

BC3 adds endorphin-sparking activities to “priceless” opioid addiction initiative

Second series of free “Reset Your Brain” classes to include yoga, meditation and outdoor adventure

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(Butler, PA) Butler County Community College’s second series of free classes promoting the efficacy of natural endorphin-resurrecting approaches to overcome opioid addiction will expand to include those very activities scientifically proven to awaken the brain’s endorphin hibernation, according to a Cranberry Township licensed therapist.

Steve Treu is the author of “Hope is Dope: Achieving Chemical Balance” and “New Eyes: A Unifying Vision of Science & Spirituality.” The licensed therapist with Quantum Revolution Counseling, Cranberry Township, calls the opioid epidemic “one of the largest the whole country, maybe even the whole world, has ever faced.”



Steve Treu, a licensed therapist with Quantum Revolution Counseling, Cranberry Township, addresses a crowd estimated at 250 inside Butler County Community College’s Succop Theater during BC3’s kickoff event of “Reset Your Brain: A Revolutionary Approach to Opioid Addiction & Recovery” on Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2018.

Treu will return to instruct BC3’s second series of four classes titled “Reset Your Brain: A Revolutionary Approach to Opioid Addiction & Recovery.”

BC3’s “Reset Your Brain” initiative, which represents an objective in the college’s 2017-2022 strategic plan by focusing on quality of life, will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. June 4, June 11, June 18 and June 25.

Class 1, titled “It’s All in Your Head” and Class 2, “A Unified Diversity,” will be held at Family Pathways, 100 Brugh Ave., Butler. Class 3, “Just Say Yes,” and Class 4, “Putting It All Together,” will be held at the Butler Art Center, 344 S. Main St., Butler.

Treu’s four presentations in April – to those using opioids, to those in recovery, to relatives, friends and therapists interested in the cure he outlines in his 2016 books – opened the eyes and held the attention of the program’s 44 participants, Tracy Hack said.

“There was one gentleman,” said Hack, BC3’s coordinator of Community Leadership Initiatives, “who came up and said, ‘I treat addiction. I totally did not think that this was curable.’ But at the end of the fourth class, he said, ‘This is curable.’”

Participant: Course “can empower people and change their lives”

Hope, Treu says, “specifically produces an opioid-like substance in the brain. Complaining does not. Sitting around and moping and being hopeless and depressed do not produce endorphins.”

Hope, added Kathy Nick, a certified recovery specialist from Clarion who also attended the April presentations, “is needed in my profession and these classes gave me inspiration. The thing that I unexpectedly gained from the classes was the knowledge that there actually is a cure to opioid addiction.”

A cure by definition, Treu emphasizes, is the “relief of the symptoms of a disease or a condition.”

Other April participants said: “The thing I gained most from this class was the in-depth science of addiction and how the brain is affected”; “Learning a new hopeful perspective on addiction and recovery was so beneficial”; and “Finally, chemistry of the brain and opioid addiction are making the front page.”

“BC3’s classes gave me insight into the scientific nature of addiction that is rarely talked about, but vital to understanding it,” said April participant Kenneth Clowes, of Butler, who works in the opioid recovery field. “As a person in recovery myself, looking to help and teach others what I learned in the class is priceless and I am very grateful to BC3 and everyone involved. This course has the ability to empower people and change their lives.”

As do the “hands-on” activities that are scientifically proven to awaken the brain’s endorphin hibernation, Treu said, and that will be implemented into BC3’s second series of classes.

Those activities and presentations include integrative restoration meditation; art and music; selecting endorphin foods, by the Community Health Clinic of Butler County; yoga and meditation, by Joni Staaf Sturgill, Healthy Body Peaceful Soul, Pittsburgh; and animal therapy, in which Butler County Humane Society representatives will bring dogs and cats available for adoption.

“Any natural way to turn on dopamine receptors is positive”

Participants who attend all four classes receive a BC3 certificate of completion, a one-year free pass to the Butler YMCA, 339 N. Washington St., and a free class at Yoga on Main, 101 N. Main St., Butler. They can also elect to participate in a proposed outdoor adventure day coordinated by Josh Thompson, of the Coalition for Christian Outreach, and which may feature canoeing and kayaking at Moraine State Park.

“Our brains,” said Thompson, of Butler, “are dopamine machines. Whatever it is, our brains chase dopamine. Exercise, outdoor adventures, any natural way to turn on dopamine receptors is positive.”

Like endorphins, dopamine is another critical brain chemical that can reinforce healthy behaviors such as exercise.

BC3, according to Hack, continues to collaborate with Butler County businesses to create opportunities for participants to practice endorphin-producing activities at the Butler Art Center, the Butler County Humane Society, the Butler Area Public Library, the Butler YMCA, the Community Health Clinic of Butler County, Cummings Candy & Coffee and Yoga on Main.

Gov. Tom Wolf in January declared the opioid epidemic a statewide disaster emergency, a first of its kind proclamation for a public health crisis in Pennsylvania. The Drug Enforcement Agency reported the number of fatal drug overdoses in the state in 2016 to be 4,642, a 37 percent increase over 2015, Wolf’s office said.

BC3’s “Reset Your Brain” classes are free to those who register. Registration is required to attend the classes. Register at bc3.edu/reset.