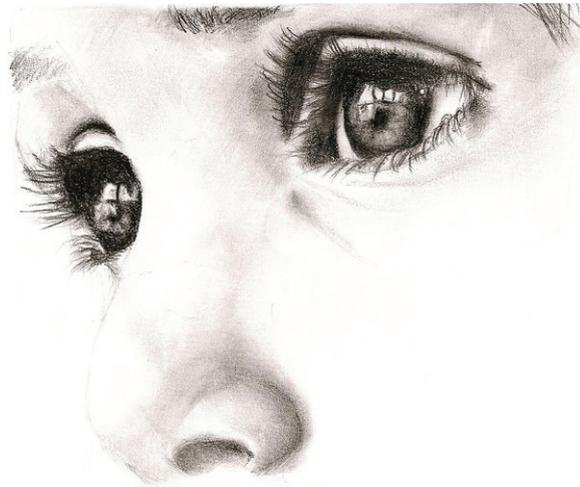


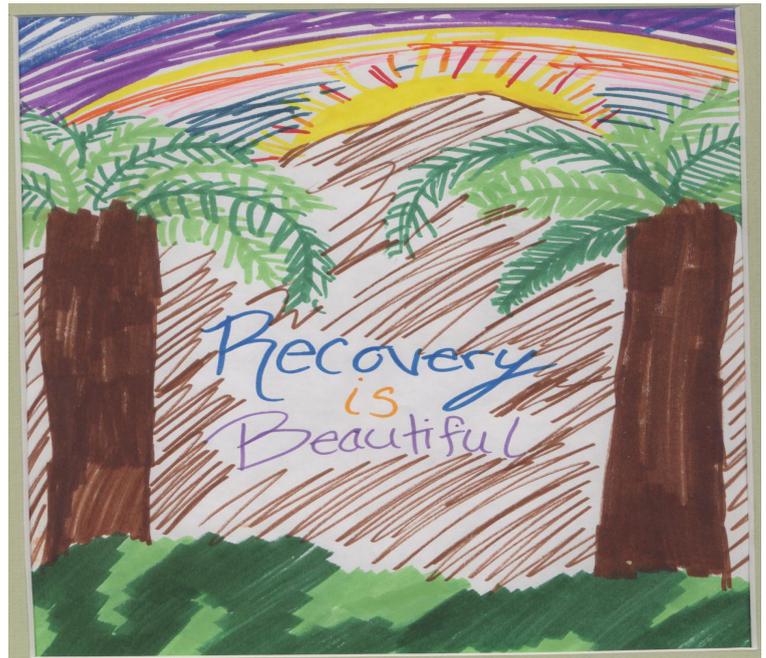
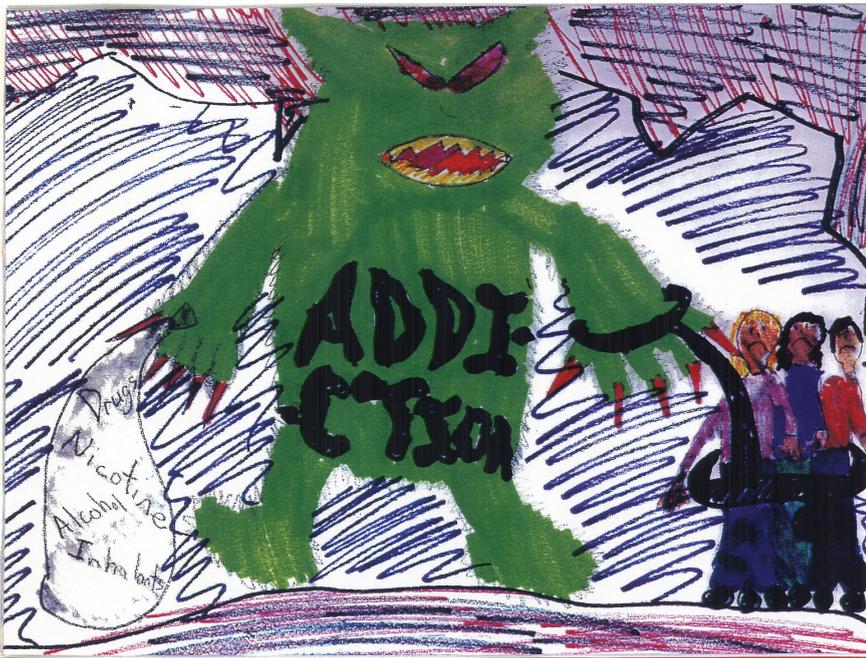
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## *Addiction and Recovery – Through a Child's Eyes*



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# Contributors

Jeannie Rabb-Marshall - President & Cofounder  
 Marcus Marshall - Vice President & Cofounder  
 Beth Stern - Dewey C.E.O. & Cofounder  
 Staff Photographer - Shalimar Cambria  
 Graphic Designers - J Rabb-Marshall  
 Outreach Directors - Peggy Salazar & Judy Gavin

**Editorial Contributors:** Marcus Marshall • Mary Cook, M.A., R.A.S. • Kay B. • Nita Vallens • Brooke Hailey, PhD • Marcia Ullett, MA, LMFT, CPC • Maria Gray, LMFT • Michelle Webber, LCSW • Jerry Moe, MA

# About Us

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I have had an incredible journey learning about and experiencing recovery in the last eight months that would not have been available to me, if I was working in any other job other than being the Vice President and Cofounder of Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. I have had the privilege and honor to meet some remarkable individuals inside the addiction treatment arena, and outside on the streets of Skid Row and the missions. I have witnessed the phenomenal inner strength that so many have exhibited in their quest for recovery, fighting the odds of destitution and hopelessness, which they face daily, truly impresses me. It makes my complaints along this path of recovery seem insignificant, because I have been blessed with abundance and inspiration from those who walked before me.

Since our first issue titled *"Dying for a Drink"*, my eyes have been opened to the atrocities that plague our society which are usually hidden from the average person, even some of those in the recovery field have not seen firsthand, the harsh extremes that are being faced daily by individuals out there. Some of us started off believing in the glamorization portrayed on television, which made it appear drinking alcohol improved your coolness and helped to make us more accepted by friends and the opposite sex. Fortunately, our eyes have been opened to the negative effects that alcohol actually causes, the physical, emotional and psychological damage that results from repeated use. We appreciate Mary Cook, author of *"Grace Lost and Found: from Addictions and Compulsions to Satisfaction and Serenity"* for writing the first feature article for us.

The issue titled *"Bringing Hope to the Hopeless"* catapulted me deeper into the world of those who had their lives uprooted by the evils of addiction. I saw hardships that were endured on the streets that should not be prevalent in our modern world, as well as the fortitude and inner strength that it takes to overcome them. We were fortunate to have John E. Bradshaw write our feature article for our second issue titled *"Recovering Addicts and Post Romantic Stress Disorder"*, which explained in detail how recovering addicts tend to react to the ending of relationships. John E. Bradshaw is called one of the greatest philosophers and communicators of our time, and his book has been on the New York Times, bestselling list for years.

Our issue titled *"Meth Destroys, Recovery Heals"* enlightened me to see how Methamphetamine can devastate not just the Neuropathways, but also the addicts life mentally, physically and spiritually - along with the families trust and their own personal wellbeing. Being a lead Technician at one of the best treatment centers in southern California, gave me the perfect opportunity to personally experience the horrific transformation that Meth causes to the human body and mind. In contrast, I saw the positive results of what recovery does to the human spirit and the family as a whole. The great news is that after 5 years of total abstinence from meth, the brain can often show no sign of meth destruction. We are thankful to have had Robert Mittiga write the feature article for us.

When our issue *"Finding Freedom: The Journey to Recover-ED"* was in the process of being finalized, I was given some remarkable information that I was totally unaware of. I had a misconception that women were the ones with eating disorders, and that men didn't have the contradictory feelings of attraction and repulsion. Eating disorders do not discriminate by age, or gender or ethnic background. There are estimates that indicate around 5% of the 11 million Americans suffering from an eating disorder will die from it, and learning that the mortality rate of eating disorders are the highest of any mental illness caused me to want to address this growing problem. Thank you very much Rachel Levi, Founder and Clinical Director, Shoreline Center for Eating Disorder Treatment, for writing our feature article.

The issue *"Prescription Pain Killers and Heroin: An American Epidemic"* enlightened me about this public social health crisis that is moving across the country at an alarming rate. Young men and women who are getting addicted to these prescription medications are dying at epidemic proportions. This addiction affects kids from lower income neighborhoods and kids from upper income neighborhoods alike. Geographical location and monetary status apparently have no bearing on who falls victim to this countrywide problem, that is hurting our nation as a whole. Thank you very much Michael DeLeon, of Steered Straight, Inc. for writing the feature article.

Our issue *"Grief Recovery: Quick fix? You get what you work for!"* is powerful in its deliverance of the importance of addressing the underlining damage, which needs to be taken care of before we cover up the pain dealing with life's other pressing matters. The underlining issues that manifest by using a quick-fix mentality to the emotional issues in our lives, inhibits us to fully recover from some of our losses. I have been blessed in these last months to have grown emotionally. Thank you Russell Friedman and John W. James, Co-founders of The Grief Recovery Institute.

In this issue Jerry Moe gives us the perspective of children, when he wrote our feature article *"Addiction and Recovery Through a Child's Eyes"*. I'm sure you will be touched by this month's feature as much as I was.

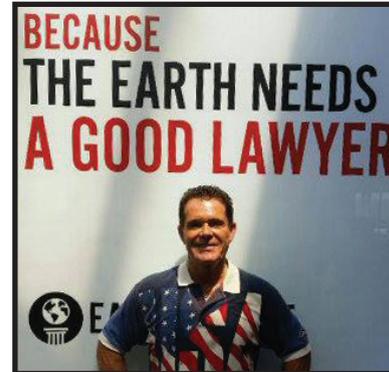
by Marcus Marshall



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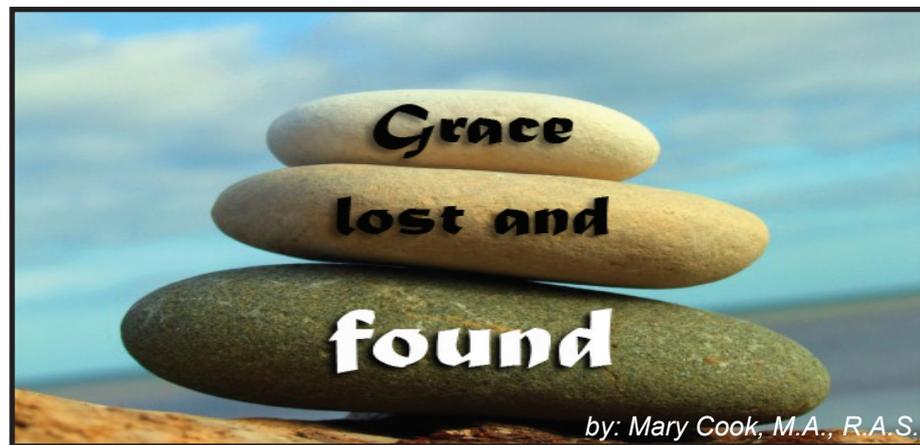


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## THE MEMORY OF PAIN

Remembering our losses can trigger a tidal wave of despair. Sadness sometimes turns into self-destructiveness, shame, anger or blame. We may close our hearts to cease investing in what we cannot possess. We might distract ourselves in endeavors that require no vulnerability, or seek solace and escape in compulsions and addictions.

Recalling trauma may bring the vision of a child's trembling terror, of not knowing what unspeakable things might happen. We may relive the razors' edge of pain or the battle cries of the criminally insane, who imagined that we were their enemy.

Long forgotten aspirations and fallow fields where hope once lived, may haunt us with a feeling that we are but a ghost with human skin. Brief moments of excitement can clash with ancient instant replays of humiliation, threats and abuse for daring to dream. The resurgence of painful memories stimulate our original sensory responses. Even when we are not consciously aware of the information, our subconscious or unconscious mind triggers these old energies. What we felt, heard, said, saw and smelled during painful events, impacts our present experience of ourselves and our environment.

