

## Heroes Beyond the Mask

# Shannon Kratky

I am a Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor and a Licensed Professional Counselor Intern, Supervised by Dr. Michael Moyer, LPC-S



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“  
*It is my purpose in life  
to love and be loved.*  
- Shannon ”



I work at the Center for Health Care Services with clients experiencing homelessness, substance use disorders, and mental health concerns. I work 3 days in office and 2 days at home providing individual and group counseling, with a focus on traumatic experiences using EMDR. I'm also maximizing telehealth, providing weekly psychoeducation packets to the clients I serve, and hand-writing them personal notes so they know they are not alone.

I'm so proud of and inspired by the clients I serve for their resilience, passion, and perseverance in healing themselves, and I'm grateful for the clients I serve. I love what I do. It's what I'm meant to do. It is my purpose in life to love and be loved, and I'm proud of being who I am and for choosing this service. I'm so grateful I get to do this. Not only am I grateful for and inspired by the clients I serve, I'm also inspired by my family of choice and the kindness, generosity, self-sacrifice, and love from all people as well as grateful for the love and support of my family of choice, my ability to stay connected with others, my health, and my husband and fur babies.

To manage my stress and stay well during COVID, I'm coping by focusing my energy on the clients I serve, utilizing my support system, dancing with my global friends on Zoom, playing Super Mario Brothers, leading guided meditations online, paying attention to what my body, mind, and spirit need, and giving to myself freely and unashamedly. It's not easy, but if I burn out, there is no one to care for them. I'm also sleeping more, putting my clothes in the wash after work, sanitizing everything that comes home, bathing my fur babies, and exercising at home.

To continue to help others outside of the clients I serve, I'm following the stay at home orders, working safe, reaching out to others, not panic buying (TP!), and giving as much as I can to others now such as buying a gift card for a future haircut. Stay at home literally means stay at home. I'm an introvert; it's still hard. Stay at home, even if it means feeling like you're a little kid that just got sent to your room and don't have a clue what you did wrong.

Post, COVID, I look forward to seeing the clients I serve face to face, hugging my own counselor, and snuggling on the couch with my mom, laughing, and watching a chick flick without fear of getting her sick. I pray this pandemic of love, kindness, and generosity continues, now we know we are all capable of it. Also, remember to Be gentle with yourself. We are all going through a world-wide traumatic experience. Reach out for support, and take care of yourself and your families