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June/July 2020

KEYS TO RECOVERY NEWSPAPER, INC.



A WAR ON DRUGS?

Cover art by Rachel Colón

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Try To Fill**
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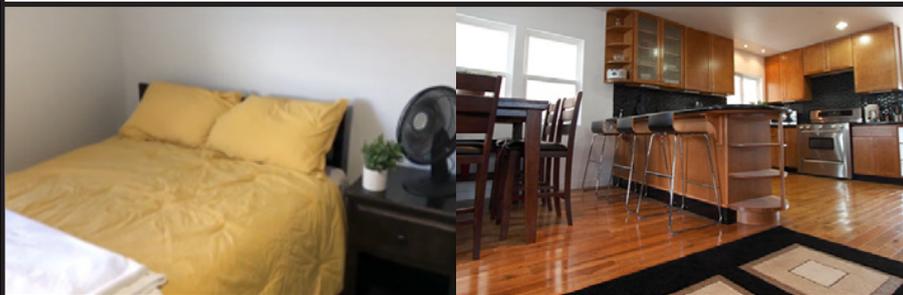
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Visit our website for more detailed information on Keys to Recovery Newspaper.



Hello and welcome to our June/July 2020 Issue. We pray that each and every one of you experiences peace today. With the fallout from Covid-19, peace has been a state of mind that I have had to work at daily. I don't want to just "survive" this moment in time, I want to thrive. I want to come out better than how I went in. Our last issue was about how "Change Brings Hope". We had no idea that there would be so much change happening in the world, but God knew. The latest incidents of senseless murder and police brutality, specifically the murders of Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, and Breonna Taylor, witnessed by the world, sparked global civil unrest. That unrest brought protests and cries for justice to almost every major city around the world. We believe that every voice counts when it comes to ending racism. We believe that every action we take makes a difference, again "Change Brings Hope".

Marcus and I talked and prayed about how we could use our voices, our platform to join the movement to fight for freedom, liberation, and justice. "Black Lives Matter" is not a "Black", thing it is a HUMAN thing." "Black Lives Matter as a statement and a movement is important because we're acknowledging the systemic racism that still exists in America. This movement at this point in time is expanding exponentially, and that acknowledgment is effecting sustainable change and hopefully government policy. Together, we can — and will — transform the world as we know it. This is the revolution. Change is coming."

We can all make a difference, and we all have to find our voices and our paths. My daughter found her voice when she joined the peaceful protests, encouraged her business associates to take a stand, and had hard conversations with people who didn't understand or agree with her views.

Another example is Juneteenth, a rich part of the history of the black community and the culture, and was celebrated more in 2020, than in the last 155 years. It is our real American History. In the last few days, cities and companies across the country have declared Juneteenth a holiday. HISTORY matters. Juneteenth is rooted in joy and is a call for liberation for the Black community. Again "Change Brings Hope".

So we at Keys to Recovery decided to use our platform – our voice – in the recovery world. Our feature deals with "A War On Drugs" which became a war on drug addicts, families, and mental health. We are also addressing how the scales of justice did not tip evenly for people of color when it came to prison terms versus a rehab stay. And we are exploring what we in the recovery world can do to bring about real change. We along with help from our friends, have dedicated our back cover to the "Black Lives Matter" movement, so we all have a chance at a future where, one day, all lives truly do matter.

As my daughter, Dominique said, "Don't let your foot off the gas! Stay at it. Change is made by the number of voices and cries heard." **God bless you! - Jeannie Marshall, President & Cofounder**

Hello to one and all. I hope this Editor's column finds every one of you safe and in good health. There has been a global change in our daily practices, perceptions, and perspectives in regards to how life is now and what it will become! A lot of us have been battling racism and prejudices for most if not all of our lives. I personally have been combatting these issues for over 50 years now. This younger generation of activists has a tenacity like no other generation before them. Their drive and determination are remarkable, to say the least!

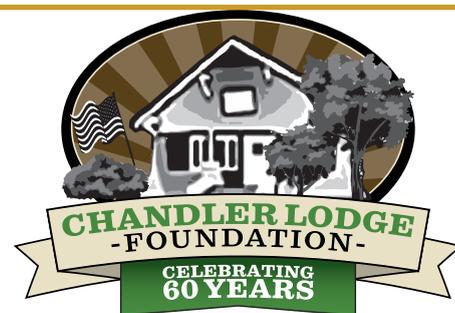
When I witness their compassion and resilience my hope for humanity is quickened, I feel relieved to know that our world will be left in strong and capable hands. I am not taking away anything from the past civil rights activists. Through their dire sacrifices, today's society is given a wider latitude for expression through different social movements, which are now more attainable. The momentum we have now acquired through the recent tragedies of those whose lives were taken senselessly, have given us better leverage like never before.

I remember the civil rights protests back in the sixties when I was a young child. I was so confused about how individuals can hate other individuals simply because of the color of their skin. Unfortunately, our progress over the last 50 plus years has been stagnated due to perceived hierarchies, and the unwillingness of the select groups to encompass everyone as an equal, regardless of their skin color, creed, or financial status. I believe that this world is about to be shaken to its very core, the voice of the many who are looking for social reform has become louder, than the voice of the politically biased regime.

I have been waiting for decades to hear Freedom Ring, and not just hear that quote! I hope and pray that we as a liberated generation, will finally, and completely "Let Freedom Ring!" **Marcus Marshall, Vice President & Co-founder**



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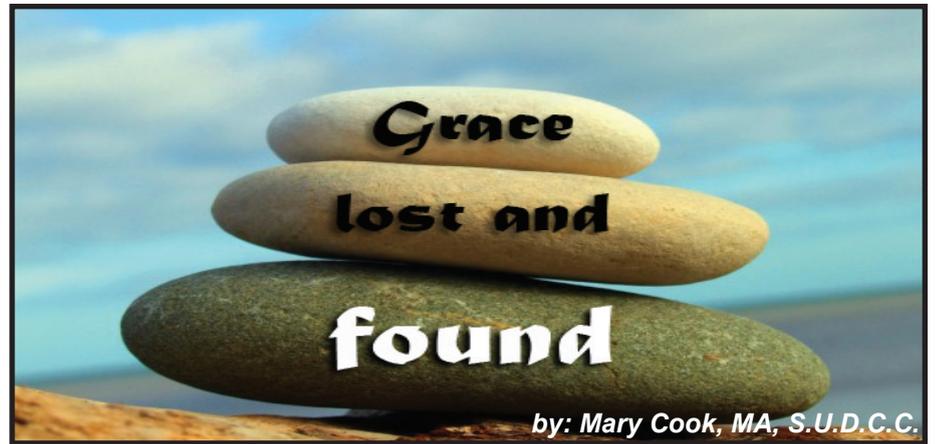
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by: Mary Cook, MA, S.U.D.C.C.

THE HOLE WE TRY TO FILL

We fear vulnerability because it invites pain and shame, so we pretend to be strong. We fear love because it invites abandonment and failure, so we objectify and control. We fear honesty because it invites humiliation and discomfort, so we deceive and manipulate. We fear open-mindedness because it invites insecurity and opposition, so we dominate and bully. We live behind a wall of defenses, thinking it protects us from a past that we deny. We project the worst of us onto others, so that our personal anger and condemnation has a scapegoat. We expect that distractions, possessions, and addictions will fill the hole left by our intolerance of truth. Whether we abandon ourselves to chase what we think will fix us, or cocoon ourselves to isolate from the world, we lose our vital life force and purpose, and become increasingly destructive.

*We find real love when we surrender selfishness,
and embrace caring and dignity for all.*

And yet pain and shame, abandonment and failure break through the wall. We disgrace and dishonor ourselves. We betray and contradict ourselves. Our hateful projections return to us magnified. How can we not be ill at ease? And yet we continue to blame others, for to stop would set the dominoes of our life tumbling down to the end. The more we attempt to fill the hole by running, fixing, and hiding, the bigger the hole gets. Illusions cannot fill the hole. Illusions cannot substitute for self-esteem that comes from facing and healing what is most difficult. Illusions cannot substitute for happiness that comes from living with gratitude and positive purpose. Illusions cannot substitute for serenity that comes from acceptance, courage, and faith. Illusions cannot substitute for love that is as expansive as the sky.

We need to face this hole that we created by willful denial. We need to re-evaluate all that we have believed and accept that our life plan failed. We need to accept the true nature of life on life's terms, and accept our human powerlessness over people, places and things. We need to sit in that hole feeling sufficient pain in order to motivate us to surrender the folly of all our illusions, and open to what life wants to teach us. We need to accept and welcome what we fear, not as our identity, but as a part of our life experiences that deserve compassion, healing, and transformation.

We find real strength and resilience by discussing personal pain and shame in a recovery community, which practices helpfulness and amends for harm caused. We find real love when we surrender selfishness, and embrace caring and dignity for all. We practice building healthy recovery relationships based on mutual honesty, understanding, and kindness. We discover that curiosity, courage, humility, and happiness are the benefits of open-mindedness. Investigating the worst of us helps us to identify desired change, and practice contrary actions to this end. We relinquish our attachment to what we thought would fill the hole, and welcome truth that we rejected. And when we do these things, there is no hole. Truth is what sustains, heals and fulfills us. Truth is the song that our spirit sings to us patiently and lovingly waiting to be heard.

