, I got so much out of it, that when we finished, I said, 'I'm going to do this for a living,' and I did," he said gazing up from his favorite therapist chair.

He said that meeting his wife was a huge part of fashioning his life. Because of her help, when he received his college degree, he joked that his wife probably could have gotten one right along with him, because she helped him study so much.

Bratspis has been helping people with their problems ever since.

In his line of work people have different ideas about what therapy is, and it's often much different than they'd ever expected it to be, he added.

For Ned Bratspis, not only is practicing marriage and family therapy something he loves to do, it's something that chills him out at the same time.

The official name of his Gig Harbor-run business is called Ned Bratspis, MA LMFT.

During a recent chat in his Pioneer Way office, it didn't take long to determine that not only is he a good listener, but this good-humored gent can talk pretty well too.

Although Bratspis, 58, has only been working in the harbor for three years, he has been practicing behavioral counseling and psychotherapy with clients for almost 20 years.

What makes this guy different is that he actually uses a few of his own mental tools to help keep himself calm, cool, collected — and smiling.

Bratspis' journey into the mental wellness profession had a kooky start that ended up landing him a wife and a fulfilling career.

He took a deep breath, then told his tale that started in California some 26 years ago.

Bratspis was working as a pastry chef when Leslie, his wife stepped into his life. Little did he know then, that she'd be the best thing that ever happened to him.



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"If something is going on with you and you think you might benefit from getting some help, talk to some people that you know who have had a positive experience with therapy and see what they have to say," Bratspis said. "It's a fact that everybody needs a hand or extra guidance once in awhile," he added.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Bratspis starts with an interview to see if his potential client(s) is a good match.

If they are, he finds out what's troubling them and what kind of things that they've done to-date to deal with it.

He said he seeks each patient's strengths and uses them to guide them throughout their healing process.

"We try to set up goals so that it's not just 'blah, blah, blah, yeah, yeah, yeah' all the time. We come up with a plan and work on it as we go, and then evaluate it at different points along the way," Bratspis said.

Each person is different, and so are their methods of treatment, he said. That's what makes it so much fun and challenging at the same time.

"Sometimes during the process painful things often come up, but I have a gentle approach with people, which is something important I believe everyone needs."

Another unique approach Bratspis uses for healing are his Saturday morning stress reducing Mindfulness Meditation classes.

Whether a client or a first-time student, his classes are designed to soften tension, the body, the breath, and to calm the mind. This type of meditation has been known to help lower blood pressure, and help people sleep better at the same time, he said.

Bratspis said his practice and the meditation classes may be two separate things, but the benefits from his Mindfulness Meditation classes are an important aspect for him to share with the community.

"People tend to make better decisions when they're calm and their minds are clear," Bratspis added. "These classes are set up for anyone that wants to enjoy some personal quiet reflection and relaxation."

For information, call (253) 514-0525 or visit relaxingone.com.

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