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September 2015

KEYS TO RECOVERY — NEWSPAPER, INC. —



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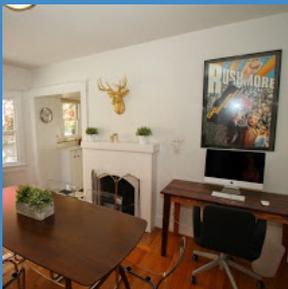
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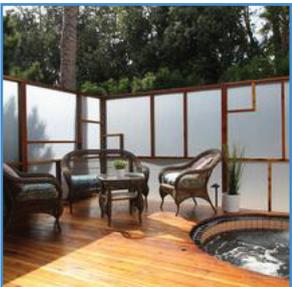
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by: Jeannie Rabb-Marshall

We at Keys to Recovery Newspaper are excited for all the events happening in the upcoming fall months. Let's start with this month (practicing that here and now concept). September is National Recovery Month - Every September, SAMHSA sponsors Recovery Month, to increase awareness and understanding of mental and substance use issues, and celebrate the people who recover. Recovery Month promotes the societal benefits of prevention, treatment, and recovery for mental and substance use disorders, celebrates people in recovery, lauds the contributions of treatment and service providers, and promotes the message that recovery in all its forms is possible.

Recovery Month spreads the positive message that behavioral health is essential to overall health, that prevention works, treatment is effective and people can and do recover. It fills me with hope for our recovery community, that so any people are working together to spread the message of recovery. To find out about events in your area or to see what you can do to "Join the Voices for Recovery", visit www.recoverymonth.gov.

Next month - October 5th, 6th and 7th - we will be in Las Vegas, Nevada attending the Lifestyle Intervention Convention (aka L.I.C. 2015) being held at the Bellagio Hotel. L.I.C. provides educational content while building a network of resources for providers, who serve those struggling with drug, alcohol and process addictions as well as food disorders and now a special focus on workplace intervention. Keys to Recovery's October issue will be in the "swag bags" given to all the registrants. For more information visit www.LifestyleIntervention.org or call 800-508-1489. For 25% off Registration use the code "KEYS". We hope to see you there.

We felt our feature this month (Myths About Marijuana, by Kevin Sabet) was a perfect fit for National Recovery Month. While working on our September issue we read countless articles, a couple books and visited numerous websites about the Legalization of Marijuana - for and against. Since, I have almost 30 years clean and sober - I have not smoked, or eaten this "new generation of marijuana", and I was stunned at the strength of it - compared to what I was exposed to in the late 70's and early 80's.

What troubled me most, was the candy like presentation of some of the more popular "edibles" (edibles is short for marijuana edible: Any edible product that contains THC). Although, brownies and cookies seem to be the most familiar form of edibles - the candy type edibles are extremely popular. They look like the candy I use to buy for my daughter when she was a child. Brightly colored and with names such as Sour Gummi Bears, Rainbow Belts, Wild Cherry Drops, made me wonder WHO are they marketing these type of edibles for? Of course, children cannot access the



"weed stores", but what about when the "edibles" are in a familiar home or setting? I taught my daughter not to take candy from strangers... but a child is much more likely to eat something that appears "candy like", in their own home or where they feel safe. Like I said it was troubling to me.

The most common argument for the legalization of marijuana appears to be "It's no worse than tobacco or alcohol". But, if you take a look at our current "legal drugs" —alcohol and tobacco— They are examples of commercialized products with addiction potential and high usage rates, fueled by easy availability. "Although, these products are taxed, neither produces a economic benefit to society. The health care and criminal justice costs associated with alcohol and tobacco far surpass the tax revenue they generate, and little of the taxes collected on these substances is contributed to the offset of their substantial social and health costs."

I think you will find our feature article very helpful when breaking down the facts for yourself or someone you love.

Have a beautiful September. See you next month.



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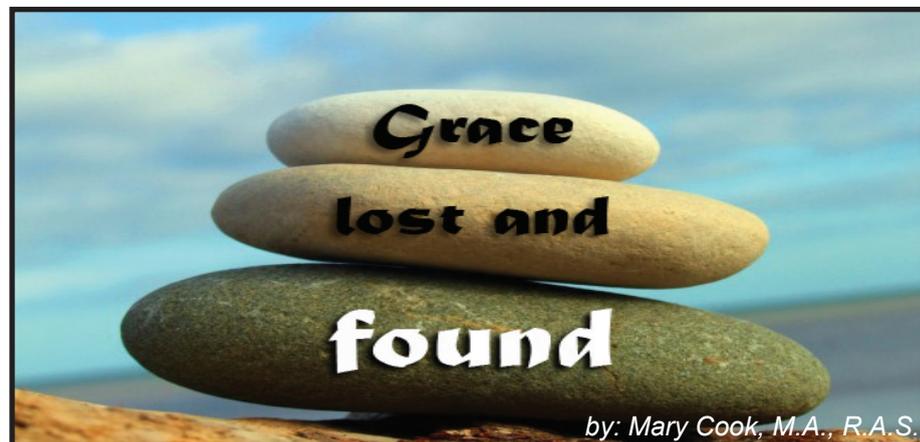
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CHANGING OUR ASSOCIATIONS

Our psychological associations to goals have a significant effect on whether we achieve them or not. Personal growth requires discipline. Yet many of us have negative associations to limits, rules and structure. Sometimes resistance or rebellion against discipline stems from past painful reactions to abusive or hypocritical role models of discipline. Alternatively it can come from positive or loving associations to someone who was overly permissive and enabling with us. Furthermore, if we are perfectionistic in our discipline, faltering can be fatal to our goal. Although as adults, we can intellectually understand how healthy realistic observance and compliance with rules and structure leads to freedoms, opportunities and achievements, our earlier associations may prevent us from this success.

We may have a goal of exercise, healthy eating, and/or quitting smoking, in order to lose weight and overcome disease. But, if we internalized negative associations about our body from past abuse, endangerment or neglect, a deep feeling of unworthiness may well sabotage our efforts for greater health. Occasionally, childhood sexual abuse leads to compulsive overeating and obesity. The subconscious mind perceives the weight as a necessary buffer between us, and others who might hurt us, and also as a barrier against unwanted sexual attention. Or perhaps we failed to receive sufficient positive attention in childhood, and developed a pattern of overeating in an attempt to compensate for this. Cake and ice cream can't love us, but our minds may associate foods with comfort, reward and pleasure, and associate healthy eating with deprivation.

When we have suffered significant mistreatment or neglect early in life, a defense of entitlement can arise. If people and things hurt us in the past, we might expect compensation from people and things now. Therefore, we refuse to take healthy personal responsibility, because it should be someone else's job. This belief keeps us in a childhood dependent state. Many people that are able to take actions toward wellness, fail to do so because they want other people, agencies or institutions to provide for them. Codependents who voluntarily assume excessive responsibility for others, find that dependent adults refuse to improve and often worsen, despite their assistance. Furthermore, dependent adults with an entitlement defense, are ultimately hostile toward their caretakers. Thus entitlement only strengthens feelings of anger, hurt, helplessness and envy, thereby preventing resolution and recovery.

Sometimes our failures to achieve goals are due to avoidant behaviors. We may be unable to relinquish workaholicism, for instance, in spite of increasing stress, because we associate professional achievements with positive esteem, and have negative or fear based associations to personal and family closeness. We may have lacked healthy role models not only for positive relationships with significant others, but also with ourselves, and therefore feel that we would fail at this. Or if we have problems with anger management, but associate anger and intimidation with the avoidance of painful earlier feelings of being over-controlled, abused, or humiliated, we may not overcome our anger issues until we change our associations. When we give our attention to how we think others should change, we are avoiding painful, personal vulnerability and awareness of our own faults and problems.

The hallmark of addictions, compulsions and other unhealthy patterns is denial. Denial exists in all of the problems that I've discussed here. Denial tells us that our sick habits are acceptable. Denial tells us that a future time is a better time to change than now. Denial says that something magical requiring no effort or difficulty on our part, will occur and all problems will disappear. It tells us that we can reach our goals without surrendering our personal faults and false beliefs. Denial finally convinces us to relinquish healthy goals entirely, preferring apathy and passivity, or anger and blame over personal growth.

When we observe healthy children, we understand that we have an innate, instinctive desire for learning, solving problems, overcoming obstacles and evolving continuously. This is how we acquire positive esteem, joy and fulfillment in life, and how we realize our full potential as spiritual beings. It requires more energy to hold ourselves hostage to fear and defenses, than to relinquish them and move forward.

If we decide to give up misery and stagnation, we need to change our associations to the things that keep us enslaved to unhealthy habits. We must practice healthy discipline to move from childhood dependent states, to recognizing the current role models, resources, knowledge and support that we have to assist us toward positive goals. We need to surrender entitlement, and experience the privilege and rewards of healing ourselves and helping others. We must recognize that avoiding what ails us gives it more power, and blaming others who mistreated us, keeps us prisoners of their sickness and makes it ours.

WWW.MARYCOOKMA.COM, Mary Cook is an addiction counselor with 39 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 Amazon.com, etc.




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It is imperative to work through the steps in the order that they are written to allow the spiritual process of transformation to take hold. We must continue working the steps in our lives as an ongoing daily practice. Steps 4 through 9 are the key action steps to freedom.

