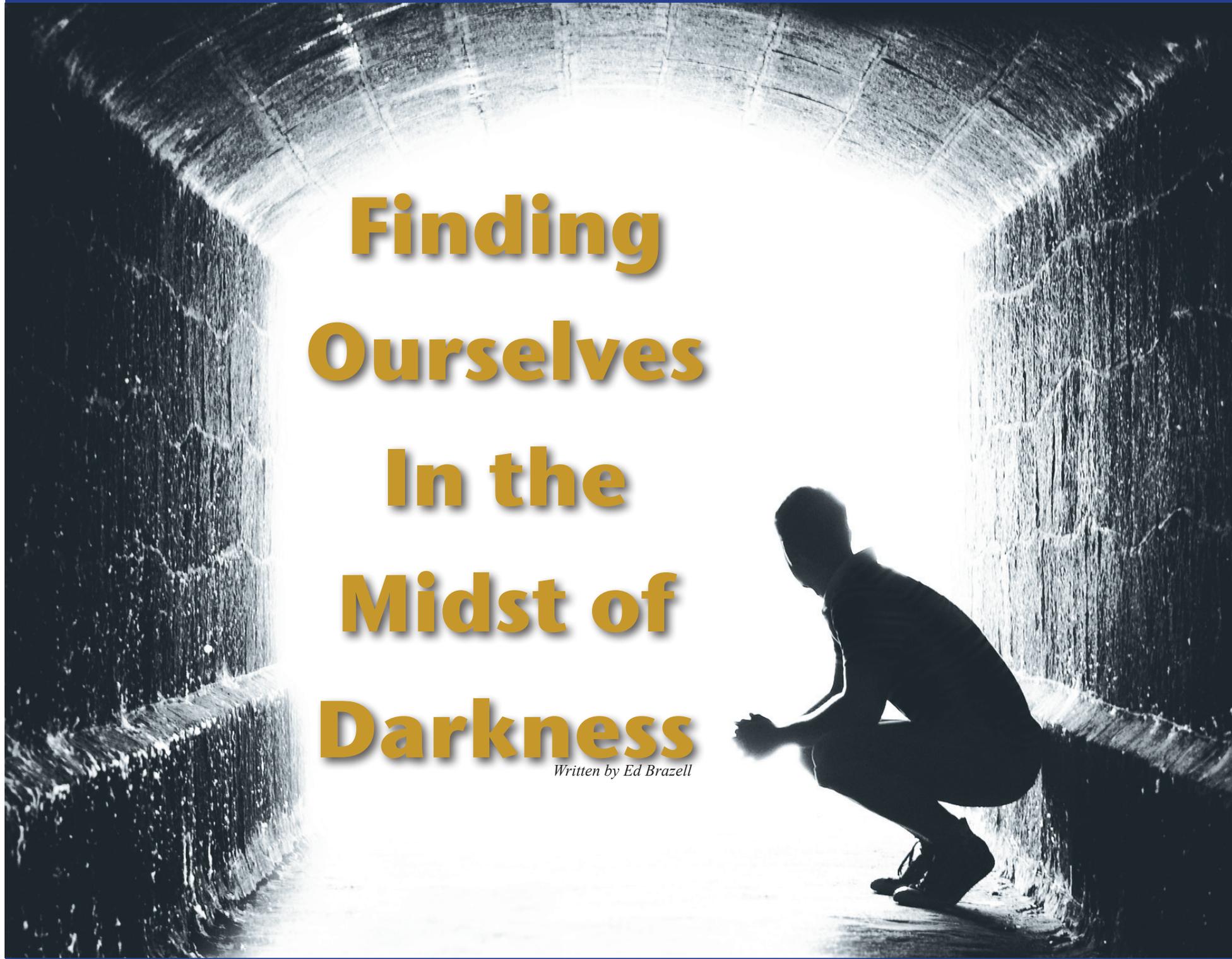


January 2017

KEYS TO RECOVERY — NEWSPAPER, INC. —



Finding Ourselves In the Midst of Darkness

Written by Ed Brazell

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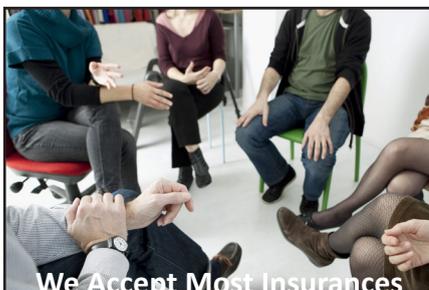
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Here we grow again. Keys to Recovery Newspaper is now entering our third year of publication with more Gratitude than ever. We want to thank everyone who makes it possible to publish our recovery newspaper each month.

First, our readers, who support us, and let us know how much Keys to Recovery is changing their lives. Next, our authors, who give us the best articles EVER, and make it possible to carry this message of Hope and Recovery. Our advertisers, who make it possible to pay our bills month after month, year after year. Lastly, all of the locations that distribute our newspapers each month, we could not exist without your support.

We are printing more copies, attending more conferences, spreading into more states, distributing papers to more diverse locations, than even we could have imagined. We thank you for your support.

We know that we are blessed, and as Bishop Stephen Hamilton (of Spirit & Life Ministries) says "get ready for a year of overflow".

Jeannie Marshall, President & Cofounder

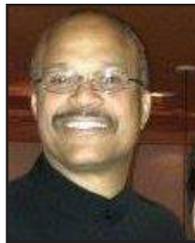


Hello everyone. I have been reflecting on the past year openly and honestly. I view 2016 as a year of triumphs on the path of sobriety, as for my personal experiences regarding friendships and acquaintances, that has been another matter. During this past year, we have lost some special and unique individuals from our 12 Step fellowships that will truly be missed. Some of them I considered friends, while others I met in passing, either way, they left a lasting impression on the lives of many.

I have learned in the years during this journey in sobriety not to take anything or anyone for granted, things can dramatically change and people can be here today and gone tomorrow, leaving us with the "I should haves". If we take one day at a time and truly look at it as a miracle within itself, we would utilize every minute of the day to appreciate everybody and every situation, as a precious moment in time to be cherished, or to gain some understanding about ourselves by learning from it and others.

When I wake up every morning, I appreciate that I have another opportunity to become a better person, husband, brother, uncle, friend of Bill's, because they're hundreds of thousands of individuals around the world that didn't have the opportunity to wake up as we did, and start the day anew. I hope that everyone who is reading this, would just stop for ten seconds and visualize as if yesterday was your last day here on earth, did you appreciate everyone and accomplish all that you could?

Marcus Marshall, Vice President & Cofounder



In this season of celebration a New Year begins. The beginning of the year brings a special atmosphere that motivates action. A time where we can't help but stare at our lives and ourselves straight in the face. We take a self-inventory and make New Year's resolutions. Starting this New Year with a resolution has good intentions behind it, but as we all know good intentions don't go very far! When I was out there using I was full of good intentions, but they never could get me sober. So this year I have decided no resolutions for me. Instead, I have decided to reconnect myself to my program, I have committed to a 1 year 12 step workshop. We work a step a month.

The way I see it, most of my resolutions are behaviors that no longer serve me. "My defects of character." Peeling another layer, continue to seek and grow. As it says in the Big Book, "AA is not a plan for recovery that can be finished and done with, It is a way of life, and the challenge contained in its principles is great enough to keep any human being striving for as long as he lives. We do not, can not outgrow this plan. As arrested alcoholics, we must have a program for living that allows for limitless expansion." How free do you want to be?

Till next time, Beth Dewey-Stern, C.E.O. & Cofounder



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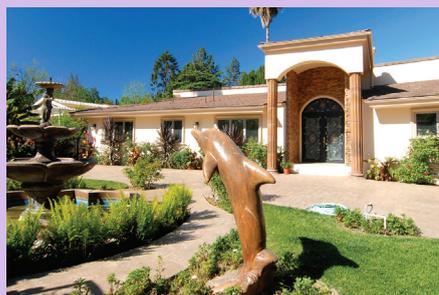
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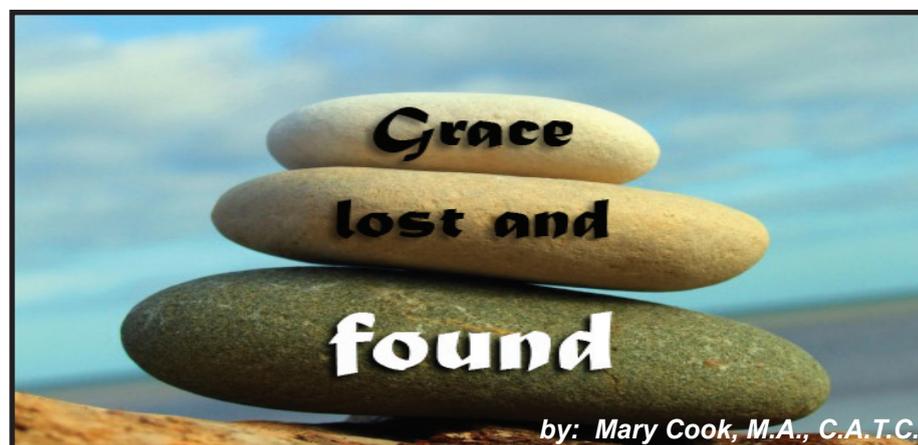
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by: Mary Cook, M.A., C.A.T.C.

RELATIONSHIPS IN SICKNESS & HEALTH

Our adult relationships contain energies of unhealed wounds from childhood. Sometimes we lack safe, trustworthy caretakers to adequately meet our physical and psychological needs in infancy and early childhood. These unhealed experiences make us vulnerable to express infantile needs, and chronic fear and anger in our adult intimate relationships. Furthermore in early childhood, our experiences with others are absorbed into our beginning concept of self. And our early caretakers represent a God-like force that influences our later relationship with a Higher Power. Thus as adults with this history, we are likely to feel imprisoned in painful experiences with ourselves, our partner and our Higher Power. We do not experience ourselves as separate, whole, unique beings, and we do not consciously experience genuine closeness and connection with others or God, and yet we have desperate feelings of neediness. Domestic violence relationships typically reflect these dynamics.

When middle to late childhood is fraught with difficulties in establishing a sense of autonomy and creativity, we can have adult relationships that are enmeshed, distant and superficial, or ones in which there is chronic conflict between one partner asking for greater closeness and the other wanting more distance. The latter can be expressed in hurtful actions toward the partner, which result in distance, rather than honest dialog. These relationships lack spontaneous joy, playfulness, humor and imagination. There is concern about losing a part of oneself in the relationship, because autonomy is not stable. This means that our sense of self is fragmented or weak, and we are attempting to artificially strengthen it through defense mechanisms, or by aligning with someone who seems to be a stronger partner. Spiritual beliefs are also immature and characterized by ambiguity, or are superficially determined through affiliation with a person or group that has dogmatic beliefs.

If we had significant problems in our teenage years, then we did not likely pursue an honest, self-searching relationship with ourselves. Healthy adolescents undertake a deep, thorough self-examination process, and try out different beliefs and behaviors to determine what feels most right, healthy and comfortable to them. Values, priorities, goals, and core beliefs about philosophy, psychology, politics and spirituality ideally form in this period. If we are sufficiently healthy teens, we perceive our strengths, weaknesses, and talents, and begin to have a deeper understanding of emotions and their healthy expression. We learn to take responsibility for ourselves and our well-being, which prepares us for self-sufficiency and interdependence. We set internal and external boundaries between our own impulses and what we know is right for us, and between others who attempt to pressure us to agree or act on what feels uncomfortable and unhealthy to us.

