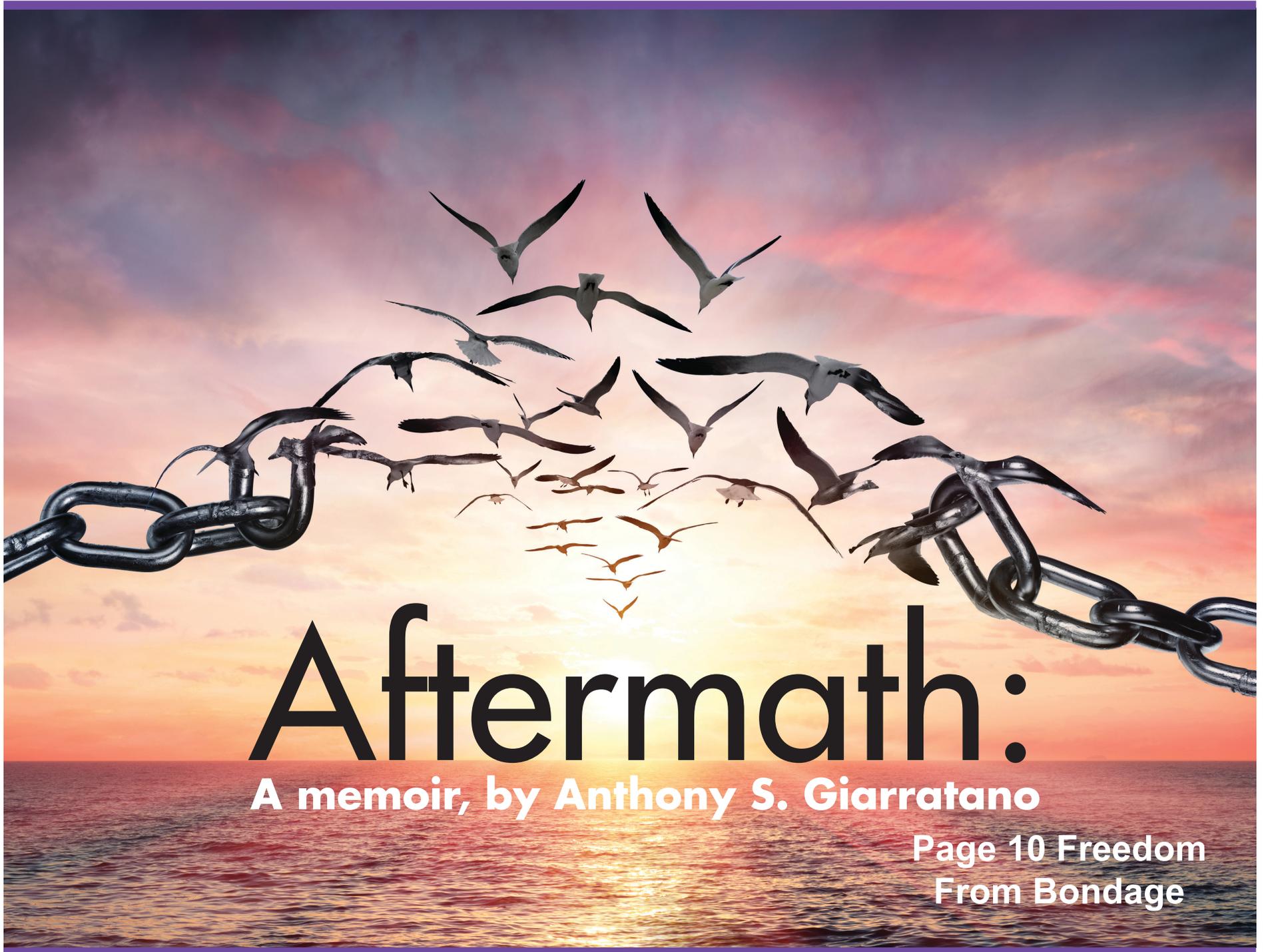


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Aftermath:

A memoir, by Anthony S. Giarratano

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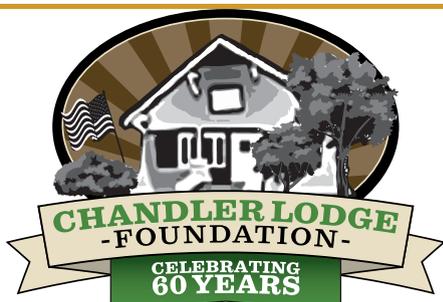
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Hello to all our readers, new and old alike. We are so excited to be publishing our second completely digital issue. Please be patient with us as we are still ironing out the differences between printing a traditional newspaper, and publishing a digital copy. Stay tuned as we start changing our website as well. We want to make sure our readers can access all types of resources, that can help with recovery from all addictions and disorders. We also want to offer help to anyone at any level of recovery to learn, grow and carry the message of recovery to others. Our articles this month are packed with incredible information on how to do just that!

I want to share with you some strategies that I have picked up on, over the last 2 years on how I deal with my stress.

First I need to get my heartbeat down to normal. That can take a few moments or longer depending on what I am dealing with. I do this by focusing on my breathing, and inviting God into the situation. I repeat I invite God into the situation and become willing to let Him run the show. I do the following not to diminish or stuff my feelings, but to get them right sized. I ask myself some simple questions:

1} Is this real or am I projecting something that has not happened?

2} Can I take any action right now to "fix" this situation?

3} Will/Does this affect: My health? My living situation? My job? My intimate relationships. etc. Basically what or who will it affect?

For me, these simple questions can help me adjust the level of stress I am experiencing. They help me get started on dealing with what I am feeling. I also practice being in the present, right here, right now, I am okay. Eating right and exercising can help to keep me balanced, and better equipped to deal with stress as it comes up. Remember each situation and every person is different, if you have more stress these days, reach out for help, you are not alone.

I have learned that when I allow others in I don't have to carry that burden alone, and neither do you. Thank you & God bless you! - **Jeannie Marshall, President & Cofounder**

Hello to everyone, my wife Jeannie and I are very thankful to have the opportunity to continue our Keys to Recovery Newspaper. Even though we are no longer printing our newspaper, we are very blessed to have had a strong online presence for years now. We have a large monthly readership here in the states, and around the world. We feel extremely blessed and fortunate, to have the chance to continue to help those in need. We want to thank our Writers and Advertisers for providing solutions, to help one addict at a time.

