wisdom heart courage

FIND YOUR WAY HOME®

YELLOW BRICK®

FAMILY HANDBOOK

INTEGRITY | EXCELLENCE | INNOVATION | OUTCOME

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"We must cross this strange place in order to get to the other side."

- L. Frank Baum

Parents as Partners

FIND ***YOUR*** WAY HOME

Dear Parents,

The purpose of this Family Handbook is to acknowledge and appreciate that participating in the assessment and initiating treatment at Yellowbrick requires integrating a significant amount of information. We know from neurocognitive research that information processing is compromised during times of stress. This Handbook is intended to support you by focusing on essential information regarding roles, responsibilities and processes involved in Yellowbrick's treatment model.

The Family Program at Yellowbrick is known as *Parents as Partners*. This represents our understanding that parents and Yellowbrick together partner with your emerging adult towards creating a treatment experience which will yield a hopeful outcome. Yellowbrick also partners with parents separately in creating a process which will support shared goals in treatment. Finally, Yellowbrick's experience has evolved to value the power and meaning of parents from different families partnering to support and learn from each other.

Parents as Partners offers opportunities for you to learn about emerging adulthood as a phase of development in health and illness. There are multiple forums at Yellowbrick for parents to experience and explore new ways of communicating and relating to their emerging adult and to treatment professionals. Yellowbrick's model emphasizes the developmental concept of *connected autonomy*. Connected autonomy focuses on the processes of re-connecting with trust and security through authentic engagement, establishing separateness, and collaboratively negotiating mutuality of needs for both the emerging adult and parents. It also means approaching often complex emotions regarding integrating the past into an experience of family within which all individuals are challenged to change.

Yellowbrick has deep respect and admiration for the commitment you have made to your emerging adult. We also are grateful for the privilege of working with you and your family. Your Family Liaison will be your clinical contact person (in addition to the Business Office) for the duration of treatment. You can think of the Family Liaison as your communication link with the rest of the treatment team, as well as your personal ombudsman about questions or concerns that may arise over the course of treatment. You may contact the Family Liaison by email or Yellowbrick telephone, or by cell phone after hours or weekends.

You've been asked to absorb a lot of information already about Yellowbrick, its methods and procedures, and it would be expected that you might not remember everything, particularly those things that Yellowbrick does a little differently from other programs you've experienced before. So here are some highlights that are especially relevant for you as parents.

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Family Handbook

A Family Liaison is offered in recognition of the difficult position of parents with emerging adults in treatment at Yellowbrick. In addition to the initial period of 4 weeks prior to the initial Family Rounds during which there are no formal family sessions, many emerging adults insist on an experience of separateness with minimal communication. Conversely, some emerging adults are either intensely angry or anxious and relentlessly reach out to parents with communications which can be assaultive, disturbing, anxiety producing or activating mistrust regarding staff and treatment at Yellowbrick.

The Family Liaison is available as an open connection to support, educate and update parents regarding the course of their emerging adult's treatment at Yellowbrick. The Family Liaison is free to speak with parents about all the verbal and behavioral communications which occur within life at Yellowbrick outside of the identified confidential forums such as individual therapy, medication management and narrative or process group therapies. As a rule, the Family Liaison will leave details for the emerging adult to communicate to their parents but will focus more on evolving themes and how to understand the current moment in the larger trajectory of treatment.

It is essential to recognize that Yellowbrick is looking to the parents to identify their needs for communication with the Family Liaison rather than Yellowbrick establishing the frequency of contact with parents. The Family Liaison will establish a weekly time upon request or respond to ad hoc requests usually within 24 hours. In emergency or risk circumstances requiring medical or Police intervention, parents are contacted immediately.

Family Rounds

Family Rounds is usually an opportunity to discuss treatment progress and planning together with staff and emerging adult. We encourage parents to approach Family Rounds as a strategic planning meeting. Issues within the family which require the attention of family therapy are identified within Family Rounds. This first Family Rounds is usually scheduled about 4 weeks following admission, to coincide with the first Individual Rounds.

Every 4 weeks, the emerging adult is scheduled for Individual Rounds- a meeting with all members of the Professional Staff to talk about their treatment. Engagement in treatment, relationships with peers, and involvement in the community outside of Yellowbrick are some of the key issues addressed.

Correspondingly, Family Rounds are held within a similar time frame to meet with parents and their emerging adult and members of the treatment team who are directly involved in their treatment. This meeting provides an opportunity to assess the treatment progress as well as address important family issues that may have an impact on the treatment of the emerging adult.

Family Therapy

Family therapy, an integral part of nearly everyone's treatment at Yellowbrick, usually doesn't begin until after the initial Family Rounds. It is also individualized as to frequency and focus, tailored to the treatment needs and interests of each emerging adult and family. We use the initial Family Rounds Conference as an opportunity to discuss and plan how your family therapy might best proceed.

Family Therapy may be prescriptively recommended in order to focus on any family issues that have emerged throughout the treatment of the emerging adult. This ongoing treatment may be provided by Yellowbrick Professional Staff; or, for clinical reasons, a referral may be made to our colleagues at the Family Institute of Chicago at Northwestern University, or to qualified local professionals if you live outside the Evanston/ Chicagoland area.

Friday Family Forum

Friday Family Forum is an every-other-week call-in group, facilitated by The Director of Family Services, for families to have support and benefit from the experience of other families. It has been Yellowbrick's experience that families have found sharing with other families is of invaluable assistance.

