

May 2017

KEYS TO RECOVERY — NEWSPAPER, INC. —

Our American Addiction Pandemic

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BE FALLING...

...BUT TOGETHER
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DOOR FOR CHANGE

by Michael DeLeon

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Forgiveness**
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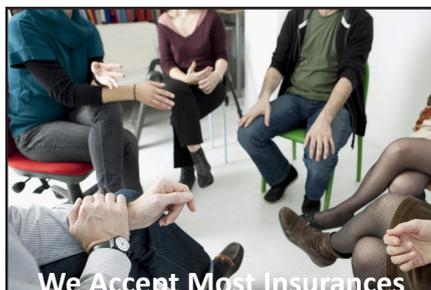
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Hello everyone, this year is going by quite smoothly and it's revealing so much promise in our direction, to continue expanding nationally, and educate the communities about all addictions and disorders. Our writers and advertisers extend specific solutions, to address the readers and/or viewer's addictions and disorders. We strive for obtaining the most comprehensible and updated information, to help enlighten those searching for resolution.

We are proud to be one of the avenues that help direct those in need, to a source, which in turn can help them find a solution. When I travel down the streets of Skid Row, I'm taken back to the time when I was a counselor in Psychiatric's in the late seventies. I could never had imagined the aftermath from the governments decision, to stop the funding for the facilities that housed the mentally disturbed, those that were psychologically and emotionally challenged. Whenever I deliver our recovery newspapers to locations on Skid Row, I see the mental illness there ever so present.

My heart is torn between extending to the residents on the streets, some of the necessities that we are blessed to have daily, such as food, clothing and hygiene products, or to personally help them to find temporary housing so they could get off those very dangerous streets. The homelessness that is throughout the United States, is reaching epidemic proportions, the hopelessness and lack of love that they must feel is truly heartrending.

We as a people should make it our obligation, to reach out whenever possible, and help another human being with their plight. It may just be kind and uplifting words, a handshake or hug, a few dollars for some food, or whatever the situation calls for at the time. There's a lot of hurt out in the world, yet we can make a difference if each of us reach out daily, and help just one person. Until next time, may you have a very blessed and peaceful month.

Marcus Marshall, Vice President & Cofounder



Hi Guys. First I want to start off by stating how grateful I am that Keys to Recovery gives me an amazing platform, to talk about topics that are close to my heart. Last month I got one more call, one more time, about a family friend who passed away. A 22 year old, in and out of treatment, overdosed on opiates. Another statistic from the Opiate Epidemic going on in our country. I called my business partners and asked what they thought about having the Opiate Crisis as our feature. And I knew if we were going to run the feature, it had to be written by Mike DeLeon. He wrote for us in 2015 about "The American Epidemic", and every time I read it I cried. After a year of filming around the country, he produced a national documentary on the opiate problem that plagues our country. It tells us how we got here, how bad it really is, but works to rally every viewer to join the mission and help solve this problem. This is his passion. I believe that if you are truly passionate about the work you do, you will have the greatest chance of achieving success. I believe when we are passionate about something, we work harder, we get more creative we search more diligently for solutions, and we inspire those who work along the side of us. Be it the simplest things or the most sophisticated, you need passion in order to succeed.

"The most powerful weapon on earth is the human soul on fire." Ferdinand Foch
Till next time, Beth Dewey-Stern, C.E.O. & Cofounder



Welcome back to another issue of Keys to Recovery Newspaper. After reading both Marcus and Beth's "Editors Column", I am moved by their passion, their kindness, and by their hearts. See here at Keys to Recovery we live with purpose, passion and recovery.

This month I want to talk about giving. Giving as a way of life. Not something I do when asked, or on a particular holiday, but all the time.

Giving comes in so many different forms, we all have something we can give. Some giving is easy, such as a smile. Sometimes giving is inconvenient, it means getting out of our comfort zone, going the extra mile. I have learned that giving is essential in my life. I need to give. It makes me feel...complete. When I give, my life gets bigger, better and brighter. It's like living in High Def!

All around us people are hurting, they need our love, our encouragement, our time. Once we get in the habit of giving it gets easier and easier...a way of life. Don't worry about getting the credit for giving. Sometimes it seems that a person is not grateful for what you have given, perhaps they just aren't used to receiving. Sometimes the best giving is done quietly, in secret.

Start small, let someone into your lane when traffic backs up. Ask the waitress or waiter if they are having a good day. Be a GREAT tipper. Make the first pot of coffee at the office, even if you don't plan on drinking any. You get the idea.

Once you have your giving muscles nice and strong, go big. Offer to help someone move, or drive them to the airport. If a friend is sick, clean their house or do their laundry. Clean out your closets and take some nice clothes to a shelter. Skip your designer coffee for a week and sponsor a child. Trust me before you know it, giving will be your best habit. I think Mother Teresa put it best, "It's not how much we give, but how much love we put into our giving".

I am blessed beyond measure, and I remember to thank God each and every day for His mercy and grace. - Jeannie Marshall, President & Cofounder



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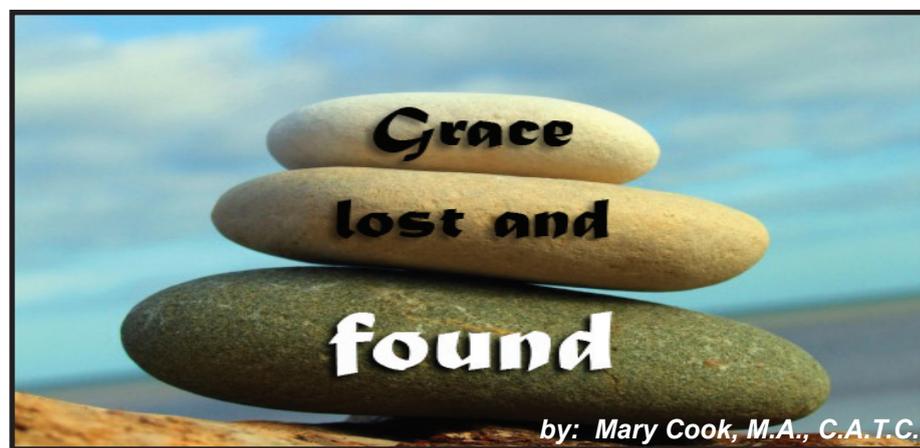
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by: Mary Cook, M.A., C.A.T.C.

REVELATIONS

Susan never meant to live this long. She was wild, promiscuous, used a lot of drugs, and lived fast and recklessly, in a feeding frenzy of quick, easy gratification. Now at 40 years old, she feels like 60, and hopes recovery can reverse time and damage done.

In recovery, Susan can learn what she was running away from and why she felt so empty. She can create safety for herself, practice relaxing mind and body, and build a recovery support system to learn about healthy relationships, and to have role models who inspire her. She can mature through accountability and character development, so that her actions are respectful and honorable to herself and others. Susan can ultimately realize that instead of reversing time and damage, her transformation through recovery gives her a profound purpose, gratitude and joyful humility that guides her through the rest of her life.

David was a doormat for others' projections and needs. He was depressed and desperately trying to ward off rejection or argument, through people pleasing. He needed others' smiles and affection to keep him afloat on a sea of self-deprecation. He needed drugs to feel accepted. Following a suicide attempt, he's in rehab.

In recovery, David can realize a new opportunity to discover who he is, and begin to take responsibility for his health and happiness. He can determine the origin of his dependence upon others and his sense of aloneness and fear. He can view his suicide attempt as trying to kill off the self and life that was failing him, but know that his true self can save him. Engaging in healthy recovery relationships will stimulate fear of vulnerability, because he's stepping out of his codependent role. This very vulnerability however, will awaken him to the pain of self-sacrifice and motivate him to heal and experience acceptance and appreciation for himself.

Louise was angry and controlling to avoid being victimized. Blaming and criticizing others helped her to feel superior and escape personal reflection. She was certain that drinking the most expensive liquor kept her from being alcoholic. Now a driving under the influence conviction threatens her defenses.

In recovery, Louise can recognize that her defenses prevent her from healing her own past trauma, and negative thoughts about herself. She can process her anger, blame and criticism of those who initially harmed her, and feel compassion for herself. Louise can discover that identifying her faults allows her to positively transform them, thus increasing her self-esteem. She can cultivate a healthy mature relationship with herself, and know when to set boundaries and when to forgive others, so that she can experience mutually helpful relationships.

John isolated from people as much as possible. In his fantasy life, he was completely self-sufficient. He was obsessed with locking doors and windows, and hoarding food. In public, he was stoic and robotic. John drank himself into oblivion every night, until he ended up in a hospital with a heart attack.

In recovery, John can see how his fears and obsessions arose from prior intrusions and deprivations. He can realize how his past unmet need for protection and nourishment, led to a way of life that caused greater harm. He can learn healthy ways to protect and nourish himself. He can practice gradually opening up to people in recovery so that he can heal his trauma. He can increasingly feel safe to express and discuss past feelings surrounded by the compassionate, caring embrace of his recovery fellowship. John can strengthen his heart through loving and sharing in healthy ways with others.

Defenses and addictions imprison us in the problem. Recovery offers us safe refuge so that we can surrender self-destructiveness, fear, depression, anger and isolation. What is revealed to us upon this surrender are the gifts of living with passionate purpose, joy, serenity, gratitude, and unity. We grow in our faith for the part of us that hopes for a better life. We grow in our faith for a program of recovery that helps us to heal. We grow in our faith in a God of our understanding that reveals our true self, and the abundant treasures of our soul. And these revelations inspire us to grow in contributing positively to our planet, for these are the actions of evolving faith.

WWW.MARYCOOKMA.COM Mary Cook has a Master's degree in psychology and is a certified addictions treatment counselor in private practice. She has over 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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ALLOWING FORGIVENESS

How many times have you heard: "Turn the other cheek"; "Forgive and forget"; "Just let it go"? A bunch? I know that I have. And that ended up making it harder for me to forgive. Let me explain what I have experienced, and share with you how I have learned to allow forgiveness (and a lot more serenity) to flow through my life.

Stop and think about it. Don't all those statements about forgiveness come across as an all-or-nothing proposition? That you have to forgive someone or something 100% or you are "failing" to forgive? That's how it always came across to me. And seldom could I forgive 100%, which meant I now felt guilty about not forgiving on top of already feeling hurt and angry over the original offense. Not wanting to give away my serenity to another person, or some event, I started to take a fresh look at forgiveness.

I began by realizing and accepting some of the very real reasons I resisted being forgiving. They included: 1) It didn't feel safe to forgive; 2) I didn't know how to protect myself from being hurt again (see #1); 3) A belief that forgiving meant that what happened to me was OK. Etc., etc., etc.

It then occurred to me that the teachings I had received about forgiveness relied on me using my willpower to forgive. All I had to do was choose to forgive, which translated into "there is something wrong with me if I can't let go of something which has hurt me deeply." What a catch-22! I'm miserable if I forgive and I'm miserable if I don't. I then realized that most self-help literature taught, directly or indirectly, that we improve our lives through willpower. We can use any number and variety of tools, and techniques to help us, but they are designed to help us exert our willpower. This same emphasis on willpower had carried over into our understanding of forgiveness.

