

'Togetherness' Seen Vital Ingredient In Modern Approach To Mental Health Problem

Second of Three Dispatches
By HELENA FROST
Newspaper Enterprise Assn.
NEW YORK (NEA)—Living is rough for most of us in this world of tensions. It is very rough for the mentally ill.

And it is not good enough to salvage them and then throw them back to sink or swim. They need help to swim again or for the first time, because people who need psychiatric care do not really have the confidence to

plunge into living.

This is the general reasoning of those who are working to safeguard the recovering mental patient against rehospitalization.

Dr. Donald M. Carmichael, director of Aftercare Clinics in New York City for the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene, summarizes thinking about aftercare and rehabilitation this way:

"It is necessary for many patients to be hospitalized, but aftercare is just as necessary. You need a convalescent program to help the patient stay out of the hospital. Medical aftercare, psychotherapy, vocational and social rehabilitation—any or all may be necessary to help him take a useful place in the community."

President Kennedy's program for mental health, proposed to

Congress, is founded on the community.

Dr. Carmichael believes that state and local mental health associations are in a unique position to bring a concerned community into the "comprehensive community mental health centers" described by the President.

Social and legal stigma are deeply rooted in the long and tragic history of mental illness. Mental health associations have been helping to change the harsh and antiquated laws governing admission to mental hospitals, while the parent organization, the National Association for Mental Health, has sustained a steady educational barrage against public rejection and lethargy. As a result, community concern is growing in certain states; and the seeds the President has sown be-

gin to germinate.

Satisfaction is too mild a word to describe Dr. Carmichael's feeling about the law just passed by the New York legislature. He said: "At long last a patient can enter a mental hospital informally, without signing any document. And he can also leave whenever he wants to. This means that a man suffering from a mental or emotional disorder can ask for help exactly as he would for gallstones or an ulcer."

This has been a fact of life in Britain since the 1929 Mental Health Bill. More than 80 per cent of mental patients in British hospitals are there by choice and as Dr. Carmichael points out:

"Stigma has been eliminated, and that's very important. When a patient enters a hospital voluntarily, he and his family enter into partnership with the hospital personnel. The doctor can draw upon the patient's innate capacity for self-help, and nothing is more important—as we have discovered here."

"Here" is the Brooklyn Day Hospital, a subsidiary service for

the Aftercare Clinics. A clinic may decide that a patient needs additional intensive treatment at the Day Center.

The patients prefer to call it a "Center," just as they think of themselves as "members," and their activities as "classes" or "meetings."

"It's not a question of semantics," said Dr. Floyd W. Carneal, psychiatrist-in-charge of the Day Center. "The terminology, the popping out to the corner drugstore for lunch, running their own meetings, conducting social functions and outings—it's all good therapy. They learn to live with others, to take responsibility in their community."

A sheltered community, a therapeutic community, yes—but still a community and one that runs with remarkably little disorder. It is fascinating and heartwarming to spend a day at the Center.

At a Therapeutic Community Meeting, attended by all patients and staff members, a young woman said, "I think we ought to have membership cards." Another expressed civic concern about the fire hazard of paper discarded in ashtrays. Someone suggested a

The Brooklyn Day Center has a full 9:30 to 4:30 day of activities Red Bank.

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Community Calendar

FRIDAY
RUMMAGE SALE, Manzanita Social Club, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Clyde's Towing.

SHASTA VIEW GRANGE, 8 p.m., meeting, 9 p.m. cake walk and dance. Public invited.

GREAT DECISIONS, United Nations Group, 7:45 p.m., joint meeting, First Presbyterian fire-side room. Speaker, Elmer Harnden.

SATURDAY
KLAMATH LANK LODGE #60, VOA, 8 p.m., memorial program, IOOF Hall.

KLAMATH COUNTY RETIRED TEACHERS, 1:30 p.m., YMCA. Exchange student speaker.

AAUW, 12:30 p.m., luncheon, Winema Hotel. Claude Hall, speaker. Reservations, Mrs. Stan Neitling, TU 2-5332.

RUMMAGE SALE, Manzanita Social Club, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Clyde's Towing.

MIDLAND GRANGE HOME EC 8 p.m., card party, grange hall.

MERRY MIXERS, 8 p.m., mortgage burning square dance, 10:30 p.m., potluck, Pelican City Hall. Caller, Stan Bouk.

N.C.O. WIVES CLUB, Kingsley Field, 6:30 p.m., dinner dance, N.C.O. Club. Reservations, TU 2-5307.

SUNDAY
COUPLE'S CLUSTER, 7 p.m., meeting, potluck, First Methodist Church. Bring salad or dessert and ground round.