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Parents as Partners Weekend

The goal of the parents' weekend is to come together to learn about emerging adulthood as a phase of development in health and in illness. The weekend offers opportunities for parents to experience and explore new ways of communicating and relating to each other, to their emerging adult and to treatment professionals. The theme of Parents as Partners represents a conceptual approach of separateness, negotiated collaboration and mutuality consistent with the developmental context of emerging adulthood.

Parents as Partners Weekend occurs every month, on the *second* full weekend of each month. If the first day of the month is a Sunday, then the second full weekend begins on Saturday the 14th.

On odd-numbered months (January, March, etc.) it begins Saturday morning with breakfast, followed by an educational presentation by staff, then a shared lunch followed by the Multiple Parent Group. Sunday features the Yellowbrick Family Brunch.

On even-numbered months (February, April, etc.), the Parents as Partners weekend includes the Family Brunch on Sunday, followed by the Multiple Family Group for both emerging adults and families together.

Parent as Partners weekends also provide the opportunity to convene Family Rounds Conferences for those families travelling to Yellowbrick from out-of-state.

Sample Schedule for the Parents as Partners Weekend

"Parents As Partners"
Program Schedule (Example)

Saturday

8:30 - 9:00AM	Continental Breakfast
9:00 – 9:15AM	Welcome Bryn Jessup, PhD, Director of Family Services & Systems
9:15 – 10:15AM	"What's Emerging About Emerging Adults?" Jesse Viner, MD, CEO & Chief Medical Officer
10:15 – 10:30AM	Break
10:30 – 11:30AM	Family Conversations with Yellowbrick
11:30 – 12:30PM	Lunch (Buffet Provided)
12:30 – 2:00PM	Multiple Parent Group Jesse Viner, MD, CEO & Chief Medical Officer Bryn Jessup, PhD, Director of Family Services & Systems
2:30 – 5:30PM	Individual Family Rounds (By Scheduled Appointment Only)

Sunday

8:00 – Noon	Individual Family Rounds
11:00 – 12:45PM	Family Brunch (At Yellowbrick Residence)
1:00 –	Individual Family Rounds

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Neuromodulation - *Minding the Brain* & Life Strategies

Minding the Brain - Life Strategies Program @ Yellowbrick

Unless determined otherwise at the completion of the assessment process, each patient will participate daily in treatment by attending the *Minding the Brain* - Life Strategies Program (PHP/IOP) at the Consultation & Treatment Center (CTC). Groups at the CTC run from 9:30 am until 3:00 pm with specialty programming 3 evenings per week. Individual professional services are scheduled by appointment.

AM	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
7:45	AM Wake Routine	AM Wake Routine	AM Wake Routine	AM Wake Routine	AM Wake Routine		
8:15	Community Breakfast	Community Breakfast	Community Breakfast	Community Breakfast	Community Breakfast		
8:30	Self-Care	Self-Care	Self-Care	Self-Care	Self-Care		
9:30	Mindfulness Intentions (TR)	Mindfulness Intentions (TR)	Mindfulness Intentions (TR)	Mindfulness/ Intentions Yoga & Embodiment (EH)	Mindfulness Intentions (TR)	AM Wake Routine Self-Care	
9:50	Break	Break	Break		Break	Individual Art Therapy Mtgs	
9:55	ACT Education (TR) or Neuroscience 101 (SM, DB. JV)	Mindful Living (EH)	CBT Education (KB) or ***Men's Group (JR)** ***Women's Group (JMY)**		DBT Education (JMY) or Self-Identity Group (JR)	Tennis (Summer) Creative Writing (Every other week)	10am-6pm Medication packing
10:40	Break/Snack	Break/Snack	Break/Snack	Break/Snack	Break/Snack		
10:50	Bioregulation of Body, Arousal and Rhythms (SM, SB)	Attachment and Coping Skills (JR)	***Narrative Group (ML)**	The Joy Formula (WG, MD) Sexuality, Intimacy and Dating (JR)	Creative Self-Expression (WG, MD)	11:00 Community Meal	11:00 Community Meal/ PAP Brunch, 2nd Sun. of month
11:45	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break		
11:50	Connections (WG)	Connections (IW) YBCC (JR,LB)	Connections (IW)	Connections (IW)	Connections (WG,MD)		
PM							
11:55 - 12:45	***Group Psychotherapy (ML,JR)**	12:40-1:50 YBCM	***Group Psychotherapy (ML, JR)**	12:40-1:50 YBCM	***Group Psychotherapy (ML, JR)**		
12:50 -1:40	Self-Regulation ACT (TR,BJ)		Self-Regulation CBT (KB)		Self-Regulation DBT (JMY)		1pm Individual Yoga With Appointment (EH)
1:45-1-55	Self-Integration (SM, SB)	Break	Self-Integration (SM, SB)	Break	Self-Integration (SM, SB)		
2:00	*Re*Cognition/ Neurofeedback 2-6pm (LB/CCN)	Neurofeedback 2-6pm (CCN)	*Re*Cognition/ Neurofeedback 2-6pm (CCN)	Neurofeedback 2-6pm (CCN)	*Re*Cognition/ Neurofeedback 2-6pm (CCN)	*Re*Cognition/ Study Group time	Individual Yoga Cont. (EH)
3:05-3:50	Men's TRP Self-Connection (EH/WG)	Education/ Volunteer/Work Exploration	RAP: Self-Connection (WG, MD) 3:05-3:55 pm	SOMA SELF: Self-Connection (WG, MD) 3:05-3:55 pm	Education/ Volunteer/Work Exploration	OPEN ART STUDIO @ MAKOM	Individual Yoga Cont. (EH)
3:05-4:00	***Women's TRP Discussion Group (JMY,)**						
4:00-5:00	***Men's TRP Discussion Group (ML)**	Education/ Volunteer/Work Exploration	***RAP: Discussion Group (LB) 4:05-4:55pm**	***SOMA SELF: Discussion Group (IW) 4:05-4:55pm**	Education/ Volunteer/Work Exploration		Activities w/ Eliza including individual yoga, theater games, team building, cultural events, discussion
4:10-5:00	Women's TRP Self Connection (EH/WG)						
5:10-6:00	Men/Women TRP: Education (JMY/ML)	Education/ Volunteer/Work Exploration	RAP: Education (LB) 5:05-5:55pm	SOMA SELF: Education (IW) 5:05-5:55pm	Education/ Volunteer/Work Exploration		Writing/Poetry/Music
6:30	Community Dinner	Cooking Night/ Community Dinner (IW)	Community Dinner	Community Dinner	YB Community Restaurant Dinner(CCS)	Community Dinner	YB Residence Order-In Dinner
8:00	7:30 Yoga Nidra (EH, CCS)	Residence 12 Step Meeting		6:00-9:00 Apt. Mtgs. & Apt. Focus (times vary)	Movie Night	Entertainment/ Community Events	Game Night Alumni Speaker
9:00	(Mindfulness, Bioregulation)	(Mindfulness, Bioregulation)	(Mindfulness, Bioregulation)	(Mindfulness, Bioregulation)			Self-Care Prep for tomorrow
10:00	Sleep Routine	Sleep Routine	Sleep Routine	Sleep Routine			Sleep Routine
11:00	All Home	All Home	All Home	All Home	Sleep Routine	Sleep Routine	All Home