WWW.MARYCOOKMA.COM Mary Cook has a Master's degree in psychology and is a certified addictions treatment counselor in private practice. She has 43 years of clinical and teaching experience. Mary is available for telephone and office consultations. 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





Sunlight of the Spirit

by: Darrell Fusaro

BREAK OUT OF YOUR BOX

“Break out of your box! Drop the limiting image of yourself. You will see that no one is attacking you, and that there is nothing to defend.” –Anonymous

Addiction is a no system, and recovery is a yes system. The alcoholic says no to life and justifies it by casting himself as the victim. He hides behind, “If only this, that, or the other, then I would have success.” Thinking this way feels bad because it’s incongruent with the positive ever-evolving stream of life. It’s meant to feel so bad that it prompts the individual to relinquish his resistance, and finally say yes. Instead of saying yes and allowing himself to be carried to a better life, the alcoholic pours himself a drink.

Jane lived with her husband in the same Connecticut home for many years. Jane was an epileptic and was in her sixties when her husband passed away. She decided to sell the car, get rid of everything except for some clothes and purchase a small Volkswagen camper van.

She left Connecticut and headed for the cape; Cape Cod, Massachusetts. As she drove along the peninsula she’d stop and pull into a campsite whenever she got the hunch to do so. Sometimes she’d stay at one of these campsites for several days. Other times, she’d stay for just a few hours. She let intuition be the guide. The joyful nudge she felt from within determined her schedule. This was 1973 and there were no cellphones and no GPS, just a widow alone on the road enjoying the thrill of trusting God by saying yes to life.

In late spring, Jane reached the extreme tip of the cape, a place called Provincetown. It was known for its artists and gay community. Jane made quick friends with the local artists and was invited to model for them, in the nude. She did and was soon in high demand.

Several months later as summer became fall she received word that her doctor had been inquiring about her. He was concerned because of her history of frequent seizures. Now that the weather was getting colder she agreed to an appointment, and headed back to Connecticut.

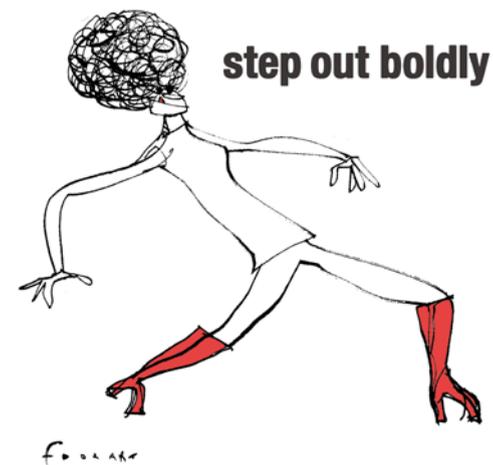
At the doctor’s office everyone was thrilled about how wonderful Jane looked. When she informed the doctor that she had experienced no seizures for almost a year, he was perplexed. He inquired about what she had been doing during this time. When she told him of her adventures he was humored by them, but felt tests were in order. Jane said yes. The results came back and they astonished the specialists at the hospital. There was no medical evidence indicating Jane to be suffering with epilepsy. “Jane, you’re a medical miracle,” the doctor said.

Jane continued to travel in her camper van. She made it all the way to the Virgin Islands where she lived on a sailboat, and managed a tropical beachfront cantina during the winter months. Then she would travel north all the way up to Ontario during the summer. She met a widower, named Raymond, who was enamored with Jane’s sense of adventure. Together they continued to step out boldly with faith and lived happily into their eighties. I know this story to be true because Jane was my grandmother.

Say yes. Let go of your resistance and jump into the positive stream of life. Surrender to your intuition; God’s voice from within. It is futile to resist life’s embrace. Regardless of how handicapped you may have been in the past, there is a force within that is forever luring you toward your heart’s desire. It all begins with willingness in the form of the little word, yes. And just like Jane, with each consecutive yes your circumstances will get better, and better, and better.

For more on this topic listen to “Funniest Thing! with Darrell and Ed” via your favorite podcast app or visit www.DarrellandEd.com

Artist Darrell Fusaro is a decorated U.S. Coast Guard veteran, co-host of the podcast, “Funniest Thing! with Darrell and Ed” and author of the book, “What if Godzilla Just Wanted a Hug?” To learn more about Darrell visit www.ThisWillMakeYouHappy.com



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Matters of The Heart



by: Rudy & Kelly Castro

FAITH (FINDING ANSWERS IN THE HEART)

In times such as these Faith may feel like a rare and precious commodity. So much is changing so quickly and while ALL of this is necessary, it can also feel absolutely terrifying. We have seen, in ourselves, our communities, and in our practice that people are being asked to face themselves at a deep level. First, we are quarantined for months due to COVID-19 and then we are uprooting and rising from a system entrenched in racism and oppression. Isolation, financial fears, serious health concerns, masks, murder, protests, riots, slowing down for some, and speeding up for others. These dynamics have created some interesting opportunities to see some of what lives and breathes in each one of us.

This is the time to go within. To see what has been left unseen. To hear the voice that we have managed to ignore. To respond to the needs we have justified neglecting due to our "busy and important" lives. To listen and respond to the inner will that is aligned with the Highest Power in the Universe. A dear friend of ours Dr. Reverend James Mellon said "FAITH" is the acronym for "Finding Answers in the Heart" and that is a powerful message to remember. How can we spend our time tuning into the collective heart that is united in love? That heart that KNOWS there is NO TRUE separation. The heart that REMEMBERS the oneness of who and what we are. The heart that is also heavy, sad - holding trauma, pain, suffering, and grief that is longing to be purged, seen, heard, and witnessed with deep compassion. Now more than ever is our time.

We are all being asked to go deep so that we may rise high, United as one. And - many systems will have to fall. The ones within each of us individually and the ones that we operate inside of as a collective. This is where we will be met with challenges. These internal and external systems are rooted in survival and they do not want to die because they are attached to trauma, lack, control, and safety. We must understand this as we begin to navigate these deep, dark, murky, and mysterious waters. This time for a bigger God, a more consistent daily practice, connection with as much nature as possible, and for support. WE ARE NOT MEANT TO DO THIS ALONE! We need one another and we need space to share honestly about what is arising. It is our responsibility to give this to ourselves and to find safe/appropriate spaces to do so.

Grab a pen and let's do a spot check inventory together. Let's see what is working and what's not. Let's connect to how you can best support yourself during this time by answering the following questions. How am I in these areas (Rate 1-10 10 being optimal):

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Who are the people that I am leaning into right now, or have I been going at this alone? What am I doing on a daily basis to take care of myself? What is my spiritual practice looking like these days? What can I do to up my game in this area? What am I consuming a lot of right now? (Media, Social Media, Food, Etc) and is this supporting my wellbeing? Who and/or what am I trying to control right now and how is this going? What are my biggest fears? (Really powerful to do a fear inventory every day, and praying to have these fears removed along with the knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out - my coach Rev Brig Feltus has brought me back into this as a daily practice, and it is helping!!) What are my desires? (Visioning and holding the possibility for our future is vital, WHILE also allowing for an authentic healing journey to take place without spiritual bypass! Another shout out to Rev Brig for the reminder to bring this into my daily practice) What do I need right now to be supported? How can I commit to this? (I, Kelly, have committed myself to a six-week intensive course facilitated by Rev Brig Feltus around Racism, White Privilege, and White Supremacy and it is changing my life! I also invested in 8 coaching sessions with the woman leading the course for extra support. This is how I am taking care of myself right now and it is IMPORTANT)

Anyone interested in this course - should take it! It is amazing and so powerful. It is creating me to be a much bigger version of myself and I am forever grateful. Contact us for more information.

Answering these questions will give you a great idea of what YOU need to show up and do your part in taking care of you so that you can show up in the world and serve others. We must fill our own tank - put on our own oxygen mask first - y'all know the drill. Sometimes we just need a little clarity and a reminder to help realign and repurpose ourselves.

We love you and are here in this with you. Love, Kelly and Rudy Castro



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by: Patrick O'Neil

THE NEW A.A. NORMAL: Videoconferencing, Eating Disorders, and Body Dysmorphia

It goes without saying that the Coronavirus pandemic has disrupted everyone's life and what the future holds isn't exactly clear. But as the "stay-at-home" order and social distancing continues I find myself longing for some semblance of human contact. Yet in order to do that and participate in my usual meetings, visit with family and friends, attend yoga classes, see my doctor, and yes, even go to work—I'm been forced to venture deep into the dreaded world of videoconferencing.

For the most part I've avoided such things as Facetime, video Skype, and Zoom. The idea of staring at someone's face on the computer screen as we conversed was never that appealing. Whenever colleagues or a friend suggested we communicate in this manner, I would lie and say my camera was broken, or the app wasn't working on my phone, or anything that sounded vaguely plausible. The one time my work required me to participate in a videoconference, I again opted out of the video capability and my screen was the lone black square with my name in a horizontal line of little white letters across the middle.

But all that was, of course, before Covid-19 turned everything upside down and the world collectively shifted into isolation mode. Within the first few weeks of social distancing all my meetings were put on hold and then overnight Zoom became the platform of choice. Now don't get me wrong. I'm totally stoked that AA rose so quickly to the occasion and meetings all over the globe were suddenly available online with the simple click of a mouse. But as I sat in my living room "attending" my Monday night home group I realized I was the only person not showing their face, and for some inexplicable reason this made me feel even more isolated. An intense wave of FOMO triggered a rush of anxiety throughout my nervous system. My hand slowly crept across the laptop. When I clicked the "enable video" option I was immediately assailed by my image amongst all the other little faces in their rectangles that filled the entire computer screen.

