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December 2015

KEYS TO RECOVERY — NEWSPAPER, INC. —



RUDOLF THE REINDEER A MESSAGE OF HOPE

**Truth &
Treasures**
Page 4

**Are You a
Perpetual Victim?**
Page 8

**Fortifying Against
Relapses**
Page 17



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Contents

Editors Column	Page 3	Jason Levin
Grace Lost and Found	Page 4	Mary Cook
Sunlight of the Spirit	Page 5	Kay B.
Ask Dr. Nita	Page 6	Nita Vallens
Food For Thought	Page 7	Jenni Schaefer
Freedom From Bondage	Page 8	Mara
Body, Mind & Spirit	Page 9	Daniel Maurer
The Journey Continues	Page 10	Morgan Thrope
Matters of the Heart	Page 11	Melody Anderson
Was Rudolph an Alcoholic?	Page 12	Rev. Leo Booth
Book Reviews	Page 14	The Crew
Attitude of Gratitude	Page 15	Lawren C.
Events	Page 16	
Fit This into Your Recovery	Page 17	Dr. Fitness
Classified Ads	Page 18	
Advertising Information	Page 19	
Resource Guide	Page 20-21	
Sober Scopes	Page 22	Marcus M

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Advertising Rates - page 19
Distribution Information - page 19

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by: Jason

February 2015 was the 7th anniversary of Jason Levin's death. For those of you who don't know him, Jason was my previous business partner and dear friend. We will be including Jason's earlier columns in the rotation of "editors" who write each month. Marcus Marshall, Beth Dewey-Stern and myself are the others in the rotation and we are honored to share this monthly column with Jason. You are missed my friend...xo Jeannie

Hello everyone,

Working a program can be a daunting task sometimes, particularly if we try to do it alone. I've been guilty of this many times and have to be reminded that this is a "we" program. When I don't seem to be making any progress, I have to remember that with the help of a higher power, each other and our programs, we can make the type of progress in our lives and ourselves that we seem to notice most in others. What an interesting part of recovering from our individual diseases – that our greatest strides in recovery come from being with others that share our same problems, helping when we can and accepting help when we need it. This brings to mind a thought about Surrender and Trust.

Surrender and Trust

When looking at the third step "Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God as we understood Him." Surrender and trust are the two things that make this step work for me.

In the first part of step three "Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God", I first had to acknowledge and believe that there was something out there bigger and more powerful than I am. For me this was not a problem, as an example, if I go to the ocean and try to stop the waves from coming in I can see clearly that I'm not the one in charge, and in the bigger picture this method can be used to see powers greater than myself all over the place.

I then had to turn my will and life over to this power greater than myself. In making the decision to turn my will and life over, I am consciously surrendering to a power greater than myself. It is the action of surrendering that lifts the burden of having to take care of every detail in my life. This gives me the freedom to experience life as it happens, instead of having to worry about what is going to happen next. In the context of the group, I can't count how many times I've gone to a meeting feeling lonely, sad or just down and after a while with others no matter what my problem is, I feel much better. This has shown me that the group is able to do for me what I cannot do for myself, if I allow it to do so, if I surrender.

It is the second part of step three, "God as we understand Him" that is the part of the step that, for me, deals with the hardest part of faith – trust. In my experiences before recovery I was the "go to guy" or "the answer man", sorting out the problems both at work and at home, of-

ten with questionable results. When I began my recovery I found out that my own thinking was suspect at best, and it threw me for a loop. How could I trust anyone if I could not trust myself? Who could I count on if I couldn't count on myself?

It was at the beginning of this journey of growth that I learned, I could at the very least count on or trust the group. In the first few months of my recovery I was plagued with all sorts of problems, both real and imagined, and each time I would tell either the group as a whole or some individual in the group the problems that I was having and they would offer solutions. In my desperation I was willing to do what someone suggested, to trust that these people, sometimes total strangers, had knowledge that would help to ease my pain or discomfort. I simply took "Good Orderly Direction". It was this kind of action that built the foundation of trust I have today, not just in the group, but also with my higher power, because no matter what I shared with another there was always something I kept to myself.

My private pains were the worst of all. These things only I knew about would eat me alive, no matter what I did, until I began giving these problems to that power greater than myself. At first it was like lip service – I did not really believe or trust that anything would change – but I turned them over none the less, and when these problems and fears that were mine alone began to be addressed, I gradually began to see that there was someone or something out there that was able to take care of my problems – all of them. So began the growth of my trust in a higher power which continues on a daily basis. I am not perfect in trusting, often taking back these problems of daily living only to give them once again to my higher power, when I've been beaten to a pulp by them again, but as time goes by I hold on to these things for shorter periods of time. A friend of mine has a saying that has helped me to understand how important it is to trust in a higher power, taking care of me and all of my needs in life. I would like to give it to you, with the hope that it helps you as it has me: **"Let Go or Get Dragged!"**

See ya' next month - Jason L. - Publisher



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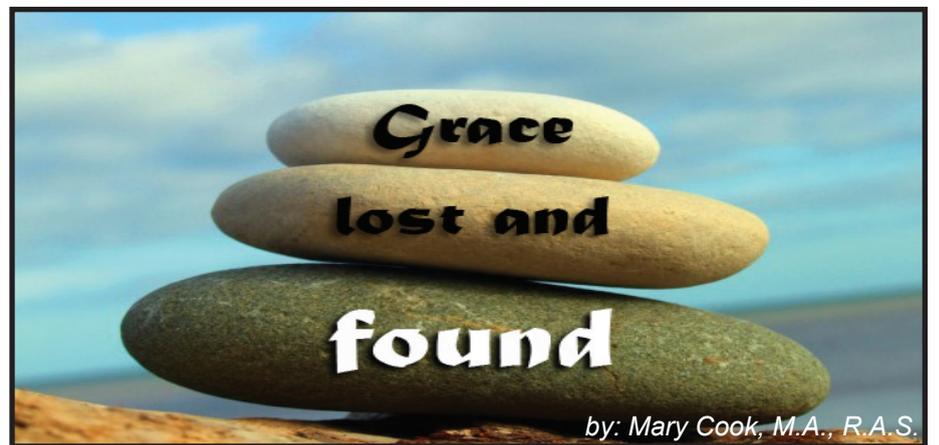


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TRUTH AND TREASURES

In addiction, we lose conscious awareness of the truth and treasures within us. We lose awareness of our unity and interdependence with earthly and spiritual realms. We define ourselves from the consciousness of trauma, loss, cravings, emptiness, shame, anger, and despair, as well as family pathology from childhood. The mind gives more attention to negative energies because they are potentially threatening to well being and survival. The mind also gives us defense mechanisms when pain is overwhelming. This is helpful in situations where there is no hope of positive change or resolution. However, this prevents us from healing and maturing when we are able to do so. We believe we need our defenses and addictions to protect us from unbearable pain, and to keep us alive, because that was our perception or reality at one time. Addiction uses all negative energies to serve its own power and progression. The cravings of addiction increase in frequency and intensity over time, while euphoric effects decrease in duration and intensity. Thus we escalate our fight against the barrier between where we are and where we wish to be, in spite of its futility. When the delusions of chemical euphoria diminish and backfire, survival is merely suffering, enslavement, paranoia, oblivion and insanity.

Recovery offers a fellowship of people who have taken this journey and embraced its failure. They willingly disclose the folly of their thinking and actions. They happily proclaim that the gifts of desperation and hopelessness led them to admission and acceptance of themselves as they are and life as it is, which allowed them to heal and mature. We begin to understand as adults that we are the ones holding ourselves hostage to past painful experiences. We are the ones defining ourselves as deprived and abandoned. We are the ones stuck in habits of thoughts, feelings and behaviors, which obstruct our growth. We are the ones believing that happiness and fulfillment exist outside of ourselves, and must be captured and possessed. We are the ones pretending that self-righteousness, arrogance and violence compensate for lack of wisdom, self-esteem and caring. We are the ones poisoning ourselves and abusing life around us.

Paradoxically in recovery, deep, honest, thorough self appraisals of traumas and failures, free us from their power. We no longer define ourselves, nor our lives through negative experiences. Rather, we learn how negative experiences teach us what not to do and what to do, in order to promote greater understanding, peace, health and happiness. We learn from positive experiences what to cherish, cultivate and create, in order to become better stewards of this planet and life upon it. The barrier that we fought against teaches us that happiness and fulfillment is our responsibility, and external manifestation depends upon our internal transformations. We discover that we are nourished from a healthy cooperative relationship with the earth and the God of our understanding. Surrendering what no longer serves us in our growth, allows us to serve life through all of its changes, and this is what makes our life worth living. We have an intrinsic interdependence with the earth and as we live lightly, helpfully, gratefully and lovingly, we become all that our God created us to be.

Through the steps and fellowship of recovery we are healed, enlightened and transformed by higher truth. Our words and actions increasingly reflect spiritual principles, which then positively change our thoughts and feelings. When we are deeply present to all that is within us and all that is around us, we wisely choose the path within our hearts. We see that we cannot carry our burdens alone without a breakdown, but when we stand together, we are stronger than our burdens. We see that anger and bitterness cannot solve problems, but compassion and humility bring clarity for resolution and resilience. We see that selfishness does not deliver serenity, but peace is experienced in service and goodwill toward others. We see that possession, power, fear and falsehood close the heart and harm lives, but when the heart is fully open, love is the unstoppable force that flows into every moment, giving freely to the world. In recovery, we not only gain conscious awareness of the truth and treasures within us, but we see that this is the consciousness of our greatest fulfillment.