One of the many purposes of healing, is to increase our ability to contain and fully feel positive energy. We cannot build a fortress strong enough to keep the vicissitudes of life away. We cannot fight, resist, escape, deny, glorify or ally with hardship and pain, to improve its' effect upon us and our lives. What we can do is enlarge our vision and understanding. We can expand our compassion to include all of life on earth. All elements, plants, animals, as well as humans, experience the forces of both positive and negative change. We can reflect upon the effects of fire, earthquakes, drought, floods and tornadoes. We can consider the consequences of deforestation, pollution, global warming, and other exploitations of the earth. We can see cruelty to animals and people through torture, rape, and various abuses including neglect, endangerment and abandonment. These are some of the many compelling reasons to cultivate compassion, caring, tenderness, respect and sensitivity. There is so much in life that begs for humility, helpfulness, and generosity of spirit.

If we are to heal and live fulfilling, meaningful lives, we cannot afford to waste time in pity, vengeance, entitlement, denial, passivity or rage. The levels of anxiety, depression and violence in our world belie a human culture that does more to perpetuate pain than to teach personal responsibility for positive change.

Animals don't wonder why they were singled out for disaster, when it arrives. They waste no time or energy in the problem. Their focus in response to threats, damage and loss is on healing and adapting. Animals additionally seek safety and comfort in self-nurturing and accepting empathic help. We can do the same by refusing to harm, endanger or neglect ourselves or others. Empathy, healthy boundaries and understanding will allow us to be safe, to heal and to adapt appropriately.

It is important to find people with whom we can disclose our stories of pain, in exchange for therapeutic identification, understanding, empathy, caring and helpfulness. In this process our mind can create new associations to trauma, which allow us ultimately to transform problems into spiritual growth. We can identify and be thankful for the positive differences between us and our environment, then and now. We can remove the defensive barriers that interfere with our ability to release negative energies and internalize positive ones. We can demonstrate this change in actions, communications, feelings and thoughts. We can allow ourselves to feel, hear, see, touch, taste and smell a broad range of healthy positive stimuli. This helps us to disempower and heal the old energies of trauma.

There are blessings that look like twinkling lights, at the edges of despair. There is a point of perfect peace at the very center of our being, despite the tornado of terror surrounding us. When we withdraw into emptiness with acceptance, we can open our eyes to divine grace. There are no distractions or "fixes" that heal. But if we listen carefully, there is a soft voice whispering solutions in our ears. When our mind mutters incomprehensible thoughts, we can ask our hearts to pray for us. When we are feeling the sting of physical pain, we might recall the feeling of soft, warm, comforting caresses from those we love. We are apprentice alchemists with the power of Heaven within us. When we remember this, the painful burdens of lead can be transformed into the gold of enlightenment. Our eyes then see the white dove of peace filling the sky with its beauty, and we prideful human warriors can lay down our bloodied swords, and humbly bow in reverence to higher truth.

WWW.MARYCOOKMA.COM, Mary Cook is an addiction counselor with 38 years of experience and 29 years of University teaching. She has a Master's degree in psychology and is a registered addiction specialist. Mary is a speaker and the author of "Grace Lost and Found: From Addictions and Compulsions to Satisfaction and Serenity", available from Barnes & Noble, Amazon.com




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## Personal Recovery Depends on Unity

“So it is we learn that in matters deeply affecting the group as a whole,” “our common welfare comes first.” Rebellion ceases and cooperation begins because it must; we have disciplined ourselves”. 1947 Grapevine, by Bill Wilson.

**Applying Self Discipline:** Most people revert back to their childhoods when the word “discipline” is used, however we must at some point in our adult lives, begin to pursue and embrace self-discipline lest we return to destructive behaviors. Disciple comes from discipline, as one being taught. We can change the way that we respond to hearing “discipline” by incorporating disciple – one who is teachable. We can also apply loving-kindness and tender-heartedness to learning and being taught, as we grow in our recovery.

We are taught in recovery that we are a rebellious bunch, that we are immature emotionally, mentally and spiritually and that of ourselves, without a radical change we are doomed to repeat the patterns of our pasts. Due to the selfish nature of the disease of addiction, unity with others is rarely a consideration. We’ve all witnessed the self-centered person in the meeting who takes charge, loves controversies, starts debates, and are only interested in their way of recovery and their own opinions... another form of pride. “My way or the highway, I know better than everyone”, they claim. These are the ones who coin the slogans, discourage and insult the newcomers and rarely participate in group service. These are the ones who make grand entrances, are usually late, leave early, and complain about everything going on the meetings!

Tradition One is about unity within the group in which our personal recovery depends on. Instead of creating division and disharmony, gossiping and complaining we might want to recalibrate our recovery by returning to the simple gratitude that we had when we were new. Our sponsors point out that we are selfish to the core, that the manifestation of addiction is grounded in our self-centeredness, therefore opposite action is required. We want to see what we can bring to the group rather than always taking from the group.

Self-discipline comes into play when we begin to take opposite action. Instead of creating division, we can practice kindness and thoughtfulness. Instead of showing up late to meetings, we discipline ourselves to arrive early – and stay late to help clean up. Instead of creating problems within the group, we can discipline ourselves to be a part of the solutions and to help when needed. Instead of rushing in and out of meetings just to “attend” or for merely social gatherings, we can discipline ourselves to participate, share, and be a positive influence in meetings and in others recovery.

Recovery is no longer about “me or I”, it is about “US”, as a whole unit. We need to be a community of people with common solutions to life, giving encouragement and support. Unity within the fellowship is vital for recovery, sanity and lasting relationships. Chances are if we stay clean (and sober), we will be in relations with the people that we are in meetings with for the rest of our lives. We need to ask ourselves, “what is more important, being right or being humble”? The disease of addiction is the enemy to relations; it destroys families, friendships and loves to hide in division, controversy, pride and isolation. It wants us to believe that no one is more important than we are and that our needs must come first. Rather than obsessing about ourselves, we can discipline ourselves (put into practice) putting others first and contribute in some way to making their day a little bit better or easier. Instead of complaining about the coffee, volunteer to make the coffee, bring snacks, or help the person who is volunteering.

The traditions are principles that we live by and try to the best of our ability to practice in all of our affairs – in every area of life, especially in our homes and not just in meetings. Here is a portion of the principles from the 1969 Grapevine by Dr. Silkworth:

“Am I in my group a healing, mending, integrating person, or am I divisive? What about gossip and taking other member’s inventories?

Am I a peacemaker? Or do I, with pious preludes such as “just for the sake of discussion,” plunge into argument?

Am I gentle with those who rub me the wrong way, or am I abrasive?

Do I make competitive AA/(NA) remarks, such as comparing one group with another or contrasting AA/(NA) in one place with another?

Do I put down some AA/ (NA) activities as if I were superior for not participating in this or that aspect?

Am I informed about AA/(NA) as a whole? Do I support, in every way I can, (the group) as a whole, or just the parts I understand and approve of?

Am I as considerate of AA/(NA) members as I want them to be of me?

Do I spout platitudes about love while indulging in and secretly justifying behavior that bristles with hostility?

Do I go to enough AA/(NA) meetings or read enough literature to really keep in touch?

Do I share all of me, the bad and the good, accepting as well as giving the help of the fellowship?

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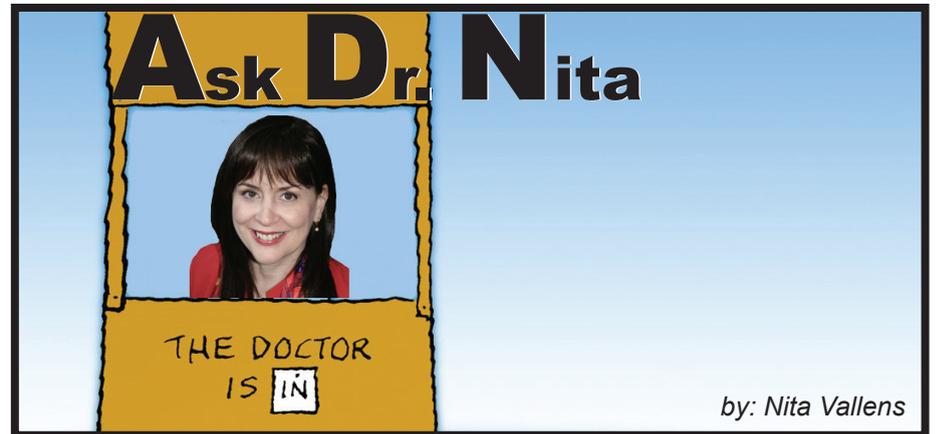
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by: Nita Vallens

Dear Dr Nita,

During the last four years of my treatment for alcoholism and pain pill addiction, I learned that this is a family disease - what do I do to help my 14 and 16 year old teens who recently returned to live with me for the first time in four years, after living with my ex-husband and then my parents since they were 10 and 12.

Mary Ann

Dear Mary Ann,

I commend you for staying clean and sober over the past four years and for taking a stand for your two children. This is truly a testament to your commitment to your children and a fresh start to make a difference in their lives. Use the foundation of new skills and support that you've been building for 4 years to be a new kind of parent.

The big book of Alcoholics Anonymous states, "An illness of this sort--and we have come to believe it an illness--involves those about us in a way no other human sickness can. If a person has cancer all are sorry for him and no one is angry or hurt. But not so with the alcoholic illness, for with it there goes annihilation of all the things worthwhile in life." With this in mind I urge you to try not to put pressure on yourself.

My first recommendation is Alateen meetings <http://al-anon.alateen.org/for-alateen> for your teens so they can have support to learn and develop skills to deal with feelings and situations in a healthy way. (Al-Anon/Alateen, are different terms for the same "worldwide fellowship" that offers a program of recovery for the families and friends of alcoholics). It is significantly easier and even fun, to have the entire family in recovery together when you can discuss concepts that you both relate to and understand. There's a Facebook page as well.

Second, I suggest family therapy, as I'm guessing you are filled with expectations and excited to start anew (what sets family therapists apart from other psychotherapists is their special training in family relationships). Regular family therapy sessions will help you strengthen your relationships with your teens by, identifying conflicts/issues and working together to find solutions. The entire family unit will be strengthened, allowing each family member to feel accepted and a part of the whole as well as relying on each other to work towards desired and effective change.

This will not be without its challenges, because past hurts and unresolved issues are going to come up. But you will have the opportunity to take responsibility for these and heal them together instead of running away or escaping from them. You can heal from the past and create a brighter future.

Let's go back to expectations, and other feelings that may try to sabotage your best efforts. I'm assuming you're working with a sponsor, working the steps, practicing the principles of your 12 step program. The following will be helpful daily reminders:

1. Be present and in the moment - stay out of the future and out of the past; a mindfulness practice daily is very useful.
2. Check your story - start from a realistic view and step back and see if your idea or belief really is the truth. Talk to someone close to you who will tell you the truth if you are really stuck.
3. Discard fantasies or old ideas - for example; applying old-fashion parenting styles and standards with your teens that no longer work.
4. Open your mind - the concept "beginner's mind" from Zen Buddhism says that we meet every situation with a clean slate, so that we have room to see the reality right in from of us - keeping ego and control issues to a minimum.
5. See like a child - from a child's point of view, most things are brand new experiences - let go of past judgments and greet this new experience with compassion and fresh new eyes, even if it seems like something you've previously experienced.

Finally, take pressure off of yourself by knowing you are doing your best - there will be mistakes along the way and that is part of being human. Be confident that with support and faith, you will create a loving supportive family unit. Feel free to call me if you need any resources along your journey.

Dr Nita Vallens is a counselor and hypnotherapist in Sherman Oaks and can be reached via [www.DrNitaVallens.com](http://www.DrNitaVallens.com) Dr. Nita's Inner Vision radio show can be heard on Tuesdays at 1:00 pm on KPFK Los Angeles, 90.7 FM or stream at [www.KPFK.org](http://www.KPFK.org)

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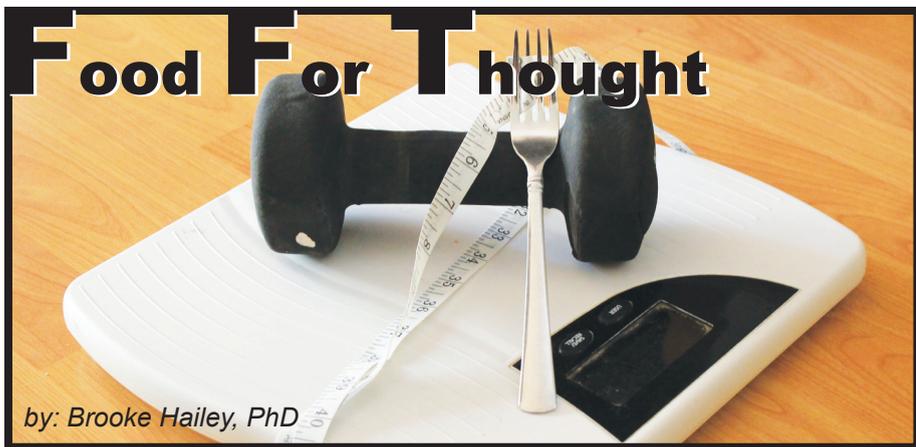
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by: Brooke Hailey, PhD

## How Can I Be Afraid of an M & M?

I remember vividly Sarah's description of finding one yellow M&M in the corner of her kitchen. It had been left over from a binge two days before. That binge, she had told me, had been a particularly bad one. A stop at a fast food restaurant had been followed by a trip to the grocery store for chips, donuts and candy. She had described in detail the quick, determined way in which she had eaten and the equally determined way in which she had purged until it felt like everything was out. She had then collapsed in exhaustion on her living room couch, not waking up until early the next morning when she made a familiar vow to eat clean, to be healthy, "to be good."

