

November 2016

KEYS TO RECOVERY

— NEWSPAPER, INC. —

The Gifts of Gratitude

By Mary Cook, M.A., C.A.T.C.



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Taught Me**
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Contributors

Jeannie Rabb-Marshall - President & Cofounder
 Marcus Marshall - Vice President & Cofounder
 Beth Dewey-Stern - C.E.O. & Cofounder
 Staff Photographer - Shalimar Cambria
 Graphic Designer - J Marshall
 Outreach Directors - Peggy Salazar & Judy Gavin
 Cover Photo: © Nikki Zalewski | Dreamstime.com

Editorial Contributors: Jason Levin • Rose Lockinger • Michal Prager • Nita Vallens • Jenni Schaefer • Michael DeLeon • Rudy & Kelly Castro • Randy Boyd • Catherine Townsend-Lyon • Mary Cook, M.A., R.A.S. • Peggy Salazar • Beth Dewey-Stern • Marcus Marshall • Eleanor Brownn, MA, CPG • Marilyn Fowler

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by: Jason Levin

Last February was the 8th anniversary of Jason Levin's death. For those of you who don't know him, Jason was my previous business partner and dear friend. I know that he would be so very proud of what we have done with Keys to Recovery Newspaper. We want to make him a part of Keys so we are putting him in the rotation of our Editors Column, to celebrate and honor his life. Here is his column, from November of 2007.

Hello again everyone

Wow! I can't believe another year has almost passed! Once again I find myself thinking about all that has happened this year. Changes to both the world outside as well as the world within my head and heart. As this journey of recovery continues, I find I'm still amazed and grateful on a daily basis, with the way my higher power has carefully taken me on my path. Sometimes I need to remember the most basic lessons I've learned in the program. That's what I'd like to share about this month.

Love, Tolerance and Gratitude

I can remember when I first found the rooms. I was a scared and angry little boy in a man-suit. I had failed at everything that mattered to me and was at the end of my rope. I was so lost that I was finally willing to listen to anything that anyone had told me - providing they met my criteria for being better off than I was. Talk about complete insanity!

Here I was, new in recovery, not because I had been on a winning streak, but because the wheels had fallen off of my life - AGAIN, and I needed and wanted help. My only problem was that my ego was deciding for me who I would accept help from based on the most superficial criteria. Nice clothes? Check. Good teeth? Check. Nice car? Check.

This was my basis for being willing to listen, as long as they met my checklist. At that time I wasn't working and found myself in a lot of meetings. I found that the people I had just described spent their days at a place called work. This to me was THE four letter word that was the most offensive word in any vocabulary. So I went to meetings, a lot of meetings.

I would sit there and judge people based on how they looked and what they wore. I wouldn't talk to anybody. I could barely sit and listen because my head was so loud! Slowly I heard these people say things that actually made me begin to feel better, so I kept showing up. I remember one day I was so spun out that I went to a meeting hall. There was no meeting at the time, but there were a couple of people hanging out. I was in so much pain that I had to talk to someone. The problem was that the people who were there didn't fit my idea of anyone who could help me. I was so desperate though. I walked in and sat down. It must have been the look on my face or the cloud of pain that I was lost in, because something happened that would change my life.

One of the people looked at me and simply said, "You don't look so good. Is everything alright?" That was all it took. I fell to pieces right there and they listened. This was a magic moment for me in the program. One gave me a cup of coffee while the other sat with me. They both shared with me their experience, which gave me hope and a moment of peace. Most of all they gave me my first gift in the program. They gave me unconditional love. There was no judgment. No preaching and no telling me that I was wrong. They just listened and shared themselves with me. I was very grateful and at the same time embarrassed, because these were some of the people I had judged unworthy or incapable of helping me because of how they looked. This was a huge lesson for me.

Another lesson came from me beginning to be myself in the program. Before I found the rooms, I was a chameleon. I was very good at making people think I was something that I wasn't. As time went on and I became more comfortable in the meetings and with the people in the program, I began to let myself go. On more than one occasion I made a complete ass of myself in a public forum. Sometimes I was angry or giddy or just plain self-centered, and no matter what I shared about, I was never told that I didn't belong or that I was too sick. Most everyone kept saying "Keep coming back", and I thought it was just some catch phrase or slogan. It took me a while to realize what they meant by that, and what they were doing for me. What they did was show me by example what it means to be tolerant. To allow me to find my path in the program, and have the dignity of my own experience was another gift given to me.

I'm so grateful to everyone who has helped me get to the place I am today, by allowing me to learn my own lessons while sharing theirs with me. I've been shown a way to realize my dreams and have a place in this world, that I never thought existed for a person like me. There is nothing that I am unable to do with the help of my higher power, and the guidance of those around me in the program. To think I almost let it all pass me by because of my own arrogance.

That's it for me this month - seeya next time!

Jason Levin



Jason Levin
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by: Rose Lockinger

3 TRUTHS RECOVERY TAUGHT ME

When I first got sober, the only thing that I really wanted was to figure out how to stop drinking, and get my life back. It was the driving force behind entering into treatment, and if that was the only thing that I got from sobriety, that would have been enough. But sobriety has offered me so much more, so much that I didn't know I was going to receive.

Being sober, and involved in Alcoholics Anonymous has given me a new way of life, with new principles, and a better understanding for who I am in relation to the world around me. And it has taught me some important truths that I probably would not have learned otherwise. Recovery has also helped me heal from trauma that haunted me for so many years.

The first major truth that being sober taught me is that I do not have to be perfect. I am not sure if other people learn this quicker than I did, but for me perfection was always the goal, whether conscious or not. I'm not sure where this need for perfection stemmed from, but my ability to accept my failings as a human being has always been lacking. For most of my life, I have been extremely hard on myself, and anything that did not measure up to the level of perfection that I was seeking was deemed a failure.

This thought process is not unique to me, and one of my favorite principles of the program is that of "progress not perfection". This has helped me combat, to some extent this type of thinking, but accepting this was always difficult for me. It is one of those strange dichotomies of being an addict or alcoholic that doesn't seem to make sense. In one regard I ruined pretty much everything during my addiction, yet I always sought to be perfect. If I couldn't be perfect I didn't bother trying at all. Once I got sober and learned that seeking perfection was a fool's errand, my attitude changed.

I learned that all that I could expect of myself was my best effort, and that if I could honestly say that I tried my best then the outcome was good enough for me. This is not always easy for me to accept, but being sober and understanding that I am not perfect has helped greatly in this aspect.

The second major truth that I learned in sobriety was that I actually am a good person. A little over two years ago you could not have convinced me of this, in fact, for the most part, I thought I was one of the worst human beings on the planet. I felt as if I could never be forgiven for the things I did. This changed however, once I got sober and I began to see that many of the actions that I took during my addiction were not me, they were uncharacteristic for the person that I actually am.

Learning this truth took some time, but when I finally began to see that I actually do care about people and their feelings, and that what I want most out of life is to help people and see them succeed, I began to reevaluate my own appraisal of myself.

This was a huge truth for me to learn and going from thinking I was the worst, to thinking that I was actually a good person, completely changed the way that I interacted with myself and with others. I found that I no longer berated myself as much, although I still can from time to time, and I also found that I was more forgiving and accepting of others as well. I don't always operate in the mindset that I am a good person, but for the most part, I am aware today that this is the truth.

The third major truth that I learned from being in sobriety is that I, of myself, am enough. I don't need to pretend to be anyone else, I don't need to try to please you so that you will love me, and I don't need to feel less than every other person on the planet. When this truth truly entered into my understanding my entire world changed.

For most of my life, I felt like the outsider. I felt like there was something wrong with me and there was some fundamental lacking that I had to make up for, through other's acceptance. No matter how much I tried to acquire the knowledge that I was enough through other's opinions, it never brought me the fulfillment that I craved. It was only after I came to realize for myself that I am enough, that I began to be at peace with myself.

If you think about it from a logical standpoint, being enough with what you currently are makes sense. I mean why would God, or whatever you choose to call your high power, create a being that was not enough? What sort of cruel joke would that entail making a person, who locked within the essence of their being was not enough for the world? When I realized this, I realized that I no longer had to strive for approval, and while I could continue to try to grow as a person, my growth was not contingent on my ability to be loved.

Behind almost all of these truths is the fear that I was not someone who could be loved. I believe that it is most people's greatest fear: that they are too terrible, too broken, or too lacking to be loved. Getting sober showed me that none of this was true, and above everything else I was worthy of love; because I was worthy of love. I didn't need to be anything other than Rose, and understanding this, took some of the pressure off of me that I felt throughout my life, as I tried to figure out how to be someone else.

I know that if you get sober, you will find your own truths, and that these truths will transform the world that you live in. This has been the case for all of the people that I have met during my sobriety, and I am excited to hear what truths a life of recovery will bring you.

Rose Lockinger is passionate member of the recovery community. A rebel who found her cause, she uses blogging and social media to raise the awareness about the disease of addiction. She has visited all over North and South America. Single mom to two beautiful children she has learned parenting is without a doubt the most rewarding job in the world. Currently the Outreach Director at Stodzy Internet Marketing. www.stodzyinternetmarketing.com, facebook.com/stodzy, twitter.com/timstodzy.

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A POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES

From early on in my recovery, me and God have always communicated with each other. God has graced me with a visual focus of His will for me. When I express a need I have, God always shows me a picture of the person to whom I need to talk, to get my need met. As with most newcomers, I doubted these pictures at first, and chose to do it "my own way." When I tried to take control of the situation to get answers from where I wanted to look, I was never happy with the results. However, when I took God's direction, I always got what I needed. Such a situation happened to me just a few years ago.

