

Together AZ



NOVEMBER 2014

Inspiring Success on the Road to Recovery

Just Say "Know"

By Stephanie Siete, *Director of Community Education, Community Bridges, Inc. (CBI)*

Let's check in on the latest trends... Rx, E-cigs, Powdered Alcohol, Vapes, Dabs, BHO...What?

A teen engaging in risky behavior is not a new phenomenon. We tend to chalk it up to a rite of passage and something that might be expected. But are these unwritten rules something we should accept in today's day and age? The drug world has changed and we want you to know the latest.

As a community, we ask parents and loved ones to challenge the typical norms and help to protect our youth. We believe awareness is the key to challenging norms that may favor drug and alcohol use and we also know that knowledge will provide you with the tools to empower you. Teens are at a critical stage in their life and they need our guidance. Adolescents are making adult decisions based on limited years of life experience and that ever famous teen brain, which is not fully developed until the age of 25. Early onset of drug use and risky behaviors often put youth at serious risk very early in life. Some of these choices will lead them down a path of addiction and some may never bounce back. We have an opportunity to turn that around.



So what's the good news?

We can make a difference. Drug and alcohol abuse will always be a threat, so awareness is your tool. Emerging drug trends that we have never seen in our time, have posed a serious risk for our youth and so much is still unknown. Synthetic drugs like spice, bath salts (cathinones), kratom and 25i-nbome are a new breed of drugs in recent years.

Prescription medication has existed as a form of treatment for decades, but abuse, addiction and death have been on a massive incline in the new millennium. Even our gateway or "kiddie" drugs have changed in terms of device and potency. Cigarettes are now battery powered, marijuana looks like honey and a concept of powdered alcohol has arrived.

Feel out of the loop? A little lost? The world of drugs is constantly changing. We are here to help.

The Revised Gateway Drugs

How many of us remember learning about drugs and to "just say no" from a program? Effective or not, this was some of the first exposure to the world of drugs in elementary or middle school. We learned about the popular drugs of alcohol, tobacco and marijuana. These drugs still reign as the top leading gateway for teens and Rx medication is a close fourth. Misperception about their dangers is our leading concern along with their dangerous potency and powerful addictive properties.

We have become a prescription (Rx) drug crazed society. According to the National Safety Council, the United States makes up 4.6% of the world's population and has been consuming 80% of the global opioid supply and 99% of the hydrocodone. To put that into perspective, in 2010, enough prescription painkillers were provided to medicate every American around the clock for an entire month. (National Safety Council, 3/13/2014, Seven Startling Facts about Prescription Painkillers, www.nsc.org/Pages/Seven-startling-facts-about-prescription-painkillers-.aspx)

In Arizona, we saw 575 million pills prescribed in 2013 (Arizona Criminal Justice Commission Statistical Analysis Center). We don't lack availability or accessibility for that matter. More than 70 percent of people who abused prescription pain relievers report getting them from friends or relatives. Only about 5 percent got the painkillers from a drug dealer or from the Internet. (National Safety Council, 3/13/2014, Seven Startling Facts about Prescription Painkillers, www.nsc.org/Pages/Seven-startling-facts-about-prescription-painkillers-.aspx)

Problem 1: The Rx drugs are here.

Problem 2: Most don't know the dangers.

Teens are curious about doctor prescribed medication and everyday people are being offered Rx meds as the best way to manage their pain. Our television commercials

Veterans Healing With Horsepower

by Shannon K. Spellman, M.S.W., LCSW, LMFT, LISAC

Why would veterans benefit from hanging out in an arena with a bunch of horses and engaging in this therapeutic modality referred to here as equine assisted healing? Well, it's actually a very effective, non-threatening, non-stigmatizing method for coping with stress, grief and loss, relationship problems, addictions, PTSD, deployment separation issues, and adjustment problems to returning home. We hear firsthand from veterans how powerful being around horses has been for them.

Paul Knutson served in the United States Army as an Infantryman from 28 January 2003 to 20 April 2011. He deployed with 1st Battalion 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from January 2004 to April 2005, and October 2006 to January 2008. Paul was wounded in 2004 in an ambush and was awarded the Purple Heart. During his tours, Paul and his teams were subjected to several Improvised Explosive Devices. As a result, Paul has been diagnosed with Mild Traumatic Brain Injury. After his second tour, Paul broke his back in training and was subsequently medically retired from the Army. Paul is now pursuing a college education in the field of radiography.

Reintegrating into the herd

Paul offers his experiences, strength, and hope about how horses have helped him. "In 2011, I was medically discharged from the Army because I had broken my back



"For some veterans, exposure to traumatic events experienced or witnessed during military service can result in difficulties that come creeping back up months or years later into one's memories."

and could no longer perform my duties as a soldier. I was lost and had no direction because I had planned on spending my life in the military. Transitioning into the civilian workforce was a daunting task as there wasn't any structure anymore that I could rely on. Even after gaining employment, I wasn't happy because I didn't understand my role in this new chapter of my life and I certainly didn't

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JUST SAY "KNOW" continued page 9



Best-selling author; guest consultant on 20/20, Good Morning America and CBS Morning News; featured in The New York Times and People Magazine; and Esquire Magazine's "Top 100 Women in the U.S. who are Changing the Nation", Rokelle Lerner is the Clinical Director of InnerPath Retreats at Cottonwood Tucson.

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publisher's note



By BARBARA NICHOLSON-BROWN

Stay Teachable

In sobriety I have learned to become teachable. Having just returned from a 12 step meeting, a gentleman with over 44 years sober spoke about how important it still is for him to be open for the lessons. Along with teachable, another word comes to mind: humility.

Being teachable has nothing to do with school grades or degrees. It means I'm willing to **pay attention** to what others are saying; by listening to their experiences, joys and pitfalls, awakenings, and the roadblocks they have had overcome on this journey.

The first time I read through the first 164 pages of the 'big book' I thought Okay now I got it! Not really. Early on my goal was to get through everything quick and fast — and it took months for my ego to get right sized. *Then and only then*, did I begin to understand what being teachable meant.

I learn what to do and what NOT to do when I listen. By staying connected and showing up, I understand my disease just a little bit more, and it's way stronger than I am. What I have in my corner though, is a powerful, loving God. When I connect — I have great chance for an amazing day.

We see men and women coming back in through the doors all the time —and they all say nothing has changed "out there." It isn't what we romanticize it to be.

The most painful times are watching someone leave — never making it back. So I need to be vigilant about my recovery, and practice what I was taught every day. I don't know anyone with any amount of clean time from 2 weeks sober to 44 years who hasn't struggled. When they share their struggles with us, we know we are not alone; nor are we unique. Ask for help be open to receiving it. Stay humble.

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appreciate working with people who didn't share the same vision of work ethic as I had learned in the military.

My mom found a horse for me that needed training, as he hadn't been handled for the first several years of his life. Horses aren't judgmental; they are herd animals that are just trying to survive day to day. Learning this about my horse, and working with him, taught me that people tend to live life the same way. In working with him, I have learned a lot about my own social tendencies and have overcome a lot of my anxieties of reintegrating into the herd that is civil society. I am now in school, am able to socialize with non-military people, and have a lot to look forward to every morning when I wake up. I don't think I would have been able to bounce back as quickly as I have without my horse."

Paul continues, "I recently attended a *Healing with Horsepower* event for veterans and was able to see other veterans be able to connect with the horses. It was powerful to see them distinguish the different personalities within the herd and then be able to identify with them. I believe that horses are an invaluable resource for veterans. I want to be able to share this experience with all of my friends that I served with and with other fellow veterans that I have met along the way." We are honored to have Paul Knutson volunteering in our equine assisted program for veterans.

Equine Assisted Psychotherapy

Across the nation, veterans are receiving help in programs that offer horse therapy. The term, Equine Assisted Psychotherapy was first introduced by Greg Kersten, a veteran and horseman, and founder of EAGALA. Training horses helped him improve his own mental well-being, and his exercises are used in many programs worldwide. Greg developed some equine assisted exercises specific to working with veterans. Greg teaches about many things including how horses respond to pressure and pain versus how people react to pressure and pain. Veterans' responses are often influenced by military training.