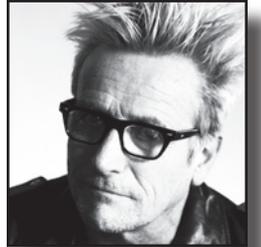
Unfortunately what happened next was not what I had expected. Instead of concentrating on the speaker, I became obsessively preoccupied with my image. When I discovered the "pin video" feature—a function that allows you to view a single person in the meeting—I pinned myself to the screen and scrutinized every one of my physical flaws. I know, you're probably thinking, what a narcissist. But I'm also recovering from an eating disorder that causes me to experience body dysmorphia—a mental health disorder where I can't stop thinking about all my perceived physical defects. And I'm thinking, does my face look bloated; why is my stomach so large, is my head really that abnormally huge, are my arms that undefined? In less time than it takes to call my sponsor, my somewhat dormant eating disorder and negative body image kicked into full swing. "I gotta stop stress eating all those snacks," I proclaimed out loud. Thankfully the secretary had muted everyone's audio.

Now there have been numerous studies and research of the brain regarding why we humans see things the way we do. There's the psychological phenomenon "mere-exposure effect" which essentially means we're used to seeing our reflection in the mirror, which is reverse, and when we see our face un-reversed it seems weird and unappealing. Another is "confirmation bias," where our brain searches for proof of our shortcomings. In other words, we see beautiful folks and then look at ourselves in comparison, and our self-esteem jumps out the window. But for those of us with eating disorders, anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem our body dysmorphia is way more ingrained. We're carrying around the baggage from any of a number of things including growing up in dysfunctional families, our childhood trauma, those damning "bad" genes, or being overly influenced by society's messages of what beauty means.

I can pinpoint the first time I discovered purging food. It felt like it relieved my anxiety and depression. I was twelve years old, an unwanted fat kid, lost in an ongoing and turbulent divorce between two narcissistic parents. I felt unseen and abandoned and I found the comfort I wasn't getting at home in food—eating until I felt ill and then throwing up. I didn't even know there was a name for what I was doing. But then even an unaware twelve-year-old figures out that if you eat too much junk food you get even fatter. By fourteen I became anorexic. And then I discovered drugs, more specifically heroin, and food didn't matter any more. I existed on the occasional candy bar and maybe a Coke for breakfast. Fast forward twenty years and I'm a strung-out junkie weighing a hundred and twenty five pounds. I was rock star thin and I thought I looked good. Prison, parole, and a couple of long term residential rehabs and I was in recovery. I was going to meetings. I had a sponsor. I was working the steps. I had a coffee commitment... I was eating everything in sight. Before I knew it I'm standing over the toilet throwing up again and my future was suddenly filled with OA meetings, therapy, and antidepressants—and gradually my obsessive thinking subsided.

Over the last 20 years, depending on life circumstances and the level of involvement in my program of recovery, my body dysmorphia has come and gone and I've made it through some very difficult times. Yet for some mysterious and naïve reason I just didn't think I'd ever have to deal with it again. especially not from such an unassuming and impersonal source as an online meeting. But what really scared me was my obsessive urge to log off of Zoom and hide. It's not like I can just stop going to meetings. I know too well where that will lead. But what I also know is there's a solution, the same solution that has always been there for me—and in order to get through these strange times I have to go back to the basics of my early recovery. I need to start working Steps 1, 2, and 3 on a daily basis—because I'm powerless, my negative body image is unmanageable, and I need to believe in, and turn my will and my life over to, a power greater than myself. And since "acceptance is the answer to all my problems" I can find the solace I need in the simplicity of the serenity prayer: "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

Patrick O'Neil is a former junkie bank robber and the author of the memoirs *"Gun, Needle, Spoon"*, and the forthcoming *"Anarchy At The Circle K"*. His writing has appeared in numerous publications, including *"Juxtapoz"*, *Salon.com*, *The Fix*, *After Party Magazine*, and *"Razorcake"*. For the past 19 years he has lived and worked in the recovery community as a recovering addict/alcoholic, a drug and alcohol counselor, a college instructor, and he is on the board of directors for REDEEMED, a California non-profit criminal record clearing project. O'Neil lives with his wife Jennifer, a rather large Maine Coon, and a squirrel, in the mediocrity of Downtown Glendale, California. For more info, visit: patrick-oneil.com. Email: patrick@patrick-oneil.com



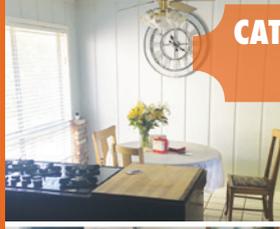
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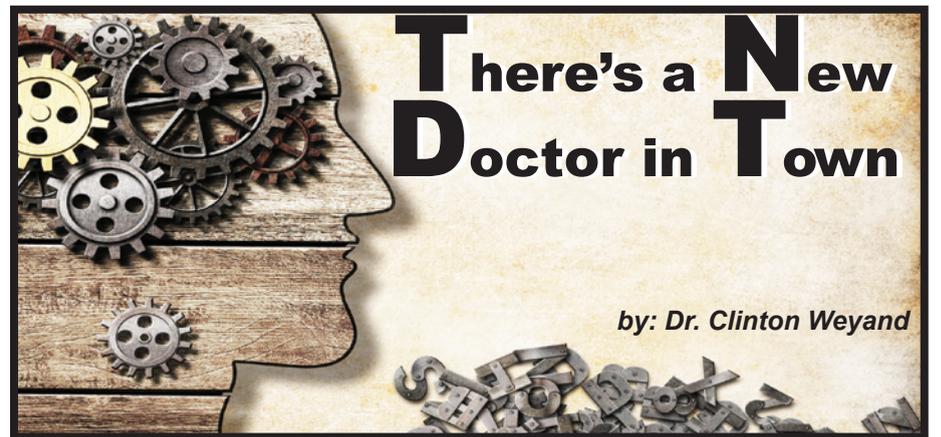
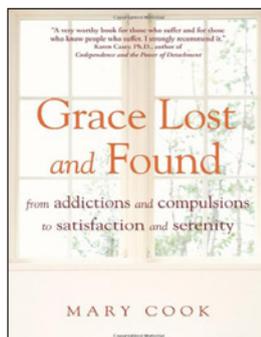
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There's a New Doctor in Town

by: Dr. Clinton Weyand

DOING OUR HERO-WORK

A hero is one who willingly and courageously undertakes the journey into the depths, into the dark abyss, to conquer the power of unconscious conflicts and the unknown. The literature of our age is filled with antiheroes, and yet ours is perhaps the most heroic of all ages.

Sometimes blinded by the depths in which we dwell, we fail to discern the heroic nature of the work in which our souls are engaged. The hero's truth grows out of an experience of intense personal feeling, combined with social awareness. The very essence of recovery and heroic wisdom is that it is transformative insight, that can make heroes of ordinary mortals. Truth, once known, never leaves us as it finds us. It possesses a creative power that changes everything.

The hero's truth is also a truth of unity; or, to phrase it differently, he or she has learned how to hold together a double vision. The hero has mastered the importance of balance. Balancing thoughts and feelings, the individual and the social, the creative versus destructive pathology; the hero addresses the concerns of both worlds.

The spiritual principle of willingness is also the territory of the hero. Willingness is required of newcomers or old timers in working the program. The desire is to complete a task and the decision to do whatever is necessary. Willingness gives one the ability to take action, to attend meetings, work steps, do service work, get and use a sponsor and to be open minded.

To be a hero means to be engaged fully in the work of becoming a human being in body, soul, and spirit. It is more than robotic living, more than physical survival and success. We are on the hero's journey when we submit to the deep process of life. We are the hero when we take on the challenges and go through our initiations and transformations, enduring loss and gain, feeling happy and sad, making progress and falling back. The hero is not the one who displays force and muscle without deep insight, or the courage to be. The hero may not look heroic from the outside, but may go through powerful developments in a quiet way. The difference is that the real hero engages in life and reflects on it. He or she becomes more and more what he or she is destined to be.

Sometimes we must give ourselves permission to be the heroic individual. It is intimidating to stick our neck out and state our truth in our own way. We question ourselves—by what authority do we speak?

We remind ourselves that identity and community really belong together; and we cannot have one without the other. It is precisely through relationships with our higher power and fellow pilgrims, that our identity is chiefly formed. The higher the quality of these relationships, the more of a unique individual we tend to become.

Anyone conscious of, or reflective upon his or her history will be humbled and obliged to pause, and discover these threads of influence that are at work in us all the while. I certainly never expected to be in the roles that I enact today. But, as I reflect on them, I find that they are all of service to the same questions I had as a child. As a therapist, a writer, and a teacher, I spend my life pondering the obscure messages of the gods. I move between the mysteries of divinity and the pathological expressions of patients, the elucidation of texts, and the shifting nexuses between people.

There is a "heroic submission" (surrender) to what we owe fate, the gods, and our own soul. This is both existential revolt and AMOR FATI. Loving one's fate means that we live as fully as we can the life to which our higher power has summoned us. We are not here to imitate those who have gone before us, for that was their life, someone else's journey. We are here to figure out and serve what life asks of us. This is not resignation, it is not defeat, it is not fatalism, it is not passivity, it is oxymoronically heroic submission for the hero archetype that is called to serve life, not the ego.

The heroic task is found whenever we overcome fear and lethargy, whenever we embrace the larger issues, wherever our daily agenda is defeated by even larger things. In the midst of defeat for the ego, we are blessed with concomitant abundance.

As young people, we are not yet ready to live this defeat, for we are convinced of the powers of will and all that it can bring us. And we need to live that will out, until we come to our accounting, to our place in the wilderness where strange paths fork off into that tangled grove where "mature" gods live.

We have to earn the capacity to surrender for it takes much living, and a lot of difficult times.

