

Together AZ

DECEMBER 2016

Inspiring Success on the Road to Recovery

Whole Health Care: A New Meaning at Terros Health

By Bridget O’Gara, Terros Health

Visit a Terros Health Care Clinic and you may not hear the phrase “whole health care,” but you’ll no doubt experience it.



Dr. Robert Allen

Terros Health physicians, nurses, patient navigators, counselors and other providers are gaining a reputation for successfully merging top-quality primary medical care with excellent recovery addiction services and exceptional mental health care. Also known as “integrative medicine,” whole health care the Terros Health way brings together patients and providers to focus on healing the mind and body.

“Changing our name from ‘Terros’ to ‘Terros Health’ was a significant milestone,” said Peggy Chase, Terros Health President and CEO.

“Physical and mental health conditions used to be treated in silos, but this is starting to change,” said Robert Allen, M.D., Terros Health Primary Care Physician and Addictionologist. “At Terros Health, we have begun treating the ‘whole’ person and the outcomes have been promising.”



Peggy Chase, Terros Health President and CEO

“Addressing both the medical issue and the substance use or mental health condition are essential to the individual’s whole health and healing.”

“Our new name better encompasses who we are now, as well as where we are going as an integrated, whole health care company caring for the minds and bodies of our patients.”

How do Terros Health patients experience whole health?

The Terros Health team is specially trained to address what are called “co-occurring” conditions. This can mean a medical condition — such as high blood pressure, diabetes or a heart condition — that spirals out of control for someone who is involved in substance use or who has a mental health condition. Addressing both the medical issue and the substance use or mental health condition are essential to the individual’s whole health and healing.

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), approximately 7.9 million adults in the United States had co-occurring disorders in 2014. Additionally, people with mental health disorders are more likely than people without mental health disorders to experience an alcohol or substance use disorder.

Co-occurring disorders are difficult to diagnose. Their symptoms can be complex and subtle with one disorder being more severe than the other. Often, people receive treatment for one disorder while the other goes untreated. This may happen because both mental health and substance use disorders can have biological, psychological and social components.

“For those suffering from addiction, finding integrated primary and mental health care — like Terros Health offers — has proven to be especially beneficial,” Dr. Allen said. “Primary care doctors can identify the signs of drug use and abuse in their early stages. This is significant given that approximately 40 million Americans are dealing with a milder form of drug use called ‘medically harmful substance abuse.’”

The whole health care services provided by Terros Health include:

- Physical health care
- Addiction care
- Prevention services
- Health education initiatives
- Mental health care (including for severe and persistent mental illness)
- Wellness programs
- Mobile crisis (in partnership with Crisis Response Network and municipal first responders)

Meet Nicole and Martin

After experiencing a tragic loss, one Phoenix family benefitted from the whole health care approach provided by the Terros Health team. The mother, father and three children receive primary and behavioral health services through Terros Health at the Terros Health Care Clinic 27th Avenue, 3864 N. 27th Avenue in Phoenix.

See **WHOLE HEALTH** page 6

Valley Professionals honored by Sierra Tucson

On December 2, Sierra Tucson held its 9th Annual “*Gratitude for Giving*” celebration honoring Valley professionals in the Phoenix area for their outstanding contribution to our community. The honorees were nominated by local colleagues and professionals in the field of addiction recovery and behavioral health. Congratulations and thank you for being the pillars in the field of hope and healing.



Compassion Recognition
Sean Walsh, CEO, LISAC
The Meadows



Hope Recognition
Annette Hill, LPC, MC, NCC



Humility Recognition
Jim Kreitler, CEO, LISAC, MS
Calvary Addiction Recovery Center



Spirit Recognition
Kyle Penniman, MSW, LISAC, CADAC
Stonewall Institute



Gratitude Recognition
Barbara Gallagher, CTRS

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Publisher's Note



Addiction Doesn't Take a Holiday

By Barbara Nicholson-Brown

Addiction does not take a break from wanting to destroy and take a life if it can. While this time of year is happy and joyful in many ways, it can also be a time when sadness, loneliness, isolation and depression sets in. Many of us grew up with the Hallmark card image of the holidays, yet never experienced it. I didn't. When active in my drinking and using, this time of year was another great excuse for going "overboard." Lying to myself and others. Oh, I just wanted to be part of the celebrations — but that rarely happened. Every time I drank I blacked out. I embarrassed myself, was overwhelmed with shame and concocted lies upon lies on to who was to blame for my behaviors. It was nothing short of a nightmare existence.

Like many others, in early recovery I wondered if I would ever have fun again — then I realized I never experienced true fun at all under any influence.

The heartfelt laughter, camaraderie and happiness comes from surrounding myself with like minded people in recovery who band together like family. If you are new to recovery or not; during this time of the year — stay with the people who will support you in sobriety. There are many of us to reach out to, we are your family.

Wishing you peace, joy and gratitude this season.


This issue of Together AZ is dedicated to the memory of Guy Davidson, John Bradshaw, Deanna Brown, Sally Lara, Pat Mellody and our founder, Bill Brown.



**OUR NATION
IS FACING AN
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Each year, more Americans die from prescription drug overdoses than from heroin and cocaine combined.

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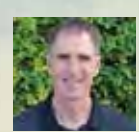


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Hot Topics

Intensive Workshops 2017

Rio Retreat Center at The Meadows offers a variety of unique workshops led by world class Meadows clinicians, as well as industry leaders who specialize in specific areas of personal growth. Workshops include:

- **Men's Sexual Recovery** — Offers men healthy alternatives to compulsive sexuality and/or sexual behavior outside of value system.
- **Love Addiction/Love Avoidance** — Explores the interactive cycle between relationship dependence and avoidance.
- **Journey of A Woman's Heart: Finding True Intimacy** — Addresses sensitive sexual concerns experienced by women.
- **Healing Intimate Treason: for Partners of Sex Addiction** — Designed to repair the trauma experienced by partners of sex addicts.
- **Discovery to Recovery: An Intensive Series for Couples Healing from Sex Addiction** — Three-part intensive designed to help couples whose relationships have been shattered by sex addiction to begin to heal and recover.
- **The Betrayal Bond: Breaking Free of Abusive and Exploitive Relationships** — Designed to help participants free themselves from, and recover from, exploitive relationships, processes, and situations.

Detailed information, dates and registration can be found at www.rioretreatcenter.com/workshops or by calling 866-932-2036.

Facing Addiction in America

The Surgeon General's Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health identified alcohol and drug misuse and substance use disorders as the most pressing public health concern facing America. The release of the landmark report marks the first time a U.S. Surgeon General has dedicated a report to substance misuse and related disorders.

The report addresses alcohol, illicit drugs and prescription drug misuse, with chapters dedicated to neurobiology, prevention, treatment, recovery, health systems integration and recommendations for the future. It provides an in-depth look at the science of substance misuse and addiction, calls for a cultural shift in the way Americans talk about the issue, and recommends actions we can all take collectively to

prevent and treat these conditions, and promote recovery.