Don't get me wrong. I am not dismissing the importance of willpower. In my workshops, I teach that we always have the power to choose, and that we are each responsible for our own happiness. I'm just saying that the emphasis on willpower, and that forgiveness was an all-or-nothing proposition, did not work for me and my serenity.

When I started working the 12 Steps, I naturally brought this same mindset to forgiving myself and others. Yes, I reached out to my Higher Power to help me forgive, but the emphasis was on me, not my Higher Power. I was asking my Higher Power to give me the willpower to forgive. I felt a little bit better, but I was still miserable, and nowhere close to experiencing serenity. My initial breakthrough came when I realized that just as resentment can grow in and harden my heart, so too can forgiveness grow in and soften my heart.

I let go of the belief that I had to forgive 100% from day one. I let go of the belief that forgiveness came only, or even primarily, from my will. I started looking at all those old sayings I had been taught, like "forgive and forget", as being goals, not as a test for me to fail. I came to realize that while I have to be willing to forgive, forgiveness doesn't come through my will.

Nowadays, my "goal" is to nurture forgiveness in my life, not demand it of myself. So how do you nurture forgiveness? Let me share with you a handful of items that have helped me. I started by realizing and accepting that my Higher Power is a source of perfect Love. Anything coming from my Higher Power came from a place of love, and was intended to bring what is highest and best for me. I was intentional about shifting any beliefs and healing any memories that stood in the way of my embracing this essential truth.

Next, I looked for intentionally shifted beliefs, I had picked up, which limited my ability to receive forgiveness and to allow it to flow through my life to others. An example of this is the belief that I mentioned earlier, the belief that I had to forgive 100% from day one or not at all. I moved toward a belief that my Higher Power asked me to be willing to forgive, and to allow that forgiveness to grow in my heart with time and nurturing.

Third, I actively looked for ways to keep myself physically and emotionally safe, while I forgave those who did me harm. I learned that forgiveness and trust are two different actions. I don't have to trust someone just because I choose to forgive them, and no longer give them power over my serenity.

Similarly, I learned to say "no". Learning to set boundaries showed respect for myself, helped me to feel safe, and told others I was no longer responsible for their happiness.

Fourth, in order to nurture my willingness and ability to forgive, I used visualizations and other energy psychology techniques. An example is the "seed" visualization. You imagine the person or event that needs forgiveness and then see yourself planting a seed of forgiveness in your heart. Then you ask your Higher Power to water that seed with Divine Love, and visualize it growing in your heart. You continue to do this visualization for as long and as many times as you need to, in order for the forgiveness to become a beautiful flower in your heart which gives off the scent of serenity.

Finally, I practice gratitude for the progress I make in allowing forgiveness to flow through my life. Gratitude requires my accepting love and forgiveness from my Higher Power. Gratitude acknowledges that I am participating with my Higher Power to bring healing into my life.

I encourage you to reflect on allowing forgiveness to flow from your Higher Power, rather than making it happen from your willpower. You have nothing to lose, except pain and suffering, and everything to gain...including greater serenity.

Larry Burton is a Certified Energy Health Practitioner through the Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology. He is the creator of the Pondera Process, a leading edge technique which helps people to move forward in their lives with greater ease. Larry is a recovery coach and conducts various workshops. www.rebuildingafter.com, email: larry@rebuildingafter.com, tel: (888) 347-6808.

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Ask Dr. Nita



by: Nita Vallens

Dear Dr. Nita,

I'm so upset - we went on vacation for five days and came home to our home being completely trashed by our daughter who, must have had the party of the century. She has left again and denied everything as usual. My husband adamantly said, "It's time for tough love, she's not allowed to be at our home unsupervised again. It's time to change the locks!"

Helpless in Torrance

Hello,

I'm especially glad that you wrote and I want to reassure you that it isn't a sign of weakness to reach out for help. And if that thought entered your mind, let it go! Reaching out simply means you need information, tools and perhaps professional help. Putting on blinders and pretending the problem will go away, usually delays your ability to get your own life back on track. The shock of a family member's destructive behavior due to drug or alcohol use, can be tough to come to terms with. It's not unusual for families to break down under the stress that may come with dealing with addiction. Part of the struggle is that it can be hard to accept that a loved one, child, spouse, parent, or even your very best friend is in trouble, and you don't know how to help them. Or, even worse you think you know how to help, yet everything you try fails.

In case you feel guilty, keep in mind that many problems come our way that we simply aren't equipped to handle, and often times we don't know who to ask or where to turn for assistance. If your phone or computer breaks, you can call technical support right? This situation is not different just because it involves human behavior, and not an object. Your husband's response reflects the need to set better boundaries with your daughter, and to keep you and the family safe. I'd like to suggest one of the best places to start learning these skills and it's called Al-Anon.

Al-Anon is a discussion and support group for family and friends of alcoholics (and Nar-Anon for loved ones of drug addicts). It is free, no appointments are needed and it's not necessary for the alcoholic or addict to be seeking help.

One of the mainstream views on alcoholism and drug addiction is that it is a family disease. That means that everyone in the family needs education, assistance, support, and tools. Members of Al-Anon do not give direction or advice to other members. Instead, they share their personal experiences and stories, and invite other members to use what works for them and use what works for their own lives. There is free literature as well as books that you can buy. Al-Anon is useful and helpful because people have a common interest and the atmosphere is non judgmental. No one cares about your employment status, socioeconomic bracket, or how you look or what you wear. Members are supporting each other and learning from one another.

This may come as a surprise to you, but Al-Anon addresses enabling behaviors on the part of friends and family, and the fact that their actions are just as serious, and in need of help as the alcoholic or addict themselves. For example, the parent who calls a child's school and tells a "cover story" when their son or daughter is too out of it, or hung over to go to school. This looks helpful on the surface, but covers up a growing problem in most cases, and is often referred to as enabling the behavior.

Additionally, addictions and the associated bad behaviors that go along with them, are not going to go away by themselves. In fact, as tensions rise in families, by trying to keep the peace, and not make waves, things often worsen. This is another form of denial and without setting boundaries will not improve, but will aggravate the situation. When you draw a boundary you are clearly stating what you won't tolerate.

Once you say something, you have to be prepared to back it up with action or behavior. For example, if you say the curfew is midnight and your teen objects, and you back down, you lose credibility and inadvertently send a message that you can be manipulated or walked on. If you hold fast to your boundaries, you'll get push back but at least you will be in integrity with yourself.

Dealing with addiction can be a challenge because as you have personally seen, the bad behavior goes with the territory. You and your spouse may have issues of fear, anger, distrust and suspicion, but you have to look unite as a team and resources such as Al-Anon can help guide you.

More information is readily available by looking on the Internet, or calling the Al-Anon Central office in your area of Torrance. I urge you to find meetings as soon as possible, so that your frustration can be reduced by knowing that you are taking immediate action.

If you want to do more, seeking a family therapist or counselor would be the next step, and you might need to do both for awhile, until you feel the situation is manageable and you feel confident with the strategies you have been taught, and how to apply them.

As motivational speaker Les Brown says, "A setback is a setup for a comeback."

I believe in you! Dr. Nita

Please send your questions to doctornita@gmail.com or phone Dr Vallens at 818.783.6258. Her radio show, Inner Vision, is at 1:00 pm on Tuesdays on KPFK Radio Los Angeles, 90.7 FM.



MAINTAINING HOPE IN RECOVERY

I remember eagerly, yet timidly, beginning eating disorder recovery. Notebook in hand, I was terrified, ashamed, and I was oh-so-tired. I was ready to be done, or so I thought. I didn't realize on day 1 that recovery would be a process, and I wouldn't get better with that one notebook. It turns out that I scribbled through dozens and dozens of journals before finding freedom. And throughout all of these journals I would often write, "I am hopeless. I can't do this anymore."

Here are seven keys that kept me going and that might help you, too:

1. Get some hope holders. No, you can't pick these up at your local grocery store. But these are actually pretty easy to find. Although, many of us, like me, will often use the excuse, "But I don't have any of these." Hope holders are people in our lives who hold onto our faith when we lose it. These are family members or friends. If you are isolated, as addictions and eating disorders like to keep us, the good news is twelve-step meetings exist that welcome everyone. In fact, these days there are twelve-step meetings on a wide array of topics, and at open meetings anyone can attend. And, if you live in a small town without many meeting options, no worries. If you have access to the Internet or a phone you can find a lot of free meeting options online. Like I said, hope holders are easy to find.

2. Find a spiritual protector. While you are joining a twelve-step meeting you are bound to hear something about a higher power, about something greater than yourself. What does spirituality mean to you? In my recovery from an eating disorder as well as PTSD, I ultimately realized that I couldn't do it alone. I needed not only those hope holders as well as professional help, but I also needed my higher power, which I personally choose to call God. I prayed. Each day, I tried to remind myself that I was in the arms of a loving God. My therapist even encouraged me to get a symbolic piece of clothing in order to remind myself of being in a protective presence. Today, I still wear my pink hoodie if I'm having a hard day.

3. Get out in nature. For many like me, nature is spiritual. My eating disorder recovery uncovered this part of myself that I never knew: I love nature. Being outside helps me to stay grounded. Being grounded helps me to hold onto my own hope. When I was in treatment for PTSD over a decade after my eating disorder recovery, I spent many hours walking in nature, often barefoot. Feeling my toes against the sand and grass felt so good. When I had to wear shoes, as was often the case, I still desired skin-to-skin-nature, so I found a solution through rocks in my pockets—or seashells. Acorns worked, too. Let's just say that you never know what you might find in my washing machine these days.

4. Think about what you are recovering to. As I said above, my eating disorder recovery brought me to nature. What will your recovery bring you? Are you moving toward your family, friends, a career, a home, your passion, a pet, a new car, a garden, a cooking class? Many of us (again, like me) can get so lost in our struggle to get better that we forget why we are doing all of the hard work in the first place. We are recovering from our illness in order to recover our lives. I was able to maintain hope in some of my darkest times by strumming my guitar, brainstorming about my next book, and playing with my nephews and nieces.

5. Recover for someone else. Often, especially in my PTSD recovery, I honestly found hope to keep fighting by imagining the faces of my little nieces and nephews. I thought about them getting older, and I wanted to be there to see it happen. I know this is kind of taboo to say, especially in a blog that mentions twelve-step meetings. But, here's the thing: thinking of my nieces and nephews was just a start for me. I gained motivation to stay in the recovery process by thinking of Andrew, Aiden, Alex, Addison and Noah. After that, it was up to me to figure out a way to make my recovery about me. What I mean is: to maintain recovery gains, I needed to get better for myself. And, ultimately, I did.

6. Remember a moment of freedom. When I was hopeless, I would re-read parts of my journal that talked about moments of freedom—like a day with my family. I will never forget the afternoon when I got the call that my first nephew, Andrew, was born. I was driving to Kentucky from Nashville, where I lived at the time. I was still deep in my eating disorder, but nothing, absolutely nothing, was wrong in that moment. Consider keeping a journal that notes the good moments. It might just be a sentence or two about a few moments of laughter with a friend. These moments can eventually string together to be your life.