Dr. Weyand studied at CSUN where he graduated Magna Cum Laude. He then studied Counseling Psychology at the Doctorate level at USC. He is also a graduate of the Addiction Studies program at Pierce College. Dr. Weyand has 30+ years of experience working in recovery and behavioral healthcare. He began his career at Woodview Calabasas Psychiatric Hospital as the Asst. Administrator, and Director of Community Services. He was Director of the Adult Unit at Van Nuys Psychiatric Hospital for over 10 years. For an appointment or consultations, call him at (818) 341-0283 or (818) 800-4814. Website: doctorclint.net. Dr. Weyand is now writing a new book, "Existential Recovery". If you have any thoughts or ideas about this book, please send them to deecoop@att.net We welcome your input.

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THE ARCH

The Keys to Recovery April 2020 issue's cover art reminded me of one of the best allegories in the Big Book. It compares the 12 steps to 12 stones in an arch through which once built we will walk through to freedom.

Bill's choice of an arch for this metaphor was not likely an accident. The architectural arch is one of the most ancient and enduring structures. In other words, arches are built to bear stress and survive over the long run. Therefore, they were perfect for Bill's vision of recovery.

We first learn of the "structure" in the chapter "We Agnostics" (page 47). The ongoing discussion there is on Step 2 provided below for convenience.

"Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."

With this underlying information, we are introduced to the allegory like this:

Do I now believe or am I even willing to believe that there is a power greater than myself? As soon as a man can say that he does believe or is willing to believe we empathetically assure him that he is on his way. It has been repeatedly proven among us that upon this simple cornerstone a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built (47).

A cornerstone is the first stone laid in a foundation and all other stones are aligned with the cornerstone. Bill could have chosen any step as the cornerstone in the allegory, but he chose step 2. Perhaps he had good reason based on his experience working with alcoholics at the time.

As we learn later, in the chapter "How it Works," (58), and from real-life experience: *We could not heal ourselves, probably no human power could heal us (60) – despite multiple attempts.*

So, what then? What would become of us? Are we condemned for life to this solitary misery because we do not believe there is a power higher than me or higher than you? We are if we cannot lay this cornerstone!

If we cannot heal ourselves, and no human power can help us, and the same is true for everyone, who or what then is it that heals alcoholism? What power has acted such that so many alcoholics are sober, happy, joyous, and free?

There must be a third option - if it's not me, and it's not you, or another human. The Big Book refers to that third option as a higher power and/or God. Perhaps God is just a higher part of me or a higher part of you that we haven't reached yet. An important realization to make is that a sick mind has difficulty recognizing it is sick, and because it is sick it may not have the power to heal itself. Therefore, something higher must take on the role and provide the healing power necessary. This we call God.

Let's explore "Working With Others" (page 97)

While discussing down and out alcoholics, Bill tells us,

*"Never avoid these responsibilities but be sure you are doing the right thing if you assume them."
"Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery (97)."*

The foundation stone of the second leg of the structure is "helping others." This strongly implies if we don't help others, our structure may well collapse and our path to freedom may be blocked.

Why is helping others so foundational?

"... nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics (89)."

Now let's turn to page 62 in "How it Works."

The conversation here surrounds the idea that we make our own trouble; if we would only stop trying to control everyone and everything and give control over to a power greater than ourselves, we could be free.

Here's part of the conversation:

"We had to quit playing God. It didn't work. Next, we decided that in this drama of life, God was going to be our Director. He is the Principle: we are the agents. He is the Father, and we are his children. Most good ideas are simple (like the cornerstone) and this concept (step 3) was the keystone of the new and triumphant arch through which we passed to freedom (62)."

At last, we knew what the structure was! It was an arch! Obviously built individually by each alcoholic using the 12 steps as 12 building stones and through which each alcoholic will pass through to freedom.

The keystone of an arch is the very top or highest stone. It is the last stone placed in the structure. Once placed, it locks all other stones in place. The stresses and forces on an arch typically do not affect the keystone. The keystone does, however, distribute those forces downward and outward into the earth via the cornerstone and foundation stone.

Finally, we find most of the rest of the stones (steps) on page 75 of "Into Action." Here we have just completed step 5. We are now spending an hour contemplating steps 5, 6, and 7. Here are Bill's instructions:

"Taking this book (AA BB) down from the shelf, we turn to the page containing the 12 steps. Carefully reading the first 5 proposals we ask if we have omitted anything, for we are building an arch through which we will walk a free man at last. Is our work solid so far? Are the stones properly placed? Have we skimped on the cement put into the foundation? Have we tried to make mortar without sand? (75)"

If satisfied with the five proposals (steps) we affirm the placement of the stones 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and very quickly after completing step 6 and 7 we place those stones into the arch as well.

The big book does not provide any further knowledge about the arch and steps 8 through 11. We just assume their placement. However, "Daily Reflections, March 14th," instructs that even through step 3 is the keystone, all 12 steps are equally important in the building of the arch, (and recovery). If any stones were missing, the arch would crumble (DR, March 14th).

AA uses this instruction to suggest that each of the 12 steps must be worked every day in order to allow a daily passage through the arch to freedom. What condition is your arch to freedom in today?

Robert Hobbs is the best selling author of Heroin Living and Dying with an Addict You Love, and the recently released Brown Bag, Blue Collar Recovery Planner - 90 Days to Clean and Sober. You can find Bob on Facebook at Bob.Hobbs.399.

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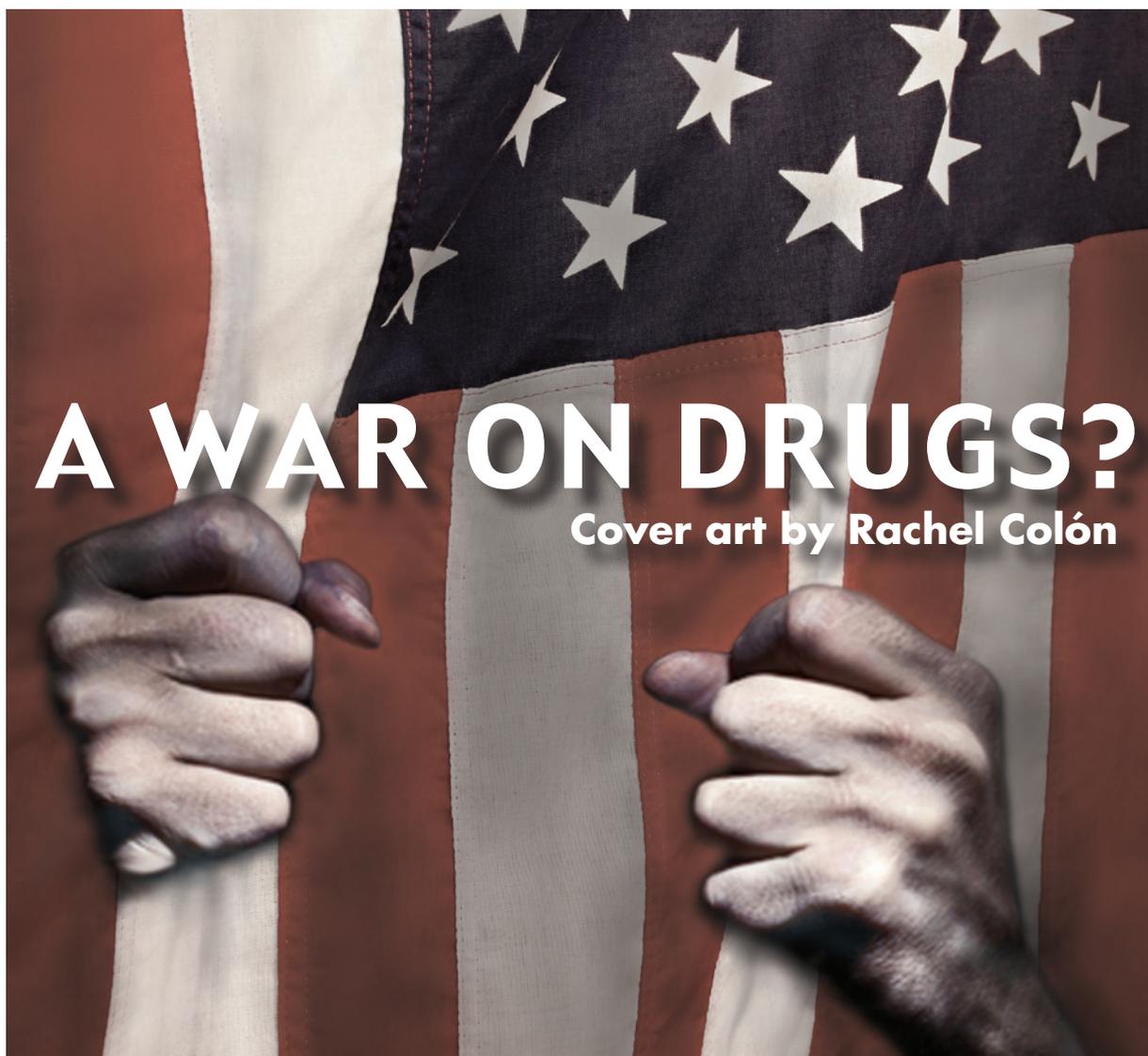
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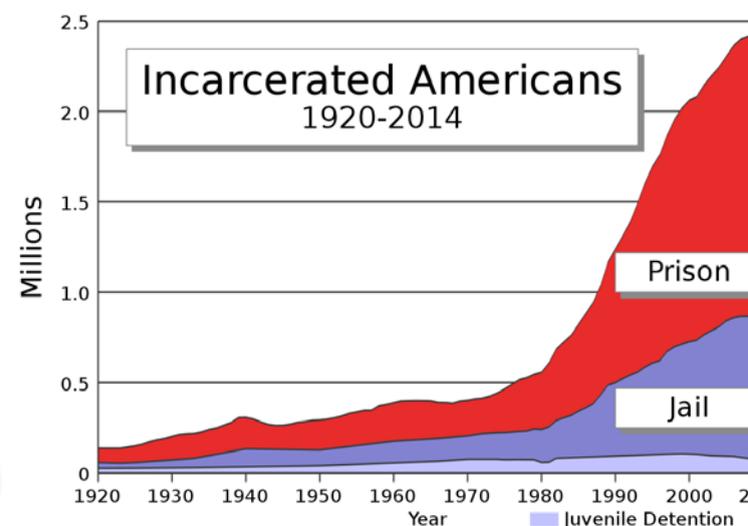
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A WAR ON DRUGS?

