

Together AZ

FEBRUARY 2016

Inspiring Success on the Road to Recovery

Love Thyself

By Mary DeYon

What does LOVE have to do with addiction? I once believed love could conquer all—my addictions as well as my Dad's and husbands.

Isn't that what all the songs say? *"Love is the Answer, All You Need is Love and Love Will Find a Way."*

Growing up I thought if I loved my Dad enough by being the perfect he would stop drinking and yelling. When I married, I thought if I loved my husband enough by being the perfect wife he would stop drinking, drugging and carousing. But it wasn't until my second marriage I finally understood it was love of MYSELF that was the answer.

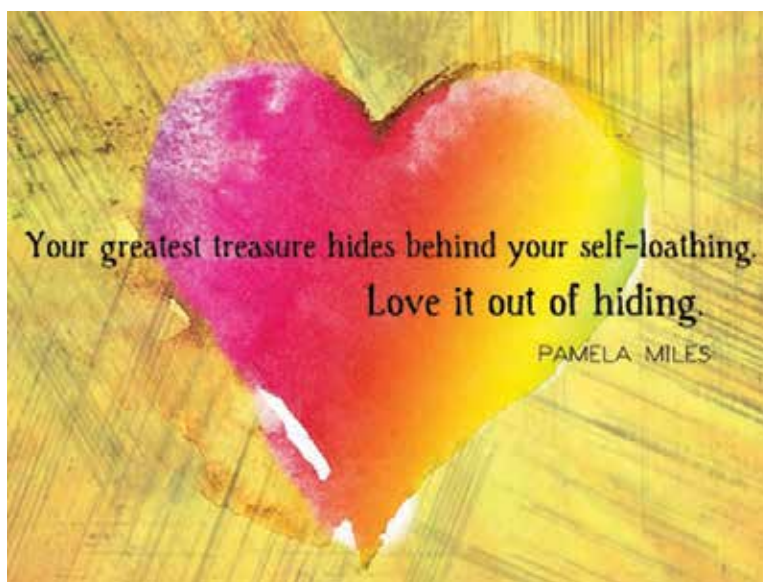
Like many of us I was raised to be a people pleaser. So if I followed the rules and was perfect I wouldn't get scolded (as much). I relied on my parents for food and shelter and my emotional well-being. I learned early on that life was better when I behaved in a way that gained their approval.

When I entered Catholic school the same rules applied. If I behaved I didn't get punished. I tried to be 'good' but with strict rules at home and school it was difficult to contain myself.

In fifth grade after a bout of orneriness, my teacher broke my arm in exasperation. Weren't the nuns supposed to be God's representatives on earth? I couldn't believe God thought I was so bad I deserved such punishment. Even worse, my mother believed the school authorities when they said I had come to school with a broken arm.

So my love affair with food began there, it was the only thing that never betrayed me. I could numb every feeling of shame and guilt with candy, cake and cookies. I got a high from the sugar and the added weight served as a protective barrier from the world and its pain. As a child I was a victim because I had no control and relied on my parents and teachers for everything. I had no choice but to live under the tyranny of home and school.

On my own in college I became empowered by being able to make my own choices. Sometimes they were the typical rebelliousness of a girl after Catholic school and sometimes I made bad choices like dropping a college class — just because I could.



The freedom was amazing but with this new power came an obsessive need to control. First, with diet and exercise. My weight went up, then down in a continuous cycle of control and loss of control. I didn't apply this control only to food and exercise but when I married and tried to be the perfect wife. I lived by the '70's Aretha song, *"I want to be what he wants, when he wants it and whenever he needs it."*

In my career I worked extra hours to make more sales. All the while tending to everything at home. Living by the words from a fragrance commercial, *"I can bring home the bacon, fry it up in a pan and never let you forget you're a man."*

These things make me laugh now, but they were the early anthems of the women's liberation movement for those of us who believed them. I loved the accomplishments of being out in the real world. But still felt I had to keep up with the housecleaning, cooking and all of my son's needs.