WWW.MARYCOOKMA.COM Mary Cook is an addiction counselor in private practice, 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.



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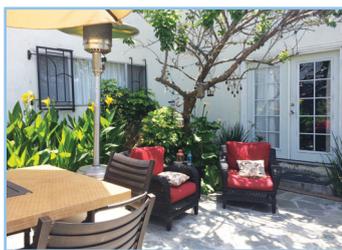
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THE GIFT OF LIFE & RECOVERY

The holidays for recovering people can be a rough time. For most people it is a time of celebration, family gatherings, and special moments. So why does it seem so challenging for people in recovery? We feel pressured into situations that we are unable to handle or need not be in to begin with, and that includes family gatherings. For many of us, the holidays were not memorable joyful events. The memories of the dysfunction within our families such as, drug abuse, alcoholism, negative attitudes, divorce, arguing, emergency rooms and jail is not something that we look forward to being a part of again.

Being with family will bring up unresolved conflicts, fears, self-pity, hurt feelings, and high expectations. The whole atmosphere will be negative if we cannot get past the memories and wounds of the past. Our expectations will destroy unity and harmony if we demand that other people fulfill our desires, or if we expect people to behave in a certain manner. Instead of attending gatherings with old attitudes, we might want to try implementing a positive attitude, an open heart and mind. We can go to events with thankfulness and a positive attitude, seeing what we can bring to each situation that enriches and blesses their lives rather than going with expectations and unmet needs. Instead of a "what about me" attitude, we can seek the guidance of our Higher Power to enable us to be less selfish and to be givers of goodness.

The holidays are not about giving and getting of material gifts, it is not about "things". Why go into debt trying to purchase gifts for people that we do not like, that we are not friends with, or for family members that we have never met, but feel obligated to purchase gifts for. Honestly, if our relationships are based on what we "give or get" materially, it isn't much of a relationship. The true worth of any relationship has its value in kindness, patience, trust, tolerance and love. The way that we care for one another in the program is the same way that we care for our loved ones – with compassion and having no expectations. We are not obligated to give presents, although we guilt-trip ourselves into believing that we do. Keeping it simple and giving from a joyful heart is a beautiful gift in itself. When we share ourselves unselfishly and humbly, it is a good gift. When we are light and polite in stressful situations it will help others to be at ease as well.

We are practicing a new way to live especially through the holidays. As John Bradshaw stated, "our families are not necessarily the family of origin, but that which we create ourselves". Many of us do not have families or do not wish to spend time with the ones that we do have, therefore, we need to surround ourselves with like-minded recovering people who are safe and know what unconditional love is.

If we have to spend time with family members who drink, use or abuse, we can limit our time with them. We let the "host" know that we have other commitments and that we will spend as much time as we can. Also, we do not have to go alone. It is always best to take someone with us if we are fearful and uncertain about how to handle certain situations. We do not have to prove anything to anyone, or set ourselves up for craziness. Staying in negative situations is not recommended. Sanity and sobriety come first, it's our priority and we cannot afford to do anything that will effect that. Doubling up on meetings prior to and during the holiday months, is a good way to keep our sanity and priorities clear.

We need to remember principles such as, K.I.S.S. (keep it simple sweetheart) or Easy Does It or First Things First or To Thine Own Self Be True, when we do, life is much easier and we are less likely to stress out and place high expectations on ourselves and others. The best way to get out of self-centered fear and self-pity is to be of service. We want be of maximum service to God and others, so we volunteer at organizations and sign up to help at marathons, dinners and events.

You do not need to be alone. There are 100's of meetings, marathons, and program events for the months of November and December. If you are institutionalized you can celebrate with your comrades! This is a time for gratitude and hope. We want to find gratitude in the things that we do have, and not be regretful for things that we no longer have. If moments of despair surface we can remember that this too shall pass and press through the difficulty. We can pause and pray through difficult moments, and give thanks for our recovery. We can remind ourselves to be gracious with difficult people, and to be a blessing, and not a burden wherever we go. We trust that God has all things covered and that He knows exactly what we need.

Let's celebrate the "Gift of Life & Recovery" with our friends and loved ones. Keeping an attitude of gratitude is paramount to how we will experience the next few months, either grudgingly or happily. If we put too much emphasis on getting materials gifts, we may miss the unseen gift being shared freely from someone's heart. Staying humble and thankful will allow us to appreciate the small gifts of life. Being humble will allow us to give and receive priceless treasures, that we usually take for granted, wholeness, health, recovery and friendship. Great things grow from small beginnings. Allow your life to be a positive message of hope and recovery as you joyfully celebrate life this holiday season.



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by: Nita Vallens

Dear Dr. Nita, I'm doing well with my sobriety but struggling with work. I find myself confused about what I should be doing career wise, and I've gotten fed up with almost every job I've gotten, even when it's going well and I could potentially have a future with the company. How do I figure out my vocation, so I can live a successful and balanced life? By the way, I'm not the creative type. I don't paint, sing or have delusions of being a model. I just want to work and be me.

Janet

Dear Janet,

I'm glad your sobriety is going well, congratulations on your achievements. Thank you for writing to me about this very common dilemma, and one that can be very frustrating.

I'd like for you to pretend you are answering me in an imaginary dialogue so that you can tune in to yourself, respond to some questions, and then I will suggest some resources to help you answer questions that might really be stumping you.

First, you mention that you have had jobs where things are going well, and there might be a future, but you get "fed up" and leave. Let's delve a little deeper and see what's going on: Are you working with people or working alone on projects? Which do you prefer? Is it important for you to be liked or get along with your co-workers? Do you find that interacting with co-workers or clients can be a challenge? How do you feel about authority figures? Is it easy for you to work with the chain of command or do you like to be independent?

Before we talk about career choices, it's helpful to figure out your work style and preferences. That's why I gave you a few questions to help you see what's working, and where you might have a stumbling block. Sometimes people pretend not to care. However, being liked and accepted, and feeling comfortable in our work environment is important, and it's our responsibility to create that space. If you prefer working more independently or alone, and your job demands collaboration, it can cause you to be unhappy even if you enjoy the work you're doing. That being said, we don't always get exactly what we want, or prefer.

There was a time decades ago when people were grateful to get and keep a job, and they weren't the least bit concerned about the topics we are discussing here. Then, along came the 1980s, and many companies became concerned with "Quality of Life" in the work place, and expectations began to shift dramatically. The corporate giant I worked for back then, opened ten career centers state wide to accommodate the concerns of the worker who had become frustrated, unfulfilled or unhappy. As a result of these changes, our hopes and dreams were on the up and up and we began reading books like, "Do what you love and the money will follow," "What Color is Your Parachute" and several others.

The good news from that period is we awakened to wanting more, and something intrinsically satisfying on the job. Since you sound willing to explore what "working and just being you" looks like, I recommend that you take two different types of assessments, the Strong, and the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). The results will reveal things about you that can help you chart a new direction, as well as confirm the direction you might have been going in, yet felt unsure.

There are several assessments for career counseling and those are the two that I would suggest for you. I administer both of these, and would be happy to discuss this with you (see info below) and explain further how these would be valuable to you now and in the years to come. Here's some general information about these two tests and why I selected them:

1 - the Strong is an interest inventory - like a fantasy exercise, and is a detailed system that even suggests specific jobs for you.

2 - the MBTI looks at personality styles by looking at four specific traits that we all have, and how we use them.

Dr. Nita Vallens is a licensed Marriage Family Therapist and certified Hypnotherapist in Sherman Oaks for more info visit DrNitaVallens.com or for consultation and appointments call 818.783.6258. Dr Nita is now providing two career assessments, the Strong Interest Inventory and the MBTI personality styles assessment. Call for information! Her radio show, Inner Vision, is on Tuesdays @ 1:00 PT on KPFK Los Angeles, 90.7 FM or live stream at www.KPFK.org (FREE podcasts on the Audio Archive Link)

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WHO AM I WITHOUT ED?

Who am I without Ed? We have been together for so long that I am afraid of what my life might look like without him. What if my life is actually worse without him? Sure, things are not exactly great with him. Okay, I admit that things are horribly miserable with Ed, but at least I'm thin. I would definitely rather be thin and miserable than fat and miserable. What if being recovered just means that I'm going to gain weight and be fat and miserable?

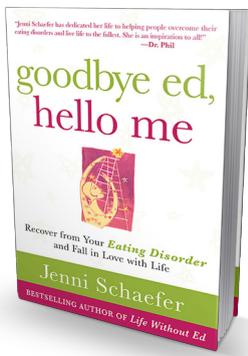
I used to have all these thoughts. I know that many of you have them too, because you have e-mailed them to me and sent me handwritten letters (yes, some people still do that). Still others have asked me these questions at presentations. At one time or another, most of us wonder if we can really make it on our own without Ed. We wonder if all this recovery mumbo jumbo is really just that – mumbo jumbo, meaningless talk. We wonder if all the pain and hard work are really worth it in the end. We wonder and we wonder, and then we wonder some more.

What I have discovered is that we can wonder all we want, as long as we are still taking steps along recovery road. We can walk and wonder at the same time. In fact, I wondered all these things all the way to that place I call recovered. For me, recovery was a big leap of faith. I held on to lots of hope. I hoped that recovered actually existed. I hoped it was a great place, but I wasn't so sure. I wondered and wondered, but I still kept walking, still had faith that life could be better. I wasn't sure until I got here. But now I'm here, fully recovered. Now I know the answers to those questions.