The Surgeon General's report is being issued at a critical time, when our country is in the throes of a national opioid addiction epidemic: between 1999 and 2014, approximately 193,000 Americans died from causes related to prescription opioids, and we know that three out of four current heroin users previously misused prescription pain relievers.

Attention was brought to the role that prescribers can play in addressing this health crisis when the Surgeon General issued a letter this past August to more than 2 million healthcare providers urging them to help turn the tide of opioid abuse problems facing the nation.

The Surgeon General's report issued calls for increasing prescribers' awareness of and compliance with the most recent federal guidelines for opioid prescribing, expanding the use of evidence-based treatments and effective integration of prevention and treatment services, and reliance on the use of prescription drug monitoring programs by healthcare providers.

The Partnership, along with the FDA, is committed to insuring that prescribers have the education, the resources and the tools they need to play their indispensable part in rescuing millions of American families – and their kids – from the pain and loss of addiction. <http://www.drugfree.org/heroin>.

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MAKE A CHANGE

The **Rio Retreat Center at The Meadows** offers a variety of unique workshops available to all interested individuals. Many workshops specifically address the needs of those who have just begun a recovery process while others help those who are stable in recovery and ready for the next stage or want to deepen their experience. Workshops can also be a source of renewal for anyone who has undergone treatment.

Participants work on sensitive issues in a concentrated format, allowing them to enhance their personal journey of healing, discovery, and emotional growth. Whether you're struggling with the impact of an emotional childhood trauma, grieving a loss, wanting to repair family dynamics, or simply want to develop more self-awareness, our experienced, passionate staff delivers a powerful, life changing intensive.

The center is situated on a historic dude ranch which offers a serene, peaceful, desert setting conducive to healing. In addition to the intensive educational and therapeutic experience that workshop participants experience, we also offer additional complimentary activities, including:

- Art
- Yoga
- Tai Chi
- 12-step meetings
- Live music performances
- Auricular Acupuncture
- Ropes courses
- Equine therapy
- Camp fires

Workshop participants also enjoy three healthy meals a day, prepared in our on-site facility. Meals are included in the registration cost.

OUR WORKSHOPS

EMOTIONAL TRAUMA

- Survivors I
- Survivors II
- The Betrayal Bond: Breaking Free of Exploitive Relationships
- Healing Intimate Treason: For Partners of Sex Addiction
- Healing Heartache: A Grief and Loss Workshop

RELATIONSHIPS

- Strengthening Coupleship: Working Together
- Love Addiction/Love Avoidance
- Family Workshop
- Journey Of A Woman's Heart: Finding True Intimacy
- Discovery To Recovery: For Couples Healing From Sex Addiction

PERSONAL GROWTH

- Men's Sexual Recovery
- Spirit: A Somatic Equine Workshop
- Mind & Heart: A Mindful Path to Wholehearted Living
- A Man's Way™ Retreat
- Life Beyond Your Eating Disorder: Taking The Next Steps
- Living in Abundance: Balancing Work, Money, and Relationships
- The Daring Way™

Full descriptions of each workshop along with dates and registration information is available on our website at www.rioretreatcenter.com. Or contact us at **800-244-4949** and a representative will be happy to provide you more information.



For more information on these workshops log on to www.rioretreatcenter.com.

Rio Retreat Center at The Meadows, 1245 Jack Burden Road, Wickenburg, Arizona 85390

No matter what lies ahead, God's already there.
—Sign on church marquis



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Becoming FEARLESS with the Help of Al-Anon

The Mother of a Claudia Black Young Adult Center Patient shares her hope.



As my daughter does her recovery work from drug and alcohol addiction and anxiety, I too work my recovery through Al-Anon.

I won't go into details of how my daughter and I both came to this point because I'm guessing many of you are already familiar with the scenario — failing grades, arrests, court appearances, isolation, detachment, and on and on.

I spent many fear-filled nights of insanity sleeping with my phone next to me waiting for that call parents fear most... Was she in jail again? Was she in an accident? Did she overdose? Was she dead? I received one of those calls.

My daughter was in such a bad place that she couldn't even finish her last semester of college.

Finally, I gave in to my fear, checked my ego, and accepted the help of many friends and family. With mixed emotions of anger, pain, shame, and guilt, I put aside my resentment of being forced to face my daughter's issues, and on a Sunday morning her intervention team showed up at her college rental house. To say things didn't go as planned would be an understatement. The well thought out plan of getting her to agree to go to treatment failed; she would not go.

I left the intervention feeling defeated and numb. What now? As hard as it was, I tried tough love and cut her cell phone service off and thus lost total communication with her. However, she still had our family dog, Bailey, at the rental house.

Little did I know that Bailey would be the link to finally getting my daughter into treatment. Late one night I received a call from my daughter's roommates; Bailey was sick and they couldn't get a hold of my daughter (no surprise). I went to pick up Bailey and had an enlightening heart-to-heart conversation with the roommates who were just as concerned about my daughter as I was. This unfortunate course of events (Bailey rebounded) helped me to formulate a plan to convince my daughter she needed treatment.

Four weeks following the unsuccessful intervention, my daughter was on a plane to treatment. She was fortunate to have some of the best treatment service available and after five months, a few relapses, and with the grace of God, she is now home.

While my daughter was in treatment I knew I had to do something for myself, so I found an Al-Anon group and started going. I knew that what I had been doing in relation to my daughter wasn't working, and my hope was that through Al-Anon,

I would be able to find new tools to help me get through these new challenges I was facing.


I've learned so much from the Al-Anon fellowship and hearing the experience, strength, and hope of others dealing with the disease of addiction. By working the 12 Steps through Al-Anon I have learned that I am powerless over the disease of addiction; I didn't cause it, I can't control it, and I can't cure it. With this new knowledge, I fearlessly let go of the control I so tightly held onto in the hope of changing my daughter. Fear still creeps in, and when it does, I have learned to let go and let God. It's one day at a time but I am committed to not letting fear define me, my life or my choices.

Reprinted with permission The Meadows.

The Claudia Black Young Adult Center is a groundbreaking, intensive, and experientially based inpatient treatment program for young adults ages 18 to 26. Our goal is to help restore hope, healing and health to young adults who have lost focus and who are unable to embrace independent lives due to unresolved trauma, addictions or other issues, including unsuccessful previous treatment.

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Ho Ho Ho!! **AND** Holy Cow

By Dr. Dina Evan

This Christmas some of you may be feeling it's hard to find something for which to be jolly. However, this is exactly the sort of time, when I am exhausted, disgusted and annoyed as hell, that my favorite word becomes my mantra. That word is...**AND**.

The election was a zoo. Never in the history of our country has an election become crasser, more combative, fraught with hostility and filled with far flung, ridiculous accusations. **AND**, with our democracy could this occur.