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Confidentiality and Public Behavior

While some parts of programming take place in confidential spaces (e.g., psychotherapy process groups; narrative group; Men's and Women's groups; specialty process groups; individual psychotherapy and medication management sessions), much of your emerging adult's time is spent in public spaces that are not treated as confidential and may therefore be talked about by your Family Liaison to you. Behaviors that have particular clinical significance, including violations of the Yellowbrick Agreements (Public Behaviors), will be acknowledged and discussed by your Family Liaison within a reasonable time frame to allow your emerging adult to talk about the behavior with you directly first.

All aspects of treatment are confidential relative to anyone outside of peers, staff and parents.

Treatment Plan

You can expect to receive a written copy of your emerging adult's Treatment Plan within 10 days of admission. You will notice that some elements may seem fairly general, other elements fairly specific, with some that are highly individualized. You may have questions about the benefits of particular elements of the Treatment Plan, or whether additional costs are associated with particular elements. You may be curious about your emerging adult's initial responses to treatment, or about their willingness even to participate in certain elements. These are all appropriate questions to bring to your Family Liaison's attention. The Treatment Tracker at the end of the Treatment Plan identifies those issues (symptomatic, behavioral and psychological-emotional) that are considered relevant to understanding the targets and monitors within treatment. These are updated following the monthly Individual Rounds and can be shared in Family Rounds. The Treatment Plan and Treatment Tracker are updated approximately every four weeks, immediately following Individual Rounds, and then forwarded to parents.

Daily Spending

Your emerging adult will have daily spending needs in the following areas: food, transportation, and personal spending.

Food: Yellowbrick recommends a weekly food allowance of $100, to cover groceries and occasional meals out. Families may find it convenient to fund this amount using the True Link re-loadable VISA card, which can then be made accessible for tracking and review by the Emerging Adult and Yellowbrick OT staff (to support budgeting and food purchasing).

Transportation: Yellowbrick recommends reliance on public forms of transportation. Residents of Yellowbrick may purchase a Ventra Card to ride on the CTA and Pace trains and busses. The Ventra App lets you manage your Ventra account, add transit value or passes on your Ventra Card and buy and use Metra mobile tickets. The purchase can be made online at www.ventrachicago.com. Other patients walk, ride bikes, longboard, etc.

Personal spending: Yellowbrick recommends $75/wk to cover personal items and entertainment costs, provided through a debit card from a local bank or American Express. This does not include smoking or transportation costs. Yellowbrick Occupational Therapy staff can support creating and maintaining a workable budget.

Prescriptions

Prescriptions are usually filled at the local Walgreens or CVS. Emerging adults are responsible for accessing and paying for their medications as arranged by their insurance. We recommend that you set up an Express Pay account with Walgreens or CVS, *one that restricts all but prescription and over the counter medication purchases.*

Staying Connected With Your Emerging Adult

It's probably best to expect that your emerging adult will need a period of separation from you, especially in the initial weeks of treatment, in order to work on adjusting to Yellowbrick, building autonomy and connections with peers, and developing more capable self-expression and self-awareness. We recommend that you take your cues from your emerging adult as to how often and in what ways you keep in touch. Please feel free to contact your Family Liaison with any pressing concerns or questions in the meantime. And please read "Six Degrees of Separation" located at the end of this booklet.