Someone very close to me who was very new in the Program talked to me about a financial dilemma in which he was caught in the middle. Since I had quite a bit more time in the Program than this relative, I assured him I would get him an answer – soon!! So I set about talking to people in the Program I knew who I thought could help me. But alas, it was not meant to be.

Almost from the beginning of talking to this relative about his dilemma, I quietly spoke to God and asked for His help. In His infinite wisdom, God showed me a picture of a woman I knew in the Program. Being stubborn as I was (and since I believed this woman didn't like me and probably wouldn't speak to me anyway), I chose to ignore God's "answer" and find my own way. I got nowhere doing it on my own.

Once I surrendered to God's will and took His direction, I went to this woman to speak to her about my relative's dilemma. She smiled at me and gave me the answer I needed to hear: You see, this woman was a loan officer of a bank. My relative's dilemma dealt with a loan he had signed for, to assist a friend. God gave me the answer I needed when I asked for help. I got what I needed when I was willing to listen to "God's will" not "my will", as is spoken about in the Second and Third Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous.

A few years have passed since this particular incident occurred, and my faith in a "power greater than [myself]" has strengthened.

Just a few days ago, after having suffered with severe neck pain for about three weeks that was not abating, I asked God for help. I asked for help finding a specialist for my particular medical problem; I have never been to such a specialist. God showed me the picture of a woman who works at a vendor that does business with the company for whom I work. Unlike previous times, I did not question God's answer. I called my friend at this vendor and told her of my need for the specialist. She provided me with a referral to someone whose business is near where I live.

Wanting more than one choice, I asked God again for another similar specialist. Immediately, God showed me the picture of a supervisor of a company where I have been interning. I called him and he referred me to someone else at that company who had the name of the type of specialist I needed. She told me most of the employees at that company go to see this specialist.

I then asked God to help me choose between the two referrals. I called the second referral and was scheduled with an appointment for the very next day – a Saturday!! And so I went on Saturday and my neck feels better today.

My faith in a Power Greater Than Me has become unwavering. I trust today without questioning and without needing to understand. (A friend of mine with whom I work recently told me that she knows that I have grown spiritually. She knows this because I no longer question and I don't need to understand God's message; I just follow it!!) My life unfolds with no kinks today because I am willing to live in God's will, and take His direction without needing to take control back and do it my way!

Michal joined a 12 step support group in 1989, when she discovered that she had been affected by someone else's drinking. She is an author in both the recovery and legal venues; articles in both of these venues have been published. She is passionate about her recovery, and shares articles about her own experiences with the recovery and legal communities. If you wish to contact her, she can be reached at: serenity.michal@sbcglobal.net.



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Ask Dr. Nita



by: Nita Vallens

Dear Dr. Nita; We are feeling overwhelmed - double digit sobriety and feeling maybe a bit off track. And, life got so busy - how do we support each other, and stop bickering? How did this happen - it's like little rubber "floaties" drifting in the pool. Signed J and F

Dear J and F,

You raise many issues here! First, let's solve the bickering - often when couples start arguing or bickering, it is because you are taking your own personal stresses or frustrations out on each other. Here are some ideas to circumvent that and sort out the real issues, if there are any.

- 1) Focus on your own self-care (more on that below);
- 2) Have listening sessions with each other;
- 3) Create a date night once a week with your partner;

4) Family meetings every Sunday as the week begins, to go over your calendars together and take care of life's mundane things - pay the bills, marketing or picking up the dry cleaning.

5) No more multi-tasking; when you try to interact with your mate and do other things, you're not paying attention to your mate and that can cause a communication breakdown. The reason it doesn't ever work, to multi-task even in business is that your brain can't do both things efficiently, according to the latest neuroscience research.

Now let's go to the overwhelmed and off track feeling you mentioned. Remember that when you got sober, and began making the necessary changes to create a new sober lifestyle, you did this by learning tools. You applied them and still do, or you would not have lasted into double digit sobriety. Here are a few reminders:

- We are each responsible for our own sobriety, and we also need support and feedback from others, but remain committed to your recovery at all times.
- Be honest with yourself and stay off the "pity pot" - if things are not going well, change what you are doing.

Use your intuition to sift through all that you hear to determine the right path for you, regardless of what others are doing.

Let go of resentments and use forgiveness as a tool to let go of the past. Reach out to others for support.

The reason I mentioned self-care as the #1 point is because it is the most important aspect to remember. When you take care of yourself and manage your time and your energy, you're more organized and efficient.

Taking physical care of yourself is another aspect of self-care, as you need to exercise regularly and eat well for optimum performance.

Learn to discern the good from the toxic relationships is another way to manage your energy and your time. Those people that you feel cause you stress or drain you need to be cut out. This includes all kinds of relationships from romantic to friends.

Learn to take the time to know yourself and use reflection meditation or self-hypnosis as tools to discover your likes and dislikes. Shift your focus onto people that you enjoy, that uplift you and that have a positive and optimistic outlook on life.

If you feel like your life is not going as smoothly as you'd like and want things to be different, then start today making it the life you want. Don't rationalize or make excuses to settle for less than what you really want in your life.

Be humble and kind to yourself as well as to others. Don't place blame on yourself or others. Take responsibility and remember that in every moment is the potential for a fresh start and a new beginning.

You can do this!
Until next Month, Dr. Nita

Dr. Nita Vallens is a licensed Marriage Family Therapist and certified Hypnotherapist in Sherman Oaks. For consultation and appointments call 818.783.6258 for information! Her radio show, Inner Vision, is on Tuesdays @ 1:00 PST on KPFK Los Angeles, 90.7 FM or live stream at www.KPFK.org (FREE podcasts on the Audio Archive Link)



by: Jenni Schaefer

10 TIPS TO TAKE THE HOLIDAYS BACK FROM ED

If you know Ed (Eating Disorder), you know that his chatter can get louder around the holidays. Remember: just because he may get noisier doesn't mean that you have to waiver in your recovery. In the end, it doesn't matter what Ed says or does. What matters is how you respond to him. Here are some positive, pro-recovery options for responding to Ed this holiday season:

1. Choose a Go-To Support Person. For each holiday celebration, select a designated person for support and accountability. Choose someone who is willing, available, and, if possible, actually attending the event. Teach this person the do's and don'ts of support and discuss things-that-might-happen scenarios—explaining what kind of response would be most helpful to you in each situation.

2. Carry Support with You. Program the contact information of key support people into your phone. Set them up as easy-to-access favorites. In moments of distress, make a call. For extra long events, be sure to bring your cell phone charger! The Tenth Anniversary Edition of *Life Without Ed* suggests, "If picking up the phone to make a support call is sometimes too difficult for you, maybe you can at least send a short text—like 'SOS' or even 'Ed.' Tell your support team ahead of time what your distress signal text might say, and let them know helpful ways to respond."

3. Stop and Breathe. Practice mindfulness by paying attention to all five senses—see, hear, smell, taste, and touch the joys of the season. Meditate—even for just a few minutes—before attending holiday gatherings. Say a prayer.

4. Facing the Food. Ed will try to make food a big deal; don't let him. The truth is that holiday food is often the same, so you can easily plan ahead by consulting with your dietitian or a trusted support person. If you don't know what is going to be served, consider asking beforehand. At the meal, you might even ask a support person to prepare a plate for you. For extra accountability, text a photo of your plate—before and after eating—to someone on your support team. Ask your friends and family not to comment about what you are eating.

5. Plan Something Special Beyond the Food. For many people, including those without eating disorders, food can become the focus of holiday gatherings. While it is normal and healthy to enjoy the festive meals, it can also be important to plan something to look forward to that doesn't include turkey or stuffing. Add fun to your schedule. Play a board game, watch a movie, or go on a walk.

6. Increase Support. The busyness of the holidays might lead you to want to cancel some therapy sessions. But the added pressure actually means that you need to beef up your support. Add to; don't take away. Get creative. Adding support doesn't necessarily mean a big time commitment. For instance, you can listen to recovery podcasts when driving to and from holiday events. Use apps like Recovery Record to send yourself positive affirmations during holiday gatherings.

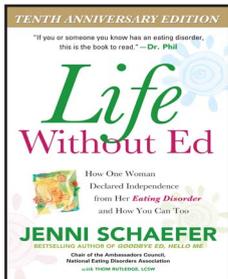
7. Address Body Image Upfront. When I was in early recovery from my eating disorder, I asked my friends and family not to make comments about my appearance. I clarified, "Please don't even say that I look 'great' or 'healthy.'" Ask loved ones to keep the conversation on topics beyond eating, shape, and weight.

8. Celebrate Small Victories. If you conquer a food fear at a holiday gathering, share the news with your support team. To some friends and family, eating a slice of apple pie might not seem like a big deal, but, to you, it surely can be a sign of courage. Celebrate with people who understand.

9. Create an Emergency 911 Card. As described in *Life Without Ed*, create a list of time-tested relapse prevention tips. Keep this list with you at all times. Consider typing your emergency 911 card into your smart phone as a note. Ed thrives on forgetfulness. Be a step ahead of him.

10. Remember the Meaning. Despite what Ed may say, the holidays were not created to cause distress. What does each holiday truly mean to you? Practice gratitude. Laugh.

Never, never, never give up. If you fall down this holiday season, pick yourself back up right away. Choose recovery in each and every moment. Most importantly, hold onto the hope for a full recovery. In the years to come, imagine a holiday without Ed even making a peep. Yes, it can get that good.



Jenni Schaefer is a singer/songwriter, speaker, and author of *Goodbye Ed, Hello Me* and *Almost Anorexic*, a collaboration about subclinical eating disorders with Harvard Medical School.

Her first book, *Life Without Ed*, has been released as a 10th Anniversary Edition as well as audiobook. Jenni is a National Recovery Advocate of Eating Recovery Center's Family Institute. For more information, please visit EatingRecovery.com/Jenni and JenniSchaefer.com.