If we skip steps 4-9 we are headed for disaster. A complete ship wreck of emotional and mental confusion is guaranteed. Seeking loopholes to cover our pride will open the way for other traits to surface such as, rebellion, justification, guilt, and anger. The defects of character, the flaws of our inner nature will begin to leak out onto others and in every area of our lives. We begin to isolate, hide and carry the burden of shame and regret. Depression and dark thinking seems normal rather than living in freedom and the light of wholeness.

If we ignore our character flaws, true happiness, serenity and freedom will never appear. Holding onto our defects is like standing in a cage with the door wide open. We cannot be at peace as long as we are unwilling to leave the cage. The importance of admitting our defects, seeing them for what they really are, and asking God to remove them is the beginning of true freedom. We can try to pretend they are not there but they will eventually leak out.

When we are honest in our inventories the truth of our make-up will be revealed. We will see the truth of what we have been feeling, what our patterns of behavior have been, how we have used our defects as survival tools and how our resentments have kept us locked in inner turmoil.

When we are ready (step 6), we look realistically at what our character defects and flaws have been and how those have affected our lives. We become ready to have all of them removed. We want to pray and begin to release all of the flaws, hurts, defects, attitudes, fears and behaviors that have kept us trapped in addiction and acting out.

When it is time to let it go... we must be willing to let all of it go! We do not need to analyze each and every piece over and over again. If we have resentments that we are unwilling to let go of, we need to pray and ask for guidance. What we need to remember is that if we hold onto grudges it is used for only a couple things; to either punish someone else or punish ourselves, keeping us in a victim mentality and a bitter heart.

Instead of holding onto our defects we must simply let go. Once we understand the root and cause of our acting out we can give it to God to remove and transform, but we must be willing to let go completely.

Allowing the past to be the past at last is a step toward inner freedom and transformation. We will no longer be burdened by the emotional heaviness that we have carried around or stuck in a cage of self-deprivation. We will be free to share our hearts and lives with others without strings attached. There is no need to continue to beat ourselves up from the mistakes done in the past, and once we have prayed in all humility, asking God to remove our defects we no longer need to keep repeating the same agonizing patterns. We do not need to keep going over and over the same list of defects, we just need to simply release them and get out of the cage. There is nothing that we can humanly do to change our pasts or our defects, we must let it go.

A life that is blessed beyond imagination is waiting. A life that is filled with joy, light-heartedness, gratitude, security, confidence, and an endless hope is available. Don't just sit there studying the past, it is time to open the cage and fly. What we did in the past does not determine our future or determine who we are now.

It's important to have loving supportive people in our lives to remind us that the past is gone and that we are truly blessed. We have a new life, another chance and we can live happy, joyous and free. If we continue to go to meetings, work the steps and trust God we will continue to grow in our recovery, and live with more freedom than ever before. We are changing, growing and progressing in our recovery a day at a time. We are Cage-Free!

*"We may never be free from the disease of addiction,
but that doesn't mean we cannot experience freedom", pg. 89 Living Clean.*



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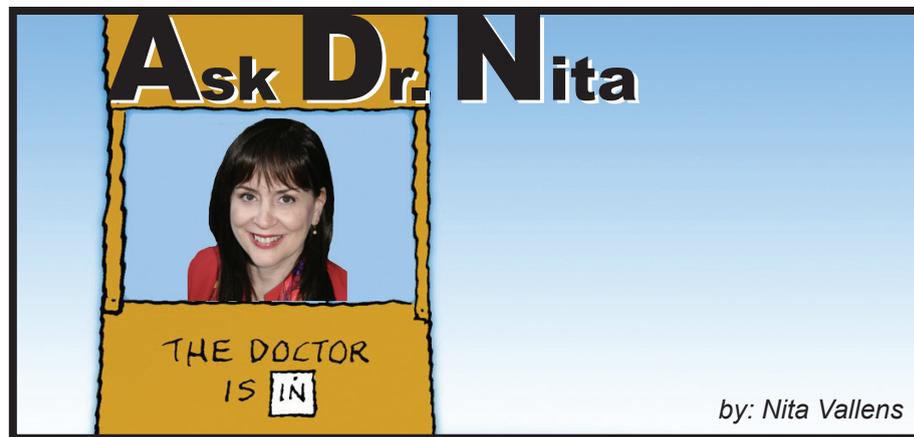
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by: Nita Vallens

Dear Dr. Nita,

I have sailed through the first three steps in *The Big Book* and my sponsor told me I'm ready to begin Step 4. But, that was two weeks ago and I can't seem to get it on paper. I keep thinking of some of the things I did that I'm not proud of. To be quite honest, I have a few regrets and from time to time I feel paralyzed with guilt. Help - I hate feeling stuck.

Saundra

Dear Saundra,

First, compliments to you on a job well done and for your willingness to enter a new realm - a life of sobriety using the steps and principles of Alcoholics Anonymous to build a better future.

Next, let's address the regret and guilt you mentioned as well as fear and shame, because sometimes these self-conscious emotions are present with the other feelings you're experiencing.

"Feelings are not facts", is a phrase we hear often in the program. And, in counseling we say that feelings are not necessarily rational or logical, and feelings and emotions also come and go, at times rather quickly. You could be happy one minute and sad or mad the next. There are no good or bad, or right or wrong feelings - they are what you have in that moment and they will pass and a different feeling will drop in.

Ever notice how you feel so much love for someone then something happens and you get angry at them? It's also possible to hold more than one feeling at once. You care about someone, but they really irritated you an hour ago, so you are angry. Notice the transitory nature of feelings as you go through your day! Sometimes, we have fear of the unknown and resistance to change, even though the changes might be good for us or we look forward to something new and different.

It's important to know the difference between guilt and shame - guilt says, "I did something bad" where as shame says, "I am bad." It's critical to start releasing any of the shame you may be holding on to, because it will allow you to begin healing and releasing your past. When you wrote, "Not proud of...paralyzed with guilt", I thought you might be feeling shame as well, which is NOT healthy, since you're not inherently bad. The guilt you feel is actually healthy, and it need not paralyze you - it is signaling you that you are not happy with some of your past behaviors so you will likely not repeat them.

Now, that you've worked the first 3 steps, you have a connection with a power greater than yourself, or your sponsor would not suggest you move on to step 4. Whatever that power and however you address that power, God, nature, spirit... ask for help and assistance from that power - create a relationship by daily conversation - like you do with friends or family.

When we utilize the 12 steps in our daily lives, we are building a new character, and we will shed the old character as time goes on. This literally means that those old ways of thinking, being and behaving you once thought were okay, will now be dropped from the way you conduct yourself. You'll find new ways of coping and moving forward in your life with ease and confidence, and find the support of people in the program and outside services when needed. This will launch you into the new reality that you have been hoping for.

We all walk in the doors of AA with past hurts and traumas to a greater or lesser degree. Everyone's story is different. Please don't procrastinate writing your 4th step by letting any feelings or thoughts get in the way. Remember your sponsor will help you put all of this in the right perspective to move on from this and all of those old self deprecating thoughts that add fuel to those negative feelings will no longer be acceptable to you.

Let's close with the first three A.A. promises (feel free to go to the book, Alcoholics Anonymous pages 83-84 and read all of them):

1. If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through.
2. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.
3. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it.

I hope this gives you a foundation to build on as you move forward - I believe in you! - Dr Nita

Dr Nita Vallens is a licensed Marriage Family Therapist and certified Hypnotherapist in Sherman Oaks for more info visit www.DrNitaVallens.com or for consultations and appointments call 818.783.6258 Her Inner Vision radio show can be heard each Tuesday @1:00 PT on KPFK Los Angeles, 90.7 FM or live stream at www.KPFK.org



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THE EATING DISORDER TIME SUCK

Thirteen years ago, when I was 22-years-old, if I wasn't sleeping, I was with Ed. I am not talking about a guy, but my eating disorder. In therapy, I was taught to treat anorexia/bulimia like a relationship - naming it Ed, short for "eating disorder" - rather than an illness or a condition.

Think of the most time consuming relationship you've ever had. Imagine it was with the most demanding person you'd ever met. That was life with Ed.

A typical day went like this: Ed talked, and I listened. Since, I only slept for about three hours a night, I heard his self-destructive voice saying, "You aren't good enough," for at least 21 hours a day. When you hear something that often, you start to believe it, and pretty soon you start to live it.

My eating disorder was as much about limiting my life as limiting my intake. I starved off fun by overworking and people by isolating. Obviously, I limited sleep as well. As for many women with anorexia, a key issue underlying my eating disorder was perfectionism, which caused me to falsely believe, among other things, that sleeping is a waste of time and that I should always be working. If I wasn't at my real job, which varied from being a waitress to a security guard (not the best occupations for someone with anorexia), I maniacally found something to do to keep myself busy. I reorganized my apartment, mailed birthday cards to every person I'd ever met, and strategized new ways to decline dinner invitations. I did anything to stay out of the present moment - a scary place to be back then. I worked like this about 20 hours a day, which meant my work week was 140 hours long.

During those few hours at night when I actually rested, I noticed that my heart would beat erratically. I knew that people with eating disorders could die from cardiac arrest, and I distinctly remember thinking that I might not wake up in the morning. The most terrifying thing for me was that I felt like I couldn't do anything about it. I was paralyzed, as if Ed was literally holding me down. It was one of those nights that finally pushed me to seek help.