If this period of development is disrupted, our immature teenage energies affect our adult relationships. This results in chronic power struggles with our partners, internal conflicts, and attempts to manipulate the God of our understanding. We want significant others to conform to our ideas of how they should be, and/or we allow friends to over-control us. Teenage rebellion, arrogance, willfulness, and vulnerability to peer pressure are precursors to the deep work of reflection. When this work is completed, the aforementioned character defects dissipate. Without this thorough period of reflection, identification and integration, spiritual principles are not generally well understood nor practiced with any consistency.

What is required for healthy adult relationships begins with the ability to provide for our physical and psychological well-being, and personal growth. We must be honest, trustworthy and have good discernment regarding the trustworthiness of others. We need to know and deeply understand ourselves as whole, unique beings. We must accept responsibility to create health, happiness and fulfillment in our lives, meet challenges and resolve problems as they occur. Once we have these components, we can work productively and proactively on internal and relationship conflicts that interfere with personal growth and intimate relatedness. In relationships we make and follow through with commitments with integrity. We choose partners with whom we have sufficient mental, emotional, physical, spiritual and functional compatibility, especially regarding important values, morals and priorities. We place our relationship with our Higher Power, our soul, and any dependent children above our relationship with an adult partner.

We typically vacillate between human and divine will, as we develop our spiritual practice. Our abilities to demonstrate honesty, open-mindedness, respect, consideration, cooperation, humility, compassion, patience, forgiveness, gratitude, joy and laughter increase the depth of our love. Adult relationships reflect where we need healing. Allowing ourselves to therapeutically discuss and release past painful and negative energies, and experience emotionally corrective experiences, paves the way to a healthy relationship with our Higher Power and principled living. This then means that all of our relationships will be healthy.

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. Contact her at 310-517-0825. She is the author of "Grace Lost and Found: From Addictions and Compulsions to Satisfaction and Serenity", at Amazon.com.



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BEING IN THE MOMENT

In the big picture, recovery is a process of awakening. We emerge from the slumber of obsessive thoughts (including craving, urges, and preoccupation with using and finding the next fix), compulsive behaviors, and self-absorbed attitudes driven by the vicious circle of active addiction. Recovery allows us to move into conscious awareness of our experience, both internal and external, and make choices that facilitate progress toward a whole, healthy, and healed life. Being present-centered in this moment, to the maximum extent possible, is essential to remaining awake. Going back to “sleep” puts people in recovery at much greater risk of relapse, as well as returning to other familiar self-defeating patterns of living.

Whenever we aren't paying conscious attention to the present moment “right here and right now” we are effectively sleepwalking, even when we are wide awake. Usually, it takes the form of being caught up in thoughts about what happened in the past or what could possibly happen in the future. This occurs unconsciously; for most people it's an autopilot mode of operating that we default into easily and habitually. We were here, in the present, and without being aware of when we slipped away, we're now thinking intensely about what happened yesterday, last month, or perhaps even years ago, or something that might (or might not) happen tomorrow, next week, or six months from now.

When we're focused on the past or the future, it is impossible to respond consciously and skillfully in the here and now. We are cut off from the possibilities inherent in the present moment, unable to see it and experience it for what it is, and the opportunities for learning, growth, and healing it may contain. During these episodes, no matter where we are and who we are with physically, mentally and emotionally we are somewhere else.

While it can be valuable to occasionally visit the past, and it's important to plan, related to the future, getting stuck in either is an exercise in futility, as well as a tremendous waste of time and energy. After all, the past is as good as it's ever going to get; it ain't changing, no matter how much or how long we ruminate on it. And the future cannot be predicted or controlled, regardless of how much planning and rehearsing we engage in, it remains to become whatever it will be, subject to a multitude of variables that may or may not come to pass.

In addition to active participation in my 12-Step fellowship, the core of my program of recovery is a nearly hour-long morning routine that integrates a range of present-centering practices. These include spiritual reading, a combination of mantra-based and mindfulness meditation, non-denominational prayer, self-hypnosis, passive and active stretching, and Qi Gong (a Chinese mind-body practice). In Buddhism, the word mantra means “mind protecting.” A mantra (a repeated sound, word, or phrase) that focuses our attention, thus decreasing the mind's automatic and unconscious tendency to continuously drag our attention from one thought or image to another. Outside of formal meditation, when I find my thoughts wandering, I use several other mantras, as well as intentional breathing, as a way of anchoring my conscious attention in the here and now.

Because it provides a pathway to greater inner peace, the concept of being in the moment is part of the foundation of wisdom and awakening in many spiritual traditions. However, it's one thing to achieve this present-centered awareness or mindfulness, but it's quite another to maintain it. Even during the meditation that I've been doing consistently for many years, there are times when I find myself thinking about various aspects of the past or the future. Moreover, as my recovery has progressed, I've modified the content and sequence of my non-denominational prayers. Every once in a while in the midst of my prayers, I'll realize that I'm using the “old” version rather than the one I meant to use, in effect, I've briefly gone unconscious, even during an activity intended to facilitate conscious awareness!

Because it is so easy and natural for present-centered awareness to slip into the past or the future, returning to the moment is just as high a priority. In fact, the essence of a spiritual awakening for me is to recognize that my mindfulness has lapsed, and use that awareness to return to the present moment. Mindfulness is about being fully present with our thoughts, emotions, and physical sensations, whether they are pleasurable, painful, or neutral, observing and accepting them without judgment.

Being present-centered is one of those recovery-supportive skills often described as simple in its essence, though far from easy to develop. Building skills in any area of life (whether reading, cooking, swimming, meditation, or recovery) is a two-fold process: 1) learn what works; 2) practice what works with persistence and dedication. You can start by identifying and beginning to practice using a present-centering “anchor” that fits for you. This could be the sensation of your breath as you inhale and exhale, a mantra, feelings of compassion, loving-kindness, or other sense of the connection you share with others, or with that beyond oneself. Let your attention rest in that experience.

When you realize your attention has drifted, and your thoughts have taken you elsewhere, you can gently return to the present moment by bringing your attention back to your anchor. And when you become aware that your thoughts have once again pulled you back into the past or propelled you into the future, you can simply return your attention to the here and now again. Learning how to stay in the present moment is an essential skill in recovery, but it's just as important to develop the conscious awareness and skills with which we can return to it, over and over and over.

Dan Mager, MSW is the author of *Some Assembly Required: A Balanced Approach to Recovery from Addiction and Chronic Pain* (available at Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and centralrecoverpress.com). He blogs monthly for *Psychology Today* at <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/some-assembly-required> Dan received his Master of Social Work from Hunter College of the City University of New York School of Social Work and is a Certified Diplomate in Clinical Hypnotherapy.



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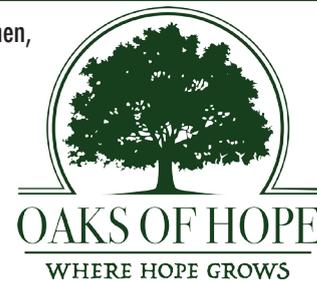
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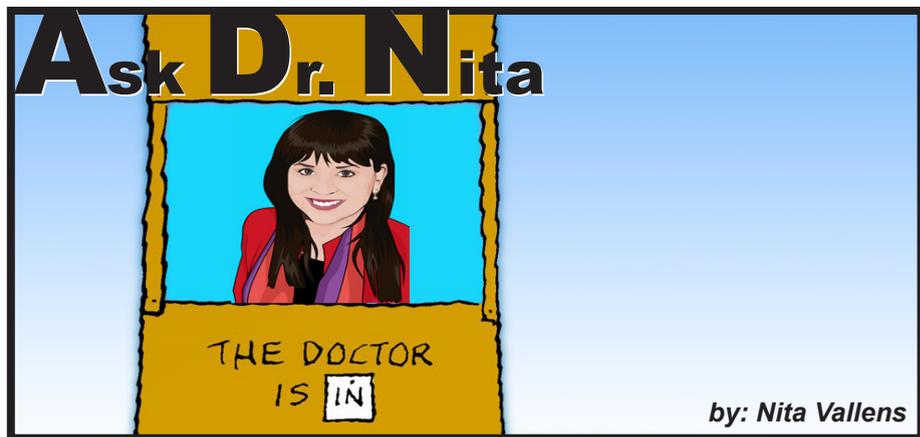
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by: Nita Vallens

Dear Dr. Nita,
I have had several careers and my family always teases me and criticizes me about not sticking with anything long enough to be successful. I guess you could say I'm a Jack of All Trades. For the New Year I want a fresh start, but when things get hard I quit. Any words of encouragement would be greatly appreciated.
Stuck in Los Angeles

Dear Stuck,
Thank you for writing and I'm sorry your family has been so critical of you. Let's take a deeper look - first we will address the Jack of All Trades, then we will discuss your statement, "when things get hard I quit."

This is a judgmental saying, "jack of all trades", then part two of it: "master of none" that is a put down when it doesn't have to be used ever. An executive coach once told me that people with many interests are "rainbow people", and it means you have many gifts! A career coach recently told me that we are living so long now, that most people will have 5-7 career changes in a lifetime. Gone are the days of working for one company for 30 - 40 years, a gold watch and party right into retirement!

If you feel that you have many gifts, it's time to figure out what you want to do next and prioritize your interests. One way to do this is to first sort your aspirations and interests into two categories: vocation or avocation. The vocation category includes areas that you think will work as a means of support or bring you the financial success you want. Avocation refers to the activities and interests that would work better as spare time, hobbies, or occasional activities you want to do for enjoyment or fun, not necessarily for financial gain.

Also, you may want to begin researching what you'll need to do to advance such as a trade school, more education or specialized training, and the cost associated with whatever you want to pursue. Next, assess whether stopping the work you are doing now is necessary while you make a shift to another career/job. Particularly if you need more education, it may be better to stay where you are until you get the needed skills/education to move on. If you don't have outside support and are self-supporting, this is a key factor!

As for being successful, there are many definitions for this - not just monetary. I invite you to create a definition for success that works for you. It's okay to want financial success, but research shows that money alone is not a motivator. Security, and being part of a team or being challenged are significant aspects of feeling successful. Take your time and also avail yourself of the many career choices and questionnaires that can help you understand your personality type, and the careers that are most suitable for you. This information is available online.

Regarding quitting when things get hard, here is a story that will inspire you: Mark Spitz, who in 1972 won 6 Olympic gold medals went to Indiana University, his coach was a guy named Doc Councilman, the greatest swim coach in America's history.

The first day of practice every fall, they take all the guys who want to be on the swim team out on the swim deck. They didn't get in the water. And there was a little banner that hung over the pool, and the banner only had three words on it; Hurt, Pain, Agony.

He said, "Okay, we're going to spend a lot of time together this year, and if you want to be a part of this swim team, every afternoon you have to come here for a couple hours, and swim until you hurt. If you have higher goals and want to be a national champ, you have to come here every afternoon and swim until you're in pain."