Exhausted from trying to control the Universe and not knowing how to continue I finally surrendered in my second marriage only because I could do no more. In that surrender I finally understood the concept of "detachment." I had heard about it in many Al-Anon meetings. It had never made sense to me before. It felt unloving to detach from my supposed "soul mate."

What I found in that wonderful place of detachment was how little control I had over how much my husband drank or what he did. In fact, I realized I had no control over what mood my boss was in or

LOVE THYSELF continued page 4

How much are you willing to lose?

by the Arizona Office of Problem Gambling

It has long been warned "the road to hell is paved with good intentions" and perhaps the same can be said to people who try in earnest to connect problem gamblers to much needed resources. Those who work closely with this group through therapy, support groups, or personal associations know that relapse is a constant threat to any success story. The last thing any problem gambling organization or support group wants to be is a stumbling block on someone's path to stop gambling. That is why it is considered an important rule to remove all gambling based terms and phrases from our vocabularies and speech. Hearing these words can act as a trigger for someone struggling with gambling addiction.

Fear of Triggers

The fear of a trigger word or image negatively affecting a gambler was the overriding concern for the Arizona Office of Problem Gambling as they worked over the past year to create a new marketing campaign. How do you reach every corner of the State blasting the message of problem gambling awareness without actually saying the words slots, betting, casino or showing machines and money? It is not an easy task and one that many potential marketing companies struggled with alongside the OPG team.

A second hardship was found in trying to make the message clear and targeted. You don't want a gambler thinking the message must be intended for someone else because it did not specifically call out slot players and they only gamble at the slots, or it can't mean them because they only play the lotto. You want the advertisement to almost call them by name saying "yes you ...right there... you have a gambling problem and here is some help!"

"We looked over pitches from several marketing companies, spent hours in debate within our own office, and went through dozens of drafts before we even got close to a campaign we could use," said Larissa Pixler, Program Director for the Arizona Office of Problem Gambling. "When you are dealing with a

HOW MUCH continued page 3

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Publisher's Note

By Barbara Nicholson-Brown

When I write these columns, I speak from my heart. I've learned to do on my recovery journey. I have a box full of coins commemorating my years of sobriety and each and every one of them tells me one important message: **Be True to Thyself.**

Am I always happy, joyous and free? In all truth, no. Life swings like a pendulum and each day brings its own set of circumstances and challenges. Do I handle them all with perfection and acceptance? I'd be lying if I said I did.

But now more than ever, I know what my true purpose is. The God of my understanding — has shown me the path to take, and it was never anything I could have thought of on my own.

The connection with my Higher Power is the greatest love I have ever known. I'm never shamed or slammed; kicked to the curb or under the bus.... And for all my antics while active in my addiction I've been forgiven and He loved me through it.

Bill used to say often, *"love people, and trust God."* He had many words of wisdom and those have stuck with me since he passed.

So when I am true to myself, follow my intuition, attempt to do the next right thing it's a great day. When I over extend myself, react to quickly, or expect too much from another human being — that's where the lessons come in, the stepping back to look at my part and amends — and that too is a pretty great day.

Love is all around every one of us and can be experienced and treasured in a relationship with ourselves. We all are deserving of it. Don't change to please another person, only change if it enhances your own growth and your love and acceptance of yourself. That is love. Happy Valentines!

Barbara

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Hot Topics

Addiction: Few Offer Concrete Proposals on Campaign Trail

Many presidential candidates are talking about addiction, but few are offering concrete proposals to combat it, *The Boston Globe* reports.

Jeb Bush, Carly Fiorina and Chris Christie regularly speak of addiction struggles among family members.

"For those candidates to say they have these personal stories — fine, we all have these stories. Tell me what you're going to do. You're not running to be storyteller-in-chief," said Patrick Kennedy, a former U.S. representative from Rhode Island who has a personal history of drug and alcohol abuse, and advocates for changing the way addiction is treated in the health care system."