Yes, recovery is worth all the hard work. No, I am not just fat and miserable. In fact, I am happier than ever before, and I love my body. No, I am not as thin as I used to be, but I don't want to be. My life without Ed is so much better than my life with him that I don't even know how to express it. In my original draft, I wrote that my life is a million times better, but it is actually much better than that.

I finally know who I am without Ed, and I learn more and more about myself every day. I will never stop learning. Some of the things I have learned: I am funnier than I thought; I am more intuitive than I believed. I am more in love with life than I ever imagined possible. The list goes on and on.

If you are still in that wondering ("Who am I without Ed?") phase, you might not be able to fully grasp what I'm saying here. I know I couldn't when I was in your shoes. Like me, you will have to take that leap of faith that recovery is going to be worth it for you. Even though I've been through it, I know I cannot completely convince you right now--no one was able to convince me. But you will get there and experience it for yourself if you keep walking. Then you will know. So keep on walking and wondering. Walk and wonder all the way to freedom. *(Excerpt from: "goodbye ed, hello me")*



Jenni Schaefer is a singer/songwriter, speaker, and author of *Goodbye Ed, Hello Me*, and *Life Without Ed*, which has recently been released in audio as well as a tenth anniversary edition. She is the co-author of *Almost Anorexic: Is My (or My Loved One's) Relationship with Food a Problem?* (released by Harvard Health Publications and Hazelden). For further recovery resources as well as information about Jenni's work, visit JenniSchaefer.com. Connect with her at Facebook. [com/LifeWithoutEd](https://www.facebook.com/LifeWithoutEd) and Twitter. [com/JenniSchaefer](https://twitter.com/JenniSchaefer).



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by: Mara

ARE YOU A PERPETUAL VICTIM?

Seven Ways to Stop Speaking Victimese: There are two languages I speak fluently, English and victimese. I seriously feel victimized in L.A. traffic or when Starbucks runs out of my Strawberry Acai Refresher mix. It's a real self-centered way to live. Things don't JUST happen...they happen to ME! I'm the victim of life's ill fortunes.

I've had a black belt in victimhood since I was little. I was a victim of a violent crime as well as my share of other trauma, so being a perpetual victim became my perspective on the world, as well as my coping mechanism to survive pain and fear. Playing the victim is one of the most damaging character defects you can have, because it affects your relationships, ambitions and success. You can't move forward in life!

I've really been working hard on getting rid of my victim mentality since getting sober 10 years ago, and although I've improved greatly, there is still a little ways to go. I discovered that I had some work to do when this woman came into my life that mirrored who I was. She is the epitome of a victim and it got under my skin so badly, so much so, that I planned to move to Iceland to get away from her (true story).

She loved getting attention for her childhood trauma story, she never took responsibility for her life, she needed constant validation from others to feel good about herself, and everyone was to blame but her for anything that went wrong. Things were always going wrong with her so much so, that she was in a constant state of dramatic distress.

But as we say in the recovery, "if you spot it, you got it." Another thing we say in recovery is "that if your reaction to a situation is hysterical (over the top), then there is something historical (ones past) that you need to look at." My reaction to her victim mentality was a bit much. I literally couldn't talk or even make eye contact with her. It was obvious that I had to once and for all annihilate this victim mentality.

So, I brought out the big guns and asked my husband, who is a life coach, for his top seven ways to get out of playing the victim:

1. Write a goodbye letter to your victim mentality. That's right; write an old fashioned break up letter. You know, like the one you wrote your high school boyfriend who cheated on you right before prom? Okay maybe that's my story but you get the idea. Tell you're inner victim to hit the road.

2. Practice Gratitude – One easy way to get out of self-pity and playing the victim, is to change your perspective like you would change a pair of undies. The victim mentality is all about lack, while gratitude is all about abundance. Look at what you do have rather than what you don't.

3. Blessings – Struggles, challenges or perceived set backs are all just blessings in disguise. Pain is the touchstone of all growth. Instead of being victimized by the struggles, look for the hidden opportunities and lessons.

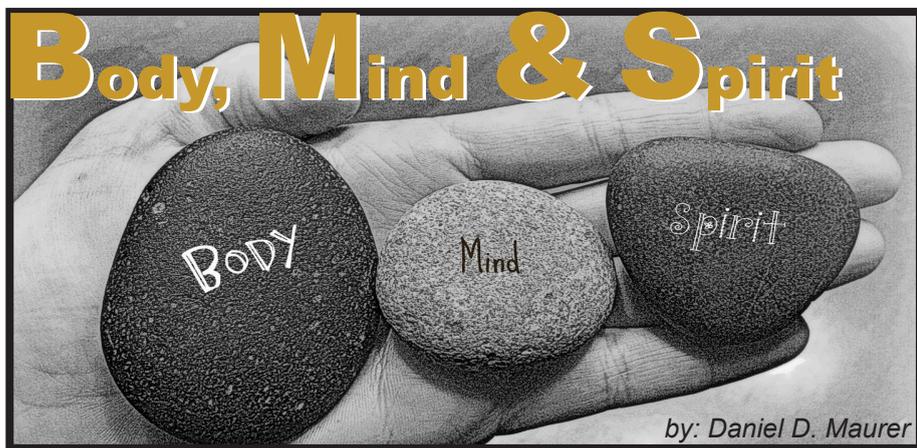
4. Forgiveness – Not forgiving someone or holding on to resentment is like drinking poison, and expecting the other person to die. Forgive others for the wrongs committed against you. You can drop that heavy victim cloak of resentment at the feet of your higher power, and you will be light as a feather afterwards.

5. Service – Often victims are self-centered people focused on their pain and their struggles. The fastest and easiest way to get out of that is to be of service to someone else. Go volunteer at a homeless shelter or for foster kids. Whatever will get you out of yourself to see how great you have it.

6. Live in the Present – There are two places that I like to live... the past and the future. If I'm in the past, I'm in regret and if I'm in the future I'm in fear and anxiety. The present is where it's at! Victims tend to live in the past going over and over the trauma in their heads, so they won't be victims in the future. They're missing out on the beauty, which is the right now.

7. Stand up for Yourself – Know Your Worth – You have a voice, use it. If something is bothering you or there are people being less than kind to you then say something. Really work on your self worth. To quote my girl, Lady Gaga, "I'm beautiful in my way, 'Cause God makes no mistakes... Don't hide yourself in regret... Just love yourself and you're set."

Mara Visit my blog:<http://selfworthdiet.com>. Read "Junky American Princess" on Wattpad<http://www.wattpad.com/myworks>. Evans' (my husbands) website soulsystemscoaching.com.



by: Daniel D. Maurer

RESENTMENTS - THE HYDROCHLORIC ACID OF THE SOUL

"It is plain that a life which includes deep resentment leads only to futility and unhappiness. To the precise extent that we permit these, do we squander the hours that might have been worthwhile. But with the alcoholic, whose hope is the maintenance and growth of a spiritual experience, this business of harboring resentment is infinitely grave. For then we shut ourselves off from the sunlight of the spirit" – Bill W. in As Bill Sees It

I'm a person who is easily pissed off. There... I said it. And it's true. Let me give you an example. Just yesterday, I got a call from a friend. He's a guy I don't see much. He said, "Hey Dan! What are you doing tonight?" I didn't have anything planned, and his question piqued my interest: "Nuttin' much. Why?"

"Wondered if you wanted to go catch a Timberwolves game with me."

"Wow. Really!?" I'm not a huge fan of basketball and I don't keep track of the NBA at all. Still, that he thought of me to do this with him was really kind. When I went to the game that evening I actually enjoyed it. It was great to catch up with him too.

My problem wasn't seeing him, or watching the game in Minneapolis (the Wolves lost, by the way), my problem was something that happened right before the game.

I decided to take the light rail from St. Paul into Minneapolis and get a bite to eat before I met my buddy. I figured that there would be plenty of places around where I could grab something quick. When I got off the train at the Warehouse District station, I could see there were already people mulling about. The Target Center is only a block away and I looked up and down the street to see if I could find a fast food joint. But there were only bars. Lots and lots of sports bars.

I suppose I could have whipped out my handy iPhone to find an alternative, but there were so many people and I didn't want to look like an idiot. So I walked.

No Burger Kings. No McDonalds. Just coffee joints and bars. I finally settled on one that had "& restaurant" tagged to its name as an afterthought "Oh yeah, we have FOOD too."

As I entered, I could see that it was packed. Most, if not all, the tables were already taken. But there were spots free, up at the bar itself. After having been a waiter for two summers while I was in college, I know that the bar servers generally get the food to you quicker anyway. I figured, what the hell. I'm not drinking. What harm is there in it?

I pulled up a barstool and a clean-cut guy in his mid-twenties looked up from washing beer mugs. He threw a paper coaster with some brand of beer stamped on it atop the gnarled wood counter and said, "What can I get for you?"

"I just want a quick burger. I'm going to the game. Any suggestions?" He replied with a few of the options I had and asked if I wanted to instead see the menu. I told him no, that I just wanted a simple burger and fries.

"Sounds great! What can I get you to drink?" The thought to go ahead and order a beer, I admit, did cross my mind. I mean, no one would know, right? That's a fairly common thought with me and I know how to deal with it. No, I'd have my favorite drink instead.

"Half tonic water, half cranberry juice with a twist of lime, please. No alcohol!" (I make a point of saying no alcohol. Firmly too. One time I ordered without specifying and my drink came back with vodka in it. I didn't drink it, but boy was I mad.)

