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Strategic Relationships

*From the Desk of Dale Shreve,
mhca President & CEO*

During our Winter Conference in Clearwater Beach, Florida, growth strategist and best-selling author David Nour spoke about strategic relationship planning and the quantifiable value of business relationships. Some of Nour's insights reinforced what **mhca** has been saying for years – relationships are our most valuable assets, but they require thoughtful, ongoing investment if we want to achieve significant returns. But during his conference presentations and in his recent book, *Relationship Economics*, Nour went on to outline proven strategies for determining which relationships should be prioritized, and how to build strategic relationships that reduce transaction costs, deepen loyalty and provide access to opportunities:

1. **Identify** which relationships you need to cultivate by thinking about your goals – what is it you are striving for and what relationships will help you get there?
2. **Initiate** relationships with key players you don't already know. The best strategy is a trust-centric approach that relies on a mutual

connection willing to make an introduction. The goal of your initial meeting is to build rapport, establish credibility and determine if there is a logical next step, such as a call, a follow up visit, or a chance to meet others and discuss challenges and opportunities.



Dale Shreve

3. **Instill confidence** in the relationship by committing to do something for them, and then delivering what you promised. Keep it simple and don't make more than three commitments in a single visit.
4. **Nurture** your relationship by consistently demonstrating you have an interesting point of view and taking note of their likes/dislikes and unique interests.
5. **Sustain** your relationship by finding ways to alleviate pain triggers (whether they be functional, social, emotional or ancillary) and identify potential

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Spring in Cincinnati - Don't Miss These Queen City Gems!



The Westin Cincinnati is located on **Fountain Square**, a vibrant gathering spot that hosts a variety of public events. On Tuesday from 11 am - 2 pm, just step outside to visit local vendors offering everything from fresh produce and lunch food to sweet treats and handmade items. On Thursday, enjoy food trucks in the afternoon and check out Salsa on the Square from 7-10 pm featuring hot salsa bands, skilled dancers, and free salsa dancing tips from expert instructors.

Explore downtown and beyond by foot, streetcar or riverboat. Downtown is very walkable and a system of public staircases known as the “**Steps of Cincinnati**” guides pedestrians up and down the city’s many hills providing scenic views of the area. If walking isn’t for you, Cincinnati recently constructed a modern streetcar line, the **Cincinnati Bell Connector**, serving downtown and Over the Rhine, and several companies offer sightseeing tours on the Ohio River by riverboat.

Cincinnati’s German heritage is reflected in local breweries, as well as restaurants specializing in schnitzels and Bavarian cooking; but, the area is best known for Cincinnati chili, a Mediterranean-spiced meat sauce served over spaghetti or hot

dogs. Try it at **Skyline Chili**, **Gold Star Chili** or **Price Hill Chili**. For dessert, visit **Graeter’s** for the best ice cream around.

Located on 45-acres along Cincinnati’s downtown riverfront, **Smale Riverfront Park** features the Walnut Street Steps and interactive fountain, the Main Street interactive fountain, the Black Brigade Monument, tree groves, a meditative labyrinth, Cincinnati Bike Center, Moerlein Lager House and more.

Findlay Market is a public market featuring 40 indoor merchants in a dense historic neighborhood rich in 19th century architecture. Open Tuesday through Sunday, merchants sell meat, fish, poultry, produce, flowers, cheese, deli, and ethnic foods. If you’re there on

the weekend, you will also enjoy a thriving farmers market, dozens of outdoor vendors and numerous street performers.

Cincinnati offers activities for every interest – so find your way to the **American Sign Museum**, walk on the wild side at the **Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden**, watch the horse races at **Belterra Park**, try your luck at a number of area casinos, discover the stories of freedom’s heroes at the **National Underground Railroad Freedom Center**, or take a thrilling roller-coaster ride at **Kings Island**. If you can extend your stay through the weekend following **mhca’s** Spring Conference, you’ll be able to check out the opening of Cincinnati’s May Festival or catch a Cincinnati Reds game. ■



New Strategies for Overcoming Business Challenges

Our Spring Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio, will feature sessions to help you address some of your organization's most pressing problems. Learn about new HR strategies to address recruitment and retention challenges and make your organization the employer of choice during our half-day Innovation Incubator facilitated by Monica Oss of Open Minds and featuring three compelling case studies.