7. Take care of you. Of course, hope is impossible to maintain if you are hungry, angry, lonely or tired. Listen in those twelve-step meetings when you hear the acronym HALT. Never let yourself get too Hungry, Angry, Lonely or Tired. For me, once I let myself go in either of those directions too far, my hope meter would also drop too low. We must nurture ourselves as best we can. Of course, I know this is hard, especially when many of our illnesses fight this very thing. We do the best we can.

Yes, this is a lot. Recovery is a lot. And, I know you have heard this a lot. But all of it is worth it. Truly, it is. Maybe you are hopeless right now. Maybe, like me, you are thinking, "I can't do this anymore." But, that's just your addiction or eating disorder talking. What would your hope holders say? Stick a rock in your pocket, put on your pink hoodie and get to a meeting. Now, go on. You got this.

Please join Jenni and Eating Recovery Center in a celebration on May 2, which is our second annual Eating Recovery Day! This year's theme, #DontMissIt, encourages sufferers to seek treatment so they don't miss out on the gifts of recovery. To engage in Eating Recovery Day festivities, join Jenni online at @JenniSchaefer (Twitter), @LifeWithoutEd (Facebook), and @Jenni_Schaefer (Instagram).

Jenni Schaefer is a bestselling author, popular speaker, and a National Recovery Advocate for Eating Recovery Center's Family Institute. In partnership with Insight Behavioral Health Centers, Eating Recovery Center provides specialized treatment for eating disorders as well as related disorders, including PTSD. Visit JenniSchaefer.com.



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Freedom from Bondage

by: Laura Shepperd

SAYING GOODBYE

The following is an excerpt from Laura Shepperd's sobriety memoir, "It's Not All Rainbows and Ponies." This excerpt picks up on Day 2 in Rehab.

The Newcomer Group was fluid, so the number of members would vary from day to day. New people would flow in and receive instructions and assignments, and those who had completed the required work would flow out, moving on to the next level of their Recovery. Carla, our instructor, said one of the requirements was for each member to write a Goodbye Letter to their DOC. The new people were given guidelines as to what was to be included, and I gave it a glance and stuffed it away in my folder.

A Goodbye Letter to alcohol? Really? What a bunch of kindergarten bull. I'll smoke this assignment, blow her socks off and move forward in record time.

"And then you will read it aloud to the group," Carla said.

Oh...well...now, wait just a minute. There are probably fifteen or twenty people in here! People I don't even know. Don't see what good can come of that. It's bull.

That night, I read the assignment outline and set out to write the most articulate, well-organized, grammatically correct Goodbye Letter ever in the history of Rehab. What I ended up with was an emotional chronicle of my very close, very lengthy relationship with alcohol. One that started as a party, disintegrated into just plain pathetic, and now was ending with a bitter breakup demand by me. My anger towards my dear old friend surprised me. It was as if I had been plucked from a sick relationship, and only in that removal could I begin to see it for what it really was. My life partner alcohol had become a selfish son of a gun:

"No one new in! And everybody who's already in, out with you too, if you disapprove! We go everywhere together, and we do everything together. If we're not allowed in together, we just won't go. To heck with you, and your judgment and intolerance!"

I cried for the me I had known and for the person I'd become. I cried for the mom and wife my family knew, and for the one they had ended up with. For two nights, I wrote and re-wrote. I threw away pages damp with tears and others crumpled in anger. At times, I meticulously edited each page. Others, I just copied the words over and over again. Finally, when words and tears no longer flowed, I neatly stacked my pages, shoved them in the folder on my desk, and let it be.

Then came the morning of my turn to read aloud, and I too, shook as I read with quivering voice, and I too, cried as I chronicled my relationship with my DOC. But as I concluded, I came to realize it was about the process, not the end product. It didn't matter at all what was on my paper, any more than it mattered what anyone in that room thought of it. So I cleared my throat, gutted it up, and finished my reading:

"Alcohol, I'm scared to let you go. You were always there for me. Picked me up when I was feeling down, relaxed me when I felt tense, and made the good times even better. Then you turned on me, and now there are no good times together, ever. But I keep crawling back to you, begging for more, like a sick, pathetic, battered victim.

"You, once the maker of all things better, now the Betrayer. You, who eased my restlessness and took the edge off, have put me on an edge so thin and sharp, now the only way I can stay balanced and tolerate this excruciating mental, emotional and physical pain is to drink again. And then again, again and again. But we turned a corner, didn't we? The party's been over for a long, long time, and the relief you once gave is now an elusive memory I chased, until I was busted up and finally, defeated.

"Yes, I'm scared to let you go. If this is life drinking, I can't bear to think what waits if I stop. I didn't want to keep drinking, and seeing the disappointed looks from my children and my husband, but I could not, NOT drink! It's all become a vicious cycle of fearful maintenance that has left me hopeless. Not the kind of hopeless that's declared by an outsider. I am, within myself, for the first time in my life, without hope. Hope that I can manage my drinking, much less, quit completely. Hope that I can stop hurting my beautiful family. Hope for a better, happier life. And hope that I won't be a drunken disappointment the remainder of my life. Yeah, that hope's been long-gone.

"But I'm done. You've taken all I'm willing to give you, so go. Haul your butt away from me and my family. Somehow, they haven't given up on me yet, so neither can I."

Did I blow their socks off? Hardly. But the effect on me of honestly putting that history down on paper, and then sharing it aloud with the other members of my group was deep and profound. I had written and read truths about myself that I had never even admitted alone, in my bed, in my busy, crazy head. I now trusted each and every one of these people, and they now trusted me. 72 hours before, we'd never even met. And but for this one thing in common, our paths would have never crossed.

Laura Shepperd is a native Texan and author of *It's Not All Rainbows and Ponies*. She and her husband follow Texas Rangers baseball, the Dallas Cowboys and their three grown children as they coach high school football and softball.

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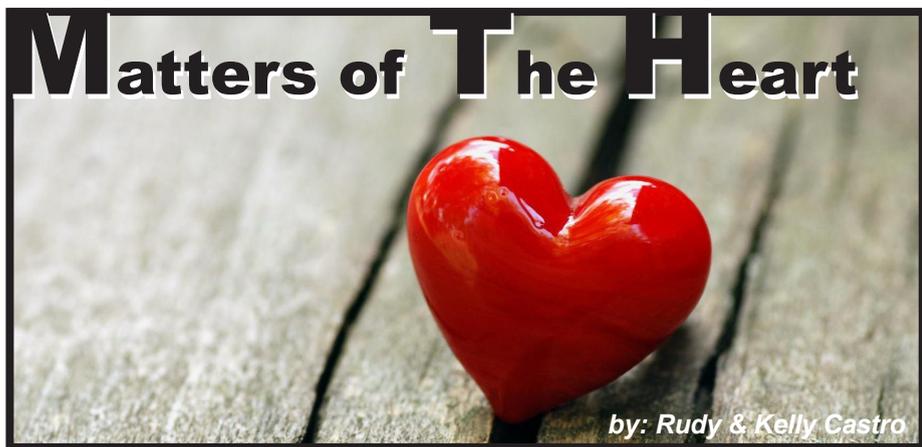
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TWO SICKIES DON'T MAKE A WELLIE

Have you ever heard this phrase? Two sickies don't make a wellie. If you are in a 12 step program then maybe you have. Especially if you have ever been in a romantic relationship with someone that is also 12 step based. There are a lot of us that are in relationships in 12 step programs. This notion of two sickies can be related to any kind of relationship. Siblings. Friendships. Parent-child. Any dynamic. So what does this phrase actually mean? Well what does it mean to be sick in the first place. One of the definitions of the word sick means to be mentally, emotionally, or morally deranged. Yikes!! That's a strong word. Deranged means insane. And when we experience insanity in any area of our lives we see unmanageability. So if two sickies are present we are talking about co-creating double insanity. Because let's face it, relationships will bring out the worst of our survival defects of character that we mastered in order for us to survive.

But to make things even more interesting, the variant word for sick, is sic, to seek. To go in search of something, a quest, or to seek a solution. So can two "seekers" make a wellie? Well, that's entirely up to the two in partnership - seeking a greater understanding of themselves. We coach people all the time, where in the beginning of the process, they get all excited and hopeful of an amazing outcome. After a short while though, once the mind realizes what is at stake - that it is being asked to let go of the multiple ways it guards itself, catastrophe strikes!! In attempting to dismantle the armor of the mind, it's being asked to be vulnerable, exposed, naked to the other person. At that point, all systems go, full red alert, full-on defense mode. Missiles are ready to fire. Usually conflict happens. Threats are thrown. Shut down. Retreat or attack. This is the point where couples want to get divorced. They're done. Boy do we understand.

The old way of being has to die and it doesn't want to. So like any living thing, its mechanism is to survive. Its coded in our DNA for millions of years to survive, and stay alive at all costs. The question that presents itself is; What is actually trying to stay alive? It is the part of the mind that believes the fear is real, that we can't be vulnerable and exposed of what our deepest feelings are. That if we do that - we will be destroyed.

Just last month during the Easter holiday, we both were challenged yet again, with another holiday, bringing up a new element. What came up was the realization of how much we try and control our two 8-year olds, and 3 year old child because of the terror in us. The fear is that if we don't manage them, they will completely harm themselves. On the surface it may seem logical, that it is our job to manage them. What we accidentally end up doing, is handicapping them to the point where we don't allow them to find their own inner guidance, and experience the lessons in life that we all need to have in order to grow and mature. Instead we want to control their exact experience in life the way we want.

So, we decided for just one day, to leave them be. To allow them to eat as much Easter candy as they want. To make their own decisions for themselves. We were terrified. Now, to be fair, we didn't control their behavior, however, we did point out possible outcomes to consider. Such as uncontrollable anger or sickness from too much sugar. What happened midday, was that Kelly was in the bathroom shaking from terror watching our kids look seemingly out of control, and Rudy was powerless of being unable to take the focus off of what they were doing. During this experiment, we were not perfect by any stretch of the imagination. We each had to support one another to stop when we would start to control them, and what we had to see was that we wanted to control EVERYTHING! We actually experienced withdrawal symptoms from not doing so. What do you know? At one point in the day, when all seemed like madness -with crying and screaming, we didn't involve ourselves. We let them figure it out. And eventually they did figure it out. Imagine that. They actually worked out their problems.

What we continuously come to realize is this: if you are willing to seek, to explore something new, and allow yourself to be guided by your inner knowing, rather than your fear, you will be given the solution. We were given one (to let our children be), and they too received solutions to their problems. We see the trauma in people all the time from growing up in environments that were too controlling.