"Tell me what you're going to do. You're not running to be storyteller-in-chief," said Patrick Kennedy, former U.S. representative from Rhode Island."

Senator Bernie Sanders called for a radical change in how addiction is treated, he has not explained how he would address the crisis. Hillary Clinton announced a \$10 billion proposal to treat addiction in September. While she has released the most details about her plan to treat addiction, some advocates describe her five-point plan as a token fix that expands current ineffective strategies.

Christie unveiled a proposal to create a drug court in each federal court district so nonviolent drug offenders could be offered treatment instead of jail. The funds saved by keeping people out of jail would be used to create more treatment programs, he said. Christie's critics say he has not been effective in treating addiction in New Jersey.

Bush has released a plan that would focus on better parenting and increased border security to reduce drug trafficking. He said he wants to improve prescription drug monitoring and expand drug courts, but has not explained how much the plan would cost or how it would work.

Trump has said he would build a wall along the Mexican border to keep out drugs, while Ohio Governor John Kasich said teachers should provide students with a weekly antidrug message. Fiorina has said the nation needs to invest more in mental health and addiction treatment, but has not provided details.

Melissa Thornburg joins Prescott House



Established in 1988, Prescott House has provided outstanding services to men and their families from across the country and abroad. Throughout the years, we

HOT TOPICS continued page 13

group that has one of the highest rates of suicide of any addiction, the last thing you can do as a prevention and treatment agency is risk doing harm.”

So how do you create targeted and effective advertising that can’t mention anything about the service that’s being provided? It’s a good question, and in the end questions were exactly what the (AZOPG) Arizona Office of Problem Gambling decided to use.

With the slogan of “*Just how much are you willing to lose?*” the agency set out to grab the attention of problem gamblers by asking them a question. The ads even offer up a list of potential answers to better drive home what is at stake, or perhaps what someone is already facing in their lives. Billboards and magazine ads ask if you are willing to lose more than just your money to gambling, but also your family or your marriage and kids. Another poses the options of losing your job or savings.

These mostly black and monotone advertisements feature only the logo of the AZOPG in color. “They are meant to leave the problem gambler thinking about what they have already lost, what they are at risk of losing, and showcasing how they are risking more than just the money they put into each gamble,” said Pixler.

Once the basic format for the advertising was chosen there was still an endless consternation over where to place the ads for the most impact. Placing the new campaign on OPG’s social media such as their @AzOPG Twitter account was easy and cost nothing. Using paid advertising on Facebook was also a low cost way to target particular age groups with certain habits. However, with a limited budget the placement of large ads on billboards and in magazines became a meticulous task.

“We are fortunate that through excellent relationships with our State’s casinos we have messaging already inside the gaming areas,” said Pixler. “The hard question we faced was where else could we target people that might need to hear this message.”

Strategic areas along major interstate were targeted for the first round of advertising. However, along with location also came decisions over timelines. OPG knew they wanted to kick off the new campaign at the beginning of the year, but they had to balance the start date with the need to still be pushing the message even harder through heavy sports betting periods like the Super Bowl and March Madness. The team also wanted a push during March since it is “Problem Gambling Awareness Month” as well as OPG’s Annual

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Symposium.

“Since most of the campaign is done digitally it allows us to make some small changes to the ads as we progress through the first year. For instance, we were able to add a line to the magazine ads that talked about our upcoming symposium and how people can visit the website www.azgamblingsymposium.com to register. However, once we have the symposium on March 7th we can drop that information moving forward. Since most of the ads are digital it really allows a lot of flexibility, especially as we continue to get new data on the new campaign,” said Pixler.

The new campaign has been running since the beginning of the year and with only two months of results by which to judge, OPG is already very optimistic that all their hours of debate and careful consideration over the advertisements were worth it. Tracking shows that the campaign has been seen online by thousands of people and a large chunk of that group is choosing to follow different links to available resources.