For some veterans, exposure to traumatic events experienced or witnessed during military service can result in difficulties that come creeping back up months or years

"The consequences to veterans of not getting help, or receiving help that results in worsening symptoms are reflected in the rates of suicide and substance abuse for veterans."

later into one's memories in a very intrusive fashion, and they may find themselves without adequate coping tools to process these experiences. We've come to know this problem as shell shock from WWII, later as combat stress, and more commonly today as PTSD. Many veterans have experienced some symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress even when they don't meet the full criterion for a formal diagnosis of PTSD.

Vernon K. Rogers, a veteran and avid horseman shared his experience with me about how horses help him with stress relief and overall health. "I was in the Navy from 64 to 68, doing two tours of duty in Nam on a tin can (destroyer). My duties, among others, included an air controller. Upon my discharge I headed back home. I had bad nightmares off and on and when I had one I couldn't go back to sleep as I was so up-tight and tense. Then one night knowing I couldn't go back to sleep, I got up and went out to my horse. After 30 minutes of talking and brushing him, I was really relaxed and went back to the house and fell to sleep. I found this worked really well and eventually they came less and less as I also learned what triggered them.

To this day I cannot watch war movies. Later in life I worked for the Dept. of En-

ergy as a Power System Controller, working shift work. When I had a really stressful shift once I got home I would go out to the horses, pet and talk to them or sometimes get on and go for a ride. They have never failed to be there for me. In my retirement horses are helping me stay active."

According to data from the VA, in 2011 alone, there were over 475,000 veterans who were treated for PTSD. This does not begin to reflect the actual numbers of veterans struggling with PTSD since there are an increasing number of veterans who are resistant to seeking help, and the number of veterans who have sought help and not received it due to the extreme service delivery problems recently discovered within the VA system. The consequences to veterans of not getting help, or receiving help that results in worsening symptoms are reflected in the rates of suicide and substance abuse for veterans.

Every 65 Minutes

Every 65 minutes, a veteran commits suicide. That's 22 suicides per day with numbers actually higher due to some states not reporting and some veterans not being counted. In a 2007 SAMHSA survey of all veterans, 1.8 million met the criteria for a substance abuse disorder. Veterans are also becoming addicted to prescription opiate pain killers at an alarming rate due to injuries sustained during their service. In this year alone, over half a million veterans

HORSEPOWER continued page 4



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have been prescribed addictive opiate medications. Some veterans may develop gambling addictions or other adrenaline seeking compulsive behaviors in an attempt to cope with the adjustment to returning home.

When veterans seek help for PTSD at the VA or through Tri-Care, they typically receive group therapy with a Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) modality, and often psychotropic medication including antidepressants and anti-anxiety pills. Unfortunately, the potential adverse effects of anti-anxiety medications are developing an addiction to the medication where tolerance results in never having enough, and withdrawals result in a return or worsening of PTSD symptoms. The adverse effects of antidepressants can include increased risks of hostility, violent behavior, and suicide.

Ross Libonati, a veteran and President of Horse Lovers Management Corp., knows about some of these problems all too well, and for years has found his own comfort in riding and working with horses. Ross explained, “I joined the Air Force in 1963 and discharged in 1967. I was security for the 320th bomb wing, the first B-52 bomb wing to bomb Vietnam. I did two tours. I know what horses can do for the heart, mind, and spirit. I know that if horses were not in my life I would have been dead by now because of self-medicating (alcohol, drugs etc.). It was my idea to start this program because I know the healing that horses can bring to your life. We are not affiliated with any government agency. We’re just veterans helping veterans with guidance from horses and qualified professionals. Come and join us. See how it works.” Ross and his wife, Kathy, volunteer in the veteran’s groups and Horse Lovers Park donates the arena. The program is run solely on donations with the seed money coming from veterans helping veterans.

Both the licensed therapist (myself), and the equine professional, Faith Knutson, M.A., are horsewomen and family mem-

bers of veterans, and both of us are certified to offer Equine Assisted Psychotherapy. As a therapist with specialties that include PTSD and addictions, I have watched many clients make rapid progress with the addition of equine assisted work.

While it’s not a cure all, it definitely has advantages in working with veterans and their families as they are able to accomplish healing that otherwise wouldn’t likely occur in traditional therapy sessions. It’s something you have to experience in order to understand. If you’re a veteran or a family member of a veteran, you are invited to join us in the arena and experience firsthand the healing power of horses.

For more information about our **Veterans Healing With Horsepower** program, find us on the web at www.HealingWithHorsepower.com/veterans_eap.html Feel free to contact us with any questions. Our dedicated phone number for the veteran’s program is (719) 497-9734. You can also reach me at my office at Veritas Counseling Center, LLC at (602) 863-3939.

Veterans can download a flyer at http://www.healingwithhorsepower.com/veterans_flyer.pdf with the workshop address and signup instructions. The groups are provided at no cost and currently meet monthly on the first Tuesdays from 6-9 PM at Horse Lovers Park in Phoenix. There are no eligibility restrictions and no required proof of service forms. Groups are open to all veterans and their family members both in and out of recovery rooms.

To make a tax deductible donation to this program to help veterans and families, you may do so online at <http://www.azhorseloverspark.org> Please specify in the instructions that you want your donation to go toward the Veteran’s program. Checks may be mailed to the Event Coordinator, Horse Lovers Management Corporation, 515 E. Carefree Highway #849, Phoenix, AZ 85085. Please write Veteran’s program in the memo on your check.

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Treatment for Self-Injury and Eating Disorders in the Complex Trauma Client

By Debra L. Kaplan, M.A., LPC, CSAT-S

From a clinician's perspective, it would be gratuitous to say that an individual with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) engages in self-injurious and/or bulimic behavior. Further, the "borderline experience" is often beset with client reluctance, hostility, power struggles, and sporadic relapses in progress, reactive transference, and counter-transference. Since counter-transference addresses the therapist's feelings toward a client it is imperative that the clinician working with this particular population to consider his or her own emotional entanglement.

The nature of BPD, herein referred to as Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (CPTSD), demands a clinician to have steadfast awareness of her own process. And it is incumbent upon the therapeutic dynamic and the therapist herself to "hold the floor" in the midst of a client's internal psychic distress that often results in emotional assaults and intense pushback with regard to the clinician.

As Bessel A. van der Kolk, M.D., so eloquently wrote, "compulsive repetition of the trauma usually is an unconscious process that, although it may provide a temporary sense of mastery or even pleasure, ultimately perpetuates chronic feelings of helplessness and a subjective sense of being bad and out of control. Gaining control over one's current life, rather than repeating trauma in action, mood, or somatic states, is the goal of treatment." 1

Within the CPTSD constellation, self-injurious acts are as consistent as the emotional inconsistency that drives them. In other words, a traumatized individual makes repeated attempts to gain control over feelings of being out of control.

Concomitant with substance abuse

and compulsive and/or impulsive sexual behavior is the exchange between one's sense of victim and perpetrator that is chronically reenacted in pendulating measures of eating disorders (ED) and self-injurious (SI) behavior.

Consider the following:

I swore not again!!!! I should have just stopped, but no, I had to keep on going. What was it? Okay... um... it's not too soon. No wait... it'll be okay... give it a minute. Hot water...yeh, hot water. Just relax dammit, relax! That will do it—it always does. Don't fail me now. No ice. Run, goddammit, run! Anything, do anything. Scoop it out; dig it out, shovel it... throw it up... NOW... before it's gone—beyond my reach! Then I'm dead! I'll die... no f----- way. I refuse. Drink water, hot water—break it down... get it up. I'm not stopping 'til I'm done. Oh God, this can't be... I'm expanding—I can tell... Yep, there I am. See it? My body is expanding... my thighs are puckering; dimpling... just disgusting. It's revolting—I'm revolting... I hate them... I hate me. You loser... idiot! They're ugly. You ugly things, you! I'd carve them out if I could but... No... There's no time for that. Quick! Run... do something, NOW! What are you waiting for??? Slice it open, hollow it, deliver it like a caesarian—handfuls at a time. God, please let me throw it up.

~Anonymous

Counterintuitive as it may be, CPTSD clients will apply violent means to induce intrapsychic calm. And, as violent as the acts of self-mutilation may be, clients like "Anonymous" will likely adopt no lesser means to quiesce their internal tension

with their ED behaviors such as uncontrollable bouts of purging by vomiting or laxative use. And, as is the often the case with CPTSD clients, it is important for the clinician to understand the pain that is underlying the need for calm. A discussion about the underlying issues is more valuable than the fact that a client actually purged or self-harmed at all.