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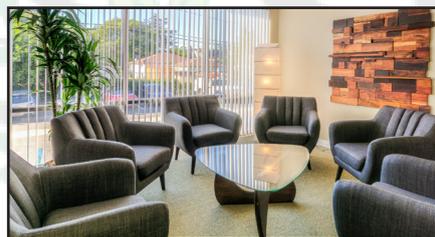
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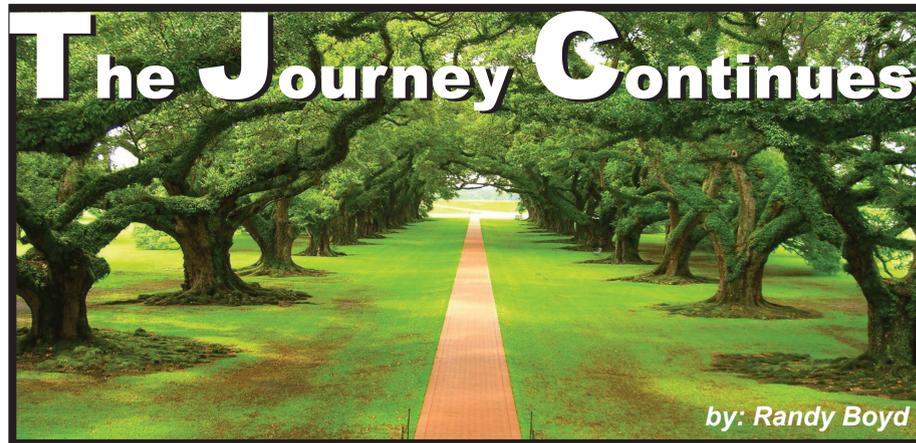
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by: Randy Boyd

DON'T LEAVE UNTIL THE MIRACLE HAPPENS

In my lifetime I have had several significant milestones. Getting married to my wife Cathy thirty-three plus years ago, raising three beautiful children and now the proud grandfather of three beautiful granddaughters just to name a few. Not to mention building a very successful construction company. All of these are milestones that many can only dream of. Yet in the last twelve years I have achieved my most important milestones.

This past February I had two very significant milestones. February 5th I celebrated eleven years of not just sobriety, but recovery. I had "tried" to quit drinking on my own in the past without success. It wasn't until I walked into the Betty Ford Center (BFC) Intensive Out Patient Program that I was finally able to not only get sober, but stay sober. What was different about it this time? What was it that made it stick this time? The love and acceptance I felt not only at BFC, but also in the rooms of Alcoholics Anonymous.

As a survivor of emotional, physical, sexual and spiritual abuse I lived my life as a victim, and I played that card beautifully. After all, the best advice anyone was ever able to give me was, Randy you just need to forgive, forget and move on." Not once did I receive any empathy or compassion about being abused, except from my wife. However, when I walked into the BFC that all changed. For the first time in my life all my feelings, the feelings of anger, fear and hate were validated. Not my behaviors, not what I did for a living, not what I had accomplished, just my feelings that had been denied for thirty plus years. This made all the difference in the world to me.

There was a woman in my home group of Alcoholics Anonymous that would always say, keep coming back and don't leave until the miracle happens, so I kept on coming back. Everyday I came back was another day I didn't drink. And everyday I didn't drink, another milestone was reached and another miracle took place. You see I believe that people are looking for a burning bush type of miracle, when in reality miracles can also come in very small inconspicuous packages. But if we are caught up in looking for the big miracle, and we don't pay attention to the little miracles along the way, then it is likely we will never see the big miracle.

Okay Randy, this all sounds good. In fact I would say a bit too good to happen to me. You don't understand what I have been through. Fair enough, in fact I use to think the same thing, so let me tell you a little bit about me. My wife and I were on the brink of separating. I had an affair the year before I got sober. My daughter wanted nothing to do with me and my business was on the edge of failure. I needed a miracle in several areas of my life. So I just did what that woman said to do, I kept coming back and didn't leave until the miracle happened.

It took time, in fact a couple of years, but my wife and I started to heal our differences and our marriage was completely restored. In fact I am more in love with my wife today than I ever thought possible. My daughter and I have fully restored our relationship. Not only is she my daughter, she is a great friend. While my daughters' relationship with me was the most strained of all my children, I had work to do with all my children and today they all look up to, love and respect me in ways I thought would never happen. Was it easy? Absolutely not; then again anything worth having in life does not always come easy.

There are several milestones I have reached in recovery. After forty years in the construction industry, I closed the doors of my business and opened a foundation, The Courageous Healers Foundation, a place where men, boys, and their families can come and heal the wounds of sexual abuse. I have written a ground-breaking book, Healing The Man Within. I graduated from junior college at the age of fifty-eight with high honors and on the Deans List with an AA in psychology. These are all things I never even dreamed I could do.

I said I had two milestones this past February. You see I have two birthdays in February, my AA birthday and my belly button birthday. My real father died at the age of 32, therefore I truly believed that I would not live past the age of 32, wow was I wrong. This past February I turned 60, and I will say that it was by far the hardest birthday to date. Just realizing that I am on the downhill side of life, which means fewer years ahead of me than behind me, is a humbling thought. The beauty about my life is that I truly feel like I am only in my forties, that is with the exception of a few aching bones and muscles. Truth is, I am in the best shape of my life and that in its self is a milestone.

There is one more milestone on my very near horizon. When I was in my 20's, I use to dream about doing the Race Across America bike ride. Being an avid cyclist today, my dream will come true this June. While it is not the Race Across America, it is a Ride Across America to Stomp out Shame, a fund-raiser for The Courageous Healers Foundation. I will be riding my bike from Indio, California to Beach Lake, Pennsylvania bringing awareness and educating as much of America as possible about the devastating effects of sexual abuse of boys. My greatest sorrow has become my greatest joy!

So, keep coming back and don't leave until your miracle happens!

For information about the Ride Across America visit courageoushealers.org Randy Boyd is a licensed California Alcohol & 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. "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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If you have been in recovery, from a gambling addiction long-term, let's face it; you don't need to be a person who works in the field of treating gambling addicts, to know there has not been much development in treatment options for those of us, who become addicted to gambling. And, there is much confusion of what to call a gambler who becomes addicted. Labeling it a disease, I feel adds to the "stigma" around many addictions let alone gambling, and hampers many who may seek for help.

Now, by all means, I am sharing this as a recovering gambler's perspective, and it is what I call myself, when speaking about my recovery from this illness. I am not an expert in the field, nor a therapist or treatment expert. It seems; however, we learn a lot about our addiction by research, by our treatment choice and the education we receive, and even by just listening to others around you in a group, or GA meeting. We can look at recovery in the same way. And I have heard many "old" battles and disagreements about what IS the best route or path to recovery. A 12-step model, professional treatment, spiritual path or others. Recovery is not a "one size fits all" concept.

When we label people, it may make them feel "like they are the disease" if that makes sense. I know I don't like being labeled just because I live in recovery from addiction. I also live with mental health challenges, so more labels around that too. My addiction is called many names; "pathological gambling," "compulsive gambling," "addicted or at risk gambling, gambling disorder" and problem gambler," and on and on. It can be very frustrating! But I am certain these various terms reflect the efforts of researchers, and treatment providers to be able to describe the different levels of severity shown among people with gambling problems.

The same is lacking for new and innovative ways to treat gambling addiction. Some even treat it as a "Mental Health" issue, and require a treatment model of cognitive-behavior. I disagree, an addiction IS a disease, and a disease is a medical problem, not just a mental health issue. The various treatment models used for gambling addiction, I found was the effectiveness of these options, and what seemed to be missing.

WHY? Because as I went through treatment myself, and attended Gamblers Anonymous meetings as well, did I relapse? YES, and I was seeing the same people in both my treatment group and GA meetings, that had relapsed as well, as they were out gambling too! That seems to question the actual honest success rate of these options of treatment. And with this in mind, most treatment options tend to only focus on three stages of treatment; crisis or intervention, followed by rehabilitation and ending with maintenance. Again, all my observations and what I experienced.

I feel what is missing in most types of treatment options is the so-called "maintenance." The aftercare and teaching us how to begin the stage of "inner work" and self-reflection, to address those deeper underlying issues, maybe pain, past trauma or abuse that may have had a part in those turning to addiction in the first place. It is the way addicts can learn to take back the power of their lives, begin the healing process, learn to forgive and then "let it GO." Only then can we journey to a better way of life. Former addicts need the necessary skills, and tools to do the inner work, of identifying and changing our character defects and "clean out the soul", so to speak.

In recovery from gambling, we need to learn how to "feel" again as we used addiction to 'numb or escape' from our problems, life, or any pain or hurt. There are many ways to learn these skills if you are not receiving it within your choice of treatment and recovery. Some ways to begin "inner work" can be by journaling each day. Write what worked and what areas you had problems that day, and correct them. Reading addiction/recovery books, recovery magazines and newspapers like "Keys To Recovery," working the 12-steps and reworking them, are all excellent tools to start the inside work, especially in early recovery.

Listening to recovery podcasts and DVD's are great ways to learn more about what others in recovery are doing to live a well-balanced, and happy life in recovery. Many add prayer, meditation, and even yoga as ways to a truer inner peace and gain serenity. These are all actions I use in my recovery. Coming into recovery is scary enough, but learning a deeper meaning of yourself and life without addiction in the process is the best part of your recovery, that gets you to long-term recovery IN happiness from addiction.

Con't Page 22

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THE SKY MAY
BE FALLING...

...BUT TOGETHER
WE CAN OPEN THE
DOOR FOR CHANGE

by Michael DeLeon



“Hey, Michael”, said the detective from the Monmouth County, NJ Prosecutor’s Office. “...your presentation was good. It really was... but you really need to knock off all the ‘Chicken Little Stuff’.”

“Chicken Little Stuff,” I responded...“What do you mean?”

“You’re running around the country telling everyone that the sky is falling, implying that we’re facing a heroin epidemic. This is the suburbs. I’ve been a cop for 25 years here in Monmouth County... We don’t have the kind of problem you’re describing. Not here. You need to take that message down to the ghetto where the heroin problem really exists. It’s just not out here like you’re implying,” said this detective.

That was toward the end of 2007. Ten years ago; seems like it was yesterday. I was presenting to a law enforcement conference as a newly released prison inmate to discuss what I was seeing from this rarely-shared, perspective. I was being asked to share the difficulties of re-acclimating yourself back into society, after 12 years in prison. I wanted to share that journey. I also wanted to educate the people, I thought I could actually do something about what I was seeing. In the final years of prison, between 2002 and 2007, I saw a dynamically changing prison population, and a changing in the demographics of drugs and drug users. I saw an epidemic coming.

I am not an alarmist. I am however a realist, I believed then, and I was right, that we were at that time,

12 years into the start of what has now become, the worst public social health crisis our country has ever seen. We are now ten years into the dramatically, steady escalation of our opiate and heroin pandemic, and it really began in 1995 when the FDA approved oxycontin. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have related that deaths from overdose of opioids, which include prescription painkillers as well as heroin, have reached epidemic status in the United States; and nearly one-half of those overdose deaths from Opioids (33,000 nationwide in 2015 alone) involved prescription drugs.

The Administration has formed a Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis. The newly formed Commission will take on prevention and interdiction, with particular attention to addiction recovery and improving access to treatment. As a New Jersey Resident, I’m not at all optimistic that anything more will get done.