It will take a full year of having the campaign in place to truly have enough data to see what impact the new advertisements had in reaching those struggling with gambling addictions or those close to someone with the problem.

“As we see the number of people reaching out for help and taking advantage of resources for problem gambling drop across the nation we have to try new ways of getting this important message out there. We need people to know there is help available,” said Pixler.

If you would like to learn more about the Arizona Office of Problem Gambling you are encouraged to go onto to their website problemgambling.az.gov and learn more about the upcoming March 7th Symposium and what other resources they offer.

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LOVE THYSELF from page 1

how my son would act in school, or how my mother would continue to criticize me. All I could manage was my reaction to them.

I could never control everything outside me enough to get the approval I so fervently sought, the approval had to come from within.

There was such freedom in realizing I could step back and watch all the craziness unfolding before me like watching a movie. I didn't have to get emotionally involved with any of it. I had so little control over it anyway.

Finally the Serenity Prayer began to make more sense. "Accept the things you cannot change" became my new mantra. Why was that so hard?

This journey from victimhood to empowerment to surrender then enlightenment is the spiritual journey I write about in my book. It brought me back to being able to love myself.

Loving Myself

When I felt the true feeling of detachment it was a feeling of being at one with God. But at the same time I was separate and only able to control myself and my reactions to the world around me.

It wasn't that I was no longer responsible as my husband's wife or my son's mother. I looked at them differently and could see they were responsible for their own choices and consequences.

I began to see my son as the man he was growing into instead of a reflection of me and my value as a mother. When he mooned the school bus, I was able to see the humor in it rather than thinking the whole school along with the whole town would think I was a terrible mother because of it.

I changed my focus from counting my husband's drinks and obsessing over my son's behavior — to me and what I needed. I honored myself every morning by spending time reading spiritual books, meditating and exercising. Getting centered each morning helped me to react to the day's craziness from a place of peace. This practice helped me to make peace with God as I realized it was the nun who betrayed me — not God.

Now that I was learning to be at peace with most of my life, it was time to make peace with my body. Forty years of my journals showed "lose weight" as the number one goal on any list. No matter what I weighed I hadn't been happy with my body since fifth grade.

I thought about why a few extra pounds should make so much difference in how I felt about myself. When friends of mine gained or lost weight, did it make a difference to me? No, they were still my friends. Nothing changed except for my bit of jealousy when they lost weight. Then I immediately wanted to know how they did it.

Food was My Addiction

Why did I have to wear mine? An alcoholic could hide their addiction for years. Maybe then the red nose and cheeks showed up on their bloated faces

like W.C. Fields. Even cocaine addicts could pass off their sniffing to a cold or allergies. But when your addiction is food, everyone knows.

Food served me well, comforting me in fifth grade when I was betrayed by the nun and my Mom. It insulated me from the world. Later in life it was a way to make myself unattractive so I wouldn't be tempted to stray from my unhappy marriage. And, I can never forget the deadening comfort of going comatose from a carbohydrate high.

Food, like cigarettes, had been my friend. But food is not like cigarettes. You can give up smoking, but you have to eat.

Many times, with countless diets, I tried to starve my body into behaving—but it was useless. For example, there was the "Eat whatever you want" diet, which my son had found particularly amusing. I would eat nothing all day and then for one hour each night I could eat whatever I wanted: maple frosted doughnuts, sausage pizza, peanut butter and chocolate ice cream. It didn't matter, as long as it was within one hour. My son would shake his head and leave me in the kitchen laughing all the way down the hall to his room. Of course the diet didn't work but I continued to starve myself with every diet known to man or woman. I would also beat my body into submission with exercise.

I was beginning to learn to accept myself but still kept trying "the next best thing." I hired a personal trainer built like Arnold Schwarzenegger, who shouted orders like my Dad, until I popped a rib while bench pressing. In another gym stint, I was running around the track, tripped and tore a ligament in my knee. As I limped back to the locker room one of the gym rats said, "You know, not everyone is made for running."