So it is here, in our therapeutic relationships, that our clients may come to realize, perhaps for the first time, the potential for state change relief from their own negative internal experience. And, in the best of all outcomes, trait change relief, as well. But, in order to better address these issues, one must first understand how these compensatory behaviors came to exist and flourish in the first place.

Reframing a Diagnosis for a working Therapeutic Narrative

It is at this point and often sooner

that the clinician can confront and reframe a narrative for therapy. Further, it is incumbent upon the clinician to address what typically tends to be avoided at all costs; disclosure for a working diagnosis of CPTSD vs. BPD.

Arguably, there may be few providers among us who would contest this notion; the notion of withholding informative disclosure to a client. To do so would be counterintuitive to what therapy is all about and, being clinicians, we are in the priority position to educate, reframe, and offer insightful guidance to those who seek an understanding of self. Further to the point, therapeutic progress or stagnation is often set by a clinician's inability or unwillingness to challenge or confront issues. There is silent acknowledgement in the belief that to be confrontational or challenging with truth is too difficult or harmful for the

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The Power of Gratitude

by Steve Price

Scientific research on gratitude is substantiating what the masters have known for centuries. Gratitude activates the parasympathetic nervous system, the rest-and-restore state in which the body heals and the mind relaxes. It stimulates the release of serotonin, dopamine and other “feel-good” chemicals. And it’s good for the heart, electromagnetically and emotionally.

Gratitude is a life-changer

It’s impossible to be grateful and judgmental at the same time. We’ve all experienced the power of gratitude, and still, in the busyness of everyday life, we forget to be grateful. It’s easy to practice gratitude on Thanksgiving, but how can we maintain the feeling of gratitude for the other 364 days of the year?

Here are a few simple, mindful ways to establish a gratitude practice:

1. Enjoy *what you have*. Gratitude has more power when we experience it physically rather than just mentally. It’s good to be thankful to have a roof over our heads, but to actually go up on the roof and watch the sunset brings a whole new dimension. It can be as simple as looking into the eyes of a loved one when they’re talking and listening to their voice. Or smelling our food before taking that first bite, and then really tasting it. When we actively appreciate what we have, we’re sending a message to the universe to give us more, and oftentimes we’re blessed in ways we could never imagine.

2. Cry. Gratitude is about feeling, not thinking. The deeper the feeling, the more we can embody it and integrate it on a cellular level, and the greater the impact it will have on our lives.

Be aware of any time you feel quiet-minded or vulnerable, maybe late at night or when you first wake up in the morning, and think of something or someone you’re grateful for. Then drop out of your head and down into your heart. Allow the feeling of gratitude to overtake you, and surrender fully to it. Let it fill you to the point of overflowing, and open the floodgates. Don’t wipe the tears away; just let them roll down. Make this a daily practice; all it takes is a brief moment each day.

3. Be grateful for *EVERYTHING*. When Carl Jung was a boy, he had an experience that would set the stage for the ground-

breaking work he ended up doing as a psychologist. His father arranged a trip for the two of them to go to the top of Rigi, a spectacular mountain in Switzerland. His dad was a busy minister who didn’t spend much time with his family, so Carl was looking forward to his quality time, so much he could barely sleep the night before. But on the day, as they stood at the foot of the mountain, his father told him he had only enough money for one ticket to the tram. Heartbroken, Carl rode to the top alone. But when he arrived, a quantum shift occurred inside of him.

He saw everything simultaneously—peaks, valleys, sun, sky, clouds, shadow, and his father waiting at the bottom. In that moment he understood the interdependence of things, how everything in life was meant to be, even his own feelings of disappointment and abandonment. He was overcome with a deep sense of gratitude that transformed how he saw, thought and felt about the world.

To see the beauty in everything, the blessing in all situations—even our own addictions—can take us from powerlessness to empowerment. Not always easy, but worth practicing.

4. Gather. Gratitude has been a sacred ritual in various cultures since ancient times. When we come together in gratitude, the impact is exponential and uplifting for everyone.

On November 15 from 3–6pm, all of us at A Mindfulness Life Center invite you to join us for a gratitude gathering. There will be a crystal bowl sound healing, zen flute meditation, tea ceremony, and other offerings, followed by a community potluck. The center is located at 10309 N. Scottsdale Road. We’re on the southeast corner of Scottsdale and Shea, in the plaza behind Dairy Queen and Oregano’s, on the east row of buildings just a few buildings down from the North Scottsdale Fellowship. All are welcome; no cost to attend.

Stop by, and feel free to bring your favorite dish, or just your presence. In the words of Meister Eckhart, “If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, that would be enough.”

Thank you.

Steve Price manages and teaches at A Mindfulness Life Center in Scottsdale. The center offers yoga, meditation, book studies, mindfulness for children, nutrition counseling, energy healing, a recovery series and more. Visit amindfulnesslifecenter.com.



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My Falling Leaves

By Dr. Dina Evan

My leaves are falling. This month I moved about a third of 72 plus years of personal life, mementos and beloved belongings in to a new home half the size of the old one. It's beautiful and I love it and it is still filled with empty and packed boxes even after weeks of purging. I also moved my professional and creative life into a separate office away from my home. This new space now requires a long and arduous hourly walk to the restroom, located down the hall near the elevator. My broken femur doesn't understand and lets me know the long walks are not appreciated. *And my leaves are falling.*

The leaves that are gently disappearing are the ones that believed my life is in the books I have written, the special cards of love I have received, the emotionally priceless pieces and statues I picked up years ago that spoke to my soul. The leaves that are falling are in my sense of voracious independence. When you grow up in an empty room you learn not to expect anyone to have your back — because no one did. My kids have my back now and the experience of having to rely on others is unfamiliar and uncomfortable. As natural as it is as a part of life's progression, I fight feeling guilty or needy. Moms are always supposed to be the ones caring for their children. So, I try to do that in different ways now, emotionally, spiritually and energetically to maintain my sense of balance.

I had a large courtyard at my old house and in the center of it is a Chinese Plum tree. Each season it brings itself alive with vibrant crimson colored leaves in what seems an overnight transformational statement of I EXIST. For weeks in each season, it stands, bare-branched, looking as if it is lifeless. It has barren dead appearing sticks protruding from what once was a full blessing of shade. She creates that shade from the tiniest of white blossoms and then a sudden explosion of crimson leaves with the surprise of fire like color on every branch.

I love that tree. It seems to me she has great dignity. She stands bare naked for weeks at a time knowing that inside her she had the ability to burst forth in elegance in each new season in a whole new way. She finds the reserve inside. Pulls it up from her roots and that energy bursts out the top of her like mount Vesuvius. She finds the energy, juice and electricity to make it happen and...so shall I.

Inside each of us is deeply hidden, the juice and electricity of precious connected moments with those we love. The times of silent understanding and awareness that need no explanation are waiting to sustain us and help us bloom again. It's in the unexpected miracles and unexpected kindnesses that create the meaning and reason for blooming. I have let go of the being the books I have written. I have let go of so many artifacts and mementos from special spiritual trips and gatherings. I have let go of the seminars, handouts, exercises and trainings I have presented. Their meaning is already in the ethers, in the hearts of those who attended each workshop or read each book. I am standing alone on my own and with bare branches and already in that freed-up space, I am starting to bloom.

We often go through life with the emphasis on getting, buying and collecting all the externals, because we have been taught these are the things that will make us safe and happy. How many times have we heard people, like me, expressing their astonishment at how much we have collected over the years and often not even seen or used for much of that time! We worry more about what is in our bank account than what is in our heart. It's trite but true that in the end, none of it matters. We will not have a wit of concern over what we didn't buy or how much remains in the bank when all is said and done. We will, however, wonder whether we loved enough, cared enough and did what we spiritually came here to do. In this season when branches go from bare to blossom, it's time to give thanks...for all the things that truly matter...like you and me and this precious connection we share each month. Thank you Barbara, and every reader who reads this column. You are not just supporting us with your readership. You are helping us fulfill our purpose and express what's in our heart, hopefully in a way that fills yours with what really matters. That's a great gift exchange and we are grateful for you. Happy turkey month and don't save the wishbone. Your wishes are already fulfilled.



Dr. Evan is a life/soul coach in Arizona working with individuals, couples and corporations. She specializes in relationships, personal and professional empowerment, compassion and consciousness. For more information 602-997-1200, email drdbe@attglobal.net or visit www.DrDinaEvan.com.