During these times of staying home more, I have been diligent in paying attention to my eating habits. I have learned to adjust and limit my cravings for sweets and calorie wasted foods. I have realized that my behaviors that causes weight gain, changed once I learned which foods worked best for my metabolism. I then started applying that form of thinking, towards different areas of my character that I wanted to improve. Knowledge is power, and the opportunity to acquire understanding that can help, is always around us if we search for it.

We see that the recovery community is starting to open their doors more, and that the industry is gearing up to be of assistance to everyone in need. It is a great feeling knowing that recovery, will be open for those that want it. It is amazing that slowing down can really help the mind, body, and spirit. By isolating and avoiding the normal daily grind, my demeanor and attitude has benefited. Previously my self-examination was more obscured by distractions, and the stress of dealing with large crowds. Since things has dramatically slowed down and does not require constant attention, I have been able address the unhealthy behaviors, that I still exhibit daily.

Hindsight is 20/20, and when I look back at the fast-paced lifestyle, I am grateful for the chance to pause and reflect. The way I carried my self was not bad, but like anything there is always room for improvement. I am very blessed to have a wife, who is also determined to improve daily. Perfection is not truly obtainable, yet striving for it helps to motivate us to do our best. Whenever we see anyone in need of help, we should ask ourselves, "what if that was me in that very same situation" and then act accordingly to what you feel you should do. Until we come together again for reasoning, we hope that God will keep you and yours safe and healthy. **Marcus Marshall, Vice-President & Cofounder**



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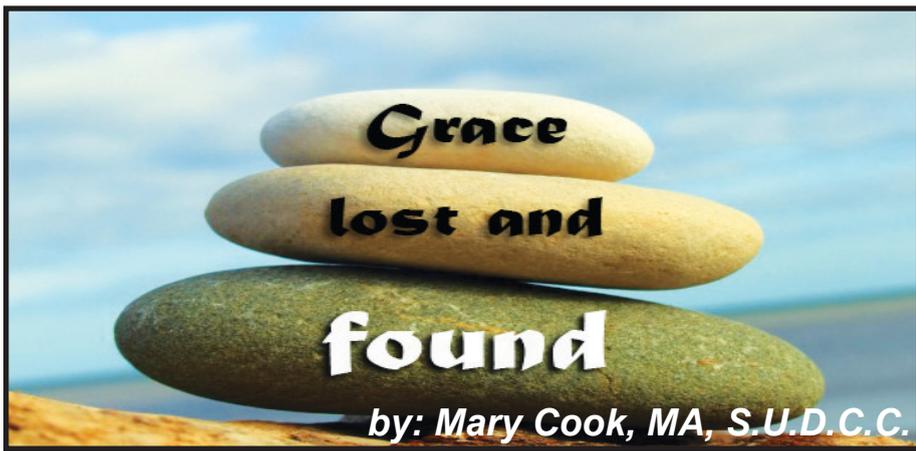
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A PUZZLING PARADOX OF PURPOSE

We are born with divine light shining in our eyes. We are blessed, united, wide open and whole. There is no end to our potential, we behold everything with awe. From our original home, we bring unbounded love, unbridled joy and bountiful peace. We are here because our soul yearns to grow.

So we descend into the uncertain garden, forgetting our purpose and plan. We begin to feel fear more than peace. Instead of unity, we notice separation, jealousy and judgment. Often we see more pain and sorrow than joy, and more abandonment, abuse and hatred than love. Our vision darkens and we see ourselves as inferior and incomplete. We become shadows on the earth with barely a glimmer of the higher truth.

***The more we are
dissatisfied with life,
the more changes
we must make within
ourselves to correct this.***

Experiencing significant pain can lead us to believe that life is a battlefield, and choice lies in the degree of energy we invest to build fortresses of protection and armaments of destruction. Energy additionally goes into finding false substitutes for peace, unity, joy and love. Sickness, ignorance and fear now hold tremendous power over us. This is how we invite more negative experiences into our life. Who we are becomes the story of life's damaging blows coiling around us like a deadly python. The more we attempt to appease or fight this snake, the less we recall of our divine origin.

And yet ultimate impending doom can open us up to solutions. It is not our physical death, but the death of this paradigm of living, that offers us hope. Brilliant discoveries and inventions come to those who think outside the given constructs of reality. What enables us to do this, is an awareness of consciousness existing apart from our mind and personality. When we witness ourselves in thought, feeling or action and begin to question the effectiveness of how we are living, we find a key.

We are not merely physical minds and bodies. There is something greater than this, observing us.

We typically do not question the meaning of life, or our individual purpose when we sit on the comfortable sidelines of contentment. Long leaps forward are neither contemplated nor attempted without a metaphorical fire at our heels. Autonomy and personal freedom are far more precious following a period of enslavement. Feeling the pressure and constraint of deceit can cultivate a deeper commitment to honesty and openness. Abuse and abandonment can awaken greater love and compassion.

We must think beyond our five senses, our mind, and society's norms, for these transformations to occur. The more we are dissatisfied with life, the more changes we must make within ourselves to correct this. What is familiar, habitual and seemingly protective, drains us of our true life force.

The earthly duality presents a puzzling paradox. Since all things exist, how can we remain aware and make conscious healthy choices without taking up arms against the opposite side? How can we live in harmony with love and hate, harming and healing? This answer lies in learning to see the deeper truth and growing beyond its disguises.

All actions communicate something important. Negative actions communicate what we feel happened to us, and how we are stuck there. When we aren't able to verbally state this in meaningful understandable ways to others, we are drawn to act it out. If I have been bullied, humiliated and rejected and feel unable to communicate the pain of these experiences to others, I may treat others in these ways so that they develop a personal understanding. Or if I am afraid of others' reactions to this behavior, I may mistreat myself. In both cases, I am communicating in actions, that I have been hurt, have lost trust, and remain stuck in this painful place because no-one understands me and the help that I need.

Once we realize there is a deeper level of communication and understanding, we are free to make choices that do not cause harm to ourselves and others. When we believe that we are spiritual beings temporarily in a physical body for purposes of learning and growth, we can see painful experiences as a sign that love is blocked. Walking through these experiences allows us to understand more completely, the profound effect of specific deprivations and abuses. When we commit to a thorough examination of ourselves and our lives, this allows us to determine and learn to demonstrate the highest form of transformation from these painful experiences.