Attend our general sessions to hear how key industry thought leaders believe behavioral healthcare providers should prepare for disruption from technology, public policy and the economy, and what they see as the evolving models for behavioral healthcare service

delivery.

Afternoon breakout sessions will focus on how to respond to consolidation in the behavioral healthcare marketplace, the dos and don'ts of executive leadership involvement in technology implementation, model programs for transitioning people from prisons to communities and providing SUD services, and how to get Medicaid to cover SUD services. Members and guests are encouraged to attend our fun-filled nightly



receptions and Wednesday evening dinner, and your travel companions are always welcome to join us too!

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New Faces & Places

We welcomed two new members this quarter.

Yellowstone Behavioral Health Center is a CARF accredited facility providing outpatient mental health services including family, individual and group therapy, therapeutic services for older adults, medication management and evaluation, psychological testing, case management services, and services to help people recovering from a serious mental illness to redevelop independent living skills. YBHC is also working with colleagues to pilot test Brief Intensive Therapy, a program that provides suicidal individuals with targeted, family-centered therapy



Mark Russler

on an outpatient basis, thereby avoiding long hospital stays.

Executive Director **Mark Russler** has a Masters of Social Work from

the University of Denver in Denver, Colorado, and a Bachelor of Criminal Justice from the University of Evansville in Evansville, Indiana.

Highland Rivers Health is one of Georgia's largest behavioral healthcare providers, annually serving more than 14,000 adults, children and families affected by mental



Melanie Dallas

health issues, substance abuse and addiction, and intellectual and developmental disabilities. They serve veterans, Medicare and commercially-insured populations in a 12-county region of northwest Georgia.

CEO **Melanie Dallas**, a licensed clinical social worker and approved

clinical supervisor with a master's degree in community counseling, has been at the helm for two years after being promoted from the position of chief operating officer.

We also welcomed a new face as President and CEO of **Aspire Health Partners**.

Dick Jacobs has served as CEO

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Dick Jacobs

of Aspire Health Partners since the organization was created. He assumed the added responsibilities of president upon Jerry Kassab's retirement.

Dick holds a Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology from the University of Central Florida, is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, and a Certified Addictions Professional. We look forward to his active involvement with **mhca**. ■

>>> *Continued from cover*

gains that you can achieve together better than either of you could alone.

6. Capitalize on the value you have built in the relationship by making occasional specific requests, allowing a reasonable amount of time for the person to respond, making it easy as possible for them to follow through, and expressing gratitude for their assistance.

Since establishing and strengthening strategic relationships requires significant investment before you can cash in your 'relationship currency,' it's important make sure you've identified a number of diverse relationships will real potential. Nour stresses that relationship diversity is just as important as relationship quantity. In his book, he illustrates this point with an example from Dr. Roch Parayre at the Mack Center for Technological Innovation at the Wharton School of Business. According to Parayre,

most organizations plan as if the world we live in is predictable, only investing in relationships based on one set of assumptions about the future. If the future plays out differently, which it often does, they find themselves at a significant disadvantage. Parayre advocates for scanning the periphery, planning for several possible scenarios, and investing in diverse relationships that will provide a variety of options in response to potential scenarios.

In these turbulent times, nurturing diverse strategic relationships is critical to developing ourselves as leaders, growing revenue and ensuring our long-term success. To learn about possible scenarios that will impact the future of behavioral healthcare and develop relationships with a diverse group of knowledgeable and trustworthy peers, join us at **mhca's** Spring Conference in Cincinnati this May!

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Record Attendance at Winter Conference & Annual Meeting

mhca's quarterly conferences are a time to learn, connect and celebrate together, and a record-setting crowd of 246 joined us at the Opal Sands in Clearwater Beach to do just that.