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Financial

A Word About Billing

The best person to contact directly with specific questions about billing and fees is the Director of Business Services, Cynthia Navas, in the Business Office at 847.869.1500, extension 222.

Insurance

Yellowbrick encourages all patients, families and/or guarantors to contact their insurance company directly for specific benefit coverage and criteria for medical necessity prior to initiating an assessment or treatment. Insurance companies determine eligibility for assessment and treatment based on "medical necessity." It is imperative that the patient, family, and/or guarantor, as well as Yellowbrick administrative staff, are made aware of the criteria applied by your insurance plan. Establishing medical necessity is a prerequisite for accessing your benefits and authorization of your assessment and/or treatment. Even under stress or time constraints it is extremely important to make yourself aware of benefit limitations and any other requirements of your insurance company. You may consider requesting that your referring clinician attempt preauthorization prior to your admission.

Based on many years of experience trying to assist families to navigate the process of claiming reimbursement from commercial insurance carriers, Yellowbrick has concluded it will be in the best interests of our patients and their families to seek expert assistance to secure their insurance benefits. Yellowbrick's experience as an out of network provider supporting families in their contractual relationship with health insurance companies has led us to a new understanding of the degree to which focused reimbursement expertise is needed. This has prompted Yellowbrick to connect our families with SJ Health Insurance Advocates (SJHIA).

SJ Health Insurance Advocates LLC (SJHIA) is an independent, third party expert and industry leader that works with professional providers and health insurance companies to assist families towards receiving their maximum health insurance benefits for which families have paid premiums. Yellowbrick's administrative and Professional Staff will refer all matters involved in the process of verifying benefits, pre-authorization or follow-up authorization of benefits, appeals of denials or creating statements and tracking billing of insurance companies to the knowledgeable staff of SJ Health Insurance Advocates.

These functions are available through a process wherein the family contracts with SJ Health Insurance Advocates for these services. Yellowbrick sincerely believes this affords families the optimal support for maximizing insurance reimbursement. Yellowbrick is not a party to this contract and will receive no payment of any kind from SJ Health Insurance Advocates.

Yellowbrick performs a supportive role in the insurance reimbursement process rather than direct participation in the review, appeals and billing/claims, etc. process seeking reimbursement from commercial carriers. We will continue to supply families with documentation of clinical treatment and expenses. Yellowbrick will consult with SJHIA regarding both administrative and clinical issues in support of securing reimbursement.

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Full Catastrophe Living: Lesson from Trauma Work with Families of Adolescents and Emerging Adults

How Did This Happen, Anyway?

Families come to the decision to seek treatment by any number of paths, but what they all have in common is the felt experience of contending with something above and beyond the ordinary course of things. If you're reading this, your family has likely gone through (or is currently going through) something unusually stressful, hard to manage and disruptive to your lives. You are seeking help, undertaking or preparing to undertake some kind of intervention or treatment. The more intensive the treatment being considered, the more likely you are reckoning with something extraordinary, unexpected, unplanned and unpredictable. Like losing your balance on a skateboard, you reach out, twist and even flail to recover your bearings. When the extraordinary, off-kilter, out-of-balance and not-what's-supposed-to-be-happening circumstances persist over weeks, months, or even longer, one's previous faith in a just, orderly and predictable world no longer seems tenable. Instead you and your family have to contend with a new normal, one fraught with confusion, disorientation, uncertainty and anxiety.

Why Do I Feel So Helpless When I'm Trying as Hard as I Can?

Parents who have been seeking help over time often feel abandoned, dismissed, neglected and even betrayed by the healthcare system. This disheartening experience can lead parents to become mistrusting, self-protective and guarded with healthcare professionals; not to mention impatient, fearful, defensive and demoralized. It's common for families in this circumstance to experience feelings of helplessness and a corresponding loss of control. Parents find they have little or no leverage to restore order and balance. Previous "solutions" no longer seem to work or may even make things worse. Parental authority has been compromised or damaged in some way, so that things cannot be "set right" by simple declaration or some other straightforward parental action. In some families, a kind of learned helplessness takes over, and it becomes harder to tell whether parental authority has been neutralized or merely abandoned, parental control fought for and lost or surrendered without a struggle. Even in those families, parents usually experience something like helpless futility and a corresponding loss of personal agency and effectiveness.

Recognizing Hidden Grief and Loss

Another characteristic of families with an emerging adult in intensive treatment is exposure to loss. These losses accrue over time, especially for parents, and include the loss of the wished-for parenting experience and the wished-for family; the loss of confidence in a safe, predictable future; the loss of faith in a just, predictable and secure world; the loss of control and personal agency (described above); loss of health; loss of financial security and predictability. Some of these losses are obvious and shared explicitly by members of the family. However, in many families, the losses are more implicit and harder to recognize as such, even as family members experience their downward emotional tug. Telltale signs of hidden grief include anxiety, fatigue, irritability, sadness, and even somatic symptoms that don't have a clear medical cause. In addition to these emotional markers of grief and loss, there are relational impacts that affect parents' connections with others outside the family, especially when parenting struggles within the family seem too private, too complicated and/or too painful to talk about with others. As a result, family members may suffer a loss of positive connection with significant others (within and outside the immediate family). The implicit losses here include the loss of family togetherness, pride and social support (relational health).