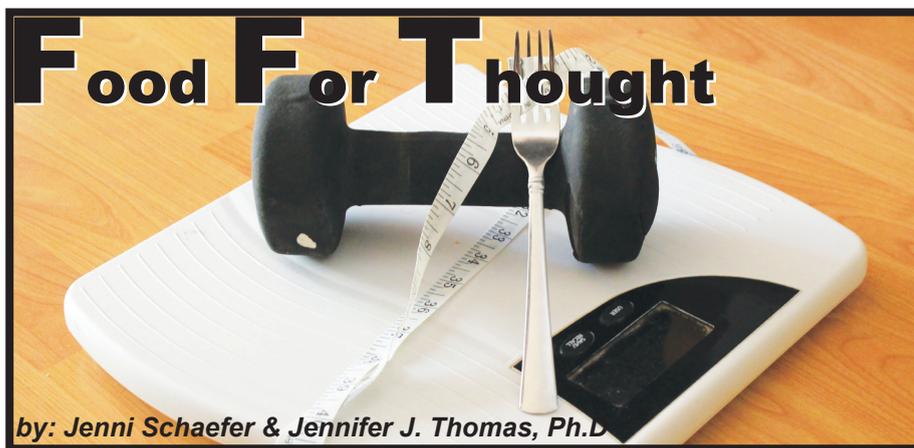
"If you have still higher goals and you want to be the next Mark Spitz, you want to be a world champion or an Olympic champion, you have to come here and train until you're in agony." He said, "So it's your choice. Hurt, pain, agony." He said, "All of you, I wouldn't have recruited you unless I knew each and every one of you had world class potential inside of you."

Here's the interesting thing. Whether you choose hurt or pain or agony, by the time you take a shower and go to dinner, everything is going to go back to normal. So it's how much are you willing to give in that 2, 2-1/2 hours every day that's going to determine your destiny. What's it going to be?

Thank you for reaching out. 2017 will be the start of new beginnings, the moment you wrote to me the wheels were set in motion. Feel free to send me an update anytime.

I believe in you, Dr. Nita

Dr Nita Vallens is a licensed Marriage Family Therapist and certified Hypnotherapist in Sherman Oaks and can be reached via www.DrNitaVallens.com Her Inner Vision radio show can be heard at 1:00 PST on KPFK Los Angeles, 90.7 FM or live stream at www.KPFK.org Please write to her at: doctornita@gmail.com



by: Jenni Schaefer & Jennifer J. Thomas, Ph.D.

BUT I DON'T DIET

Excerpt from Almost Anorexic by Jenni Schaefer and Jennifer J. Thomas, Ph.D.

These days, many of us carry a smartphone. Consider this: would you have purchased your current brand if it had a reputation for failing the vast majority of the time? Probably not. But for years our society has kept dieting despite the well-documented failure rate.

Luckily for the weight-loss industry, dieters typically blame themselves when they gain the weight back, thus keeping their wallets open for the next miracle slimming plan. Some diets focus on a specific food, from grapefruit to cookies, while others, with the help of strategic exercise, promise to change a certain body part like your abs or backside. The tube-feeding diet, popularized in Europe, is so drastic that it requires a feeding tube that holds a minimal amount of liquid calories to be run through a person's nose right down into the stomach! Low-carbohydrate diets are popular worldwide from Atkins (in the United States) to Dukan (in France). Others encourage more obvious, though no more effective, approaches such as consuming very few calories per day or skipping meals. Some people jump on a certain diet bandwagon only to jump off and then start the same, or possibly different, one later. Unfortunately, chronic or "yo-yo" dieting is typically associated with weight gain, rather than loss, over time.

You might be breathing a sigh of relief right now thinking, but I don't diet. Jenni used to believe the same thing, even though she did restrict herself to small amounts of certain types of food due to concerns about her weight. That's clearly one form of dieting. She knows that now. As the public has become increasingly savvy to the mantra "Diets don't work," the diet industry has stayed in business by cleverly repackaging its wares as "lifestyle changes." Why else would they be promoting books with names like *The No Diet, Diet?* Although some life-style changes are healthy, others can be dieting in disguise. Here are just a few examples.

Food Allergies: Are you avoiding dairy or gluten because you think you might be allergic or intolerant? Food allergies involve a severe, possibly fatal, reaction to a limited number of foods—most commonly soy, wheat, eggs, milk, fish, shellfish, peanuts, or tree nuts. Studies suggest that approximately 6 percent of children and 1 to 2 percent of adults have bona fide food allergies, and must therefore abstain from at least one of these foods. Similarly, celiac disease, an autoimmune disorder that affects less than 1 percent of American adults, requires that sufferers follow a gluten-free diet and abstain from many types of foods and liquids, including wheat, French fries, soy sauce, and beer. Although food allergies are a very real phenomenon, in some cases they are just another smoke screen for dieting. A recent nationally representative study found that 96 percent of American adults who reported following a gluten-free diet tested negative for celiac disease via blood analysis. Indeed, the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease explicitly discourages food allergy self-diagnosis, since people tend to be wrong in 50 to 90 percent of cases. According to Klarman Eating Disorders Center dietitian Jaimie Winkler, "With a lot of food intolerances, people cite bloating and stomach discomfort as 'the symptom,' but truthfully, it's very human to sometimes bloat and have discomfort after meals. If it resolves within thirty minutes, chances are you aren't allergic, just human." In light of these findings, we recommend asking your doctor for a skin test, blood test, or food challenge test before emptying your cupboards of bread, nuts, and pasta.

Sugar and Flour Addiction: A new generation of research on the possibility of food addiction has identified that anticipation of eating highly palatable food activates areas of the brain similar to those activated by drugs and alcohol. Some, but not all, Twelve Step programs even ask their members to abstain from foods like sugar and white flour, which they believe are addictive. But there is no evidence that eliminating specific foods (such as flour or sugar) from your diet is an effective way to prevent binge eating. On the contrary, there is much more evidence that trying to eliminate these foods from your diet will make you even more likely to binge. Here's why: we frequently crave what we won't let ourselves have. Have you ever turned down a dessert that you really wanted at a restaurant only to get home with an intense desire for something sweet? Dr. Thomas has worked with many patients who have exhausted their willpower trying to avoid eating a delicious homemade cookie at a party, only to feel deprived and binge on an entire box of stale store-bought cookies on the drive home.

Caloric Restriction for Longevity: Proponents of calorie restriction (CR) for longevity believe that consistently consuming 10 to 40 percent fewer calories per day than your body burns will make you live longer. Although early research on rats appeared to support this hypothesis, a 2012 study of rhesus monkeys (who are genetically more similar to humans) failed to find any difference in lifespan between those who were adequately fed, versus those who were calorie-restricted. Moreover, as clinical psychologist Kelly Vitousek has pointed out, rats and humans live very different lifestyles: "Laboratory animals are typically isolated in individual cages, protected or exempted from germs, temperature variation, work, fatigue, social interaction, parenting and competition. In effect, their only job is to cope with CR, so that all of the meager energy supplied by their otherwise optimal diets can be put straight to that purpose. Think of it this way: if you are constantly hungry, irritable, and tired on a calorie-restricted diet, your life might just feel longer!"

*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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Freedom from Bondage

by: Veronica Valli

NOBODY FEELS FEAR THE WAY ALCOHOLICS DO

I'm aware that's not exactly true. However, there's something about alcoholic thinking that twists all our emotions and makes the unpleasant ones dominant in us. We seem to take fear to a whole new level, much more than ordinary people do. It's like I was born frightened and my whole life has been a reaction to the fear. None of my fears were real, they were always imagined, but they seemed real to me and they followed me wherever I went. It was like a cancer of the mind, spreading and destroying everything in its path.

When drinking my fear crippled me. I lived in blind terror every day. Everything was frightening for me. Other people terrified me. I felt so worthless in their eyes and was sure they would see any minute what a despicable human being I was, and discard me. At any given time I couldn't really explain what I was frightened of. I just knew that I was scared. It ate me up inside. I would try to act as if it wasn't there, try to ignore it, but it would come back stronger.

Some days it felt like I could barely breathe because the fear was crushing me. It made me feel sick. I struggled to find different ways to cope with it. Drinking, of course, numbed it briefly. I tried to ask for help, but I couldn't find the words that would make someone take me seriously.

Fear is a universal experience. Everybody feels fear. It's just very few of us talk about it.

If we do, it's at a superficial level. People rarely open up about what they're really scared about, which is extraordinary, because we're all scared of more or less the same things:

• Rejection • Being vulnerable • Loneliness • Other people • Not being good enough • Not being loved • Speaking in public • What other people think of us • Someone seeing who we really are • Failure • Success • People laughing at us • Looking stupid • And – other people finding out we're frightened!

How many did you recognize? All of these are fears I have had at one time or another.

There are, of course, many more, but this is an example of the core fears most people have to some degree, but are least able to speak about. I would boil these fears down to, two dominant ones:

1} I'm not good enough, and therefore, 2} I won't be loved.

It is my belief and experience, that these two fears exist inside everyone at some point. It is part of our human experience. As an alcoholic, I was also the least equipped to deal with these fears.

Facing up to fear: So the first step is to be honest with yourself and admit your fear. Facing up to our fears is ironically much easier than we think.

I'm going to let you into a little secret that may possibly change your life. If it doesn't then it will certainly make you feel a little more comfortable:

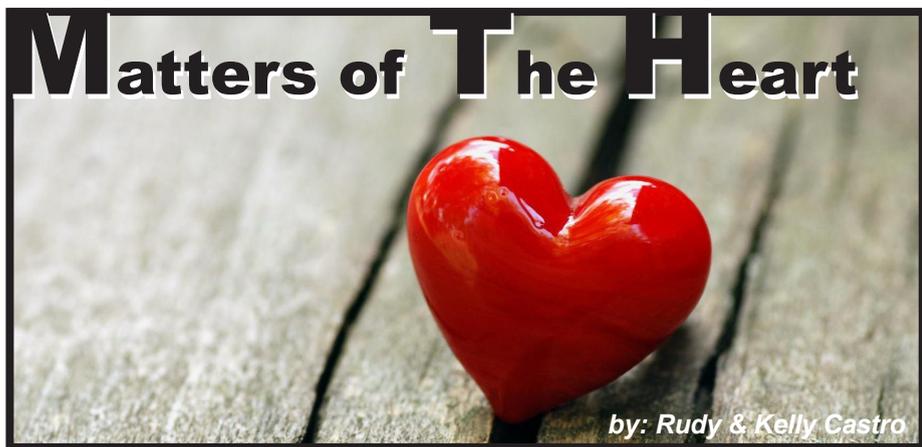
Everyone else is frightened too! Everyone.

Whenever you're frightened because you've been pushed out of your comfort zone and you're doing something different, everyone else around you is probably feeling the same way. But because we are so used to hiding it, we look around us and think we are the only one feeling this way. In Britain, where I come from, we have this tradition of a 'stiff upper lip,' which effectively translates as, 'never, under any circumstance show how you really feel'. Now this may be a necessary policy in some situations, but more often than not it has led to our pretending not to feel what we actually feel. Ever.

The goal of recovery is to recognize when we are frightened, and examine further what the fear is about. Is it real? Is there any evidence to support it? Can we talk to someone about how we feel? These are simple but life-saving tools.

There is really only one way to deal with fear and that is to face up to it, to understand you are going to feel it, but move forward anyway; it's a paradox, the only way over it, is through it. In sobriety your fears will become manageable, leaving you free to finally become the person you were always meant to be.

Veronica Valli is the author of 'Why you drink and How to stop: journey to freedom' and 'Get Sober, Get Free.' Available at Amazon and other retailers. You can learn more about her at Veronicavalli.com, where she writes about all issues relating to addiction and recovery.



SKINNY COW

We heard a story from a wise man named Mark Anthony Lord. A story about a poor man and a skinny cow. The story goes as such: A man and his family lived a humble life. They had been sustained by their one valuable resource providing them nourishment and food. It was their loyal skinny cow, not a voluptuous one, but one that has nourished the family just enough.

One day a very well-known spiritual leader and his followers came to town and knocked on his door, and asked for shelter and food for the night. The man is ecstatic to have such a prominent visitor. He welcomes them in and frantically looks for food in the cupboards and finds none. Despite his wife's objection, he decides to sacrifice his skinny cow. He thinks to himself, well at least I will have plenty of food for my family for a week until I figure out what to do. But as the night goes on his visitors eat and eat and eat the entire cow. To greater dismay when they were done feasting, his visitors just get up and leave, saying they are done here. The man is utterly devastated and at a loss of what he is going to do, he decides to take a walk into the forest.