When I presented, to the New Jersey Law Enforcement conference in 2007, I believed that Monmouth County, and the adjoining Ocean County, New Jersey were ground zero for our state for opiates and heroin. I didn’t feel at all as if I were Chicken Little, but I did believe the sky was about to fall... And fall it did. The problem hasn’t subsided at all in New Jersey. Those two counties became the top two counties in the state with measurable destruction and remain so today. The epidemic became pandemic and the problem is not de-

creasing at all in New Jersey or nationwide. In fact, it’s worse than it ever was, and it is about to get a whole lot worse. I don’t believe we’re even at the peak.

The U.S. opioid epidemic is continuing, and drug overdose deaths nearly tripled during 1999–2014. Among 47,055 drug overdose deaths that occurred in 2014 in the United States, 28,647 (60.9%) involved an opioid. Illicit opioids are contributing to the increase in opioid overdose deaths.

During 2015, drug overdoses accounted for 52,404 U.S. deaths, including 33,091 (63.1%) that involved an opioid. It has been estimated that when 2016 numbers are finally tallied, we will have lost 75,000 Americans – a 43% increase in just one year!

I estimate that we will lose more than 100,000 in 2017. Call me Chicken Little! Seem extreme? Alarmist? How can I justify predicting a 90% increase in just two years? Well, I don’t believe for one minute that the numbers are correct. I don’t believe for one minute that we are accounting for every death due to an overdose or drug poisoning. I believe there are far, far more deaths from overdose than are being accounted for. I believe that many suicides are actually overdoses, and I believe a majority of elderly deaths aren’t even calculated to fall into this category. Drug poisonings are calculated very differently from state to state. I believe this pandemic is far greater than trusted federal numbers portray. But regardless, I do believe 2017 will bring us the worst numbers this country has ever seen.

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Two years ago this month, I wrote an article for this magazine. “An American Epidemic – More Than a Documentary” (**Keys To Recovery Newspaper, Inc., April, 2015**). It was describing the epidemic I had documented over the previous year travelling 40 states, interviewing hundreds of people to fully understand why so many people were dying from drug overdoses. I wanted to show people how bad the problem had become, but more importantly, I wanted to rally America to the solutions. I wanted to show people that this social problem could in fact be solved, but that we must band together to make that happen.

Many people were telling me that the War on Drugs had become an abysmal failure, and that it never worked. That’s because it was never a War on Drugs, it was a “War on Drug ADDICTS”! We needed a new “War” and I wanted to create a new approach with a new collaborative Army – a Recovery Army! It hasn’t been easy, and the problem has gotten much, much worse. And the scariest part of it, is that it was affecting everyone!

There has been a dramatic increase in the mortality of middle-aged white Americans (between the ages of 45 and 54) — and it has been attributed to higher rates of suicides, drug overdoses, and liver disease. And since about 2001, drug overdose deaths in the US have increased 7 percent annually for white Americans, compared with an average 2 percent increase for black and Hispanic Americans, respectively.

However, data from 2014 and 2015 indicates this might be shifting. The number of black Americans who died from a drug overdose in 2015 jumped from 10.5

deaths for every 100,000 people to 12.2 deaths, marking the largest uptick in drug-related deaths for black Americans in the past 16 years. Similarly, Hispanic Americans experienced the biggest jump in drug-related deaths in 2015 too, climbing from 6.7 deaths for every 100,000 people to 7.7.

It’s evident that it’s getting worse, and it’s evident that it affects every sector of the country. I just don’t see the evidence convincing enough of the country, how serious it really is. If this many Americans were dying due to Ebola or the Zika virus, I think people would be paying very close attention, and I believe wholeheartedly that major shifts would be taking place in prevention, education and intervention. I believe that if legislators would have the guts to go after the Pharmaceutical industry, I believe health care would be solved, and treatment in America for substance abuse and mental health, would be dramatically addressed. What else in this country, that affects 50 million people, lack a standard of care? Nothing.

I want people to understand the magnitude of the problem, without believing that it can’t be solved. We might not be able to solve it on our own, but maybe we can solve the overall epidemic by working together. The ongoing epidemic of opioid deaths, requires intense attention and action.

In a November 2016 report, the Drug Enforcement Administration referred to prescription drugs, heroin, and fentanyl as the most significant drug-related threats to the United States. It’s comforting that some Government agencies are waking up. It’s comforting that the Administration is discussing it.

But it’s a National Crisis and a State of Emergency is warranted across the board.

We need to come together as ONE VOICE. Everyone in Recovery and every family affected by addiction must come together. It’s going to take more than a village here – It’s going to take an Army. A Recovery Army.

I choose to be a difference maker, and I work to make a difference in this fight every single day. I encourage you to do the same. Join me as part of a Recovery Army where we can make a difference. If I can change some young adult lives, some students from starting drug or alcohol use in their teens, some students way of looking at the world – by opening up and sharing my story, I will have fulfilled my life.

Please go to www.recoveryarmy.com and learn about the solutions we have proposed. Join us in this fight and help us change not only the conversation, but the country’s response.

Michael DeLeon of Steered Straight, Inc. and the Recovery Army – check out the website www.steered-straight.org and www.recoveryarmy.com You can buy his 3 documentaries, “Kids Are Dying”, “An American Epidemic” and “MarijuanaX” as well as order the Recovery Movie Soundtrack with over 30 Recovery tracks. His newest movie, “Higher Power” as well as his memoir, “Chasing Detours” will be available in June, 2017.

KEYS TO RECOVERY

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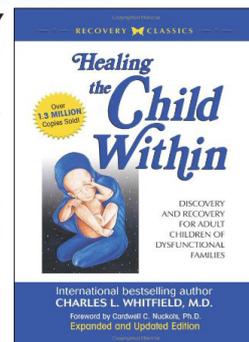


HEALING THE CHILD WITHIN: DISCOVERY AND RECOVERY FOR ADULT CHILDREN OF DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES: Written by Charles L. Whitfield, MD Published by Health Communications, Inc.

Charles Whitfield first wrote this book in 1986, as a kind of educational aid and "bibliotherapy" for his patients. He did not anticipate that not only would it sell more than a million copies, but that it would also be translated in more than 10 languages worldwide. Since 1986 there have been several new and important things learned regarding our "Child Within", and the need to acknowledge him/her, and to heal any wounds we still silently suffer from. Charles Whitfield writes this update in hopes that while working to heal our Child Within, we can live a life of true freedom and be in harmony with our Real Self.

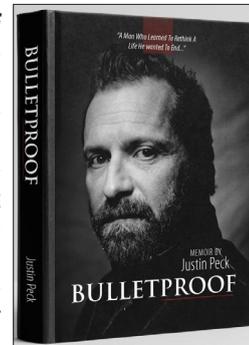
So many of us know of this child, but we feel we are healthy and have no unresolved hidden traumas. This book asks us to take a few quizzes that are only for our eyes. Let me assure you, if you honestly answer these questions; you will know that his book can help you live a more meaningful life.

Charles Whitfield clearly explains the symptoms and how we try to deny them, our reluctance to deal and therefore, how we act out. He helps us to understand the need of healing, and how do it with baby steps. He tells us it takes time and our willingness to get the help we need, from friends, family and/or loved ones, we cannot do it alone. If we have no one or are not ready to talk to those close to us, then a great place to start would be to attend any of the many 12 step programs. An important part of successful recovery is learning to accurately name what happened to us, and the components of our inner life as they come up for us, including our various feelings, and learning to tolerate emotional pain without trying to medicate it away. So get ready to change your life, to be set free from yourself. Then read this book. Available at www.Amazon.com

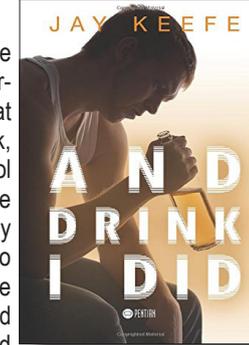


BULLETPROOF "A MAN WHO LEARNED TO RETHINK A LIFE HE WANTED TO END..." Memoir by Justin Peck. Published by Bulletproof Entertainment, LLC.

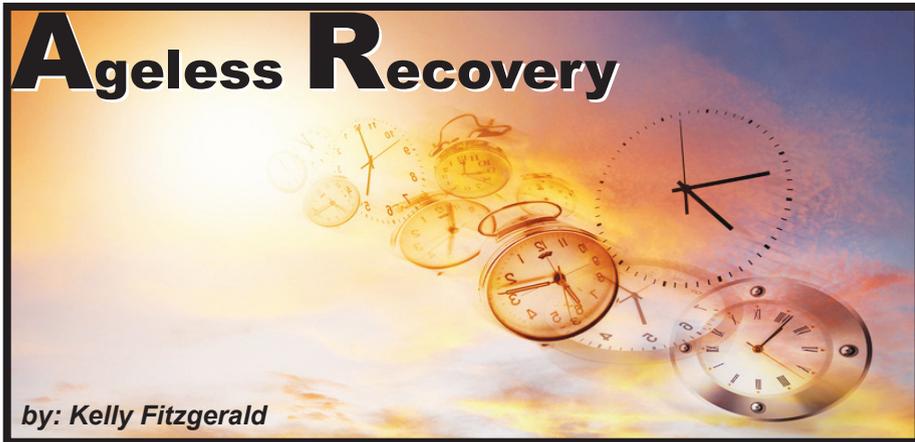
This is a must read for those contemplating about the true existence of God, and their own significant contribution to society with all the ramifications attached, good or bad. Justin Peck's mindset was basically geared to working on destroying himself, depression, self-doubt and all its accompanying negative baggage, that was pulling him down beneath the under current of the waves of peace and serenity, which is accessible to us all. There are a few individuals that are primarily fearless in their pursuits, in a matter of speaking, death-defying with their actions until they receive an enlightenment, which opens their mind and spirit to being selfless. Justin Peck extended himself to be of service whenever possible, due to his unique drive, it allowed him to redirect his energies into becoming very successful in his endeavors. This book is inspirational and shows the true strength of the human spirit, when a positive path is finally visible to the one walking momentarily down the wrong one. Available at www.Amazon.com



AND DRINK I DID: BY JAY KEEFE. Published by Pentian.
One Man's Story of Growing Through Addiction. This is one man's descent into alcoholism and journey into recovery. Jay had parents who provided for him, lived in a nice neighborhood, was a great student. Nothing stands out except that when Jay took his first drink, he loved it and he ran with it. Jay did have signs of OCD and alcohol repressed that. Drinking filled a void for him, and the more he drank the more the void needed to be filled. Boy! Can I relate to that feeling. Jay wrote about his last drink on October 3, 2009 and said he never felt so desperate in his life. He wanted to die. There is that sweet surrender we all have right before we get sober. His journey into recovery was filled with meetings and exercise, but he still felt empty. It wasn't until Jay had his spiritual experience, did he really begin to change and grow. This is a story of hope. As he states on the last page of his book, that with a little bit of willingness we can and do recover "One day at a time." Thank you, Jay Keefe for carrying the message of recovery. Available at www.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.