Mature love does not offer pollyanna sentiment or coercive schemes. Mature love arises from deeply seeing, understanding and valuing ourselves and others. We cannot live the answers to our questions until we have sufficiently lived and understood the problems. It is through this process of living, learning and transforming, that we discover and attain our unique purpose in this life.

~~~~~  
*WWW.MARYCOOKMA.COM Mary Cook has a Master's degree in psychology and is a substance use disorder certified counselor in private practice. She has 45 years of clinical and teaching experience. Mary is available for telephone 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.*  
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Sunlight of the Spirit

by: Darrell Fusaro

LIVING BY CHOICE

“To change one’s life, start immediately, do it flamboyantly, no exceptions.” –William James

In Charles Dickens’s classic *“A Christmas Carol”*, a lonely old miser named Ebenezer Scrooge wakes up from a dream on Christmas Day determined to live life generously expressing love. He came to the conclusion that his old ideas of fear, lack, and worry were corrupting his personality. He had the realization that it wasn’t society or circumstances that caused him to be distrustful and stingy in the past. It was only his own defective ways of thinking and behaving that were getting in the way of joyfully expressing himself. From this day forward Scrooge is committed to living by faith rather than self-protection.

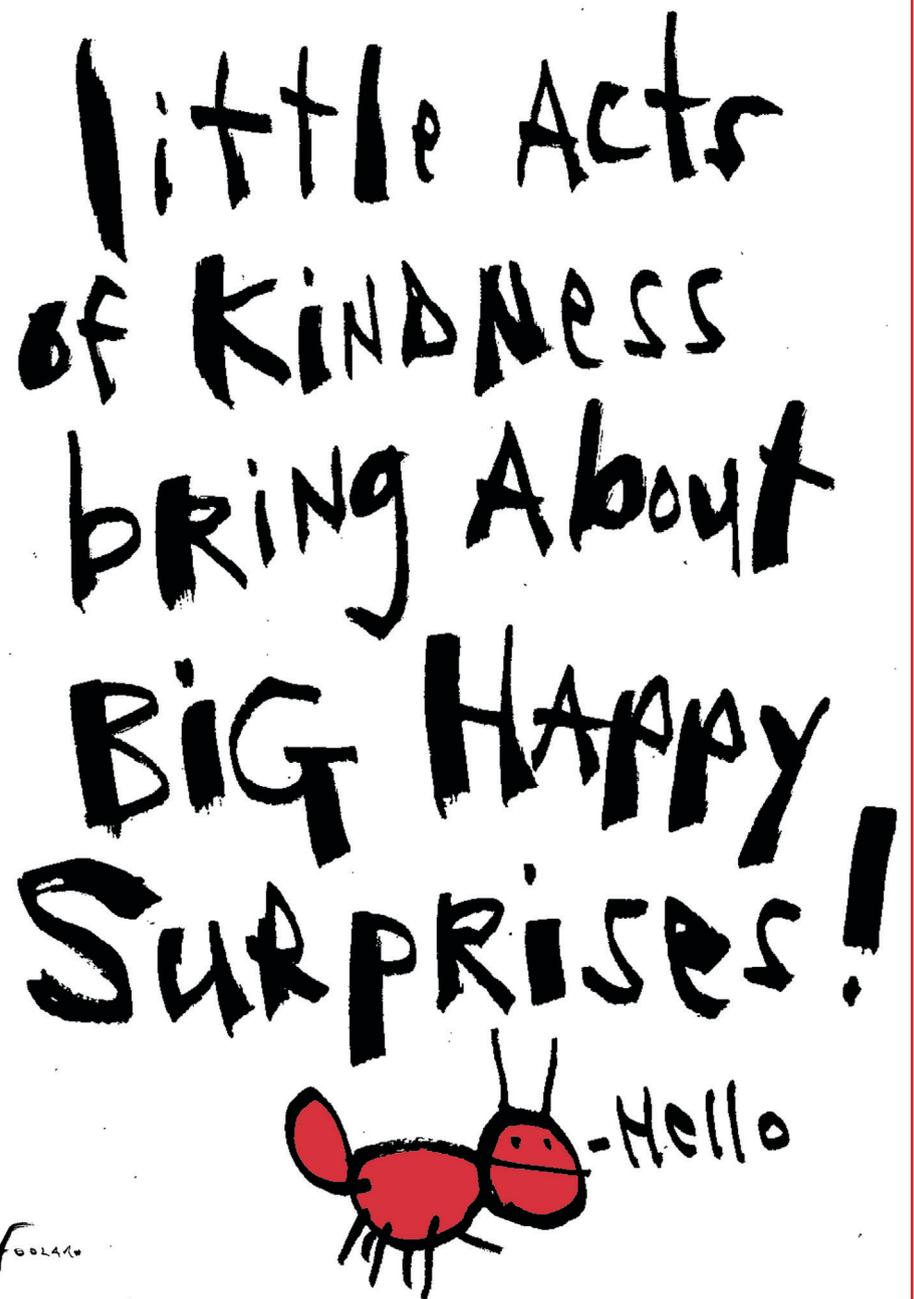
One day during the summer I was feeling depressed. Although I had the desire to be experiencing a healthier state of mind, nothing I tried seemed to help. An old adage came to mind, “Move a muscle, change an emotion.” I decided I’d go for a walk. As I was putting on my sneakers my mind started to turn the thought of going on a walk into a funeral dirge. In spite of this, I continued to tie my laces and put one foot in front of the other. Then all of a sudden it was as if my sincere desire to feel better was clarified by a silly idea. “I want to feel like Scrooge the morning after!” I thought.

The idea of feeling as wonderful and being as generous as Scrooge did the morning he woke up after his dream was appealing to me. I thought, “That’s it! Rather than just going on a walk in order to hopefully improve my mood, I’m going to go on a Scrooge walk!” This silly thought felt so good that I decided to go for my walk exuding the generous spirit Scrooge had the morning he woke up from his dream.

Now I was infused with a delightful sense of purpose. My mind had shifted from a getting mentality to a giving mentality. As I headed out the door I carried the image of myself tipping my top hat to each and every passerby I’d meet. I felt an appreciation for life, and everyone in it growing within me.

I looked forward to seeing the people on my path. When we’d pass one another I would silently bless them with love. Whenever I felt the generous urge to say hello, wave to them, or share a smile, I did it. Not only did I start to feel better, but I also noticed that people seemed to have the urge to say hello to me as well. It was heaven. At this point, it became clear to me that if anyone had asked me why I was feeling so down and out earlier I wouldn’t be able to recall the reason.

Here’s the thing, it’s scientific. It’s the law of circulation. When you choose to express love you open up the channel which creates a vacuum that draws more love to you, and through you. Being law or principle, it never fails and is always true.



“Whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.” (Galatians 6:7)

“What we change inwardly will change outer reality.” – Plutarch

Our circumstances always correspond to our inner life (thoughts and feelings). We always receive more of the love we share, and it is reflected in our experience as good health, happiness, success, and prosperity.

In this case, my commitment to share love as generously as Scrooge during my walk brought immediate healing to my mind, body and was also reflected in my bank account. Later on that same day I received a letter from our insurance agency that included an unexpected check for \$800. Apparently, some sort of mistake had been found in regard to our yearly payments.

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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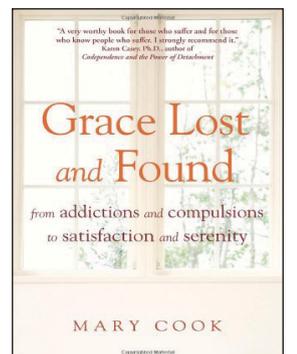
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Freedom from Bondage

by: Anthony S. Giarratano

AFTERMATH

On May 7, 2011, I robbed a Walgreens pharmacy at knifepoint. Nearly seven years later, and after more than four years in prison, I was pardoned by New Jersey Governor Chris Christie. How does a graduate of Rutgers University, someone with no prior felonies and who comes from a very supportive and loving family, find himself threatening the life of a pharmacist while wielding one of his dad's favorite steak knives?

For me, my cancer came suddenly. Acute promyelocytic leukemia. The oncologists at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia said that if I hadn't come in within the next two weeks, I would have died in my sleep. The first drop of chemotherapy was administered later that day, and for the next 40-plus days, I underwent rigorous and life-threatening treatments while not being spared their horrendous side effects. Through it all, pain meds – morphine, Dilaudid, and eventually fentanyl, housed in a machine directly connected to one of my IVs, with a remote button that I could press every nine minutes to administer. I had never before used opiates in my life. When the time eventually came for my third and final round of chemotherapy, while I was sedated for a preparatory procedure, the doctors noticed an irregularity with my heart. Shortly after, the final round was called off entirely, and I left the hospital diagnosed with chemotherapy-induced heart failure, at 18 years old.