While out there, he hears screaming and follows the sound until he reaches a man that is in pain. He realizes he broke his leg and begins helping the man by tearing off his shirt and gathering branches to create a makeshift brace. As they talk, he finds out that the injured fellow is the richest man in the region. As he helps the rich man out of the forest, they talk about how he wished he had his wealth but the rich man replied, "don't be fooled, as my family fights over who will get my money when I die, sometimes it feels like a burden." After he helped his new friend he went back to his life and three years go by.

Then one day, the spiritual leader returns to his town. During their reunification, the man excitedly shows off his beautiful horse and carriage and exclaims, "I'm a rich man!" It turned out that the rich man died and left all his money to the man and not to his own family. As the spiritual leader was leaving the town, one of his followers with much confusion asked, "I have to ask. What happened? We came here three years ago, you don't eat meat, you never disrespect someone's home by eating all their food and then leave. Why did you do that to the poor man?" The teacher looked at his pupil and said, "he was not poor, I just needed to remove the skinny cow."

The Spiritual leader was willing to compromise his diet, and risk looking bad to follow the intuitive guidance he received to help set this man free from his own bondage. The man, as a result, was forced into seeking a solution to provide for his family. He also was given the gift of space, in which something much greater could show up. In his seeking, he paused and, with an open heart was of service. Little did he know that he was opening himself up to abundance by choosing love in that moment. He stepped outside of his comfort zone, taking the next right action, and the Universe was busy conspiring for his success.

The tradition for the New Year is to make resolutions. When we googled "resolution" these were the two definitions that popped up 1) a firm decision to do or not to do something. 2) the action of solving a problem, dispute, or contentious matter. When has this ever worked inside of self-will? It hasn't. If we could have stopped drinking/using/gambling/having inappropriate relationships; we would have. If we could have solved our own problems; we would have. We have been given the gift of steps that offer a spiritual awakening, and access to a power much greater than self. May we let go of what God is encouraging us to let go of, open ourselves to faith, and leap. Take action with integrity, and leave the results to our Higher Power. Sometimes the first action will be praying for the willingness to do any of the above.

As we begin the new year, we do create goals, set intentions, and inspire ourselves with aspirations. We also do our best to remain flexible to the guidance, and intelligence of our Higher Power. We have found ourselves feeling at times like somehow we landed on the "wrong" path. Without fail, in letting go of our attachments, and allowing God to sort out the details, we have always been blown away by the magic, and synchronicity that is encapsulated in every experience. Everything - truly - is unfolding perfectly, and with divine order.

Con't Page 18



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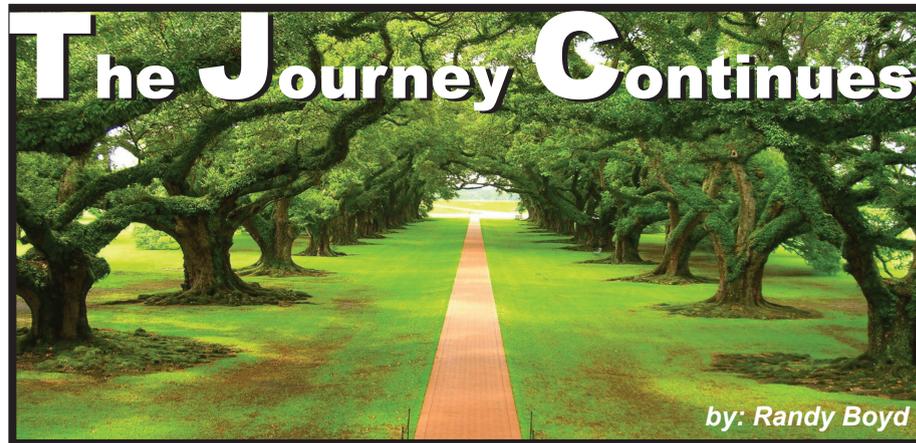
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A CLOSED CHAPTER

If you have been following me, you know that forgiveness is one of my favorite topics. It is also the one topic I struggled with most in my life. For most of my adult life, or at least until I entered into recovery, I heard these words more than I cared to, Randy you just need to forgive, forget and move on! In my opinion these are the three words survivors struggle with the most.

The people who were in my life making this statement had no idea of the emotional pain I was dealing with. How could they? They had not been through what I had been through. Those same people in my life that would blurt out that statement were sick and tired of hearing my whining. Sick and tired of me blaming everything that went wrong in my life on my abuse. They were all just doing and saying what they felt I needed to see and hear. Little did they know it only enraged me.

What I know today is that forgiveness is the key to true freedom and happiness; at least it has been for me. But forgiveness is also a process with several layers to navigate through. The process of forgiveness will be different for each person as will the amount of time it will take to achieve. Forgiveness is not just a one-time action. The level of harm done to an individual will play into the individual's forgiveness process.

I had two people in my life that were difficult to forgive, my perpetrators: my mother and my stepfather. It was by working through the twelve-steps of recovery and with the guidance of my therapist that I was finally able to forgive both of them. My stepfather actually was the easiest, as he had not been in my life for thirty-plus years, and in fact I had no idea if he was even alive. Remember that forgiveness is for you, not the perpetrator. Personal contact is not required or recommended.

My mother on the other hand, was very difficult, as she was still alive and a part of my life. Eventually I came to fully forgive my mother, however she has not been allowed in my life since 2009. I did attempt to reconcile with her to no avail. You see she still wants to blame me for my abuse, wants me to own up to my part of it. I did make my amends to my mother for the way I disrespected her as a teenager, however that was not enough for her. It was only through much work with my therapist and pastoral counsel that the decision to cut the ties with my mother was made.

On October 1st of 2016, my brother contacted my wife, informing her that "his" mother, not our mother, had been in a minor car accident and was paralyzed from the neck down. I became very confused because I did not know how to feel. I had no emotion or grief. After talking with my therapist and pastor, I came to understand that what I was feeling was not only ok, but also normal. I have had no contact with my mother for seven years; therefore there was no emotional bond.

On Tuesday night December 6, 2016, I was at my men's sexual abuse group that I have been a part of for nine years. My wife never interrupts me when I am at these meetings, so when she texted me to call her ASAP, I knew it was important. We had received a phone call from a cousin I had not talked to in over 20 years. I had not heard anything about my mother's condition since the original contact from my brother, so I could only assume that she was getting better. When I called my wife at home she informed me that my mother had passed away earlier in the day. I am grateful I was with my men's group and the therapist that facilitated it, as I was able to process my feelings.

Again I was confused about my feelings. One minute I could feel the tears welling up and the next there were no feelings. My adult self had already processed and come to accept the fact that mother was never going to make amends to me or change. On the other hand my inner child was sad and upset. My inner child was still hoping that my mother would sit down and talk with me, tell me she loved me and was sorry for the abuse she both allowed and inflicted on me. Now that will never happen, and my inner child will have a bit more healing to do.

I am saddened at my mother's death, although she has been dead emotionally to me for several years now, which is making her passing a bit easier. I was asked this by one of the men in my sexual abuse process group, Randy did you say everything you needed to say to your mother before she died? Was there any unfinished business you had with her? I can say with absolute certainty that there was no unfinished business, and I said everything I needed to say.

I realize that everyone's journey and story is different. Therefore, we all process our grief differently and in our own time. I am grateful that I made my amends and forgave my mother before she died. I can honestly say that my side of the street is clean and for that reason I can close this chapter of my life with no regrets.

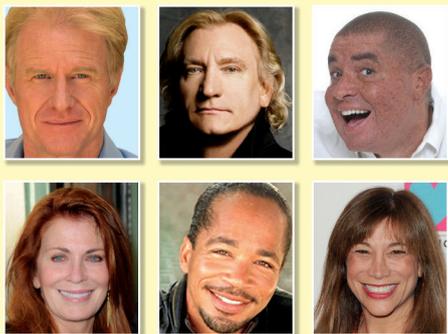
Randy Boyd is a licensed California Alcohol and Drug Counselor, Certified Life Coach, the founder of the Courageous Healers Foundation, and an associate of "It Happens to Boys." He speaks at conferences, schools, and treatment facilities, about the effects of abuse on men, and how men can heal from those 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



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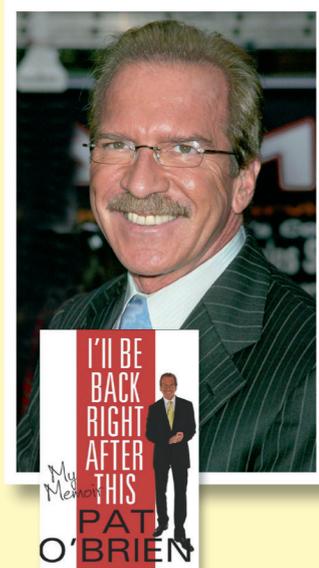
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YOUR SPOUSE HAS A GAMBLING PROBLEM. NOW WHAT?

"So you just got your bank and credit card statements and found many withdrawals at a casino from an ATM? You are livid with your spouse and don't know what to do? Get support and protect yourself financially and emotionally from their gambling."

When a spouse finds that the other spouse has a gambling problem, or may even be addicted, they are in shock and disbelief at this fact. It can also be from how they found the evidence without the spouse even saying a word to them about what they have been doing.

I can share this from a look, at both sides of a personal perspective, as my husband, and I went through so much with my battle with this addiction and disease. So when I finally went into gambling treatment for the first time, yes, it took me a couple of tries, but the first time, my husband had so much frustration hurt and anger, he felt it was my problem to fix and not his. Bad mistake on his part.

However, later on down the road, that changed in a big way and that is another article for another day. Gamblers get very exhausted by trying to hide, lie, and cover all they are doing within their addiction, especially when it comes to the money. We wait for the mail for statements, we try to cover money that we spent, and it goes on and on. But eventually, your cover and hiding will be caught.

So what does a spouse need to do to protect themselves when they do find out? Here are some steps my husband took that was advised by our gambling counselors when I was in treatment. Spouses need to learn how to support you, and protect themselves.

Of course, the very first thing is to get the addicted gambler help. A great place to start is visiting Gamblers Anonymous (G.A.) & Gam-Anon. They have phone numbers to call for help and G.A. meetings in your local area, as they offer support for the spouse and family, help and advice for those around the gambler through Gam-Anon. G.A. offers online meetings and chats as well. And let me put one misconception to rest about how some feel 12-Step Programs are religious programs. G.A. is not a religious program. It is a fellowship and unity program to help gamblers.

Here is how G.A. answers this question or religion: Is G.A. a religious society?

"No. G.A. is composed of people from many religious faiths along with agnostics and atheists. Since membership in G.A. requires no particular religious belief as a condition of membership, and cannot be described as a religious society. The G.A. recovery program is based on acceptance of certain spiritual values, but the member is "free to interpret these principles as he chooses."

When you learn that the spouse is having gambling problems, here are a few steps to consider taking right away:

1.) Have the gambler give all money, credit cards, atm card and checks to the non-gambler. The gambler will not feel good about this decision, but you need to protect what money you have left and create no more debt. He/she has already done much financial damage. Keep a close eye on valuables like jewelry and high-priced tech stuff around the house as they can be a source of money if pawned and sold.

2.) Spouses, get support! Gam-Anon or Family Treatment counseling which is a great place to start; you may even want to consider treatment therapy with a gambling specialist for spouses and family counseling, to have a better understanding of how you can help them without enabling the problem, or addicted gambler, learn and understand the differences.

