EXTENDED INSIGHTS...

AIM HOUSE

Boulder, Colorado
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By: Larry Stednitz, PhD

In a 2000 visit report, Carol Maxym, PhD, concluded that "AIM House promises to be one of the growing number of new, small, independent programs, envisioned and founded by a younger generation of committed, idealistic, educated and talented people who may well set the tone for the next stage in residential, therapeutic/emotional growth education and treatment." This writer traveled to Boulder, CO to visit AIM House and could not agree more with Dr. Maxym. Loi Eberle, MA also wrote a program visitation report in 2002, which did an excellent job of describing AIM House. These visitation reports and program descriptions are both available on www.strugglingteens.com.

Seven years ago, Daniel Conroy made the decision to develop a mentor-based program for young people ages 17 ½ to 23. AIM is one of the programs listed in the Parent Empowerment Directory published by Woodbury Reports, Inc. as one of the better transition programs in the country. Located in stately buildings near downtown Boulder, AIM House is designed to be a real life experience and their location allows this opportunity. In this real life experience, the program uses a variety of approaches, including mindfulness-based techniques to assist the participants in broadening their exploration of what they want out of life and how to replace self-sabotaging behaviors. Each young adult at AIM House is viewed as "unique," responding differently to their world and the environment. Learning to deal with varied emotions and change engrained behaviors appropriately is important to success of the participants as they move out into the world and the environment.

AIM stands for *Actions and Intentions Merge*.

AIM House incorporates James Prochaska's seven stages of change into their program. Research shows that people who successfully change a major self-defeating or harmful behavior tend to move through each of these seven stages by utilizing several processes which allow them to be successful at lifestyle change. People who use appropriate change processes for their stage of change are far more

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