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DRUGFREE.ORG

By ALAN COHEN

Sitting backstage at a network television studio in a large metropolitan city, I waited to go on the air for an interview. My segment was scheduled right after the noon news broadcast, which began with a gory account of a murder, then a rape, then war footage, followed by bad economic news and a political scandal. I began to feel depressed, but consoled myself that the broadcast would get to more positive reports. It didn't. The entire fifteen minutes was filled with gloom and doom, nothing anyone in his right mind would want to get up in the morning and face. Eventually I just had to laugh. The news was beyond depressing. It was ridiculous. It was unbelievable. Finally, after the closing sort of auto accidents and snarled traffic, the broadcaster announced, "...and now for a great new book by an author who is going to tell you how to live a happy life."

The camera turned to me.

Suddenly I became Neo in the movie The Matrix, in which wizard Morpheus extends two open hands, a red pill in one palm and a blue pill in the other. If Neo ingests the red pill, he will awaken to his true self and the real world. If he takes the blue pill, he will remain in a familiar but oppressive world of illusions.

I sat up straight and reached for the red pill. I told the audience that love is our birthright and fear the imposter. I took a stand for living authentically in a world consumed by illusions. I told the viewers that they deserved better than the world showed them, and they held power over their lives regardless of the insanity around them. It was the only news I knew how to broadcast.

After the program, the anchor, a highly-respected lifetime journalist, took me aside and told me, "I agree with you completely. I get depressed coming to this job. There has to be more to life than the world we are telling people there is."

The reality we have been shown by the media and other seemingly authoritative institutions has been twisted into the polar opposite of truth, championed by people more

GET REAL

committed to bondage than freedom. You have likely told someone about a valued vision of yours, to which he or she responded, "Get real!"

Suddenly your excitement was reduced to ashes and you either gave up your quest or you had to once again build up the courage and momentum to forge ahead.

Take care to share your sacred visions with people who will empower you, not attempt to gobble your hopes in the shredder of doubt.

If you have even one or two good friends who understand you and believe in you, that is sufficient. And if it seems that no one understands or supports you, Higher Power has your back. Even when you do not have faith in yourself, God has faith in you.

When most people say, "Get real," they mean, "GET SMALL. GET LIMITED. GET STUCK."

I am trapped in my little fear-bound world, and your expansive vision is threatening to me. So I demand that you grovel in the mud with me. How dare you rock my tiny world with greater possibilities!" The premise is that success and happiness are unattainable illusions, while struggle and suffering are realities we must adjust to and live with.

Most planetary game-changers were told, "Get real." They were branded insane, shamed, imprisoned, tortured, and killed. The Catholic Church sentenced Galileo to

house arrest for suggesting that the earth revolved around the sun. Soon afterward Italian philosopher Giordano Bruno proposed that the sun was a star and that the universe contained an infinite number of inhabited worlds populated by other intelligent beings. Giordano was convicted of heresy and burned at the stake. When the judges issued his death decree he told them, "Perchance you who pronounce my sentence are in greater fear than I who receive it." Jonathan Swift later noted, "When a true genius appears, you can know him by this sign: that all the dunces are in a confederacy against him." Einstein echoed, "Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds." Every person is potentially great. Are you willing to step into your greatness, claim it, and live it?

The holiday season offers you many opportunities to get real in the presence of people who fear to get real themselves, and call you to play small with them. Regard their resistance as a call for love and an invitation for you to be authentic. When you stand for truth in the presence of illusion, you break the illusion for yourself and for everyone who subscribes to it. Your mission is to remain alive in a world preoccupied with death; to walk tall when others are compromising their integrity; to be who you are while others have forgotten who they are.

Reality is not for sissies. To live authentically in a world steeped in illusion is the gift of lifetime, spreading light in ripples from your own life to the lives of everyone you touch.



Alan Cohen is the author of many inspirational books, including *I Had it All the Time: When Self-Improvement Gives Way to Ecstasy*. Join Alan's upcoming Life Coach Training Program to become a professional life coach or incorporate life coaching skills in your career or personal life, join. For more information about this program, Hawaii retreats, Alan's books, free daily inspirational quotes, and his weekly radio show, visit www.alancohen.com, email info@alancohen.com.

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JUST SAY “KNOW” from page 1

tell us “there is a pill for every ill.” The messaging gets confusing, yet let’s be clear...legal doesn’t mean safe. It never has.

The temptation to use prescription painkillers can be just as addictive and deadly as heroin. In 2012, the number one cause of death in 17 US states was prescription drug abuse (American Society of Interventional Pain Physicians, 10/11/11, The American Society of Interventional Pain Physicians (ASIPP)

Fact Sheet, www.asipp.org/documents/ASIPPFact-Sheet101111.pdf). This may sound like a startling statement, but more concerning is the lack of education with the general public. More people need to be “in the know” about the risks, even when medication is legitimately prescribed. Opioids are deadly and too many people continue to die.

Heroin:The Deadly Opioid Cousin

Heroin is not a gateway drug; although it continues to grow in popularity. Heroin does have a proven link to prescription painkillers because of its similar effects sold at a fraction of the price. It’s generally more affordable and no one can explain an opiate withdrawal if you have not experienced the pain yourself. Sometimes the only option is the street option. Recent statistics conclude that heroin use continues to rise in the US. In a 2012 report released by the National Survey on Drug Abuse and Health, from 2007 to 2012, the number of Americans using heroin nearly doubled, from 373,000 to 669,000 individuals.

E-cigs,Vapes,Dabs,BHO,What?

Prescription pills may be the newest to the list of gateway drugs, but the older ones are looking and smelling a lot different lately. Remember when cigarettes were pieces of paper you lit and smoked? Now they are electronic cigarettes consisting of battery operated devices that turn nicotine or other chemicals into a vapor. Some of these products look like an ordinary cigarette but when touched, one can feel they are metal and can be easily filled with liquid nicotine. E-cigs were designed to wean one off of smoking cigarettes by replacing the fumes with vapors; however one should ask...are vapors safer than smoke?

The jury (and the Surgeon General) is still out on this one. We just don’t know the long term effects. Not only should we be concerned about the vapor itself, but we should know the potential poisoning associated with liquid nicotine. Between 2012 and 2013, there was a 219% increase in poisoning exposures in the US (American Association of Poison Control Centers, E-Cigarette Devices and Liquid Nicotine, www.aapcc.org/alerts/e-cigarettes/)

Vaporizers or Vaping pens are also being used to smoke flavored tobacco but also cleverly being used to conceal marijuana. Individuals can use marijuana concentrates or hash oils in these products. The well-known plants can contain up to 20% of the hallucinogenic THC but the concentrates may be as potent as 90%, causing one to pass out or experience intense hallucinations (Miles Bryan, April, 18, 2014, Pot Smoke And Mirrors: Vaporizer Pens Hide Marijuana Use, National Public Radio (NPR)). Previously, pot had a pretty recognizable smell but with the newer smokable devices hitting the scene; it has made detection much harder.

More about Hash Oils and BHO

Wax, honey, budder, dabs and shatter are all the most recent slang associated with the newest and most potent form of marijuana, butane honey oil (BHO). The names of honey, wax and budder (butter) effectively describe the look of the product. No longer are police, parents and probation officers only searching for a bag of weed, but they are looking in lip balm containers for this gooey form of marijuana. With the success of online video sites, it doesn’t take one long to search for “BHO” on the internet and watch how to create the product.

What’s Trending with Alcohol?

Underage drinking is still the number one problem affecting American youth and young adults. It still remains the most commonly used and abused drug among youth in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), people aged 12 to 20 years drink 11% of all alcohol consumed in the United States. More than 90% of this alcohol is consumed in the form of binge drinks. And on average, underage drinkers consume more drinks per drinking occasion than adult drinkers. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, January, 16, 2014, Fact Sheet — Underage Drinking, www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/underage-drinking.htm)

Clearly, we have our work cut out for us in preventing, intervening and treating the abuse of alcohol. Mixed drinks, beer, wine, shots and even the pre-mixed alcohol energy drinks all well-known and commonly used but

what about a powdered form of alcohol? If you have or currently work with a juvenile, then a product like this grabs your attention and probably creates a sense of fear or worry knowing a powdered form in a small packet will easily be overlooked in a pant or purse pocket. Palcohol is a new concept in 2014.

GOOD NEWS: It is NOT officially available and hasn’t been approved by the FDA (yet).

BAD NEWS: It has been approved by the US Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau.