Cover art by Rachel Colón



More laws were passed such as the Comprehensive Community Substance Abuse Prevention Act of 1989, when crack became an issue again during the *election cycle*, “a plague...eating away at the fabric of America.”

The enforcement of harsher, new drug laws would be concentrated in poor black communities. These communities were already suffering tremendously due to the major recession of the early 1980’s. Critics pointed to data showing that people of color were targeted and arrested on suspicion of drug use, at higher rates than whites.

The impact of the drug scare would continue perpetuating “mass incarcerations”, during the Clinton administration (1993 to 2001) with the passage of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, the largest crime bill in U.S. history.

It placed an additional 100,000 new police officers on the streets and provided nearly \$10 billion funding for prisons. It also eliminated Pell grants for incarcerated prisoners to receive post secondary education, which had been available since 1965, taking away both education for prisoners, and hope for change.

The rate of drug arrests grew by 162% from 1980 to 2006, with nearly 1.9 million arrests made for drug law violations in that final peak year—more than for any other offense. The racial disparity in drug arrests reached a peak in 1989, with black Americans four times as likely as whites to be arrested for a drug offense—a disparity that was “unrelated to relative rates of drug use and the limited available evidence on drug dealing.” Moreover, drug arrests were more likely than in the past to result in imprisonment, and mandatory-minimum and “truth-in-sentencing” laws prolonged prison terms.

The increased funding, extra police officers and prosecutors led to the *largest growth in prisoners in world history*. The incarcerated population in the United States grew, and the policies led to mass incarcerations for nonviolent drug offenses.

The War on Drugs led to the imposition of crime policies, which would put America in the position of having only 5% of the world’s population, and over 25% of the people incarcerated.

While all of this was happening, federal allocations for education and treatment of drug abuse was decimated. The National Institute on Drug Abuse saw its funding slashed from \$274 million in 1981 to only \$57 million by 1984. It was not a War On Drugs, so much as a war on addicts.

We know that this is a lot of information to absorb, and we encourage you to educate yourself with the resources we have listed at the end of this article, along with your own research.

The War on Drugs is slowly ending, but the damage done by mass incarcerations will leave a scar for our lifetime. Each of us can help to reverse the damages caused to so many communities and families.

We can do this by rewriting laws that no longer serve our society as a whole. Such as the 3 strikes, - Even Bill Clinton admits he was wrong when passing these harsh laws.

With the most recent murders, acts of police brutality and civil unrest, we asked ourselves what we could do to help bring justice and equality to our part of the world, specifically the recovery world. How could we do this while staying focused on our primary purpose - Carrying the message of Hope For Recovery?

We were inspired to run this month’s feature “A War On Drugs?” after watching the *Netflix Documentary “13th”* directed by Ava DuVernay, written by Spencer Averick, and Ava DuVernay. We encourage you to watch it. We were shocked into action. We hope it does the same for you.

Most think the “WAR ON DRUGS” was started by President Ronald Reagan. It actually started after President Richard Nixon (who served from 1969 to 1974) coined the phrase “Law and Order”, and declared that “*America’s public enemy number one in the United States is drug abuse*”. As a result, the federal government, states, and localities dramatically ramped up law enforcement and punishment for the next three decades, while allocating limited resources to prevention and treatment.

Years after working as one of Nixon’s top aides, John Ehrlichman revealed that the administration was specifically using the drug war to target African Americans and the anti-war left: “We knew we couldn’t make it illegal to be either against the war or blacks, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin, and then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities.”

Years later began the Reagan era of the “War On Drugs”. President Reagan’s presidential term lasted from January 20th, 1981 to January 20th 1989.

“The mood toward drugs is changing in this country, and the momentum is with us. We’re making no excuses for drugs — hard, soft, or otherwise. Drugs are bad, and we’re going after them. As I’ve said before, we’ve taken down the surrender flag and run up the battle flag. And we’re going to win the war on drugs.” – President Ronald Reagan, Oct. 2, 1982.

With these words America’s War on Drugs was re-launched. This war would have many casualties. The war would lead the United States down the path to incarcerate over two million people. State budgets would expand to pay the costs of hundreds of new prisons. The Black and Latino communities would lose countless young men to incarceration. The United States now has the highest rate of incarceration in the world.

The irony of the War on Drugs being launched in the 1980’s is that illicit drug use had been dropping for about a decade. We were essentially fighting a war with an enemy that no one believed existed. Less than 2% of the public viewed drugs as the most important issue facing the nation. Prior to this time the federal government played only a small role in controlling crime. But the War on Drugs did not play a major role in reducing cycles of drug use.

The Reagan Administration and Congress authorized \$125 million to establish regional drug task forces. The FBI drug enforcement budget skyrocketed from \$8 million in 1980 to over \$95 million four years later. From 1984 until 1991 the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) antidrug budget increased from \$86 million, to over a billion dollars.

New laws were passed such as the Anti-Drug Abuse Act: In 1986, Congress passed the Anti-Drug Abuse Act, which established mandatory minimum prison sentences for certain drug offenses. This law was later heavily criticized as having racist ramifications, because it allocated longer prison sentences for offenses involving the same amount of crack cocaine (used more often by black Americans) as powder cocaine (used more often by white Americans). Five grams of crack triggered an automatic five-year sentence, while it took 500 grams of powder cocaine to merit the same sentence. Mandatory sentences took away the ability of the judges to sentence according to circumstances surrounding a crime.

Abolish mandatory sentencing: Let Judges, judge the situation and sentence according to the circumstances, which will humanize the sentence, and allow the chance for parole when they feel it fits.

Given the evidence that incarceration of drug users and sellers is not an effective remedy for substance use disorder, policy makers and criminal justice professionals should continue to significantly reduce the number of people incarcerated for possessing or selling drugs of all types, and eliminate the collateral consequences imposed on people with drug convictions.

The opposite of criminalization is humanization. It's about restoring human dignity.

We believe that Drug Courts / Alternative Sentencing (treatment courts) are vitally important to changing the way we treat addiction in our legal system, in our society and in our lives.

Following is an in depth view of Treatment courts and what they do, and how they can help humanize the treatment of addiction.

What is treatment court?

- Treatment courts are an alternative to incarceration that provides life-saving treatment to people with substance use and mental health disorders.

- Treatment courts represent a public health response to addiction within the criminal justice system. They transform the courtroom from a place of punishment, anxiety, and fear to a place of hope, healing and trust.

- Treatment courts treat the underlying substance use and mental health disorders that have created a revolving door of addiction, crime, broken families, and wasted resources.

- Treatment courts are not for low-level possession cases, they focus on individuals facing incarceration for crimes driven by addiction.

- Treatment courts demonstrate that instead of punishment, a combination of treatment and support, can lead even the most desperate people in our justice system to lives of recovery, stability, and health.

- Treatment courts differs from traditional courts because in treatment court, treatment providers are a vital part of the team and ensure each person receives an individualized, evidence-based treatment plan. Treatment providers work closely with the judge, case managers, prosecution and defense to provide ongoing support for the participants who appear before them.

- Treatment courts identify and meet individual needs beyond clinical treatment, from education, employment, and housing assistance to family reunification, restitution and healthcare.

- There are now over 3,500 treatment courts in the United States including models specifically for repeat adults with substance use and mental health disorders (adult drug court), DWI offenders (DWI court), families whose children have been removed from the home due to addiction (family drug court), juveniles (juvenile drug court), tribal communities (tribal healing to wellness court), and veteran's (veteran's treatment court).

Is drug court effective?

- Treatment courts are the single most successful intervention in our nation's history for leading people struggling with addiction from justice system to lives of health and recovery:

- 150,000 individuals are referred to treatment annually through treatment court programs

- The most comprehensive study on treatment courts to date, the National Institute of Justice Multi-Site Drug Court Evaluation (MADCE) confirmed that treatment courts:

- significantly reduce both drug use and crime

- improve education, employment, housing, and financial stability

- promote family reunification, reduce foster care placements,

- increase the rate of babies who are born fully drug-free.

- save considerable money for taxpayers approximately \$6,208 per participant, and can return up to \$27 for every \$1 invested.

- Punishment does not solve the problem of addiction;

- 95% of those released from prison return to drug use.

- 1.2 million addicted people behind bars.

- More than \$80 billion spent annually on corrections.

- Unfortunately, high-quality treatment can be expensive and often unavailable, putting effective treatment out of reach of the people who need it most.

- Treatment courts connect participants with evidence-based treatment for a minimum of one year, which research shows is generally found to be the minimum length of time necessary for treatment to be effective. The treatment court team works together to help them stay in treatment long enough to be successful.

- Treatment courts refer more people to treatment than any other intervention in America (approx. 150,000 individuals annually), and those people are more successful in treatment than any other group.

History and larger societal impact of drug court

- Treatment courts prove that a combination of compassion, structure, supervision, and evidence-based community treatment can and should be the principles upon which the justice system responds to substance use and mental health disorders.