Only here, could two diametrically opposed candidates provide people with such an obvious choice. Good, bad or indifferent, only here can people say their truth, whatever that truth may be, even if it's not the truth at all.

We have experienced the worst weather in history, with the highest number of deaths and the greatest devastation to homes and communities *ever*. **AND**, for the first time people who believed global warming was a farce, are only now beginning to understand the ramifications of that denial.

We have the worst addiction rates in the history of this country. **AND**, there are more sober-living homes, 12 step meetings and centers of support, more compassion and knowledge around this issue than ever before.

When I started teaching spirituality in the early 70's people called me the next Jim Jones. **AND**, today there are in excess of 300 million websites and many more teachers who teach consciousness and spirituality.

In 1982, I fasted 37 days on water for the E.R.A. Women across the country had ratified the amendment in all the states but five and we only needed three more to pass it. The insurance companies bought off the Senators who had promised us their vote so they could continue to charge women higher premiums. We pay women 79 cents on the dollar and minority women earn 63 to 54 cents on the dollar depending upon ethnicity. At the rate of change between 1960 and 2015, women are not expected to reach pay equity with men until 2070.

AND, there are more women owned and managed companies than ever before, more glass ceilings shattered and more women supporting

women in business than ever before. Women can now run for President. In other words, women have stopped asking for equality and we are giving it to ourselves and each other.

Here's the point, in every situation and circumstance there is always an **AND**. Whether a personal challenge or universal one, there is always an **AND**. Too often we forget this and become overwhelmed by the micro-awareness instead of the macro.

This is a time to be joyful and grateful. The choices about who we want to be and how we want to act are crystal clear. There is no middle ground. You are either *principled or not, truthful or not, loving and compassionate or not*. This is not a time to be half-hearted about anything, and this is a great thing. It's bumping all of us up a notch.

During the Holidays, we can spend an hour or two doing nothing except being together.

We make time to take in the scents and sounds of the day, laughter, conversations, music and the sharing. Every color seems more vivid, every expression a bit more poignant and every minute together more precious. **AND**, in a country that abhors and avoids feelings like a plague, we allow ourselves to feel the full gambit of them on the holidays. We give into the moment and the feelings on holidays.

So, here is a feeling from *Together AZ* for you. Each month, Barbara and each of the columnists sit down, we breath and we take a moment to feel what you might most want or need to hear from us. And then, we let it flow with a sense of joy and gratitude, hoping it touches each of you in some way that is meaningful. We invite you to let us know how we are doing and to let us know what you want to hear more about. We are incredibly grateful you have given us a way to fulfill our purpose and share the thoughts of our hearts and soul. From all of us, to all of you, we wish you profound, connected moments with everything your heart desires.



Dr. Evan specializes in relationships, personal and professional empowerment, compassion and consciousness. 602-997-1200, DrDinaEvan@cox.net and www.DrDinaEvan.com.

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Nicole, the mom, was the first family member to seek out Terros Health to address grief due to the death of her 3-year-old son.

“The counseling really helped,” Nicole said. “I also go there for my primary care.”

Martin, the father, said the mental health care he receives has helped stabilize his depression and anxiety. He also receives excellent medical care for his diabetes with

the nonprofit health care organization.

“I will keep going to Terros Health,” he said. “They take time to listen to me.”

It’s a family affair as 20-year-old Eric receives help from Terros Health’s behavioral health professionals.

“I need counseling to help me with my ups and downs,” he said, “and to better manage my anger outbursts.”

Eric also receives primary care at Terros Health, as does Mishelle, his 16-year-old sister. Their older brother, Quinn, plans to reach out to Terros Health for his medical care.

For Nicole, she values the convenience of having all aspects of the family’s health care managed from a single location.

“We even get our prescriptions filled there,” she said. “We would not be doing nearly as well without Terros Health.”

Knowledge is Power

In Arizona and nationwide, the importance of treating the whole person is particularly critical. According to a SAMHSA report, in Arizona the lives of people with Serious Mental Illness (SMI) are shortened by 30 percent. Nationally, people with SMI die 25 percent earlier.

A recent study of 1.1 million people with bipolar disorder supports this disturbing statistic. It also firmly links physical and mental health. Published in *JAMA Psychiatry*, the researchers found people with SMI were 3.5 times more likely to die than the general population during the study period. A staggering 85 percent of the early deaths among people with SMI were due largely to preventable conditions: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes and heart disease.

Why is this? It’s a complicated question, but many experts point to a whole health approach as part of the solution. For example, it’s been recognized for some time that people with SMI, including bipolar disorder, also often have unhealthy lifestyle behaviors—poor diet and lack of exercise. Additionally, people with bipolar disorder are more likely to smoke than people with no mental illness. All of these unhealthy behaviors contribute to many of the physical problems this population experiences.



Meet Monica

Thankfully, because of her introduction to Terros Health, Monica has been able to effectively address her SMI.

When her mother passed away in 2015, Monica’s life began to spiral out of control. Previously diagnosed with bipolar disorder, she went into a manic state after receiving a large sum of money from her mother’s estate.

“The insurance payout made it all real,” Monica said. The weight of her significant personal loss caused Monica to consider unpleasant thoughts of suicide.

After receiving advice from a friend, Monica voluntarily checked herself into Recovery International last summer. It was the same day Monica was introduced to Tracy McDowell, a crisis transition navigator, from Terros Health who was assigned to help her make a smooth transition out of the hospital and back into her daily life.

Tracy was quick to take action. She set up a SMI evaluation, as well as a primary care appointment with a nurse practitioner, at the Glendale Primary Care and Counseling location. Within four days, Monica received an SMI diagnosis, which is often a lengthy process that can sometimes take up to 20 days. The nurse practitioner also assessed Monica’s medication and referred her to Terros Health’s behavioral services for further care.

And they were just getting started. In less than two weeks, Monica and Tracy worked together to build a strong resume, submit applications for jobs, and schedule counseling and primary care appointments for the next 90 days.

Today, Monica is stronger.

“I didn’t know what to expect when I was set up with a crisis transition navigator,” she said. “I thought once I got out of the hospital they would just leave me to my own devices, but that wasn’t the case. Tracy really changed my life.”

Whole Health Concept Grows

The idea of healing the whole person is gaining national traction. In fact, the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is focused squarely on the issue.

Susan T. Azrin, Ph.D., Program Chief, Primary Care Research Program,

Division of Services and Intervention Research at NIMH, has described the premature and preventable deaths of people with SMI as “a tremendous public health concern.”

She’s called for strategies designed to reduce common health risk factors – high blood pressure, poor diet, lack of fitness, and smoking — among to people with SMIs.

Peggy Chase noted this is the centerpiece of the Terros Health whole health model. She also said the organization is eager to share what her team has learned about the benefits of whole health.

“We collaborate with community, government agencies and health systems to efficiently deliver the best patient experience and quality care,” she said.