"Thanks for that," I said looking down at my well rounded body, built way too close to the ground. When I sprained my ankle falling off a treadmill I finally realized some people are just not gym material.

So I decided to appreciate myself. I thought of everything I had done to my body over the years—overeating, starving, binging, insane exercises, fad diets.

Looking down at my little feet I said, "I'm sorry I've given you so much to carry." I took a good look at my legs, thighs, stomach, chest and arms. "I'm sorry," I repeated. Through all the torture my body had served me amazingly well. "Thank you, Body," I said out loud.

God had not made me to be tall and thin. I had made peace with the height part, now it was time to make peace with being thin. God had built me for comfort, not speed.

With that, I made a promise to be kinder to myself. I got rid of my scales and no longer judged each day by how much I weighed. I realized I had treated myself poorly for a long time. The golden rule says, "Treat others as you would like to be treated." I decided to start treating myself as I would like others to treat me.

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And I reasoned further: Why would anyone treat me well, if I wasn't good to myself? I began treating myself to good shoes, decent face cream and especially good food. I realized I deserved the best food I could afford to buy. No more burnt toast or questionable leftovers in the fridge. These were the beginnings of treating myself well.

I learned to treat my body like it was part of me, instead of something outside of me. I learned to ask my body what it wanted to eat, rather than thrust upon it what the latest diet guru said was good for me. This way I could truly enjoy every bite and I didn't need as much. When I ate consciously I could tell when I was full and I stopped. It felt so much better than stuffing myself mindlessly. I asked my body what it wanted for exercise, a walk, yoga? Slowly I began to really love my body, fluffy as it was.

Forgiving Myself

Part of learning to love myself was forgiving myself for all my perceived wrong doings. I had set such high standards in my quest to be perfect and try to control everything. No human could accomplish the impossible goals I had set.

I had forgiven my body for wanting it to be something it wasn't. I knew I needed to forgive myself for not being a perfect wife or mother, my divorces and all my other apparent sins from what I learned in school.

Several clients I have worked with felt stuck in their addictions until they realized they needed to forgive themselves. Some had abortions, others had affairs. When they were able to forgive themselves, their lives changed dramatically.

The guilt and shame from our childhoods and the constant critical voice in our heads needs to be dealt with. There is nothing unforgivable in God's eyes. We are human. We make mistakes. The big mistake is not letting it go. We are so forgiving of others. Why not ourselves?

I believe in any situation we are doing the best we can under the circumstances. All can be forgiven. Forgive yourself. Love Yourself Everyday

The journey of conquering our addictions is a spiritual journey. It is a journey to learn to love yourself as God loves you. As you do you realize you no longer need to seek approval outside yourself. The kingdom of heaven is within.

What does love have to do with addiction? Everything. Love can conquer all when you love yourself



Mary DeYon is an author, speaker and Codependency Coach who insists on bringing humor to the Truth. For more information about her programs, Podcasts and events, visit marydeyon.com. You can contact Mary at mary@marydeyon.com.



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Where to Find True Love

By Alan Cohen

My coaching client Jodi has been in a Mormon marriage for nearly 30 years. For all those years she, her husband, and five children have participated avidly in the Mormon Church, rituals, and community.

A few years ago Jodi felt guided to explore other philosophies such as yoga, meditation, and alternative forms of spiritual expression—all no-no's according to traditional Mormonism, which shuns people who step out of line. So for Jodi to express her desire to delve into non-traditional pathways required a huge leap of faith.

Although Jodi's husband Don was initially distressed by her dabbling outside the church, he supported her to venture onto other paths of spiritual inquiry. Jodi stopped wearing traditional Mormon garments, took a life coaching course, read books by Paramahansa Yogananda, set up an altar including small statues of Buddha and the Hindu deity Ganesha, and took an unprecedented trip by herself to a residential meditation retreat. If Don had been stuck on their special relationship, he might have hit the ceiling and called in the church fathers to "deprogram" his wife. But, to his credit, he just kept loving Jodi, which endeared him to her all the more. His trust in her explorations did not dissolve their marriage, but strengthened it. When I last spoke to Jodi, she reported that she and Don were doing tantric sex practices. Both of them deserve huge credit for flowing with the changes in their relationship and co-creating a marriage based on love, not fear.