It is exactly as it sounds, a small tear away packet of powdered alcohol; coming in versions of rum, vodka and kamikaze. All you have to do is add water. Not much is known about the potency as use has not been reported; however it pays to take note of a new format and a potential new trend.

Cathinones, Spice, Kratom, 25i-nbome, Molly...the Never-ending List of Synthetic Drugs

Synthetic cannabinoids laced on plant material were first reported in the U.S. in December 2008, when a shipment of “Spice” was seized and analyzed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in Dayton, Ohio (Office of National Drug Control Policy, Fact Sheets – Synthetic Drugs <http://www.whitehouse.gov/ondcp/ondcp-fact-sheets/synthetic-drugs-k2-spice-bath-salts>). Ever since then, the US has seen an increase in unknown designer substances sold as “research chemicals” imported from places like Southeast Asia showing up in communities across America. Names like Kratom, 25i-nbome, K2 make these psychosis causing, suicidal feeling chemicals sound like foreign languages. Not commonly known or regularly reported, doesn’t mean they should be overlooked. Synthetic drugs are popular because they are NOT sold as drugs; rather sold as code words in gas stations and convenient marts as potpourri, incense, fertilizer, glass cleaner, bath salts, etc. They still state “not for human consumption”. These constantly changing chemicals are not all federally regulated. There are many different county ordinances and state bans around the US, making the sales hard to prosecute. However, DEA at a national level continues to investigate and take down the large production and distribution efforts.

Quick Facts and Concerns about the “Others.” The list goes on...

The word “crystal” has stuck with us when we are referring to methamphetamine. “Bath salts” fit right into this category of dangerous substances, as well. “Bath salts” are cathinones, a psychoactive substance with stimulant properties occurring naturally in a khat plant. This plant mixed with chemicals is being abused worldwide causing instant psychosis and long-term brain damage. The DEA has also deemed this drug an “imminent threat to public safety.”

Acid seems to be making a comeback under the name 25i or nbome. Sadly, more and more deaths around the US are being reported. These new forms of synthetic LSD are used with a blotter or drops that may be put in the nose or on the tongue. It has a rapid onset and can cause intense hallucinations but little beyond that is well known.

The name, “Molly” is not a friend; not in the drug world. She is sung about, talked about and commonly abused on the party scene. She has been referred to as ecstasy in pop music, but the reality is that when Molly pills are tested with forensic science, they can be anything. Molly can be forms of heroin, meth, cathinones, MDMA, or even baking soda. It’s a term that has been used since the 60’s. That’s all it is; a term.

Kratom is legal in the US and commonly used in Southeast Asia. It is an opioid that is put into teas or may be chewed; consumed in small doses it can produce a stimulant effect. However, larger doses provide that respiratory weakness all opioids are known for. This is a cheap and readily available substance that looks like spice and can cause nausea, hallucinations, tremors and aggression.

The consensus of synthetics is that little is truly known with their chemistry as the combinations of chemicals vary with each drug; the short and long term effects are unknown as testing is in the early stages and a treatment plan is hard with minimal information.

Taking Action

Here we are coming full circle. We know that drug use is risky; more so today than ever in history. We have so many new drugs that have not been tested and have no known long term effects. We, as a community, need to do our part. We need to share our knowledge with today’s risk takers. We need to emphasize that legal does NOT mean safe. Access resources that will help you find the tools to spark up meaningful conversation, detect possible warning signs and know how to find help if it is needed for a family member or friend.

Here are some of CBI’s top resources:

- www.casafamilyday.org/familyday/tools-you-can-use
- www.drugfree.org
- www.parentstheantidrug.org
- www.drugabuse.gov/parents-educators
- findtreatment.samhsa.gov/

Let’s help others “Be in the Know.” You are now.

“Parents In the Know” workshops are available at no cost to the community thanks to a grant made possible by the Governor’s Office for Children, Youth and Families-Parents Commission. We also offer Rx360 classes, specifically educating parents about how to prevent misuse and abuse of prescription drugs with youth and teens. Join us or be a host of a future workshop! Please contact Stephanie Siete at ssiete@cbridges.com to schedule.

Stephanie Siete is the Director of Community Education for Community Bridges, Inc. (CBI).

Ms. Siete is an expert prevention trainer on drug trends and community resources spending the majority of her time educating the public about the realities of drug abuse. <http://communitybridgesaz.org/>



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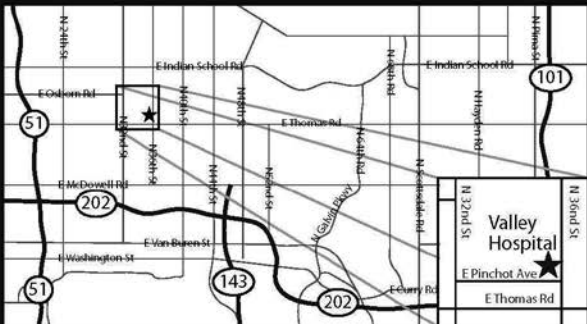


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Chandler Valley Hope 480-899-3335
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The Promises 866-390-2340
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Remuda Ranch 800-445-1900
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1-800-273-TALK (8255)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

NOV. 5, 8:00 am - 9:00 am. *St. Luke's Behavioral Health Center • Clinical Break-fast Series*. Each seminar is held on the first Wednesday of the month from 8-9 a.m. in the St. Luke's Behavioral Health Center Auditorium. Continental breakfast will be served. **ECT Treatments** presented by Dr. Denis Shub, Medical Director, St. Luke's Behavioral Health, Generations Program. St. Luke's Behavioral Health Center Auditorium, 1800 E. Van Buren, Phoenix. For more information contact: Luis Gonzalez, 602-794-8977 or e-mail: lgonzalez@iasishealthcare.com

NOV. 3-7 - Tucson - Cottonwood Tucson - *InnerPath Beginnings & Beyond Retreat*. This five-day intensive retreat is tailored to meet the needs of those individuals who want to make healthy changes in their lives. Facilitated by Rokelle Lerner. Visit www.cottonwoodtucson.com or call Jana at 520-743-2141 or email at jmartin@cottonwoodtucson.com for information and registration

NOV. 12 - 1:00 to 4:00 pm - *Addiction, Recovery, and Faith. Understanding the Spiritual Malady of Addiction - Helping Those Who Still Suffer* (Diagnostic, Treatment, and Recovery/Spiritual Considerations for Addicts and the Family System). 3 CEU's (Awarded by Chandler & Tempe Valley Hope) Mountain Shadows Presbyterian Church, 3201 E Mountaineer Drive; Tucson. (520) 825-7858. Presenter: Michael R. Japenga, M.Div., LSAT. Community Services Clinician - Valley Hope in AZ.

NOV. 18 - *Meadows Alumni Inspired Recovery* - 6:30 pm- 8:30 pm. 6:30 - 8:00 PM. Chaparral Suites, Fiesta Room, 5001 North Scottsdale Road Scottsdale, AZ. Contact: Morgan Day, The Meadows Alumni Association. 928-231-7606, E: mday@themedadows.com

Every Week - Tucson - Cottonwood Tucson - *InnerPath Developing Healthy Families Workshop*. Five-day workshop is for families impacted by addictions, psychiatric disorders, anger & rage, and trauma. Facilitated by Cottonwood staff. Visit www.cottonwoodtucson.com or call

Events Calendar

Jana at 520-743 2141 or email jmartin@cottonwoodtucson.com for information.

DEC. 5 - Seventh Annual Phoenix Area "Gratitude for Giving" Celebration. 8:30 - 11:00 a.m. Arizona Biltmore, Grand Ballroom, 2400 E. Missouri Avenue, Phoenix. 602-955-6600.

DEC 1-5 - Tucson - *Cottonwood Tucson - InnerPath Developing Healthy Relationships Retreat*. This five-day retreat for couples focuses on learning what constitutes a healthy relationship and how to attain it. Facilitated by Rokelle Lerner. Visit www.cottonwoodtucson.com or call Jana at 520-743-2141 or email at jmartin@cottonwoodtucson.com for information and registration.

Merritt Center Returning Combat Veterans Retreat Program. Free 4 week-end program for combat Vets. With the assistance of Vet mentors, and healing practitioners, returning vets will begin to release the experiences of war, and to create the dream of a new life. Betty Merritt, betty@merrittcenter.org. 800-414-9880 www.merrittcenter.org

On Going Support

CHRONIC PAIN SUFFERERS - "Harvesting Support for Chronic Pain," held the third Saturday of the month, from 12 noon - 1 p.m. Harvest of Tempe Classroom, 710 W. Elliot Rd., Suite 103, Tempe. Contact Carol 480-246-7029.