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Pathways Toward Repair, Renewal and Recovery

One of the consistent themes in the trauma recovery literature is the importance of making sense of what happened. The simple act of making meaningful sense out of a distressing life event is much more difficult, yet no less important, when that event is a complex and ongoing family struggle with mental illness. Making sense of the unexpected, the terrifying and the forever-changed means constructing a meaningful narrative of what happened, how things unfolded, and how people in the family reacted to these events and to each other. As you develop your own story or perspective about your own family crisis, try to make room for the complexity and multiplicity of experience of everyone in your family. It's more helpful, for example, if your perspective is developmentally sensitive, reflecting differences in age, maturity and neurodevelopmental capability of family members. A family narrative or perspective that allows for different points of view becomes a narrative that can be told and "owned" by everyone, with compassion and integrity.

To recover a sense of control and agency, try to recognize and accept the limits of your personal authority and influence to "make everything better" and "fix the problem." It's usually helpful to think about your parental role as supportive rather than directive, as your Emerging Adult begins to (re)build or strengthen their own capabilities for more successful independent functioning. Establishing boundaries and limits with resources you control (including financial support) can help you and your Emerging Adult avoid becoming mired in power struggles over who has (or should have) control over their own behavior and choices (hint: it's NOT you).

The process of recovery also entails developing new, improved ways of communicating about feelings within the family. At Yellowbrick, we repeatedly find that opening up constructive dialogue about emotional experience within the family, especially between Emerging Adult and parents, can become a welcome alternative to the expression of those feelings in symptomatic, risky or self-defeating behavior. Many parents tell us that they find valuable support through their own involvement in therapy, and with resource and support groups such as NAMI.

Although it may not feel especially pleasant or welcome in the moment, setting boundaries and opening up communication about emotional experience are two powerful ways of strengthening supportive connections with your Emerging Adult. You may find other pathways to connection and growth in the process of navigating these issues together, which in turn help speed the recovery process for the entire family.

Finally, as veteran Yellowbrick parents often remind us, it's important to seek and invest in supportive connections outside the family, including with other parents and families in treatment. Recreational and respite activities help to restore some needed balance in lives that can otherwise feel entirely dominated by the sometimes-draining work of treatment. These connections help build and strengthen needed social support, which turns out to be a vital ingredient in the recovery process (social support is consistently linked to better outcomes for both individuals and families in trauma recovery).

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What You and Your Emerging Adult Can Do to Help Make Treatment at Yellowbrick Work

One of the main reasons that the Yellowbrick treatment program can be helpful is because it offers so many opportunities for human interaction. Part of the advantage of this is that there are chances for young people who are struggling to meet kindred spirits, to feel and be less alone, to make friendships, to find support, to substitute human relationships for substances and symptoms.

Patients sometimes experience the community as "living in a bubble," different from the real world in that peers and staff are more understanding and tolerant of people's issues than they believe people in the "real world" are likely to be. Alternately, sometimes people experience the community as all too real, bringing up painful realities that they may have preferred to avoid facing or thinking about. The fact is that there is truth in both of these perceptions. Yellowbrick is a place where people have a lot of empathy, understanding and tolerance for each other's struggles. At the same time it is a program that asks people to learn to talk about their conflicts with others, their own inner world, and their problematic behaviors.

In fact, our experience tells us that it is inevitable that whatever core difficulties a person brings to Yellowbrick, these will emerge in the cauldron of community life. If a person has been lonely and has had difficulty feeling a part of things, these feelings of alienation are likely to emerge here at some point, in some fashion. If a person has had issues comparing themselves to others or with competitive feelings, these are bound to come up. If anger has been a problem, or if the way a person has expressed it has pushed people away, it is almost certain that this problem will be expressed in that person's relationships here, and so forth.

Sometimes, when this phenomenon occurs, the patient (and their family) feels worried and discouraged. "This is a therapeutic community! Why am I still feeling this way? Why is this still happening?" The answer, though it may not feel consoling in the moment, is that all of us as humans have a remarkably tenacious tendency to repeat our own long practiced patterns of relating to others, to ourselves, to our own feelings, even if these patterns have led to disappointment, danger or destructiveness. We all bring ourselves and our core patterns with us wherever we go. In treatment this is actually an advantage. Having these patterns enacted in our midst gives us the opportunity to work with them in vivo, in real life, in real time.

Yellowbrick is a community and a treatment program that is designed to take advantage of the reemergence of these core troubles: as opportunities to witness them as they are occurring in our midst; to understand them more deeply; to see how they may have been a person's adaptation to difficult circumstances; to help the person judge for themselves if these ways of being are getting them where they want to go; to help the person see and to learn alternative ways of coping or relating.

A note about feelings: While the therapeutic work at Yellowbrick frequently focuses on helping patients to recognize and to articulate their feelings, our goal is to assist the individual in bringing emotions back into their rightful place as a part of the understanding of the self, alongside the person's values, their needs and wishes, and their thoughts. We recognize the importance of emotions, but we don't value them any more or less than we do the person's ideas or their value system.