When I first arrived at Rutgers, I was immediately aware of an energy that existed in the air of the campus. Everyone around seemed to have this overflowing aura of excitement for college and actively shaping their futures. I could never fully relate. I had this nagging injury that just wouldn't heal. I was fighting a constant battle in my head to go out and live my life, and not sit around waiting for my heart to stop beating. I was left with something that I didn't think anyone around me would understand. I felt like I knew something they didn't – just how quickly and easily this could all be over. I followed the herd, but my mind was always elsewhere.

Should my cancer have some type of influence in my life? What should I have learned from it? What major should I choose? What do I want to do for the rest of my life? Could my heart give out at any moment? What am I even interested in? It seemed so apparent how easily other students were making these decisions.

Trying to sort through the endless swirling of career and life questions, coupled with the emotional disconnect between me and my peers, quickly led to me desperately needing help. I began seeing a therapist and a psychiatrist on campus, and not long after, I was cycling through every available antidepressant and anxiety medication on the market at the time. Having and surviving cancer became my identity, not just something that happened to me. Slowly, I became consumed with finding its meaning for my life.

Part of me felt that I was barely alive and should be extra cautious with every decision. So, for a while, I would rigorously avoid anything I perceived as negative, including certain people, parties, drugs, and alcohol. Eventually, I would always find myself wondering if this was the right lesson. Maybe I was really supposed to learn to stop being so uptight about every little thing, and to go out and enjoy my life.

And so, for a while, I would allow myself to loosen up and commit to living and enjoying each moment however I wanted. I pushed personal boundaries and did some things I previously never entertained. I would end up partying all hours of the night while dabbling in pills and cocaine, and rarely turning down an opportunity to cheat on my girlfriend. The aftermath of these risky and hurtful behaviors left me burdened with worry and shame, yet I was unable to shed the feeling that maybe I should be doing these selfish things.

Always from one extreme to another, I teetered back and forth between being an exceptionally positive and healthy person, or a boundary-pushing, self-serving scumbag, until eventually, I became more addicted to pain pills. I severed the friendship of each and every one of my best friends who were all a part of my life since childhood. All of them there before, during, and, with open arms, immediately after my survival of cancer, all long gone. Why didn't I open myself up and seek their support long before it got out of hand? I don't know.

I suppose I was ashamed for the confusion I felt and the questions I had about life. It's not easy to grab your bustling, late-teen best friends who are all filled with that college energy and sit them down to talk about life, death, and what it all means. I was embarrassed for thinking so differently, and I was afraid that if I pursued these kinds of discussions, then I would slowly become someone nobody wanted to hang around. And so I kept it from them, hoping that eventually my feelings would coincide with theirs.

In May 2010, after barely graduating from Rutgers, I moved back home and became an immediate terror to my entire family. I repeatedly lied to and cheated them. My parents rearranged their entire lives to sit bedside with me every single day while I fought cancer, and later, I rummaged through the house pawning anything of theirs with value. My sisters, Emily and Alexa, what it must have been like for them at 10 years old knowing their older brother might die, and then at 14 years old, that he's sneaking into their room while they're at school and robbing them blind.

I was repeatedly kicked out of the house, and one time, I broke back in through a basement window, leaving a trail of blood. I was later arrested down the street while asleep in my car, and charged with breaking and entering. When I was allowed back home, my mom said she used to come into my room in the middle of the night to check to make sure I was still breathing. I bounced in and out of a couple of rehabs during that first year back home from school – one out-patient, and one, week-long in-patient program – but neither stuck.

I continued seeing psychiatrists, and what years prior had originally started out as an honest attempt at trying different medications in the aftermath of cancer, eventually evolved into me working them for anything I could get my hands on. Adderall and Ativan, and their various alternatives, as well as Lunesta and Suboxone, all came my way along with countless others. Including my heart meds, at times, I was on seven or eight different medications. Anything that had the possibility of abuse, I abused. If it wasn't a typically abused medication, I tried abusing it anyway. At one point, I was snorting Lunesta.

With the way I treated my family and the way I treated myself, I kept sinking to new and different lows of character I had never thought possible. And the further I sank, the shittier I felt about myself, and it became cyclical to the point that I didn't know how to get out. I just couldn't stop.