Recovery, which took time and professional support, actually forced me to be a healthier person with food and weight than I ever would have been without it. I noticed that the less I obsessed about what I ate and how I looked, the more energy I had for pursuing dreams I'd put aside, discovering new passions, and even falling in love (not with a guy named Ed, I hoped). The part of my life that Ed consumed was slowly becoming mine again.

One of my dreams had been to become a professional writer and singer. I actually turned down an acceptance to medical school in Dallas, Texas and moved across the country to Nashville, Tennessee to pursue music. The problem was that Ed drove the U-Haul. I didn't have the strength to sing or play guitar in Music City, and I couldn't think straight enough to write a song. I did go to weekly vocal lessons, but couldn't truly connect with the music. When I recovered from my eating disorder, I got my life back and then some. Today, I perform songs as part of my career, and I get to write books and speak professionally, too.

As I travel across the country sharing my recovery journey, I no longer spend my time in airports worrying about the food offered on every corner. When my body was malnourished, I literally could not walk past all of that food without bingeing on it. Not to mention, traveling is stressful, and bingeing relieved that stress. In an unfamiliar city in a hurried airport, no one ever noticed when I rushed from one fast food restaurant to the next eating uncontrollably. If you spot me in the airport today (I am traveling to Utah for a gig... as well as some snowboarding), you won't see me carrying lots of binge food. What you will see is someone who looks grateful that she is toting around a guitar -- an instrument I never believed I could play. Letting go of Ed meant I had the time and energy -- and belief in myself -- to pick up my guitar and actually make music.

In my work, I am surprised over and over again by how many people hear Ed's voice. Not everyone has a clinical eating disorder, but no one is immune to society's message that says, "to eat less and to be thinner is to be better." In my latest book, Goodbye Ed, Hello Me, I named this voice - Societal Ed.

According to the National Eating Disorders Association, a staggering 80 percent of American women are dissatisfied with their appearance. Countless moments are wasted worrying about how small our waists are and making sure that our coffee drink begins with just the right prefix. That will be a nonfat, sugar-free, no whip latte, please.

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by: Michael DeLeon

GROWTH AND GIVING BACK

Recovery from an Addiction is truly the most meaningful and beautiful state of my life. As someone in long term recovery from my addiction to drugs, I wish I never knew drugs. I wish I never picked up drugs in the first place, but since I did, since I made that mistake, since I nearly destroyed my life, I am forever grateful to be in Recovery.

Today, there is likely more discussion about Recovery right now than in any time in American history. There are more people in Recovery than ever before, and that is because there are more people suffering from addiction. We are without a doubt in the midst of the greatest public health crisis this country has ever known. We are truly at critical mass. With drug overdose and overdose death becoming an all too familiar part of our lives, and with some people in recovery deciding to no longer remain anonymous, but speaking out about it, the discussion of Recovery is more commonplace. That's a good thing. It needs to be talked about even more. We all need to discuss how it can be embraced by everyone as we smash the stigma of addiction by showing that Recovery is possible. In this higher-than-ever level of Recovery-speak, I see such varied views on this important subject.

In studying and working in this field, and in talking to thousands of people over the past 3 years while filming three documentaries on this issue, I often hear very different views on which road people should take to recover. Some people are open-minded about other views, some are strictly described as the panacea phenomenon for staying clean. Some believe in a life of meetings. Some believe meetings aren't necessary. Some use medication to get there. Some people against medication assisted treatment in the rooms refuse to grant clean-time to those being treated. Others feel that smoking marijuana or taking benzodiazepines can be the remedy for opiate addiction. It's a very divisive issue, and for the life of me, I can't understand why this country is so divided, working in silos to solve our shared problem. We should change this, and come together for the good of all those still suffering, and embrace recovery no matter which path we each took to get there.

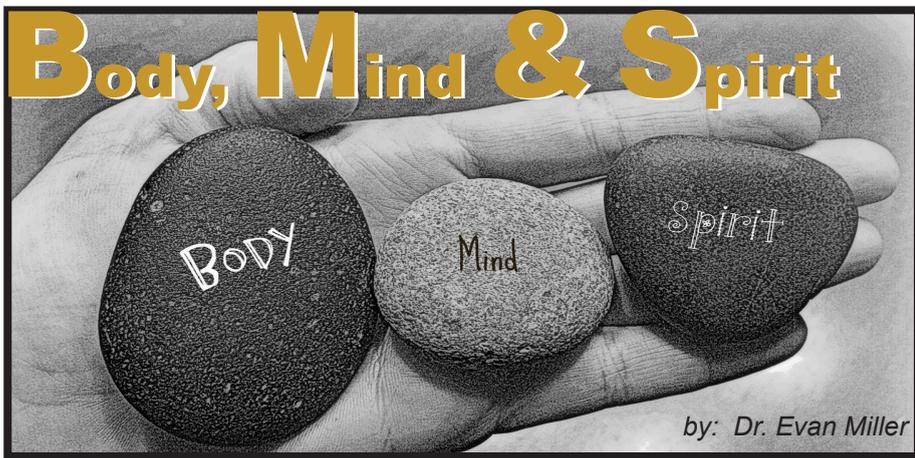
Ironically, one thing that almost 100% of everyone in Recovery agrees with, is the Spiritual nature of it. Most call their program, whatever program that is, a Spiritual program. Recovery is spiritual. In my travels, I focus a great deal of time and attention on recovery and the recovery movement, not only because I am gratefully in it, but because of the importance I feel it presents to all those suffering from addiction. I too understand the spiritual nature of recovery. I believe that those of us in Recovery have a duty, no less an obligation, to talk openly about it so that those that need it can understand how beautiful it is. That is what most reflects our spirit. And there is a foundation to this spirituality.

The two pillars of that spiritual nature are growth and contribution. Recovery's permanence is not guaranteed once we arrive at its doorstep. We must grow in our recovery in order to keep it. Growth in life is required if we want to move forward to be successful. Growth in recovery is just as important and doesn't just stop at any 'clean-time' plateaus. I believe that Growth is an actual need of our Spirit. Our Spirit grows when we allow growth in our recovery. It grows further when we are constantly improving ourselves, and enhancing how our lives evolve.

I believe that contribution to others is the other need of our spirit. Contribution beyond ourselves – giving back as is so often referred – is that other pillar of recovery. It's often said you can only keep what you have by giving it away. I believe this wholeheartedly. It became less and less important in our addiction, but it becomes more and more important in our recovery. In fact, it's more important than anything else, and it feeds that other pillar called growth. It's said in tennis that those who don't serve well don't play well. Service. Doing for others and giving while gaining clean time in sobriety is extremely beneficial to us. Our world grows. We go from addiction in a world with a population of one to recovery from that addiction and a world with an endless population. Growth evolves, and so does our Spirit.

One of my mentors, Zig Ziglar often told us, "You get everything in life you want if you help enough other people to get what they want." This is so apropos in recovery. Spiritually, our recovery grows when we give it away.

Michael DeLeon has earned 3 Assoc. Degrees, Baccalaureate Degree, and a CADCE Education certificate. He is now in the process of obtaining his Masters in Social Work as well as LCDADC. He is founder of Steered Straight Inc, a non profit organization. www.sterredstraight.org. Wrote and directed Kids are dying, www.kidsaredying.com, and wrote produced and directed, An American Epidemic documentary, www.AmericanEpidemicMovie.com



MAKING MEDITATION WORK FOR YOU

The busy lifestyle and constant “On-the-Go” pace of American culture has taken its toll on many Americans. Every day worries, for many, include early mornings after late nights, rush hour traffic on the way to work and on the way back, office politics and family matters, endless gas pumps, and mortgage payments. Stress affects our physical and mental health and well-being. Luckily, there is an easy and effective way to reduce the damaging effects of stress and find that inner calm so many of us want.

The practice of meditation comes from the Eastern philosophy of healing and health. Mindful meditation is based on the belief that the mind and body must be in harmony, with a positive “Qi”, (pronounced chi) translated as “energy flow.”

It has taken a little longer for the holistic concept of meditation to be popular in America, where health is promised in capsules and milligrams. It is not that American doctors only want to write prescriptions, rather, their Western medical training relies heavily on empirical proof from countless research studies.

Over the last twenty years, researchers have studied the effectiveness of Eastern methods of healing, especially meditation. The results have concluded that meditation and mindfulness improves physical and psychological health in many ways, that have formerly been treated with prescription and OTC medications, including:

Physical Health

- Anxiety and sleep disorders
- Asthma
- Depression
- Heart Disease
- High-blood pressure
- Depression
- Pain

Emotional/Psychological Health

- Increases introspection skills
- Increases stress-management skills
- Increases self-awareness
- Increases ability to focus
- Reducing negative emotions
- Increases memory and cognitive functions
- Reduces rigid-thinking

What is Mindful Breathing?: Mindful breathing is a simplified form of meditation that can be done any place, at almost any time, and by anyone seeking to reduce feelings of stress and anxiety. Many people have a difficult time with the concept of mindful meditation, because they believe it requires one to achieve a quiet mind. A quiet mind is a wonderful thought, but it is an impossible goal. The human mind is always on, always processing information, problem solving, and randomly thinking. The true objective of mindful meditation is finding a focal point and training the mind to stay on that focal point for a given amount of time. This is why mindful breathing is meditation, just simplified.