And for the next two days she had, in her mind at least, been good. She had kept her calories significantly under one thousand. She had not touched a single carbohydrate or dairy product. Her diet had consisted of dry chicken and vegetables. In her mind, she was "back on track." In actuality what she had done was not get back on track at all, but put herself in a fragile position where she was very vulnerable to binge again. This is why when Sarah saw the yellow M&M she panicked.

It was not the panic itself, but her feelings about her panic that made things so much worse. To me the panic was valid. To her it was absurd. As she panicked, she told herself many of the things people who suffer from eating disorders often tell themselves. In her most critical voice she told herself how ridiculous she was to be panicked about a tiny piece of candy. It was not as though she was a drug addict and she had spotted heroine or cocaine in the corner of her kitchen. It was not as though she was an alcoholic who had spotted a last drop of scotch. In her mind those would both be acceptable situations in which to panic.

Sarah's harsh judgment of her panic left her unable to tame it. And she gave in, eating first the M&M and then everything else she could find in the pantry. It is not uncommon for eating disorder patients to have much more compassion for alcoholics and drug addicts than they do for themselves. Part of the reason is that alcohol and drugs are known to be addictive substances but the research on whether it is food that is actually addictive or simply the act of eating that is addictive is still inconclusive.

Currently, binge eating as listed in the latest edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, or DSM, is the closest condition to experts description of a food addiction. Binge eating is simply defined as repeated episodes of "eating significantly more food in a short period of time than most people would eat under similar circumstances." Many researchers, however, see a future in which food addiction could be categorized as a substance addiction, not just an eating disorder. However the issue remains controversial. And my point is not to get into a debate about whether a person has a food addiction or an eating addiction. To me it does not matter because the way out is the same: In order to recover, it is essential someone develop compassion for themselves and what they are going through.

When Sarah saw the M&M on the floor, she had no compassion for herself. In fact, what she had was an immediate, judgmental response to her own panic. This response is called a secondary reaction to a primary emotion. Secondary emotions are caused by the beliefs we have about experiencing certain emotions. And they can be dangerous.

When Sarah asked me, "How can I be afraid of an M&M?" my answer was simple. "You find eating the M&M soothing. It brings comfort and you desperately want comfort. And you don't know how else to get comfort." I reminded her that food and our response to it is primal. A baby cries, a mother nurses and the baby is soothed. It is through food that a baby has its first experience of being soothed.

Eating disorders are complicated. One thing many eating disorder patients have in common is harsh judgment of themselves. In the case of Bulimics and Binge-Eaters, they cannot forgive themselves for using something as simple as everyday food to numb pain. In the beginning of treatment, it helps to educate patients about the cycle in which restrictive behavior leads to bingeing. It is, however, even more important that they understand how primal the act of soothing through food actually is.

Developing compassion for oneself is not a simple or quick process but it has to occur in order for real recovery to take place. Ironically it is an understanding and acceptance of the power of food that ultimately diminishes that power. In other words, once Sarah understood and accepted how she could be so afraid of one yellow M&M, she wasn't anymore.

Brooke Hailey, PhD is the Clinical Director and owner of New Directions Eating Disorders Center in Sherman Oaks. She also has a private practice in Sherman Oaks where she specializes in the treatment of eating disorders. Please visit her Websites at [www.Newdirectionseatingdisorders.com](http://www.Newdirectionseatingdisorders.com) and [www.Brookehaileyphd.com](http://www.Brookehaileyphd.com), email her at [mbrookehailey@gmail.com](mailto:mbrookehailey@gmail.com) or call her directly at 310-245-6114.

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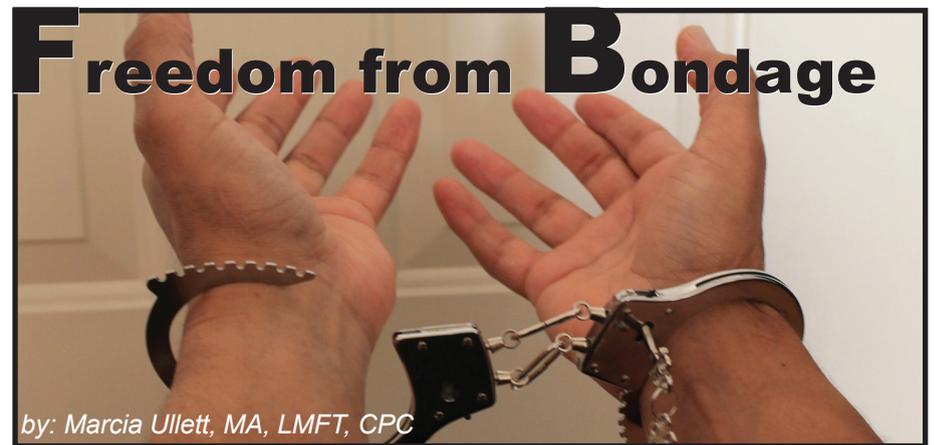
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by: Marcia Ullett, MA, LMFT, CPC

### **WORRY - IS IT WORTH IT?**

So many of us worry. Have you ever worried about something, and the time came and went? Did you think to yourself, "Wow? That was totally worth the worry?" Not likely. Worrying can be helpful when it moves us to take action and solve a problem. But if we become preoccupied with what could happen and our fantasies of worst-case scenarios, worry becomes the problem.

When our doubts and fears take center stage, they can paralyze us, sap us of our emotional energy, and cloud our very focus. Living based on fear is overwhelming. It depletes our energy and leaves us feeling hopeless.

Worrying chronically and excessively can produce extreme anxiety. It's common to seek escape from this anxiety in harmful lifestyle habits such as overeating, cigarette smoking, or using alcohol and drugs. These symptoms of worry and anxiety can then overtake all other problems.

Emotional stress caused by such worry can generate health problems as well. The fight or flight response gets triggered and causes the body's sympathetic nervous system to release stress hormones such as cortisol. These hormones can boost blood sugar levels and blood fats that the body is supposed to use as fuel to fight off the attacker or run from the danger. When this fuel in the blood isn't used for physical activities, the rush of stress hormones can cause significant health consequences.

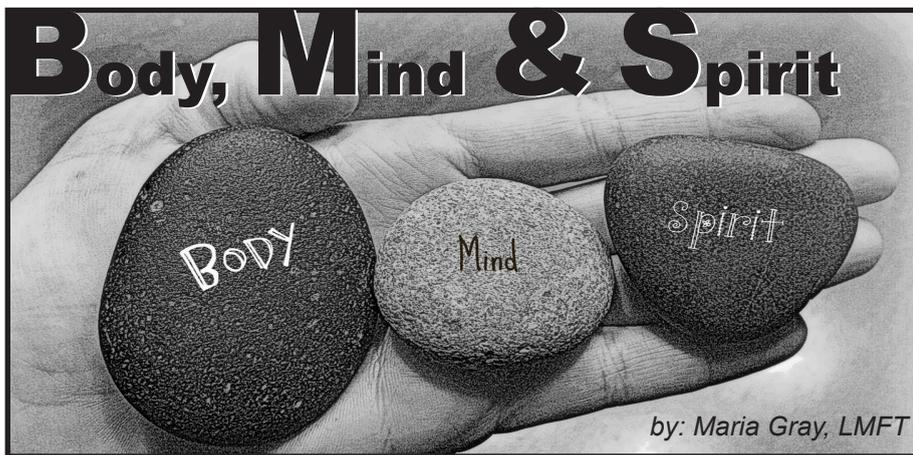
The immune system can become suppressed; muscle tension can become painful and chronic; digestive disorders can develop; coronary artery disease or short-term memory loss can emerge; or heart problems can ensue. These conditions are not due directly to the stress. Instead, it's the effect responses such as excessive worry have on these various interacting systems that can bring on the physical illness.

Worry is common, and most people do it now and again. However, if we find ourselves worrying regularly, it can have a definite effect on our daily lives. There are quite a few ways of dealing with worry to reduce its presence and lead us to calmer, more peaceful and productive lives.

#### **BELOW ARE SOME IDEAS FOR COPING WITH WORRY:**

- 1) Share your thoughts with a supportive friend: A discussion with someone you trust can help provide perspective regarding the situation over which you're worried.
- 2) Exercise regularly: The chemicals produced during moderate exercise can be helpful to increase the function of the immune system. It can also take your mind off your worry. Regular aerobic and strengthening exercise can build your sense of confidence, thereby increasing your ability to cope.
- 3) Meditate or find another way to relax: Studies indicate that meditation helps to focus and decrease such stress hormones as cortisol and adrenaline. If traditional meditation doesn't appeal to you, take a quiet walk or drink some tea (preferably without caffeine).
- 4) Eat a healthy and balanced diet: Eating healthy foods helps to balance our blood sugar. This has a calming but energizing effect on our lives.
- 5) Schedule your worries: Be conscious of your worries. Set aside 15 minutes each day where you allow yourself to focus on problems and fears-and then vow to let them go after 15 minutes is up. If you still feel there's more to worry about, decide to begin tomorrow's 15 minutes with what's left today. Before you begin your scheduled worry time, decide what you'll do when it's over to take your mind off the worry.
- 6) Focus on your life's values: If you begin to look at what's important to you in your life, you can begin to take your mind off the worry and affirm what matters most to you.

Con't Page 18



by: Maria Gray, LMFT

## DEALING WITH “STINKING THINKING”

Sometimes my clients ask me how they can get their minds to quiet down. I am a big fan of mindfulness and meditation. I recommend starting with 5 minutes of silent meditation in the morning. Some people think that if they meditate “properly”, they will have a “blank mind”. As a longtime meditator, I am here to report that I have never experienced a “blank mind” and I still have “stinking thinking” on a regular basis.

I have experimented with all kinds of ways to deal with stinking thinking, here are some of them: reading the book “The Secret” (I felt like a failure when all my positive thinking failed to bring a Porsche into my life, this led to even more stinking thinking), trying not to think about what is bothering me (only made me think about it more- try not thinking about a pink bird and you will be surrounded by pink birds), chanting (works great and very uplifting but the thinking came right back) yoga (this is one of my favorite pastimes and I experience lots of benefits from my yoga practice, (sometimes I have stinking thinking in the middle of yoga class, especially when the entire class is doing a pose that I cannot manage with my tight runner’s hamstrings), meditation (works well and calms me down like nothing else, but thinking still occurs!). I could continue my list, but I think you get the point.

I recently attended a training on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy otherwise known as ACT. The therapy combines mindfulness and behavioral interventions. It differs from other therapies in that it does not attempt to reduce symptoms like stinking thinking; however, symptom reduction is often a byproduct of the therapy. The goal of ACT is to create a rich and meaningful life while experiencing the pain and discomfort which is an inevitable part of life. There are two main assumptions underlying ACT’s interventions. The first is to learn how to develop acceptance of unpleasant experiences which are out of our personal control. The second is making a commitment and taking actions which support having a rich and meaningful life. So if I treat my stinking thinking using ACT, my first step is to give up trying to stop my stinking thinking (allowing it as opposed to trying to eliminate it). The next step is to learn how to accept it or be with it when it happens.

There are six core principles of ACT: The first is Contacting The Present Moment, which simply means being present in the moment. The second is Defusion, which I will be talking about in greater detail. The third core principle is Acceptance, which means allowing ourselves to be open to all our feelings, sensations and thoughts as they come up without struggling with them. The fourth core principle is Self-as-Context which is similar to the Observer Self, from the meditation world. The fifth core principle is Values, which in ACT terms means deciding what we want to stand for in life. The sixth core principle is Committed Action, which simply means taking actions that are based on our values.