- By bringing medical experts into the courtroom to conduct assessments and make treatment decisions, treatment courts became the first program in the justice system to treat substance use and mental health disorders as a public health issue, instead of a moral failing.

- The emergence of treatment courts taught the legal community to treat people struggling with substance use disorders as individuals who deserve dignity and respect, not 'addicts,' 'abusers,' or 'junkies' who are beyond help.

- Treatment courts uphold the enduring, absolute value of every human person and are changing our national perspective on what it means to serve justice.

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- Treatment courts introduced humanity into a system that has relied on inhumane tactics for too long, proving that it is possible to repair lives, reunite families, and reduce drug use and crime, and to do so for far fewer tax dollars than the cost of jail or prison.

- Treatment courts are the foundation of the current criminal justice reform movement in the United States, the success of drug court has led directly to other incarceration alternatives, diversion programs, sentencing and juvenile justice reforms, harm reduction strategies, and the establishment of reentry programs for prisoners with substance use histories.

- Treatment courts have led 1.5 million people to lives of recovery. They go back to school and back to work; they take care of their families; they pay their taxes. They are mothers, fathers, sons and daughters, friends and neighbors, and their lives are worth saving.

We want to thank National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) for taking the time to give us this valuable information on Treatment Courts. They can be reached at www.nadcp.org, or call 1 (703) 575-9400

NADCP is a national 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to educating and offering technical assistance to drug court, DWI court and veterans treatment court professionals. NADCP does not certify, accredit, investigate, supervise, or have any other authority over any drug court.

NADCP has made equity and inclusion a priority of their training, and has several new resources designed to assist courts in making sure all individuals have equal access to treatment court, and treatment/recovery services.

There is so much more that could be written here about how and why to reform our system and repair the "collateral consequences", done by over a half century of WAR, but for now we hope this incites you to learn more, understand more and take action wherever possible. Make your voice heard.

References and Resources

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TAKING CHARGE OF YOUR ANXIETY

Nearly everyone is worrying about COVID-19 and the impacts on our lives. That's a normal response to a dangerous pandemic without a known end in sight. But, when this fear takes over your life, or makes current anxiety even worse, it's time to take charge. Rather than retreat and fall into a deeper state of anxiety, you can take simple steps to retrain your brain. You may not be able to change your situation, but you can certainly change the way you respond to it.

First, let's consider the common physical symptoms associated with awareness of an imminent threat. Imagine you were a caveman and there is a lion nearby. You'd want your body to prepare for action. You'd want your body to take in more oxygen and get the blood flowing, so you can be ready to either defend yourself or run away, fight or flight. When the threat goes away, the body calms down. That is a normal stress response.

Anxiety occurs in someone spending so much time and mental energy focusing on potential threats, and worrying about how to handle life's common uncertainties, that puts them in a constant state of stress. The body is always preparing for fight or flight. Over time, this wears away at the body and creates long term health issues.

In the short term, it triggers a vicious cycle. One may not be consciously worrying about anything at the moment, but the body is still in that mode. Heart rate goes up. Breathing gets more shallow and rapid. Some people start sweating, their muscles tighten, their stomach starts cramping. When the individual does become aware of these sensations, that awareness can trigger more anxiety. The mind senses the physical response and tells the brain that this must mean there is danger ahead. As the brain responds, the physical symptoms get worse. The anxiety intensifies, and the cycle continues. It can be debilitating, making it difficult to function normally throughout the day. For some it can escalate to a full-blown panic attack.

If this happens to you, you may feel like there is nothing one can do, but that's not true. You can train your brain not to react to those symptoms. You can stop the cycle.

Here's how. Get moving, literally. Do any activity that increases your heart rate and your breathing. It could be running, hiking, swimming, cycling, or whatever other aerobic activity you enjoy. You will flood your brain with chemicals that lift your mood and calm your brain circuitry. As your anxiety begins to fade away, your brain will learn that an increased heartbeat and rapid breathing are associated with positive feelings. It will no longer react to those sensations by amping up anxiety levels.

CALMING THE ANXIOUS BRAIN: WHY EXERCISE HELPS

Anxiety Response: Sedentary People	Anxiety Response: People who Exercise
<p>Stress and anxiety increase heart rate and breathing</p> <p>The brain of someone who rarely exercises learns that increases in heart rate and breathing can only mean there is a threat.</p> <p>This brain of the non-exerciser responds to physical sensations that always imply a threat by becoming more anxious.</p>	<p>Exercise increases heart rate and breathing</p> <p>As the brain is flooded with exercise-induced mood lifting chemicals, it learns that an increased heart rate and breathing can be part of a pleasant experience.</p> <p>This brain responds to physical sensations that can imply either pleasure or threat by remaining calm.</p>

Once you learn to harness the power of exercise any time anxiety flares up, you will be in control. You may still worry about various issues from time to time, and that's normal; but that worry will no longer trigger a vicious cycle of more anxiety, and more physical discomfort. You will be in charge of your physical responses.

Leslie Gold is the founder and executive director of Strides in Recovery, a Southern California non-profit which brings the healing power of exercise to addiction recovery communities. Since 2013, she has been working with residential treatment programs, sober living homes, and IOPs to coach hundreds of people in early recovery across the finish line of events ranging from 5Ks to the Los Angeles Marathon. To learn more, visit StridesInRecovery.org



HOW TO STAY SAFE FROM ONLINE GAMBLING

Since the pandemic of Covid-19 started many of us were, and still are following, "stay at home" orders, gamblers can't head to the nearest casino or lottery retailer to get their fix. They are now turning to online gambling. You can try self-banning or self-exclusion. But is it right for you or a loved one to help you stop gambling? I'm asking because Internet gambling is on the rise! It is the same as sitting at a card table or behind a slot machine, but at the convenience of your home with a computer, laptop, iPad, etc.

We all know that old saying, "if you want something bad enough, you will find a way to get it!" and that is certainly true when you are talking about gambling addiction. When an urge or trigger hits, you need to be banned and blocked from Online Gambling too!

What is Self-Banning or Self Exclusion? Every state may have its own rules and policies about this option to help someone stop gambling and in so doing, harming themselves. For example, I currently live in the State of Arizona, so I will share this state's options as there are many Indian Tribe Casinos all over this state, hence, lot of access to gambling.

Here is what my friends at the Arizona Dept. of Problem Gambling say about Self-Exclusion or Self-Ban, which is a process that allows a person to request to be banned from all Indian Gaming Facilities within the State of Arizona, and to be prohibited from collecting any winnings, recovering any losses, and being banned from the use of any of the services or privileges of the facility. You can choose either a one-year, five-year, or ten-year exclusion. This exclusion is permanent and cannot be altered or rescinded for any reason during the selected period on the form.

You can go to your local state gaming office to complete the entire self-exclusion process, which includes meeting with the self-exclusion administrator who will discuss the program, notarize the form, take your photo, and give you additional resources for addicted and problem gambling. Visit the National Council on Problem Gambling and find your State Contact: www.ncpgambling.org. There are helpful tips are to ban yourself from using ATMs too! The Everi STeP program allows you to exclude yourself from using ATMs at over 1000 gambling locations. Automated Systems America, Inc. (ASAI) can also assist in blocking ATM transactions in other state casinos. This information is essential because DURING COVID-19 problem gamblers are turning to online internet gambling. Do you suspect a loved one who may have a problem? Even your teens or college-age adults?

Keith from The National Council on Problem Gambling shares, "With brick-and-mortar casinos across the United States shut down to slow the spread of the new coronavirus; public health advocates are concerned that a shift to online wagering may lead to an increase in problematic behaviors. Gov. Phil Murphy ordered the indefinite closing of Atlantic City's nine casinos on March 16th, 2020, but permitted online gaming to continue. Industry experts expect an escalation in online gaming activity because of the retail casino closings. The anticipated growth in internet play has gambling addiction professionals' worried. "We believe every risk factor for gambling problems is increasing right now," said Keith Whyte, executive director of the National Council on Problem Gambling.

A few other resources you can try are GAMBlock and GAMBAN. I have heard some good feedback from those who have used it. They were able then to get themselves into treatment and Gamblers Anonymous for support. And GAMBAN works on all online gambling sites in or out of America. I understand, there is more protection and an added layer to stop Online Gambling even if you already use GAMBLOCK.

I hope you have found this article to be helpful and informative. Here are some signs to look for if you are concerned and suspect a loved one or a friend may be gambling online too much. Addiction causes highs and lows in a person and gambling addiction is no exception, so here are some psychological signs of gambling addiction: • Feeling bad after you/they gamble, but not quitting. • Feeling guilty for spending time away from family or hurting them, but not quitting. • Always thinking about gambling.

• Believing that gambling is not a problem for them, or avoiding thinking about how much time and money they spend on gambling and talk about how they win all the time.

Gambling addiction does become a compulsion, and it is easier not to think about it than to soberly consider the repercussions of gambling in your life. When people start using money that is supposed to go to your utilities, rent, or house payments. If the person you are concerned about starts to sell or pawn things, you know you have a problem. There are helpful resources and treatments, and there is hope to recover from gambling addiction. If I can Quit to Win, I know you can too!

Catherine Townsend-Lyon is the author of her debut memoir, "Addicted To Dimes," a gambling recovery advocate, coach, and ghostwriter. She runs "Lyon Media Services" helping authors market their books throughout social media. Catherine advocates about gambling addiction and has shared her story on Addictionland.com, FacingAddiction.org, and HeroesInRecovery.com. Catherine writes and shares her recovery journey from gambling addiction along with resources on her recovery blog "Bet Free Recovery Now" betfreerecoverynow.wordpress.com. Catherine resides in Phoenix, Arizona, and continues to help and sponsor those from gambling addiction. Email: LyonMedia@aol.com. Call (602) 633-3991.