The focal point of mindful breathing is the breathing rhythm or the tiny space between the inhale and the exhale. Inhaling through your nose, you exhale through your mouth; some people touch the tip of their tongue to the roof of their mouth, as done in Reiki yoga. Like all forms of meditation, mindful breathing takes practice; it may come more naturally to some than to others. There are no “rules” to follow or break.

Here are some things to remember when beginning mindful breathing:

Thoughts Will Come and Thoughts Will Go

With practice, thoughts will come flowing in and rest somewhere in the back of your consciousness. Your brain is an organic machine—always processing. If you can imagine your thoughts as white noise, you will find yourself able to recognize them without focusing on them.

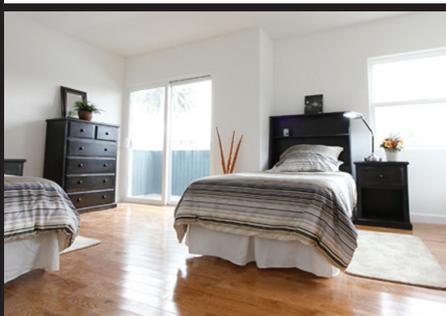
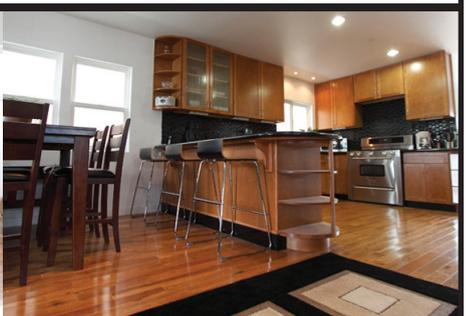
Some people use imagery to manage thoughts during meditation; during mindful breathing, you can just return your focus on your breathing. Imagine your breath as colors, one color on the inhale blending into another color on the exhale.

If you are in a cold environment, focus on the feeling of the cold air coming into your nose, the chill in the back of your throat, and the hot air as it passes out of your mouth. Whenever your thoughts wander away from your breaths, just let them go and return to breathing and counting.

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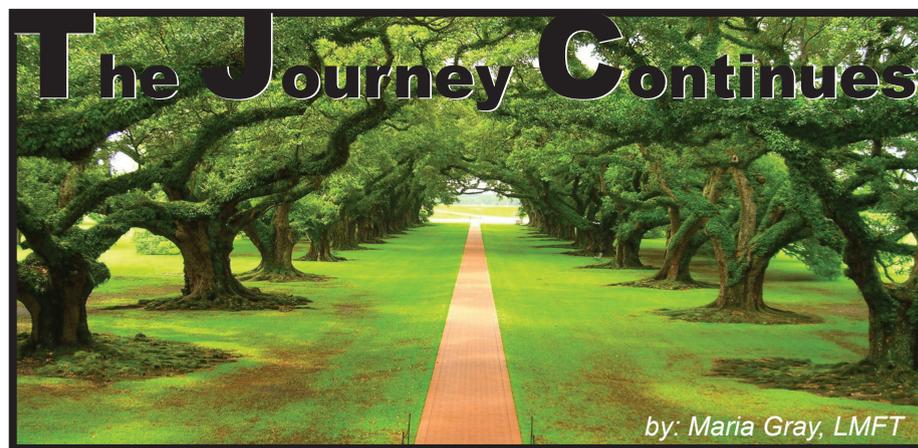
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by: Maria Gray, LMFT

SELF CARE IS NOT SELFISH

Edward Khantzian, M.D. (2008), (psychiatrist, author and one of the founders of the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatry) describes addiction as consisting of problems of control (addicts have lost the power to choose) and psychological suffering in four areas. One of these four areas is "an inability to desire self-care for oneself". Khantzian's theory is that addicts self-medicate as a result of being unable to care for themselves.

Sometimes, when I discuss self-care with my clients they respond by saying "that sounds selfish". Adult Children of Alcoholics often grow up spending the majority of their time focusing on their parents; this can make shifting the focus to themselves feel awkward. One of the most practical 12 Step slogans is HALT, which is short for- Don't get too Hungry, Angry, Lonely or Tired. HALT is a good barometer to use for monitoring self-care.

Let's start with the H for Hungry. I am a snacker, I tend to get pretty hungry in between meals. If, I forget to have my snack I start to get a little grouchy, so part of my self-care routine includes carrying some nuts or a protein bar with me. You might try experimenting with your meals to see what works best for you. Many years ago a friend explained to me that a chocolate chip muffin is not a meal.

The next part of HALT is A for anger. If, you are feeling angry it's probably a good idea to make an outreach call or do some writing (a 10th Step for those in recovery) and share it with a sponsor or friend. Don't forget to pause if you are feeling agitated or doubtful. Slowing down a little today may prevent having to make amends tomorrow.

Loneliness (L) can be addressed by going to a meeting or picking up the phone to schedule some time with friends; sometimes just leaving the house and heading to a café and being around other people can ease loneliness. The last one, T for tired was a challenge for me for quite some time. In the past, I liked getting up early to exercise and then tried to pack a lot into my days without leaving enough time for sleep. This worked fine in my 20's; however, when I carried that behavior into my 40's it left me feeling burnt out and suffering from frequent colds and sinus infections. Today, in my 50's I need 8 hours of sleep to feel my best. I set my phone to Do Not Disturb an hour before bed time and stay off my computer and tablet. Reading helps me fall asleep, other things may work better for you. If you are struggling with insomnia (as I did for many years) it may be helpful to go to bed at the same time every night and avoid using electronics one to two hours before bed time.

People in early recovery sometimes get so excited about meetings and fellowship, that they find themselves out 5 or 6 nights a week at meetings with little or no down time. I am pro-meetings, but I am also pro-self-care. One thing I enjoy is scheduling a "no plans" night during the week. It can be a time to prepare a healthy dinner, or relax with a book or your favorite television show. Maybe, it's a night to enjoy being with your partner or children; whatever feels good to you. In addition to a "no-plans" night it is important to cultivate fun, by taking pleasure in hobbies or interests (as suggested in the Al-Anon Program). Children learn to play and explore at a young age; when I meet a new client, I usually ask that client "What do you do for fun?" An Al-Anon friend once asked me that question and I proudly answered "I go to the gym". She told me that this did not count as it was something I felt compelled to do. I tried again and mentioned how much I enjoy the time I spend in my kitchen; I listen to music as I mindfully chop vegetables. I don't feel compelled to cook the delicious, healthy meals I make, I do it for fun. That answer passed with flying colors. Consider taking some time this week to explore a new way to practice self-care.

~~~~~  
*Maria Gray, LMFT, NMP is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in private practice in West Los Angeles; specializing in trauma and addiction. For more information see [www.mariagray.net/](http://www.mariagray.net/) or call 310-319-6500. Maria is currently enrolled in Dr. Young's Internet Addiction certification program.*  
~~~~~

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Neurobiology of Attachment:
Integrative Therapies for Eating
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Trauma-informed Experimental
Methods of Engagement Using
Psychodrama
Nancy Bailey Ph.D.

Positive Psychology Meets
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Maria Gray MFT