Meet Ryan

Ryan is a Terros Health client who has thrived, thanks to the organization’s whole health approach to care.

Ryan had a difficult childhood. Witnessing his family deal with substance abuse and mental health issues, he used drugs and alcohol at a young age as a way to cope. At 14-years-old, he checked into his first rehab facility.

“He went to numerous rehab facilities after that,” said Karen, Ryan’s mother. “They would always try to diagnosis him with ADHD and depression, but could never agree on a diagnosis.”

In 2014, Ryan’s battle with addiction and mental health issues came to a breaking point. After losing his grandfather, Ryan seemed to lose his will to live. He attempted suicide by ingesting 45 Xanax pills. Doctors shared the bleak news with Ryan’s family that he would not likely survive. And, if he did pull through, Ryan may have sustained serious organ damage. Miraculously, Ryan survived unscathed.

“That’s when I asked for help,” Ryan said.

He entered an inpatient program at the Urgent Psychiatric Care Center. There, he learned about Terros Health.

“I knew that I didn’t want to get lost in it all after I was discharged, so I enrolled in the LADDER program,” said Ryan.



LADDER Leads to Diagnosis

It was through LADDER, an outpatient counseling program that Ryan first started to understand co-occurring disorders and dual diagnosis.

“I always just thought I was an alcoholic,” Ryan said. “I never knew that I had some deep-seeded mental health issues as well.”

Ryan was diagnosed with major depressive disorder and substance abuse disorder. Both Ryan and his mom were relieved to see how much there was to learn about his health challenges.

“For six months, he would take two different buses, every day, to get to LADDER,” Karen said. “He was ready to change.”

Shortly after Ryan graduated from LADDER, he was offered a job at a construction company by a man who shared a similar dream as Ryan: to open up a sober living facility. Now, that dream is becoming a reality, as their first sober living home is due to open this month. Ryan, who will be the director of operations at the new facility, said he’s content with where he is in life.

“I’m so thankful that I’m gainfully employed and have my family back,” he said. “Terros Health brought me to the understanding that anything I go through is manageable.”

Inspiring Change for Life

According to Chase, the Terros Health story is best told by its whole health partners, people like Nicole, Martin, Monica, Ryan and others.

“Many thanks to these brave individuals for sharing their journeys,” Chase said. “It feels good to hear such touching stories of empowerment and life transformation. These heartfelt testimonies illustrate how our focus on whole health provides better outcomes for our patients and our community.”

For more information about Terros Health, visit www.terroshealth.org or follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/TerrosHealth and Twitter @TerrosHealth.

Terros Health is an Arizona, not-for-profit, integrated whole health care organization with specialization in mental health and addiction care for adults, adolescents, children and families. Terros Health provides whole health care through the patient centered medical home — an all-in-one place location dedicated to meeting the needs of a person’s mind and body.

Another Layer of Denial: CHILDREN

By Debra Alessandra

As a group facilitator in a local treatment center and a person with long-term recovery, one of the saddest and most concerning things I hear from clients and members of the recovering community sounds something like this. “Well, at least the kids weren’t really affected.”

Perhaps it’s a way to avoid an uncomfortable discussion. More often, however, the motivation is less obvious. The lack of knowledge of a starting point is a major block. For if we don’t know where or how to begin, we do nothing.

When it comes to families, many parents of young children rationalize and opt to do nothing. They hope the pain they caused will disappear without effort on their part other than staying clean and sober. They don’t know how to begin, yet they must. Harmony doesn’t come from one instrument alone.

Somewhere deep in the mind of a person with addiction, an ‘off-switch’ keeps them from fully accepting this unpleasant truth. Yet this is a truth that must be addressed to heal. Whether it is overt or covert, the fact remains: Your children have been impacted by the disease of addiction. The ramifications are critical and can extend into adulthood.

Imagine how much better recovery would be if the entire family were involved? All instruments playing in harmony. And yes, the entire family includes children. Not only teen aged children, but younger children as well.

Sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, I have witnessed parents come to the realization and recognition of the impact of their addiction had on their children. Not only do they recognize the damage, but they make attempts to remedy the situation.

Children: Worth the focus

My mission is to help families navigate the path of recovery together. I believe we must be willing to go the extra distance and try to meet their needs.

I understand the challenge of opening a conversation about recovery with children. Many recovering parents ask, “What is a good starting point? How much can they understand? Is it really necessary?” They often justify, “Isn’t my changed behavior enough?” As you can see, strength and courage on your part are required.

12 Steps 12 Stories offers a way to approach the steps of recovery at a level children can grasp. It helps children feel comforted, valued, and included.

Comforted

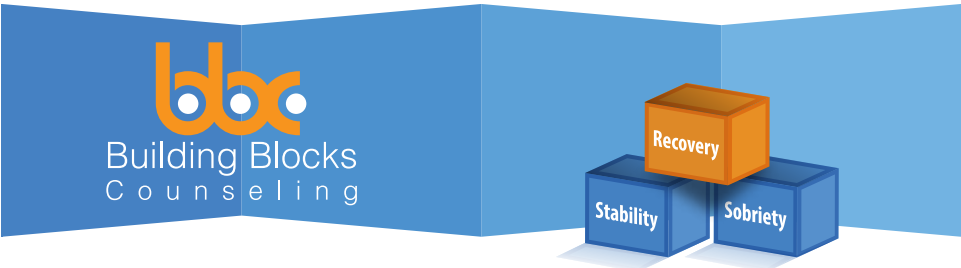
Children may struggle to make sense of the changes in the home. Even good changes are stressful. Frequent small, but meaningful conversations can soothe children and alleviate their confusion. When children have some basic understanding, they feel more comfortable. They adjust to the new ‘normal’ with greater ease.

Valued

When you acknowledge their needs in this area, you can share one of the most precious resources you have: time. Children know they are valued if you devote time to their emotional needs. Taking time to offer age-appropriate explanations can go a long way in assuring your children of their value to you.

Included

All children need information. This helps them feel included. Stories can encourage them to talk openly and honestly about their feelings and concerns. When they can identify with the characters, they are more likely to want to have a conversation. Introducing the 12 key concepts in a recovery based lifestyle will



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broaden the depth of family healing. Short and simple spiritual messages can be easily shared. Follow-up questions and talking points further the conversation.

The End Results

Perhaps the culture of drug and alcohol abuse and addiction can change if children have a working knowledge of the 12 steps of recovery. After all, children who are informed can and do make better choices.

It is my deepest wish that children empowered by knowledge of the 12 step recovery progress may benefit now and for years to come.

Let’s shape a generation of spiritually knowledgeable children and share the hope and joy of recovery with children.