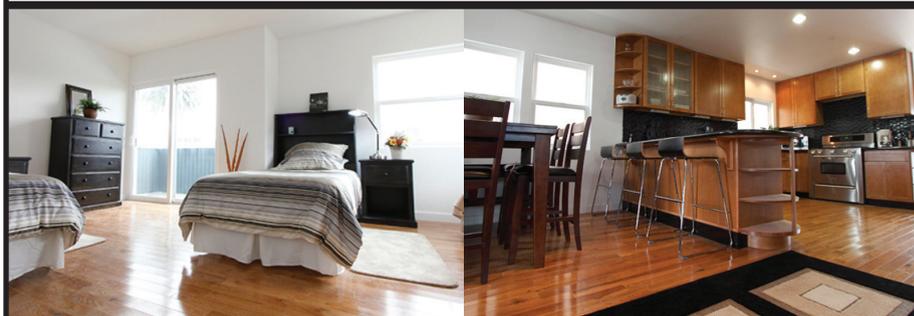
I am going to focus on the principle of defusion. Defusion is the practice of learning how to avoid becoming “fused” with our thoughts. In ACT fusion is defined as when our thoughts and whatever we are thinking about become fused together in our minds. I like to think about it as becoming overly attached to my thoughts, which leads to “stinking thinking”. ACT refers to our thoughts as “stories” so another way to explain defusion is the story and the event become “fused” or stuck together. We start believing that what our thoughts are telling us is the absolute truth.

One way to understand this is that certain magazines and newspapers are known to be somewhat biased, especially some of the tabloids. So my thinking is often similar to a story from The National Enquirer and somehow I believe that the tabloid reporter (Me!) is telling the truth. I have a choice in how I respond to the stories that are in the tabloids. ACT differs from CBT in that it does not recommend substituting a positive thought for a negative one or practicing “Thought-stopping” two very effective techniques that do work for some people; instead ACT recommends learning how to experience our feelings and change our response to our thinking.

Con’t Page 18



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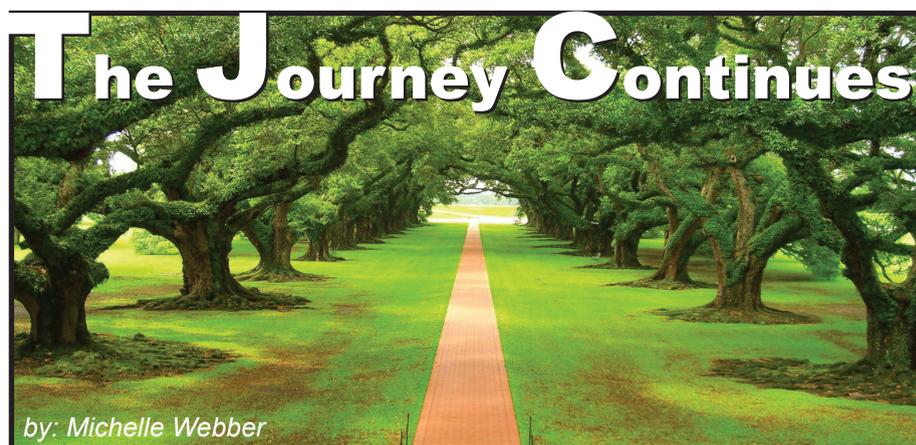
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by: Michelle Webber

## ACCEPTANCE AND LOVE

In August of 1987, I was living in Berkeley, California. I had just left a huge job directing mental health programs for children and adolescents and was going to move back to the east coast in about ten months. My daughter would be graduating high school and going onto college. I was ready to move back east for medical reasons but was staying in Berkeley until my kid graduated. I had time on my hands and decided to do some volunteer work. I saw that the AIDS Project of the East Bay, in Oakland, was looking for people to give a day or two a week and I called and offered my time. I am a psychotherapist and an addictions specialist and believed that I could be of service. Additionally, I had directed a center on death and dying at Yale and could be available to help people cope with grief and loss.

In 1987, we had very little idea about this virus and how it impacted people who were diagnosed with the disease. I was expected to go through an intensive 3 day training before I began working with any of the clients. The training began with a panel composed of three young men who were diagnosed with HIV. Each told their story to a group of about a hundred volunteers. These stories were difficult to hear and you could feel the sadness permeate the auditorium. Richard, one of the guys on the panel, was really angry. He proclaimed that he was not gay, as many of the guys in the program were, and he insisted that he had contracted the disease by sleeping with prostitutes. The more he spoke, the angrier he became. He made it difficult to feel any compassion towards him.

When the training was over, I received a call from Diane, the clinical director. She told me that she had my first client and wanted me to call him and set up an appointment. It was Richard and he really needed help. I immediately said no. I said that he was rude, angry and a sexist pig. She said, "Pease Michelle. He really needs a strong woman." Again I said no. Then I realized that I needed to take a breath and slow down. I had volunteered my services but I was refusing to see the first client that she had referred. This was not at all kind on my part. I stopped and said that I would agree to see him in order to determine if we could work together. Little did I know that he had refused to see me because he said that I was a pushy broad and he did not like pushy people! She then informed me that there had been some incidents of domestic violence. "Oh great," I said. "What am I getting myself into?" But I called him and we agreed to meet in a few days for lunch. From the first minute that we met, we clicked. He was dressed in a suit and tie and when he saw me, he stood up and pulled out my chair for me. I can't describe the details, but he was calm and kind and I was open to hearing him and giving him feedback. Something lovely happened. We seemed to have forgotten our prejudice and we were able to connect. We continued to meet a few times a week throughout the year. He would call me from the hospital when he went in for his treatment. We would speak every day. In those days, AIDS patients would be hospitalized for up to a week while receiving treatment. And, in those days, AIDS was a death sentence. AZT was on a lottery and guys all around me were dying very quickly.

Richard, however, seemed to keep going. He would call me when his estranged wife would be coming to his house and I would tell him to leave immediately because I was not going to bail him out of jail. There had been domestic violence on both parts and I did not want him to repeat his actions of the past. One time, when Diane was running a group that he was in, she called to tell me that everyone was complaining about their therapists except Richard who said that you needed to have a therapist like Michelle who calls you a dick head when you're acting like one. At that point, everyone started to laugh and Diane recalled that Richard was smiling "like a Cheshire cat" and acting proud to have me as his therapist. When Christmas came, I received a card from him telling me that he was determined to live through 1988 because of me and how grateful he was to have met me.

We worked together until June of 1988. He had reconnected with an old high school girlfriend and I was leaving for the east coast. At the end of the training, the panel convened one last time. Each of them were asked what was the best thing that had happened to them this year and Richard said "having a therapist like Michelle who got me to look inside and deal with my feelings." At this point, everyone was crying including Richard. He and I said goodbye a few weeks later. He left for Arizona and I left for the east coast. He continued to call me every Sunday. And as the days went by he became weaker and weaker. He had gotten really ill. One Sunday morning, his voice was so weak that I could hardly hear him. He told me that he was really tired and that he didn't want to hold on anymore. I told him that if he wanted to, he could let go. He thanked me and we said goodbye. His girlfriend called me a few days later to tell me that he had died and that he had told her to make sure to call me and thank me for all that I had done. A week later, I changed my license plate to Pushybrd (Pushybrod) and dedicated it to Richard, a man who helped me open my eyes to acceptance and love.

Michelle Webber, LCSW, Psychotherapist / Life Coach / Addiction Specialist, 9171 Wilshire Boulevard, Penthouse, Beverly Hills, California 90210, (323) 301-0083, e: [michellewebber@me.com](mailto:michellewebber@me.com), [www.michellewebber.com](http://www.michellewebber.com)

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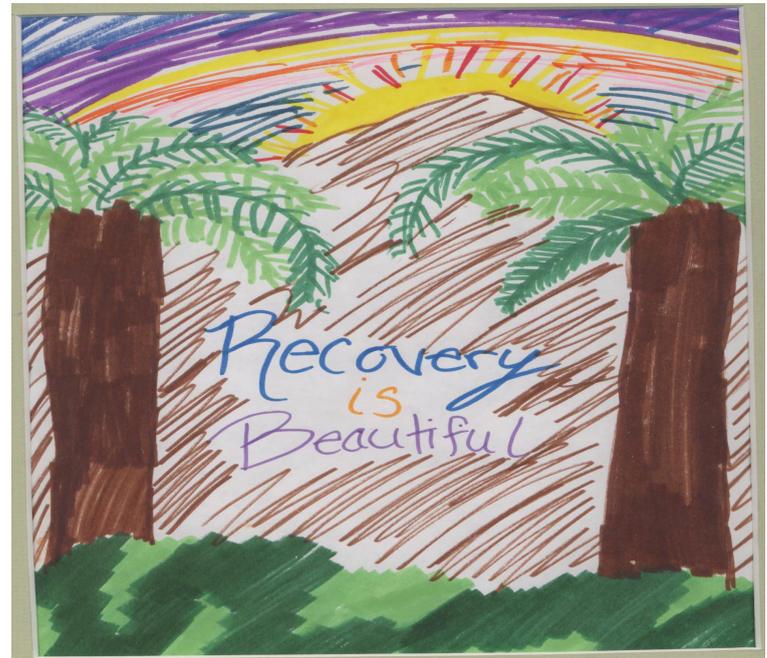
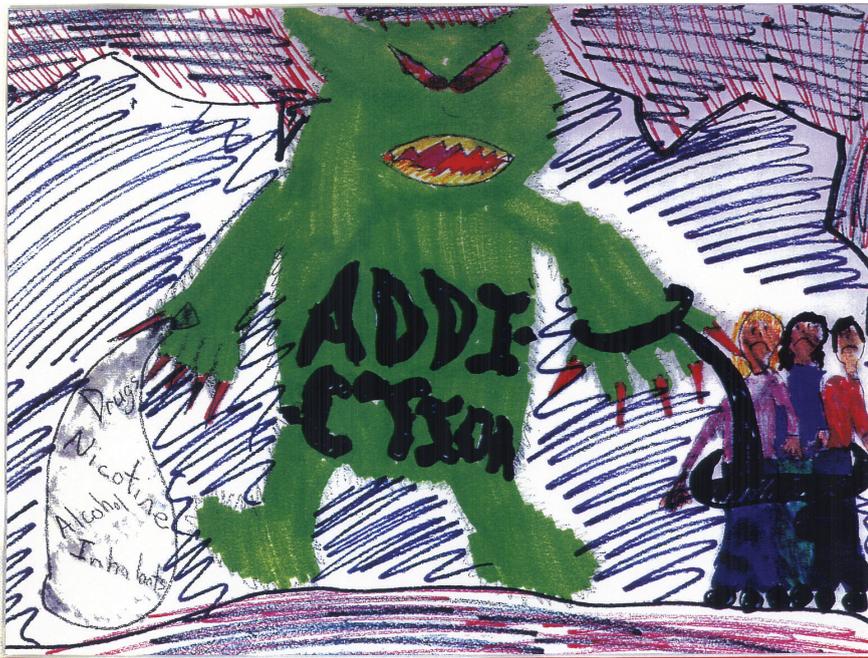
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# Addiction and Recovery – Through a Child's Eyes



By: Jerry Moe, MA

All too often alcoholism, drug addiction, and other addictive problems become a family legacy. It is essential to spare children from unnecessary years of silence, suffering, and shame. Effective prevention measures can introduce children to a path of help and healing. Youth can find their voice, build strengths, and deepen their resilience. They can connect with others who know all too well the horrors of this disease and the secrecy that envelopes their families. They can climb aboard the health and wellness train, even if loved family members aren't ready and able to do so. Today there is hope.

The alcoholic and drug addicted homefronts are armored by denial, delusion, and steadfast adherence to the strict "no talk" rule. Consequently, children don't always understand what's happening in their families. If no one explains to them what is going on, children will often make up a story for it all to make sense. Unfortunately, these stories can be way off base, especially when youngsters believe it's their fault. Without intervention, these stories can turn into life scripts ("I'm no good." "I always mess stuff up") which thwart healthy growth and development.

When children from families challenged by addiction learn about this insidious disease in an age-appropriate way, it can sometimes be a mixed blessing. They often feel a sense of relief and comfort when they learn to separate the person they love from the addiction that consumes them. Finally it's beginning to make sense. As seven through twelve-year-olds understand that their loved ones are trapped by alcoholism and other drug addiction, children often break through any remaining denial. Like many adults, it's especially tough for them to come to grips with

the fact that they can't make their addicted family member better, as these kids would do virtually anything to see their loved ones get well. On the bright side, they do come to realize that it's not their fault and they are not alone.

## TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

In an effort to build upon hope, we introduce children to the super heroes T&R, "Treatment" and "Recovery". T&R are the arch nemeses of addiction. They help people get better and come in many forms, including treatment, counseling, 12 Step meetings, therapy, and a turn to faith and service to others. Once an alcoholic/addict asks for help or accepts it through a form of intervention, T&R come to the rescue and provide a safe haven to ward off the disease.

Children and families can truly heal if they make T&R an essential part of their lives on a daily basis. Through counseling and educational support groups, at both community and school locations, children from addicted families can learn to be kids. They can have fun, develop new interests, and engage in a multitude of activities. They can learn new ways to help care for themselves and stay safe. They are able to communicate their thoughts and feelings to people they trust. They can feel good about themselves and develop strengths, even if their loved ones continue to be stuck in their disease. They can celebrate who they are and move forward despite what is happening in their families.

## ONE LITTLE GIRL

Rosa was an adorable young girl who stole my heart the very first moment I met her. She had bright blue eyes, curly blond hair, and a radiant smile that could magically light up the

room. Underneath this façade was a scared and confused child. Her mom was initially resistant to the idea of letting her daughter participate in the children's program. "Look, she's only seven. She is so little. Let's just let her be a kid," Kelly told me at our first meeting. She had only been at the treatment center for eight days, as her alcoholism had gotten completely out of control. It was only when her physician, primary counselor, and family counselor all spoke to Kelly about the importance of the Kids' program that she finally relented.

Rosa took to the group immediately and had no difficulty sharing her mind. I'll never forget what she had to say during our second meeting. "I don't want my mommy to be sick anymore," she told the group. When asked how she could tell when Mommy was sick, she said, "That's way easy. She stays in bed, sleeps a lot, is very grumpy, and yells at me." Rosa took a deep breath and stated, "She forgets about me. My mommy forgets about me." All the other children rallied around her when Rosa started to cry. She was learning that mom got hooked by addiction and that it wasn't her (Rosa's) fault. She was learning that she is not alone. She was learning that T&R can help mom get better.

## CONTINUING CARE

Kelly's continuing care plan included a weekly kids' group for Rosa while Mom was concurrently in an AA Meeting. Kelly was again resistant to this notion. Her initial reluctance was about the guilt and shame she carried about how her disease had hurt her daughter. "Rosa loves her meetings but I get scared that she won't love me anymore if she keeps talking about my disease," Kelly related with tears in her eyes. "No way," I

responded. "Let her do her own T&R so your family can heal. You are her only parent and she adores you. Please let her be part of the healing." With fear and trepidation Kelly took another courageous step by allowing her daughter a safe place to continue learning and growing.

Kelly and Rosa faithfully participated in continuing care for six months. They grew closer together and Rosa was so proud of her Mommy, something she mentioned on a regular basis. Even when Kelly became exhausted with all the balls she juggled in the air as a single parent, Rosa would remind her, "T&R keeps addiction away from us. We gotta do T&R. Let's go to our groups."

### A FORK IN THE ROAD

Eighteen months passed and I hadn't had any further contact with this family. One day Rosa, now a fourth-grader, came home from an afterschool program, took one look at her mother, and declared, "You've been drinking that yucky stuff again." Despite Mom's vehement protestations, Rosa asked, "Well, what's in that glass?" Mom quickly and defensively replied, "Diet Coke." Before Kelly could get there first, Rosa took a big sip, ran to the sink, and spit it out. With hurt, anger and disappointment surging through her body and a look of horror on her face she silently glared at Mom, went to her room, and slowly shut the door. Mom, apparently dumbfounded, was not sure what to say or do. She sat on the couch and sobbed, as the realization that she was trapped by addiction again painfully pierced her heart.

Rosa came out twenty minutes later carrying her backpack and clutching her favorite Care Bear. Her backpack was full of her favorite clothes along with some prized treasures. She slowly walked towards her mom and softly said, "Please call Grandma now. Mommy, I can't live here anymore. If you keep drinking that stuff you will get sick and die." Mom collapsed on the couch as a result of her daughter's simple yet poignant words. Rosa wasn't

done yet though. "Mommy, I love you, but I don't want to be here when that happens."

Before Rosa got to the door Mom took her daughter and held her ever so tightly. Within minutes Mom was on the phone. Within an hour she was back in treatment.

### AFTERWARDS

Kelly recently received a ten year medallion at her homegroup of Alcoholics Anonymous. The most important person in her life, Rosa, had the gift and blessing of watching this celebration unfold. As Kelly built a solid foundation by working the steps, she got to a place where she could address growing up in an alcoholic family herself. She lovingly gave her daughter the gifts she never got as a child, a sober parent and a place for Rosa to grow and heal. Rosa, a veteran of Alateen, is completing her first year of university. Due to the inherent risks, she has yet to pick up a drink or drug. There's a closeness and bond between these two of shared experience, gratitude, and joy. Together they are changing the family legacy. Today there is hope.

*Jerry Moe, MA. is the National Director of Children's Programs at the Betty Ford Center. An Advisory Board Member of the National Association for Children of Alcoholics (NACoA), he is the author of many books. Jerry has lectured, trained, and consulted around the world.*

*The Betty Ford Children's Program is for 7 through 12 year-olds who come from families hurt by alcoholism and other drug addiction. With locations in Southern California, the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex, and Denver, Colorado, no child is ever turned away due to an inability to pay. For more information go to [www.bettyfordcenter.org](http://www.bettyfordcenter.org)*

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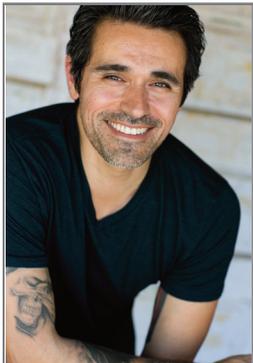
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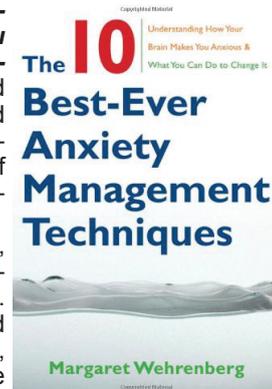
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# Book Reviews

**The 10 Best-Ever Anxiety Management Techniques: Understanding How Your Brain Makes You Anxious and What You Can Do to Change It.** By Margaret Wehrenberg, Psy.D. Anxiety disorders—grouped into three main categories: panic, generalized anxiety, and social anxiety—are among the most common and pervasive mental health complaints. From the subtlest effect of sweaty palms during a work presentation to the more severe symptom of reclusion, anxiety casts a wide net.

Medication, once considered the treatment of choice, is losing favor as more and more sufferers complain of unpleasant side effects and its temporary, quick-fix nature. Now, thanks to a flood of fresh neurobiology research and insights into the anatomy of the anxious brain, effective, practical strategies have emerged allowing us to manage day-to-day anxiety on our own.

Addressing physical, emotional, and behavioral symptoms, Margaret Wehrenberg, a leading mental health clinician, draws on basic brain science to highlight the top ten anxiety-defeating tips. Everything from breathing techniques and mindful awareness to cognitive control and self-talk. [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com)

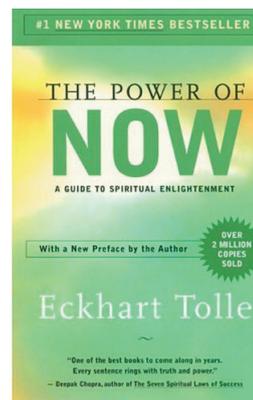


**The Power of Now: A Guide to Spiritual Enlightenment.** By Eckhart Tolle.

It's no wonder that The Power of Now has sold over 2 million copies worldwide and has been translated into over 30 foreign languages. Much more than simple principles and platitudes, the book takes readers on an inspiring spiritual journey to find their true and deepest self and reach the ultimate in personal growth and spirituality: the discovery of truth and light.

In the first chapter, Tolle introduces readers to enlightenment and its natural enemy, the mind. He awakens readers to their role as a creator of pain and shows them how to have a pain-free identity by living fully in the present. The journey is thrilling, and along the way, the author shows how to connect to the indestructible essence of our Being, "the eternal, ever-present One Life beyond the myriad forms of life that are subject to birth and death."

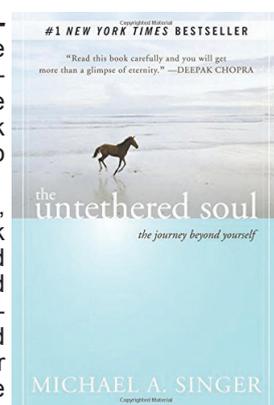
Featuring a new preface by the author, this paperback shows that only after regaining awareness of Being, liberated from Mind and intensely in the Now, is there Enlightenment. [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com)

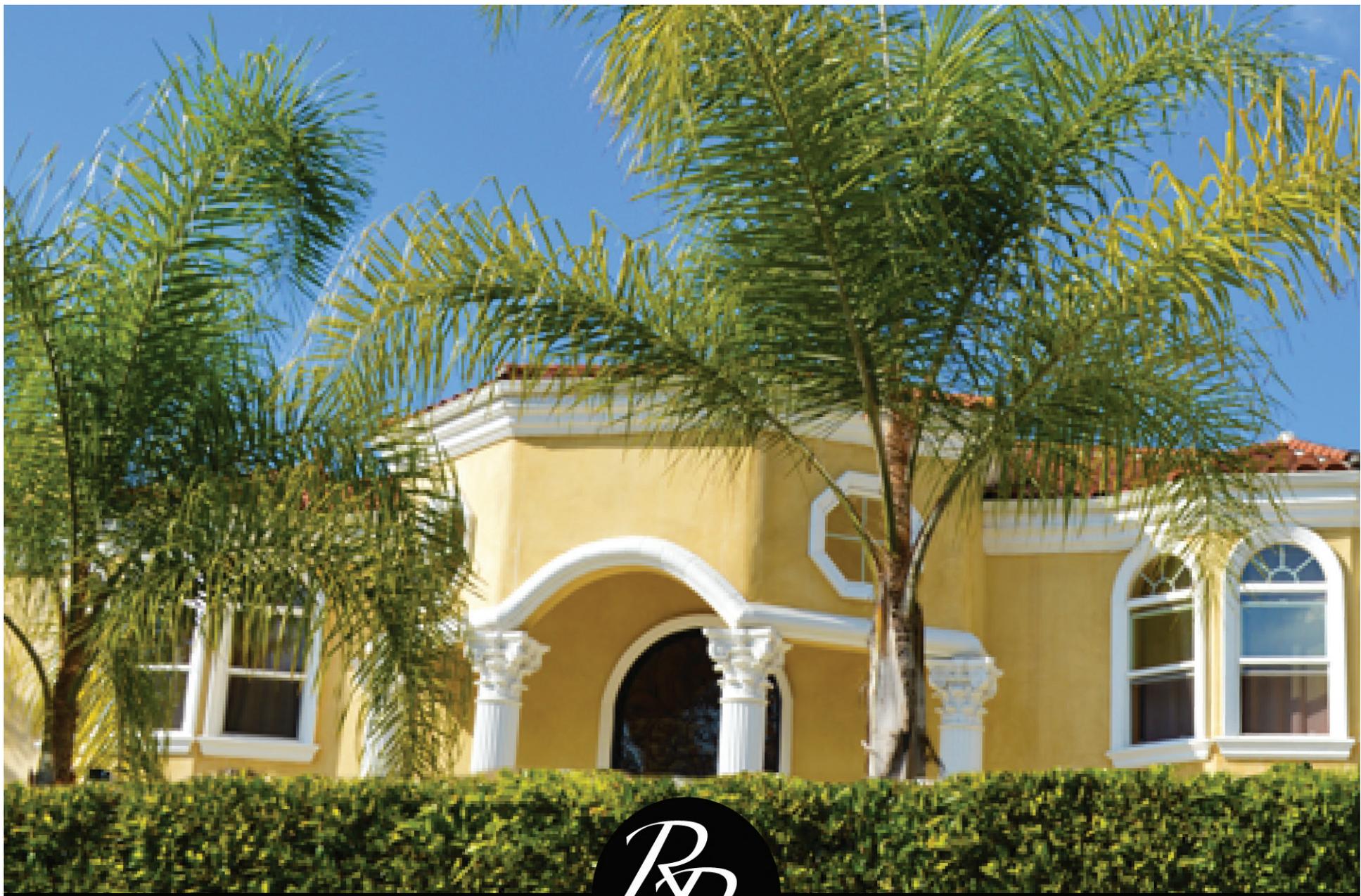


**The Untethered Soul: The Journey Beyond Yourself.** By Michael A. Singer. What would it be like to free yourself from limitations and soar beyond your boundaries? What can you do each day to discover inner peace and serenity? The Untethered Soul—now a #1 New York Times bestseller—offers simple yet profound answers to these questions.