COSA (12-step recovery program for men and women whose lives have been affected by another person's compulsive sexual behavior) - **Being in Balance**. Thursday 11:00 am-Noon. 2210 W. Southern Ave. Mesa, 85202. Information 602-793-4120.

Co-Anon Family Support Group - Carrying the message of hope and personal recovery to family members and friends of someone who is addicted to cocaine or other mind altering substances. "Off the

RollerCoaster" Meeting, Thursdays, 6:30 - 7:45pm, 2121 S. Rural Road, Tempe, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. Donna 602-697-9550 or Maggie 480-567-8002

Gamblers Anonymous Meeting - ACT Counseling & Education. 11:00 am to 12:30 pm. Call 602-569-4328 for details. 5010 E. Shea Blvd. D202, Phoenix.

Emotional Healing Journaling Workshop. Strategies to manage unwanted habits, compulsive behaviors. Thursdays 7-8:30pm. Elisabeth Davies, MC. \$20 Includes copy of *Good Things Emotional Healing Journal: Addiction*. 9401 W. Thunderbird Road. Suite 186. Peoria (602) 478-6332 www.GoodThingsEmotional-Healing.com

Incest Survivors Anonymous - North Scottsdale Fellowship Club, Saturdays, 1:30-2:30pm. Gloria, 602-819-0401.

COTTONWOOD TUCSON. Ongoing **Alumni Meeting**: first Wednesday of month 6:00-7:30 p.m. **Cottonwood campus in Tucson**. 4110 W. Sweetwater Drive. Come at 5:00 p.m. for dinner. Contact Jana Martin 520-743-2141 or email jmartin@cottonwoodtucson.com

ACOA (Adult Children of Alcoholics) Thursdays, 7:00 p.m., North Scottsdale United Methodist Church, 11735 N. Scottsdale Rd., Scottsdale. 602-403-7799.

ACA meeting. Tucson. Wed. 5:30-7:00 p.m. *Streams In the Desert Church* 5360 E. Pima Street. West of Craycroft. Classroom A (Follow the signs). Michael 520-419-6723.

Overeaters Anonymous - 12 Step program that deals with addictions to food and food behaviors. 18 meetings scheduled per week. For information 520-733-0880 or www.oasouthernaz.org.

Families Anonymous - 12-step program for family members of addicted individuals. Phoenix/Scottsdale. 800-736-9805.

Pills Anonymous - **Glendale** Tues. 7:00-8:00 pm. HealthSouth Stroke Rehab 13460 N 67th Ave. (S. of Thunderbird) Education Room. Rosalie 602 540-2540. **Mesa** Tues. 7-8:00 pm, St. Matthew United Methodist Church. 2540 W. Baseline. B-14. Jim, 480-813-3406. Meggan 480-603-8892. **Scottsdale**, Wed. 5:30-6:30 pm, N. Scottsdale Fellowship Club, 10427 N. Scottsdale Rd., Room 3. Tom N. 602-290-0998. **Phoenix**, Thurs. 7-8:00 pm. First Mennonite Church 1612 W. Northern. Marc 623-217-9495, Pam 602-944-0834. Contact Janice 602-909-8937. **CELEBRATE RECOVERY** - **Chandler Christian Church**. Weekly Friday meetings 7 p.m. Room B-200. For men and women dealing with chemical or sexual addictions, co-dependency and other **Hurts, Hang-ups and Habits**. 1825 S. Alma School Rd. Chandler. 480-963-3997. Pastor Larry Daily, email: larrydaily@chandlercc.org.

GA Meetings - ACT Counseling & Education in Phoenix and Glendale. **Tuesday, Spanish** (men) 7:00 -9:00 pm. 4480 W. Peoria Ave., Ste. 203, Glendale. **Thursday, Spanish** 7:00 - 9:00 pm 4480 W. Peoria Ave., Ste. 203, Glendale. **Sunday, Spanish** 6:00 - 8:00 pm 4480 W. Peoria Ave. Ste. 203, Glendale. **Sunday, English** 6:30 - 8:00 pm 5010 E Shea Blvd., Ste. D-202, Phoenix. Contact Sue F. 602-349-0372

Sex Addicts Anonymous www.saa-phoenix.org 602-735-1681 or 520-745-0775.

Tempe Valley Hope Alumni Support Groups, Thursdays 6-7:00 p.m., 2115 E. Southern Ave. Phoenix. Tues. 8-9:00 p.m., 3233 W. Peoria Ave. Ste. 203, Open to anyone in recovery.

Special Needs AA Meetings. Contact Cynthia SN/AC Coordinator 480-946-1384, email Mike at mphaes@mac.com

Survivors of Incest Anonymous. 12-step recovery group for survivors. Tucson Survivors Meeting, Sundays 6:00 to 7:15pm. St. Francis in the Foothills, 4625 E. River Road (west of Swan). Carlos 520-881-3400

EVENTS continued page 14

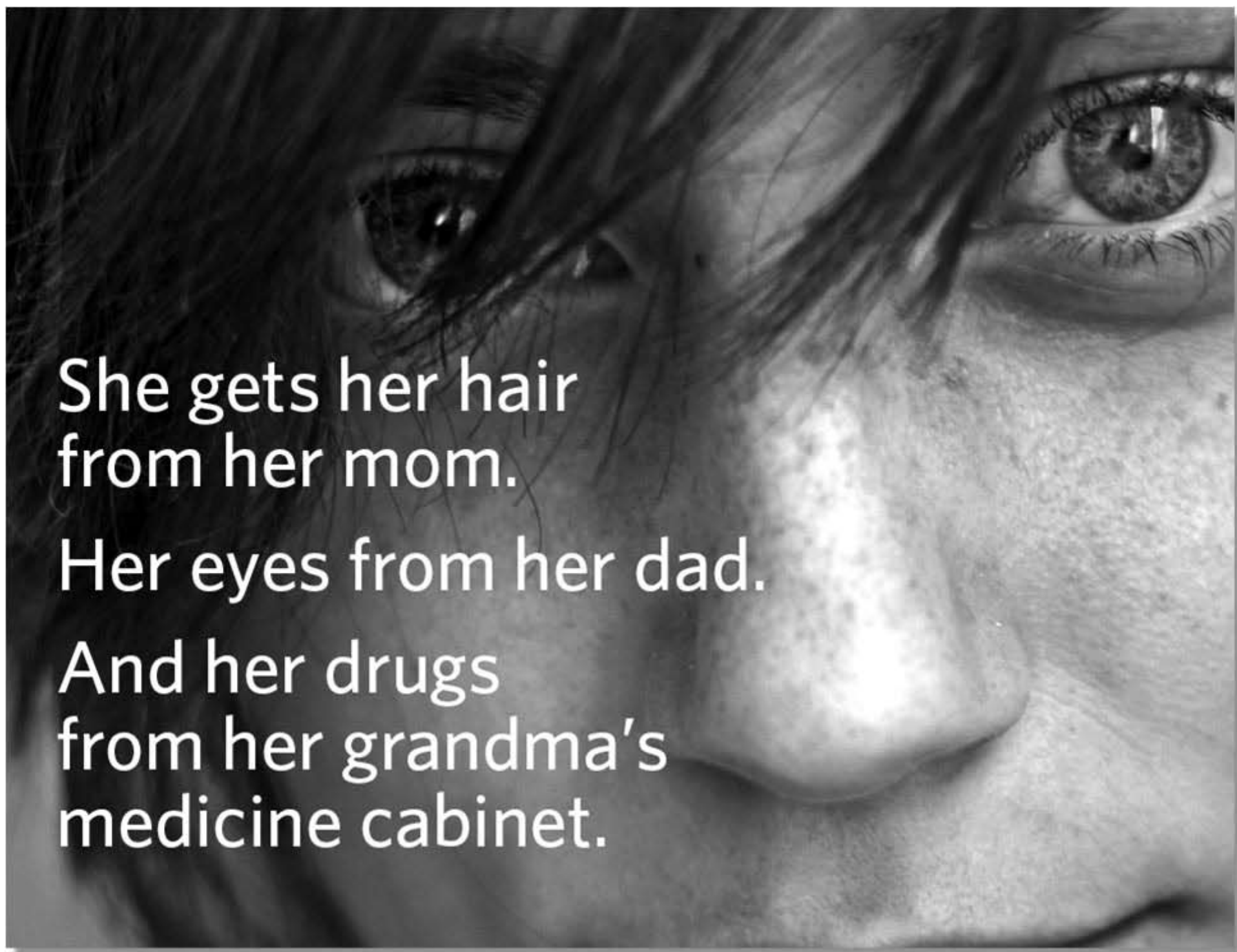
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Want To Be Mentally Tough? doing these 5 things!