Debra Alessandra spent over 30 years as an educator, Prevention Specialist, and Drug and Alcohol Counselor. She holds a BA in Sociology and Elementary Education. Having witnessed the harmful effects of alcoholism and substance abuse on all members of the family, Debra carefully crafted a unique set of 12 stories to build bridges of understanding for children and families. Visit www.12steps12stories.com and on [facebook.com/12Steps12Stories](https://www.facebook.com/12Steps12Stories).

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Why Millennials are Failing to Launch

By Gary D. Hees MA, LPC

“Failure to Launch”— a term used to describe a situation in which a young person is unable to leave the protection of the parental home to begin living independently. These three words have gained significant attention recently as more young people are staying in the family home longer than in the past.

The Millennials (*anyone born between the early 1980’s and early 2000’s*) are facing an unprecedented level of financial insecurity; one of the most challenging job markets in recent history, and an extremely complex and fast-moving social life. While most young adults will effectively navigate these difficult waters and find the will and skill needed to enter independent adulthood, many others will fall by the wayside and find themselves stagnating without a sense of purpose or passion.

Who am I?

This issue is not just about a lack of motivation. The core issue is the lack of development of what Eric Erikson called “Ego Identity.” In plain language, a guiding set of internalized moral values that define and answer the question, “Who am I?” Once a young adult knows who they are, they can begin to decide how to express their identity in the world around them, often in terms of a career or a vocation of service. Parents and home life play a huge part in this development. Literature on the subject cites several factors impacting the development of identity, purpose and independent functioning. Permissive parenting or parenting that is not supportive of independent decision-making and functioning (*Helicopter parenting*) is closely correlated with lack of identity development, lower levels of moral reasoning, an external focus of control (*giving in to peer pressure*) and difficulty differentiating from the family and parents.

When developmental maturity is incomplete we see the formation, and later, concretization, of negative cognitions about the self. Most commonly, and in general, the beliefs are the negative side of the dichotomies presented by Eric Erikson as the stages of human development.

Rather than trust of self and others, there is mistrust, particularly of self, resulting in a sense of hopelessness and resignation. Some young adults avoid trying — **because they do not believe they can trust themselves to succeed.**

Rather than autonomy, there is a sense of shame and doubt, often exhibited and interpreted by others as a lack of will and direction. These young adults will under-function, leaving it to others to ‘do it’ for them. In a sense, they demand an over-functioning counterpart, (parents), and will become expectant of being ‘taken care of’ the more this dynamic persists in the family.

There is a sense of passivity and taking initiative is rarely seen, with the exception of seeking, finding and using mind-altering substances and a job that provides subsistence. There is little or no sense of purpose. These young adults are often unemployed or under-employed, and are seemingly passionless and unengaged in life beyond a repetitive pattern of living.

Asking the question “Who are you” often provokes anxiety and anger, for the answer to that question is often unknown. This lack of identity generates tremendous anxiety and a sense that all activities are basically meaningless. This mental state often is expressed as response to peer pressure rather than thoughtful, independent decision-making. The relationships of ‘failure-to-launch’ young adults are often chaotic and characterized by using others and allowing themselves to be used.

Erickson’s vision of intimacy, the sharing of ones’ self with another, is blunted by the lack of knowledge of ones’ own self. How can we share what we don’t know?

If the above were not enough, other obstacles co-occur causing significant exacerbation of these factors and, unfortunately, reinforcing the negative cognitions of the self. Some obstacles include mental health issues, trauma, substance use disorders and issues of organization and reasoning (*Executive Functioning*). These factors exacerbate a lack of identity and can make thriving in today’s demanding world exceedingly painful and difficult for young people at a time when they are forming opinions of themselves and their relationship to others that will shape the rest of their personal and professional lives.

Failure to Launch and substance use disorder often go hand-in-hand. Whether young people succumb to substance misuse and lose the ability to focus and work effectively, or if they are self-medicating to overcome underlying mental health problems such as depression and anxiety, where you find failure to launch, you often find substance use disorder.

What the entire substance use disorder treatment industry must acknowledge is the extent to which **Failure to Launch** and substance use are intertwined. Treating substance use disorders in young adults without addressing failure to launch is tantamount to putting a band-aid on a gash. Lasting positive results will be, at best, elusive.

After years of recovery, and countless readings of The Big Book, I see the Fellowship of AA and recovery as the means to have a life, not the end purpose of life. It is a natural progression, if one is to address a failure to live in a positive and productive way, to use the 12 Steps to foster identity and integrity, and then to facilitate the young adult realizing the amazing array of choices open to them and help them direct that energy into a useful and fulfilling life. Why be satisfied with half measures?

In addition, developing the skills and mentality required to complete education, attain meaningful work, maintain relationships and live independently play a critical role in treating this condition. To address this wide range of needs, assistance must be given with identity achievement, mental health disorders, functional relationship building, educational, career counseling, and the trauma often found in people suffering from this issue. Life skill work instills good and healthful behaviors and thinking, including the areas of nutrition and financial literacy needed to live a healthy, productive and promising life.



Gary D. Hees MA, LPC has worked in Behavioral Health for 22 years. He received his Master’s degree from the University of Houston–Clear Lake in Psychology–Marriage and Family Therapy. Gary has been licensed in Texas and Arizona for sixteen years. His has worked with Seriously Mentally Ill adults, adolescents in long-term treatment and presently with young adults. Gary’s clinical orientation is developmental and trauma informed. He is trained in Ericksonian Hypnosis, Motivational Interviewing, EMDR, Pia Mellody’s Post-Induction Model and multiple Family Therapy modalities. Gary has years of experience working with addiction, depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder and bipolar disorder.

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The Year of Redirection

By Alan Cohen

One way I like to make the end of a year work on my behalf is to assess how the past year has redirected me. It's tempting to look back and regret errors I made or things that seemed to not work out. But failure and regret exist only at the shallowest level of appearances. What seems to be a dead end sign is an arrow pointing you in another direction. The universe is saying, "***This is not it. There is a better direction for you. Go that way and you will find what you are looking for.***" No movement in life is wasted. It all has a purpose. You just have to know how to read the signs.

Dee and I were shopping for a new home when we found a lovely parcel on a mountainside. The lot was large with magnificent views, a meandering stream running through it, and decently priced. Although we would have preferred a property with a home already on it, we liked it and told the real estate agent we were going to make an offer. She arranged for us to meet the owner.

The day before we were to sign, I received a letter from the bank that mortgaged my current home, informing me my mortgage would be more than doubled starting the next month. This had to be an error, so I phoned the bank. The agent informed me the loan I had taken out had been based on interest only for ten years, and now I would have to start paying principle. This news was burdensome, considering I would have to pay a large mortgage on our current home until it sold, plus the new one and build a new home. I felt overwhelmed and told the real estate we would not purchase the new property.

A month later we discovered another property closer to the ocean, a few miles down the hillside from the one we had looked at. This property already a well-built turnkey house on it, a great view, plus a car and truck thrown in with the deal, all at a price not much higher than the mountainside property. We fell in love with the place, a friend offered us the money to finance it, we made a deal, moved in, and loved it.