"Ooooookay," he said.

I saw him punch in my order at the register and several other customers sat down, up at the bar. And then it happened. He proceeded to take their drink orders (all alcohol) and serve them first! I waited patiently. After fifteen minutes I had my burger in front of me. Still no non-alcohol drink. "Hey. Did you forget my drink?" I asked. I saw that he was busy filling orders for the other servers.

"No. I got it on the bill," he said as he hustled over to another server who placed an order with him. He assumed I was asking whether or not he included the drink on my tab.

"Hey! I never got my drink!" I yelled across the bar. A few of the patrons turned their heads to see what a**hole had a few too many and was getting rambunctious.

He looked at me. Then he looked at my place setting and, without apologizing, quickly mixed up my bitter, tee-totaling concoction (it has a name, by the way: "The Saint Paul Summer"—my own creation, thank you very much) and placed the glass next to my plate. Then I heard him apologize under his breath as he turned to fill more orders.

I was seething. I actually contemplated standing up and leaving. I imagined I saw myself walking to the hostess at the door and informing her that the restaurant had committed a grave sin in hiring the jacka** behind the bar. I mean...come on!!!

But something kicked in. It's a habit I've created with myself. Instead of reacting, I paused. It's funny that such a simple action allows my prefrontal cortex of my brain (the part that controls higher reasoning) to catch up with my animal side.

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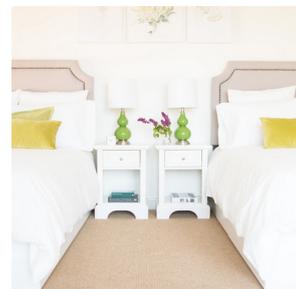
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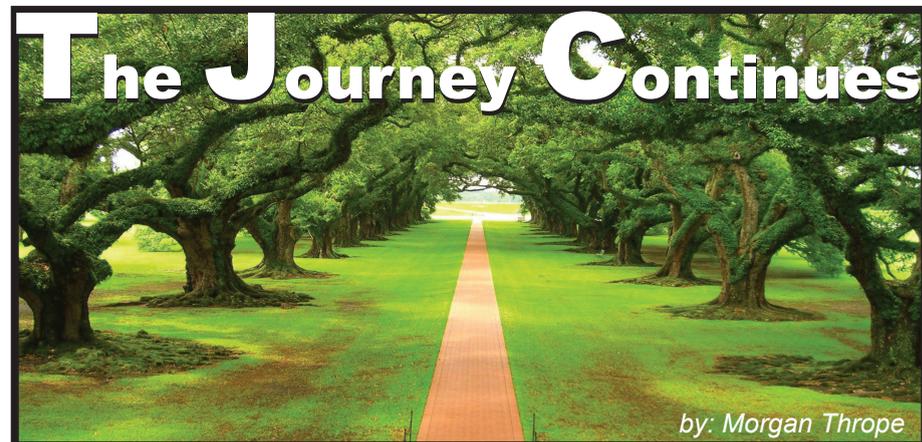
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by: Morgan Thorpe

WHAT ADVICE I WOULD HAVE GIVEN MYSELF

Find your passion and go for it. Don't let anyone or anything keep you from reaching your goal. There are many roads to choose from, some are longer than others, always choose the scenic route. Every new person you meet knows something you do not, so learn how to listen. An old homeless man told me when I was young, that if I don't get what I want in life, I have no one to blame, but myself. It is some of the best advice I was ever given.

Give freely of what you find, this does not only mean material possessions. If you are happy, smile, if you have climbed a mountain, bring up others so they too can enjoy the view. Always remember, that if you can laugh at it, you can live with it. Times will be tough, no doubt, and when the world says, "Give Up," Hope whispers, "Try it one more time." Never, ever, ever give up. There is always another day, another sunrise, there is always hope. You must believe that no matter what. God will always do for you what you cannot do for yourself. He may not always take away the pain, but pain is often a promise of progress.

Hold onto your purpose at all costs. Be prepared to walk through fire to keep your integrity. It goes a long way. You were meant to shine. Keep away from people, places and things that will drain your light, that will steal your soul, that will take your serenity. Never be afraid to walk away, or turn around if you walked down the wrong path. It takes more courage to turn around and admit your faults, than eventually come face to face with a mistake. The more mistakes you make, the easier it becomes to do the wrong thing. If you need help, ask. You won't get help unless you ask. And this includes asking God for help.

I once read that God is a gentleman, he will not go anywhere unless he is invited. And when others ask you for help always do what you can within your means. The best way to get rid of negative thoughts, is to stop thinking about yourself and think about how you can help others. The more you give, the wealthier you become. Walk. Pray. Listen. Remember, God will always be there. He will always guide you, He will always answer your every prayer, however, sometimes the answer is no, and that may be the greatest gift of all.

Be prepared to be amazed at just how beautiful the world really is, drive through the Smoky mountains in the first week of October, travel the roads of Ireland, you will see colors you never knew existed. Take a look around, it is a wonderful world, always full of a plethora of possibilities. When your spirit is right you can find happiness in simply looking up at the sky.

Keep your promises as best you can, especially to your friends and family. Your parents love you unconditionally. They may not always be able to show it in their words; however, you must remember that 93% of all communication is NON verbal. Your family loves you no matter what. In the end, they are the only ones who can explain you.

Love deeply. Never be afraid to say I love you, it may be the last words someone hears. However, love completely, love does not pick and choose which parts to keep and which parts to throw away. If you love, love with all your heart. Do not be afraid that love won't last, you will be much better for remembering the smiles it brought rather than the tears it took.

Don't worry about money, the more you worry about it, the less you will have. Never lean on others financially. Get a college degree, or even two, become the smartest person you possibly can. Education is priceless.

Do not be afraid of what other's think of you. Do not let them rent space in your head. What others think of you is none of your business. You cannot control people, places or things. The only thing you can control is yourself. Abraham Lincoln once said, "Most folks don't realize they are about as happy as they make up their minds to be." Make up your mind to be the most positive, enthusiastic person you can.

Learn to leave gracefully, learn to say a good farewell. In this life you will experience loss...loss of a job, loss of a home, loss of a loved one, loss of a life once lived, loss of a dream once shared. You will say more goodbyes than hellos, and that is okay. You are okay. You will be just fine. I promise. Hold your head up because in the end, it will be worth every misstep, every lesson, every wrong turn, because one day you too will be able to share your story... and the advice you would have given along the way.

Morgan Thorpe is a Marketing Manager and a freelance writer who lives in Canoga Park, CA. She has her BA in Communications and she enjoys writing inspirational articles that focus on hope. Morgan is also a Breast Cancer survivor, having been diagnosed at the tender age of 23. Her unwavering goals include publishing a book, getting her pilot's license and continuing to share her experience, strength and hope to those in the recovery community. You can reach Morgan Thorpe at 818-657-9031 or Email: morgan.thorpe1978@gmail.com

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HEALING PARTNER TRAUMA

Being born is traumatic. Being an addict is traumatic. Being alive is traumatic! But being in a Recovering Relationship can help to repair those traumas.

Healing trauma is a process of alchemy. Like turning dross into gold, that open, painful gash of trauma can mystically turn into a small, painless scar. When couples practice the spiritual principles of kindness, compassion and forgiveness, they develop a loving environment that deepens and maintains that transformation. For couples in recovery, the 12-Steps provides the map.

In Step 1, couples are reminded that the principle of surrender, once vital to their sobriety, is also vital in coping with trauma. They must accept the reality that they lacked the power to heal the trauma, and the damage it caused to the relationship. Couples also identify how this belief made their lives unmanageable.

In Step 2, couples "Come to believe" that something greater than themselves has the power to heal. One of the first Higher Powers should be a licensed trauma and couple specialist. This work is dense and volatile. I also highly recommend a good dose of Al-Anon, where partners learn to focus on self-care vs fixing the traumatized partner.

In Step 3, a decision is made to turn these problems over to the care of even bigger shoulders. Attendance at an in-patient trauma facility may be necessary. Partners should continue attending their 12-Step meetings and keep working Steps 4-9 with sponsors. That is because the jarring effect of trauma eats away at the threads that connect partners, ripping them away from each other and their true selves.

Trauma symptoms are present day reactions to historic, life-threatening events. Most people move through their trauma in 3-6 months. But a few retain the experience, putting them at risk for retriggering the trauma. Reactions include: recurrent and intrusive memories; distressing dreams and sleep disturbances; unexplained anger; physical and emotional flashbacks; an inability to control distressing emotions; and destructive behaviors. Trauma devastates the body just as the addiction did, changing brain structure and chemistry, altering body chemistry and harming the metabolic and nervous systems.

As trauma is held in the body, it is vital to first attend to the physical changes occurring when the partner is triggered. Couples can use simple exercises that will calm their partner within 15-30 seconds by adding oxygen to the body. This lowers the heart rate, slowing down the release of the fight, flight, or freeze hormones- cortisol and adrenalin. The body calms and the partner safely returns to their pre-triggered state. Partners should initially avoid using touch, holding or physically calming their loved one unless invited, as this may trigger an earlier assault memory. Partners verbally soothe their loved one by speaking slowly in gentle and even tones and asking the loved one to:

1. Slow their breath by inhaling for a count of 4, holding for a count 8 and blowing out of the mouth for a count of 12, and then asking what changes they notice in the body.
2. Describe the 5 senses (smell, taste, hearing, touch and sight) of the place they are in at the moment and notice if there are any changes in the body.
3. Describe the 5 senses of their favorite place, person or event that makes them feel joy and notice the shift in their bodies.
4. Name the furthest object in the room and keep naming objects as their gaze moves towards their bodies. The gaze ends at their hands where they describe the condition of their fingernails.

