

## Chappaqua Therapist Uses Art, Yoga to Help Others Overcome Eating Disorders

By Martin Wilbur

As a psychotherapist and certified eating disorder specialist for more than 20 years, Susan Schrott has counseled clients who have sought help for anorexia, bulimia, binge eating and other problems that can ruin their lives.

What sets Schrott apart from some of her colleagues is the integration of her other skills and interests to assist those who call on her for help. The 55-year-old Chappaqua resident is a certified yoga teacher and LifeForce yoga practitioner for mood disorder, and is also an accomplished fabric artist who brings her passions to her practice.

In October, Schrott opened her own office in Hartsdale after being a longtime staff member at CEDAR Associates in Mount Kisco. Her new practice allows her to bring the evidence-based benefits of yoga and meditation, when applicable, to certain patients and group art therapy for adolescents who have trouble communicating.

"I had a vision of a space that would enable me to treat my clients in a very unique multidisciplinary approach," Schrott said of the move to go into private practice.

Her East Hartsdale Avenue office, which draws from the large southern and central Westchester population base, is just big enough for her and up to four or five clients to pull out the mats, or for small group yoga sessions to help



MARTIN WILBUR PHOTO

Eating disorder specialist Susan Schrott has opened her own practice in Hartsdale, using yoga and art to help connect with her patients.

relieve anxiety, tension and depression and enhance self-esteem. Schrott trained extensively to become a certified yoga instructor under Amy Weintraub, author of "Yoga for Depression" and a leader in the field of yoga and mental health.

Those with eating disorders often exhibit a high level of anxiety. Invariably, the disorder masks other problems in the patient's life. Schrott said a goal is to help her patients look at themselves a little less critically or judgmentally to move their

lives forward.

While an alarming number of teenagers are afflicted with eating disorders, Schrott said she counsels patients as young as 10 years old and senior citizens from all races and religions. While eating disorders are predominantly found in girls, she has also found a rising number of boys are falling victim.

"I think because eating disorders are much more in the media, parents fortunately are much more willing to see it

and control it and report it to a pediatrician first, and then I get that referral," Schrott said.

Her practice has also allowed her to use adolescent art group therapy sessions. While she introduced art into her therapy years ago, through drawing, painting, beading, poetry, clay and collage, Schrott said she is able to connect with some of her patients who better express themselves through that medium.

"It opens up playfulness, letting go, a sense of freedom, and then sometimes whole stories unfold," Schrott explained.

She also has individualized counseling sessions for anxiety, depression, posttraumatic stress disorder and therapy for couples with marital issues.

Schrott, who has been featured in her own fiber art shows throughout Westchester and in venues around the country, was also included in the recent book "Jewish Threads: A Hands-On Guide to Stitching Spiritual Intention into Jewish Fabric Crafts." Despite the time she needed to create a work to be included in the book, Schrott was adamant that if she was ever going to launch her own practice, it had to be now.

"I believed (if) I didn't take the leap, when am I going to do it—when I'm 80?" she asked.

*To learn more about Susan Schrott or to contact her, visit [www.susanschrotttherapy.com](http://www.susanschrotttherapy.com) or call 914-725-3131.*