3.) Keep in mind your children and close friends are also affected by your spouse's gambling too. There is much shame, guilt and embarrassment you may be feeling at this time. Your confused and shocked that your spouse could do this to you and your family. So remember, don't hate the addict, hate the disease and addiction. They can recover, and as a family, you can heal.

I came across an article a few years ago written by the wife of an addicted gambler. It touched me deeply as I could understand it coming from "the spouse's perspective", and knew just how she felt. My husband had shared many of the same points and feelings to me when I read her article to him. It's worth the visit and read if you are a spouse of an addicted gambler. It is titled; Real Voices: The Wife of a Problem Gambler. Details of the damaging impact, are on this recovery site called; Northstar Alliance for Problem Gambling. I recommend you visit it, read the article, then see all the resources my good friends have to help.

"Approximately 2 million individuals in the U.S. are pathologically problematic gamblers, while an additional 4 to 6 million can be considered problem gamblers. Gambling Addiction is now #1 of ALL Suicides from any addiction."

It does and will take a while for the gambling addict to grab hold of long-term recovery. That fact I have to be open and honest about as it was one of the reasons I shared this in my published memoir/book. For me to open my life up to the world, to read and learn was about healing, making amends, informing the public, and taking accountability for my past misdeeds and poor choices within my gambling addiction, seemed the only way for me to be able to help others who suffer from this devastating addiction. Also, to show spouses and families that we can recover, we can be trusted again, and have a beautiful life in 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. Catherine lives in Arizona with her husband of 26 years. She is owner of Cat Lyon's Reading Den, formerly Lyon Book & Social Media Promotions where she promotes authors of many genres.




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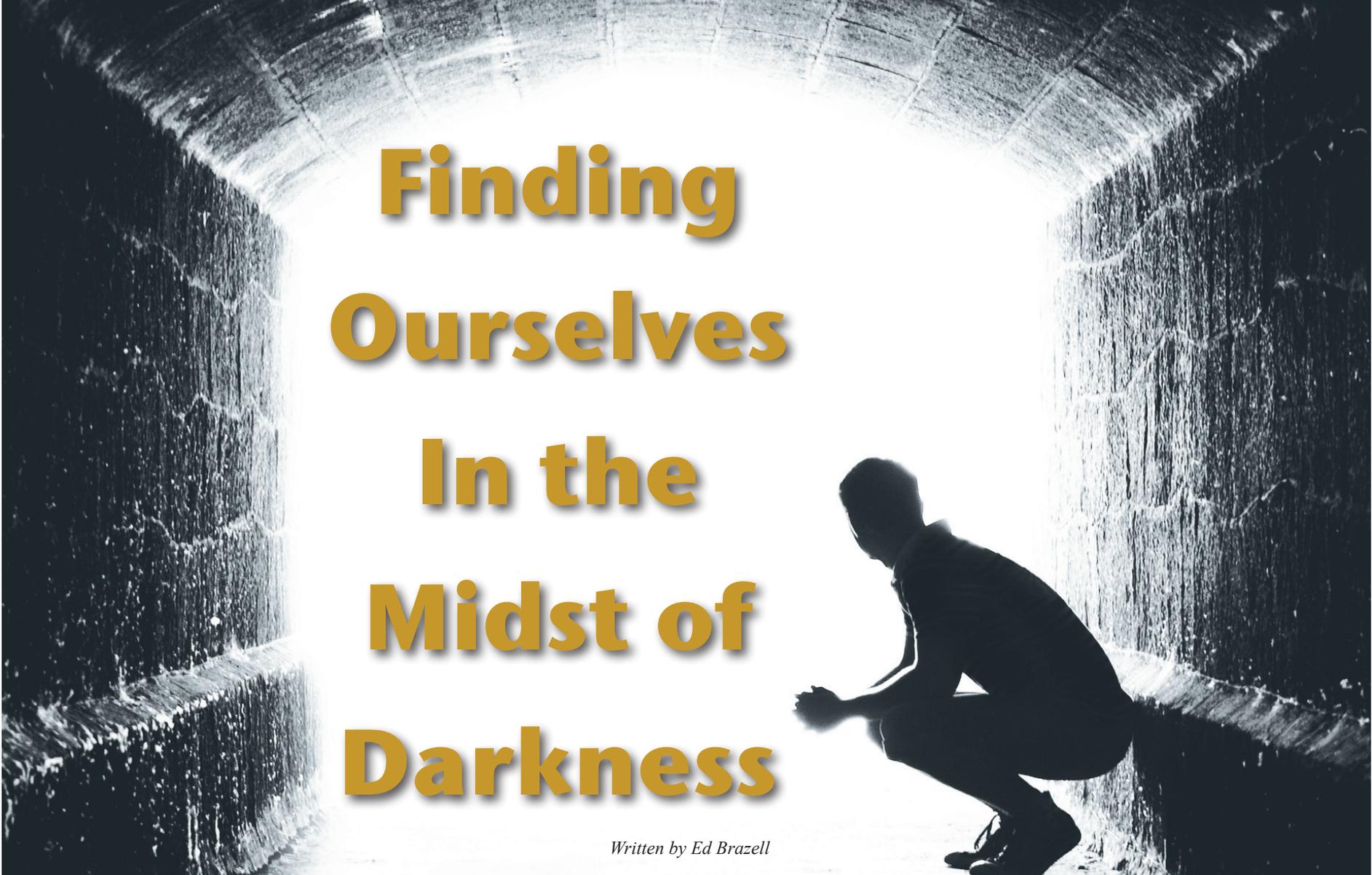
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Finding Ourselves In the Midst of Darkness

Written by Ed Brazell

Let's face it, the struggles are real. But happiness can be ours if we work at it. It takes the ability to believe. Even if we can't find happiness the first time, it takes a commitment to try again and again. Until we find it.

Don't get me wrong we can't walk around every day in some happy fantasy world, because sadness is also a part of life. However, we can strive to make our lives better and work on removing the cloud over our head that many of us get stuck in. It's not something that is given to us, we must find it within ourselves and if it's not, there then we must create it. Temporary happiness comes in the form of the things - money, relationships, substances, sex, cars or anything that we can put in front of us, to keep us from looking inside of ourselves.

Finding a good balance in spite of our circumstances goes so much further than putting a smile on our faces. It cultivates other feelings, such as joy, peace and contentment. It also has a way of showing what is truly beautiful in this world.

Like all good things in life we must work for them. It's something that only you can find and it has to be a part of our daily lives. Below are just a few things that hopefully will help. Pick and choose what you want, but remember you must do the work.

I was once told that my brain is a liar. Then I started looking into it, and it has been proven time after time, that the brain thrives on negativity. Just look how hard it is to move forward when we're in a sad situation. As a human race we are always drawn towards negative thoughts. One of my simple examples is to take two different poems. One sad and one happy, equally beautiful in their own way, but we always react to the sad one in a more gripping way. This is the way we are, and it takes work to change, and a training process to not do this. You are what you put in your brain.

Here are two really good exercises:

It's hard to imagine, but I am what I see and hear. It's easy to be down on ourselves, to quietly speak in the whisper of our minds that we're not good enough, that we'll always be just what we are now and that trying to make changes in our lives won't matter. Well we need to fight those negative thoughts. One way is to trick ourselves into thinking good thoughts. Being proactive on how we treat ourselves. The best way to do this is with a mirror. Yes some will think this is silly, but I challenge you to try it for a week. Use a full length mirror or your bathroom mirror. Every day in the morning stand in front of the mirror, standing tall, take a few deep breaths, look at yourself, smile and tell yourself out loud: I love you {your name}, I believe in me or any other affirmation. It's OK if you don't believe it when you first start doing this. If something happens during the day, take a moment and do the exercise even if you're at work. Remember we're putting good thoughts in to replace the bad thoughts. This does work.

Another way that I tell folks to fight, is by taking a sheet of paper. Write down 10 things you are grateful for, or what is special to you. If you can't come up with something then write down, "That I'm breathing and I have another day to fight". No matter how bad things are we all have something, we just need to find what they are. Take the sheet everywhere you go. Especially when you're doing the mirror exercise. Tape it to the mirror in the morning while you're getting ready. When something pops into your head write it down. Your list is to help you remember that even in our darkest hour that we have something to be grateful for. Read them often out loud. Remember we're trying to push out the negative thinking and replace it with positive thinking. Something else you can do with the list, is to cut up each one, fold them over and put them in a jar.

As you come up with new ones do the same. When you having those "I can't go on" thoughts get the jar, pull one out and read it out loud.

I have everything I need and got it when I came into this world. The problem is we fight every day, looking for answers to life, outside of ourselves. We all want love, happiness, peace and think that it can be found in things and other people. But the truth is that it starts with us. Outside of ourselves, will temporarily give us what we need, but it is just a lie and it won't last. Also the Jones' next door is a illusion. They might look like the perfect family, but you don't know what goes on behind closed doors. Take a moment each day to reflect on yourself. For 10 minutes, close your eyes, block everything out, sit quietly and shut everything out. We truly have everything we need. We just need to look inward.

Along this same thought, is we are only in control of ourselves. I bring this up because many of us live our lives trying to change and fix others. Our hearts are in the right place, but we see ourselves as the only hope they have. No one can live a happy life, living on someone else's ups and downs. I tried for years to do this for my son. Where did it get me...Well it made me a frustrated, angry man. When one of my fixes didn't work it was his fault, but it didn't affect him, it affected me. Our attitude always goes south when we attach our expectations to whatever we're doing and when they don't work. This is one of our biggest problems as families. We were able to fix things when they were growing up, why not now. Take a step back and let the controlling behaviors go. You will be surprised how it will give you a sense of freedom.

Along this path of finding ourselves we forget about a very important part: Our spirituality, faith and our belief in something greater than us. It's been proven that faith can heal our hearts and bring about changes in our lives.



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It gives us someone to surrender our brokenness to. Praying is an additional benefit. It allows us to reflect, turn over our hopelessness and sorrows and get strength. Not counting the meditational feeling that we get. Yoga, breathing and mindfulness are a great part of spirituality.

Many of the people I talk to are lost in the past and future. Live in the now! For many of us this is where we are stuck. We only know what's been proven to us from the past. When we're stuck in the past substance use can't be released, our love ones can't be released to grow and figure it out. We must face the reality that the past is gone and we can't change it, nor can we live in it. Our projecting into the future only robs us of seeing the beauty in today. We end up putting unrealistic expectations on ourselves or our love ones. When we do this we are setting ourselves up to fall hard. There is nothing wrong with hoping for a wonderful future, but we must let the future roll out on its own course. We are truly only promised now!

One of the best ways of helping ourselves is by having compassion for others and to give back even when you don't feel it. Reaching out and helping those in need does something amazing to our soul. The joy that you get from others lightens the load on our shoulders. Many of us think there is no way to help or they don't have the time, but that is hogwash. How about taking a pair of those old shoes you never wear, and giving them to someone you walk by every day. Spend a couple hours in a soup kitchen or food pantry a month. You want to feel blessed then do something for someone that is less fortunate than you. It has a way of coming around 10 fold.

What do you mean it's me! We've all done it but at some point we need to stop and look at ourselves. What do I mean, I'll put it another way. Stop blaming everyone else for our problems, our attitude and our terrible life.

Time to step up and make some changes.

If you're around others that bring you down then get away from them. It is easier for us to blame someone else than to look inside of ourselves and say "What can I change, what can I do differently".

Loneliness is a terrible thing and many times we create this in our own minds. Please know that you're not alone. I know when I'm down in the dumps I would say to myself, that no one else is feeling or going through what I am. That's not true. Many have followed our same footsteps and came out the other side stronger and happier than they ever thought they would.