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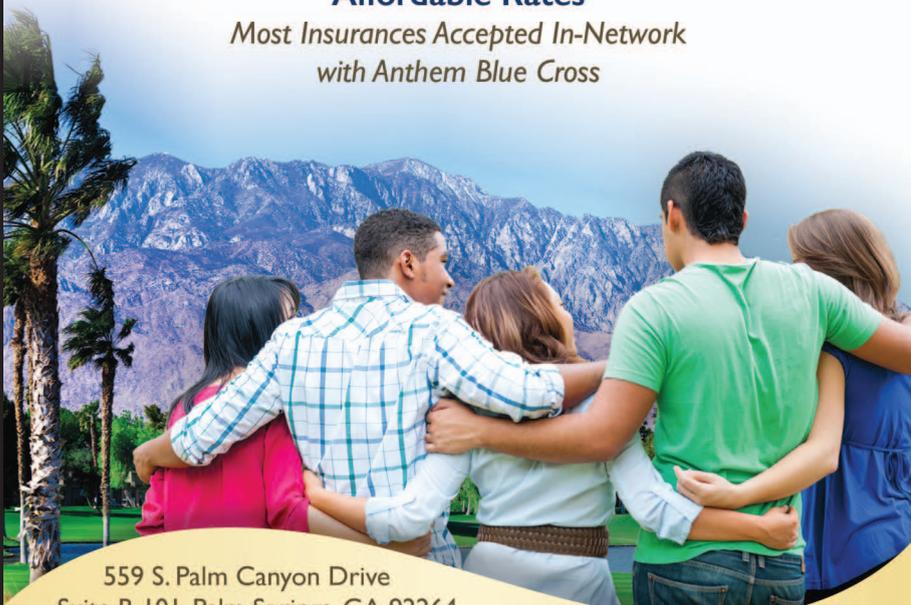
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Freedom from Bondage

by: Michael DeLeon

THE CHOKEHOLD OF YOUR RECOVERY IS YOU

Recognize that true power resides within you ~ never outside of you. Keep your eyes on the prize and do not allow yourself to be thrown off course. There is power in the pursuit of your dream.

- Les Brown

"Relapse," said Mike T. at a Drug Court Graduation in Illinois, "is part of Recovery." I almost fell out of my chair. I've heard it before, but maybe it was the context. Maybe it was the scenario at which it was said – a commencement of addicts who had amassed years of drug-free recovery. But I started to really analyze what people were saying about relapse throughout the Addiction and Recovery movement. The more I heard about "relapse", the more uncomfortable I got.

Since that day, I have sat in dozens of group sessions across the country doing research for a movie. I've listened to many different Recovery speeches and read countless editorials and articles. It's incredible how prevalent the mindset is about relapse being "a part" of Recovery. Within this opiate and opioid epidemic, the data shows us that most people do in fact relapse. But does that mean it's inevitable? Is it an acceptable part of the process of Recovery? Do we make relapse part of the acceptable language, normalizing it? Do we look at addiction, recovery and relapse as something that is SO different than other difficulties of life, that all inner power is stripped from us in favor of victimstance to a life-long disease we can't control? I choose to look at our role in our recovery as the most important factor – and with Recovery, comes responsibility. With Recovery, comes commitment.

I believe the relapse figures speak more to the inadequate time that insurance will cover for treatment for addiction than anything else. The powerful nature of opiates is certainly a factor. The absence of a continuum of care or the total void of recovery support services within that continuum is a huge factor with relapsing. But our attitude and approach toward relapse seems to have completely embraced the idea that relapse is inevitable. It's my opinion that it's not – or at least it doesn't have to be. We must believe that we play more of an active role in our success. What we focus on is what becomes true. Whatever we perceive as our reality, becomes our reality.

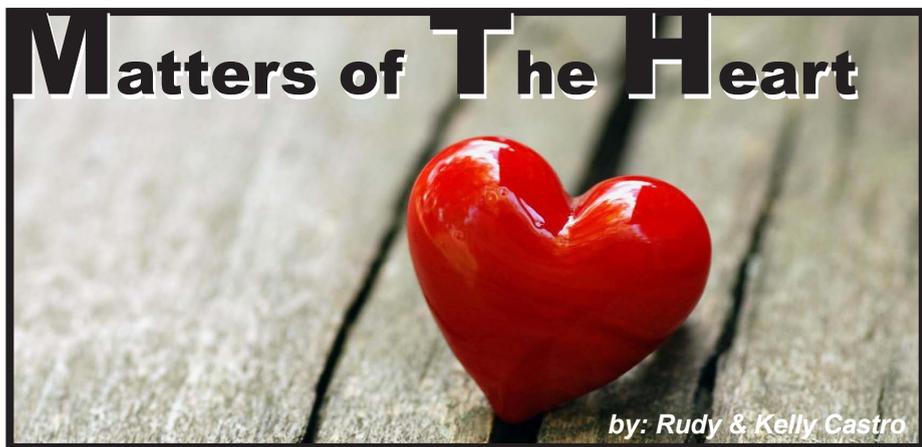
In looking at the top motivational speakers, trainers and life-coaches in the world, people that are literally paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to inspire business leaders, employees and couples and those seeking life coaching, they would never have that message – that failing is part of getting clean. In many contexts, failing IS part of succeeding. But it's more of a hindsight concept, that you learn more from failing than you do from succeeding. But within the learning process of looking forward, rising from addiction, should we be encouraging the mindset that continued failure at recovery should be embraced. That might be considered in business, in sports, maybe in investing. The difference herein is that failing can mean death.

It is only within the last few years that addiction has been medically accepted as a chronic brain disease. Many people state that it is a disease without a cure. Some go on to state that one must attend meetings on a regular basis and introduce themselves verbally and openly with a self-imposed label, one that they will carry for the rest of their lives. I completely believe that this process works for many, many people and it has delivered tens of thousands from addiction and alcoholism, worldwide, for over 80 years. This is not a path I embrace for me – Not without using the principles that come from Les Brown, Tony Robbins, Zig Ziglar, Eric "ET" Thomas and many, many other motivational Life Coaches.

I recognize the disease of addiction and the overwhelming difficulties of overcoming it. I put millions of dollars into my arms, spent over 12 years incarcerated, lost a multi-million dollar business and destroyed my family. I hurt many people and am beyond grateful to have found Recovery. It was the fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous that led me to the path of Recovery, and Celebrating Recovery that carried me on the journey to where I find myself today. I share my experiences in Recovery with many people, whom all found their way following different paths. Some found their journey along the same path I did. Some found it through medication assisted treatment. Some found it cold turkey. Some found it through the redeeming blood of Jesus Christ. As is often said, there are many paths to Recovery. But in all paths, we're the guide – and to believe we don't control our journey weakens us. We become the chokehold in our very own recovery.

I fear the mindset is that relapse is inevitable, that it's part of the recovery process. For me, taking self out of the equation, or minimizing the power that I have in achieving, and more importantly, maintaining recovery, is wrong.

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THE MAGNITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Most people recognize the Month of November as the month of gratitude. Thanksgiving is such a powerful time of year to give thanks to all around you. Give thanks to your family, your communities, your life and all that it contains. The power of gratitude is so tremendous that it has the ability to transform particles themselves. In a study by a man named Dr Emoto; there were microscopic pictures of water taken in its natural molecular structure. He then took water that had been blessed by a Zen Buddhist monk, as well as water that had powerful, loving words written on the container that held it, and documented the amazing effect in CHANGING its very molecular structure. The intention of the study was to highlight this; Consider that your body consists of water within every cell. Then think about how many cells are throughout your entire body. Most experts agree that water actually constitutes about 70% of a human being! Just think of the MAGNITUDE that your thoughts, words, and beliefs have on your life!!!! If you can begin to accept how powerful of a manifestor you really are, then you are ready to accept deep, and complete responsibility for the direction of your life with full clarity, and ownership. From that place of ownership there would no longer be space for any excuses, blame or resentment to last longer than a fleeting moment. What would then be in its place, would be the absolute pure intention of what you want to create...in that moment and every moment thereafter.

With all that said. The most important practice is the practice of gratitude. Living in gratitude is exhilarating, and it takes practice. November is the month that highlights this practice, however, everyday is an opportunity to create magic by working out our gratitude muscle. In our relationship, we attribute the boundless love that we share with one another to gratitude. We give thanks to each other every single day, multiple times a day from the biggest things to the smallest things. Its contagious!!! Try the practice, pick a person in your life, your favorite loved one and remind them everyday for 30 days why you are grateful for their existence. If you are someone that has mastered this already or for anyone who wants a greater challenge, we have something special for you. Pick a person in your life that you have a difficult time with, regardless if you interact with them a lot or very little. For 30 days look at a picture of them and say, "thank you for being in my life and teaching me great lessons. I send you blessings". Remember the powerful lesson of transforming water molecules. You are out to create magic. Haven't you always wanted to be a magician?

If you need more convincing around the magnitude of powerful intention, let us share with you another amazing story of transformation through group conscious thought. What do you think the impact would be on an entire city when four thousand transcendental meditators meditated together for over one month, within that city, for that city? Would you guess that the impact would be significant? Would you consider the possibility of crime dropping? Well a Washington D.C study of these TM Sidha meditators showed that there was a 20% crime drop in the middle of summer heat. Immediately after disbanding, the study showed that crime rose significantly. It was reported in the study that the statistical occurrence of this crime drop happening by chance was less than two out of one billion.