WHAT IT'S HONESTLY LIKE TO GET SOBER AT 27

Does anyone ever really want to get sober? In my experience, they don't. Sobriety is born out of necessity, out of pain, and out of the depths of despair.

I certainly didn't want to get sober at the age of 27, but that's exactly what happened. Now that I'm 3.5 years sober I am often asked what it feels like, how I did it, and what I've learned. I'm in a constant state of awareness and reflection. But despite that, I rarely think about the age of 27 as being relatively young to quit drugs and alcohol. When talking to older sober people, I am reminded. Their reaction is always, "the good thing is you got it, and you got it young."

Getting sober at 27 was a life-altering event. It was never something I planned on doing. It was never how I saw my life going. I thought I'd get a job, get married, and have kids all while downing wine daily, still going to happy hours, and celebrating milestone birthdays at bars and nightclubs. I pictured myself vacationing at the Jersey Shore with family, coolers full of beer, and tanning on the beach all day. In my family we grew up going to Ocean City, New Jersey every summer for a week. Ocean City is a dry town and I thought "what fun is that?"

I couldn't wait to get out into the world and flex my drinking muscles.

My unhealthy relationship with substances started way back in high school, although I would never admit it until I got sober. I stayed out past my curfew, I yearned to get high again as soon as I was done smoking. I drank alcohol whenever I could. When I had my first knee surgery at the age of 16, I became familiar with the mellow sedation of Vicodin. I immediately liked how it made me feel, and after having several more knee surgeries I started taking the pills for fun. I never considered these facts to be part of my addiction either, until a few months ago. I thought alcohol was my only problem, but I've realized alcohol is only a symptom of a bigger disease.

I didn't plan on getting sober, and definitely didn't want to take my last drink before the age of 30. Most people think that getting sober at 27 is depressing, sad, and a lifetime sentence of boredom. I was no different. I was convinced that alcohol was the lifeblood of my existence. Without happy hour, dirty martinis, craft beer, nightclubs, and mimosas what is life? I was convinced I couldn't live a glamorous life without booze. Even when I looked towards the future, I would always imagine life with a cocktail in my hand.

In 2013 when the pain became too great, my only option was change. I had been attempting to moderate my alcohol and drug use for a year before then. I failed in every way.

When I quit drinking I felt like I had no other option.

The first year of my sobriety was much like living in a new place for the first time. I felt lost, confused, emotional, out of place, and unsure of where I was headed in life. All I could do was put one foot in front of the other, and get through each 24 hours without a drink or a drug. Once I strung some days together, I started to feel much better physically. But there was another experience I had when I quit drinking, and that was mourning my relationship with alcohol. As time went on I knew in my soul that I had found the answer to my problems, sobriety. But internally I was struggling with how to let go of alcohol. Being told by society, the media, and my peers that alcohol is necessary to live a fun, exciting life led me to believe I could not have these things if I stopped drinking.

I believe I went through all the stages of grief when it came to mourning my relationship with alcohol. Before I quit I was in denial, and still when I stopped drinking I had the idea that maybe one day I would be able to drink again. I didn't want to believe alcohol was the source of my problems. As the denial faded I became angry, why did this have to happen to me? Life wasn't fair and I felt like the only person who could have ever dealt with this issue. As I graduated to the bargaining stage, I felt overwhelming shame and guilt. How could I have let it come to this? If I got my life together and proved to myself I could stop drinking, then maybe I wouldn't be an alcoholic or an addict. Maybe one day I would be able to learn how to control myself, and enjoy life with alcohol moderation. If I behaved now, it would pay off in the end. After bargaining came depression. For many months during my first year of sobriety I felt sad and at times, I felt like I was missing out. I believe this was because I was truly accepting that sobriety is the best path for me. Losing substances that were my crutch for so long was sad, life-altering, and transformative. It also proved to me just how embedded alcohol and drugs were in my life.

It proved to me that I did have an addiction.

The one-year mark is when I truly reached a state of acceptance. It was when I embraced my new identity as a sober woman. I've had to relearn how to do almost everything – how to express and work through emotions, how to socialize without alcohol, how to attend weddings, birthdays, and get-togethers without ordering alcohol.

Con't Page 22




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WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 2017: (Weekly May 3, 2017) 12th Step Yoga. 7:15-8:30pm. Santa Monica Yoga. Free Donation Weekly Yoga Class in Safe Environment. D1640 Ocean Park Blvd., Santa Monica, California. 90405. Contact Dennis (310)-266-2698 or dennislyonsyoga@gmail.com

SATURDAY, MAY 6, 2017: Every Saturday Night (Weekly April 1, 2017) Music and Meeting. 9:30-11:30 pm. The New Radford Hall. 13267 1/2 Victory Blvd., Van Nuys, California. Contact Ron (818) 823-3633.

SATURDAY, MAY 6, 2017: ASL American Sign Language. 4pm Garden Grove Alano Club. 845 Belfast Dr., Garden Grove, California. www.ggalano.org

SATURDAY, MAY 6, 2017: Mother's Day Boutique Sale Oasis Women's Recovery Community. 9am-3pm. 13832 Polk St. Sylmar, California 91342 (818) 362-0986

SATURDAY, MAY 13, 2017: Color of Money. 7:30-11:30 pm. Bowling Includes Shoes \$20 18 and over. Open Bowling for Those Who Are Not 18. Linbrook Bowling Center. 201 S. Brookhurst St., Anaheim, California. 92801

SUNDAY MAY 14TH 2017 - Inner Mammal Zoo Tour Make peace with your inner mammal. Learn how our happy and unhappy brain chemicals work in animals and to rewire yourself for healthy new happy habits. Meet at the Chimpanzees at 2:00PM Free after zoo admission.RSVP: InnerMammalInstitute.org.

THURSDAY-SUNDAY, MAY 18-21,2017: 33rd Annual Tri- State Round Up. Don Laughlin's Riverside Resort Hotel & Casino. 1650 South Casino Dr., Laughlin, Nevada. 89029 Register Online at www.tristate-roundup.com Questions Contact: tristateroundup@hotmail.com

SATURDAY, MAY 20, 2017: Pancake Breakfast every 3rd Saturday at The Orange Friendship Club. All You Can Eat for \$2.50. 2191 Orange-Olive Rd., Orange, California. Call The Club For Time (714) 637-9860

SATURDAY, MAY 20, 2017: Dance Therapy The Windsor Club. Hosted by Pat Fohrer. Meeting 8-9:30. Dance 9:45pm-1:30 am. The Windsor Club, 123 W. Windsor Rd., Glendale, California, 91204.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY, MAY, 26-29, 2017: Welcome to AALA. The 2017 AA & Alanon "A Common Solution" LA Marriott Burbank Airport, 2500 North Hollywood Way, Burbank, California. 91505

UPCOMING

SATURDAY, JUNE 3RD, 2017: BIKE-N-4-BOOKS, San Fernando Valley H & I Fundraiser. Woodley Park Picnic Area #3, 6350 Woodley Ave., Van Nuys, California, 91346. Call (818) 850-2313 or email biken4books@gmail.com.

FRIDAY, JUNE 2ND TO SUNDAY JUNE 4TH, 2017: Woman to Woman, 38th Annual Sharing and Caring Workshop weekend. Mount St. Marys College. www.WomantoWomanLA.org.

THURSDAY, JUNE 8TH TO SUNDAY 11TH, 2017: AA Desert Pow Wow with Al-anon Participation. Renaissance Indian Wells Resort & Spa. General Info Sherali J (760) 340-7540 Sandy W. (760) 776-1066

SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 2017: Comedy Night @ Oasis. Adult Comedy. Come Have a Night of Non-Stop Laughter. Come Hungry We Will Have Our Famous Nachos and Other Snacks Available at Snack Bar. Tickets\$10 Donation. \$15 at Door. Info Call (818) 362-0986

SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 2017: 4th Annual 202 Block Party Hosted by Anaheim Alano Club. 10am-5pm. Proceeds Will Be Donated To Upkeep of The Club. Kid Zone, Face Painting, Bounce House, Photo Booth, Live Music, Food, Awesome Vendors, and 50/50 Raffle. 202 West Broadway, Anaheim, CA. (714) 535-0900

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SURVIVING MOTHERS DAY ONE BREATH AT A TIME

Mothers Day. Those two words once brought happy memories of cards and flowers, crabs and beer. My family gathered together to celebrate motherhood. Three generations laughing and loving. Sharing the memories of childhood, then teen years that became adult years, changing our families women into mothers. Every year we gathered together at my house. A beautiful family tradition. Grandmothers, Aunts, mother-in-law, sister, sons and daughters. To celebrate family and love. This year Mother's Day grabs my heart and shatters it like glass. Broken in too many pieces to ever be repaired. Our family forever changed by addiction. A beautiful family tradition now missing a very large presence.

My youngest son gone forever. His demons more powerful than a mothers love. A family broken. A mother broken. Thinking of this once special day brings me to my knees. A day I once looked forward to, now a day that will forever be a reminder of the profound loss. The gut punches become relentless, taking my breath away in sobs that I can no longer control. It is said losing a child demolishes the mother. I can tell you it absolutely does.

How does a grieving mother survive a holiday in her honor. There are no Hallmark cards dealing with moms like me. There are no "how to" books explaining what to expect on days that are meant to bring joy, but now will bring incredible pain. There is nothing happy about Mother's Day for this mother. Yet, I recognize I still have my mother, sister, daughter-in-law, and most importantly my oldest son. My mind knows I still have much to be thankful for, but my heart is missing a very special piece. How do I explain that all I want to do is close my eyes and wish I would disappear?

There is no greater love than that beautiful bond shared between a mother and her child.

How do I make everyone understand that my heart has shut down to protect my sanity, and Mother's Day is now a day I want to forget?

Now along with grief I have guilt. Mother's Day has always been my holiday to do for everyone. I cook the food and provide the drink. Buying beautiful flowers for all to enjoy. I transform my gardens into the peaceful place for all the mothers to relax, and appreciate Mother Nature. While affording my adult son's precious time together. Watching my two boys, now men, laughing and sharing their lives, filled my heart with joy. Now I see the pain etched on my oldest son's face and my heart feels the depth of his loss. His grief washes over me. His bravery astounds me as I witness his silent tears. How does a grieving mother help her grieving son?

Mothers Day, once a holiday I loved, has become a day that will always remain a painful reminder of our families loss. Most of my friends are mothers with living children. Now rather than sharing their joy of our day, I'm jealous that their children are here and one of mine is not. Guilt again. How can I feel this way? What kind of mother is jealous that another mother's child is alive? Grief has changed this mother. I'm no longer the woman I once was. The loss of my youngest son has made me question the circumstances of life. Many days I wake and the tears fall as reality creeps into my sleeping brain. He is gone, my mind says, and the pain of my new life begins again. I have enough trouble trying to navigate through a normal day, how will I ever make it through Mothers Day?