I could hear the officers outside, talking and laughing among themselves about how my life was now over. I was sitting in a small, windowless intake cell my first night in Somerset County Jail on May 7, 2011. At the time, I know my family strongly considered disowning me. They were disgusted. But as I sat in jail, they again looked for answers on how to deal with their drug-addicted son, now also charged with armed robbery. Ultimately, they bailed me out with the stipulation that I was to go straight to a long-term, in-patient drug rehab in Delray Beach, Florida, called Caron Renaissance. Only after placing a lien on their home and with gifts from my grandparents were these gestures possible. Their generosity set the stage, as I was privileged to have an opportunity not afforded to many, but it was up to me to do the work.

Throughout treatment, I tried not to focus so much on my pending felony, although it was immensely challenging and oftentimes debilitating. Instead, I tried my hardest to remain open-minded to the process and to actually hear what the therapists said. Vicki, one of the vocational therapists, used to often say, It's not what you're given, it's what you do with it. I didn't ask for cancer, nor did I ask for heart failure, but I'm responsible for how I handled the aftermath. Not everyone who survives a life-threatening illness turns into a pharmacy-robbing drug addict. So for the first time in my life, I submitted to someone else to take the reins. And today, I am thankful that I did. A lot of their shared wisdom made its way into my head and aided me tremendously over the years.

For the entire two-plus years I was out on bail, I remained drug-free and out of any trouble while continuously maintaining full-time employment. I had reclaimed my life and my family. They were back on my side and seemed once again proud to call me their son.

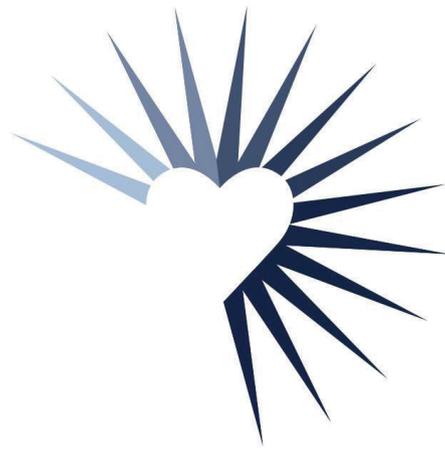
On August 30, 2013, I was sentenced in Somerset County Superior Court to five years in New Jersey State Prison.

After nearly two years into my incarceration, I began maintaining a daily journal. These were private entries at the time, intended for emotional release and personal exploration, never meant to be shared.

I was released from custody on November 3, 2017. And shortly after, on January 12, 2018, I was pardoned by New Jersey Governor Chris Christie. This terminated the mandatory parole supervision that I had just begun, and I took the opportunity to travel, setting out on a one-way ticket.

I have since adapted my journals into a book titled *Aftermath*. It was completed while traveling throughout Southeast Asia.

Anthony is from the small town of Monmouth Junction, New Jersey. He graduated from Rutgers University in 2010. Since May 2018, he has been living in Southeast Asia. This article is taken from the book "Aftermath" available on Amazon.com or at www.anthonysgiarratano.com. FaceBook <https://m.facebook.com/anthonysgiarratanoauthor>.



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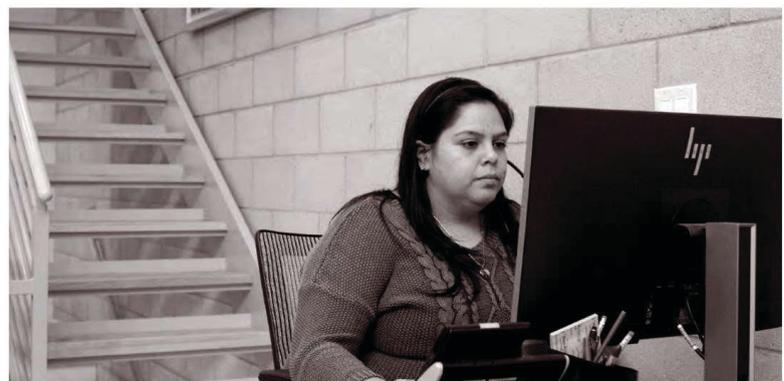
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by: Annie Kuni, LMFT

PARENTING DURING AN EATING DISORDER

You've just found out that your child has an eating disorder. Maybe you've seen some strange food behaviors for a while, or maybe there was a doctor's appointment where the diagnosis was confirmed. Perhaps the school counselor reached out, or your child came forward and told you directly. You've called a therapist, set up a dietitian appointment, gotten medical labs done...what now?

Eating disorders are complicated and scary. It's typical to fear "messaging" as a parent. Everyone learns how to adapt and react over time, and it's ok to make mistakes along the way. Below are several tips for how to proceed, and pitfalls to avoid to help ease you into the treatment process.

Be aware of your own relationship with food. Most people in Western society are very involved with diet culture, and will need to adjust the way they talk about food in the house in the context of an eating disorder. This means no dieting, not saying things like "junk" food, and not talking about your own body image and weight – or anyone else's for that matter! You'll be surprised with how much diet talk we all do unconsciously once you start to make these changes. As your child gets more comfortable with treatment they will most likely start to point out these triggering statements in the family themselves. It's easy to feel defensive in these circumstances. Try and be open-minded to the feedback and make changes.

Get comfortable with being the bad guy. When we have an eating disorder we're not in a headspace to be able to help ourselves. We need other people (like our parents) to step in and help us instead. This means that your child will most likely not be pleased when you make them accountable to mealtimes, go to therapy, or talk about treatment. It's normal for someone in the midst of their disorder to be resistant to help, but down the line, your child will thank you for it. Being the bad guy might also look like talking about a higher level of care when necessary. It's very easy to want to ignore disordered eating or hope it goes away, but this will just elongate the issue. Those who are suffering from an eating disorder need their supports to take it seriously, and intervene quickly to get the easiest treatment outcome. Teenagers, in general, are like porcupines – they have lots of spikes and can be hard to get close to. Teenagers with an eating disorder are twice as prickly. The only way to make those spikes go down is to hug the porcupine, even if it's a painful process.