The importance of this incredible study is that mind-power is not limited to one mind. It demonstrates that joined together we can have a much greater impact than we truly know!! As we begin to celebrate thanksgiving with various communities, let us remember the power of our thoughts. May we keep in mind, and heart the transformation potential that we hold as a group. Gratitude with community can be a powerful time to make a declaration, a statement, or expression of love. Our hope is that we all use these moments to strengthen our community power, whether it's through a toast at a family thanksgiving dinner, a card for someone you appreciate, washing dishes, feeding the homeless, or any other act of service. Imagine whatever blessing you participate in that you are affecting the vibration beyond your mind, the minds around you, but possibly your community at large. Don't forget how powerful you really are!!

We also understand that holidays can be challenging, triggering, and hard. We really get it, and have had to be super conscious of how we relate to ourselves, one another, and all those we will be celebrating with. Some relationships, and/or events can be more challenging than others especially with family dynamics. We are not suggesting that you walk in with any intention to change/fix anyone.

Con't Page 18

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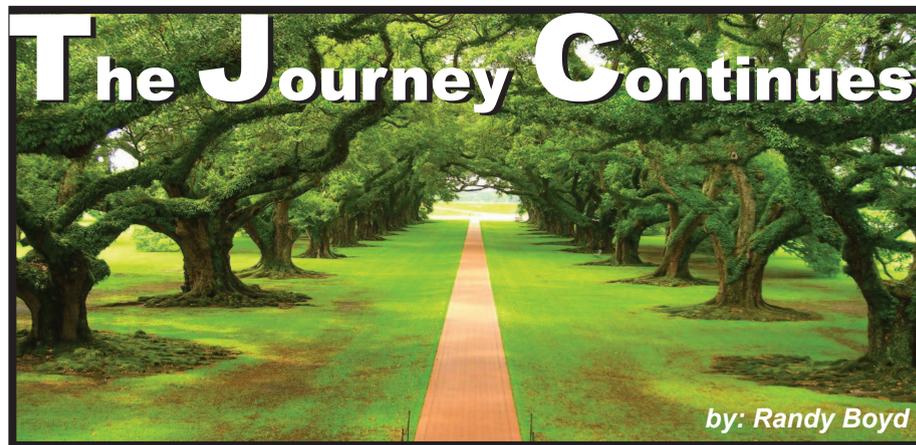


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by: Randy Boyd

SELF-ACCEPTANCE

One of the affects of my abuse that has followed me into my adult life until just recently is being accepted. Survivors not only face an internal battle for self-acceptance, but an external one as well. Because I could not accept myself internally, I sought external acceptance. From the very first time I was molested, I never felt like I fit in. I felt dirty and tainted. I felt like an outcast within my family and amongst friends.

Actually, the first time I felt like an outcast and had been rejected by my schoolmates in school was shortly after my father died. I returned to school after taking a week off of school to attend my father's funeral services and have some time to grieve. Upon my return to school a group of my schoolmates approached me and asked where I had been. When I told them that my father had died and I was with my family, they laughed at me calling me a liar and telling me my father did not die. I was devastated and crushed. Worse of all, I had no one I could talk with, not even my mother. So I carried the searing pain of those schoolyard comments with me until just a couple of years ago.

Growing up I loved playing baseball. I played little league and high school baseball. In my freshman year I was one of the better hitters and fastest runners on the team. I was one of about four players the coach would keep after practice for more batting practice. I felt accepted and yes even special. You would think that would be good enough – it wasn't. Where was my family support? It's not like the practice and games were in the middle of the day, they were in the late afternoon. After all other parents were their supporting their sons, but my parents were not there.

As time went on, I must have drove my teammates crazy always asking them if they thought I was good enough to make the starting line-up. Without a father figure present in my life feeding into me, I had no one else to turn to. What made all of this worse was the fact that my brother was playing football and had the full support of my mother and stepfather. I never felt good enough. It felt like nothing I did was ever good enough for my mother and stepfather. Nothing I did seemed to make them proud or happy that I was their son.

Spring break 1974, I was seventeen-years old. My mother and stepfather were going to Hawaii for the week and stepfather was letting me use his truck to drive to Mammoth Mountain snow skiing. I had returned home a day or two before they were to arrive home and in appreciation of Jack letting me use his truck – I washed and waxed his truck for him. I also thought it would be nice for them to come home to a clean house. So, I cleaned the entire house – including windows.

I remember the day they came home clearly. As my mother and stepfather arrived home I was excited with anticipation. After all I had wash and waxed the truck and cleaned the entire house. Surely they would be grateful and show me some appreciation on this day. As they arrived home I met them in the driveway greeting them with a smile and asking how their trip was. My stepfather walked by his truck glancing at it, yet not saying a word. As they entered our house he looked around, walked up stairs, came back down into the kitchen and after looking at the kitchen windows he had only one thing to say – you missed a spot! There was not one word of thanks expressed, again only what I missed or did wrong. The motive behind what I had done for my mother and stepfather was two fold. First it was out of appreciation, but the deeper motive was a last ditch effort at getting their approval.

To this day I have never received unconditional approval from my mother or stepfather. While he has not been a part of my life for over thirty years and has since passed away, my mother is still alive and says I have to accept my part of the responsibility of being abused. This is baffling to me because even as rebellious I might have been as a teenager, I never deserved to be abused let alone have a part in it. It is never our fault.

Whether we are still seeking approval from our invalidating parent, or we are looking for approval in a romantic relationship, or we even seek it out from our own children, we cannot replace the internal need for validation through external sources. But there is hope.

I have been in recovery now for nearly 11 years and I am finally accepting and approving myself, but it took a village to get me here. I surrounded myself with people who loved me and taught me to love myself. My sponsors were two phenomenal older men that helped me navigate though the lies I had been telling myself for thirty-plus years showing me unconditional love. My wife and children both love and accept me unconditionally, and have modeled that love acceptance in ways I never knew possible.

Most importantly, I am a child of God, my higher power, and he has always loved and accepted me, therefore what right do I have not to love an accept myself. Today I love, accept and approve myself. Oh I'm not perfect and I still stumble, but what is it they say? Progress not Perfection.

Randy Boyd is a licensed California Alcohol and Drug Counselor, Certified Life Coach, the founder of the Courageous Healers Foundation, and an associate of "It Happens to Boys." He speaks at conferences, schools, and treatment facilities, about the effects of abuse on men, and how men can heal from those effects. Read more on Finding Your Bliss in his New groundbreaking book addressing the sexual abuse of boys entitled "Healing the Man Within," a book for male survivors and their families, written by a male survivor. Available at Amazon.com, www.courageoushealers.org. Contact Randy at (760) 702-5498, email: courageoushealers@gmail.com





by: Catherine Townsend-Lyon

HOW I BECAME ADDICTED TO THE LOTTERY

I can remember the day I was taught "Flush Fever", a video poker game as it was just yesterday. I became aware of a video poker game that is on poker machines sponsored by the Oregon Lottery. My husband and I lived in So. Oregon for over 26 years before moving to Arizona in 2013 and where we live now. These poker machines are how I got my start into problem gambling, and slowly crossed into a full-blown gambling addiction, as we know this illness is a slow progressive addiction. I wrote about this in my current book titled; "Addicted to Dimes, Confessions of a Liar and a Cheat." So, I thought I would share an excerpt of my book about this part of my gambling history. The Oregon Lottery for-profit gambling has devastated many lives and has torn many families apart. They introduced video poker machines in most bars, lounges, restaurants and even all these little "lottery retail deli's." Here is how I got hooked to the lottery video poker and slots.

"Flush Fever" An Excerpt from My Book.

After a visit to Oregon with my parents, my best friend, Debbie, who had lived next door to me in California for many years, decided to move to Oregon after her visit. She moved up and stayed with us until she got settled at her new job. A few year's prior, the state of Oregon passed a for-profit gambling bill to allow video poker machines in places that served food, such as bars, taverns, delis, and even most restaurants. The lottery already had Keno games online. For my addiction, that was a downfall for me, as soon I started compulsively gambling later. It was so accessible and everywhere.

If you live in Oregon, you know what I mean. If you think about it, gambling is socially accepted. It's pretty much everywhere you go – even in our children's schools, with raffles, casino fundraisers, in our churches with bingo, and at our gas stations, markets and grocery stores with Megabucks, Powerball drawings, and scratch-off ticket machines. So, for an addicted gambler, it seemed "action" was everywhere, and when you're addicted, you have no self-control. You feel as though you're always teetering on a high wire. When the state approved the video poker machines, the machines popped up everywhere. Why drive to Las Vegas, Reno or Lake Tahoe, or go to an Indian casino, when you can go up the street to gamble? In the town where I lived, there were lottery retailers everywhere around town disguised as delis if they served food and soft drinks, they could have up to six poker machines in their stores. They sold the cheapest cigarettes in town, along with all types of lottery services and games.

As my husband continued working out-of-town for the next several months, this left lots of time on my hands, and with my friend Debbie staying with me, she and I would often have lunch at one of these delis. As that year went by, I also noticed I'd spend a little more money than I should have. I believe it was because of the easy access to gambling, and too much time on my hands. Was I addicted at this point? Hardly. That would soon change, though. As I look back now, I was experiencing a few "red flags" of addiction, but not recognizing them. I remember having growing feelings of excitement before I went, knowing I'd get to gamble if we met for lunch at the deli, or if we were going to the Indian casino.

The only thing I did was play Keno if we went at our local deli. I had never played the new video poker machines there, which were operated by the state lottery. One day, in early 1998, Deb and I went to have our usual lunch at the deli on a Saturday. We started talking to four retired gentlemen, who were also having lunch and playing Keno while they ate. One of them finished his lunch and went on the other side of the deli playing one of the video poker machines, so I walked over to watch him play. He was winning. He had a large amount of credits on his poker machine. I asked him how much money did he start with? He said "only \$10."

As I was playing, the retired gentlemen got up and was getting ready to leave. As long I live, I will always remember what happened next: He leaned over my shoulder and said to me, "When you're ahead, always cash out, so you always leave with their money, because I'd really hate myself if you got hooked on these machines." Oh, if only I had listened to his sage wisdom. I still look back today, all these years later, and I remember what that man said to me. He never knew how that day changed my life because I never saw him there again. He never knew my story of how I became a gambling addict.