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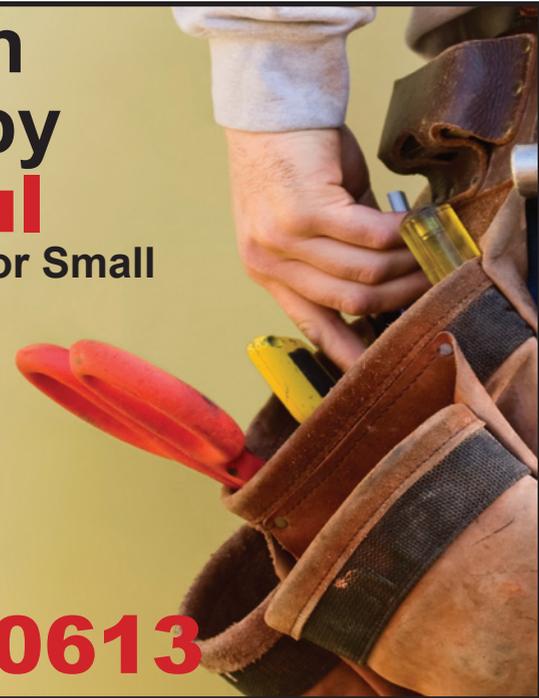
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Our purpose and our mission is to give hope that recovery is possible. Incorporated in the state of California Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c) (3) non-profit Public Charity.

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 100,000 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
- Colleges
- Correctional Facilities
- Counseling Office & Services
- Department of Health
- DUI Classes
- Doctors Offices
- Drug & Alcohol Councils
- Drug Courts
- 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
- Sober Livings
- Transitional Housing
- Therapist Office
- Universities
- Veterans Hospitals

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, NY, 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, L.A., CA 90003, www.aa.org (323) 750-2039, info for Spanish Speaking.

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

A.A. Santa Clarita Central Office: www.aascv.org (661) 250-9922.

Al-Anon Family Groups: www.al-anon.alateen.org (888) 425-2666.

Grupo Al-Anon: FE Y GRATITUD DE NEWHALL, 22505 Market St, #102 Newhall CA.

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 meetings, Thurs & Suns 6pm 8742 Mulberry Dr., Sunland, CA. Lisa (818) 293-2222.

Alsana Eating Disorder Helpline: For individuals, friends, families, and providers to receive support, answers to questions, and resources. Monday – Friday, 6am – 6pm PST. Call or text: (314) 807-3065. www.alsana.com/helpline/

Anaheim Alano Club: 202 W. Broadway, Anaheim, CA 92805. Meetings 7-days a week (714) 535-0900.

California Depart. of Health Care Services: www.dhcs.ca.gov (800) 735-2922 for deaf and blind.

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.

CEA-HOW: Compulsive Eaters Anonymous: www.valleyhow.org (818) 503-7484.

CEA-HOW: Compulsive Eaters Anonymous; HOW: San Fernando Valley Intergroup, (818) 667-6722 or e-mail: sfvalleyhow@aol.com or Bryce at (818) 621-2130.

CEA-HOW: NEVEDA Compulsive Eaters Anonymous: 12-Step Recover. Las Vegas www.ceahow.org (702) 393-6570.

Cocaine Anonymous: World Service Office www.ca.org. (800) 347-8998 or (310) 559-5833.

Clutterers Anonymous: (866) 402-6685.

Co-Dependents Anonymous: (CoDA) L.A. (323) 969-4995.

Co-Dependents Anonymous: (CoDA) San Fernando Valley (818) 379-3300.

COMMUNITY REFLECTIONS INC.: Prison Outreach, Homeless & Veteran Care, LiveScan, Prop 47, Legal Services, Etc. 10020 S. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90047 (323) 674-4376

COSA for friends & family of Sex Addicts: www.cosa-recovery.org (866) 899-2672.

Crystal Meth-Anonymous: (CMA) (855) 638-4373

Debt-Anon: 12-step recovery program for those affected by a problem of compulsive debt in a relative or friend. Phone Mtg. Sun. 10am Pacific Time (605) 313-5104, 74951#. www.debtanon.org.

Debtors Anonymous: offers hope for people whose use of unsecured debt causes problems and suffering in their lives and the lives of others. Visit www.debtorsanonymous.org for more information and support.

Eating Disorder Support Recovery Groups free & open to the public. Thurs at 7 pm. Center for Discovery, 21650 Oxnard St. # 2375, Woodland Hills; 8484 Wilshire Blvd., #510, Beverly Hills; 4281 Katella Ave #131, Los Alamitos; 1000 Quail St., #290, Newport Bch; 11455 El Camino Real, #360, Del Mar. for info visit www.centerfordiscovery.com

Eating Disorder Support Recovery Group. FREE. Drop in. Open to the public. Wednesdays from 6-7pm. EDCC (Eating Disorder Center of Calif) 520 S. Sepulveda Blvd., #208, Los Angeles, 90049.

Greysheet Anonymous: Recovery 12th Step for all eating disorders. Greysheet.org, (310) 245-6441, cell (310) 445-7709, Linda L. Meeting Saturday, 8:45-10am. Farmer's Market Community Room.

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

Family Support Group: FREE of charge. Have a loved one suffering with mental health and/or substance abuse? Parents & spouses invited to join group, Wed. 6:30pm-7:30pm. At Awakenings, 28720 Roadside Dr., #200 Agoura Hills. For info call (805) 574-0936.

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

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

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

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

International Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Foundation: (OCD) www.ocfoundation.org (617) 973-5801.

LGBTQIA+ AA Meeting: Saturdays, 6:30 PM, Thousand Oaks, CA (800) 560-8518. www.laventanatrement.com

LifeRing Secular Recovery, Lifering.org, (800) 811-4142

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

MADD Mother Against Drunk Drivers: www.madd.org (877) MADD-HELP

Marijuana Anonymous: www.marijuana-anonymous.org World Services (800) 766-6779.

Marijuana Anonymous: www.marijuana-anonymous.org Los Angeles (310) 494-0189 or 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 & Drug Dependence Headquarters: (NCADD 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.

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.

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 (800) 977-HEAL.

Sexual Recovery Anonymous (SRA): www.sexualrecovery.org (323) 850-8565.

S-Anon: (Friends & Families of Sex Addicts) www.sanon.org (800) 210-8141.

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

SUPPORT GROUP: Free & open to anyone supporting a loved one through their mental health and/or substance use recovery. 1st and 3rd Thurs. of each month, 7:PM Thousand Oaks, CA (800) 560-8518 www.laventanatrement.com

Survivors of Incest Anonymous: (877) 742-9761. www.siaawso.org

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

The Other Bar: FREE 12 step based peer recovery network for lawyers & law students (800) 222-0767; www.otherbar.org

Workaholics Anonymous: www.workaholics-anonymous.org (510) 273-9253.

INFORMATION & REFERRAL SERVICES

www.SunshineCommunity2015.org Social Services, (626) 297-6112, Resource Services to Children in Foster Care, Emancipated individuals, Single Women age 18+ with children & much more.

www.Foundation2recovery.org, Prevention, Education, Treatment (561) 981-6214.

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

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 & Family Services (661) 949-1069.

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

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

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

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

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.

FOOD BANKS

APLA's Necessities of Life Program 7336 Bellaire Ave., N. Hollywood, CA. Thursday 10:30am to 4:pm, (213) 201-1600.

As You Are Church, 7855 Lindley Ave., Reseda, CA. Wednesdays & Fridays, call for hours, (818) 758-1700.

Catholic Charities/Guadalupe Community Center 21600 Hart St., Canoga Park, CA. Once a month, or on emergency basis. Food recipient must register (818) 340-2050.

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.

Los Angeles Food Bank (323) 234-3030.

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.

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. (818) 346-5554.

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

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

DISABILITY SERVICES

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

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

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

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.

EMERGENCY HEALTH & MENTAL SERVICES

Armenian Relief Center, Prevention of drug/alcohol abuse (818) 242-2390.

Because I Love You, Nationally Known Parent And Teen Support Group. www.bily.org

County of LA Depart. of Mental Health for listing of 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.

HOMELESS HEALTHCARE LOS ANGELES: 2330 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90057, www.hhcla.org, (213) 744-0724.

MISSION HILLS Recuperative Care Shelter (818) 392-0020.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES: Hathaway-Sycamores Child and Family Services, For info on mental health services, (844) 222-2377 (1-844-2Access) or email referral@hscfs.org. Please include the type of service being requested, the age and the city of the person you are requesting service for, and any additional comments. We will respond to all calls within one business day. Interested in volunteering with us? Please email mentoring@hscfs.org.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS (NAMI) S.F. Valley (818) 994-6747 www.Nami.org. NAMI Urban Los Angeles (323) 294-7814, www.namiurbanla.org. We advocate, educate, and support people with mental illness and their families via our free education programs, support groups, and other services.

MEALS SERVED & SERVICES OFFERED:

Homeless Shelters listed most have food programs.

THE MIDNIGHT MISSION meals 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. non-profit: Last Sunday of Each Month 1pm N.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) 859-4893.

HOMELESS SHELTERS & RELATED

At The Fountain Transitional Living (562) 306-4115.

Centennial Place Permanent Housing (626) 403-4888.

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

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 (310) 791-3064.

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.

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

Friends in Deed Pasadena Homeless Services. (626) 797-2402.

Family Promise (818) 847-1547.

