

Sacred Spaces of CARE: Connect with Mental Health & Substance Use Resources

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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ALTON - A new organization is working to connect people with mental health and community resources.

Sacred Spaces of CARE is a nonprofit “one-stop shop” that provides information about mental health professionals and substance use programs in the Alton area. When someone is experiencing a mental health crisis, it can be difficult to find the time and energy needed to seek out local resources; even knowing where to start can be a daunting task. Sacred Spaces of CARE aims to make it easier.

“Our systems are very hard to navigate, and when people are in crisis, they’re even more difficult. So how do we reduce those barriers? We can’t eliminate them, but how do we help?” Executive Director Megan Tyler said. “I just kind of looked at the community and tried to see...where are some gaps that we could potentially fill? And really, the biggest was just kind of being like a connector organization, like a network. Not a provider of services, but walking alongside individuals or families or whoever wants to seek support.”

Tyler teamed up with several local therapists and social workers to found Sacred Spaces of CARE earlier this year. In addition to mental health, trauma and addiction services, Tyler points out that people with these struggles often have other areas where they need support, such as housing, food insecurity, medical needs and family dynamics. The nonprofit can offer assistance on each of those levels.

Tyler notes that Sacred Spaces of CARE can’t guarantee an organization will provide services. But they can connect you to existing services and organizations you might not know of, and they can provide support to you and your family while you navigate a crisis.

“Our job is to try to have that awareness of what is out there,” Tyler explained. “What does exist? What are the options? We don’t have any more power than you making that call yourself...I can’t wave a magic wand and make it happen, but I can be there to support you during that process.”

Tyler previously worked in high-trauma settings as an educator, which sparked her interest in trauma-informed community care. The name of the organization itself is an acronym that speaks to its mission; Sacred Spaces of CARE: Community Advocacy Resource Education.

In addition to their individual services, Sacred Spaces of CARE has worked with other groups to host mental health trainings and youth service presentations for community members. The organization is also partnered with the Alton Police Department to provide officer wellness and suicide prevention education, and they have helped APD manage mental health crises in the community.

Sacred Spaces of CARE is still in its beginning stages. Looking forward, the group hopes to start a TeenConnectED program that will use social media to educate and support young adults. In the meantime, their website provides [a full list of services](#).

“We have a lot of really good things in Alton, and I love this community and I’m committed to it. And then at the same time, we really are under-resourced,” Tyler said. “I can’t force anyone to bring those resources that we desperately need, but I can try to be a voice for that. I can advocate for that.”

For more information about Sacred Spaces of CARE and their role in the Riverbend community, visit their [official website at sacredspacesofcare.org](https://sacredspacesofcare.org), their [Facebook page](#) or [Instagram profile](#).