Approach behaviors with curiosity rather than shame. Eating disorders are full of sneaky behaviors. You can expect that your child is going to try and hide food, sneak in restriction or purging, or weigh themselves when they get the chance. When you catch these behaviors try and be curious about why they feel the need to do it, rather than being angry or shaming towards those relapses. It's completely normal to feel upset or scared during these circumstances as a parent, but we want to try and remain open to a conversation rather than jumping into punishment. You may never understand what it's like to suffer from an eating disorder, so this can be an opportunity to learn more about why your child does what they do.

Recovery is not linear. It's normal for everyone to feel frustrated with the ED recovery process. It takes a long time, it's very up and down, and there will be relapses along the way. It doesn't mean that you or your child are doing anything wrong. Eating disorders usually develop over a span of years – and it can thus take years to fully recover. It's rarely a quick process. Reminding everyone of this reality helps the whole family feel less ashamed.

Eating disorders, like addiction, require changes within the entire family system. It can sometimes feel like everyone is in treatment, and needs more therapy during an eating disorder. This doesn't have to be a bad thing! Survivors and their families grow and mature during the ED treatment process, and are better for it.



Annie Kuni is an LMFT. She co-founded Gemmed to provide eating disorder support groups for teens and adults. She can be reached at www.gemmed.ngo

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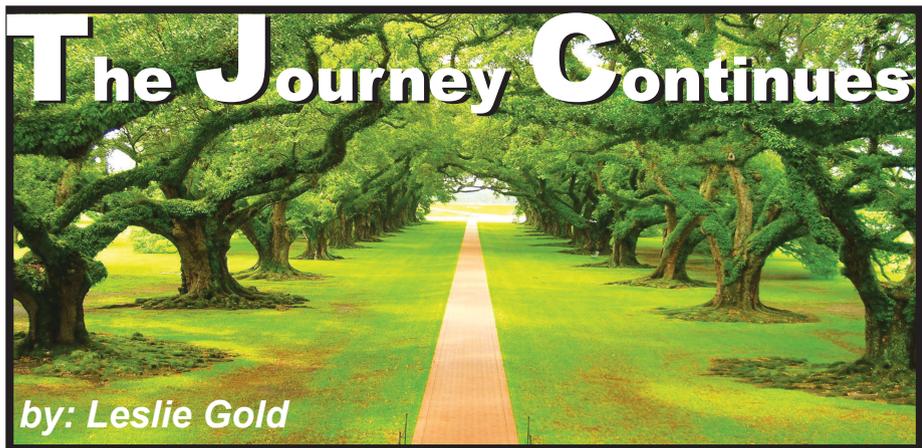


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GARY'S JOURNEY

"I was always getting into trouble. I was in and out of prison. I became okay with stealing to support my habit, because meth made me not feel anything anymore. My feelings were dead." Sitting in his cell, Gary realized that meth *"had taken over my life. It took away my time. It took away my freedom"*. He also realized he couldn't stop on his own.

Although he was in a very dark place, there was one bright spot in his days. He noticed that he felt good whenever he was working out. *"It got my brain moving. It got me to want to do something productive. It gave me the confidence to set up goals for when I got out."* One of those goals was to get clean and start a new life. A month after his release, he began residential treatment at Fred Brown Recovery Services. *"They helped me bring out my feelings, and learn how to deal with them."* He completed the program and moved to sober living. Soon afterward, he joined the Strides in Recovery team that had just started there.

"The team kept me motivated. It made me accountable." After several months of running with the team, he chose to take on a new role. *"It's not just about my own recovery anymore."* He began to see himself as more than a team member. He chose to be a mentor. That self-assigned responsibility is what got him moving on days when he didn't feel like running. *"What gets me motivated is the other addicts there, with less sobriety. Being part of this team gives me a purpose. It helps me in every part of my life."* Gary would be out there running with his brothers in sobriety, encouraging them to keep moving forward, to take on the challenges that lay ahead. He helped them translate the experience of training into lessons for life.

Today, Gary has over a year of sobriety and a full-time job. His new work hours conflict with the team runs during the week, but any time he can come back to support his team on the weekends, he's there. While he credits his treatment team and running with much of his success in sobriety, he was quick to point out, *"I couldn't have done any of this without God."*

Gary with some of the team members, after they crossed the finish line of their first 5-mile event.

Leslie Gold is the founder and executive director of Strides in Recovery, a Southern California non-profit which brings the healing power of goal-oriented group exercise to addiction recovery communities. Participants in Strides in Recovery programs enjoy improved self-confidence, empowerment, self-discipline, camaraderie, stress reduction, health & wellness, pride in accomplishment, and so much more. Leslie is an RRCA certified running coach who has trained hundreds of people in early recovery to cross the finish line of events ranging from 5Ks to the Los Angeles Marathon. To learn more, visit StridesInRecovery.org



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GAMBLING ADDICTION & MENTAL HEALTH = SUICIDE?

(This article was originally published in July 2018)

I wrote some of my story as a person who lives dually diagnosed (I maintain recovery from gambling and alcohol addictions, and live with mental health challenges). Recently we have had several high-profile celebrities choose suicide over life. I thought I would share some of what I wrote with you this month in my column. I write this in the hopes of sharing my voice to help shatter the stigma around these critical topics that are touching, and claiming too many lives.

"My recovery journey restarted in 2006. I woke up in a hospital as the result of my second failed suicide attempt, and then went back to an addiction and mental health crisis center for another 14-day stay. The problem wasn't that I gambled again and relapsed; the problem was not taking my psych medications for a few weeks. I thought I didn't need them; that I could be normal like everyone else around me, but as you read my story, you'll see that didn't work out too well."