GRCN Connecting Communities (562) 293-7595.

Glendale YWCA Domestic Violence Project (818) 242-1106.

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

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

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

Homeless Health Care Los Angeles www.hhcla.org, (213) 744-0724.

Homeless Adult Center (626) 403-4888.

House of Hope (323) 663-1215.

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

Jenesse Center (323) 299-9496.

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

Los Angeles Mission (213) 629-1227 x305.

Long Beach Rescue Mission (562) 591-1292.

Los Angeles Youth Network (323) 957-736.

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

National Runaway Switchboard (800) Runaway.

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.

S.P.Y. Safe Place for Youth: Supportive Services for Homeless & At Risk Youth. Drop in Services, meals, hot showers and clothing. 2469 Lincoln Blvd., Venice, CA 90291 (310) 902-2283.

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 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.

Union Rescue Mission (213) 347-6300.

Union Station Homeless Services (626) 240-4550.

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

WLCAC Homeless Access Center (323) 563-4721.

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.

Child Protection Helpline, (800) 540-4000 (24 Hour).

Children's Institute International (walk-in center) (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) (562) 864-3722.

House of Ruth (909) 623-4364.

Human Services Assoc. (walk-in center) (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.

National Domestic Violence Hotline: (800) 799-SAFE (7233)

Project Peacemakers, Inc.(walk-in center only) (English, Spanish) (323) 291-2525.

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.scadplne.org (562) 923-4545.

The Good Shepherd Shelter: (323) 737-6111.

YWCA of San Gabriel Valley www.ywcawings.org (626) 960-2995, 24 Hour Hotline (626) 967-0658.

RAPE HOTLINES

RAINN Hotline (victims of sexual assault) (800) 651-6000.

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

Rape Hotline (800) 978-3600 (So. California): 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Callers can get help in eleven languages (English, Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Cantonese, Tagalog, Khmer, Japanese, Thai and Armenian).

Rape Hotline (213) 626-3393 (Central Los Angeles)

Rape Hotline (310) 392-8381 (South Los Angeles)

Rape Hotline (626) 793-3385 (West San Gabriel Valley)

S.A.F.E LA www.safela.org/rape-and-sexual-assault, (800) 799-7233

Stalking Hotline (877) 633-0044 (Stalking Hotline)

HEP C / HIV / AIDS INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

National AIDS Hotline, (800) CDCINFO. (800) 344-SIDA (Spanish), (800) AIDS-TTY (TTD/TTY for deaf)

REACH (risk reduction education & 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.

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

SUICIDE PREVENTION

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

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800) 273-TALK (8255), www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org, www.veteranscrisisline.net

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

The Trevor Project offers suicide prevention services for LGBTQ youth at (866) 488-7386.

SAMHSA's National Helpline offers referrals for substance abuse and mental health treatment at 1-800-662-4357.

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

Many of these Resources change quickly, if you find a number (or place) no longer exists please let us know.

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

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

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SATURDAY AUGUST 15TH, 2020: 2nd ever Debt-Anon Fellowship Day! The Debt-Anon Fellowship Day is in participation with the 2020 Debtors Anonymous World Service Conference Fellowship Day. Location: Video Conferencing through ZOOM For Fellowship Day information and registration click the Events tab on our website: debtanon.org

Since many meetings have had to close their doors for safety reasons during this "safer at home," shutdown, many recovering individuals have been left alone and unsure of where to turn. We thought we should list some options for online meetings. Our collected experience suggests that groups that are unable to meet at their usual meeting places have begun to meet digitally. A.A. does not endorse any specific way to meet as a group digitally. Each group must decide what works best for their needs. You can visit the following providers to get more information on how to use their platforms to set up an online meeting. There are many options for converting to audio/video or phone meetings. See below platforms groups have shared:

Google Hangouts/Meet • Zoom • Free Conference Call/ For more information on other online platforms visit: G2.com

For more information on anonymity please see: Understanding Anonymity at www.aa.org/pages/en_US/options-for-meeting-online. For more information on passing the digital basket please see: www.aa.org/pages/en_US/options-for-meeting-online Winter 2017 Box 459 p. 3 "Passing the Digital Basket". Many online meetings are setting up ways to continue to give digitally. With AA meetings shut down internationally Our World Services Office and local Central Offices are going to need your support more than ever.

[Online Meetings can be found here:](#)

Alcoholics Anonymous

www.aa-intergroup.org/directory.php

www.onlinegroupaa.org

www.aonlinemeeting.net

Narcotics Anonymous

www.virtual-na.org

www.na.org/meetingsearch

Gamblers Anonymous

www.gamblersanonymous.org/ga/locations

Al-Anon

www.al-anon.org/al-anon-meetings/

To find local meetings and events all year long call

Alcoholics Anonymous
San Fernando Valley Central Office
Telephone: 818-988-3001

Mon.-Fri. - 9:AM - 6:PM Sat. & Sun. - 9:AM - 5:PM

VOLUNTEERS ARE ALWAYS NEEDED

Book, CD & Video Reviews



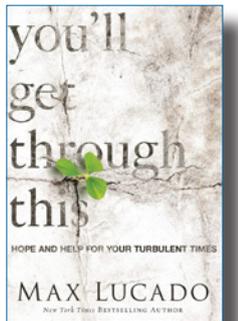
YOU'LL GET THROUGH THIS, *Hope and Help for Your Turbulent Times*, author Max Lucado. Published by Thomas Nelson publishers.

Max wrote this book in 2013, but it seems to have been written to help us get through what we are going through NOW. This book digs deep into what it means to go through hard times, and it gives a realistic, hopeful view of where God or your Higher Power is in the process. Let's face it life is hard sometimes, making it easy for us to wonder where God is in the middle of a struggle. Max hits that head-on, as someone who has made a lot of mistakes and been through his share of hard times.

This book is rooted in reality and in scripture. Real faith tells us that we must go through troubles. In this book Max talks to people that are not living in a fairy tale, but a faith trail. Max Lucado has a way of gently grabbing his readers in the first sentence, and keeping their undivided attention until the last word. But be assured that it is what's on the pages in between, that will move you to the very marrow: truth.

When life gets tough we all could use some reassurance. Like a true friend, Max delivers biblical truth in an encouraging fashion. His words bring relief in the present and hope for the future.

Without a doubt we are going through turbulent times, we long to know that our storms, trials, disappointments, and challenges have a purpose beyond our pain. Max masterfully shows us how, no matter what we are walking through we can find hope and strength to stand when everything around us seems to be falling; Max profoundly reminds us that God is in control. I am grateful that Max wrote this book and that it came to me; NOW, when I really needed it. I am sure if you read this book, "you will come away believing that you'll get through 'this', whatever this is in your life". Available at Amazon.com



FROM PARK BENCH TO PARK AVENUE: One Man's Journey Out of Homelessness. Written by Anthony Brown. Published by Square Tree Publishing.

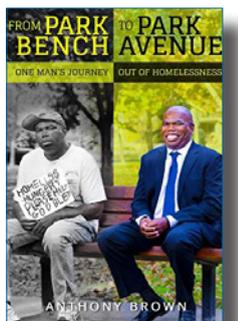
Anthony Brown's story is one of a harsh beginning, waking up as a young child and seeing his mother lying on the living room floor dead from a gunshot wound. The psychological ramifications that are usually attached to witnessing such a painful sight, can manifest into adverse behavior- alcohol and drug addiction, and criminal behaviors which can ruin one's life.

Anthony's life was catapulted into various drug addictions, homelessness, and incredible despair. Subsequently, his behavior caused incarceration, deprivation, and isolation, which became part of his ways of life.

Once Anthony got a glimpse and envisioned how life could actually be, from being exposed to positive insights, viewpoints and applications, allowed him to turn his life around. He demonstrated fortitude, determination, and stick-to-itiveness which helped propel him into becoming the success that he is now.

This book can help to keep our minds focused on what can and will be accomplished, if we apply ourselves wholeheartedly to all of our endeavors! This remarkable book gives us a visualization of how we can take incredibly negative situations and make them positive results.

A must read. I give it 5 Stars. Available at Square Tree Publishing and Amazon.com



WASTING TALENT: A novel. Written by Ryan Leone. Published by Catharsis Fiction.

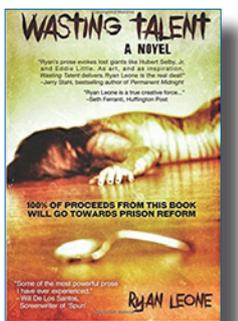
I was introduced to Ryan Leone and his book, *Wasting Talent*, through my friend and favorite author Amy Dresner, who wrote *My Fair Junkie*.

I have to be honest when I saw on the front cover, "100% OF PROCEEDS FROM THIS BOOK WILL GO TOWARDS PRISON REFORM", I knew I was giving it 5 stars no matter what! But once I started reading this book - those 5 stars were earned by the fast paced, gritty and too real writing style of Ryan Leone.

This story is dark, and not for the light hearted. The main character Damien falls into some pretty dark and scary places behind addiction, and the fallout of the life style of an addict. It is a fast and furious read, I actually had to put it down to catch my breath more than once.

Although this is a work of fiction, I could feel the authenticity throughout the prose style writing. Ryan wrote this book, his first novel, while serving a five year sentence in federal prison for his involvement with an international heroin ring. Art imitates life, or is it life imitates art? With this book BOTH!

Leone's many talents beyond being a novelist include, film producer, television writer, and my favorite, "prison reform activist". Like I said at the start he had me at "100% OF PROCEEDS FROM THIS BOOK WILL GO TOWARDS PRISON REFORM". I give this book 5 stars. Available at Amazon.com



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

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