

## ***New Spiritual Care Group*** **by Wolf Yoxall, Spiritual/Wellness Director**

*"Addiction is rooted in a physical, mental and spiritual imbalance. There is a necessity for a substance abuse treatment model that gives credence to the mind-body-spirit connection." Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Publications and Research: Spirituality has a Role in Substance Abuse Treatment Programs, Maryland Researchers. 12/2007.*

Over the course of the last five years working at Pavillon, I discovered that spirituality as a separate discipline within recovery treatment programs is few and far between. Many of the programs throughout the US teach elements of spirituality, but do not give it the priority it deserves. If we look at the Twelve Steps we will see that seven of the twelve are specific to the spiritual process. According to research done by the University of Pennsylvania, "Spirituality permanently changes the neurological circuits of the brain." Since we know addiction damages the neuro-functioning of our brains, then spirituality is a key ingredient to the healing process.

As I continued to research the lack of spiritual discipline in treatment programs, I recognized that there was no identified spiritual organization for professionals in the field and saw an opportunity. Reaching out to the few treatment programs that do have spiritual departments it became clear that a professional organization was on the minds of others in my field as well.

In September, 2014, six of us gathered in Chicago to discuss where spirituality is going in treatment programs. During our time together we developed the professional program SCATP, Spiritual Care Addiction Treatment Professionals, along with our website and LinkedIn account. Our first adventure is presenting a pre-conference workshop on Spiritual Care in Treatment Programs at this year's NAATP (National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers) Addiction Leadership conference. SCATP's long term goal: To develop a set of standards for spiritual care within the field of addiction treatment.