My mind is filled with memories of happiness and joy. My two little men. Hand made cards and hand picked flowers would be thrust into my arms by these precious children who stole my heart, the moment they were placed in my arms. Motherhood with all the ups and downs still remains an incredible gift from God. Mother's Day held new meaning once I became a mother. There is no greater love than that beautiful bond shared between a mother and her child. There is also no greater pain when that bond is severed by an untimely, unexpected death.

Recently, a very wise mother, a mom like myself, gave me some incredible advice. She told me to imagine you are on a plane. The oxygen masks drop down. Save yourself first, she said. Place the mask on your face and breathe. Keep breathing and take care of yourself before you take care of others. This Mothers Day, I will say his name. I will let my tears come. I will feel his absence and not hide my pain. I will tell his brother how much his love means to me and how amazing of a man he has become. I will not pretend I am fine. This Mothers Day I will be on that plane and I will take care of myself one breath at a time.

MaryBeth Cichocki is a registered nurse living in the state of Delaware. She lost her youngest son, Matt, to an overdose of prescription drugs on January 3rd 2015. After his death she was unable to return to her world of taking care of critically ill babies in the N.I.C.U. She now spends her time advocating and writing about the disease of addiction. She started a blog shortly after Matt died titled Mothers Heart Break, mothersheartbreak.com. She also started a GRASP support group for those suffering the loss of a loved to the disease of addiction. She is working with legislators in her state to make changes in the treatment of addiction.

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SOBER LIVINGS

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

MOUNTAIN VIEW SERENITY HOME: Men's sober living home. All new remodeled home. Nice area in Sunland, CA 91040. Two shared rooms each with their own bathroom. Go to: www.mountainviewserenity-home.com. Big screen in all rooms, Outdoor patio area with large BBQ island, tables, chairs and fire pit. All you can drink coffee, some toiletries provided, on site laundry with soap provided, Bedding and towels, plenty of storage, WIFI internet, community computer, cable & phone. Gated property and parking, on sites manager, close to bus lines. \$150.00 a week or pay monthly and save! Call Steven Poffinbarger at: (818) 572-6216 or stevenpoffinbarger@gmail.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@primary-ryp.com.

THE SOBER LIVING NETWORK: Supporting, protecting and expanding quality recovery housing since 1995. The BEST sober living homes in Southern California are Network Certified. Find quality homes at www.soberhousing.net or call (800) 799-2084

SOBER LIVINGS

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.

SOBER SOLUTIONS RECOVERY: Sober Living For Men & Structured Program. Based in Los Angeles, California. Sober Solutions Recovery is dedicated to providing newly sober men with the tools, resources and foundation needed to end the cycle of addiction and establish self-supporting lives with the goal of long-term recovery. For more information call (844) 762-7765. www.sobersolutionsrecovery.com.

TRUE INTENTIONS Sober Home Located in Tarzana, California, provides a safe environment, free of alcohol & drugs. On site Manager, Heated Outdoor Pool, 12-Step Meetings, Work closely with IOP & Treatment Centers, Pet Friendly, Refuge Recovery Meditation Meetings, Gym Membership, Jacuzzis in some Suites, Private & Semi-Private Rooms. Sobriety is a gift that we wish all will experience. (818) 288-6075 www.TrueIntentions-SoberLiving.com

You can email, or mail your classified ads to us. Please, no later than the 15th of the month prior to the month of publication. The Cost for classified ads is \$40 for 25 words or less Call us to confirm receipt of your ad.

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The Cost for classified ads is **\$40 for 25 words or less,**
.50 for each additional word. You can email, regular mail or call your ad into us.

CLASSIFIED AD HEADING : _____

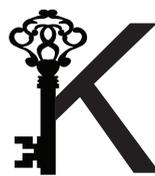
Classified Ad Content: _____

Billing Address: _____

Contact person: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Email To: info@keystorecoverynewspaper.com or call us at (818) 386-8400

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



KEYS TO RECOVERY — NEWSPAPER, INC. —

Advertising Rates

Ad Sizes

	1x	3x	6x	12x
		ea.	ea.	ea.
Full Page	1,700	1,600	1,500	1,400
3/4 Page	1,400	1,350	1,300	1,275
1/2 Page	1,200	1,175	1,150	1,100
1/3 Page	750	725	700	675
1/4 Page	575	550	525	500
1/6 Page	400	375	350	325
1/8 Page	375	350	325	300
1/12 Page	275	250	225	200
Front Cover	\$1,500 (one time only)			
Banner	Each advertiser can only run once a year			
Business Box	\$100 flat rate			
Classified Ads	\$40 for 25 words or less Each additional word \$0.50			
<u>Additional Charges for</u> Back Cover, Inside Back Cover & Inside Front Cover (which are premium locations)				

Full Page	10" width x 13" height
3/4 Page	10" width x 9" height
1/2 Page - Vertical	4.85" width x 12" height
1/2 Page - Horiz.	10" width x 6" height
1/3 Page - Vertical	4.85" width x 9" height
1/3 Page - Horiz.	10" width x 4" height
1/4 Page - Vertical	4.85" width x 5.9" height
1/4 Page - Horiz.	10" width x 2.9" height
1/6 Page - Vertical	3.25 width x 5.95 height
1/6 Page - Horiz.	4.85" width x 3.9" height
1/8 Page - Horiz.	4.85" width x 2.95" height
1/12 Page - Horiz.	3.25" width x 3" height
Business Box	2.38" width x 2.38" height
Front Cover Banner	10" width x 1.5 height

Materials & Deadlines

Terms and Conditions

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 - HOW www.ceahow.org. World Service Office (323) 660-4333.
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.ocfoundation.org (617) 973-5801.
Our House Grief Support Center: WLA & Woodland Hills, CA (888) 417-1444 www.ourhouse-grief.org.
Overeaters Anonymous: www.oa.org World Services (505) 891-2664.
Overeaters Anonymous: Meeting Hotline 24 Hour (323) 653-7499.
Overeaters Anonymous LA Intergroup: www.oalaig.org (323) 653-7652.
Pills Anonymous: (PA) www.pillsanonymous.com
Rageaholics Anonymous: www.rageaholicsanonymous.org
Recovering Couples Anon: www.Recovering-Couples.org (781) 794-1456.
RumRadio.org: 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., Pacoima, CA (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., Reseda, CA. Every Saturday, (except the first Saturday of each month) 11:am to 12:15pm, (818) 776-9696.
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church 8520 Winnetka Ave., Winnetka, CA (818) 341-1629.

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.

FOOD BANKS Con't

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

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

Salvation Army Glendale Corps: Monday -Friday Food Pantry. 320 West Windsor Rd., Glendale, CA 91204 (818) 246-5586.

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

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

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

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

HOUSING & HOMELESS SHELTERS & RELATED

At The Fountain Transitional Living (310) 631-1600.

Beyond Shelter: Homeless Services (562) 733-1147.

Casa Youth Shelter (562) 594-6825.

Centennial Place Permanent Housing (626) 403-4888.

Children of the Night (818) 908-4474 ext. 0.

Children's Hunger Fund (818) 899-5122.

City of Refuge Rescue Mission Personal Good Service (323) 759-2544.

Covenant House California (CHC) provides shelter and services for homeless, at-risk, & trafficked youth 18-24, 1325 N. Western Ave., Hollywood, CA 90027. (323) 461-3131. www.covenanthousecalifornia.org

Dimondale Adolescent (323) 777-6258.

East San Gabriel Valley Coalition For The Homeless (626) 333-7204.

Ella's Foundation Homeless Services (323) 761-6415.

Fervent Heart LLC (626) 319-7479.

Family Promise of Santa Clarita Valley (661) 251-2867.

Family Rescue Center (818) 884-7587.

Global Childrens Organization (310) 581-2234.

GRCN Connecting Communities (562) 293-7595.

Glendale YWCA Domestic Violence Project (818) 242-4155.

Global Human Service Inc (818) 507-6026.

Friends helping Friends Inc: Homeless, No Money, We can help - Sober Living. (323) 293-9778.

Family Promise (818) 847-1547.

First Step Transitional Living Foundation (323) 830- 6517.

HPRP Los Angeles Homeless Assistance (213) 683-3333.

HPRP Pasadena Homeless Services (626) 797-2402.

HPRP Huntington Park - Homeless Services (323) 388-7324.

HPRP Lynwood - Homeless Assistance (310) 603-0220.

HPRP Compton - Homeless Assistance (310) 605-5527.

Habitat For Humanity (818) 899-6180.

Harbor Rose Lodge (310) 547-3372.

Hazel Transitional Housing (213) 327-7986.

Higher Goals Inc. (323) 755-9702.

Homeless Health Care Los Angeles www.hhcla.org, (213) 381-0515.

Homeless Adult Center (626) 403-4888.

Hope for Homeless Youth (213) 353-0775.

House of Hope (323) 663-1215.

Hope of The Valley: (818) 392-0020, www.hopeofthevalley.org December 1st thru March 15th Cold Weather Shelter (Pacoima & Sylmar) - Hotline (818) 207-8776.

Jenette Center (323) 299-9496.

Joshua House For The Homeless (323) 759-1625.

Jordan's Transitional Shelter (323) 577-5941 or (424) 785-7781.

Lillie of the Valley Shelter (323) 971-4432.

Lamp Community Homeless Drop In Center (213) 488-0031.

Los Angeles Mission (213) 629-1227 x305.

Long Beach Family Shelter (562) 733-1147.

Long Beach Rescue Mission (562) 591-1292.

Los Angeles Youth Network (323) 957-736.

Los Angeles Family Housing (818) 982-3895.

Mitchell House Substance Abuse Treatment Veterans (310) 398-0191.

Nancy Painter Home Transitional Housing For Women (818) 246-5586.

New Image Emergency Shelter (323) 231-1711.

New Directions (Veterans) Res. Drug Treatment (310) 268-3465.

NCH National Coalition for the Homeless (202) 462-4822, www.nationalhomeless.org

OPCC Safe Haven (310) 883-1222.

Passageways Homeless Intake Center (626) 403-4888.

Pentecostal Outreach (562) 313-1257.

PATH: People Assisting The Homeless (323) 644-2200.

Rochester House Transitional Living (213) 986-5599.

Runaway Homeless Youth Shelter (310) 379-3620.

Rainy Day Emergency Shelter (562) 733-1147.

The Salvation Army Adult Rehab Center, 21375 Roscoe Blvd., Canoga Park, (818) 883-6321.

Salvation Army The Way Drop in Shelter for Youth (323) 469-2946.

Salvation Army Westwood (310) 477-9539.

Sunshine Mission for Women (213) 747-7419.

Salvation Army Glendale Chester Village For Homeless Families (818) 246-5586.

St Joseph Center Homeless Services & Meals (310) 399-6878.

Sanctuary of Hope (323) 786-2413.

Samaritan House (562) 591-1292.

San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission (818) 785-4476.

The Midnight Mission (213) 624-9258.

The Children's Life Saving (310) 450-3701.

TEAM HOUSING (310) 631-9516.

Union Rescue Mission (213) 347-6300.

Union Station Homeless Services (626) 240-4550.