MONDAY
AAUW, 12 noon, Monday luncheon, Winema Hotel. William Sweetland, speaker. Reservations, Mrs. Stan Neitling, TU 2-5332.

PARENTS' GROUP, Tulelake High School, 7:30 p.m., meeting, high school music room.

BETHEL NO. 61, Job's Daughters, 7:30 p.m., meeting, Scottish Rite Temple.

NEIGHBORS OF WOODCRAFT, 8 p.m., meeting, K.C. Hall. Novelty hat night.

Grass Fire Extinguished

City firemen extinguished a grass fire on the bank of the government canal, along the 1100 block of High Street, about 10:02 p.m., in one of two calls answered by the Klamath Falls Fire Department Wednesday.

The fire was reported by a person who observed youngsters set the canal bank afire and then flee, firemen said.

FISHERMEN!

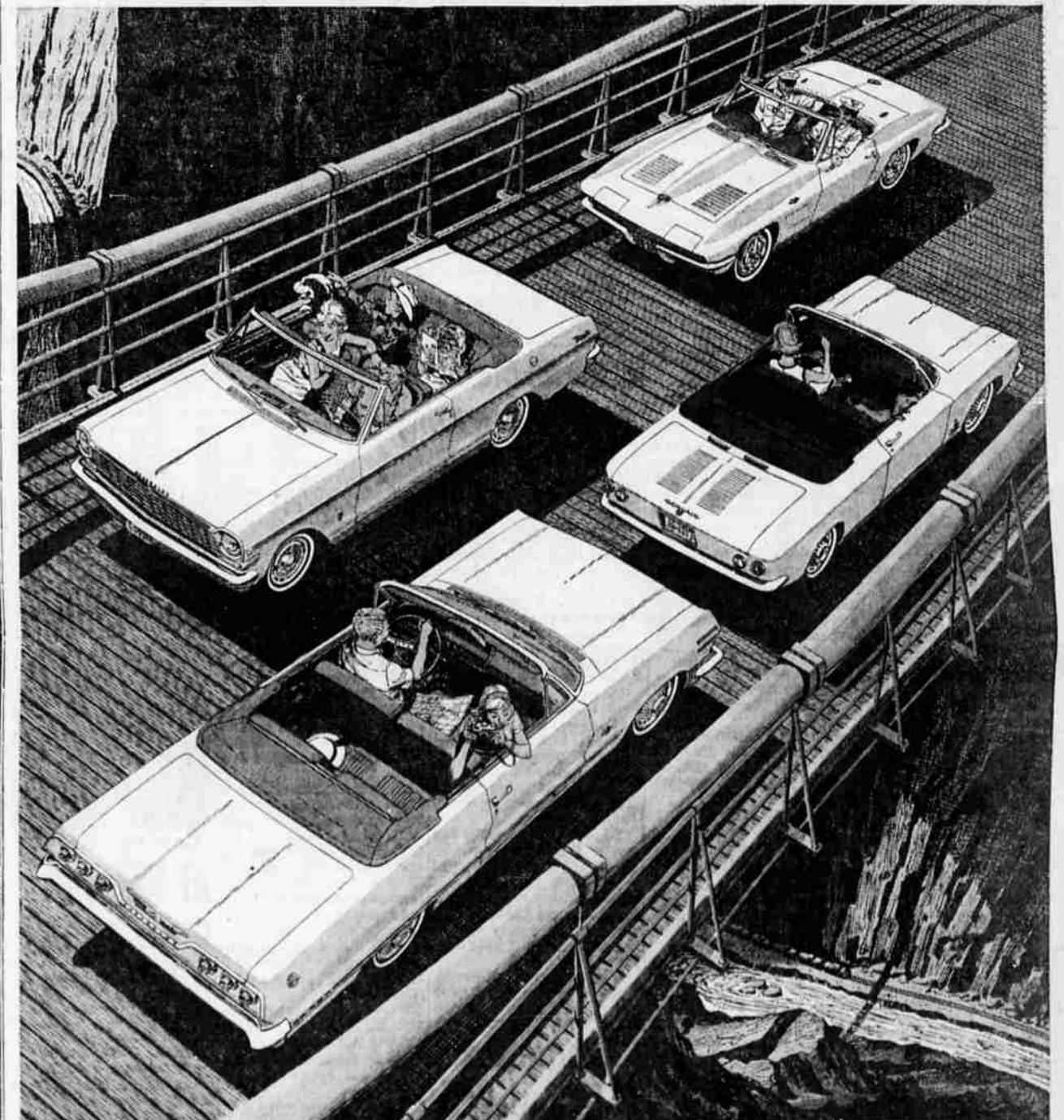
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