By CLAIRE DOROTIK-NANA, LMFT

There are a lot of ways to get stronger. Adding more resistance, adversity, or stress is one way, and learning how to adapt to the challenge is another. Yet for all of these ways to get stronger, without removing the obstacles in our own approach to adversity, we will see little gain. So if you want to get stronger mentally, here are five things to stop doing right now.

Stop Off Loading Responsibility. Mentally strong people know what is their responsibility and what is not. What they take responsibility for is their behavior, thoughts and feelings. They have long since let go of the idea that anyone is going to make things better for them. While they know that sometimes things happen that are out of their control, they know that they — and only they — are solely responsible for how they respond to these things. You will never see them pointing a finger, blaming anyone else for “messing up their day,” “making them feel bad” or “making them angry.” Instead they simply take responsibility and accept their responses as their own, aware that these are choices they are making — and if they don’t like them it’s no one’s fault but theirs.

Stop Taking Things Personally. Those who get through setbacks and come out stronger know that these things are not personal. Whatever those around them do, they recognize is a reflection of that person’s character, and only that. Mentally tough people do not believe that anyone “has it out for them,” or “that the world is against them.” Instead, they recognize that what happens to them is the result of other people’s actions, thoughts, and feelings — which they are not responsible for. So they spend no time wondering why others do the things they do, and a lot of time thinking about what they will do about it.

Stop Forecasting. Mentally strong people — as tough as they are — know that there is one thing they cannot do. **They cannot predict the future.** And they don’t waste any time thinking about, anticipating, or foretelling the future. Because they know the action is right here, right now, and the future is not now. But they also know that when their mind is in the future, it’s not in the now, and they are likely to miss critical details and make mistakes — simply because they were distracted by what could happen as instead of focusing on what is happening.

Let Go of Illusions. While we all love to dream, mentally tough people know dreams are not reality. The chances are, it will not “all just work out.” More than likely, tough people will tell you, there will be good and bad. Thinking life is “all good”, they know, is just a fantasy that promotes denial. And denying what might not be going so well is a sure way to keep it going that way.

Stop Holding On to the Past. For many of us, holding on to the past would allow us to avoid loss. Yet mentally tough people know that wishing things “could just go back to the ways they were,” is a wish, and not reality. They know the past — as great as it might have been — is gone. They you can’t go through life, looking through a rearview mirror. So they accept the losses, and instead of wishing they could go back in time, think about what they need to do in the present. Because focusing on the wonderful things happening yesterday is a sure way to miss the opportunities that might be right in front of you.

Becoming mentally tough is a hard earned battle — and one that is not won overnight. And while sometimes we have to learn how to fine tune our approach and leverage the adversity, sometimes we also have to learn how to get out of our own way.



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LIFE 101

By COACH CARY BAYER www.carybayer.com

My Late Friend Steven

On a recent Sunday when my wife and I were hosting three dear old friends — emphasis is on the dear, rather than the old — from elementary school, and their wives, I learned that a fourth friend, Steven Naiman, who used to join such gatherings, had passed away from our planet that morning from cancer. How ironic to discover such sad news at a little party that he himself could have attended.

Several days later, in a funeral chapel where I said the eulogy for my father decades earlier, I spoke about Steven. Friends and family who'd gathered to honor the memory of this sweet soul heard me talk about him as a wonderful human being. Human being is the operative term here, because we all praised his humanity. We spent the evening remembering his uniqueness, his individuality, each of the things that made Steven... Steven.

As his former Transcendental Meditation teaching colleague, I decided that I'd also discuss his Being. I chose to remind everyone that, because Steven was intimately familiar with the Transcendent, his higher Self — the Universal Being inside each of us — and recognized that from so many deep sittings of meditation he was already fine.

Said differently, the sad news for survivors as the Angel of Death completed his assignment and took the individual we call Steven from us on the physical plane, there was also good news to report. And that was that Steven was left with his Being on the metaphysical plane, and he instantly recognized that as his true nature.

So Steven hasn't gone anywhere, he simply merged with what he was, in a similar way that he'd already merged with that in the meditations that we did together as villa mates on our teacher training course so many moons ago on the coast of Spain. As waves of the Atlantic merged with the ocean outside our villa, our individual waves of consciousness merged with the ocean of our Being. Steven spent most of his adult life doing just that in his twice daily meditations.

We all lose Stevens in life. Sometimes our father is named Steven. Sometimes our uncles, clients, bosses, friends and the guys we play tennis with. Sometimes the Angel of Death takes Stephanies from us, too. Our mothers, aunts, sisters, cousins, friends, co-workers and — God forbid — our daughters, too.

And when all that we know of these Stevens and Stephanies in our lives is their individualities, then grief can sometimes overtake us. When, however, we also know that beyond the individuality of the dear one who leaves us behind there is also a universality, we can be comforted. I don't mean in some religious way as the ministers and rabbis like to tell us, but in a deeply spiritual way, because we know that what was never created can never be destroyed.

Their bodies were certainly created by their parents nine months before their birth certificate registered their arrival in our world, but the invisible essence of who they were never was created. As Einstein said so eloquently: *"Energy cannot be created or destroyed."* The same can be said of our essence.

Einstein added that energy can be changed in its form. And such is the case with our essence, as well; it can change form in the process that we call reincarnation. If we're wise enough to experience our true nature, when the Angel of Death comes for our body, we can give it to him, peaceful in the knowledge and experience that there's nowhere to go, because who we in our deepest nature is already everywhere. And so we quietly shed our form as we quietly remove our clothing every night before going to sleep. And instead of resting in the silence of yet another night on our beds for eight hours, we rest in the eternal silence of our true nature, the who we've always been in the past, and the who we will be forever.

So I say so long to Steven and congratulate him for all the wonderful things that he did on Earth, and congratulate him for all the wonders he's now enjoying in the timelessness of Being that some people also call Heaven.

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TRAUMA from page 5

client. However, the clinician is presumably the very person with whom the client comes up against her or himself without judgment, prejudice, or hostility as s/he learns to experience and grow. The very essence of therapy is a modeling for an intimate relationship and indeed calls for the very courage that most clinicians are afraid to summon, but nonetheless ask for, in their client.

Origins of Trauma Repetition

Repeated exposure to chronic adverse childhood experiences induces behavioral and physiologic changes. It is known that the developing brain under extreme inextorable distress will undergo changes in neurotransmitter activity. Children, particularly newborns and infants "who have been exposed to severe, prolonged environmental stress, will experience extraordinary increases in both catecholamine and endogenous opioid responses to subsequent stress." ²

We also know that a newborn's attunement to the world is externally focused. The incoming stimuli is stored in and controlled by the lower segments of the developing brain such as the thalamus and the amygdala. The amygdala, considered to be a part of the limbic system, performs the crucial and fundamental role in the establishment of memories associated with emotional events. The system's primary function is to maintain appropriate levels of arousal; too little stimuli and the neurons cannot register. If there is too much stimuli, the newborn's sensory signals become overloaded, thus inducing system disorganization and temporary "collapse."

In brief, a newborn's caregiver must regulate arousal states until the infant's developing system can self-regulate internal and external states of arousal. As a

result of early uncontrolled arousal states, abused children tend to manifest a higher threshold of stimulation of the endogenous opioid system in order to self-soothe. This is in comparison to those whose early developmental experiences were met with consistent and "good enough" early nurturing.

¹van der Kolk BA. The Compulsion to Repeat the Trauma: Re-enactment, Revictimization, and Masochism. *Psychiatric Clinics North Am* 1989;12(2):389-411

²van der Kolk BA. The Compulsion to Repeat the Trauma: Re-enactment, Revictimization, and Masochism. *Psychiatric Clinics North Am* 1989;12(2):389-411



Debra L. Kaplan, MBA, MA, LPC, CMAT, CSAT-S is a licensed therapist in Tucson, Arizona. She specializes in attachment and intimacy, complex traumatic stress and sexual addiction/compulsivity;

issues that are often rooted in unresolved childhood trauma. Debra is a Certified EMDR clinician and incorporates advanced EMDR protocols in her work with trauma and addiction. Debra lectures internationally on trauma and addiction and authors articles and blog publications. Her book, *For Love and Money: Exploring Sexual & Financial Betrayal in Relationships* was published in 2013.