I had a few severe financial crises happen, and since I had not taken my medication and had already worked through all of our savings, I panicked and chose to steal from someone. What a mess! Of course, that person pressed charges. I was arrested, went through the courts, and was sentenced to many hours of community service, two years of probation, and paid restitution that I'm still paying today. My point? You have to do the work in all areas of maintaining your recovery, including your finances. I had not done all the work necessary for a well-rounded recovery. Even though I was not gambling, my financial and legal troubles told me I still needed to do more work, so I did with a gambling addiction specialist. After my problems occurred, I worked with a specialist for a year while I went through the legal mess I created. Why am I sharing this? Our recovery stories and words are powerful tools to help others.

After this second suicide attempt and crisis, I learned I had a lot more work to do, and I also learned that God, my higher power, has bigger plans for me, a purpose for me that involves helping those reaching out for recovery from the cunning illness of compulsive gambling addiction. After my release from the crisis center, I started working with a gambling specialist, and got my mental health under control; I began to see the stigma surrounding those of us who live dually diagnosed. Those of us who have a mental illness also have a huge hurdle in our path, STIGMA.

Since I am a dual-diagnosed person who maintains recovery and has mental health challenges, it can make obtaining recovery a wee bit more work, as I discovered. The old habits, behaviors, and diseased thinking needed correcting. Working with the gambling specialist was eye-opening. He helped me break down "the cycle of the addiction", and we also worked with tools and skills for dealing with financial problems that may arise while in recovery. I was given a fantastic relapse prevention workbook as well. Although I didn't relapse into gambling, this workbook has helped me develop a plan for any financial, or life event that may arise during my recovery journey. You need a plan beforehand as these life events will come.

Another tool that helped was journaling every day. I have always done this, but my specialist showed me how to relieve stress and learn more, and see my growth from my journaling. I used my journals in writing my current published book as well.

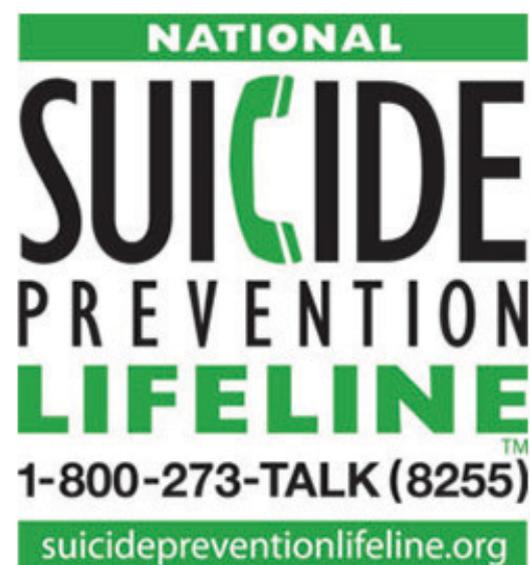
Writing my story and experiences in memoir form was a very healing, and letting go process for me. I shared my gambling addiction with alcohol abuse, my past childhood abuse, and sexual trauma, and what it is like living with mental illness. I never dreamed I would be a published author, recovery advocate, writer, and blogger, but these are just a few of the recovery blessings I have received in my journey thus far.

By writing my book and sharing it with the world, I hope to shatter the stigma around gambling addiction, recovery, mental and emotional health. I want to be a voice for those who are childhood sex abuse survivors. I have chosen not to be anonymous as I want others to know how devastating compulsive gambling addiction is, and how quickly one can become addicted. It indeed is a real disease and illness. I want others to be informed and educated, and I raise awareness of the effects it has in our communities and in families' lives. One in every five attempts suicide from this addiction.

"A suicide attempt is a clear indication that something is gravely wrong in a person's life. Suicide doesn't discriminate as it is true that most people who die by suicide, have a mental or emotional disorder. The most common underlying disorder is depression, 30% to 70% of suicide victims suffer from major depression or bipolar (manic-depressive) disorder." ~ MHA - Mental Health America

The expansion of casinos and state lotteries is making gambling more and more accessible today, and is now touching our youth. Currently, 2.9% of our population are problem gamblers. The best advice I can give? When starting early recovery, learn about this addiction. Work with a specialist or recovery coach to determine the cycle, and then learn the tools and skills to interrupt it. Work a well-balanced recovery that encompasses mind, body, spirit, and finances. There are many ways to recover including in or outpatient treatment, and G.A.12-step meetings for support. Anything and everything you can find. Do it. One option may not be enough for success in long-term recovery. I learned this the hard way, but have found a way to make it 11+ years maintaining my recovery.

I know it is my job, my duty, to be of recovery service to others, and to advocate about mental illness. Life today is good! My husband and I learned that we could weather any storm together. I know "sharing" our experiences and our recovery with others is just as important as the professional, or clinical side of how to recover. Sharing one's story is a powerful tool for others to listen to and learn. The time is now to start the conversation about these topics, and shine a bright light on them! It's time to "Quit To Win!"



Suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem. Depression, anxiety, bipolar or any other mental health issue should never have to end with suicide. Make the call if you have any thoughts of suicide.