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How You and Your Emerging Adult Can Take Best Advantage of This Treatment Opportunity

1. **Show up.** It's been said that 90% of success is about showing up. If you can learn to get up and get in to the program even on those days when you don't feel like it or when your thoughts are telling you to stay in bed, you will have won more than half the battle.
2. **Be willing.** To try something that stretches your limits. To try something that someone else suggests. To accept an invitation. To ask for and take someone's help.
3. **Be honest.** About your thoughts, your feelings, your behavior. Lying separates you from the community and from yourself.
4. **Practice behaviors and ways of coping** that are different than the ones which got you here. Try something new or something that is opposite to your usual way of being, like to come closer to people when you feeling like running away or to treat yourself with kindness when you feel self-destructive.
5. **Connect.** Allow yourself to get to know others and let them get to know you.
6. **Test this proposition:** If I allow myself to show my vulnerabilities I will feel safer and stronger than I do when I hide them.
7. **Avoid avoiding.** This place works best as a community and for the benefit of each individual when difficulties between and within people are confronted directly.
8. Don't be willing to keep secrets, your own or anyone else's.

Working to Earn Secure Attachment

Many people who come to Yellowbrick have significant difficulties in their relationships with others. Sometimes these problems cause patients to isolate and avoid connecting, or to engage in destructive relationships, or to believe that their self worth depends on a connection with a romantic partner. Frequently patients report that they have a hard time trusting others; that is difficult to depend on others or to allow others to depend on them; that they worry about not being accepted; that they worry about being or ending up alone. A growing body of research points strongly to the fact that these kinds of difficulties have profound effects upon life satisfaction, self esteem, the ability to feel comfortable with intimacy and with independence: all core concerns for emerging adults. The literature also clearly indicates something that is extremely hopeful: it is quite possible to develop secure attachment as an adult, and a therapeutic environment like Yellowbrick is well suited to facilitate this process.

Here are some examples of ways that you can help yourself to work on this dimension of your life:

- Working on your relationships by
  - Practicing turning to others for comfort
  - Improving your ability to set boundaries and limits
  - Having less tolerance for being mistreated by others
- Working on your emotions by
  - Practicing recognizing and tolerating your own feelings
  - Practicing expressing what you feel
  - Learning to access your "wise mind" which integrates feelings and your good judgment
- Working on your self by
  - Moving toward taking charge of your own life by being more active and less passive
  - Practicing compassion toward yourself
  - Practicing tolerance toward your own vulnerabilities and limitations
  - Actively grieving past losses and traumas
- Working to develop "metacognitive" abilities by
  - Being curious about yourself and others
  - Cultivating "beginner's mind" which isn't too judgmental, open to possibility, which considers options
  - Developing a coherent narrative, your own life story, which helps you to make sense of who you are and how you came to be you

How You Will Know if You Are Progressing

We all hope that treatment will help every patient both to behave and to feel better. We know, though, that even in the most successful, best conducted treatment,

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progress is not linear but may happen in fits and starts, or involve periods of progress and regression, or may cause some people to feel worse before they feel better. These phenomena may make it difficult for a person, and for their family, to judge whether genuine progress is occurring. Here are some indications that a person is making progress:

- You know yourself better, even if the knowledge is painful.
- If you have been numb or cut off from your feelings, you are beginning to be able to feel a greater range and depth of feeling.
- If you have been overwhelmed by your feelings, then you may begin to feel a bit less overwhelmed by them.
- If you are attempting things which make you anxious but don't overwhelm you.
- If you have tended to withdraw, then you may be a little more willing to come out of your room, or to let others know when you are having a hard time.
- If you are becoming more likely to use words to express feelings or needs, rather than retreating into silence or using actions to express yourself.
- You begin to feel connected to peers and/or staff and that others know you and you know them.
- You notice that your relationships with important others, including your family, are changing—this may be that they feel more genuine or real and that things are beginning to feel more resolved, or it may be that, for the moment, the relationships are more tense or conflictual.

It may be apparent from the above signs of progress, why it is that sometimes a person engaged in deep treatment may feel worse before things improve: approaching those things that have been avoided, while an essential part of recovery, almost inevitably is uncomfortable or frightening or painful in some way. If a person has tended to avoid conflicts, then beginning to address these is likely to raise anxiety and discomfort; if a person has used drugs or alcohol to manage their own emotions, then being sober may leave a person with intense feelings that they may not yet know how to handle well; if a person has had a history or trauma and denied or minimized its impact, beginning to face what happened and the toll it has taken will, of course, be a painful process.

How Parents Can Help the Process

- Participate in Parents as Partners activities.
- Consider your emerging adult's developmental task of separation-individuation—in some cases, letting go is what's called for; in others, greater involvement.
- Keep in mind the concept of connected autonomy.
- Be open to looking at family history and relationships, not for someone to blame but to gain a better understanding of how your emerging adult has taken in their history, how they have understood their early experiences and how those have contributed to the narrative of their emerging adulthood.
- Be open to observing family interactions and mutual influences in the present during Family Rounds and Family Therapy sessions.
- Expect that as your emerging adult changes, so may others in your family. The family is a homeostatic system. When a child changes, this inevitably leads to changes in the family dynamic, often ones that are disruptive at first.

Some Key Indications of Readiness to Move Out of the Residence

1. If safety issues have been present, these aren't currently acute, with evidence of a commitment to safety and a willingness to collaborate around safety plans;
2. Major symptoms under control and stable, collaborative relationship with medicating psychiatrist and treatment team;
3. If drug or alcohol problems have been present, evidence of a stable period of sobriety with appropriate supports;
4. Ability to self regulate, including maintaining a schedule, decent sleep and eating pattern, etc.;
5. Capacity to manage one's anger without being destructive to others or to oneself;
6. Capacity to be alone, i.e., to tolerate one's own feelings, to tolerate separation, to learn to appreciate one's own company;
7. Ability to reach out to others, to ask for help when needed, to take initiative to connect;
8. At the least, the start of some meaningful foundation for life in the community, e.g., solid connection to AA, a few friends, stable relationship to school or volunteering or work, good collaborative relationship to therapy either here or outpatient.