Whether this is your first exploration of inner space, or you've devoted your life to the inward journey, this book will transform your relationship with yourself and the world around you. You'll discover what you can do to put an end to the habitual thoughts and emotions that limit your consciousness. By tapping into traditions of meditation and mindfulness, author and spiritual teacher Michael A. Singer shows how the development of consciousness can enable us all to dwell in the present moment and let go of painful thoughts and memories that keep us from achieving happiness and self-realization. It begins by walking you through your relationship with your thoughts and emotions, helping you uncover the source and fluctuations of your inner energy. It then delves into what you can do to free yourself from the habitual thoughts, emotions, and energy patterns that limit your consciousness. Finally, with perfect clarity, this book opens the door to a life lived in the freedom of your innermost being.

Available in a special hardcover gift edition with ribbon bookmark—the perfect gift for yourself, a loved one, or anyone who wants a keepsake edition of this remarkable book. [www.Amazon.com](http://www.Amazon.com)





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**June**

**June 4th, 5th 6th & 7th 2015**, A.A. Desert Pow Wow - with Al-Anon Participation. Renaissance Indian Wells Resort & Spa, Indian Wells California. For more info visit [www.desertpowwow.com](http://www.desertpowwow.com) or call (760) 340-7540 or (760) 776-1066.

**June 7th 2015, Sunday** Skid Row Drifters, Potluck & Meeting. Potluck Noon-1pm with Entertainment (please bring a dish & a chair). 1:00pm to 2:30pm The Gratitude Meeting. 804 East 6th Street in the Park, Los Angeles CA (S.W. Corner of 6th & Gladys between San Pedro & Central) Skid Row Drifters is the only group to hold "open" meetings on Skid Row every night and twice on Sunday - and have been doing it for 40 years. This Annual Potluck Meeting is held to raise the funds necessary to keep the essential meeting going. For more info you can email: [LAskidrowdrifters@gmail.com](mailto:LAskidrowdrifters@gmail.com) or call Jerry H. (213) 884-2750 or Robert H (661) 951-9615.

**June 13th 2015, Saturday:** The Healing Power of Laughter AA 80th Anniversary. A Fun Hilarious AA Meeting & Comedy Show with Professional Comics, Great music and an 80th AA History Tribute Party Sat., June 13th, 2015 (3 days after AA's Birthday) Doors Open at 5 PM AA Meeting starts at 6 PM - Followed by Comedy, Music & some Real Cool Surprises! South Bay AA hosting this event being held at the Majestic Crest Theater at Westwood and Wilshire Blvd. Everyone is Welcome!! including Al-Anon & Alateen. Tickets cost \$20 & are available at the South Bay Alano Club Coffee Bar or Call (310) 245-8989 - or online [www.TheHealingPowerOfLaughter.org](http://www.TheHealingPowerOfLaughter.org)

**June 17th 2015, Wednesday:** The 7 Realities of the Addictive Families: Guest Speaker Susan Jackson LMFT. Hosted by His House Quarterly Network Luncheon - 1 CEU available, 11:30am to 2pm, 9491 Pittsburgh Ave., Rancho Cucamonga CA 91730 RSVP (909) 243-7321 or [events@hishousenewcreation.com](mailto:events@hishousenewcreation.com)

**June 20th, Saturday**, Windsor Club Sober DANCE: 9:45pm-1:30am with DJ Nicole OLD SCHOOL & new music, \$7 at the door. - 123 West Windsor Rd, Glendale California 91204. (818) 242-1350

**UPCOMING**

**July 2nd - July 5th 2015** International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous. July 2-5, 2015 - Atlanta, Georgia. For more info visit [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) - for more information. Keys to Recovery Newspapers will be there!

July 18th, Saturday, Windsor Club Clean & Sober DANCE: 9:45pm-1:30am with DJ Nicole OLD SCHOOL & new music, \$7 at the door. - 123 West Windsor Rd, Glendale California 91204 -- 818-242-1350

**August 14 - 16, 2015** - 11th Annual Mountain AA Conference with Al-Anon Participation. A Search for Serenity. Held at Big Bear Performing Arts Center, 39707 Big Bear Blvd., Big Bear City, CA 92315. For more info visit [www.MountainAAConference.com](http://www.MountainAAConference.com)

**August 14 - 16, 2015** - The 65th Alcoholics Anonymous Virginia Area Convention Fredericksburg, Virginia. For more info visit <http://aavirginia.org/hp/events>.

**August 27th to 30th, 2015** - 31st Annual South Bay Family Roundup - AA Conference with Al-Anon Participation. Having Had a Spiritual Awakening. Held at Torrance Marriott South Bay, 3635 Fashion Way, Torrance CA 90503 - For more info visit [www.SouthBayRoundup.org](http://www.SouthBayRoundup.org) or call (310) 354-7660.

**September 2015** - Nikko & Michele T.'s Super Sober Saturday Celebration... Date - Time - Location to be announced

**October 29th 2015** Aloha and welcome to The 54th Annual Hawaii Convention "Our Whole Attitude and Outlook upon Life will Change" to be held October 29th - November 1st, 2015. For more info visit [www.annualhawaiiiconvention.com](http://www.annualhawaiiiconvention.com) - The entire Keys to Recovery Newspaper Staff will be working to get to this one!

Send us your upcoming SOBER or recovery related events. We will list it for fun and for free. Email events to: [info@KeystoRecoveryNewspaper.com](mailto:info@KeystoRecoveryNewspaper.com)

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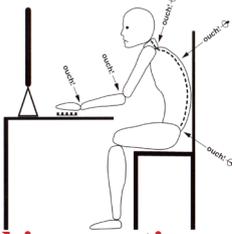
## 2015 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous July 2-5, 2015 - Atlanta, Georgia

The 2015 International Convention of Alcoholics Anonymous will be held July 2 - 5, 2015 in Atlanta, Georgia with the theme "80 Years – Happy, Joyous and Free." A.A. members and guests from around the world will celebrate A.A.'s 80th year with Big Meetings held Friday night, Saturday night and Sunday morning in the Georgia Dome. Other meetings, scheduled or informal, will take place throughout the weekend in the Georgia World Congress Center and local hotels.

**3 WAYS TO REGISTER** 1) Online: [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org) 2) Fax: (508) 743-3605 3) Mail: 2015 International Convention (check, money order or credit card) c/o Convention Data Services, 107 Waterhouse Road Bourne, MA 02532  
For More Info: [www.aa.org/pages/en\\_US/2015-international-convention-of-alcoholics-anonymous](http://www.aa.org/pages/en_US/2015-international-convention-of-alcoholics-anonymous)

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**Con't from Page 8**



7) Make a gratitude list each day: A daily gratitude list can change your focus. This particular tool is one I depend on in my life to help me direct my energies in a positive way. I find it amazing the way it can help me stay centered and feel light-hearted.

8) Practice acceptance: Much of what we usually worry about is something we cannot control. So all we're really doing is upsetting ourselves for no reason. We have the power to direct our thoughts and actions if we work at it. Granted, this isn't easy to do, but it can be done. Practicing acceptance of what we cannot control is a powerful way to live. It also allows us to spend time working on what we can control in our lives.

It's always worth considering what we might be avoiding thinking about when we place so much energy and focus on a particular unrelated worry.

If we can look at our lives today and know that nothing bad is happening at this very moment, it can give us pause so that we can look at the situation with fresh eyes and spend some time focusing on the more positive characteristics of our lives. After all, most of the time we might spend fretting on some imagined event is unlikely to help us in any way. Quite the opposite in fact.

*Marcia Ullett, MA Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist Certified Professional Coach Author of Your Best Life Yet: A Journey of Purpose and Passion. [marciaullett@gmail.com](mailto:marciaullett@gmail.com), [www.marciaullett.com](http://www.marciaullett.com), [www.yourbestlifeyetbook.com](http://www.yourbestlifeyetbook.com), (310) 600-5091*



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**Con't from Page 9**



One important principle of defusion is to refrain from asking ourselves whether a thought is true and instead to focus on whether a thought is helpful. If we pay attention to a particular thought is it going to help us to create the kind of life that we desire? If I notice myself drifting off into worry I can stop and gently say "Is this thought helpful?" There are many ways to practice defusion, here are two of my favorites:

**1} I AM HAVING THE THOUGHT THAT**

a. Pick a troubling thought that you have on a regular basis, a good example might be "I am not good enough." Be sure to pick one that really works for you. Often when I am out running and I see other younger runners flying by me I think "I am too slow"

b. Now insert the following words in front of your thought "I am having the thought that...I am too slow". Practice the new thought a few times in your mind. "I am having the thought that I am too slow". Often after practicing this technique people notice some distance between themselves and the thought. You might try practicing this technique each time the thought comes up and see what happens. You can practice this anytime you catch yourself thinking unhelpful thoughts

**2} NAMING OUR THOUGHTS AS STORIES**

To continue with the "I am too slow" thought, another popular version is the "I am too old story". In this story I am too old and certainly too slow to be running and I should feel embarrassed to be seen running outside in a neighborhood where so many younger, faster runners are passing me by. Often there are different versions of the same story, I think you get the idea.

a. Name your thought as a story- "The I am too old story"

b. When the thought comes into your mind (usually for me this happens early in my run before the endorphins have kicked in) simply acknowledge it- "Oh there it is, the I am too old story" or "I know this one it is the I am too old story" or maybe you like "My favorite story- the I am too old story". Use whatever words feel authentic to you.

c. Once you have acknowledged the story, there is no action to take, just let the story come and go and continue on with what you were doing. In my case, just keep running.

So the next time your mind starts engaging in "stinking thinking" try one of these techniques and see if you find it helpful.

*Maria Gray, LMFT, is a psychotherapist in private practice, specializing in addiction and trauma. Her office is located on the Westside, for more information go to [www.mariagray.net](http://www.mariagray.net) or call 310-319-6500.*

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Advertising Deadlines: Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. will hit the streets on the first week of each month. Camera ready artwork is due the 15th of the month prior to publication.

## Terms and Conditions

All ads are due and payable upon acceptance of ad prior to publication unless otherwise authorized. The publisher assumes no liability if for any reason it becomes necessary to omit an ad. The publisher assumes no liability if for any reason we are unable to print an issue of the newspaper. It is the advertisers responsibility to proof ads, we will do everything we can to help but the publisher assumes no liability for any errors in ad. All advertising is subject to publisher's approval. The publisher reserves the right to reject advertising that we feel is not in keeping with our standards. The publisher does not assume responsibility for the contents of advertisements and all representatives or warrants made in such advertising are those of the advertiser and not the publisher. Publisher is not liable to advertiser for any misprints in advertising.

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## DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION:

Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. is printed and distributed in California and the surrounding states. Having a current print run of 20,000 newspapers and a readership expected to exceed 70,000 per month, we are already a solid and formidable presence. Although we have digital access to our publication, our primary focus is distributing hard copies. Our newspaper targets readers who are seeking recovery from all types of addictions, disorders and alcoholism and the loved ones who are affected as well as anyone wanting to know more about addiction and recovery. Here are some of the types of facilities we will be distributing our recovery newspaper to:

- 12 Step Alano Clubs
- 12 Step Meeting Halls
- Churches
- Clinical Professionals
- Coffee Shops
- Correctional Facilities
- Counseling Office & Services
- Department of Health
- DUI Classes
- Drug & Alcohol Councils
- Employee Assistance Programs
- Homeless Shelters
- Judges
- Libraries
- Medical Centers - Hospitals
- Outpatient Centers
- Police - Parole - Probation Departments
- Recovery Stores
- Rehabs / Treatment Centers
- Rescue Missions
- V. A. Hospitals
- Sober Living's
- Transitional Housing
- Related Conventions
- Recovery Industry Networking Events
- And many more locations every month

# Vital Services Resource Guide

Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. publishes this monthly "Vital Services Resource Guide" FREE as a community service to assist those in need of help or information. You are welcome to submit listings and volunteer needs.