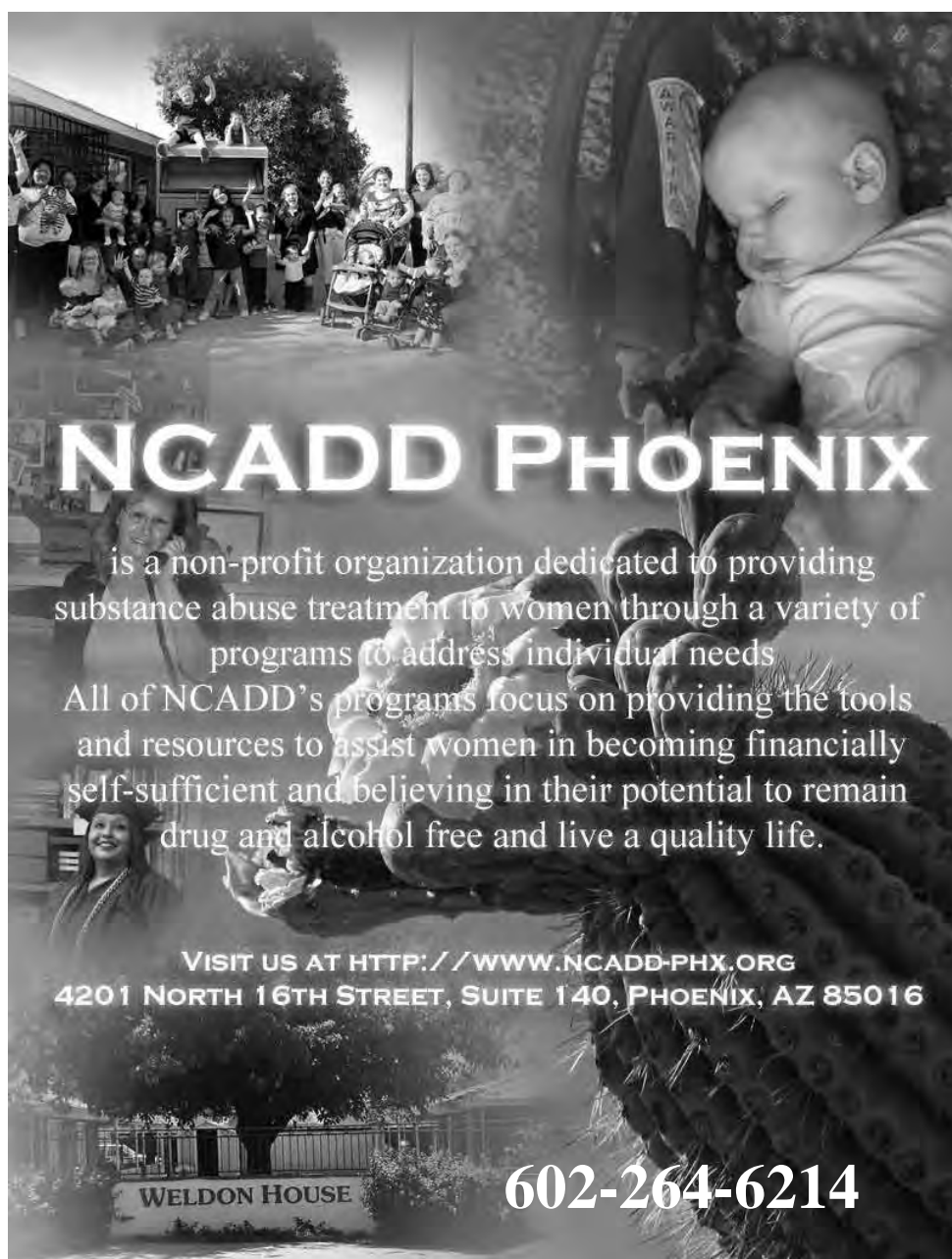
Living at the lower altitude, we discovered the weather in this microclimate was entirely different than those nearby. We looked up the mountainside to see the property we had originally considered and noticed it was extremely rainy. Our new property was almost constantly sunny. We could hardly believe the difference in rainfall over just a few miles distance and a few hundred feet in altitude. But it was so. We were grateful that we didn't purchase the mountainside property.

Looking back on the process of the mortgage being more than doubled at that exact moment, dissuading us from purchasing the mountainside property, I see the mortgage increase was a huge gift. Spirit was redirecting us to live in a place more desirable, and avoid the work of building a home. What seemed to be a curse was a blessing. We eventually sold our house, so everything worked out perfectly.

Everything is working out perfectly even when it doesn't appear to be so. All spiritual traditions teach that the world we believe is so real is really a manifestation of maya, or illusion. When a job, business deal, or relationship falls through, don't be fooled by the current appearance. There is more going on than meets the eye. If this was right for you, it would have worked out. There is something better in store. Relax, breathe, and be patient. You are being redirected.

What is right for you will find you without struggle or suffering. If you have to fight with yourself or someone to make something happen, it's not it. There is a better fit for you, and you can have it if you let life take you where it—and you—want you to go. How has this year redirected you to get clear on what you want and — don't, where you would like to head now?

Alan Cohen is the author the bestselling A Course in Miracles Made Easy: Mastering the Journey from Fear to Love. Alan H. Cohen (author), and Twitter @alanhcohen



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ACA	aca-arizona.org	Narcotics Anonymous	480-897-4636
Bipolar Wellness Network	602-274-0068	National Domestic Violence	800-799-SAFE
Celebrate Recovery Chandler		Overeaters Anonymous	602-234-1195
Christian Church	480-963-39972	Parents Anonymous	602-248-0428
Cocaine Anonymous	602-279-3838	Phoenix Metro SAA	602-735-1681
Co-Anon	602-697-9550	Rape Hotline (CASA)	602-241-9010
CoDA	602-277-7991	Sexaholics Anonymous	602-439-3000
COSA	480-385-8454	Sex/Love Addicts Anonymous	602-337-7117
Crystal Meth Anonymous	602-235-0955	Sex/Love Addicts Anonymous	520-792-6450
Emotions Anonymous	480-969-6813	Sex Addicts Anonymous	602-735-1681
Families Anonymous	602-647-5800	S-ANON	480-545-0520
Gamblers Anonymous	602-266-9784	Suicide Hotline	800-254-HELP
Grief Recovery	800-334-7606		