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In other news

Grants Explore Use of Social Media to Prevent, Treat Substance Use

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) will fund researchers who are studying the use of social media, including Facebook and Twitter, to prevent and treat substance use and addiction.

The NIH announced it will provide grants totaling more than \$11 million over three years. “We hope to learn more about how changing technologies affect interpersonal communications and factual knowledge about tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs, including the nonmedical use of prescription drugs,” Dr. Nora D. Volkow, Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, said in a news release.

Scientists can use social media to identify current attitudes and myths about alcohol, drugs and tobacco, the article notes. They can also use social media to convey accurate information to the public, and to learn about patterns of use, risk factors and behaviors associated with substance use.

The ‘Cool’ Parents? Really?

Parents who provide their teens with alcohol and a place to consume it may think they are teaching their children “responsible drinking.” A new review of studies con-

cludes this view is misguided. Researchers found parental provision of alcohol is associated with increased teen alcohol use.

Parental provision of alcohol is also linked with increased heavy episodic drinking and higher rates of alcohol-related problems, the researchers report in the *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*.

“We suspect there is a surprising amount of ‘social hosting’ going on — parents providing alcohol for their teens and friends,” said study co-author Ken C. Winters, Ph.D., Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Minnesota Medical School. “Parents need to be aware that social hosting could have criminal implications in some states if things take a bad turn.

Parents influence their children’s risk for alcohol use in both direct and indirect ways. Indirectly, parents can influence their teens’ behavior by failing to monitor their activities while their child still lives at home, having permissive attitudes toward underage drinking, expressing direct approval of underage drinking, or simply by providing unguarded access to alcohol at home.

The researchers say there is little research to support the notion that it is possible to “teach” children to drink alcohol responsibly.

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OA—Teen Meeting, Saturdays 4:00 p.m.
1219 E. Glendale Ave. #23 Phoenix. www.oaphoenix.org/ 602-234-1195.

SLAA—Sex and Love Addict Anonymous
602-337-7117. slaa-arizona.org

FOOD ADDICTS Anonymous—www.Foodaddictsanonymous.org

GAM-ANON: Sun. 7:30 p.m. Desert Cross Lutheran Church, 8600 S. McClintock, Tempe. Mon. 7:30 p.m., Cross in the Desert Church, 12835 N. 32nd St., Phoenix, Tues. 7:00 p.m., First Christian Church, 6750 N. 7th Ave., Phoenix, Tues. 7:15 p.m. Desert Cross Lutheran Church, Education Building, 8600 S. McClintock, Tempe, Thurs. 7:30 p.m.

CELEBRATE RECOVERY—Chandler Christian Church. Weekly Friday meetings 7 p.m. Room B-200. For men and women dealing with chemical or sexual addictions, co-dependency and other Hurts, Hang-ups and Habits. 1825 S. Alma School Rd. Chandler. 480-963-3997. Pastor Larry Daily, email: larrydaily@chandlercc.org. DEBTORS Anonymous—Mon., 7-8:00 p.m., St. Phillip’s Church, 4440 N. Campbell Ave., Palo Verde Room. Thurs. 6-7:00 p.m., University Medical Center, 1501 N. Campbell. 520-570-7990, www.arizonada.org.

Crystal Meth Anonymous www.cmaaz.org or CMA Hotline 602-235-0955. Tues. and Thurs. at Stepping Stone Place in Central Phoenix, 1311 N 14th St. cmaaz.org/god-zombies-the-awakening/

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Calvary Addiction Recovery Center	602-279-1468
Carleton Recovery	928-642-5399
Celebrate Recovery with Chandler	
Christian Church	480-963-3997
Chandler Valley Hope	480-899-3335
Chapter 5	928-379-1315
Community Bridges	480-831-7566
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Cottonwood de Tucson	800-877-4520
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The Meadows	800-632-3697
Millennium Labs	623-340-1506
NCADD	602-264-6214
North Ridge Counseling	877-711-1329
Pathway Programs	480-921-4050
Phoenix Metro SAA	602-735-1681
Promises	866-390-2340

Psychological Counseling Services (PCS)	480-947-5739
Remuda Ranch	800-445-1900
River Source-12 Step Holistic	480-827-0322
Sex/Love Addicts Anonymous	520-792-6450
Sierra Tucson	800-842-4487
Springboard Recovery	928-710-3016
Start Fresh	855-393-4673
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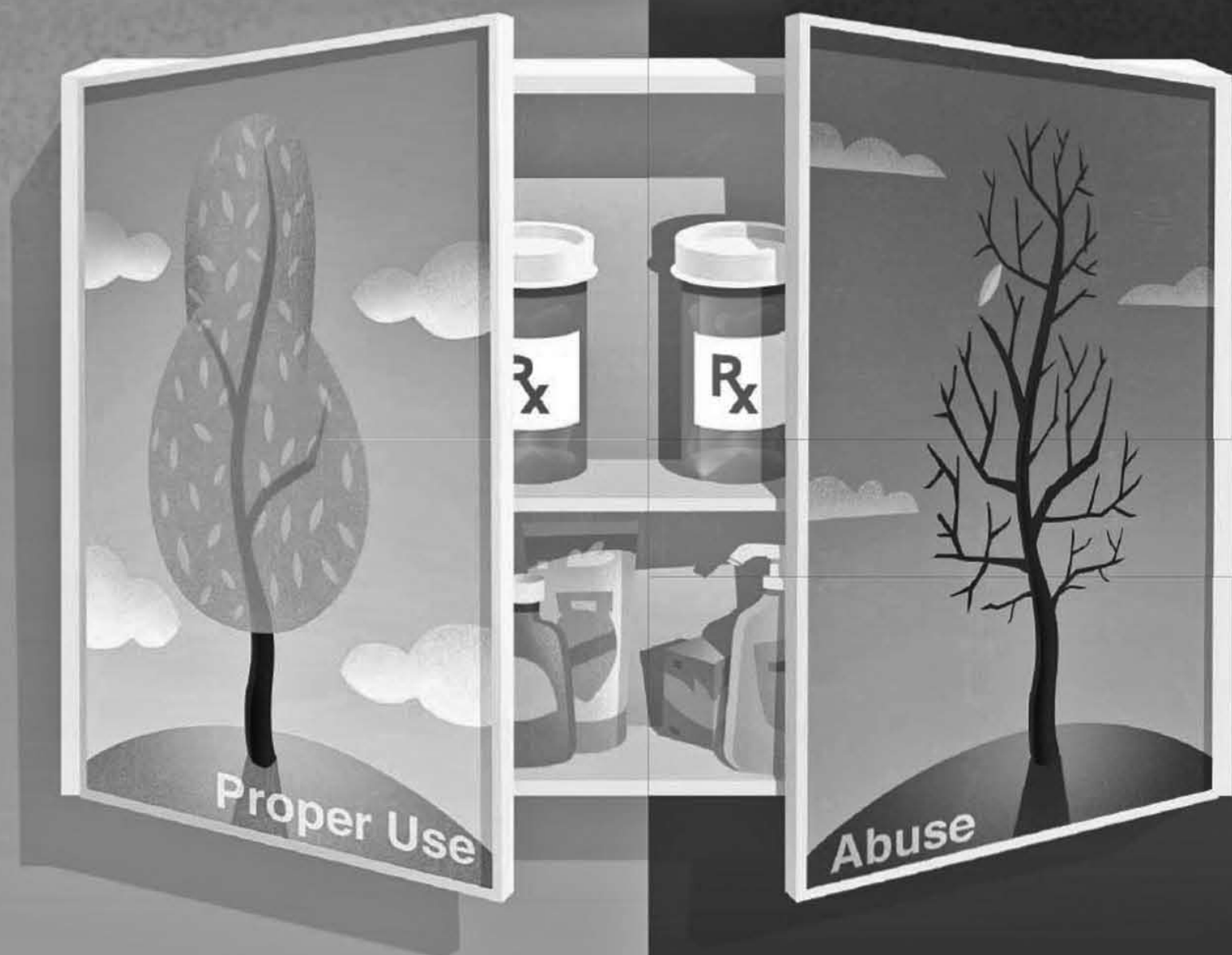
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