These exercises may have to be repeated until the partner is comforted. I also recommend downloading the Trauma Resource Institute's iChillapp.com, which offers even more calming techniques.

Due to the destructive power of trauma, it is vital to keep the Step 4 character defects of Pride and Fear in check. Pride raises its ugly head when partners feel they did not deserve a damaged partner. Recovering Couples Anonymous reminds us that, "Problems emerge when we control, shame, limit or abandon our partner because they have a threatening strength or disappointing liability." Pride also develops in the traumatized partner as they resent their partner for not fixing, or stopping their inner pain.

Fears of abandonment or rejection produce shame in the traumatized partner if blamed for letting the trauma happen, or not fighting back. The other partner becomes angry about their impotency to protect their loved one and punish the perpetrator. However, Step 4 inventories must also include positive qualities such as what is good in the relationship, what is good about each other and how each believes the trauma will make them better partners.

In the 5th Step, it is crucial that the traumatized partner initially not share all the dark details of their trauma story, as their other may be too overwhelmed to offer helpful and compassionate responses. In Steps 6 and 7, the couple identifies what defects need to be lifted and Steps 8 and 9 allow them to make amends for their hurtful actions, which resulted from the trauma. Step 10's "restraint of pen and tongue" reminds partners to never share without rehearsing and receiving approval from all their HPs i.e., sponsors, therapists, God, and writing pads! And Step 11 heals through praying together for each other and the couple.

The goal for Recovering Couples is to use their 12-Step principles to create a bond of empathy and love that unites them against the trauma, not the traumatized partner, or even the perpetrator. As the great linguist, Na'ama Yehudi writes, "Trauma ruptures and hollows. Compassion mends and fills. Love heals."

Melody J. Anderson, LCSW practices in Westwood & Manhattan. A graduate from The Ackerman Family Institute, she specializes in treating couples and families. Ms. Anderson is a Certified Trauma Specialist. She is also a licensed Reverend, providing pre-marital counseling to recovering couples and presiding over recovery wedding ceremonies. www.counselingbymelody.com (310) 285-9410.



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RUDOLF THE REINDEER A MESSAGE OF HOPE WAS RUDOLF AN ALCOHOLIC?

by: Reverend Leo Booth

Was Rudolf an alcoholic? I realize this is a silly question because everybody knows that Rudolf did not exist. If he did not exist then he could not be alcoholic. This I know. However, playing along with the Christmas song, I think it might be helpful to consider some aspects of the story.

Firstly, he had a shiny nose and it glowed. I've met many alcoholics who had red noses...indeed even in recovery they maintain the red nose look. But I've also met many more alcoholics who had normal noses...assuming we can define what a normal nose looks like!

The plot begins to thicken when we hear that all of the other reindeers used to laugh and call him names. Hmmm. Again, we are not told what they called him.

"Hey, lamp face, Schnoz, Fireball." – "Tomato face." And, of course, for those who were not imaginative: "Big nose."

But they didn't just call him names they wouldn't let him play in any reindeer games. He was isolated. They didn't like him. And he was obviously very lonely.

I think I know how he felt. Before I got sober people called me names. – "The drunken priest." – "A waster, in robes." – "Lush."

And they didn't want me in their company. Certainly, the experience of my alcoholism fits this part of the Rudolf story.

And let's remember that hurtful names create shame. That feeling that we are not good enough. Damaged goods. Unworthy. Dirty. Shame creates that self-torture that prevents us ever being able to love and accept who we are.

Then something happened. Remember: What it was like. What happened. And what it is like now. Rudolf received an intervention from none other than Santa himself.

"Rudolf with your nose so bright, won't you guide my sleigh tonight?" Change. Do something different. Take what you thought was a deficit and make it into an asset.

I wonder how many alcoholics, when they got sober, used the "ism" of their alcoholism in a positive way. Developing and affirming their creative personalities. Disciplining their compulsive behavior in a productive way. Searching for a different "spirit".

I know the Rudolf story is fiction, but it has some telling messages for the alcoholic. What we are not told about in the story is how quickly Rudolf responded to Santa's request. Personally, I doubt if he immediately walked to the front of the reindeer team. He had to think about it. Ponder the implications of "standing up" and proclaiming his difference.

"My name is Leo. And I am an alcoholic."

If I'm right, it took Rudolf some time to face his fears and challenge those who had ridiculed him for many years. In short, I doubt that he got the message from Santa on first hearing.

I know many alcoholics who don't get it, the first time. But the Rudolf story brings hope. He did eventually get it. He grew in self esteem. He used his difference in service. Wow. What an important recovery message.

"Then all the reindeers loved him, and they shouted out with glee, Rudolf the red nosed reindeer, you'll go down in history".

Now Rudolf is loved and accepted; more, he was acclaimed. He would go down in history. Somebody who was special. But what about you? You are reading this column, but what are you thinking about?

• A crazy relationship that is hurting your recovery?

- How to use prescribed drugs for a sickness?
- Your sober but without a job?
- Realizing that you have physical sobriety, but are spiritually empty?

What are you thinking about? Because you, I suspect, are also like Rudolf. Have you heard that you are special?

This is my message to friends and church people today. Recovery involves confidence. It can affirm a belief in God, but also a belief in ourselves. It is not only about not drinking, but realizing our uniqueness. Discovering that emotional sobriety that Bill Wilson wrote about in AA Grapevine (1958): "Then we can be free to live and love; we may then be able to Twelve Step ourselves and others into emotional sobriety."

Back to Santa's message: Go to the front. Believe in yourself. Let your light shine. What you thought was so shaming will take you to glory.

And that is the message at this holiday season. We are special. And this is certainly true for the alcoholics who are in recovery.

We may not become famous in the eyes of the nation or the world, but to many of our families, friends and colleagues, we truly are wonderful. And an example of change.

Was Rudolf an alcoholic? If we allow ourselves to be poetic for a few minutes, I think we can see in the story, the connection to our recovery. The stigma. The fear. The ridicule. And then the progressive transformation. Now I understand why so many people love the Rudolf song. Occasionally I've been known to get the recovery group to sing it before I tell my story...and they always sing it with gusto. It's as if they know they are singing about themselves.

I see the smiles. I see the tears. But always I hear the hope in all the voices coming together.

I suppose that is the main message that we receive this month in all the holiday festivities: Hope.

Since I have become a Unity minister I've been really aware of the belief that "wherever I am, God is...and all is well". My hope is based on the possible; people do change, they do get sober; healing is real.

As we already discussed, Rudolf made a decision to use his apparent defect and bring it into service. One alcoholic taking time to share with another alcoholic. Shared suffering brings healing, one day at a time.

Spiritually I want to take this time to wish you all a blessed "holiday" and regardless of where you are on your spiritual journey, know that you are special.

Leo Booth, a former Episcopal priest is today a Unity minister. He is also a recovering alcoholic. Spiritual advisor for New Found Life – in Long Beach, California For more information about Leo Booth and his speaking engagements visit www.fatherleo.com or email him at fatherleo@fatherleo.com. You can also connect with him on facebook: Reverend Leo Booth.



The True Story Behind

RUDOLPH THE RED-NOSED REINDEER

We think this is mostly true, there were a few different versions of this basic story.

A guy named Bob May, depressed and brokenhearted, stared out his drafty apartment window into the chilling December night. His 4-year-old daughter Barbara sat on his lap quietly sobbing.

Bob's wife, Evelyn, was dying of cancer. Little Barbara couldn't understand why her mommy could never come home. Barbara looked up into her dad's eyes and asked, "Why isn't Mommy just like everybody else's Mommy?"

Bob's jaw tightened and his eyes welled with tears. Her question brought waves of grief, but also of anger. It had been the story of Bob's life. Life always had to be different for Bob. Small when he was a kid, Bob was often bullied by other boys. He was too little at the time to compete in sports. He was often called names he'd rather not remember. From childhood, Bob was different and never seemed to fit in.

Bob did complete college, married his loving wife and was grateful to get his job as a copywriter at Montgomery Ward during the Great Depression.

Then he was blessed with his little girl. But it was all short-lived. Evelyn's bout with cancer stripped them of all their savings, and now Bob and his daughter were forced to live in a two-room apartment in the Chicago slums.

Evelyn died just days before Christmas in 1938. Bob struggled to give hope to his child, for whom he couldn't even afford to buy a Christmas gift. But if he couldn't buy a gift, he was determined to make one - a storybook! Bob had created an animal character in his own mind, and told the animals story to little Barbara to give her comfort and hope.

Again and again Bob told the story, embellishing it more with each telling. Who was the character? What was the story all about? The story Bob May created was his own autobiography in fable form. The character he created was a misfit outcast like he was. The name of the character? A little reindeer named Rudolph, with a big shiny nose.

Bob finished the book just in time to give it to his little girl on Christmas Day. But the story doesn't end there. The general manager of Montgomery Ward caught wind of the little storybook, and offered Bob May a nominal fee to purchase the rights to print the book. Wards went on to print, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer and distribute it to children visiting Santa Claus in their stores. By 1946 Wards had printed and distributed more than six million copies of Rudolph. That same year, a major publisher wanted to purchase the rights from Wards to print an updated version of the book. In an unprecedented gesture of kindness, the CEO of Wards returned all rights back to Bob May. The book became a best seller. Many toy and marketing deals followed and Bob May, now remarried with a growing family, became wealthy from the story he created to comfort his grieving daughter.