U.S. Mission Canoga Park Transitional Housing (818) 884-4409.

Volunteers of America Homeless Support Services (626) 442-4357.

West Side Homeless Outreach, Inc. (310) 570-9065.

WLCAC Homeless Access Center (323) 563-4721.

FOOD AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

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

INFORMATION & REFERRAL SERVICES

Free Drug Testing Kit: www.Foundation2recovery.org, Prevention, Education, Treatment (561) 981-6214.

24 Hour DayCare, Referrals and Crisis Intervention Services (310) 669-5933 or (310) 427-4022.

California Rehab Guide: Free On-Line Rehab Directory - www.calrehabguide.com.

The Sober Living Network referral service (800) 799-2084.

Sober Living Network (310) 396-5270.

San Diego Sober Living Homes Assoc.: (858) 483-5866.

INFO LINE community service referrals, shelter, food, medical, (800) 339-6993 or simply dial 211.

AVYFS, Antelope Valley Youth And Family Services (661) 949-1069.

The Council of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse (CADA) Drop-In Center (805) 962-6195, www.cadasb.org

CCBCDC: California Certification Board of Chemical Dependency Counselors www.CaliforniaCertificationBoard.org (562) 927-5143

CAARR California Association of Addiction Recovery Resources (916) 338-9460, www.caarr.org

CADCA Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of American (800) 54-CADCA.

CCPG California Council on Problem Gambling www.cal-problemgambling.org (800) 522-4700.

CENTER FOR LIVING&LEARNING - employment & supportive services (818) 781-1073 www.center4living.lle.org

RAPE HOTLINES

RAINN Hotline (victims of sexual assault) (800) 656-HOPE.

Rape Hotline (24 Hours) (800) 585-6231. www.elawe.org

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Jason Foundation A Youth Suicide Prevention Program, www.jasonfoundation.com, (888) 881-2323.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800) 273-TALK

Suicide Prevention 24Hour Assessment Center (800) SUICIDE (784-2433).

Suicide Prevention Center (877) 727-4747.

TEEN LINE: Teens Helping Teens US & Canada (800) TLC-HOPE or (310) 855-HOPE www.teenlineonline.org

DISABILITY SERVICES

Job Accommodation Centers, Toll Free (800) 526-7234 (voice & TDD).

RIDE INFO Paratransit Referral Service, transportation voucher program, (800) 431-7882.

Social Security & Medicare Eligibility, Info (800) 772-1213, TDD (800) 288-7185.

HEP C / HIV / AIDS INFORMATION

AIDS Project Los Angeles - APLA, Los Angeles - www.apla.org, The David Geffen Center, 611 S. Kingsley Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90005, (213) 201-1600 Main line, (213) 201-1500 Client line

Asian Pacific AIDS Intervention Team: (213) 895-7715, Free Outpatient Trauma & Substance Abuse Treatment for Women & Transwomen, 1730 W Olympic Blvd., #300, Los Angeles, California

HIV/AIDS Hotline (800) 367-2437. Spanish (800) 400-7432.

Clean Needles/Harm Reduction LA (323) 857-5366.

Friends of Aids Foundation (310) 401-4755. Referrals to National AIDS Hotline, (800) CDCINFO. (800) 344-SIDA (Spanish), (800) AIDS-TTY (TTD/TTY for deaf)

REACH (risk reduction education and community health) FREE testing for HIV, HEP B&C and Syphilis. Referrals for substance abuse-etc., HIV+ or HIV- people in need. (866) 33-REACH, (714) 834-7926.

HEP C - APLA, Los Angeles - www.apla.org, The David Geffen Center, 611 S. Kingsley Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90005, (213) 201-1600 Main, (213) 201-1500 Client line

HepCHope: www.hepchope.com Hotline (844) 443-7246

On-Line Resources for Hep C: www.hepcsource.com • www.hepnet.com • www.harvoni.com • www.theliverinstitute.org • www.hepctreatmentlosangeles.com

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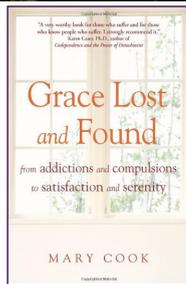
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Matters of The Heart

CON'T FROM PAGE 9



We are constantly helping people untangle all these old belief systems, that accidentally got put together by means of "helpful" parents. We are coaching people back into their own inner guidance systems, and somehow there has been a piece of us that refuses to believe that our children are capable of forming one on their own. It has felt so unsafe to trust this truth. What we got to see is that it's one more area where we're not trusting God. In fact, we've been playing God. We have accepted the challenge of transforming this for our kids. The greatest gift we could ever give them is the capacity to trust themselves, their own intuition, and their relationships to resiliency. Hopefully, this will empower them to be seekers from the start. That they can experience themselves, and others from a place of wellness rather than "sickness."

For those of us who are still in the process of healing, we continue to encourage the process of going inward. From that place one can be vulnerable, and exposed to their truth. Once connected to that, it becomes possible to share it in partnership or any other relationship that is important to you. Watch what happens, you create powerful intimacy rather than a fear driven illusion. We invite you to take on the challenge to trust and become a seeker. Look inward and share outward.

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Rudy is a therapist, and Kelly is a Certified Relationship Coach. They facilitate groups at exceptional treatment centers such as, Inneractions IOP, The Villa Treatment Center, and PAX House. 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, www.consciouspartnershipcoaching.com.

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Life doesn't stop just because you are recovering. It takes honest surrender that gambling has you beat, that you are ready for change, and you want your life back. It takes a lifetime journey, but always remember we "all are works in progress." I think as others do, in recovery from gambling addiction, we need to continue to ask ourselves, what more can we do to help decrease the "stigma", and increase how we can help and be of service to others fighting this addiction? I say, Keep having the conversation and advocating.

Facts are from both National Council on Problem Gambling and Rehabs.com, Catherine Townsend-Lyon is the Best-selling Author of her debut Memoir titled, "Addicted to Dimes, Confessions of a Liar and a Cheat" available on Amazon online. She has been in long-term recovery from gambling addiction and advocate on how it effects and impacts our communities and families. She is a recovery writer and columnist for "In Recovery Magazine" and shares her experiences and recovery in many popular recovery publications and interviewed articles. She can be reached at LyonMedia@aol.com



But getting sober young isn't just about learning how to live your life without alcohol, it's also learning why you drank, and reconciling those reasons, and the mistakes you made while drinking. So, what's it really like to get sober at 27? It's hard and it's sad, and it's happy and it has changed my life in every single way. It has given me my life back. It's given me the possibility of growing older with less health risks, with healthy relationships, and free from the shackles of addiction. I love being someone who doesn't drink or do drugs. It's empowering. I am happy that my future children will never know a mother who drinks. I no longer feel like I'm missing out on life, in fact I feel like I am more connected to life, than I ever was when I was drinking.

Getting sober at 27 was a relief. I feel grateful every day that I found recovery, and I encourage everyone to do the same, regardless of age.

Kelly Fitzgerald is a sober writer based in Southwest Florida who is best known for her personal blog The Adventures of a Sober Señorita, www.sobersenorita.com. Her work has been published across the web including sites like The Huffington Post, Medium, Thought Catalog, Ravishly, SheKnows, Elite Daily, The Fix and, AfterPartyMagazine. She is currently writing a memoir.

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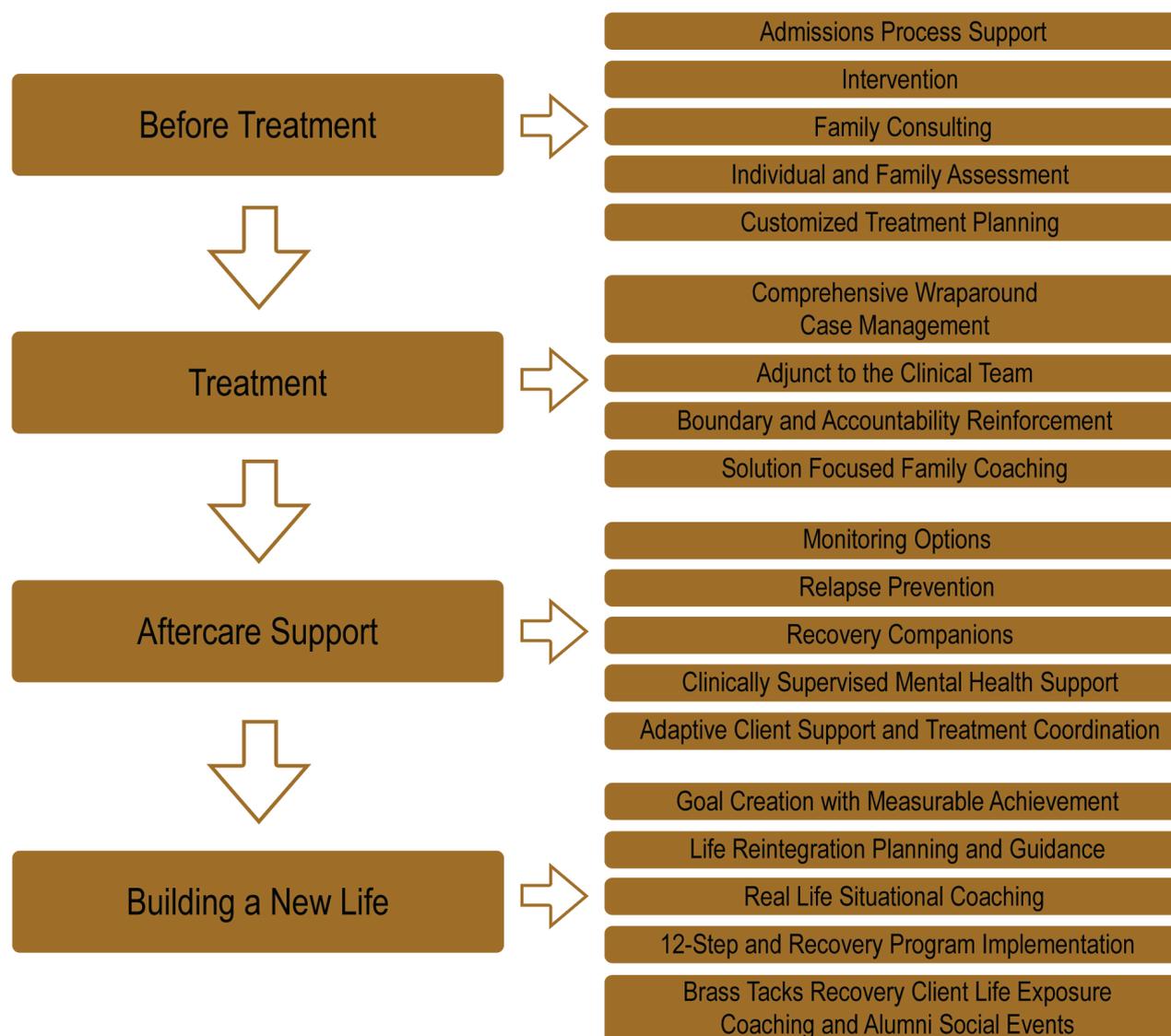


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