I have often pondered why so many of us have had so much pain in relationships. It's because we were trained to believe that we are empty or broken, and if we can just get someone to give us what we are missing, we would be happy. Then we must control our supposed source of good so that person will keep doing the things that make us feel loved. As it turns out, it's the other way around. The purpose of relationship is to source love within ourself and then extend it to our partner. When we genuinely love, the joy that passes through our heart to the other person

Love doesn't care
about age or race
or religion. It
doesn't care
whether the
other person
loves you back or
not. All it knows
is that it feels
right.



blessees, uplifts, and heals us as it moves through us.

I used to teach about unconditional love, until my mother taught me what unconditional love really is. When I set out on my spiritual path, I was inspired by the teachings of Jesus. I studied the New Testament and I taped a small picture of Jesus on the dashboard of my car.

My Jewish mother was not exactly pleased as punch to ride with Jesus as co-pilot. When I picked her up to take her shopping, she made fun of the photo. "Were you cold out here last night, Jesus?" she mockingly asked the image, tapping it with her forefinger. "Would you like me to knit you a sweater?"

So out of respect for my mother (especially since she had paid for the car), I removed the photo from the dashboard and placed it in the glove box. The next time my mother sat in the car, she said nothing but she seemed happier, so I figured Jesus was secretly smiling under the dashboard.

A few weeks later when I went to visit my mother at her house, I saw something I had never seen before in my home or in any Jewish home. On the dining room table, propped up against a napkin holder, was

a small picture of the Catholic Saint Veronica.

Astonished, I asked, "Mom, where do you get this?"

"I saw it at a garage sale," she answered nonchalantly. "I thought you would like it."

I was speechless. In order for my mother to get me that picture, she had to rise above her lifetime belief system and values as a Jew and a Jewish mother. In that moment I realized that unconditional love goes far beyond words. It is an energy we radiate, a principle we live.

Love is not about control, but connection. Not about demanding, but allowing. Not about getting, but overflowing and supporting. As we release fear-based models of love, we open to the gift we were born to receive by giving it.

February is Valentine's month, when we celebrate great love. If you are searching for love, it may be closer than you think. Kabir said, "I laugh when I hear that the fish in the water is thirsty." The love of your life might be right where you stand. Even if you are not with your ideal lover, you have friends and family who love you deeply.

If you are with a partner who does not appear to be "The One," there might be more love available in that relationship than you know. Appreciate and celebrate what you have before asking for more. The gifts that you have been seeking have been laid at your door. When you find beauty and wonder in those around you, you open the door to find it in yourself. Let this month be the one in which you find true love, by discovering the happiness you seek right where you stand.



Alan Cohen is the author of the new groundbreaking book *A Course in Miracles Made Easy: Mastering the Journey from Fear to Love*. Join Alan and intuitive Dougall Fraser in Hawaii, February 21-26 for a life-changing retreat, *The Guru in You*. For more information about this program, Alan's Life Coach Training Program, free daily inspirational quotes, and weekly radio show, visit www.AlanCohen.com



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Lao Tzu



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LIFE 101

By COACH CARY BAYER www.carybayer.com

Do you gamble on your HAPPINESS?

People gamble on lotteries, on slot machines, on football games. Rarely, do you hear someone gamble on happiness. And yet, every day most people actually do.

Most people derive happiness based on what happens that day. If they get a massage, a new client or a raise at work, or their child or grandchild gets a prize they'll be happy. Conversely, if they lose at tennis, lose a client or a possible promotion at work, or their child or grandchild gets sick they'll be unhappy. Said differently, their happiness is a function of what happens to them and those they care about. It's outer-dependent and usually out of their control. Hence, my expression "gambling on their happiness." Like a roulette wheel, if it shows up red they lose, if it shows up black they win. It's a tough way to live.