Tuesday's Innovation Incubator on improving visibility in the integrated care marketplace was the best attended pre-conference session on record, attracting 80 attendees interested in hearing about today's ACO marketplace and how to market to ACOs and MCOs.

The highest-rated general session of the conference was Organizational Ethics in Mental Health Services: Marketing, Fundraising and Social Media, presented by a returning speaker, Bioethicist Michael Gillette. The highest-rated breakout sessions were ViewPoint, which featured an informal group discussion about how anticipated changes under the new administration in Washington DC might affect member organizations and what they are doing to prepare, and Your Relationship Currency Roadmap, a workshop with author David Nour to help attendees apply the principles of 'relationship economics' in their lives and in their organizations.

During Wednesday's annual meeting, the Board of Directors shared the 2016 Annual Report and updated Strategic Plan for 2017. The board also recognized outgoing chair Dale Klatzker and outgoing directors Nelson Burns, Sue Stubbs and Inman White for their years of service. During Friday's board meeting, our new board chair, Barbara Daire, congratulated our new board officers – Vice Chair Rick Doucet, Treasurer Peggy



Dale Klatzker & Nelson Burns



Sue Stubbs & Dale Klatzker



Dale Klatzker & Barbara Daire

Chase and Secretary Steve Ronik – and welcomed new directors Susan Garnett and Laureen Pagel.

A record number of exhibitors participated in our Winter Conference, and **mhca** staff was pleased to deliver a gift bag full of goodies provided by our exhibitors to member attendees' rooms. Attendees also seemed to enjoy the lively competition around the Jenga game during the evening receptions. If you have any suggestions for activities you would like to see incorporated into **mhca's** receptions, please contact Lonnie Parizek at lparizek@mhca.com.



Cathy Barnes & Jerry Mayo

Celebrating Excellence

mhca's Customer Satisfaction Management System helps behavioral healthcare providers measure client, staff and referral source satisfaction to inform quality improvement efforts and ongoing success in today's competitive marketplace. At our Winter Conference, Tropical Texas Behavioral Health gave a brief presentation highlighting how the new electronic surveys available through **mhca's** Customer Satisfaction Management System have streamlined survey distribution and submission, reducing demands on staff, improv-



Cathy Barnes & Candace Clevenger



Kristine Pendency & Cathy Barnes



Cathy Barnes & Harriet Hall

ing response rates and expediting reports.

Following the presentation, **mhca** recognized top performers in each category of service including: Pine Belt Mental Healthcare for Best Overall Ranking, Overall Best Practices among Organizations

Offering 1-2 Categories of Service, Best Practices in Overall Drug and Alcohol Services, and Best Practices in Drug and Alcohol Residential Services; Care Plus NJ for Best Practices among Organizations Offering 5-7 Categories of Service and Best Practices in Partial/Day Treatment Care; Heritage Behavioral Health Center for Best Practices in Overall Mental Health; River Bend Hospital for Best

Practices in Inpatient Services; River Valley Behavioral Health for Best Practices in Emergency Services; Comprehensive Behavioral Healthcare for Best Practices in Case Management; Jefferson Mental Health and High Plains Mental Health Center (tied for first) for Overall Staff Satisfaction; and The Counseling Center for Overall Referral Source Satisfaction. Well done! ■



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Save the Dates!



2017 Spring Conference

May 16-19, 2017

Westin Cincinnati
Cincinnati, Ohio
Reservations: 800-937-8461
Hotel Group Rate: \$189
Reservation Deadline: April 21

2017 Summer Conference

August 8-11, 2017

Grand Hyatt Denver
Denver, Colorado
Reservations: 303-295-1234
Hotel Group Rate: \$209
Reservation Deadline: July 7

2017 Fall Conference

October 24-27, 2017

Westin Kierland Resort
Scottsdale, Arizona
Reservations: 800-354-5892
Hotel Group Rate: \$285
Reservation Deadline: Sept. 21