But the story doesn't end there either. Bob's brother-in-law, Johnny Marks, made a song adaptation to Rudolph. Though the song was turned down by such popular vocalists as Bing Crosby and Dinah Shore, it was recorded by the singing cowboy, Gene Autry. "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" was released in 1949 and became a phenomenal success, selling more records than any other Christmas song, with the exception of "White Christmas." The gift of love that Bob May created for his daughter so long ago, kept on returning back to bless him again and again. And Bob May learned the lesson, just like his dear friend Rudolph, that being different isn't so bad. In fact, being different can be a blessing.

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Book Reviews

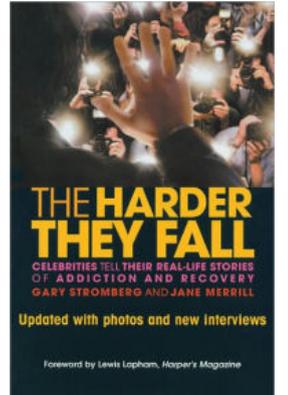


The Harder They Fall: Celebrities Tell Their Real-Life Stories of Addiction and Recovery: by Gary Stromberg & Jane Merrill. Published by Hazelden. Now available in paperback with updated photos and additional interviews.

The interviewer - legendary Los Angeles publicist, Gary Stromberg, gives readers an up-close look at fame and addiction, as told by the stars themselves. Some of the celebrities include: comedian Richard Lewis; musicians Alice Cooper, Steven Tyler, Grace Slick, Dr. John, and Chuck Negron (Three Dog Night); actors Malcolm McDowell and Mariette Hartley; Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Franz Wright; writer Anne Lamott; and athletes Doc Ellis and Gerry Cooney.

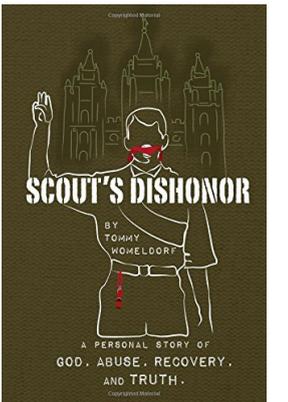
Stromberg helps reveal the intimate thoughts, feelings, regrets, and beliefs of celebrities in recovery.

These interviews tell how celebrities who had everything - and watched as addiction devoured everything - until they had nothing at all. Gary tells in compassionate detail, how each fell and more important how they found the courage to ask for help. These are inspiring stories of lives rebuilt - one day at a time - the joy of finding a way of life more rewarding than fame and fortune. A must read! This would be a great present Available at Amazon.com and Hazelden.org.



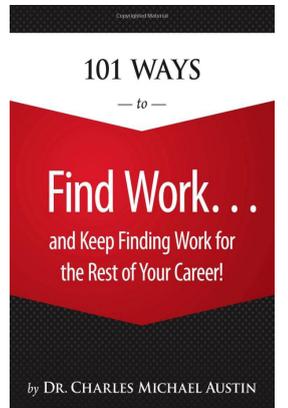
Scouts Dishonor: A personal story of God, Abuse, Recovery and Truth: by Tommy Womeldorf. Useful Publishing.

Tommy Womeldorf's personal story of sexual abuse and the devastating effects it had over his life is extremely raw and candid. Through a series of very personal anecdotes, Tommy opens up about his struggle with alcohol, drugs that expands over decades to cover up all the pain. In this book Womeldorf illustrates the ongoing nightmare of the effects of sexual abuse and addiction. But this book offers hope. We do recover thru healing and forgiveness. Tommy's battle with the church and the Boy scouts gave him a voice and some healing. Through his journey and his ability to tackle his demons and get sober. He has been inspired to create change in the world and within himself. Available at Amazon.com and Barnesandnoble.com



101 Ways to Find Work... and Keep Finding Work for the Rest of Your Career! Written by Dr. Charles Michael Austin B.A. M.A. Published by Cengage Learning.

Because of the vast difference in the job market of today from the one our parents and grandparents knew, the need arose for a truly keen mind that explains specifically how through a common sense, practical approach, success in the 21st century work world can be achieved. This inspiring book thoroughly explains in detail about "Critical Thinking and Action", understanding Short-Term Thinking, Networking, Building a Relationship, having an Objective regarding Resumes and Cover Letters, and so much more to help assure that you continue to get the work that you desire throughout your career. Dr. Austin is a career-development specialist with an amazing accumulation of knowledge, being a graduate of several prestigious institutions equipped him for an outstanding career, which covers 17 years of teaching business and communication courses at some of Southern California's higher learning institutions, including Loyola Marymount University, Chapman University, and Philips Graduate Institute to name a few. This book is a must for those who are navigating through the evolving career culture of today, wanting a clear cut formula for success. Available at Amazon.com and Cengage.com.



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POWERLESS OVER THE HOLIDAY SEASON?

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference. How many times have you said the serenity prayer while you tried to navigate/survive the holiday season? We practice the twelve steps in all our affairs, so why should the holidays be any different? Here are some suggestions to keeping sane during the holiday season as inspired by the twelve steps, and the program of alcoholics anonymous.

1. Admit that you are powerless over the holiday season. The holiday season with its stressors, expectations and temptations can be overwhelming and trigger feelings of unmanageability. Recognizing this fact is the first step to recovery.

2. Believe in a power greater than yourself. Now is a great time to recharge and renew your commitment to your higher power, and your spirituality. Revisit your routine of prayer and meditation. Treat yourself to a meditation retreat or class, a new meditation cd or book of prayers. Revamp your 11th step routine and renew your conscious contact with HP!

3. Make the decision to turn your will, AND the holidays over to God. Stop trying to control everything with regard to the holidays. Have faith that HP's got this! Everything is as it should be.

4. Acceptance is the answer. Accepting people, places and things as they are instead of how we want them to be, helps us stay out of resentment. When visiting with family and friends staying out of expectation allows us to be present, and open to seeing things unfold in miraculous ways.

5. Practice self-care. Do what you can handle and leave the rest. Give yourself permission to say "No". If getting to that party, making the office party goodies or hunting down the "perfect gift" is just too much, don't punish yourself with guilt. There is more than one way to get something done, and knowing that you cannot always do it alone is excellent self-awareness.

6. Don't isolate. You are not alone!— if self care means giving yourself permission not to join the party, be careful not to isolate. Heightened awareness of old behavior brought on by stress is key. Isolating is just one form of old behavior. Meetings, phone lists, online meetings and phone meetings are all useful ways of beating the desire to isolate. Join a fellowship or reconnect with those you haven't seen for a while. And, don't forget to stay connected with your sponsor and sponsees.

7. Stay away from slippery places. If money or credit is your drug make a spending plan and stick to it. Have a PRG around Christmas shopping. If you are in a food program, have a plan for social situations in which sugary and fatty foods are plentiful. If your program is for alcohol or substances stick with the winners and attend a sober dance. If you must go into slippery territory, keep your fellows on speed dial and have an exit plan.

8. Be of Service. Being of service takes us out of ourselves and our own problems. Make a living amends by donating time, money or goods to a program affiliated with a cause that is right for you. Being of service in any capacity is a great way to meet others, and feel a part of. But don't forget, we can all be of service in just about every part of our lives. Is there someone around you that could use a hand? Remind yourself to be of service every day; be more patient, listen to others or just give someone a smile

9. Carry the Message. Reach out to a newcomer. Volunteer at a sober event. Speak on a panel at a hospital or institution. Look after your sponsees, check in on other's having a problem with the holidays. Help someone else by making your own outreach call.

10. Practice an Attitude of Gratitude. Having an attitude of gratitude is not one of the Twelve Steps, but remembering what is good in our lives can keep us positive, or even shift us from the negative to the positive. Make a gratitude list and share it with others. You'll be surprised at how uplifted you will be by the responses you get!

Lawren C. is a recovered alcoholic and recovery coach. Contact her at myserenitycoach.com.

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DECEMBER 5TH & DECEMBER 19TH 2015 - Oasis Women's Recovery Community is having a HUGE Christmas Boutique to help raise funds for the non-profit house on Sat. Dec. 5th & Sat. Dec. 19th -9:00 am-3:00 pm. New merchandise for all ages, amazing deals at 50% off retail. 13832 Polk St, Sylmar, CA 91342 (818) 362-0986

SATURDAY DECEMBER 5TH, 2015 - Comedy Show - Sat. 10 pm - 11:30 pm - The Spirit of Studio 12 - 6006 Laurel Canyon Blvd. North Hollywood, 91601 - Ticket are \$5.00 For more info. and ticket sales contact David Z. 818 566 1442 or Will W. 818 915 0534.

SATURDAY DECEMBER 5TH, 2015- Annual Pajama Jam-Saturday. Meeting 8pm -9pm. Dance-9:30-1 am -Santa Barbara Alano Club-235 East Cota st.Santa Barbara, 93101. Hosted by SBYPAA

SUNDAY DECEMBER 6TH,2015 -3rd Annual Literature Workshop- Sunday. 1130am-4pm.- Simi Valley Senior Center, 3900 Avenida Simi, Simi Valley, 93063-Questions: Matt 805-886-1904.