Recovery took me many tries. Addicted gambling is like today's "Crack" for me. After my second failed suicide attempt and crisis stay in 2006, I found a recovery specialist in 2006 who worked with me for a year so I could grasp my beginning into long-term recovery. Making GA meetings for support, and started my 12-step work and journaling. These are just a few things I do to stay in recovery today. Now I sponsor others and continue to share my story to those who still suffer this cunning disease called "Gambling Addiction."

There is Help, HOPE, and Recovery.

Catherine Townsend-Lyon is the author of the book "Addicted To Dimes, Confessions of a Liar and a Cheat." Available at Amazon.com. Catherine is a Columnist for "In Recovery Magazine's "The Author's Cafe" where she interviews and writes about author's and their books, films, and apps of recovery products. She has been featured in many articles about gambling addiction, most recent had been by "Columbia University" titled; Gambling with America's Health and interviewed for a new article out soon by "Time Magazine." Catherine lives in Arizona with her husband of 26 years and her three cats, Mr. Boots, Miss Princess, and Simon Peter. She is owner of Lyon Book & Social Media Promotions where she promotes authors of many genres.



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The Gifts of Gratitude

By Mary Cook, M.A., C.A.T.C.



Gratitude allows us to fully experience and receive all of life's gifts. Gratitude increases the depth of joy during positive experiences and attracts more positive energy to us. Gratitude decreases the depth of pain during negative experiences and fosters greater compassion, understanding, healing, personal growth and resilience. Gratitude allows us to navigate through the rough seas of life, and to find refuge but not be anchored to the safe harbors, for life is an ever evolving adventure to discover our deepest treasures.

We typically try to control what happens to us and what we experience in life. We do this even more frequently and intensely when we have a history of trauma, in an effort to prevent further trauma. The energy we maintain and reinforce however, is the energy we attract. Thus we end up repeatedly attracting and perceiving what we do not want, creating increasing confusion, conflicts and loss. Gratitude releases us from being trapped in past negative emotions and offers us a different life in the present moment.

In order to resolve and transform unhealthy patterns of thinking and behavior, we must expand and raise our consciousness. Instead of seeking ego gratification and attempting to avoid pain, we can be

grateful for the lessons and blessings of both pleasure and pain. Instead of attempting to control life or to see ourselves as victims in life, we can collaborate with and value life on life's terms. Instead of harboring resentments against ourselves or others, we can be grateful for the peace that comes on the heels of forgiveness and amends. Instead of focusing on our goals and achievements, we can be thankful for a journey of continuous learning and growth. Instead of feeding cravings and greed, we can nourish others through expressing and demonstrating gratitude.

We might not like being confused, but when we practice gratitude, we see opportunities for deep reflection and investigation. We can reach out for help and be open to new perspectives. We can become more patient, tolerant and accepting of our lack of understanding. We can feel grateful for our curiosity and that there are endless subjects to study and explore. We can experience the awe and wonder of a universe of mysteries. And when appropriate, we can relinquish our need to understand, and trust that our Higher Power will enlighten us at the right time.

Conflicts can arise from opposing forces within us, or between us and others. We might wish to be healthy, but we're unwilling to surrender habits that sabotage this. We might wish to be happy, but shame and low self-esteem obstruct this. A boss may with-

hold a promotion. A family member may belittle or manipulate us. People may be exploitive, corrupt or abusive and we want them to change. We can be grateful for our awareness of the problem and what we want, and focus on changing ourselves and our responses to conflicts so that we feel greater peace and hope. We can reflect upon the moments where we are healthy and happy, and gratefully nourish those feelings and circumstances. We can be grateful for our talents, knowledge and work experience, our ability to continue to grow, and be open to new job opportunities that match what we have to give. We can gratefully nourish our self-esteem, assertiveness, values and integrity. We can take actions and set boundaries that are healthy for us. We can be grateful that we are an adult who can choose the time and circumstances that we spend with family members and others.

Gratitude in the midst of loss means that we value what we have given and received, learned and taught, and how we have grown, and we continue to have these experiences in new ways. It means that we cultivate compassion for suffering for ourselves and others, and learn to gratefully receive what supports us in our grief. It means that we cherish each moment and what and whom we love, for we cannot know when loss will occur.



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It means that we take responsible care of ourselves for our life is precious. It means that we walk through life with open hands and hearts, letting life work through us for the highest good. It means that we accept change as the nature of life, and we gratefully allow our Higher Power to be in charge of all life.

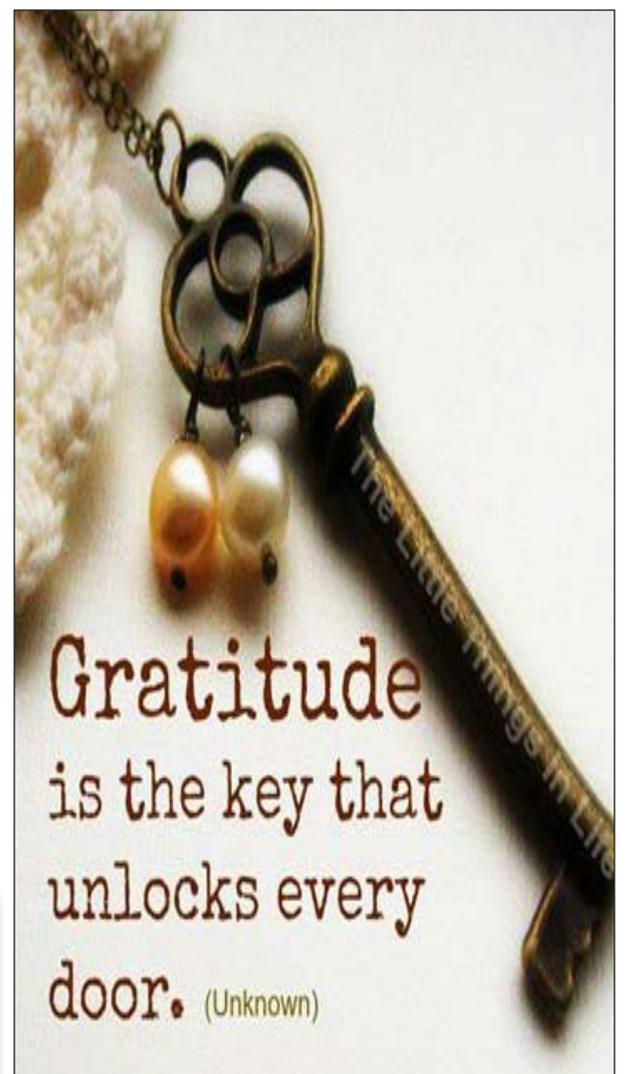
We can be grateful for our ability to identify our defenses, character defects, false beliefs and unhealthy habits, for this awareness prompts us to engage in healing practices and spiritual actions that positively transform them. We can be grateful for trials and tribulations, for they motivate us to discover hidden strengths and support. We can be grateful for those who challenge us, for they foster our psychological and spiritual development. We can be grateful for those who demonstrate examples of unhealthy thinking and behaviors, and spur us into living from higher values.

We can practice gratitude with daily journaling, reflection and meditation on what we appreciate. We can express our gratitude to others through conversation, thoughtfully written cards, and actions of helping and giving. We can create art, take photographs, or make collages that reflect our gratitude. We can be grateful for this planet and all of its resources, for the diversity in nature, animals and humanity. We can value our breath and our health, our safety and freedom. We can value our physical and spiritual senses and how they enrich our life. We can appreciate the food that we eat, the water we drink and where it

comes from. We can be grateful for our home and make it a warm, welcoming place where love grows. We can be grateful for the people who have inspired, helped and mentored us. Our life can be a mission to express, demonstrate and send gratitude out into the world, for certainly it is something the world needs.

We can be grateful for our faults, for they motivate us to learn and grow. We can be grateful for our talents, for they inspire us to help others. We can be grateful for what we don't know, for it increases open-mindedness and humility. We can be grateful for our awareness, for it stimulates deeper observations and creativity. We can be grateful for our pain, for it fosters greater sensitivity and compassion. We can be grateful for our happiness, for it heightens generosity and unity. We can be grateful for our fears, for they strengthen resourcefulness and discernment. We can be grateful for our faith, for it gives us boundless love and purpose. Gratitude brings calm to the storm, hope to despair, fortitude to fear, and peace to anger. When we plumb the depths of darkness with the light of gratitude, we discover the deepest treasures of life and feel the gifts of Heaven in our heart.

WWW.MARYCOOKMA.COM *Mary Cook has a Master's degree in psychology and is a certified addictions treatment counselor in private practice. She has 40 years of clinical and teaching experience. Mary is available for telephone and office consultations, and speaking engagements. She is the author of "Grace Lost and Found: From Addictions and Compulsions to Satisfaction and Serenity", at Amazon.com.*



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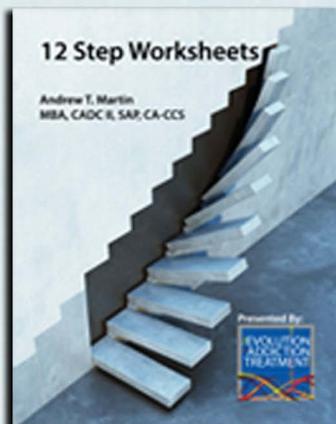
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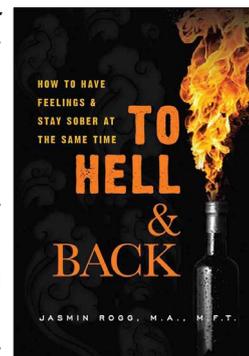
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Book Reviews

To Hell and Back: How to Have Feelings and Stay Sober at the Same Time. Written by Jasmin Rogg, M.A., M.F.T. Published by Voices of Recovery Press.