Somatic Experiencing Applications
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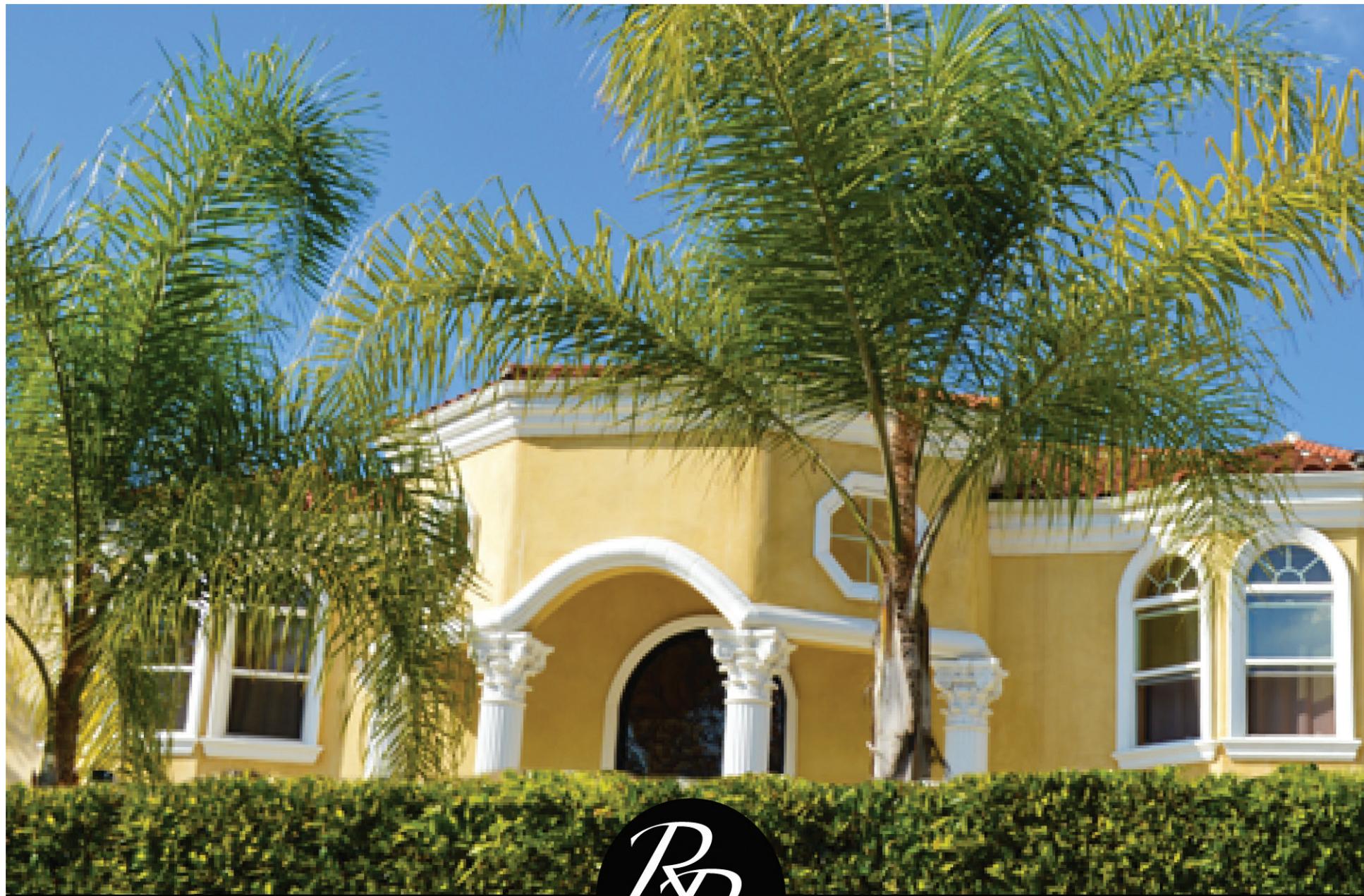
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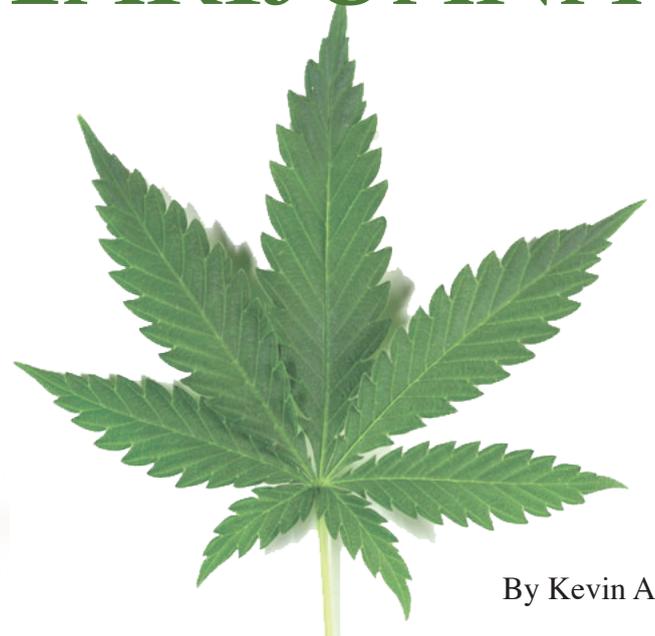
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MYTHS ABOUT MARIJUANA



By Kevin A. Sabet

NOTE FROM THE EDITORS: With such a controversial topic - we urge you to check your FACTS as we did. At the end of this article - submitted by Dr. Kevin Sabet - are references so that you can personally check the scientific facts and studies. The next time someone tells you one of the following myth's ask them "where is the science to back that up?" For more in-depth information check out Dr. Sabet's book [Reefer Sanity: Seven Great Myths About Marijuana.](#)

MYTH: I can't become addicted to marijuana

Marijuana may not be as addictive as tobacco or heroin, but 1 in every 6 teens (and 1 in every 11 adults) who ever try marijuana will become addicted to it. Just as with alcohol and tobacco, most chronic marijuana users who attempt to stop 'cold turkey' will experience an array of withdrawal symptoms such as irritability, restlessness, anxiety, depression, insomnia, and/or cravings. These are classic signs of dependency. Marijuana is about as addictive as alcohol.

This may not sound alarming until translated into actual human lives. In 2010, marijuana's addiction rate meant that 4.5 million Americans met the criteria for abuse and dependency. That accounts for more marijuana addicts in the United States than Americans addicted to prescription pain relievers, cocaine, tranquilizers, hallucinogens, and heroin combined.

Teens and young people are particularly vulnerable to addiction, since their brains are being primed and are under rapid development until age 25. So, it's no surprise that more youth are in treatment for marijuana dependence than for alcohol or any other drug combined.

MYTH: Today's marijuana is the same old Woodstock weed my parents used

The main psychoactive ingredient found in marijuana, THC, has significantly increased in potency during the past 50 years: in the 1960s and

1970s, THC levels smoked by baby boomers averaged around 1%, increasing to just under 4% in 1983, and more than tripling in the subsequent 30 years to around 14% in 2011. This increase in potency is similar to comparing a 'lite' beer a day to a dozen shots of vodka.

What are the consequences of intensified marijuana potency? Emergency Room admissions for marijuana-related reactions increased nearly twenty five-fold between 1991 and 2008, while the actual number of users stayed the same.

Although, your parents (or you) may have smoked once, twice, or even 50 times during their adolescence, the marijuana they smoked was over ten times weaker, and therefore less harmful, than the marijuana found today. In fact, the kind of marijuana often smoked by today's teens - which has upwards of 20-30 percent THC - was totally unheard of just two decades ago.

MYTH: Smoked or eaten marijuana is medicine

While the marijuana plant has known medical value, that does not mean smoked or ingested raw marijuana is medicine. Just as patients don't smoke opium or inject heroin for morphine's medical benefits, they should not smoke marijuana for such reasons.

A pill, Marinol, based on marijuana's active ingredient, is available by prescription at US pharmacies today. Nearly two dozen countries have approved a new oral spray comprised of marijuana extract. The spray, Sativex, produced in Britain, does not get you high, contains levels of ingredients rarely found in street-grade marijuana, and has proven its effectiveness for relieving cancer pain and muscle spasticity. It will be available in the US soon, and in the meantime, the federal government should start a research program to allow medications like this one to be used by qualified patients under physician supervision.

The point is not to deny patients a medication to help them, but to prevent smoked or eaten marijuana

from becoming a smokescreen for recreational use, or from being misused. Patients should be able to access a medication that is both scientifically approved and obtainable at a pharmacy - not "medical marijuana lollipops" at stores that feature bouncers, bong, and a neon green cross on the door.

MYTH: Smoking marijuana doesn't hurt my brain

Research shows that teens who smoke marijuana once a week over a two-year period are almost six times more likely than nonsmokers to drop out of school and over three times less likely to enter college. In a study of over 1,000 people in 2012, scientists found that using marijuana regularly before the age of 18 results in an average IQ of six to eight fewer points at age 38, relative to those who did not use the drug before 18. These results still held for those who used regularly as teens, but stopped after 18.

Even more seriously, marijuana use is strongly associated with stunted emotional development. In particular, females who smoke marijuana show a great vulnerability to heightened risk of anxiety attacks and depression. According to a study published in the British Medical Journal, daily use among adolescent girls is associated with a five-fold increase in the risk of depression and anxiety. Moreover, youth who begin smoking marijuana at an earlier age are more likely to have an impaired ability to experience normal emotional responses.

The link between marijuana use and mental health extends beyond anxiety and depression. Marijuana users have a six times higher risk of schizophrenia, are significantly more likely to develop other psychotic illnesses.

MYTH: Marijuana is not tobacco - it won't harm my lungs

For most people, common sense would suggest that drawing smoke into the lungs isn't natural, and whether it's tobacco smoke or marijuana smoke,

there are bound to be some health consequences. The fact is, according to the American Lung Association, marijuana smoke contains 50-70% more carcinogenic smoke than tobacco. In addition, marijuana users often inhale more deeply and hold their breath longer than tobacco smokers do, further extending the lungs' exposure to dangerous smoke.

Other respiratory consequences of marijuana use include airflow obstruction, increased prevalence of acute and chronic bronchitis, and a potential disposition to developing lung cancer (though a precise link to cancer has not been found). Moreover, a 2007 study found that the airflow obstruction effects of smoking a marijuana joint, are comparable to smoking two and a half to five cigarettes. Marijuana is not tobacco – in many ways it just might be worse.

MYTH: I can't die from marijuana

Our notion of drug-related deaths comes from people overdosing on large amounts of drugs, such as crack/cocaine, heroin, or prescription drugs, and then dying shortly after. Like tobacco, one cannot "overdose and die" from marijuana, but it is possible to suffer acute panic attacks and other major short term health risks from smoking or eating marijuana (that is why almost 400,000 emergency room admissions a year are related to marijuana). Additionally, an alternate form of inhaling marijuana, called 'dabbing', which has recently grown in popularity, is responsible for a rising number of marijuana-related overdoses and 911 calls. Dabbing involves inhaling very strong concentrates of marijuana, called Butane Hash Oil, which often exceed 80% of THC content. Users can inhale so much concentrated smoke at once that they

pass out. Even regular cannabis smokers, who have been using the drug for years, often express shock and astonishment after dabbing, often referring to it as "the crack of marijuana."