Treatment Service Resources

TOGETHER AZ	602-684-1136	River Source-12 Step Holistic	480-827-0322 or 866-891-4221
Art of Recovery Expo	602-684-1136	St. Luke's Behavioral	602-251-8535
ACT Counseling & Education	602-569-4328	Sundance Center	844-878-4925
AZ. Dept. of Health	602-364-2086	Teen Challenge of AZ	800-346-7859
Office of Problem Gambling	800-NEXTSTEP	TERROS	602-685-6000
Aurora Behavioral Health	623-344-4400	Valley Hosptial	602-952-3939
AzRHA	602-421-8066		
Calvary Addiction Recovery	866-76-SOBER	Legal Services	
Carla Vista Sober Living	480-612-0296	Dwane Cates	480-905-3117
Chandler Valley Hope	480-899-3335	Tax Intervention	
Choices Network	800-631-1314 - 602-222-9444	Renee Sieradski, EA	602-687-9768
CBI, Inc.	480-831-7566	www.tax-intervention.com	
CBI, Inc. Access to Care	877-931-9142		
Core Recovery Services	602-810-1210	TUCSON	
Cottonwood Tucson	800-877-4520	ACA	aca-arizona.org
Crisis Response Network	602-222-9444	Alcoholics Anonymous	520-624-4183
The Crossroads	602-279-2585	Al-Anon	520-323-2229
Decision Point Center	928-778-4600	Anger Management	520-887-7079
Dr. Marlo Archer	480-705-5007	Center For Life Skills Development	520-229-6220
Dr. Janice Blair	602-460-5464	Co-Anon Family Groups	520-513-5028
Dr. Dina Evan	602-997-1200	Cocaine Anonymous	520-326-2211
Dr. Dan Glick	480-614-5622	Cottonwood Tucson	800-877-4520
Foundations Recovery Network	855-316-0114	Crisis Intervention	520-323-9373
Gallus Detox	928-227-2300	Desert Star	520-638-6000
Gifts Anon	480-483-6006	Narcotics Anonymous	520-881-8381
Governor's Office of Youth, Faith & Family		Nicotine Anonymous	520-299-7057
	602-542-4043	Overeaters Anonymous	520-733-0880
Hayes/Davidson	800-219-0570	Sex/Love Addicts Anonymous	520-792-6450
Hunkapi Programs	480- 393-0870	Sex Addicts Anonymous	520-745-0775
Geffen Liberman, LISAC	480-388-1495	Sierra Tucson	800-842-4487
Lafrontera -EMPACT	800-273-8255	Suicide Prevention	520-323-9372
The Meadows	800-632-3697	Men's Teen Challenge	520-792-1790
Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care		Turn Your Life Around	520-887-2643
602-222-9444 or 1-800-631-1314		Workaholics Anonymous	520-403-3559
NCADD	602-264-6214		
Pathway Programs	480-921-4050		
PITCH 4 KIDZ	480-607-4472		
Psychological Counseling Services (PCS)	480-947-5739		
		To get listed email Barbara Brown:	
Remuda Ranch	800-445-1900	aztogether@yahoo.com	
Rio Retreat Center	800-244-4949		

LIFE 101

By COACH CARY BAYER www.carybayer.com

It is Indeed A WONDERFUL LIFE

It's December and for the umpteenth time I'll watch my favorite film, *It's a Wonderful Life*. In my 20's, a secret pleasure was introducing friends to the Frank Capra classic. It was a spiritual experience for Capra virgins.

If you're foggy on the plot, it opens in Heaven, where a senior angel is telling a junior wingless counterpart about a boy named George Bailey. The boy's growing up is a cinematic dossier for Clarence, the angel, preparing him for his chance for wings when, years later, George reaches a deep existential crisis.

George is a good kid — he'd grow up to be Jimmy Stewart; enough said, a devoted son, a devoted brother — he loses the hearing in one ear to save his brother from drowning. He has a great yen for traveling the world, but sacrifices his dreams to work for his father's credit union and help put his brother through college. When it's finally time to pack his bags for faraway places his dad dies, and he sacrifices again to keep the building and loan running. He passes on a chance to get in on the ground floor of his rich buddy's burgeoning business because his heart isn't in it. George only does what his heart is into or what duty demands; he follows his dharma, his spiritual duty dutifully. He marries a childhood sweetheart (the ever-sweet Donna Reed) and moves in to a run-down derelict building. In time, children come, the Depression hits, there's a run on the bank, and he saves the homes of his customers by resisting the seductive offers of the town millionaire scrooge, who's trying to get his clammy hands on their homes to turn them into a shanty town. A crisis comes when his absent-minded uncle and partner loses an enormous deposit at the bank, an act which George takes responsibility for, and will send him to jail for malfeasance. Broke and hopeless, he jumps off a bridge, figuring his life insurance policy makes him more valuable dead than alive.

We've all known people who've sunk into deep depressions where they can't think straight; sometimes, sadly, suicide ensues. George doesn't believe the savior who pulls him out of the water is his guardian angel. Until the bumbler hits on a big idea: to show George, who

thinks his life has been meaningless, just how important it truly has been. What follows is a Twilight Zone spell in which George wanders his familiar town, but nobody knows him: Clarence is granting his wish, and showing him what the world would have been like had he never been born.

His former pharmacist boss is a rummy because George wasn't there to intercept the poison he'd accidentally put into a prescription when his son died. His mother is an angry childless widow because her son didn't have an older brother to save him from drowning. His uncle is in an insane asylum. His idyllic town has become the shanty Pottersville, because he wasn't there to keep the building and loan alive to help people get affordable housing. The nightmare continues until George begs for release from the spell.

He returns home, broke, with the law waiting for him, but that's when Kleenex boxes get busy: in the final emotionally charged scene George discovers how important he truly is. When his wife had discovered that he needed money, she let everyone whose life George had so deeply touched know —and they raised the money his uncle lost—and then some—and the police join the celebration of George's wonderful life.

This film should be given to everyone who's depressed; it might save them the need for anti-depressants, it might save them wallowing in despair; it might even save their lives.

Years ago, I studied with the guru Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, who, in his commentary on the great yoga classic, the Bhagavad Gita, wrote that "unfathomable is the field of karma (action)." This film shows ever so poignantly the effect that a single life has on the lives of so many others. If you know someone who's depressed, pick up this spiritual classic from Netflix, so they can see that they, too, are living a wonderful life.



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Community Calendar

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2017-Jan. 17—FREE Professional Networking Luncheon—Psychological Counseling Services (PCS) A free networking luncheon experience from 12:15-1:45 p.m. Mark your calendars. If you have attended in the past, join us. If you are new send an email request to pcs@pcsearle.com or call **480-947-5739**. Ellen Hamilton for details.

Clinical Breakfast Series—First Wednesday of the month 8:00-9:00 a.m. *St. Luke's Behavioral Health*. Trends and treatments in the behavioral health field, 1 CEU. St. Luke's Behavioral Health Center Auditorium. 1800 East Van Buren Street.

Mondays-Scottsdale-FAMILY RECOVERY GROUP at The Meadows Outpatient Center. Facilitated by Brough Stewart, LPC. 5:30-7:30 p.m. Designed to help begin and continue family recovery. Stop enabling behaviors, set healthy boundaries based on Pia Mellody's Model. **No RSVP or charge.** The Meadows Outpatient Center, 19120 N. Pima Rd., Ste. 125, Scottsdale. Contact: Jim Corrington LCSW, **602-740-8403**.