Jasmin's ability to combine her personal struggle with drugs and alcohol, and following it up with recovery and spirituals tools to achieve sobriety, won me over immediately. She provides solutions for many of the problems we encounter in sobriety as we start living life on life terms. Even some as simple as drinking water. One of my favorites was on page 78. "Walk through your fear. Stand erect in your pain. Address your problems one at a time, one day at a time. Make yourself useful. Bring some kindness and compassion to the people you see. They might need some encouragement to go on. If you do this every day, your life will be better, and so will your self-esteem and your mood."

POWERFUL! And yet so simple! Thank you Jasmin for sharing your experience, strength, and hope. This book is brilliantly written. This is not a book you read and put back on the shelf. It's a book you keep reading and I will definitely be added to my spiritual tool box. Available at www.amazon.com



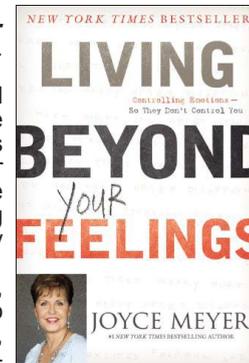
LIVING BEYOND YOUR FEELINGS, Controlling Emotions So They don't Control You. Written by Joyce Meyer. Published by FaithWords, Hachette Book Group.

This is a book that we can all benefit from; I am sure we all can live a much more peaceful and therefore happier life if we learn not to let our feelings control our actions. Joyce Meyer is one of my favorite authors and I must tell you that by reading her books and listening to her for several years; she has helped me change a lot of my negative habits into positive habits; making me a happier person and this made my family and friends enjoy me, and spending more time with me.

The average person has thousands of thoughts every day, and many of these thoughts trigger a corresponding emotion. No wonder so many of us allow our emotions to control our behavior, and afterwards we often regret the way we responded to someone or something. When this happens, often we don't want to admit that we may have over reacted, then we feel bad and others may feel disrespected, hurt or just plain insulted. In this book, Joyce helps us understand what we are feeling and helps us identify the reasons for many of these feelings.

She identifies several feelings. Anger and hurt are the feelings that cause us the most trouble. She helps us understand how to look at those emotions before we react; this also gives us time to react properly. She explains that anger and hurt are often justified but that doesn't mean that we always have to respond and usually we don't need to respond while we are feeling anger or hurt.

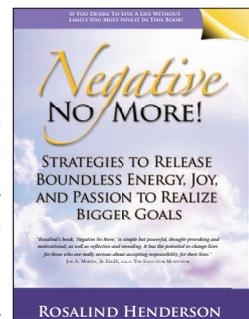
Controlling your emotions will not only lower your stress, it will make you healthier, and that will make you happier and who doesn't want to be happy and healthy. SO, if you are ready to master your emotions this book is for you. Available at www.amazon.com.



Negative No More! Strategies to Release Boundless Energy, Joy, and Passion to Realize Bigger Goals: Written by Rosalind Henderson. Published by Leadership Keys Publishing Company.

If the reader of this book is truly searching within themselves to become all that they can be, then by applying the principals and tactics written within this book, the negative consequences that lead them to defeat can be Honestly examined, and the probability of triumph is within their reach and obtainable. Rosalind's approach is a self-esteem builder, which allows the reader to visualize their true potential, this in turn causes one to have a better perspective of their value system. Rosalind's 31 day Automatic Negative Thinking Style Dairy, is a method of A,B,C,C - writing down the ADVERSE events, BRAINSTORM beliefs attached to the adverse event, list the CONSEQUENCES of these beliefs, and COUNTER these beliefs. By utilizing the journal, the reader can follow their progress, and see the results in their behavior.

This is a must read for all of us who know there is more to us than what meets the eye, and her methods shows how we can relinquish the hold that inhibits us from our destiny, that being, true empowerment over different aspect of our lives. The exposure of information within the pages of Rosalind's book, helps one to honestly question themselves about what is their inner quest, and what lengths will they go to achieve the completeness of it. I enjoyed immensely the wisdom and application of easy to understand enlightenment's, coupled with practical techniques to help ensure one's success. To order call (310) 488-7591 or email: rozzy9315@sbcglobal.net.



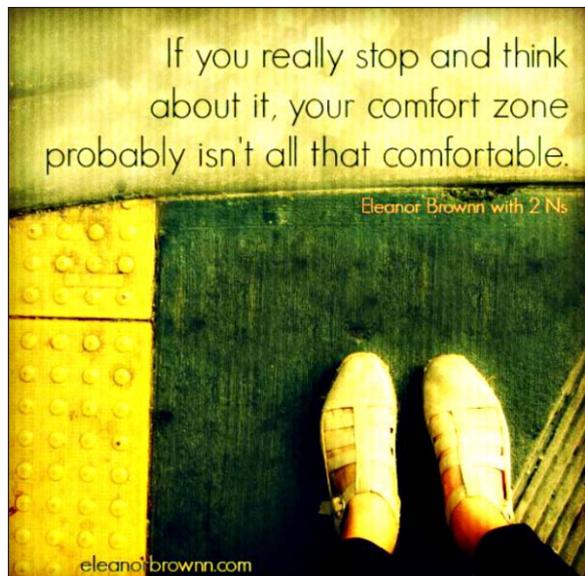
Do you have a book you want us to review? Send us a copy to at: 6930 De Celis Pl. #35, Lake Balboa, CA 91406.



7 WAYS TO ESCAPE THE COMFORT ZONE

If you really stop and think about it, your Comfort Zone probably isn't all that comfortable. If you're living inside of a box, stuffing down your feelings, or putting your dreams on the back burner out of fear, it probably doesn't feel very good.

So many people I see in my workshops feel they have nothing original to say or do, or they think they're "too old" to fully live their dreams. They have a business idea, or a piece of art they've created, or a song they've written — the list goes on and on — and they think it's not "enough" to put out into the Universe, because somebody else has already done it. Just as no two snowflakes are alike, no one else is exactly quite like you. No one else can do what you do or say what you say, in the way you do. Two people can write a book on the same topic and they are completely different books. For example, literally millions of books have been written throughout time. They are different because each person who wrote them is different.



What is it you dream of doing? What vision have you put on-hold while you remain in your so-called Comfort Zone?

1. Value your unique gift. The fact is you have a light to shine that no one else has.
2. Accept that making mistakes is not only human, it's a form of learning.
3. Recognize that it's not about YOU. Somewhere, someone is waiting for exactly what you have to offer. The world needs your light.
4. Focus on one small piece of your dream and take a baby step. Don't allow yourself to be overwhelmed. Baby steps do add up.
5. Acknowledge your progress along the way. You don't have to wait until you get to the top of a mountain to enjoy the view.
6. Pay attention to your heart. If a dream is in your heart, sooner or later you're going to have to deal with it.
7. Stop waiting for conditions to be perfect. They never will be. Fortunately, they don't need to be.

I believe in the possibility of positive change at every age and every stage of life. There are things for you to do, but you won't do them hiding out in your Comfort Zone. Step into the sunlight.

Eleanor Brownn, MA, CPG, is a self care expert, author, speaker and workshop leader. www.eleanorbrownn.com

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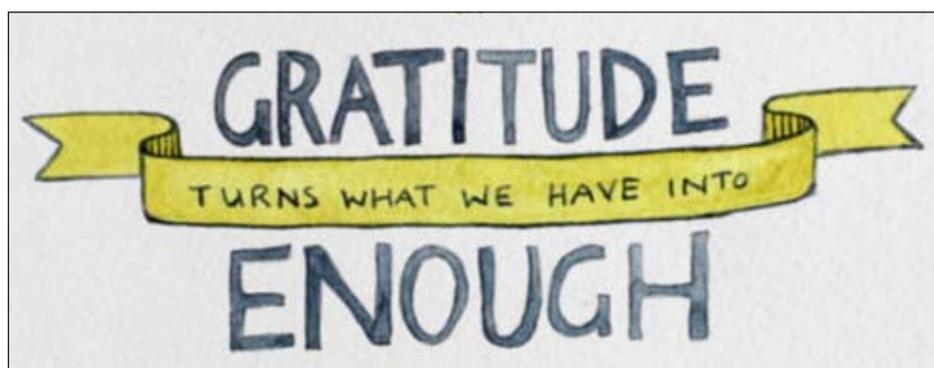
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FRIDAY NOVEMBER 4TH 2016 to Sunday November 6th 2016: A Vision For you 2016 Big Book Study Convention in Asheville, North Carolina, Late registrants, see special information on the Hotels page! Registration starts at 1:00pm and program begins at 3:00pm on Friday Nov 4. This convention is self-supporting by members of Alcoholics Anonymous. **SPEAKERS ON ALL TWELVE STEPS AS LAID OUT IN A.A.'S BIG BOOK**

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 5TH 2016: RADFORD HALL, Comedy Show Fund-raiser, Doors Open at 7:30pm and the show starts at 8pm. Tickets still only \$5 per person. 16 and Older please held at Radford Hall, 13627 Victory Blvd., Van Nuys CA 91401.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2016 to Sunday, November 20, 2016 - Yosemite Summit Conference 2016- SERENITY IN YOSEMITE. AA Open Meetings and Al-Anon Open Meetings, Alateen Closed Meetings, Friday & Saturday Night Dances, Saturday Al-Anon Luncheon, Saturday Dinner. For more information visit: www.yosemitesummitconference.com call (209)966-8300 or Email: ysc@sti.net.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2016 to Sunday, November 20, 2016, THE 10TH ANNUAL WAVES OF SOBRIETY ROUND UP, will be held at the The Grand Hotel, Cape May, New Jersey from - please join us! Workshops, Marathon Meetings, Ice Cream Social * Entertainment, Recovery Yoga, Meditation Meetings, Friday Night BBQ, Saturday Night Banquet - Just your BASIC food fun fellowship! Register for Round Up Online: www.wavesroundup.net, or email: info@wavesroundup.net

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2016 - PANCAKE BREAKFAST every 3rd Saturday at The Orange Friendship Club. 2191 Orange-Olive Road, Orange, CA. \$2.50 All You Can Eat. Call the club for times. (714) 637-9860, Saturday Meetings at 830am, 2pm, 730pm & 10pm.