Being miserable is another one of those negative traits from our brain. Don't sit in it. When things don't go exactly as you planned don't add more sorrow by wallowing in it. Feeling sorrow for us is negative thinking. This only keeps you imprisoned in something you have complete control over, our mind. One of my favorite saying is: No matter how you feel, get up, get dressed in your best and show the world who you really are. The longer you sit in your misery the harder it will be to get out. Don't wait - go to the mirror.

In closing I want to talk about what has been a challenge for me and many others. Our growth to better ourselves. If I want to grow then I must use my problems and challenges as a chance to be a better me. Dealing with what comes into our lives can be hard. Many times we find ourselves putting off what needs to be done, because we don't want to deal with them. The act of not dealing with something will continue to weigh us down. Facing whatever the issue is has a way of making us even stronger.

When dealing with challenges we often have to look at our inner-self and by doing this we grow, and the growth is always from the inside-out. It also helps us see that we are stronger than we think. Many times we think we can't handle something.

When we face it and find out we were able to handle it, we gain pride in ourselves.

I always think of a friend that was scared to death to fly. It kept her from going to places that she had always dreamed of. Then one day she had no choice, but to fly and when it was over and done, she said "why didn't I face up to this sooner". Some would say that her challenge was silly because everyone flies, but it's not, it was her struggle. We all have obstacles in our lives that are real to us. Face it by dealing with them it will make us stronger, and the next challenge will be easier.

When we are no longer able to change a situation - we are challenged to change ourselves.

- Viktor E. Frankl -

Written by Ed Brazell. After seeing the shame and stigma due to his son's addiction, his passion for helping others has quickly grew. After completing several accredited courses he now serves the community as a recovery coach, trainer, interventionist, advocate, co-facilitator in two family groups and radio host in the Soul Solution Recovery radio show.

Ed started, 'Silent Epidemic', a non-profit company that helps families and those looking for help. He also likes to reflect in both the happiness of recovery and the sadness of addiction in poems. His past times are traveling the country on his motorcycle with his wife.

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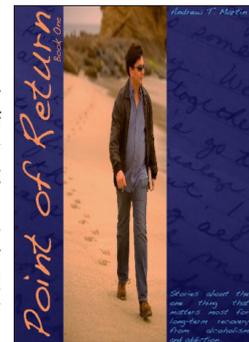


POINT OF RETURN, Book One: Written by Andrew T Martin.
Published by Serene Centre, Inc.

This book is for the addict that wants to recover, but doesn't believe he or she can. This book has fourteen stories of such people. They tell their stories about different types of addictions and how they got to the Point of Return. These are real people that are baring their soul in hopes that they will help someone else. The real fact is that everyone can recover, they just need to put in the work. It isn't easy but it is worth it. And what these stories have in common, is that not only do you need to WANT to leave your addiction behind you, but, as sad as it is you need to get to the point in your life, (most people refer to this as "hitting the bottom"). Once you get to that place, there is a fork in the road, one road leads to sure death, and usually not a quick and easy death. The other road is "the Point of Return".

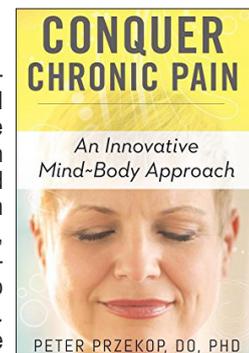
This book will also, help the addicts loved ones understand the disease. This is a DISEASE, it is not something people can just decide to stop. Addicts loved ones usually do not know how to help.

Andrew's hope is that someone who is desperately seeking a point of return will find in these pages, the inspiration to gain that point. Regardless of the outcome, and whatever else they find here, his wish is for the reader to realize, within these words, the inspiring hope of recovery. Available at Amazon.com.



Conquer Chronic Pain: An Innovative Mind-Body Approach.
Written by Peter Przekop, DO, PHD. Published by Hazelden.

I met Dr. Peter Przekop at an event that Betty Ford had at UCLA earlier this year. I had been trying to get in touch with him for many months. I wanted him to do a feature on chronic pain. Thankfully he said yes, and he gave me his book "Conquer Chronic Pain", this is a topic so many of us in recovery have to deal with. It's a tricky, when it comes to chronic pain and pain management. In the intro Dr. Przekop states, "If you are suffering from chronic pain, this book is my best attempt to help you. I do this because, you and everyone else deserve it. I want to do my part to end that suffering." He explains chronic pain and the non-pharmacologic approach to treating it. The first part of the book he explains how pain works in the brain. And how the mind works and how it's different from the brain, and how the brain, mind, body work together to create our own experience of pain. The second part contains exercises designed to help conquer pain. If you or anyone you know is suffering from chronic pain, THERE IS A SOLUTION! A must read! Thank you Dr. Przekop for addressing this issue and giving comfort for so many. This book is brilliant. Available at Amazon.com.

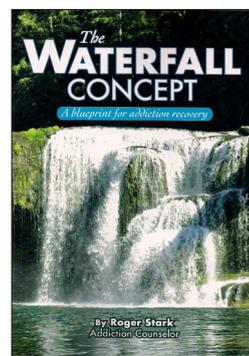


The Waterfall Concept: A Blueprint for Addiction Recovery.
Written by Roger Stark. Published by Silver Star Publishing.

This is one of those books that capture your full attention about who, what and where you are regarding your sobriety, and your relationship with GOD. Those who survived trauma in their childhood may it be physical, sexual abuse, emotional and/or sometimes abandonment issues, cover and mask the pain through self-medicating. The shame from the various forms of abuse that they endured becomes overwhelming and causes denial, which manifest into abnormal behavior resulting in self-abuse, outburst of violence, and numerous different character deficiencies.

There is a foundation from which to acquire inner strength, the foundation is: The Willingness to go through any length to achieve sobriety. Being truly Committed to work through whatever comes one's way. Reaching deep within to gather the Courage to accomplish what's set in front of us. To be rigorously honest by being Accountable for all our actions. Those are the four attitudes for building a solid foundation that can withstand all forces, which at times unfortunately, causes one to stumble into relapse. The ability for us to stand firm and succeed in recovery is partially up to us, the guarantee rests upon our Savior who is our refuge and our very strength in all times of trouble.

When allowing God to be the director of our lives, complete and permanent recovery is reached. We all are Mind, Body and Spirit, this harmony must remain in balance for us to maintain a clean and healthy relationship with all of those around us, and with our precious Savior Jesus Christ, who truly loves all of us unconditionally. This is a must read for all of us who want a true union with mankind, and a deeper relationship with our incredible Lord and Savior. I enjoyed the inspired words within this remarkable book very much so, and I will recommend it to all of those who are struggling with their addictions and disorders. Available at Amazon.com.



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.

Fit This In Your Recovery



by: **Dr. Chaz Austin, Ed.D, with Monica Blauner, LCSW**

PREPARING FOR THE WORKFORCE

The modern workplace in the U.S. has become a gig - or freelance - marketplace. For almost 15 years, as a college professor, workshop leader, and career coach, I've been preparing young people to navigate it. I've specialized in the recovery field for the past two years, and the clients I've worked with present a unique set of challenges. Many have become addicted to mood-altering substances at a very young age, and have not achieved basic developmental milestones. These include:

1. Low self-esteem. Caused by a combination of early trauma (from abuse or emotional neglect) as well as years of problems created by their addictive behavior.
2. Lack of education. In many cases, their addiction was the interruption.
3. Poor or no formal work history (although they may have worked very hard to find the money to get high).
4. Shame. Because of their history of out-of-control behavior, and the many resultant losses and missed opportunities, they often feel like a failure, or damaged goods.
5. Lack of drive. Pursuing a career - or even knowing how to begin the process - is an intimidating challenge that can feel insurmountable. Often my clients will want to give up before even starting. If you feel you've never accomplished much of anything, your attitude may well be, "Why bother trying?"
6. Lack of integrity. People in active addiction lie, and it takes time to change that pattern. Being honest and following through are skills that need to be learned and practiced.
7. Underdeveloped Communication Skills. They haven't been studying or working, and are often not practiced in how to write with clarity, nor how to express themselves verbally.
8. Lack of accomplishments. Addicts typically opt for the short-term fix (pun intended), but have difficulty planning for and achieving longer-term goals.

So how do I surmount these obstacles?

The philosophy underpinning my work is Experiential Learning. What that means is that the best way to learn is by doing - over and over again. Whether riding a bike or learning how to interview, as the composer Philip Glass said, "You practice and you get better. It's very simple." I don't teach; I train; this training involves actively learning and practicing the skills needed to find work. My work is long-term because altering behavior patterns takes time.

The strategy is what I call Critical Thinking and Action. I help clients to separate the story they tell themselves from the facts. I help them develop realistic and achievable goals, getting them into action so they can alter the direction of their lives. As daVinci said, "Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Being willing is not enough; we must do."

Tactically, we begin at the end. What are their goals for their lives and careers - both short-term and long-term? Then we design a step-by-step plan to get them there. If they have no idea of what their goals, interests and abilities are, I have exercises that enable my clients to find them. And they set the goals in writing, so they can track their progress. We use many tools, but the primary one is a journal they create that shows them what they've committed to - and by when they said they would accomplish each task. This motivates them to be accountable.

They begin to get a handle on what their strengths and passions are, and what steps they need to take to get on the road to achieving their goals. Ideally, because we've broken the process down into steps, they're less intimidated. Instead, they are driven to accomplish the tasks they need to complete, and they can see achievable results ahead. I coach them on their writing, so they can be more effective with emails and posts on social media. And we work on their verbal communication skills, primarily via mock interviews.

By doing all this, we have set up a structure that addresses the challenges they face in forging a career. They have a plan that they have created, one that aligns with their passions and skills. Everything flows from this. They are now pointed in the right direction.

As they complete each step, their self-esteem improves. They have tangible results they can proudly point to. And because it's their goal and their plan, just as with staying sober, they become willing to do whatever it takes to get where they want to go. This can include more education, and doing volunteer work and/or taking on internships in their chosen field (which will help beef up their work history).

They learn to deliver consistently, to honor their word and to be professional, because all of these support them getting what they want in their lives. And they become confident and proud of what they've done and who they've become. Shame is replaced by satisfaction.

They have created a new life, and a future for themselves.

Dr. Chaz Austin specializes in conducting career workshops and coaching individual clients at recovery centers in Southern California, preparing them to enter, or re-enter, the workforce. His most recent book is "101 Ways to Find Work...and Keep Finding Work for the Rest of Your Career!" (Cengage PTR). The three online courses he wrote and teaches for lynda.com (a LinkedIn company) are: "Creating a Career Plan" <http://goo.gl/IFMDCj>, "Succeeding in a New Job" <https://goo.gl/YxRSH>, and "Transitioning Out of Your Job" <http://goo.gl/YtWBkr>. Dr. Austin holds an Ed.D in Organizational Leadership from the Graduate School of Education and Psychology, Pepperdine University.