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Six Degrees of Separation

A Guide to Parents

Emerging adulthood is a period of transition toward increasing autonomy while struggling to define new ways of remaining connected. The family is undergoing a parallel transition of its own. As such, it may be necessary for parents to be open to changes that will occur, including changes within your emerging adult as well as within family relationships. Parents can help by being supportive, trusting, open to reciprocal communication, and encouraging of independence. For every step the emerging adult takes, there is a corresponding need for change within the family.

Entering the Yellowbrick Residence may be the first time your emerging adult has lived away from home or lived in an independent setting. Alternately your emerging adult may have, in the past, attempted college or living on their own and experienced difficulties in managing and regulating their life. Your emerging adult's involvement at Yellowbrick represents a step toward autonomy and self-management. You, as parents and partners in the treatment, can be an invaluable aspect of that process.

Here are six ways to help your emerging adult help themselves:

1 Connection: The primary goals, as the emerging adult enters Yellowbrick, are to adjust to living on their own, to connect with the Yellowbrick community, and to engage in the treatment and other productive activities such as school or work. Much time and energy may be expended in the process of this developmental step. The "phone call" may come during a period of being overwhelmed or feeling unable to manage. Initial anxious or tough moments in treatment are often expressed as complaints or accusations about the program that provoke fear and anger in parents. As much as you would like to alleviate the stress, you cannot and should not try to "fix" this for them. Be calm and reassuring about their ability to work through challenges and to seek help from the support system at Yellowbrick. Speak with the Yellowbrick Family Liaison directly about any concerns being evoked in these communications.

2 Separation: Accept that as much as you may have needed to in the past, you won't know the details of your emerging adult's life. Your emerging adult may not have lived away from you before and the opportunity to move toward adulthood and establish autonomy is an important step in their growth. Your emerging adult may need to experience the outcome of their choices and manage this outcome on their own with the support of others in the Yellowbrick community.

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This may require of you that you find support to manage your own anxiety about the separation. Your Family Liaison is available to provide support to you as needed. The Parent Weekends, held on a monthly basis, are an opportunity to meet with others who are parenting emerging adults and may share similar concerns.

3 **Problems:** Managing complex problems within society, i.e. dealing with the daily business of life, is a vital part of becoming a competent adult. Empower your young adult to solve problems by offering guidance, expressing confidence in them, encouraging a balance of independence with thoughtful reliance on others for needed support, and trusting their decisions. Handling difficult situations for them only impedes their development and conveys a lack of believing in them as capable of developing their own strategies. They are learning important skills and becoming empowered to undertake other challenges with confidence.

4 **Personalities:** Learning to live with other people teaches essential skills such as communication and boundary setting. Your emerging adult is living in a setting where the staff is available at all times and understands the multiple challenges of this developmental period. The culture at Yellowbrick urges the emerging adult to deal openly with relationships within the community with support from the staff and peers. Several meetings a week are devoted to the experience of community and the relationships with staff, peers, and others in the Evanston community. Encourage your emerging adult to actively work through issues instead of avoiding, looking for easy solutions, or fleeing. Help your emerging adult to seek solutions that will enhance their growth and learning.

5 **Responsibilities:** Rules and structure are a part of any setting that your emerging adult may experience. Learning accountability for their actions and conduct is an important aspect of life at Yellowbrick and an important tool for managing responsibility in the future. The Yellowbrick Agreements and policies are designed to provide for your emerging adult's safety, health, and security as well as assist in self-regulation, engagement in treatment, and neurobiological growth.

6 **The Treatment:** Your emerging adult is involved in an intensive treatment program. Days are often long and can be exhausting. Outside of IOP programming, there are many activities designed to promote community, provide cultural and fine art experience, enhance living skills and have some down time and fun. The weekends are less rigorously scheduled, but developing the skills to be alone with one's self and to be an active agent in life are all important aspects of the program at Yellowbrick. It is also a time in which grocery shopping, caring for the apartment, and other tasks may be completed. It is important to take the cues from your emerging adult in regard to time spent at home and family obligations. Often, the emerging adult will need a period of separation in order to work on building autonomy, a stronger sense of self, and the skills of self-expression and self-declaration. The ultimate goal of the separation process is relational autonomy - to become able to achieve and affirm independence and self-governance while maintaining close and mutually validating relationships.

Six Degrees of Separation are guidelines for providing support to your emerging adult as they work toward increasing autonomy. Yellowbrick is here to provide support to you, as well.

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Support Resources For Families

Yellowbrick Website

www.yellowbrickprogram/resources/library/articles

Yellowbrick's website includes a library of articles documenting the research basis for our clinical model.