FRIDAY DECEMBER 11TH, 2015 -Culver City Studio Group Annual Holiday Party - Friday. 8pm- 1 hour speaker meeting, potluck, and raffle.-Grace Lutheran Church. 4427 Overland ave, Culver City- for more info. call Rich P. 818-522-3329

SATURDAY DECEMBER 12TH, 2015- The Ugly Sweater Party- Saturday. 8pm- Speaker, Dance to follow with DJ-K-Love. Ugly Sweater Contest. - Windsor Club 123 W. Windsor rd, Glendale, 91204-\$10 Suggested Donation-Free entry when you pre reg. for ACY-PAA or SOCALYPAA.

SATURDAY DECEMBER 19TH, 2015 - Windsor Club Clean & Sober HOLIDAY DANCE PARTY: 9:45pm-1:30am with DJ Nicole OLD SCHOOL & new music, \$7 at the door. - 123 West Windsor Rd, Glendale California 91204. 818-242-1350

THURSDAY DECEMBER 31ST, 2015 : NEW YEARS EVE: SCPVCA Convention Committee Presents... Red Carpet Formal NEW YEARS EVE DINNER & DANCE (Dress Your Best) Dance Contest * Raffle Prizes * Fun. Dinner & Dance \$25 Dance Only \$10 Thur. Dec. 31st, 2015. Doors Open 6:30 pm / Dinner 7 pm / Dance 9 pm. Westminster Presbyterian Church. 1757 Lake Ave, Pasadena, CA 91104. Contact: Allison 818-319-5785

UPCOMING EVENTS:
SUNDAY JANUARY 10TH, 2016: Area 93 District 11 presents a Sponsorship Workshop. 1-3pm at The Windsor Club 123 W. Windsor Rd. in Glendale. Free event, coffee and refreshments provided. Panelists and question & answer format. Call Dave L. for information 818-572-5086.

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



FORTIFYING AGAINST RELAPSES

Relapse in recovery is common. It happens in stages, often beginning with unresolved issues that lead to uncontrollable negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, fear, and resentments that are still deeply rooted in the subconscious mind. Temptations often emerge out of nowhere; unforeseen pressures, psychological and circumstantial, may build progressively and then unexpectedly combine to drive the person over the edge. Having lost tremendous functional strength, especially if it drops below 50%, becomes critical causing the person to overreact first without thinking (impulsiveness and lack of control) as opposed to thinking first and then taking the appropriate action or response (discipline and spontaneity). When living a life through an addictive unhealthy lifestyle, he or she is unable to think reasonably and may make unhealthy decisions, potentially leading to a relapse. In this article, we will address two common triggers to relapse, which are relationships and stress.

Relationships: A foundational concept to acknowledge before going on, is that all relationships begin with the relationship with ourselves and our own ability to love and forgive ourselves first, then forgive others and let go of resentments and regrets. Resentment is considered one main offender when it comes to relapse. Since the addict's emotional growth was stunted when the active addiction started, they face many challenges for healthy relationships. Some factors may include fear of rejection, abandonment, noise, failure, intimacy, and poor self-esteem. Constant rumination between thoughts and feelings leads to indecision and vulnerability to relapse, if no positive action is taken.

The most commonly adopted methods to address this phenomenon in recovery, are based on intellectual knowledge through the medium of workshops, support groups, therapy etc. Those methods are valuable, however much emphasis is placed on the social, psychological and emotional causes of the problem via intellectual data, while little attention is placed on grounding the information into the physical body, (brain to muscle connection), where the information is housed. When it is all said and done, at the end of the day, the fact remains that addicts and alcoholics, are by nature uncomfortable in their own skin; always seeking to escape that feeling of being present and lacking the desire, and ability to be grounded. This results in the inability to set healthy boundaries, which is a key factor in relapse.

Every action creates a reaction and every motion creates an emotion. Strength training is a specific action step that can be taken immediately to provide instant functional strength increase, and begin to change one's desire and habits to a positive lifestyle change. It provides an avenue to create new healthy relationships with health-focused individuals. When you start feeling better in your own skin, you will automatically begin to make new relationships to support your newfound self-esteem and lifestyle.

Stress: The relationship between stress and addictions has long been established. Acute stress can lead to drug abuse in vulnerable individuals, and increase the risk of relapse in recovering addicts. Stress response hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol are released via the sympathetic nervous system. The heart rate increases, causing blood vessels to constrict and blood pressure to increase as a result of the fight and flight response. The recovering individual might be more susceptible to stress, due to the way that alcohol and drug abuse has changed brain chemistry. This may also explain why some individuals relapse in response to situations that would only be considered mildly stressful by others. Long-term, fulfilling sobriety happens by attaining emotional sobriety, which requires the ability to remain calm and centered under stress and to make healthy choices. Recovery houses and treatment centers incorporate stress management courses, and other interventions or modalities aimed at helping addicts more successfully manage their stress by focusing on social support, problem solving and coping skills. Remember the acronym H.A.L.T. – avoid getting too hungry, angry, lonely and tired is recommended. This might be easier said than done, especially for the individual who has lost tremendous functional strength and is on overload emotionally.

So creating new habits and behavior patterns to strengthen the nervous system and relieve stress is essential.

When done properly, strength training allows you to create such new habits and behavior patterns in a methodical way. It is a safe sport that provides fast and measurable results, and an instant sense of well being, by quieting the mind. Added benefits: exercise becomes a fun activity rather than one more thing on the to-do list, giving you more free time to an over-extended schedule.

Fast becoming the number 1 anti-aging sport because of its amazing overall health benefits, strength training is a powerful exercise modality with superior ability to rebuild the alcoholic brain, by increasing neurogenesis, allowing you to become more balanced physically and emotionally, as it stimulates the release of endorphins and neurotransmitters that help to relieve stress response and fight against depression. It serves as a form of meditation that takes the mind off stress factors. It offers an avenue to blow off steam so to speak. It also allows a safe place to let go of negativity, and distance yourself from undesired situations; Men and women who have grown up believing that they are victims of everything from their mothers to the foods, and the drinks they consume begin to experience a new sense of self-confidence and self-respect, feeling powerful, competent and capable of taking charge of their bodies and their lives.

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by: Daniel D. Maurer

The animal, lizard brain only knows fear, sex, hunger and how to fight. Alcohol and drugs fed this side of me four years ago (and a day). Today, I have to pause, count, and hold back. Then, I can see the resentments for what they are: a false reality created to stimulate my brain and feed my ego to assuage my deep-set fear that I'm not good enough.

Bill W. was right to identify resentments for what they are: *the hydrochloric acid of the soul, seeking to eat away the spiritual foundation we depend on.* Resentments build not only anger, they destroy relationships. Resentments seek to blame the source of a problem on something or someone else. They thrive when self-righteous indignation creeps into every corner, blurring our vision so we fail to see what really is. Perhaps most importantly, resentments block us from experiencing heart-felt forgiveness.

The reality of the story I told you above is that the guy was simply busy. It had nothing to do with him slighting me for ordering a non-alcohol drink—or really anything at all. It had nothing to do with me.

Part of me wishes that non-alcoholics and non-addicts could experience the freedom that the Twelve Steps have given me. One of the things I've tried to do with my blog is share many different stories of transformation, not just recovery-based stuff—anyone can benefit from the lessons that recovering people have to share.

After all, these are human issues, not just ex-boozer or ex-junky matters.

The gift of a spirit-filled life is recognizing that the center of existence is not you. Your resentments toward people and things do not have to rule you. And it's remarkably freeing to know that things and people don't control your destiny in life. That much has already been decided by a power greater than any of us.

(I apologized to the bartender for yelling. He wasn't impressed. Then again, he didn't need to be — my action to do this was just as much for me as it was for him.)

Daniel D. Maurer administers the blog "Transformation is Real." He was an ordained ELCA pastor for eleven years, but now pretends to be a writer. He is the author of two nationally-distributed books, Sobriety: A Graphic Novel (Hazelden Publishing) and the co-author of Faraway: A Suburban Boy's Story as a Victim of Sex Trafficking (Two Harbors Press). He lives with his family in Saint Paul, Minnesota, the world's coolest city.



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

www.KeysToRecoveryNewspaper.com

If you would like to receive Keys to Recovery Newspaper FREE of charge at your facility you can go online and fill out the "Distribution" form or e-mail your information to: info@KeystoRecoveryNewspaper.com or call us at 818.386.8400.

Our purpose and our mission is to give hope that recovery is possible. Incorporated in the state of California Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit entity.

Our main objective is to carry the message of Hope and Recovery from all types of addictions and disorders to as many people as possible and to offer resources that may provide treatment and support. We do that by printing a traditional type newspaper as well as having an online presence. Our newspaper is filled with columns from today's top experts in the recovery field.

Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. is educating our communities about alcoholism, drug addiction, eating disorders, sex addiction, gambling addiction, homelessness, domestic violence and so much more. We also print, at no charge, a resource guide listing free services and vital help offered within our community.

Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. is making a strong effort to reach the many individuals currently in jails or other types of institutions and offer them information that will assist in their future recovery.

We are NOT affiliated with AA, NA, Al-Anon or any other 12-step program. We do, however, believe in the power of the 12-steps and the principles behind them. We strive to operate Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. using these principles as a guideline - Honesty, Hope, Faith, Courage, Integrity, Willingness, Humility, Brotherly Love, Justice, Perseverance, Spirituality and Service.

