The Alliance for Pelvic Pain is coming to New York on March 8-9, 2014!

All About The Alliance for Pelvic Pain: Interviews with Amy Stein and Alexandria Milspaw regarding the Alliance’s Weekend Retreat held in April 2013

What was the goal in creating the Alliance?
Our main mission in creating the Alliance was to expand knowledge and care to the underserved population of female patients with chronic pelvic pain. We wanted to create an atmosphere where patients felt safe to be their authentic selves and felt comfortable in expressing their thoughts and feelings. It was important to us to help these women meet each other in an effort to help them not only realize they are not alone in their experiences, but also to learn there are answers and reasons for their pain. We also wanted to expand knowledge to health care professionals around the country. We hope to hold educational retreats for professionals as well as patients in the near future. In addition, we wanted to help women meet other women suffering from chronic pelvic pain (CPP) and to teach them self-healing and self-care techniques that they could practice at home. Furthermore, we wanted to help participants learn about the medical, physical therapy approach and mental health approach to treating CPP and to learn about how bowel, bladder, and sexual function can be compromised due to CPP.

What were the highlights of the weekend in your opinion?
AS: The highlights were the ability for these women to realize that they were not alone and they were able to bond with each other. We were also pleased with the teamwork of the interdisciplinary health care providers. CPP is a complex condition that affects multiple aspects of life and which requires the participation of several disciplines to account for all areas affected. The Alliance team all worked very well together and we felt huge reward and accomplishment by offering this to these women.

AM: I think the entire weekend was a highlight! Beginning with Friday night’s “Meet and Greet”, the energy in the room was swirling with excitement and camaraderie as the participants began to meet each other and share stories. The entire lobby of Hotel Bethlehem was buzzing with sounds such as, “Really? Me too!” and “Oh my gosh, I thought I was the only one.” Watching the smiles on these women’s faces and hearing that this is the first time they have smiled and felt part of a community warmed my heart and expanded my energy for the upcoming weekend.

Another highlight was the break-out sessions, which provided more one-on-one attention in practicing the techniques discussed in the lectures. Finally, a highlight that was more “behind the scenes” was the opportunity to meet with one-on-one practitioners who specialized in a variety of areas. We are so grateful for the providers who took their weekend to be available for individual sessions for the participants.

Please visit www.allianceforpelvicpain.com for more information on the retreat or contact us at info@allianceforpelvicpain.com

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ATTENDEES’ TESTIMONIALS—
WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT THE ALLIANCE FOR PELVIC PAIN’S RETREAT:

“The Alliance for Pelvic Pain retreat was a life-changing experience. It was wonderful to meet so many other women with similar symptoms. I felt incredibly supported & understood. The roundtable luncheons also allowed me to meet women w/ my specific diagnoses (vulvodynia & pudendal neuralgia) & within my age group (I was relieved to see that I’m not the only “young person” struggling w/ CPP). As for the panel & information presented, I really appreciated having such a range of experts— it reflected how CPP needs to be treated from different angles. I feel as though I finally “got” the connection between anxiety & CPP. The information about what factors the brain considers before concluding that the MindBody is in pain was so helpful. In addition, I really appreciated the experiential meditation & PT sessions. So, in conclusion, the retreat was worth every penny & was a wonderful experience. Thank you so much for offering it!!” —“A.C.”

“Perhaps most meaningful to me was the opportunity to look the assembled practitioners in the eye and say “THANK YOU! THANK YOU!” We all know they possess the rare combination of compassion, skill, and expertise gleaned from thinking outside the "establishment box" to both validate our concerns and ameliorate with a passion our almost insurmountable issues. I hope that more and more doctors take advantage and train with Dr. E and Dr. Coady. Amy Stein’s classes were well received and we all learnt a lot from Alex's workshops...Dr. E and his staff spent a lot of time encouraging me to attend. The event was beyond my expectations.” —“M”

“I was elated and excited all the way home. I felt honored to be among these women who got up every day in pain and still made lives for themselves. I was also honored to be among these hard-working, curious, intelligent, forward thinking, compassionate healers. I am considering what I put in my mouth and whether it will help me or not, I am doing exercises from Amy Stein’s book. I am reading more about the psychological effects of chronic pain and feeling a greater sense of advocacy on all of our behalfs. This helped me to tie together strands of psychological and physical ways of thinking about my body and myself. I realized that having chronic pain has been a very powerful journey that is unfortunate and harmful in many ways, but in other ways, has made me feel that to reach full humanity, a person must integrate the pelvis, as well as every other part of her physical being, into her mind with love and acceptance. I left the conference feeling much more of that sense of integration, and with a sense of connectedness to everyone else there. I have much more I could say about this, but I just wanted to say how deeply meaningful the whole experience was for me and how grateful I am for you to have provided it.” —Alexandra H.

For more testimonials, please visit www.allianceforpelvicpain.com