Written by Kevin A. Sabet; Dr. Sabet was a senior advisor in the Obama Administration and is the author of Reefer Sanity: Seven Great Myths About Marijuana. He also is the co-founder, with Patrick J. Kennedy, of Project SAM (Smart Approaches to Marijuana). <https://learnaboutsam.org/>

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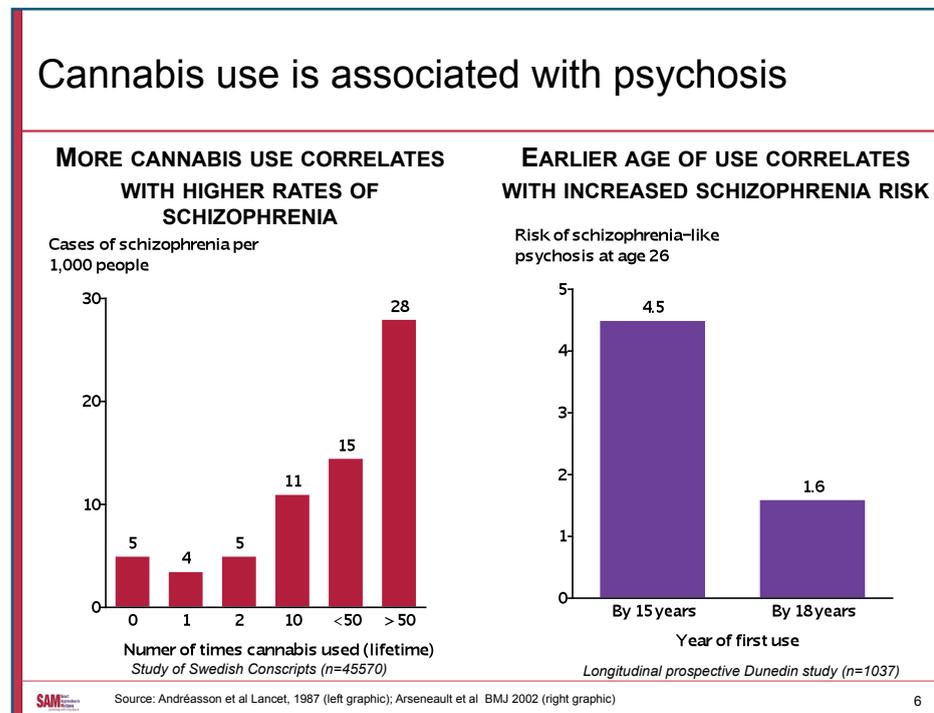
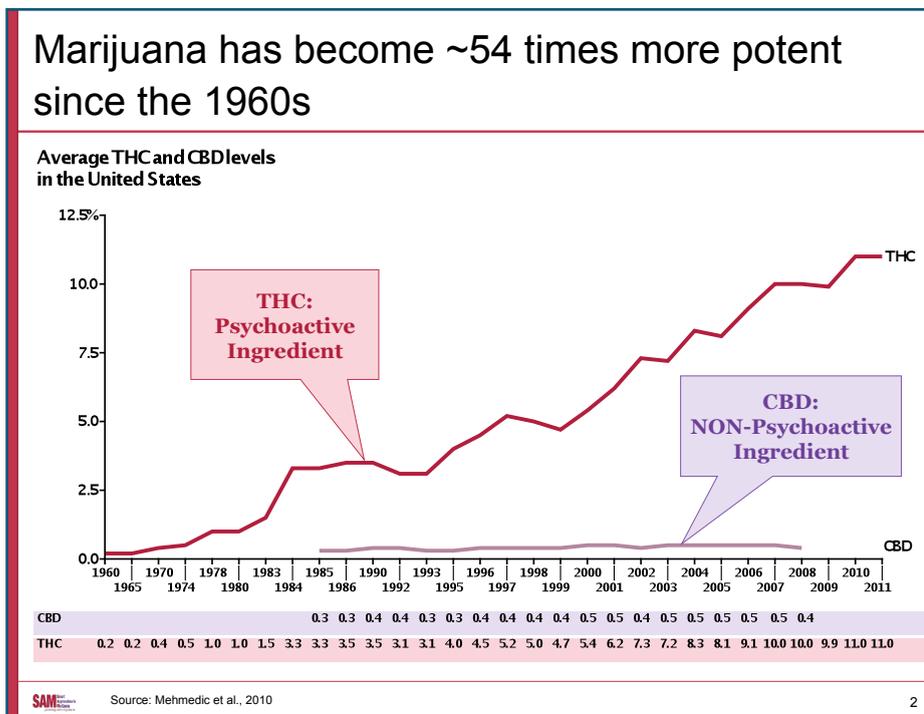
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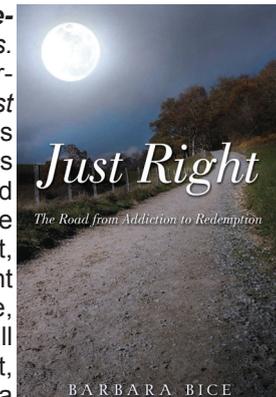
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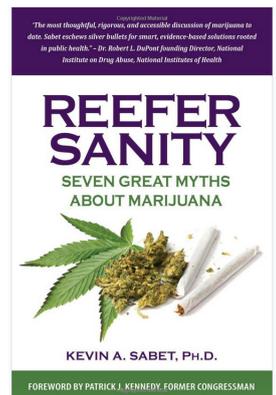


Just Right - The Road from Addiction to Redemption: By Barbara Bice, Published by Xulon Press. I was hooked the moment I read the dedication. Barbara tells her story - in *Just the Right* way, using *Just the Right* words. I love that each chapter not only ends with quotes from my favorite book, but contains quotes throughout this beautiful book - you will just have to read it, to see what book I am referring to! There is heartache in her story laced with hope for the reader. In *Just Right*, Barbara will walk you through her husband Ed's descent into addiction and her battle to save him, her marriage, and her family. You will laugh, you will cry, and you will learn. You will learn about addiction, how to confront it, and how, by the grace of God, to overcome it. This is a story that had to be told and a story that must be read by anyone who's life has been touched by addiction. *Just Right* is a true testimony of faith.



Recently Barbara wrote an article for "Keys to Recovery Newspaper" that was beautiful and heartfelt. That article led me to read this book... my life is changed by the reading of both. Thank you Barbara Bice. Available at www.Amazon.com

Reefer Sanity - Seven Great Myths About Marijuana: By Kevin A. Sabet, Ph.D, Published by Beauport Books. Before reading this book I had attended an event where Kevin Sabet was a presenter. I was both fascinated and skeptical with all the facts Kevin was presenting about modern day Marijuana. So instead of making up my mind before checking out ALL the facts, I read *Reefer Sanity* and I encourage you to do the same.



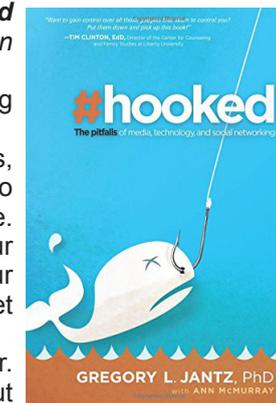
This book relies on science, research and studies - not emotion or anecdote. This is a fact based guide to help us through this complicated social issue.

"Kevin Sabet is a beacon in the confusing haze surrounding marijuana legalization. He is passionate and knowledgeable and cannot be easily dismissed as a reefer-madness-style propagandist. Policymakers, parents, and concerned citizens should read his meticulously factual case against marijuana legalization. He offers more effective solutions than either legalization or incarceration could provide to deal with marijuana use." Available at www.Amazon.com

#Hooked: The Pitfalls of Media, Technology and Social Networking: By Gregory L. Jantz, Ph.D with Ann McMurray, Published by Charisma House Book Group.

The New Addiction. What you start out controlling can end up controlling you.

From Twitter to iPhones, from Facebook to tablets, we have an endless supply of media and gadgets to hook our interest, snag our wallets, and occupy our time. Think back over the last five years. How much of your time was devoted to online activities? How much of your real life has been gobbled up or googled up in your net life?



In *Hooked*, counselor and addiction specialist Dr. Gregory Jantz speaks enthusiastically and frankly about the gizmos and gadgets, social media magnets, and Internet sidetracks we have at our fingertips. With real-life examples and biblical applications, he presents a celebration of the positives technology offers and a cautionary tale about the negatives it unleashed, and he brings hope and solution on "Employing the ultimate filter and taking back control of your life". Available at www.Amazon.com



by: Mendi Baron, LCSW

FLAKKA - DESIGNER DRUG DANGER

Running naked across a major intersection, attempting to kick down the doors of a local police precinct, and shouting from a rooftop while naked and wielding a gun; these are just three examples of bizarre behavior that have been linked to flakka, the newest designer drug on the streets. Known by some as "gravel" because it comes in crystalline rock form and deemed "the insanity drug," by the media, because it causes such crazy behavior, its' popularity among teens is surging because it is cheap. For just \$5, flakka is far too affordable and accessible for adolescents who fail to understand the drug's serious risks.