NOVEMBER 23RD AND 24TH 2016: UNIT A Thank-A-Thon. Starts Wednesday Nov 23rd at 6pm until 10pm then continues Thursday November 24th THANKSGIVING day at 7am. Meetings all day - Dinner at 12:30pm. 50/50 Raffle, Food Fun and Fellowship. Unit A 10641 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood CA 90601.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH 2016 - Moorpark Meeting (on Moorpark, in Studio City) Thanksgiving Feast on Thanksgiving day :) Meeting at 9:00am.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH TO Sunday, November 27, 2016: The Las Vegas Roundup presents, 50th Annual Las Vegas Roundup, Westgate Resort and Casino, 3000 Paradise Road, Las Vegas NV. \$35.00 Registration due by October 31, 2016. Speakers & Marathon Meetings, Workshops, Sock Hop, Golf Tournament, Banquet, Buffet, For more information: www.LasVegasRoundup.org

NOVEMBER 24TH 2016: RADFORD HALL: NOON Thanksgiving day dinner at noon followed by a gratitude meeting at 1pm. You don't have to be alone during this Holiday. Radford Hall, 13627 Victory Blvd., Van Nuys CA 91401.

UPCOMING

DECEMBER 9TH THRU DECEMBER 11TH 2016: A Magical Journey Thru The Steps, Birmingham, Alabama - Ramada Inn Airport. Come join us for a weekend steeped in the 12 Steps with sides of fun and fellowship as AA and Al-Anon speakers lead us on a Magical Journey through the Steps. A weekend of recovery focused fun!. visit www.magicalcityroundup.com

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



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PICKING UP THE PIECES

"Opportunities to find deeper powers within ourselves come when life seems most challenging." ~Joseph Campbell

Life is never a one-way street with all the pieces fitting together. Each of us in our lifetime experiences has a mixture of many situations, including becoming an addict. But one of the most difficult situations we face is losing something important to us. And addiction can be one of those things we miss and grieve when entering recovery. Today, using my experiences to make clear my explanations, I'd like to address a few of those losses. Maybe you'll recognize yourself in some of it as I go along. And I know those who live in recovery may too.

"Grief is like the ocean; it comes on waves ebbing and flowing. Sometimes the water is calm, and sometimes it is overwhelming. All we can do is learn to swim." ~Vicki Harrison

In life and recovery, we need to be ready for loss and life events with a reliable "Relapse Prevention Plan." Because those life events will come like the few below.

Loss of a Loved One: This is one of the most difficult, and I don't believe we ever fully recover. With some, it may take years to find peace with it. And loss can add fuel to any addiction. I lost my parents and both of my brothers, and I still live with the feeling they took a part of me with them. I don't dwell on the loss, and I'm finally at peace. But I miss them, and when I look at their pictures, memories come back, and I allow whatever comes up. Then I have to move on with the ebb and flow. We need to learn this in recovery too as you begin the inner work that must be made to become "whole" again for you, your children and family.

Divorce: I filed for divorce. I wanted it. But when the final papers arrived, I sank to the floor devastated. Why wasn't I celebrating? After my initial tears, I realized I cried not for the relationship lost, but for never having the relationship I'd dreamed of growing up. When I was young, I made the wrong choice, my mistake. 12 miserable wasted years, how stupid. I had to pick up the pieces, forgive myself and heal, and create a different life for my children and myself. Many in recovery have to do the same, as addiction could be one of the mistakes we made to bring us to a divorce. We need to learn in recovery to "forgive" and move on.

"Your child's life will be filled with fresh experiences. It's good if yours is as well." ~Dr. Margaret Rutherford

Empty Nest: When our children leave the nest and venture out, we worry they can't make it on their own. We are afraid they may do the wrong thing and turn to addiction to cope. For mothers there are fewer duties to be done like cooking and less laundry, the house feels empty, and we have more time on our hands, so we lose part of our parent role. So who are we? I kept in touch with my children, but I had to overcome my identity crisis and discover there was more to me than the parent. It can be a source to why many women turn to addictions. So in recovery we need to begin the "inner growth" and learn new hobbies and interests.

Loss of Job: Loss of a job can be traumatic in any circumstance. It means tightening your belt and learning a new way to manage. It may even involve a major move, and a whole family can suffer. I lost jobs raising children without child support, and moving when my mother had a stroke. Many lose a job due to addiction. But for me, each time I had to regroup and get help where I could. Then a job loss at age 47 forced me back to school into a new field of work where I spent many years as a Psych Therapist. Yes, a loss can bring a blessing.

Are any of these examples familiar to you? A loss is a loss, and it can come from any life situation in our environment, within ourselves and even in recovery from addiction. It can create stress, anxiety, depression, fear, family tension, etc. And we wonder how we can survive. But we do. Every healing journey takes time and effort. But we all heal at our pace, especially from addiction.

The first step in finding your way through a loss is to accept that your life is and will be different. And then begin your healing and recovery. Christina Hibbert, Psy. D. gives clear direction for approaching and facilitating healing from loss. She says, "Instead of ignoring loss and trauma, or moving past them; we can choose to slow down, sit with each loss, examine it, and grieve it. It's better to sink in and experience it now than to find yourself drowning years later in losses that had no voice."

Learn to reach out for support. Your life will change, and you will change. But you're not alone. And as time passes, learn from experiences. You may find something wonderful you would have missed without your challenge. You become stronger, wiser, more of who you're meant to be, even after addiction! I wish you peace in your heart.

Author, Marilyn Fowler is a retired Licensed Clinical Social Worker/Psycho-therapist. Her professional experience includes: Mental Health Team Leader, Director of Mental Health Services in the Duval County Jail in Jacksonville, Florida; Coordinating Mental Health Services in nursing homes, working on in-patient units, and in private practice for a number of years. She taught a class at the University of North Florida on "The Influence of Childhood Messages on Adult Life." Marilyn's Memoir, titled: "Silent Echoes" was published a few years ago and available on Amazon. She has a self-help blog titled; The Self-Help Road To Freedom.



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True power, as Les Brown indicated, resides within you. The minute you start to believe that the power is not there, that you don't have a say in your recovery, is the minute you start down a path toward relapse. Maybe it's not relapse that most people are afraid of. Maybe it's Recovery.

I have a motivational poster in my office that I look at every time I sit at my desk. It says, "I am the Master of My Fate, and The Captain of My Soul". I refuse to believe in the invisible asterisk that says, 'except addiction'. It doesn't say that, thus I am the Master of My Recovery!

Failing might be part of the process of success, but it's not a perennial part of it that is out of your control. Don't get sucked into the expectations of people who believe that Recovery is not within you. As Les Brown states often, "You Have Greatness Within You!" I have Recovery within me as well.

Michael DeLeon of Steered Straight, Inc., is on a mission: A mission to educate the youth to stay in the right direction when it comes to serious life issues, especially drugs. check out the website www.AmericanEpidemicMovie.com or www.KidsAreDying.com to buy the movie. Order the soundtrack to the movie, 30 Tracks, all music on Recovery & Addiction Struggles donated by 26 amazing artists around America including Colin McGuinness and Ricky Byrd. Check out his other websites www.steeredstraight.org • www.heroinolutions.org.



We are encouraging you to keep your own vibration high regardless of what goes on around you. We will be practicing with you! Gratitude is magic! We always explain to our clients that gratitude is the antidote to suffering, and the access to everything we could ever want. There is this backwards relationship that many of us participate in. We think about the thing we want so much, that all we are present to is the absence of it. From this place of lack we lose, rather than gain. The magic lies in being so grateful for what we have right here, right now that we become magnets for more prosperity, and love. Everything we want is on the other side of adoring our current circumstances. May we all step into this month with a commitment to an attitude of gratitude. Love only, Rudy and Kelly Castro

Conscious Partnership Coaching Rudy is a therapist, and Kelly is a Certified Relationship Coach. They facilitate groups at exceptional treatment centers such as, The Villa Treatment Center, PAX House, and Inneractions. Together they have created partnership, family, and a business designed for service.



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www.KeysToRecoveryNewspaper.com

DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION:

Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. is printed and distributed heavily throughout California and now in 26 other U.S. States. Having a current print run of 20,000+ newspapers and a readership exceeding 90,000 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
- Bail Bonds
- 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
- Recovery Conventions & Conferences, 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.

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. LA 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 (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 Dr, 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.

CEA-HOW: Compulsive Eaters Anonymous- Honesty, Open Mindedness, Willingness Recovery for Compulsive Over Eaters. 5632 Van Nuys Blvd. # 401, Van Nuys, CA. 91401

Cocaine Anonymous: of the SFV (818) 760-8402.

Cocaine Anonymous: World Service Office www.ca.org. (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.

Eating Recovery Center: (877) 957-6575, www.EatingRecovery.com/Jenni.

ERC Insight: (Mood, Anxiety, Trauma) (877) 737-7391, www.jennischaefer.com/seek-help.

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

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

Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous: (FA) www.foodaddicts.org (781) 932-6300

Families Anonymous: www.familiesanonymous.org (800) 736-9805.