Catherine Townsend-Lyon is the author of her shocking debut memoir titled "Addicted To Dimes," available on Amazon. Today she celebrates 14+ years of maintaining recovery and shares her experiences, strength, hope, and recovery journey as a writer, author, speaker on her website at <https://betfreerecoverynow.com>. Catherine is the owner of Lyon Literary Services & Consulting, helping new authors learn where to market their books. She and her husband reside in N. Phoenix, Arizona. She welcomes questions and emails at lyonmedia@aol.com.



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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. Our newspaper is filled with columns from today's top experts in the recovery field.

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Distribution Information

Keys to Recovery Newspaper, Inc. has a readership exceeding 100,000 per month, we are already a solid and formidable presence. 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.

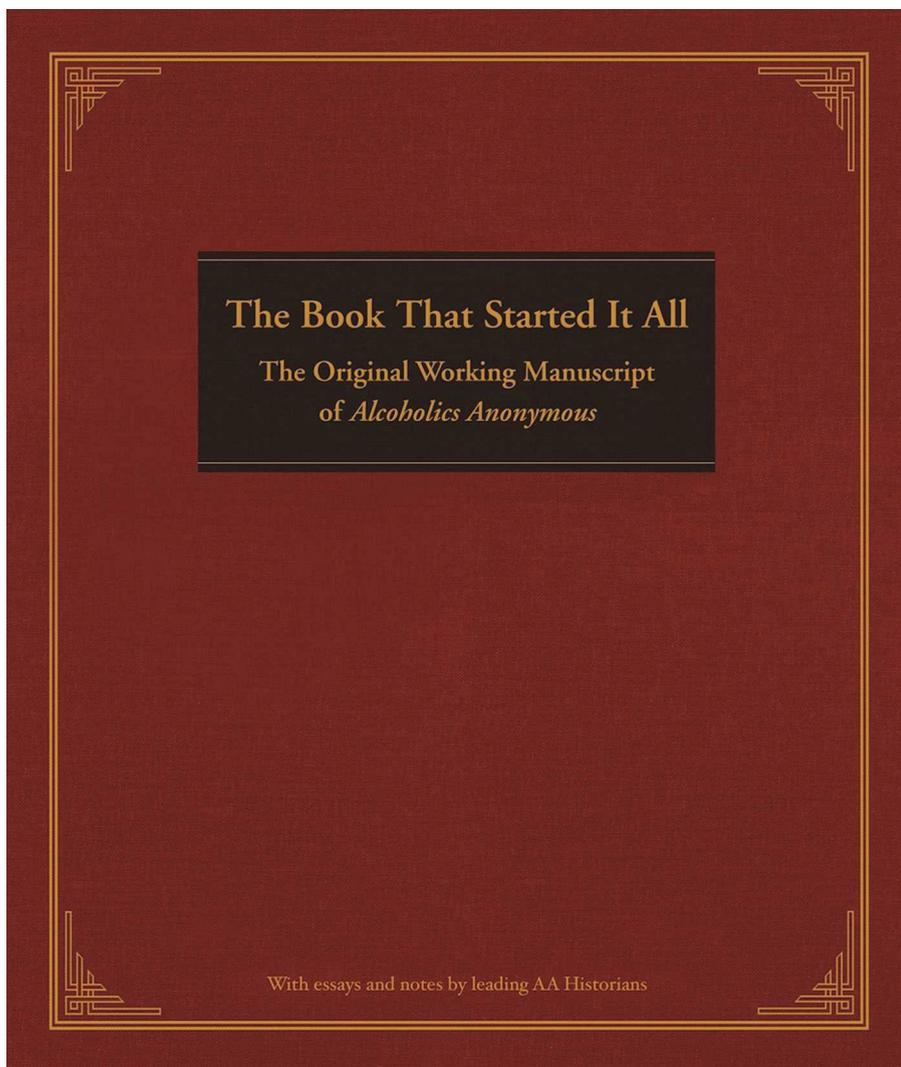
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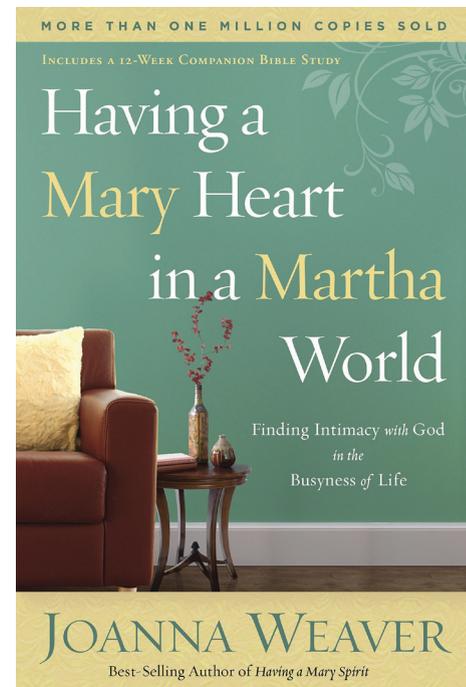
The Book That Started It All offers fresh insights into the history and foundation of the revolutionary Alcoholics Anonymous program. Reproduced in this elegant gift edition with essays and notes by a panel of celebrated AA historians, the original working manuscript is the missing link in our understanding of what transpired between AA founder Bill Wilson's first draft of Alcoholics Anonymous and the first published edition. In January 1939, Wilson and other AA founders distributed 400 copies of his typescript to everyone they could think of "who might be concerned with the problem of alcoholism," to test out the program. As the loan copies were returned, suggestions for revision were considered and written out in colored pencil on one master copy that was eventually submitted for publication. The many changes made in black, green, and red on page after page are shown here in their original form, revealing the opinions, debates, and discussions that went into making the Big Book. This is perfect for your coffee table, and we give it 5 stars because *The Book That Started It All* weighs more than five pounds. www.Amazon.com



HAVING A MARY HEART in a MARTHA WORLD: Finding Intimacy with God in the Busyness of Life. Written by Joanne Weaver. Published by Waterbrook Press.

In the Bible there are only a few sentences about Martha and Mary; they had invited Jesus into their home, while He was there Mary sat at His feet to listen to Him, while Martha was busy in the kitchen preparing a feast. Martha became very frustrated at doing all the preparations herself, (who can blame her). Yet when she complained to Jesus, He told her that Mary had chosen the better thing to do; (as Martha) so many of us living a very busy life, do not really understand the message Jesus was trying to teach to Martha. This book considers the struggle we often face in our life of addressing the balance between work and worship. Joanne neatly sums up the issue when she states that "we want to worship like Mary, but the Martha inside keeps bossing us around." Myself, I have often ruined a special day with my family because I was so busy working, refusing help and worrying that it would not be good enough. Not only was I so frazzled that I couldn't relax enough to enjoy my company, I made them feel uncomfortable. How many times have we tried to carry burdens God never intended us to carry? This is a beautifully written a message for all of us whether we are a Martha, a Mary or a little bit of both.

I found this to be one of the most helpful and insightful books, with regards to a growing relationship with Jesus. "Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World" can be a life changing experience, if you will hear what you are reading. Available at Amazon.com

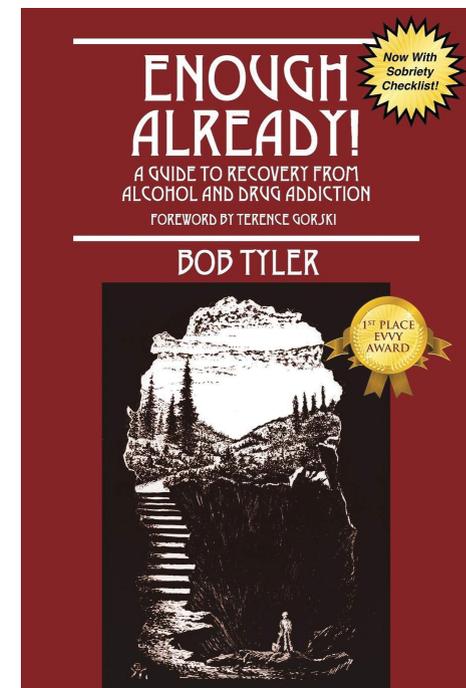


ENOUGH ALREADY!: A Guide to Recovery from Alcohol and Drug Addiction, by Bob Tyler.

Enough Already! is an easy read that educates alcoholics and addicts on precisely what to do to get and stay sober.

After learning about the disease of alcoholism/addiction and time-tested tools of recovery, the reader is introduced to relapse prevention strategies, the 12 Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and other 12 Step programs, and coping skills to deal with uncomfortable emotions that often lead to drug and alcohol use.

This is followed by specific instructions on how to get started in recovery and a final inspiring chapter entitled "The Miracle." Having years of sobriety and experience in the field of chemical dependency, Bob presents the information in this book drawing from personal and professional perspectives. Therefore, the reader learns the principles of sobriety and how to apply them in daily living through Bob's candid self-disclosure - a unique quality of this book. We give this book 5 stars Available at Amazon.com



Do you have a book, CD or movie you want us to review? Just send us a copy to: Keys to Recovery Newspaper, 6930 De Celis Pl. #35, Lake Balboa, CA 91406.

You can also email us a digital at: info@keystorecoverynewspaper.com

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.lacocaa.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.aasgvco.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 Family Groups: A 12-Step recovery program for those affected by a problem of compulsive debting in a relative or friend. 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.

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 Driving 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 (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

Dimondale Adolescent (310) 791-3064.

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.

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.