While the turbulent years of adolescence present parents with more challenges, conflict, and stress, parents need to remember that they still have a strong influence on the decision-making of their teens. More likely than not, the fact is your teen has already been to at least one party where alcohol and drugs, including flakka, are readily available. When it comes to talking to your teen about critical issues like drug use and abuse, it is important that you keep the lines of communication open. In fact, studies show that the more frequent the antidrug messages are at home, the less likely a teen is to become a user. To start that conversation about this new and deadly designer drug, parents first need to learn as much as they can about flakka; so let me fill you in.

Flakka is addictive, dangerous, and potentially deadly. It resembles a white or pink crystal, a cross between crack cocaine and meth, with a distinctive foul smell. Flakka comes from the same designer drug family as bath salts, which caused a similar string of bizarre behavior in 2012.

Both bath salts and flakka are cathinones, a class of synthetic drugs that produce short and long-term effects that are similar to crystal meth and cocaine. The effects of the drug can last as few as 3-4 hours, but can also linger for several days. Flakka floods the brain with dopamine and then blocks the brain's natural dopamine re-uptake process. It also causes a surge in norepinephrine, increasing heart rate, blood pressure and feelings of alertness. It is a highly addictive drug, both from a physical as well as a psychological perspective.

When eaten, snorted, injected or vaporized in an e-cigarette device, flakka creates a feeling of euphoria, "excited delirium," an abundance of manic energy, and hyper-stimulation. It can also cause excessive sweating, seemingly superhuman strength, paranoia, and hallucinations that can lead to violent aggression, self-injury, and even psychosis. Flakka is most commonly vaporized using an e-cigarette, which quickly sends the drug into the bloodstream and increases the likelihood for an overdose. Some flakka users continue to take more of the drug while high, a practice known as "snacking." Or they combine flakka with other drugs, causing serious health complications and drug-induced delirium.

The main ingredient (a chemical compound called alpha-PVP) is not federally regulated, which means the drug is technically legal in any state that doesn't specifically ban it. Again, because it is so inexpensive, flakka abuse is on the rise and it's sweeping through Florida as well as popping up in Texas, Oklahoma, and Ohio.

Paramedics who have driven teens high on flakka to emergency rooms, say, "this drug is scary." The emergency calls come in describing trouble breathing, chest pains, and patients who seem mentally unstable. In addition, when the body enters a state of psychosis from flakka abuse, internal body temperatures can exceed 105 degrees accompanied by a rapid heart rate. Excessive internal temperature can lead to kidney damage, muscle breakdown, or kidney failure. Flakka has been linked to deaths by suicide as well as heart attack.

Talking about drug and alcohol use with your teen, is always most effective when it comes as part of a greater conversation. While your words carry weight, no one wants to be lectured, especially teens. Your teen may already know about flakka, so don't be surprised if they roll their eyes when you broach the subject. Talking about drugs will not tempt your teen to try drugs. A conversation with your teen about drugs is a two-way dialogue: a give and take that builds trust and respect. If you are confident that you have built a trusting relationship with your teen, then your teen will most likely feel comfortable and confident enough to say "no" to drugs and will not succumb to peer pressure as a "cool" way to fit in.

Have this conversation with your adolescent, it may save their life!

Mendi Baron, LCSW, is the founder and CEO of Evolve Treatment Centers based in Southern California. A passionate advocate for teens in the field of mental health and addiction, Mendi is the go-to expert to start the conversation on critical issues that impact teens and their families.



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SEPTEMBER 21TH MONDAY evening Puente House in Covina will be hosting a kickoff event (the public is invited to attend) for *September 24 - October 3, 2015* 7th Annual Run4Recovery. Robin McGeough & Norman Fujimoto will be trekking from San Francisco to Covina, California to raise money for The Puente House Foundation. For info. Contact Karl Morris at Puente House 626-967-1819.

UPCOMING

OCTOBER 18TH 2015 - 8am Heroes In Recovery 6k Run & Walk October 18th 2015 8am. Paramount Ranch, 2903 Cornell Road, Agoura Hills, California 91301. Register at <http://heroesinrecovery.com/heroes6k/malibu-ca/>

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.annualhawaiiConvention.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

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MYTHS & TIPS FOR EXERCISING

You probably already know that alcohol and drug abuse changes brain chemistry overtime, which affects judgment, memory, emotional states and perception, and that these side effects last long after the individual has stopped using the above substances.

Although, people tend to think of exercise as just good for the body, did you know it also benefits the brain, as it produces the creation of new neurons? Exercise increases oxygen in the brain by opening new pathways internally, and promotes the formation of blood vessels in the brain, builds connections between cells, enhances repair of neural tissue, and generates new neurons in memory formation areas!

This is exciting news, as it has become scientifically proven that exercise isn't just good for occupational therapy in the field of recovery, but it actually has the potential to repair brain cell damage and assist in mood elevation and stabilization, by increasing the production of mood-boosting neurochemicals such as dopamine and endorphins. Other studies indicate that it even has the added benefit of potentially tempering impulsive / compulsive behaviors, as it also increases production of serotonin. This means fewer relapses resulting in an increased recovery success rate, which is at the alarming low rate of 3 to 5% to date.

Does every exercise produce the same results? No! The general belief is that cardio promotes weight loss, yoga creates long, lean sculpted bodies or that a local personal trainer will give you the discipline and tools to achieve the body of your dreams. While these statements may hold some truth to them, the notion that all exercise provides maximum opportunity for brain health is a myth. Here are some of the most popular myths that keep people stuck in dead ends, and more often than not, even injured.

1. Losing weight with cardio: Aerobic activities facilitate burning calories for only the duration of the chosen activity, it also produces a large amount of cortisol in the body (stress hormone) that suppresses the immune system. This can produce weight gain and inflammation. It is hard on the joints. Cardio does release endorphins, so you will have a feel-good sensation, but the negative side effects are numerous and great.

Alternative Tips: A better and more efficient way to go is to change the composition of your body by replacing fat cells into muscle cells through Strength Training. This will further boost your metabolism by enabling you to burn calories up to 72 hours after your training. Strength Training is just as beneficial for heart health as cardio, and is known to release massive amounts of mood boosting neurochemicals faster.

2. Achieve a long, lean sculpted body with yoga. Contrary to popular belief, yoga is not a muscle building / sculpting activity. The body is composed of 2 distinctive types of muscle fibers that have specific and individual purposes: Slow-twitch and fast-twitch fibers. Fast-twitch fibers build and sculpt the body, while slow-twitch fibers promote endurance. Working both muscle fiber types is essential to build and sculpt a strong, lean body. Yoga mainly uses slow-twitch muscle fibers, and isometric contractions promote endurance, not muscle building. Performing yoga without incorporating strength training activity can result in joint instability caused by overstretching and a loss of those precious fast-twitch muscle fibers. You won't benefit from any substantial caloric burn doing yoga either, and the release of mood-boosting neurochemicals is significantly smaller than strength training, which is known to release a massive amount of endorphins, fast.

3. Cross training compounds results and saves time. Beware, these types of trainings are entirely unsustainable, extremely hard on the body and have an average injury rate of 75%. Unless you are a pro athlete training for specific reasons, don't go there!

4. Swimming or walking are obviously better than doing nothing and do offer some health benefits. You won't get the results you want though. For the same time spent, you will see more results and look and feel significantly better with strength training.

Strength Training - The new kid on the block: Actually, strength training is not so new. Ancient Egyptian and Greek societies used weight training to gain strength and measure power. Weight lifting can also be traced to India in the 11th century, where people lifted stone dumbbells to help overcome the challenges of daily life.

Some of the scientifically proven benefits of strength training include:

• Boosts metabolism • Regulates hormonal imbalances • Builds bone density mass (prevents or reverse osteoporosis) • Reduces risk of diabetes, heart disease, arthritis • Improves cholesterol, blood pressure, glucose metabolism and insulin sensitivity • Reduces the appearance of cellulite • Fights against depression and stabilizes mood behavior.

Yes, strength training has superior abilities to produce those wonderful neurochemicals that makes us feel good and have the capability to assist us in being more in control of our lives.

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Batista Gremaud is a published author, empowerment speaker, entertainer and co-founder of the International Institute of Body Design. She is a 7th degree Master Teacher in Dr. Fitness USA's protocols of Body Design. For more information visit [DrFitnessUSA.com](http://DrFitnessUSA.com) or write at [doc@DrFitnessUSA.com](mailto:doc@DrFitnessUSA.com)  
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Food For Thought



by: Jenni Schaefer

What would happen if we stopped being so preoccupied with whether or not our thighs touched at the top and obsessed about life instead? We could spend more quality time with our families. Or we could change careers, go speed dating, and even take trapeze lessons. We could experience more joy.

Societal Ed says if we reach the lowest number on the scale and wear the smallest size jeans (if we become less), we will finally be happy. But that's a lie. At my lowest weight, I was unhappier than ever.

By the time I reached my healthy, ideal weight in recovery, I had not only added physical mass to my body but, more importantly, I was well on my way to gaining what I like to call "pounds" of joy and peace in my life. It's important to note that our ideal weight has nothing to do with the bathroom scale, but rather it is the size we are when we can think best, have the most energy, and feel whole. When you put on weight like that, you get things like being able to write a song, ride a motorcycle, and enjoy every savory moment of your favorite food.