## Southern California COUNTY RESOURCE GUIDE

12 Step Recovery Info Line: Phone meeting info & recordings of recovery 951-262-3623, Lisa Moss 818-293-2222. Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) World Services, P.O. Box 459 New York, NY 10163, www.alcoholics-anonymous.org, (212) 870-3400.

A.A. San Fernando Valley Central Office (818) 988-3001. A.A. L.A. Central Office 4311 Wilshire Blvd., #104 Los Angeles, CA 90010, www.lacoaa.org (323) 936-4343 (800) 923-8722

A.A. 8752 S Broadway Los Angeles, CA 90003, www.aa.org (323) 750-2039

A.A. San Gabriel / Pomona Valley - Central Service Office, www.aasgvco.org (626) 914-1861.

A.A. Santa Clarita Valley Central Office: http://www.aas-cv.org (661) 250-9922

Al-Anon Family Groups www.al-anon.alateen.org 1-888-425-2666

Al-Anon/Alateen LA County WWW.ALANONLA.ORG (818) 760-7122.

Al-Anon/Alateen Spanish, LA County, (562) 948-2190.

A.C.A. (Adult Children of Alcoholics) World Service Organization: www.adultchildren.org (562) 595-7831

Adult Children/Codependents 12 step & recovery based meetings, Every Thurs. & Sun. at 6pm 8742 Mulberry Drive, Sunland, CA. For info call Lisa Moss 818-293-2222 Addicts for Christ Los Angeles www.addictsforchrist.org (310) 452-4328.

Anaheim Alana Club, 202 W. Broadway, Anaheim, CA

92805 - Meetings 7-days a week 714-535-0900

California Dept. of Health Care Services - www.dhcs.ca.gov (800) 735-2922

California Hispanic Commission on Alcohol & Drug Abuse - www.chcada.org (916) 443-5473

Cocaine Anonymous of the SFV, (818) 760-8402

Cocaine Anonymous World Service Office - www.ca.org. 1-800-347-8998 or (310) 559-5833.

Clutterers Anonymous (866) 402-6685.

Co-Dependents Anonymous (CoDA) Los Angeles (323) 969-4995.

Co-Dependents Anonymous (CoDA) San Fernando Valley (818) 379-3300.

COSA for friends and family of Sex Addicts, www.cosa-recovery.org - (866) 899-2672

(HOW) Compulsive Eaters Anonymous: www.valleyhow.org (818) 503-7484.

Crystal Meth-Anonymous (CMA) (855) 638-4373

Debtors Anonymous www.SoCalDA.org 310-822-7250.

Emotional Anonymous -www.emotionsanonymous.org - World Services (651) 647-9712.

Food Addicts Anonymous www.foodaddictsanonymous.org - World services (772) 878-9657

Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous (FA) - www.foodaddicts.org (781) 932-6300 Families Anonymous - www.familiesanonymous.org (800) 736-9805.

Gamblers Anonymous (GA) www.gamblersanonymous.org - (626) 960-3500

Problem Gambling 24-Hour Help Line (Calif.) (800) Gambler or (800) 522-4700.

Love Addicts Anonymous (LAA) www.Loveaddicts.org MADD Mother Against Drunk Drivers, www.madd.org - 877.MADD.HELP

Marijuana Anonymous - www.marijuana-anonymous.org - World Services (800) 766-6779.

Marijuana Anonymous - www.marijuana-anonymous.org Los Angeles 310.494.0189

Marijuana Anonymous - www.marijuana-anonymous.org Van Nuys (818) 759-9194.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) www.todayna.org Regional Office (800) 863-2962.

Narcotics Anonymous of the San Fernando Valley - www.nasfv.com (818) 997-3822.

Nicotine Anonymous - www.nicotine-anonymous.org - (877) 879-6422

Nar-Anon Family Groups - www.nar-anon.org/naranon (800) 477-6291 or (310) 534-8188

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Headquarters, (All NCADDs provide help & info and oth-

er alcohol/drug related services). www.ncadd.org - (800) 622-2255

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence - San Fernando Valley www.ncadd-sfv.org - (818) 997-0414

International OCD Foundation - Obsessive Compulsive Disorder - www.ocfoundation.org (617) 973-5801

Our House Grief Support Center - WLA & Woodland Hills, CA (888) 417-1444 - www.ourhouse-grief.org

Overeaters Anonymous -www.oa.org - World Services 505-891-2664

Overeaters Anonymous Meeting Hotline 24 Hour (323) 653-7499.

Overeaters Anonymous LA Intergroup - www.oalaig.org (323) 653-7652.

Pills Anonymous ( PA) www.pillsanonymous.com

Rageaholics Anonymous - www.rageaholicsanonymous.org

Recovering Couples Anon. www.Recovering-Couples.org - 781-794-1456

RumRadio.org the most comprehensive Twelve Step sponsorship informational resource website in the known and in the unknown Universe. 512-267-4707

Secular Organization For Sobriety (323) 666-4295.

Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA) https://saa-recovery.org - (800) 477-8191

Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous (SLAA) - www.slaalos-angeles.org (323) 957-4881

Sexaholics Anonymous (SA) -www.sa.org (866)424-8777

Sexaholics Anonymous (SA) www.sasocal.org (310) 491-8845

Sexual Compulsive Anonymous www.sca-recovery.org 1-800 / 977-HEAL

Sexual Recovery Anonymous (SRA) - www.sexualrecovery.org (323) 850-8565.

S-Anon (Friends and Families of Sex Addicts) www.sanon.org (800) 210-8141

SHARE - www.shareselfhelp.org - (310) 846-5270

Survivors of Incest Anonymous (SIA) (410) -893-3322. www.siaawso.org

The Other Bar: free. 12 step based peer recovery network for lawyers & law students 800-222-0767; www.otherbar.org

Workaholics Anonymous - www.workaholics-anonymous.org - (510) 273-9253

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Amanecer/Community Counseling Services (walk-in center only) (English, Spanish) (213) 481-1792

Battered Women/Children Hotline, (818) 887-6589.

Bienvenidos Children's Center, Inc. (walk-in center only) (323) 726-9790

Bilingual Shelter for Victims of Domestic Violence, (800) 548-2722 (24 Hour).

Center for the Pacific Asian Family 1-800-339-3940

Chicana Service Center (English, Spanish) (323) 268-7564

Child Protection Helpline, (800) 540-4000 (24 Hour).

Children's Institute International (walk-in center only) (213) 385-5100

Domestic Violence (SAFE): (800) 799-7233 Crisis Hotline.

Domestic Abuse Center (walk-in center only) (818) 904-1700

East Los Angeles Women's Shelter (walk-in center only) (323) 526-5819 - 24 Hour Hotline (800) 585-6231

Family Crisis Center (South Central) - (323)737-3900

Glendale- YWCA Domestic Violence Project (818) 242-1106

Haven Hills, www.havenhills.org - (818) 887-7481 (818) 887-6589

Helpline Youth Counseling (walk-in center only) (562) 864-3722

House of Ruth - (909) 623-4364

Human Services Association (walk-in center only) (562) 806-5400

Institute for Multicultural Educational Services I.M.C.E.S (walk-in center only) (213) 381-1250

Jenesse Center www.jenesse.org (323) 299-9496

Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles/ Family Violence

Project/Tamar House www.jewishla.org (818) 789-1293

Foothill Family Services (walk-in center) - (626) 338-9200

Legal Aid Foundation of LA (LAFLA) (323) 801-7991

Mental Health Center Inc. SFV Community (walk-in center only) (818) 838-1352

Project: Peacemakers, Inc.(walk-in center only) (English, Spanish) (323) 291-2525

Prototypes (walk-in center only) (323) 464-6281

Safe Horizons 800.621.4673 (HOPE)

San Pedro- Rainbow Services - (310) 547-9343

Santa Monica- Sojourn - (310) 264-6644

So. California Alcohol & Drug Program/ Angel Step Inn - www.scadp.org (562) 949-5358

The Good Shepherd Shelter - (323) 737-6111

YWCA of San Gabriel Valley www.ywcawings.org (626) 960-2995 - 24 Hour Hotline (626)967-0658

## EMERGENCY HEALTH & MENTAL SERVICES

AIM HealthCare Foundation, physical & emotional needs of those who work in adult entertainment (818) 981-5681.

Armenian Relief Center, Prevention of drug/alcohol abuse (818) 242-2390.

Because I Love You, Nationally Known Parent And Teen Support Group. (818) 882-4881 or www.bily.org

County of L.A. Depart. of Mental Health has complete listing of mental health providers at www.dmh.co.la.ca.us/providers/allprov.htm, (800) 854-7771

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Information (626) 793-7350.

HHS The U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services, www.dhhs.gov - (877) 696-6775

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) San Fernando Valley Chapter, Free

National Runaway Switchboard (800) Runaway.

Meetings (818) 994-6747

Pasadena Mental Health Center-Low fee counseling www.pmhc.org, (626) 798-0907 1495 Lake Ave.

San Fernando Valley Counseling Center, affordable mental health services (818) 341-1111.

## FOOD BANKS

APLA's Necessities of Life Program 7336 Bellaire Ave., N. Hollywood Thursday 10:30am to 4:pm, (213) 201-1600

As You Are Church, 7855 Lindley Ave., Wednesdays & Fridays, call for hours, (818) 758-1700

Catholic Charities/Guadalupe Community Center 21600 Hart St., Once a month, or on emergency basis. Food recipient must register (818) 340-2050

Children's Hunger Fund 12820 Pierce St., (818) 899-5122

Congregational Church of Chatsworth 20440 Lassen, Chatsworth, CA (818) 882-3474

First United Methodist Church 18120 Saticoy St., Reseda, CA - Wed. 11:00am to 1:30pm, (818) 344-7135

INFO LINE of Los Angeles Phone: (800) 660-4026

Los Angeles Food Bank (323) 234-3030

North Hollywood Interfaith Pantry - 4390 Colfax Ave., M & F open from 9:am to 1:pm - (818) 980-1657

Manna, Ministry to the Poor 6642 Reseda Blvd., Every Saturday, (except the first Saturday of each month) 11:am to 12:15pm, (818) 776-9696

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church 8520 Winnetka Ave., WINNETKA, CA (818) 341-1629

St. Jane Frances Food Pantry 13001 Victory Blvd, North Hollywood, CA (818) 766-7393

St. Bridget of Sweden Catholic Church - Tuesday 11:am to 4:pm 7100 Whitaker Ave., Van Nuys, CA (818) 780-8294

Shepherd's Nest, Feeding the Homeless 9237 Crebs Ave., Northridge, CA (818) 557-6247

SOVA Food Pantry, Jewish Family Services (open to all in need) 16439 Van Owen St., (818) 988-7682

West Valley Pantry - 7304 Jordan Ave, Canoga Park, CA (818) 887-6101

West Valley Food Pantry (Prince of Peace Church) 5700 Rudnick Ave., Woodland Hills(818) 346-5554

## MEALS SERVED

Call the Homeless Shelters as most have food programs. The Midnight Mission meals served 3 times a day 213-624-9258

# Vital Services Resource Guide

Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. publishes this monthly "Vital Services Resource Guide" FREE as a community service to assist those in need of help or information. You are welcome to submit listings and volunteer needs.