Every Week - Tucson - COTTONWOOD TUCSON - 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 **520-743 2141**.

SIERRA TUCSON—Alumni Groups. Scottsdale, Tues., 6:00- 7:00 p.m. **Valley Presbyterian Church.** 6947 E. McDonald Drive, Paradise Valley. 480-991-4267. Alumni meet in the Counseling Center (Parlor Room). Park in west parking lot, follow signs to the Counseling Center in chapel complex. Contact: Rob L. **602-339-4244** or stscottsdalealumni@gmail.com.

SIERRA TUCSON—Continuing Care Groups in Phoenix. Wednesdays—for Family Member Alumni (18 and over). **(PCS)** Psychological Counseling Services, 7530 E. Angus Drive, Scottsdale. 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. **Thursdays**—for Patient Alumni, PCS, 3302 N. Miller Rd., Scottsdale, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. Facilitated by the clinical staff of PCS. **No charge for Patient and Family Member Alumni.**

DEC. 18 —HEROES IN RECOVERY 6K. Gilbert, Riparian Preserve at Water Ranch. Heroes in Recovery celebrates the heroic efforts of those who seek the addiction and mental health help they need without feeling ashamed or isolated. Registration and information: <http://heroesinrecovery.com/heroes6k/arizona/>

ON GOING SUPPORT

Celebrate Recovery—Chandler Christian Church. Fridays 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, E: larrydaily@chandlercc.org.

Valley Hospital— IOP Group for Chemical Dependency/Co-Occuring. Mon., Tues., Thurs. 6:00-9:00 p.m. **602-952-3939.** 3550 E. Pinchot Avenue, Phoenix. www.valleyhospital-phoenix.com

Open Hearts, Open Minds Counseling Services— Women's Therapeutic Group for Partners of Sex Addicts. Find comfort, strength and hope while exploring intimacy issues. Shea/Tatum area. **Men's Therapeutic Group for Sex Addiction—**work through a task-centered model with a certified sex addiction therapist. Call Cynthia A. Criss, LPC, CSAT **602-677-3557** for details.

Families Anonymous—12 step program for family members of addicted individuals. Phoenix -Mon. 7:00 P.M., First Methodist Church, 5510 N. Central Ave. 602-647-5800. Scottsdale Sun. 4:00 p.m., 10427 N. Scottsdale Rd., North Scottsdale Fellowship **480-225-1555** or **602-647-5800**

Thursdays—Men's empowering work through blockages to living. Dennis Ryan, M.C., L.P.C. 5-6:30 P.M. and 6:30-8:00 P.M. Transformation Institute. 4202 N. 32nd St., Suite J, Phoenix. **602-381-8003.**

Chronic Pain Sufferers "Harvesting Support for Chronic Pain," third Saturday of month, 12-1:00 p.m. Harvest of Tempe, 710 W. Elliot Rd., Suite 103, Tempe. Carol **480-246-7029.**

Jewish Alcoholics, Addicts, Families and Friends **(JACS)** 1st / 3rd Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. Ina Levine Jewish Community Campus, 2nd floor. 12701 N. Scottsdale Rd. **602-971-1234** ext. 280 or at JACSarizona@gmail.com

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

WOMEN FOR SOBRIETY— www.womenforsobriety.org Saturday —10-11:30 a.m. All Saints of the Desert Episcopal Church-9502 W. Hutton Drive. Sun City. Christy **602-316-5136.**

Co-Anon Family Support - 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 Roller Coaster"** Thurs., 6:30-7:45 p.m., 2121 S. Rural Rd., Tempe. Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. Donna **602-697-9550** /Maggie **480-567-8002.**

COTTONWOOD TUCSON. ALUMNI—First Wednesday of month 6:00-7:30 p.m. **Cottonwood campus in Tucson.** 4110 W. Sweetwater Drive. 5:00 p.m. dinner. **800-877-4520 x2141.** cottonwoodtucson.com

ACOA Thurs., 7:00 p.m., North Scottsdale United Methodist Church, 11735 N. Scottsdale Rd., Scottsdale. www.aca.arizona.org

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

Overeaters Anonymous (OA)- 12 Step program for addictions to food, food behaviors. **520-733-0880** or www.oasouthernaz.org.

Pills Anonymous (PA)—Glendale Tues. 7-8:00 pm. HealthSouth Rehab 13460 N. 67th Ave. 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, 10427 N. Scottsdale Rd., Rm 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, Janice 602-909-8937.

GA Meetings —**Tuesday/Thursday Spanish** 7:00-9:00 p.m. Christ the Redeemer Lutheran Church, 8801 N. 43rd Ave. **Sunday, Spanish** 7:00-9:00 p.m. Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 3040 N 7th Ave. **Sunday, English** 6:00-8:00 p.m. 5010 E. Shea Blvd., Ste. D-202, Contact Sue F. **602-349-0372**

SAA 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.

SPECIAL NEEDS — AA Meetings. Cynthia SN/AC Coordinator 480-946-1384, email Mike at mphaes@mac.com
SLAA—Sex and Love Addict Anonymous **602-337-7117.** slaa-arizona.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.

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. Stepping Stone Place 1311 N 14th St. cmaaz.org/god-zombies-the-awakening.



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Sober Living and the Holidays

by Sandy Boller-Bilbrey, RN

As anyone who has been through it themselves or with a loved one knows, getting — and staying — sober is no small feat. It takes strength, determination and dedication to live a life of sobriety, especially during the holiday season. These tips can help reinforce your commitment to sober living and give you valuable tools to stay on track.

- **Stay away from the first drink.** If you don't start, you won't have to worry about stopping.
- **Easy does it.** When you feel overwhelmed or anxious, relax. Take a deep breath and a few minutes to physically and mentally calm yourself.
- **Remember the serenity prayer.** Ask for the strength to accept the things you cannot change, the courage to change the things you can and the wisdom to know the difference.
- **Change old routines.** If your usual holiday celebrations include parties and events where you know there will be alcohol served, change it up. Seek out get-togethers that do not center around drinking, and avoid temptation by celebrating the season with others in recovery to remove the temptation.
- **Use the 24-hour plan.** It is much more realistic to pledge that you will not take a drink in the next 24 hours than never again.
- **Don't test your willpower.**
- **Remember your last drink,** or last hangover, DUI, job loss, or drunken fight. Be honest with yourself about how ugly the "good old days" truly were.
- **Check in** with a 12 step group, a rehabilitation center or church group for support only a fellow addict can give.
- **Fend off loneliness.** Isolation can be dangerous. Spend time with family and friends who will support your recovery and provide companionship and positive reinforcement.
- **Be good to yourself.** Addiction beats you up. Now that you're in recovery, treat yourself kindly.





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