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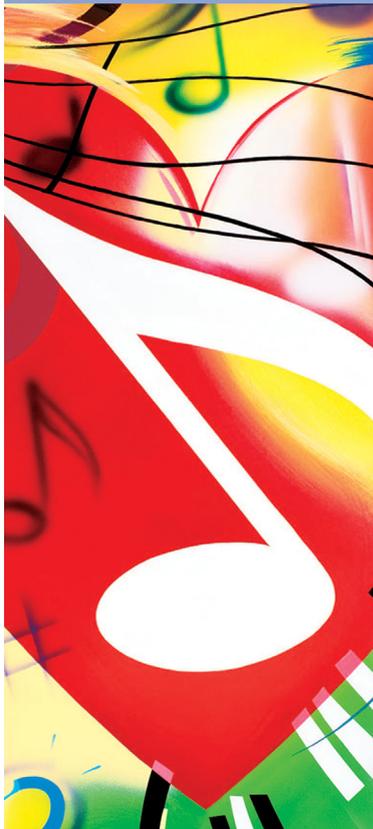
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Events January



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4TH, 2017: 12th Step Yoga. 7:15-8:30 pm. Santa Monica yoga. A Free/By Donation Weekly Yoga Class in Safe Environment. 1640 Ocean Park Blvd., Santa Monica, California 90405. Contact Dennis (310) 266-2898 or dennislyonsyoga@gmail.com

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7TH, 2017: Every Saturday Night. Music and Meeting. 9:30-11:30 pm. The New Radford Hall. 13627 1/2 Victory Blvd., Van Nuys, California. Contact Ron (818) 823-3633

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7TH, 2017: ACYPAA Presents Karaoke, Lip Sync Battle. 5951 College Ave, Oakland, California. Customs encouraged. Meeting starts at 6 pm. Suggested Donations \$15. Questions Krystal M. (510) 931-9466

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14TH, 2017: Color of Money. 7:30-11pm. Bowling includes shoes. 18 and over. Open Bowling for Those Who are Not 18. Linbrook Bowling Center, 201 S. Brookhurst St., Anaheim, California 92804.

THURSDAY JANUARY 19TH TO 22ND, 2017: 27th Annual River Round Up. Don Laughlin's Riverside Resort & Casino Laughlin, Nevada. www.rcco-aa.org Chair Bill (928) 542-9329 Registration Chair Debra (928) 543-9044

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21ST, 2017: Pancake Breakfast every 3rd Saturday at the Orange Friendship Club. All You Can Eat for \$2.59. 2191 Orange-Olive Rd., Orange, California. Call the Club for time (714) 637-9860.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21ST, 2017: The Windsor Club gives you DANCE THERAPY. 9:45pm-1:30am. Suggested Donation \$7, Club Members \$5. Platinum FREE, Snacks, Refreshments, 50/50 Available. 123 West Windsor Road, Glendale, California 91204. 818-242-1350.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21ST, 2017: The Official Women's March LA. 9am-4pm. The March is Open to Everyone Who Stands for Human Rights, Civil Liberties, Tolerance of Diversity and Compassion for Our Shared Humanity. Perish Square-Public Park Downtown. Los Angeles, California Info Contact (213) 473-5556

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22ND 2017, 11 A.M.-2 P.M. KTLA NEWS anchor and media personality Courtney Friel kicks-off "Stay Sober & Be Sexy" campaign in Los Angeles, hosts "Sexy Sober Sunday" brunch benefit to celebrate sobriety and raise money for the nonprofit organization Shatterproof, which helps families affected by addiction. Casa Del Mar, 1910 Ocean Way, Santa Monica, California. 90405 Tickets can be purchased at www.SexySoberSunday.com.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27TH, 28TH & 29TH, 2017: SFVAAC 2017 - Acceptance Was The Answer", Warner Center Marriott Woodland Hills, 21850 Oxnard Street, Woodland Hills, California 91367. Meetings & Events Include A.A., GSO, H&I, Young People, Longtimers, Marathons, Banquet & Spiritual Breakfast, Al-Anon - Workshops, Luncheon Alateen - Family, Workshops, Dinner & Dance -Saturday only, 8am - 11pm. Spanish - A.A. and Al-Anon Marathons.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 29TH, 2017: Starts 1pm. New Year Rejuvenation - for the Homeless and their furry friends. Food, Clothing, Blankets, Information & Resources, Barber, Veterinarian Services. Animal Grooming and Food. Pets must be on leash or in a crate. North Hollywood Park, 11455 Magnolia Blvd., North Hollywood, California. For more info please call Angel Hanz for the homeless (818) 358-3663.

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SAME ROAD-WHERE ELSE CAN IT GO?

Most of us spend our lives traveling the same paths. We go about our daily lives taking the identical directions each time; then we lament when we get to the end that we have often just gone round in a circle ending up where we started, wondering how it got so bad. But that's the cycle of addiction.

1. Addiction is all about us - our needs, our wants, and our priorities.
2. Addiction robs of us of the opportunities to be a better person
3. Addiction feeds on our fears and unresolved issues.
4. Addiction is the never-ending circle, cycle or dead end.

Rather than be trapped in the loop of addiction, travel that road again and see what you missed on the first trip.

In our recovery, we purposefully make a return trip on our familiar road which gives us the opportunity to stop and acknowledge all the times that we bypassed something, just to get on with using.

We have to stop long enough to ask ourselves, "What did we miss on the road in our haste to get high"? Is it time to reflect on all the missed opportunities, the times we were too busy for our families, the times that we operated from character defects rather than spiritual principles?

A New Road Called Recovery: Too often in early recovery, we assume that we will not have to travel that road again. We think we have left our troubles and problems behind us. There is some truth to this assumption.

We are no longer using drugs and alcohol, yet we still have the wreckage of our past, strewn along the roadside. In addition, there were other lessons along that highway that we failed to learn in our haste to use. In recovery, we have an opportunity to see the needs, problems and troubles of others - what about the friend who could use our help with cleaning gutters or the neighbor struggling to take groceries into the house. Could we help them?

We now have time to give our co-workers a shoulder to cry on, a kind word, or acknowledgement of a job well done. Could our family use more of our support in their recovery? We are not the only ones that need a recovery supportive meeting.

Traveling that highway again, we begin to see that others are important. We stop long enough to see them, help them, and interact with our fellow travelers and we begin to view these stops as part of our healing and spiritual growth.

A New Life Path: Recovery is about considering the other person. Therefore, if we did not travel that road again, we would not have the opportunity to revisit all of those people that we took for granted, used, or harmed.

If we reflect on our journey through life in our addiction, we realize that we created chaos, caused harm, and did damage. While we can create the illusion of leaving it all behind, without traveling that road again and repairing the damage, we cannot grow spiritually. But acknowledging our wrongs, taking responsibility for our actions and then making amends, we repair the damage.

A New Agenda for our Travels: Most of us have strained relationships with family, friends and employers. We lied to them, often stole from them, and for many of us, these relationships are damaged. When we make changes in our recovery and return to these individuals, we have the opportunity to interact with people on a different footing.

We can now arrange to pay them back, start keeping promises, and quit manipulating them for self-serving gains. Therefore, we revisit these relationships in recovery and let them see the changes we have made in our lives.

When we face our fears and go to people to make amends, they often come away with a different perception of us, one based on our newest actions, not just our addiction and shortcomings. This gives them and us an opportunity to have better memories of our interactions with them.

Seeing the Road Differently: Traveling that road again, we see all the blessings and opportunities we missed in our using. We are fortunate that we have a second chance to travel that road again. When we revisit individuals with the purpose of making amends, we discover that many of them are still supportive of us, even though our actions angered them.

Without making the trip again, we can create the illusion that we've moved forward in our lives. Yet many will still have guilt, remorse and regrets. We know we missed something when we hurriedly traveled the road before. In recovery, we backtrack on the road to find those people that we owe an amends to, and we willingly and gratefully participate in the experience. We understand that traveling the road again will give us spiritual lessons.

Con't Page 18



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WANT A JOB IN RECOVERY? SHARE! IS HIRING. To apply, please send your resume and a cover letter detailing your passion for self-help support groups, your personal experience attending self-help support groups and why you want to work at SHARE! to: jobs@shareselfhelp.org. See more info at www.shareselfhelp.org. Under Programs/Jobs.

SOBER LIVINGS

12STEPSOBERLIVING.ORG: Sunland Area, men's, shared rooms, \$140 week / \$20 day. Phone, Cable, Internet, TV in every room and all the coffee you can drink! www.12stepsoberviving.org. Joel & Lisa Moss (818) 293-2222.

A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION Luxury Sober Living Homes, Pet Friendly, Gender Specific. Call 855-975-HELP (4357), www.AStepintheRightDirection.org.

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HOUSE IN THE HILLS: Transitional / Sober Living for Women in Recovery. Our core philosophy lies in the belief that recovering addicts/alcoholics must safely reconnect with the outside world, aided by a healthy, balanced, structured & secure environment as their Support System and Home. Call (818) 264-8545, www.HouseintheHills.org.

MIRACLES IN ACTION SOBER LIVING: Sober Living at it's finest. We provide food and transportation to 12-step meetings. Located in Glendale, California. (818) 429-9130, www.MiraclesinAction.com

PRIMARY PURPOSE SOBER LIVING HOMES IN THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY: Are conveniently located. Our women's home (Valley Glen) is next to the Orange Line station and Valley College. Our men's home in No. Hollywood is near Cri-Help and the Van Nuys home is close to the Civic Center. Being an active participant in a 12-step program is required. We care about your Recovery! Call Marianne (818) 612-1439 or marianne@primaryp.com.

PROSPEROUS ROSE SOBER LIVING HOUSE LLC: Prosperous Rose Sober Living For Men: Structured sober living house. For men in Lakeview Terrace minutes from Hansen Dam. Residence includes laundry facility, gym, wifi, cable t.v. and nice spacious rooms. We offer transportation for grocery shopping and to 12-step meetings. Mellow house with a solid support network. Rent is \$600 per month which can be paid weekly or monthly. Move in today. Call Suzy for Info (818) 660-8070.

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What we propose as you venture into 2017 is that you examine, and take stock of your life in a different way.

What is your skinny cow? What is something in your life that resembles the skinny cow that may be nourishing you, but at the same time is preventing you from reaching your actual goal in life. It may be a newly manifested addiction, a relationship, a job, or a mindset. Imagine, like in this story what may be possible if you let go of your skinny cow. Let go and shine!

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. Whether you are an individual looking to create partnership in your life, or a couple looking to develop deeper levels of intimacy, they are here to help guide you. consciouspartnershipcoaching@gmail.com



I have been down that road in my addiction and retraced my journey in my recovery. Some people were no longer here to make amends to; they had died from their addictions. Others wanted nothing to do with me even in my recovery. Some have come around over time. Others I never could find. But I made the effort to travel that highway again and grow spiritually from all of the experiences. I like the reflective quality of these lyrics and hope they help you frame traveling that road again.

Take this opportunity today to look in the metaphorical rear view mirror.

- See that road you've traveled?
- What did you miss because of your addiction?
- Is there a person back there that you need to revisit?
- What spiritual lessons will you learn when you travel the road again?

Marilyn L. Davis is a Certified Addiction Recovery Empowerment Specialist, who opened and ran an award winning residential facility from 1990-2011. She recently celebrated 27 years of abstinence-based recovery. She is the author of *Therapeutic Integrated Educational Recovery System*, and her blog is *FromAddict2Advocate*. In 2008, Brenau University created the Marilyn Davis Community Service Learning Award, ongoing to honor individuals working in recovery and mental health. In 2010, Marilyn received the Liberty Bell award, given to non-judges and attorneys for contributions to the criminal justice system and communities. www.twodropsofinkat.wordpress.com



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Advertising Materials: The best type of artwork/graphic to send is a PDF (with all artwork and fonts embedded), we can also accept JPEG's, Photo-shop files and In-Design files, again make sure that you include all artwork and fonts.

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

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

www.KeysToRecoveryNewspaper.com

If you would like to receive Keys to Recovery Newspaper FREE of charge at your facility you can go online and fill out the "Distribution" form or e-mail your information to: info@KeystoRecoveryNewspaper.com or call us at (818) 386-8400.

