



THE WOODSTOCK MANOR

Healing within a loving family.



Natural beauty.

Nurturing relationships.

Purposeful activity.

Recovery is already starting . . .

You approach a magnificent Victorian house on a country road framed by thick stands of evergreens. In the huge backyard, dogs frolic with their human friends. A few folks are planting bulbs. Beyond are lush forests and the blue Catskill Mountains.

Step inside and your nose responds with pleasure — something delicious is cooking! Pork loin with baked yams. Or orange beef stir-fry delicately seasoned with Asian spices. On the kitchen table sits a made-from-scratch chocolate cake fresh from the oven. You see residents making salad dressing and whipping up chocolate frosting. Our chef doesn't hand out menial tasks . . . she teaches creative cooking. And oh, the smiles of pride when dinner is served!

Welcome to the Woodstock Manor, an innovative group home for adults seeking mental health. This gabled mansion filled with mouthwatering aromas, creative cooks and chirping birds, gardeners and poets and lots of cooperative helping offers healing and recovery beyond all expectations.

The healing power of family.

We are a family-owned and family-operated group home serving the needs of adults with psychiatric disorders. ***Our family lives right in the facility with the residents.*** So we are always there. Always available. To talk. To listen. To laugh at a joke. To support through a difficult moment — or month.



And, like family, we get to know each other in an intimate and deeply caring way. This lets us develop personalized goals and treatment plans with residents as partners. We are able to continually observe how each resident is doing, and to modify treatment when necessary. Over the last 30 years, we have seen and managed every imaginable crisis that the human mind can present.

As residents become part of a loving family, they experience growth and healing considered "impossible" by the mainstream mental health community.

Who we are. How we can help.

We are located in New York's scenic Catskill Mountains, minutes from the arts community of Woodstock. Our 21 residents live in sunny, spacious single or double rooms. Stays can be short-term or longer.



Together, staff and residents work toward personal development through wholesome physical activity, top-notch nutrition, growth-enhancing programs and personal relationships with staff and each another.

We build toward each resident's full participation in the community life of the Woodstock Manor. Healing occurs as residents feel a sense of belonging, relate trustingly to others, and discover that they have something valuable to contribute to the group.

A focus on humanity. Not pathology.

We regard our residents as people who communicate through their behavior. As a family of stage actors and educators, we are trained in communicating; and as mental health practitioners for 30 years, we are skilled at speaking the languages of the disordered mind. Instead of challenging or restricting a different mode of communication, we enter into it, share it, then coax the person toward more productive ways of thinking, feeling, expressing and behaving.

Trust is the foundation of our healing work.

Many ways to grow throughout the day.

Each staff person functions as a skilled, compassionate teacher. And every activity is seen as an opportunity to boost focusing ability, to build practical skills, and to deliver the healing riches of self-esteem born of real achievement.

So our full-time chef doesn't just supervise the residents as they scrape carrots. Instead, she teaches creative, joyful cooking and baking. To prepare residents for independent living, our chef also shows how to cook **individual portions** of every meal. Our housekeepers don't just dust and mop as residents look on passively. Instead, with patience and kindness, they teach how to keep one's room and assigned area clean and tidy. All staff members teach how to care for and train our many animals, as taking responsibility for another living creature is a key building-block of recovery from the isolation of mental illness. Staff also help people tend our extensive, lush grounds. As flowers and herbs bloom under the hands of our residents, they feel a healing connection to larger cycles of nature beyond their own lives and concerns.



A goal and treatment plan as individual as each resident.

For one person, the current goal can be taking a daily shower. For another, it may be learning to kick the habit of years of institutional eating and discovering how to eat nutritiously. For others, goals can be taking their meds as prescribed, learning to control their symptoms, or working at a job in town. For people for whom it is appropriate, we focus on a long-term goal of independent living in mainstream society.

The path to these goals can be a long one. Yet there are no deadlines at the Woodstock Manor. A resident stays with us until they are ready for discharge.

And we celebrate each small step taken along the way.

Activities that move the body, stimulate the mind and nourish the spirit.

On any given day, our residents engage in *many* of the following: Music therapy, Movement therapy, Poetry therapy, Poetry appreciation workshops, Cognitive games, Current events discussion, Pet therapy — grooming *and* training, Exercise program, Cooking therapy — doing *and* teaching others, Flower gardening, Landscaping, Nutrition program, Tai Chi class — gentle, balance-promoting movement, Qui Gong — relaxed movement meditation, Independent living skills program

Pharmacology: Less is more.

We work toward finding the lowest level of medication needed. So the personality emerges, the true self is experienced, the resident has a minimum of disorienting side-effects, and starts to move toward regaining wholeness from the inside out.

Reducing medication to the lowest level possible is one of the pillars of our effective, multi-pronged approach to recovery that includes the Woodstock Manor's loving family environment, high level of nutrition, growth-fostering activities, and the slow and steady rebuilding of self-esteem and selfhood.



Our history . . . the discovery of a better treatment

During the '60s, Henry Howard, then a stage actor, lived for a time at Kingsley Hall in London, the innovative psychiatric community started by Scottish psychiatrist R.D. Laing. There, 33 schizophrenic patients and therapists lived together — an alternative to long-term, drug-dependent institutionalization. In this loving, home-like atmosphere, patients weren't restrained, confronted or stupefied by drugs. Healing occurred as staff understood the communicative meaning of patients' unusual speech and behavior; guiding patients to find the mental stability each naturally sought. **Inspired by this powerfully healing environment, Henry knew his lifework was to create it in America. Henry has done this . . . at the Woodstock Manor.**

Part of the world around us.

One key way we prepare residents for independent living in the larger community is to find ways they can participate in that community. Feel part of it. **Actively contribute to it.**

So we plug residents into a wealth of community resources — workshops, lessons, classes, trips, cultural experiences, local jobs, volunteering, and spiritual and religious experiences of various types.

Meanwhile, the Woodstock Manor remains their safe haven, a place to come home to after testing their wings in the world.

- Classes at the Woodstock School of Art
- Riding lessons at a local stable
- Local pottery classes
- Private photography classes
- Participation in the communal Woodstock Drum Circle
- Volunteer work at the Woodstock Animal Sanctuary and local animal shelters
- Trips to the local library
- Taking our holiday choral program “on the road” to malls and nursing homes
- Paying jobs in town
- Trips to attend concerts and dance performances at the historic Bardavon performance center in Poughkeepsie, the Egg Center for the Performing Arts in Albany, and the Ulster County Arts Center in nearby Kingston
- Movies in town
- Talks at libraries
- Theater trips to Manhattan
- Meditation workshops at a local Buddhist monastery
- Religious services of all denominations



Here there are no limits to growth.

Stacey came to us crawling on all fours, speaking in tongues, and eating grass. 18 months later, she is living on her own and going to college.*

Sunk in depression, Mark slept all day for months. Then, gradually, his dormant cooking talents awakened and he delighted us with entire meals. As Mark's self-esteem grew, he took a job in town. He was a competent and well-liked worker. Today he lives on his own.

We know the brain is malleable. In a loving, accepting environment, the brain changes. It begins to heal. We see this happen again and again at the Woodstock Manor.

After five years at the Woodstock Manor, Jim began to smile. Judy has lost 20 pounds and permanently changed her eating habits. Sam has blossomed into a gifted poet. Fred started singing publicly. . . a lifelong dream.

*Names changed to preserve confidentiality

To find out more about the Woodstock Manor, please call us at 845-679-2761. Ask for our director, Henry Howard.



WOODSTOCK MANOR

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