For more information visit
www.KeysToRecoveryNewspaper.com

DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION:

Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. is printed and distributed heavily throughout California and now in 13 other U.S. States. Having a current print run of 20,000+ newspapers and a readership exceeding 70,000 per month, we are already a solid and formidable presence. Although we have digital access to our publication, our primary focus is distributing hard copies. Our newspaper targets readers who are seeking recovery from all types of addictions, disorders and alcoholism and the loved ones who are affected as well as anyone wanting to know more about addiction and recovery. Here are some of the types of facilities we are distributing our recovery newspaper to:

- 12 Step Alano Clubs
- 12 Step Meeting Halls / Central Offices
- Churches
- Clinical Professionals
- Coffee Shops
- Correctional Facilities
- Counseling Office & Services
- Department of Health
- DUI Classes
- Doctors Offices
- Drug & Alcohol Councils
- Employee Assistance Programs
- Homeless Shelters
- Hospitals
- Intensive Outpatient Centers
- Judges & Lawyers
- Libraries
- Medical Centers
- Mental Health Professionals
- Police Departments
- Parole - Probation Departments
- Recovery Stores
- Rehabs and Treatment Centers
- Rescue Missions
- Veterans Hospitals
- Sober Livings
- Transitional Housing
- Therapist Office
- Related Conventions
- Recovery Industry Networking Events & many more locations each and every month.

From the most prestigious neighborhoods and facilities of all types to the impoverished streets of Skid Row, we carry the message of Hope & Recovery to everyone we can. Join us!

Vital Services Resource Guide

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

Southern California COUNTY RESOURCE GUIDE

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

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

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

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

A.A. Santa Clarita Valley Central Office: http://www.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 Alano 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.foo-daddicts.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.siaowo.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

Hope of the Valley (Mission Hills) Recuperative Care Shelter 818-392-0020.

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 we have listed as most have food programs.

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

Hope of The Valley (Van Nuys) - Victory Blvd. & Tyrone - Monday Thru Friday 12:15pm. 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

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.

SOVA Food Pantry, Jewish Family Services (open to all in need) 16439 Van Owen St., (818) 988-7682
West Valley Pantry - 7304 Jordan Ave, Canoga Park, CA (818) 887-6101
West Valley Food Pantry (Prince of Peace Church) 5700 Rudnick Ave., Woodland Hills(818) 346-5554

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
Fervent Heart LLC 626-319-7479
Family Promise of Santa Clarita Valley (661) 251-2867
Family Rescue Center (818) 884-7587
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 - (818) 392-0020 • www.hopeofthevalley.org December 1st thru March 15th Cold Weather Shelter (Pacoima & Sylmar) - Hotline (818) 207-8776
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 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

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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

Mary Cook

Addiction Specialist Counselor



M.A Psychology, R.A.S.

Author of:
Grace Lost and Found

38 years of experience

Available for counseling
in my office in San Pedro,
CA or by telephone

Phone: 310-517-0825

Email: MaryCookMA@att.net

Website: WWW.MARYCOOKMA.COM



Sober Scopes

SAGITTARIUS – Nov. 23 to Dec. 21: Money is tight over this holiday season so try not to overspend then you won't have to pay the consequences of it later. Fortunately, right after Christmas with God's answers to your selfless prayers, you begin to move into a rather lucrative financial time. Still, it isn't okay to go ahead and spend crazily, just because some positive financial healing happens afterwards. It may not come in just the form of money, but it will definitely be what is needed. You will be at peace and happy with your spiritual progress throughout the month.

CAPRICORN – Dec. 22 to Jan. 20: You are enjoying networking, socializing, sharing ideas, and spending time at 12 step meetings, friends, and neighbors. You are also able to find some awesome sales while shopping for the holidays. Both your home life and your professional life are kind of taking a backseat to your social and playful extroverted activities. It is not that you suddenly do not care about these things, only that you are far more interested in these happier more social aspects of your life at the moment.

AQUARIUS – Jan. 21 to Feb. 18: Your social life and/or business dealings involving professional groups and/or, the Internet have had such a detrimental effect on your finances that you end up spending some time reevaluating your approach to money and wealth. It is not a negative thing, but more of a reconfirming that you have your financial, professional, and spiritual beliefs in sync and by applying the principals of the Steps makes you feel morally and ethically good. This is a good month for you socially and professionally despite the financial challenges.

PISCES – Feb. 19 to March 20: You are in a very social mood. You are getting along with everyone and your partner is tagging along and having a good time as well. You are good at both the superficial friendships that grease the wheels of society and also the deep meaningful friendships that bring deeper levels of companionship and joy into your life. You are making sure to spend time with both. Meditation along with prayer strengthens your sobriety greatly during this time.

ARIES – March 21 to April 20: Yes, it is the holiday season and everyone expects you to be focused on celebrations and family gatherings, but you are experiencing some of the luckiest and most productive and lucrative professional energy of the entire year. You and your partner or rival finally have that big blow up and then you figure out how to negotiate an intelligent and fair peace agreement. Sharing with your Sponsor promotes your emotional and spiritual well-being. I suspect that you are finding ways to create balance between your loved ones and your fantastic professional opportunities. With God's guidance you are able to juggle both successfully.

TAURUS – April 21 to May 21: There are a number of irritating issues popping up at work. But the truth is that you are having an amazingly good time with your loved ones, so you probably do not care. Maybe that is the problem, your mind is on holiday fun and little details are being missed. It is more likely though, that you are not the cause of the problems and you are not going to let it get you down either. By keeping your mind focused on God, there will be long-term effects on you or the people you care about, so you are correct to not worry too much about it.

GEMINI – May 22 to June 21: You are dealing with romantic or financial issues affecting your love life, parenting, hobbies, playtime activities, and/or luxury purchases. Fortunately, you have a lot of spiritual and financial security flowing into your home and private life, as well as plenty of opportunities for you and a partner to have fun in recovery. Talk with your sponsor about how you're arguing over how much to spend over the holidays, because you haven't saved up as much as you wanted. Either way, there is still a lot of love to be spread around.

CANCER – June 22 to July 22: You and a romantic, social, or business partner are getting along wonderfully, but something or someone in your home or private life is upsetting them. Mostly, you seem to be siding with your partner. The good news is that with God's guidance accompanied with the 12 step principals, they're minimized and not something to get upset about. Holiday schedules and shipping challenges are making it difficult to get much of anything done at work. You might be in the mood to just take some time off, but by sticking with it the struggles will become less, and things will get accomplished.

LEO – July 23 to August 23: There is an expected flurry of shopping, financial juggling, and community events during the first part of the month. But then come Christmas Day, you are suddenly ready to sit quietly and think about spiritual things. What kinds of negative attitudes and beliefs have you been holding on to over the years? Are you doing anything to sabotage your own happiness? Turning it over to God puts you in a wonderfully open frame of mind and ready to "let go" of whatever it is that has been holding you back. This opens a space for new lovely beginnings in the New Year.

VIRGO – August 24 to Sept. 22: Throughout this month and especially during the first half, you are dealing with financial and home related battles and arguments. Then during the second half of the month, you start finding some awesome sales and bargains. You also begin enjoying some really happy and fun times with extended family as well a close partner or between you and an adversary. The financial problems do not go away completely, but by applying the principals of the steps you'll be able to spread plenty of love over the holidays.

LIBRA – Sept. 23 to Oct. 23: There is a lot of relationship tension in your life this month. You have some fantastic communications, negotiations, and diplomatic skills at your disposal to help you keep the various parties involved from blowing up, and causing real damage to the various relationships, but it does get tiring always having to play that role. Fortunately, with help from your Higher Power and recovery family, those really suited come in and help.

SCORPIO – Oct. 24 to Nov. 22: Technically, your holiday shopping and your personal finances are clashing in a big ugly way until Christmas day. But you also have a fantastic amount of opportunities to acquire the gifts you want to give. You are brilliant, creative, and I think you kind of enjoy the game of creating a splendid holiday without having much, if any money, to actually spend on it. Allowing God and your sobriety family to help gives you the right perspective needed.

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

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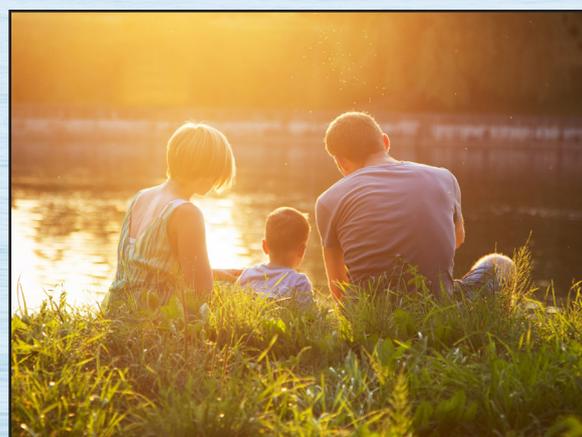
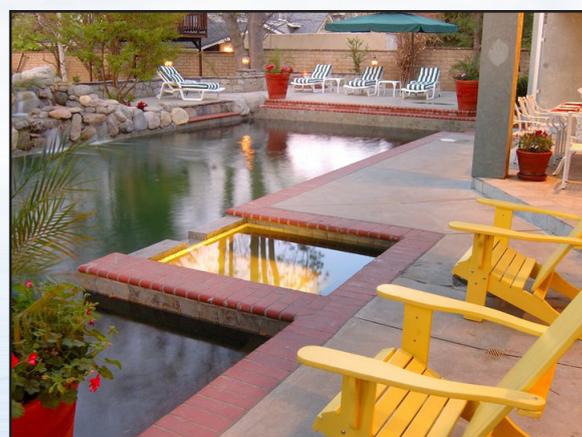
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