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

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

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

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

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

For more information visit
www.KeysToRecoveryNewspaper.com

DISTRIBUTION INFORMATION:

Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. is printed and distributed heavily throughout California and now in 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.



MARY COOK

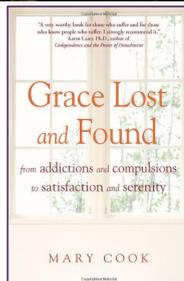
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AUTHOR OF: *Grace Lost & Found*
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WWW.MARYCOOKMA.COM

email: MaryCookMA@att.net



It's time for a New Year to roll in and you're tired of the same old failed New Year's Resolutions. I totally get it, I am too. So, what can we do? There's got to be something out there for us. Lo and behold, there are some things that us otherwise hopeless and hapless New Year's resolute-ers can look forward to. by Brittani Sponaugle

1. Finish a chap-stick: Oh what a day! If you can manage to hold on to that sucker for the better part of six months (maybe a year), be proud. Be even more proud if you use the chap-stick enough in these six months that it actually finishes. It's totally worth the effort of keeping that thing out of the laundry, the trash, off the ground and out of the sticky fingers of your chapped lipped friends. Facebook status worthy, yep.

2. Fill up your gas tank all the way. Maybe I don't know that many wealthy, or even relatively financially stable people, but no one seems to do this. I'm more on the "I-might-run-out-of-gas" spectrum than I am "oh dang, only a half a tank left" wavelength. Not sure about you, but filling up my gas tank – all the way – at least once this year would be a true feat.

3. Grow a plant: No, don't buy a plant and then dutifully neglect it. Plant something and watch it grow. Again, no negligence. Think of it as a fish or something. It's non-intrusive but adds great character to your home. You wouldn't forget to feed your fish would you? (You might and I wouldn't blame you.) Still, adding some greenery to your house is going to help your oxygen intake and make things look nicer – as long as it's green. Brown isn't very becoming. And, chia pets don't count.

4. Separate your colors from your whites: Ugh. Such an adult thing to do. I can honestly say, at 28, I still have never spent the time to separate my whites from the rest of my mangy clothes. I don't see the point in washing four white tank tops and six pairs of socks by themselves. But maybe it's time for a change. Mom would be proud.

5. Don't send a text to someone sitting in the next room...or the same room. You might be that person that can hear your roommate asking you a question but instead of parting your lips to make noise, you get quick with your fingertips to send a response. Whhhhhy. Is it that hard to communicate with people these days, or are we as a collective just that lazy. I know, I know, it's totally both. Thanks internet.

6. Try taking a selfie that looks like a picture of an actual person: Yes, I'm talking to you duck-face ladies of the world. How about showing us your great new do by taking a semi-normal picture of yourself. You know, the kind where the angle isn't totally in your favor, or your lips aren't wrinkled up like you're ingesting citric acid. Let's see those pearly whites, sans the bathroom stalls.

7. Try coming up with a new creative excuse for playing hooky. "I'm getting sick" and "my Aunt died" are getting a little old and are totally transparent: Simple. Say something like "my car got run off the road and all four of my tires popped, my GPS was launched from the car and I haven't the slightest idea where I am or how to read a map." Man, what are the odds? Bossman won't question a thing. (He'll question everything.)

8. Don't save your fortune cookie message like it's going to guide you towards the light, or save you when you're in the dumps. You put the message in your wallet or on Facebook as a go-to when you're in need of some affirmation. However, you never look at it, you never will and your friends don't care when you remember it's there and you want to share it with them. I've been on both the giving and receiving end of this, trust me. Instead, maybe, scope out this meditation course and find some happiness in under a minute a day.

9. Take a nap instead of doing work: Sometimes, you need that all our drool-fest with your pillow when you're so tired your eyes won't stay open. Instead of prying them open Clockwork Orange style, shut those baby's and hit the nearest soft thing for some much needed Zzz's. Work will always be there. Sanity will not. I know this.

10. Case your house so you know how the robber will get in when they try. Yeah, I say try because I err on the side of extreme pessimism. My mom always says "better safe than sorry". You are probably never going to be robbed, and no one is probably ever casing your house. But, in the event that you are part of the 30% of people who are victimized, do yourself a favor and do it. If you don't know what casing is: case and point (get it, get it?!).

11. Don't do so much "foot cleaning". I know you, you spill spaghetti sauce on the floor and you can't bear the thought of bending over to clean it with your hand, so you drop the paper towel on the floor, step on it and move your foot around anxiously. Next time consider using those things attached to your shoulders you grew. Which brings me to number 12.

12. Don't let your dog, Barky, be your vacuum. You lazy, lazy human. As easy as it is to fling food around the kitchen and then call out for your non-human best friend to do the dirty work, you shouldn't. Well, not all the time. Try, I don't know, cleaning it up with your HANDS, or something. Even a foot in replacement for your dog works here.

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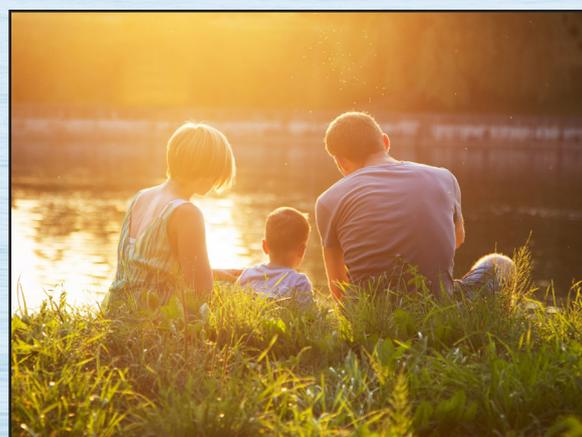
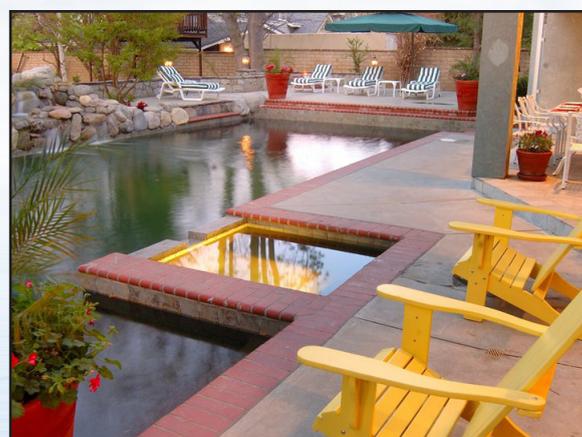
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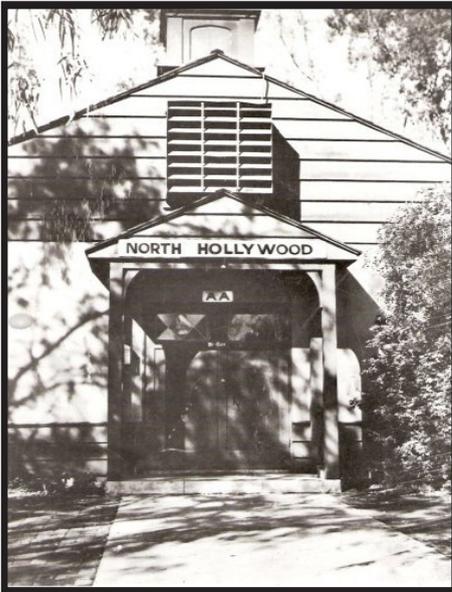
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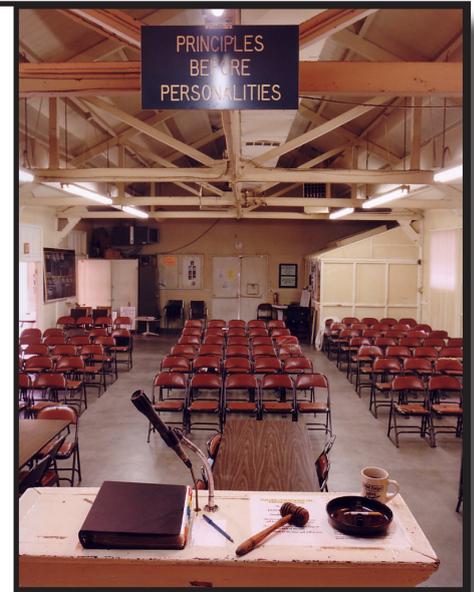
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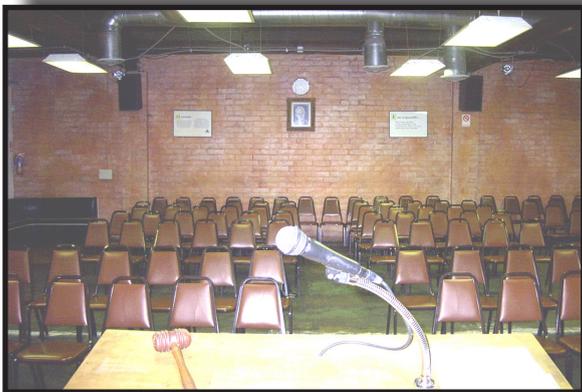
In 1944, Alcoholics Anonymous of North Hollywood was incorporated in the State of California.



4343 Radford Ave., N. Hollywood

“Good luck on the Clubhouse,” Bill W. responded, bestowing his best wishes in a letter to Chairman Tom O. written in January 1945. “The first AA Clubhouse, as such, is to be built by the North Hollywood Group,” announced the Grapevine, “...on property that is now theirs...

North Hollywood AA’s are going to build a clubhouse of their own... and are underwriting their adventure through the sale of ‘Sobriety Bonds’.” More than 250 “Sobriety Bonds” were bought by members purchased for \$10 each. None of the bonds was ever cashed in.



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No matter what Radford Hall you remember... It probably saved your life or saved someone that you know... Now Radford Hall Needs your help. Ways you can help:

- 1} Donate Money: Radford Hall is now able to receive credit and debit cards - at the coffee bar!
www.gofundme.com/save-radford-hall OR Mail in a Check Payable to The North Hollywood Group OR Drop by any meeting and make a donation
- 2} Attend Meetings at Radford - Make it your HomeGroup Again
- 3} Looking for a place to hold your meeting? RADFORD has open slots for meetings
- 4} Hold your event at Radford for a small donation
- 5} Join our Fundraiser Events

www.RadfordOnline.com

LIST OF DAILY MEETINGS

DAILY Monday – Sunday: 6:30am AA
DAILY Monday – Sunday: NOON AA
DAILY Monday – Sunday: 6:00pm AA

Monday – Friday: 9:00am AA
Monday – Friday: 10:00pm AA

IN ADDITION TO THE DAILY & WEEKLY MEETINGS

Monday’s 8:00pm Men’s AA

Tuesday’s 8:30am Men’s AA
 Tuesday’s 7:30pm AA
 Tuesday’s 8:00pm Beginners Book Study AA

Wednesday’s 8:30am Al-Anon
 Wednesday’s 7:30pm Debtors Anonymous
 Wednesday’s 8:00pm Women’s AA

Thursday’s 8:00am Anonymous Yoga AA
 Thursday’s 7:30pm NA
 Thursday’s 8:00pm Birthday /Speaker AA

Friday’s 8:00pm Young Peoples AA
 Saturday’s 9:00am Debtors Anonymous
 Saturday’s 9:00am AA / Al-Anon
 Saturday’s 10:30am Al-Anon
 Saturday’s 9:30pm Artists in Recovery AA

Sunday’s 8:00am 11th Step AA
 Sunday’s 9:30am Debtors Anonymous
 Sunday’s 10:30am Back to Basics AA
 Sunday’s 8:00pm AA

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