Hope of The Valley 8165 San Fernando Road, Sun Valley, CA 91352 - weekdays 12 noon to 1pm (expect Thursday Dinner 6pm to 6:45) call for more info 818-392-0020 San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission: call (818) 785-4476

## HOMELESS SHELTERS & RELATED

At The Fountain Transitional Living 310-631-1600  
 Back To Life Community Living House Transitional Housing 626.277.8135  
 Beyond Shelter - Homeless Services (562) 733-1147  
 Casa Youth Shelter (562) 594-6825  
 Centennial Place Permanent Housing 626-403-4888  
 Children of the Night (818)908-4474 ext. 0  
 Children's Hunger Fund (818) 899-5122  
 City of Refuge Rescue Mission Personal Good Service (323) 759-2544  
 Covenant House California (CHC) provides shelter and services for homeless, at-risk, & trafficked youth 18-24, 1325 N. Western Ave. Hollywood, CA 90027. (323) 461-3131. www.covenanthousecalifornia.org  
 Dimondale Adolescent (323) 777-6258  
 East San Gabriel Valley Coalition For The Homeless (626) 333-7204  
 Ella's Foundation Homeless Services 323-761-6415  
 Emmanuel Baptist Rescue Mission - 231-626-4681  
 Fervent Heart LLC 626-319-7479  
 Family Promise of Santa Clarita Valley 661-251-2867  
 Family Rescue Center 8188847587  
 Global Childrens Organization (310) 581-2234  
 GRCN Connecting Communities (562) 293-7595  
 Glendale YWCA Domestic Violence Project 818-242-4155  
 Global Human Service Inc (818) 507-6026  
 Friends helping Friends Inc: Homeless, No Money, We can help - Sober Living. (323) 293-9778.  
 Family Promise (818) 847-1547  
 First Step Transitional Living Foundation (323) 830- 6517  
 HPRP Los Angeles Homeless Assistance (213) 683-3333  
 HPRP Pasadena Homeless Services (626) 797-2402  
 HPRP Huntington Park - Homeless Services (323) 388-7324  
 HPRP Lynwood - Homeless Assistance (310) 603-0220  
 HPRP - COMPTON - Homeless Assistance (310) 605-5527  
 Habitat For Humanity (818) 899-6180  
 Harbor Rose Lodge (310) 547-3372  
 Hazel Transitional Housing 213-327-7986  
 Higher Goals Inc. (323)755-9702  
 Homeless Health Care Los Angeles www.hhcla.org, (213) 381-0515  
 Homeless Adult Center 626-403-4888  
 Hope for Homeless Youth (213) 353-0775  
 House of Hope (323) 663-1215  
 Hope of The Valley - www.hopeofthevalley.org - 818.392.0020  
 Jenesse Center (323-299-9496  
 Joshua House For The Homeless 323-759-1625  
 Jordan's Transitional Shelter 323-577-5941 or 424-785-7781  
 Lillie of the Valley Homeless Shelter Transitional Shelter 323-971-4432  
 Lamp Community Homeless Drop In Center (213) 488-0031  
 Los Angeles Mission 213-629-1227 x305  
 Long Beach Family Shelter (562) 733-1147  
 Long Beach Rescue Mission (562) 591-1292  
 Los Angeles Youth Network (323) 957-736  
 Mitchell House Substance Abuse Treatment Veterans (310) 398-0191  
 Nancy Painter Home Transitional Housing For Women (818) 246-5586  
 New Image Emergency Shelter (323) 231-1711  
 New Directions (Veterans) Res. Drug Treatment (310) 268-3465  
 NCH National Coalition for the Homeless (202) 462-4822, www.nationalhomeless.org  
 OPCC Safe Haven 310-883-1222  
 Passageways Homeless Intake Center 626-403-4888  
 Pentecostal Outreach 562-313-1257

PATH - People Assisting The Homeless Hollywood (323) 644-2200  
 Rochester House Transitional Living (213) 986-5599  
 Runaway Homeless Youth Shelter (310) 379-3620  
 Rainy Day Emergency Shelter (562) 733-1147  
 The Salvation Army Adult Rehab Center, 21375 Roscoe Blvd., Canoga Park, (818) 883-6321.  
 Salvation Army The Way Drop in Shelter for Youth (323)469-2946  
 Salvation Army Westwood (310) 477-9539  
 Sunshine Mission for Women (213) 747-7419  
 Salvation Army Glendale Chester Village For Homeless Families 818-246-5586  
 St Joseph Center Homeless Services And Meals (310) 399-6878  
 Sanctuary of Hope 323-786-2413  
 Samaritan House 562-591-1292  
 San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission - call (818) 785-4476  
 The Midnight Mission 213-624-9258  
 The Children's Life Saving (310) 450-3701  
 TEAM HOUSING 310-631-9516  
 Union Rescue Mission (213) 347-6300  
 Union Station Homeless Services 626-240-4550  
 United States Mission Canoga Park Transitional Housing 818-884-4409  
 Volunteers of America Homeless Support Services (626) 442-4357  
 West Side Homeless Outreach, Inc. 310-570-9065  
 WLCAC Homeless Access Center (323) 563-4721

## FOOD AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services, Info on General Relief, Aid to Families w/Dependent Children (AFDC), Food Stamps, MediCal and other forms for financial assistance, (800) 339-6993

## INFORMATION & REFERRAL SERVICES

24 Hour DayCare, Referrals and Crisis Intervention Services 310 669-5933 or 310 427-4022  
 California Rehab Guide: Free On-Line Rehab Directory - www.calrehabguide.com  
 The Sober Living Network referral service (800) 799-2084.  
 Sober Living Network (310) 396-5270.  
 The San Diego Sober Living Homes Association: (858) 483-5866.  
 INFO LINE community service referrals, shelter, food, medical, (800) 339-6993 or simply dial 211.  
 AVYFS, Antelope Valley Youth And Family Services (661) 949-1069.  
 The Council of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (CADA) Drop-In Center (805) 962-6195, www.cadasb.org  
 CCBCDC: California Certification Board of Chemical Dependency Counselors www.CaliforniaCertificationBoard.org (562) 927-5143  
 CAARR California Association of Addiction Recovery Resources (916) 338-9460, www.caarr.org  
 CADCA Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of American (800) 54-CADCA.

CCPG California Council on Problem Gambling www.cal-problemgambling.org (800) 522-4700.  
 CENTER FOR LIVING AND LEARNING - employment and supportive services Job Search Preparation Program 818-781-1073. 14549 Archwood Street #221, Van Nuys. www.center4living.lle.org

## RAPE HOTLINES

RAINN Hotline (victims of sexual assault) 800-656-HOPE.  
 Rape Hotline (24 Hours) (800) 585-6231. www.elawe.org

## SUICIDE PREVENTION

Jason Foundation A Youth Suicide Prevention Program, www.jasonfoundation.com, (888) 881-2323  
 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK  
 Suicide Prevention 24Hour Assessment Center (800) SUICIDE (784-2433).  
 Suicide Prevention Center (877) 727-4747

## DISABILITY SERVICES

Job Accommodation Centers, Toll Free 1-800-526-7234 (voice & TDD).  
 RIDE INFO Paratransit Referral Service, transportation voucher program, (800) 431-7882.  
 Social Security & Medicare Eligibility, Info (800) 772-1213, TDD (800) 288-7185.

## HEP C / HIV / AIDS INFORMATION

AIDS Project Los Angeles - APLA, Los Angeles - www.apla.org, The David Geffen Center, 611 S. Kingsley Drive Los Angeles, CA 90005, (213) 201.1600 Main line, (213) 201.1500 Client line  
 Asian Pacific AIDS Intervention Team: (213) 895-7715, Free Outpatient Trauma & Substance Abuse Treatment for Women & Transwomen. 1730 W Olympic Blvd., #300, LA  
 California HIV/AIDS Hotline (800) 367-2437.Spanish (800) 400-7432.  
 Clean Needles Now/Harm Reduction Central L.A. (323) 857-5366.  
 Friends of Aids Foundation (310) 401-4755. Referrals to HIV/AIDS programs and services in Los Angeles County.  
 Hepatitis C Task Force For LA County: 2330 Beverly Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90057 (213) 381-0515, www.HepCTask-ForceLA.org  
 National AIDS Hotline, (800) CDCINFO. (800) 344-SIDA (Spanish), (800) AIDS-TTY (TTD/TTY for deaf)  
 REACH (risk reduction education and community health) FREE HIV Prevention education and testing for HIV, HEP B&C and Syphilis. Referrals for substance abuse-etc., HIV+ or HIV- people in need. (866) 33-REACH, (714) 834-7926.  
 On-Line Resources for Hep C: www.hepcsource.com www.hepcstraightup.com • www.hepatitusc.org • www.hepatitusfree.com • www.hepnet.com • www.hepcnet.com

Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. publishes this monthly "Vital Services Resource Guide" FREE as a community service to assist those in need of help or information.

You are welcome to submit listings and volunteer needs.

Organization/Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Services offered: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

What you would like us to print in the resource guide: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mail To: Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Post Office Box 922495, Sylmar, CA 91392

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**GEMINI:** May 22 thru June 21 - Your social life is re-energized this month with all kinds of lovely opportunities to bond with friends, colleagues, neighbors, sponsors, and 12 step members. You can learn from, teach, persuade, entertain, laugh, and barter with these people. You could find that you also have a great time playing online and using the internet to stay connected socially and professionally. During the final days of the month, you begin seeing some financial and professional success as well.

**CANCER:** June 22 thru July 22 - After the emotional dramas of last month, you are ready for a spiritual vacation this month, it could be a good time for you to schedule it. However, if you choose to stay home and meditate, there are some wonderful recovery aspects about to happen in your life. You will be able to take some time to thank your higher power about your professional and financial goals and you are able to reflect on how you are in alignment spiritually, emotionally, and ethically with the will of your higher power.

**LEO:** July 23 thru August 23 - You have regained control over your social life and are once again able to balance your personal life with your social life. You are having a great time because of applying the 12 step principals, while creating all kinds of professional and personal relationships. You are still in the mood to broaden your horizons and to spend more time with your sponsor, and cultural, political, and religious related activities as well. You are smart enough to know that sometimes the rules of society are wrong, during those times guidance from God is essential.

**VIRGO:** August 24 thru Sept. 22 - This may be the time of year when most people like to go on vacation, but for you this is a good time to be focusing on your professional goals and your spiritual aspirations. You have times when you are strongly working your recovery program, and then you have other times when you are not focused, listening to self and not your higher power effecting your emotional well-being. All three elements are working quite nicely individually and in various combinations for you this month.

**LIBRA:** Sept. 23 thru Oct. 23 - This is a good time for you and your romantic, social, or business partner to be traveling together and spending time socializing and interacting with members from 12 step groups. You could find that cultural, religious, academic, and travel related activities gives you plenty of opportunities to make new friends, forge new business deals, and to learn new things from your sponsor. By the end of the month, you are ready to focus on work again and take on leadership roles in your group meetings.

**SCORPIO:** Oct. 24 thru Nov. 22 - Your career and finances are doing really well this month. You are smart, productive, and are a natural leader. It is a good time for working on productivity goals, financial negotiations, job interviews, promotions, and a stronger contact with your higher power. And it is a good time for taking on leadership roles at your 12 step group meetings, earning the respect and admiration of your peers, getting them to see what a valuable member of the team you are.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Nov. 23 thru Dec. 21: You and a

partner or rival are able to iron out your disagreements. You could even find that you are ready to have some fun together since applying the 12 step principals. There is a great deal of positive energy between the two of you now. You are also able to funnel more romantic and financial security into your home or private life. A couple of months ago, you and then later your partner were both disappointed about someone or something in your private life. Now, thanks to God, you seem to have worked it out and you are feeling much better about the situation.

**CAPRICORN:** Dec. 22 thru Jan. 20 - Last month, you were dealing with a lot of drama in your daily life. You were also dealing with a partner or rival that was unhappy about you and your home life. Those things are still happening this month, but by working the 12 steps you're doing a fantastic job of smoothing things over and getting everyone to work together to actually fix things, and get them moving in a direction that helps everyone. People are more open to hearing your ideas and they are happy to see you taking a leadership role.

**AQUARIUS:** Jan. 21 thru Feb. 18 - You and your partner could enjoy spending quality time with relatives, neighbors, and others from within your local community recovery groups. Backyard bbqs, family reunions, and local gatherings at the park are all fun possibilities. The two of you will find some time to go on family outings, get closer to God, and to enjoy working with others through sponsorship. The two of you work well together in the pursuit of being joyous and free.

**PISCES:** Feb. 19 thru March 20 - You are focused on your home, roommates, parents, retirement plans, and/or a home-related business. You have an opportunity to roll up your sleeves and get to work on these topics. You have your financial and professional goals and activities in line with God's will. You should be feeling rather safe and secure when it comes to setting up a life of recovery that you want. You are also finding some time to enjoy and have some fun during the final days of the month.

**ARIES:** March 21 thru April 20 - Last month, you were disagreeing with your neighbors, extended family, and local community members about recovery related things and they were really getting on your nerves. This month, you are able to really enjoy hanging out with these same people by turning it over to God, and you are able to hear what they are trying to say and they are actually listening to what you have to say about recovery. It is a far more friendly and fun experience. You could also find that you are able to make some quality time for hobbies, vacations, and various 12 step activities.

**TAURUS:** April 21 thru May 21 - You are spending a lot of time thinking about how to bring more romantic, financial, emotional, psychological, and/or spiritual energy into your home and/or private life. You still have a little bit of trouble making time for your sponsor, and 12 step groups, but otherwise, you have some spiritual help to motivate you to budget for the various household related items that you feel would help you create the recovery home life that you are dreaming of.

*The Soberscopes are for entertainment purposes only - enjoy and remember RULE 62!*

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