The Yellowbrick Blog - Advice, support and insights on emerging adulthood.
www.yellowbrickprogram.com/blog/

Web Resources

Austen Riggs Hospital – Stockbridge, Massachusetts:
www.austenriggs.org

Menninger Clinic – Houston, Texas:
www.menningerclinic.com

Rogers Hospital – Oconomowoc, Wisconsin:
www.rogershospital.org

S.A.F.E. – Denton, Texas: www.selfinjury.com

National Eating Disorders Association (parent membership): www.nationaleatingdisorers.org

Dr. Jeffrey Arnett, PhD – Clark University:
www.jeffreyarnett.com

Dr. Alan Reifman, PhD – Texas Tech University:
www.emergingadulthood.blogspot.com

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (parent membership) – www.nami.org

Dr. Daniel J. Siegel, MD – UCLA School Of Medicine:
www.drdansiegel.com

Publications

"The Developing Mind - Toward a Neurobiology of Interpersonal Experience", Daniel J. Siegel, MD

"Parenting From The Inside Out", Daniel J. Siegel, MD and Mary Hartzell, M.Ed

"Emerging Adults in America: Coming of Age in the 21st Century", Dr. Jeffrey J. Arnett, PhD and Jennifer Lynn Tanner, PhD

"Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens through the Twenties", Dr. Jeffrey J. Arnett, PhD

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WHY YELLOWBRICK

Yellowbrick is recognized nationally as providing a unique, trauma informed treatment environment innovatively integrating multiple dimensions of treatment not found all in one place elsewhere.

- Yellowbrick is a national center of excellence specializing in the treatment of troubled adolescents, emerging adults and their families. Yellowbrick has a homogeneous sober peer community of youth ages 14-30's.
- Yellowbrick operates as an Open Therapeutic Community which means that relationships are established not on the basis of power but on the invitation to challenge oneself, take supported risks and collaboratively bring the authentic parts of self forward into the treatment.
- Yellowbrick operates within "real-time" and real life as individuals come to live their lives within the context of being immersed within an intensive treatment environment. Rather than an "as-if" or asylum context, this creates real choice and risk which activates the neural networks required for real and enduring change.
- Yellowbrick integrates supported, sober community living platforms, intensive treatment and assistance for re-entry with school or work for emerging adults whose psychiatric and addiction histories have demonstrated the need for extended life-skill support, intensive treatment, rehabilitation from severe impairment and reclaiming of a peer community.
- Yellowbrick's model integrates traditional and cutting edge research approaches to psychiatry, cognitive enhancement, healing from trauma, individual developmental growth, change in family systems, and life-skill rehabilitation. Yellowbrick's programs and services promote self-empowerment, brain hygiene & health, identity integration and coherence, the development of connected autonomy within a nurturing sober peer and family support system while developing life strategy skills, career and education advancement and productive life activity in the Chicagoland community.

Yellowbrick is distinguished by values of integrity, a commitment to excellence and innovation, and outcome. Professional Staff are expert, senior, and full-time Yellowbrick professionals including three full-time psychiatrists. Yellowbrick Professional Staff possess decades of combined experience as clinicians, teachers, and program executives. Our clinical-scholar and research professionals, in consultation with internationally recognized premier thought leaders have created a treatment model recognized throughout the nation as powerfully integrated and comprehensive.

Yellowbrick's model utilizes the latest research from neurobiology, trauma research, cognitive neuroscience, developmental psychology, a spectrum of approaches to psychotherapy, and strength based, wellness approaches. Interventions include a unique integration of:

- Research based categorical and functional diagnosis.
- Neuro-modulatory treatments such as collaborative, pharmaco-genomically informed psychopharmacology, *deep* Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (*d*TMS), neuro-feedback and Direct Trans-Cranial Current Stimulation (DTCS).
- Neuro-modulatory protocols for exercise, nutrition and sleep hygiene.
- Neuro-modulatory treatments such as mindfulness, meditation, yoga and mind-body integration which quiet the limbic system, creating safety which promotes attachment and new learning.
- *Re*Cognition; Cognitive enhancement interventions focused on attention, working memory and executive function, all considered essential for making use of other treatments and preventing relapse for psychiatric illness and addiction.
- Strength-based enhancement of life skills and executive function led in a "real-time" community living context within supported home healthcare apartments.
- Yellowbrick's treatment culture includes an expectation of involvement in school, work, and /or Community Service while in treatment to assist with the challenges in role performance functioning. This is in contrast to the asylum approach of most treatment settings.
- Intensive individual and family therapy 3-5x/week conducted by senior, expert Professional Staff with training at a Doctoral level or with decades of experience. Treatment occurs within the context of deep, often intense, relationships with professionals, peers and families within the Yellowbrick Community. Neuro-imaging shows changes in brain networking demonstrating that effective emotional engagement in relationships promotes new learning and functioning, especially in the emotion-regulating capacities of emerging adults.
- Intensive Outpatient Group Therapy Program ranging from 3- 30 hours/week specifically developed to address the universal developmental challenges of emerging adulthood and the specific symptomatic issues associated with trauma, addiction and eating disorders.
- Family Model including a 24/7 Family Liaison, Family Rounds Strategic Planning sessions, family therapy and Parents as Partners educational monthly weekends.
- Outcome is evaluated by patient and Professional Staff research validated metrics and objectively with neuroimaging by an admission and transition quantitative EEG.

The Yellowbrick model is an in-depth but practical, strength based approach creating a context for enduring change. Treatment at Yellowbrick offers value that lasts a lifetime through enhanced personal understanding and integration, life skills and strategies, and the development of core competence.

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YELLOWBRICK®

HEALING THE BRAIN, TRANSFORMING LIVES®

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