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

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

Love Addicts Anonymous: (LAA) www.Loveaddicts.org

Laughing Yoga Recovery: for Stress reduction and wellness, breathe, love, laugh and be happy, (760) 832-9992.

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: www.nasfv.com (818) 997-3822.

Nicotine Anonymous National & World Services: www.nicotine-anonymous.org (877) 879-6422.

Nicotine Anonymous So. California Intergroup: www.scina.org (800) 642-0666

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

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence: SFV www.ncadd-sfv.org (818) 997-0414.

International Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Foundation: (OCD) www.ocfdoundation.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: comprehensive 12 Step sponsorship informational resource website (512) 267-4707.

Secular Organization For Sobriety: (323) 666-4295.

Sex Addicts Anonymous: (SAA) www.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) 210-814.

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

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

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

The Other Bar: FREE12 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 (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 LA 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 www.nami.org (818) 994-6747.

National Runaway Switchboard (800) Runaway.

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

MEALS SERVED & SERVICES OFFERED:

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: (818)785-4476.

ANGEL HANZ FOR THE HOMELESS, INC. Vegan non-profit: Last Sunday of Each Month 1pm North Hollywood Park, 11455 Magnolia Blvd., North Hollywood, Food Served, Care Packs, Barber, Pet Food, Pet Groomer and a VET for the animals. For Info Call (818) 358-3663.

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.

Vital Services Resource Guide

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FOOD BANKS Con't

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 .
 Salvation Army Glendale Corps: Monday -Friday Food Pantry. 320 West Windsor Rd., Glendale CA 91204 (818) 246-5586.
 Shepherd's Nest, Feeding the Homeless 9237 Crebs Ave., Northridge, CA (818) 557-6247.
 SOVA Food Pantry, Jewish Family Services (open to all in need) 16439 Van Owen St., (818) 988-7682.
 West Valley Pantry - 7304 Jordan Ave., Canoga Park, CA (818) 887-6101.
 West Valley Food Pantry (Prince of Peace Church) 5700 Rudnick Ave., Woodland Hills (818) 346-5554.

HOUSING & HOMELESS SHELTERS & RELATED

At The Fountain Transitional Living (310) 631-1600.
 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 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.
 Los Angeles Family Housing (818) 982-3895.
 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 (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 & 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.
 San Diego Sober Living Homes Assoc.: (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&LEARNING - employment & supportive services (818) 781-1073 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 (800) 273-TALK
 Suicide Prevention 24Hour Assessment Center (800) SUICIDE (784-2433).
 Suicide Prevention Center (877) 727-4747.
 TEEN LINE: Teens Helping Teens US & Canada (800) TLC-HOPE or (310) 855-HOPE www.teenlineonline.org

DISABILITY SERVICES

Job Accommodation Centers, Toll Free (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/Harm Reduction LA (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

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

Organization/Company Name: _____
 Services offered: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone: (____) _____ Cell (____) _____
 Contact person: _____
 What you would like us to print in the resource guide: _____

Mail To: Keys to Recovery Newspaper, 6930 De Celis Pl., #35, Lake Balboa, CA 91406



MARY COOK

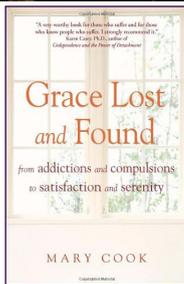
ADDICTION SPECIALIST COUNSELOR

M.A. Psychology, R.A.S.

40 Years of Experience

310-517-0825

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



AUTHOR OF: *Grace Lost & Found*
Available on Amazon.com

WWW.MARYCOOKMA.COM

email: MaryCookMA@att.net



The SoberScopes are for entertainment only because we live by Rule 62.

Cancer: June 24 to July 22

Something special is headed your way today. It might not arrive in the package that you're expecting-- but it might be something you've been wanting for a long time. It has something to do with love, acceptance and contentment, and it's something you may have read in the 12 &12 or heard in the rooms. It is introduced gradually, but at the end of the day the understanding you'll receive will be encouraging as never before.

Leo: July 23 to August 23

You're thankful for your loved ones and everything your higher power blessed you with, and that goes double for those that are close to you. Whether they're newly acquired or you have known them since childhood, equally keep them nearby and spend time with your most beloved people and truly appreciate your possessions. The material objects are beneficial when there not obsessed over, spending time with your people as well staying in the present moment, brings lasting breakthroughs.

Virgo: August 24th to Sept. 22: You don't often do something unpredictable or, rarely out of the ordinary, but here you are. You don't want to do anything that appears mundane and routine. You're after changing your stinking thinking, a change of perceptions and some new experience you've never had before. You might have to wait until your head is quiet, after prayer or meditation, since you're probably quite busy. Once it's all behind you, go for it!

Libra: Sept. 23 to Oct. 23: Sleep has been eluding you for a couple of days now, mostly because someone you care about is under fire and you're trying to figure a solution how to help them handle it. Bring it to your Sponsor who may provide the advice you need, relax and search for the answer. In the meantime, if you're still staying up not being able to sleep, offer it up in prayer and patiently wait for the answer. When one relays more on their higher power and less on self, sleep should be easier to obtain.

Scorpio: Oct. to Nov. 21: You are well known for your willingness to go the extra mile when someone you love, is in need of your assistance. That appears to be happening right now, and the indications will continue coming your way, until you find a solution in regards to maintaining their anonymity, and being able to get outside help to resolve their dilemma. You can pull it off, of course, but that might result in telling everyone a bit more than you'd like. Trust your instincts.

Sagittarius: Nov. 22 to Dec. 21: You have always felt that your own perceptions could be trusted compared to anyone else's. Trusting your own judgment solely can be right, it being usually a good plan, seeing your instincts are ordinarily right on, but it might not work out as you'd like it to this time. You need to rely and confide in someone else (Sponsor, confidant or higher power) and trust their judgment if you want your plans to succeed. Choose the one who you know can help you find a happy medium between the rules and their own instincts.

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Capricorn: Dec. 22 - Jan. 20: You feel somewhat bored and antsy lately, and you're figuring that by changing the scenery your mood would be better. Get out of your head when it tells you that your avoiding responsibilities, release those feelings to your higher power, meditate and if need be, talk with your Sponsor about it, this in turn, can truly rejuvenate you. Take a long walk with a good listener—a person who could be objective and supportive of your needs. Someone that will help you find solution to help uplift you.

Aquarius: Jan. 21 - Feb. 18: You're feeling so close to your higher power right now that it feels somewhat unreal -- to you at least. It's like you've known each other all your lives. Maybe it's because you're releasing all of your cares, and character defects to your higher power. Regardless, you owe it to yourself to spend as much time as possible looking into the matter while thoroughly enjoying the new since of freedom.

Pisces: Feb. 19 - March 20: You respect authority figures, though you have your limits. You admire how much time and energy members invest into expanding their wisdom and experience through the 12 steps, and you're plenty willing to give them the esteem they deserve. When someone offers you their advice in a somewhat disrespectful manner, you still listen to them and understand that we all have short comings. If someone you're advising isn't quite sure what to do, take them to the big book, its information should help enlighten them in what direction to take.

Aries: March 21 - April 20: Everyone needs to do a serious character cleansing every now and then. It's your turn now, so you probably want to get serious and apply the principal's full force. If you have the desire to get rid of things-- even if you're emotionally attached -- do so. Consider it as a new start, and move on. After all, if you don't discard the old, then welcoming the new would not be appreciated. You've got nothing but good things ahead when in gratitude.

Taurus: April 21 - May 21: Fortunately, it happens, you find yourself surrounded by individuals needing help finding the path to recovery, one of them captures your interest. You think hard about sponsoring them, even though you have limited time already. Are you ready to get to know them better? If they haven't asked you to be their sponsor it's not because they haven't been thinking about it, they might just be shy.

Gemini: May 22 to June 23: Being an intellectual, cerebrally focused individual doesn't mean you don't have deep feelings -- it's that you have better control keeping them at bay than most when under similar circumstances. That is a vital talent that's needed now, as well as your ability to remain diligent in applying the 12 steps when under fire. You should do just fine, and might even uplift those around you in the process! If you're at all tempted to criticize a loved one, stop and think about giving them inspiration instead.

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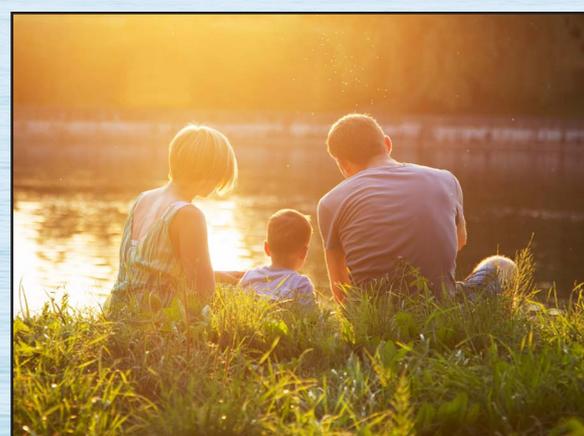
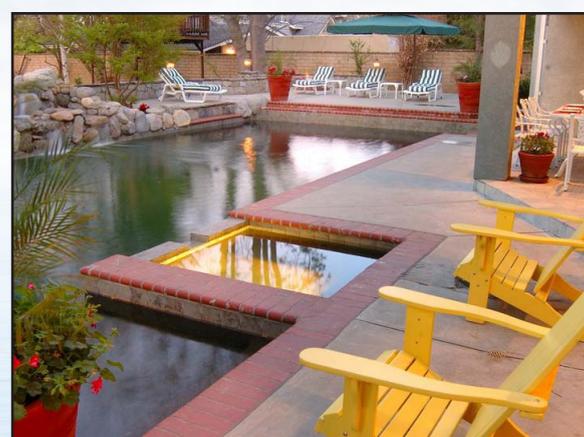
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