The body truly is a vehicle for life rather than something to be controlled. I've heard it said that our bodies are our Earth suits - simply what we wear on this planet in order to get around. We must nourish this gift in a balanced way.

As part of my continued effort to do that, I recently went zip-lining in Alaska. (I actually do things like zip-lining in Alaska now - most days Ed wouldn't even let me leave my apartment). When I was flying through that rain forest strapped to a single cable, I wasn't concerned - for even a single second - about how my backside looked in the harness. Instead I was a little scared and focused on not falling. But, even more than that, I was exhilarated, suspended in the moment. And that's time I wouldn't trade for anything.

*This article first appeared on Jenni's Huffington Post blog: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jenni-schaefer>; Chair of the Ambassadors Council for the National Eating Disorders Association, Jenni Schaefer is a leading motivational writer and speaker. Her books include *Almost Anorexic: Goodbye Ed, Hello Me*; and *Life Without Ed*, which has recently been released in audio as well as a 10th anniversary edition. Learn more about Jenni's work, including her inspirational music, at JenniSchaefer.com. Connect with her at [Facebook.com/LifeWithoutEd](https://www.facebook.com/LifeWithoutEd) or on Twitter at [@JenniSchaefer](https://twitter.com/JenniSchaefer).*



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Con't from Page 9



by: Dr. Evan Miller

Breathe Naturally or Rhythmically

You can breathe naturally or in a rhythm; some guided breathing meditations use different rhythms for different meditation goals. For example, a positive affirmation meditation may have a choreographed breathing rhythm: 3-count inhale and a 4-count exhale (4-0-3 Affirmation Meditation). A popular new breathing meditation for insomnia has a choreographed breathing rhythm: 4-count inhale, 7-count hold, 8-count exhale (4-7-8 Insomnia Meditation).

Relaxation is the Purpose of Mindful Breathing

Mindfulness is not always a relaxing moment; it is most effective when used to cope with stressful situations. It is also a recommended strategy for people recovering from addiction, who are struggling with cravings. You may feel less stressed after mindful meditation, but that is not the goal. The goal of mindfulness is to step away from negative thoughts and self-talk, which is a constant occurrence for many people in today's fast-paced, high-stress environment. For people struggling with anxiety attacks, mindful breathing is often done with affirmations, said aloud or quietly, "I am safe, I am OK". Mindfulness reacquaints the body and mind to the present moment.

To introduce mindfulness breathing in your daily routine, start easy; begin with 3-5 minute meditations or 8-10 breath cycles. Try making it a routine first thing in the morning, during a lunch break, or right before bed. There are also many resources to help you with your mindfulness exercises. YouTube has guided breathing meditations for almost every mood and situation; there are also apps that can guide mindfulness breathing as well. Try setting an alarm, on your phone or tablet, to remind you to take a mindful moment out of your day and just breathe.

Dr. Evan Miller is the CEO and Founder of Akua Mind & Body, Inc. Dr. Miller is considered a leader in the field of addiction and men's studies. He has an extensive background in addiction program development, evidence-based treatment initiatives, and athletic performance enhancement.

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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.aascv.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

TEEN LINE: 800-TLC-TEEN (in CA) 310-855-HOPE, Teens helping teens. www.teenlineonline.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

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

MEALS SERVED

Call the Homeless Shelters as most have food programs.

The Midnight Mission meals served 3 times a day 213-624-9258

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

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

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.

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

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 (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
 U.S. 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

Free Drug Testing Kit: www.Foundation2recovery.org, Prevention, Education, Treatment (561) 981-6214
 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 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.
 HEP C - APLA, Los Angeles - www.apla.org, The David Geffen Center, 611 S. Kingsley Dr. LA, CA 90005, (213) 201.1600 Main line, (213) 201.1500 Client line
 HepCHope: www.hepchope.com Hotline (844) 443-7246
 On-Line Resources for Hep C: www.hepcsource.com • www.hepnet.com • www.harvoni.com • www.theliverinstitute.org • www.hepctreatmentlosangeles.com

Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. publishes "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, 6930 De Celis Pl., #35, Lake Balboa CA 91406

KEYS TO RECOVERY NEWSPAPER, INC.

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Addiction Specialist Counselor



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38 years of experience

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Email: MaryCookMA@att.net

Website: WWW.MARYCOOKMA.COM



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

Virgo: August 24 to September 22: You are dealing with some financial tension this month. Ultimately, you follow the 12 Steps spiritual beliefs. You are also having difficulty spending time working the steps with your Sponsor, and attending the meetings that you would like to engage in. Despite these challenges, you manage to have a positive attitude and have fun in the process.

Libra: September 23 to October 23: You are still dealing with some challenges regarding balance between your spiritual and physical health. You and a partner or rival are beginning to battle more than you like. Fortunately, when you allow God to intervene and help smooth things over, your home life truly benefits from all of the positive energy and it becomes a lovely oasis for emotional and spiritual rejuvenation.

Scorpio: October 24 to November 22: You are in a great place financially and professionally, your communication skills are naturally good, but this month they are exceptionally good. You could be very persuasive when working with 12 Step groups. Focus on your playtime activities, your love life, and possibly your parenting efforts. You will need to work harder to maintain a sense of balance between the needs of all of these various people and your, "me time."

Sagittarius: November 23 to December 21: You are enjoying working towards achieving your financial and professional goals. You feel blessed things are going your way towards achieving your financial and professional goals. Sometimes home and private life seems to clash with what you are trying to do, your beginning to evaluate the spiritual application towards your character flaws, and considering the changes, or improvements that are needed.

Capricorn: December 22 to January 20: You might want to plan your vacation for this month, you could find this is a deeply meaningful and emotionally invigorating time for you to be exploring and expanding your horizons. If you do not actually physically leave for some new journey, you could find that you are in the mood to academically dive into studying the 12 Steps, which can really open your mind and help you to understand the Big Book in a new way.

Aquarius: January 21 to February 18: You and your partner are given another chance for enjoying romantic, and financial projects together. You are also beginning to focus more on financial and romantic commitments that you make. You are happy keeping your commitments to your Higher Power, also your enjoying some excellent financial opportunities that are beginning to surface as a result of your excellent people skills.

Pisces: February 19 to March 20: You and a partner or rival agree to a fresh start, this ongoing battle between the two of you will end when given to God. The two of you seem to get along great when you are in social settings, but not so well when it is just the two of you. In the meantime, you have some lovely opportunities to become closer and regain that precious intimacy. The principals of the 12 Steps can help you appreciate the qualities of your partner or rival.

Aries: March 21 to April 20: You are a smart, productive, and creative problem solver at work. You are a natural leader and people like following you. Your romantic partner feels that you're too focused on your professional goals. The two of you are able to come to some kind of an agreement when turning it over to your Higher Power, and you two find balance between your love of climbing the Ladder of Success and the love you have for each other.

Taurus: April 21 to May 21: Your social obligations are clashing with your personal happiness and playtime activities. You feel torn between the two. You are also beginning to focus more on your career. Nothing is so overwhelming that you can't handle, when properly applying the teachings of the 12 steps. Despite the challenges, you are more open-minded and joyful at heart than usual and it helps you to come up with creative solutions.

Gemini: May 22 to June 21: Home is where the heart is, but your home is undergoing some drama. At times it's hard to bring financial and romantic security into your private life, and maintain a sense of peace and harmony at home. Speak with your Sponsor to help find ways to keep things from getting completely out of hand. The good news is that the positive loving and financial aspects will outlast all of the rest. So, keep your focus in that direction.

Cancer: June 22 to July 22: Something or someone at home is beginning to annoy one of your partners or is fueling an adversary's fire. It is not a major big deal yet, but keep an eye on it. The two of you are able to communicate, negotiate, and compromise when reflecting on steps, principals and the guidance from your Higher Power this month. So utilize this to prevent any major upheavals or reoccurring issues concerning political, cultural, or legal matter.

Leo: July 23 to August 23: Your finances are taking center stage this month. On the one hand, you are experiencing some really lucky financial and work connections making it easier than normal to earn a decent living. On the other hand, you are questioning your budgets and you might be tightening your belt to prepare for future holiday shopping. Trust in God your Sponsor and the wisdom of the 12 steps to help you make the right decisions in all of your affairs.

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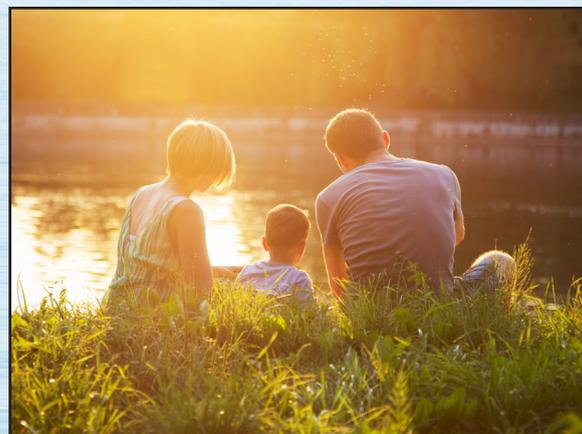
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