The good news is that there's a deeper happiness that's inner-dependent, and even better news is that it's possible to

- connect to that happiness daily
- to live from that state, as well.

Outer-dependent happiness comes about through the senses, your arms, legs and the rest of your body. Inner-dependent happiness doesn't involve them, and arises when they're completely at rest. The yogis of India call this inner happiness Ananda, Sanskrit for bliss. Ananda exists in abundance—infinite in fact—at the deepest level of your mind, where your individuality and your universality meet.

Meditation is the primary path to this concentrated happiness; the yogis of India call this brief experience of the inner Self Samadhi, which translates from the Sanskrit as "steady mind." In other words, when the mind is steady, when it comes to rest and your conscious mind becomes consciousness, no longer aware of any thing in particular but awake within itself, Samadhi is achieved. Even the word "achieved" is a misnomer, because Samadhi isn't something you can achieve like writing a book, cooking a meal, or even walking to the mailbox. It's a state of Being, beyond the doing of your everyday actions, beyond the perceptions of your five senses, and beyond the thoughts of

your thinking mind. It's a fourth state of consciousness, as distinct from waking, dreaming, and sleeping, as each of them is from each other.

This is the knowledge elucidated by the yogis, and I can vouch for it from my own personal experience of having meditated since the age of 17 and taught Transcendental Meditation since three years after that until 2010 when I began teaching Higher Self Healing Meditation.

A fleeting experience of Samadhi that lasts for maybe a second or two or a minute or more brings a concentrated download of happiness into your mind. So when you come out of meditation your mind is infused with this happy state, making it so much easier to derive happiness out of the simplest things that you may see or do immediately afterwards. In an hour or so, almost all of that happiness fades out of consciousness; that's not a bad thing, per se, it's just the way of things. A little of it, however, still remains.

Regular exposure to the experience of Being within enables more and more of this precious bliss to habituate itself into the nature of your mind. Over the course of years of such exposure, the individual mind becomes saturated with that happiness; in fact, the mind comes to live in a state of happiness. The yogis of India have a name for this as well: Moksha, or liberation. In English, we call this Self-Realization, when you have come to identify yourself as both an individual being, who the world knows you as, and one with the Universal Being. This state of Enlightenment enables you to bring a truckload of happiness with you wherever you go and to whatever you do. This makes the activity of outer-dependent happiness, of course, much easier to achieve.

In the Emerald City in The Wizard of Oz everyone wore green glasses, so that everything appeared to be green. When you wear happiness glasses, it's awfully hard not to see happiness, AND your gambling on happiness has ended.



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Moments Matter

By Dr. Dina Evan

My Saturday evening was quiet. There was a gentle energy of discomfort in my body and discontent in the air that I couldn't shake. My friend Jeanne Cordova was somehow with me. I knew she was leaving, dying and I could not release that knowing to focus on anything else. We have known each other for more than 30 years and life had happened in the last ten years, separating us in time and distance. She was in L.A. with her partner Lynn Balen and I was in Phoenix.

However, only moments matter... the moments we created in the thirty years kept rising in my memory, bubbling up from my heart, creating smiles and tears and a sense that I wanted to be with her. Friendships of that length and texture are gold, not to be dismissed by earthly limitations.

They are of the Beloved.

I smiled remembering the times we bumped heads over my metaphysical beliefs and her Catholic up bringing. Eventually we began to vibrate somewhere in the middle where she began collecting the symbols of her heritage in large Mexican blankets, pots and Indian statues with wondrous stories and I dug deeper exploring the spirit of my soul in metaphysical teaching and energy magic. We shared our discoveries late at night wrapped up in quilts and blankets on the floor as we taught each other, laughed at each other and cried together. So this night, I sat with her in spirit as we had before, and I knew. I asked the Universe to clothe her in peace and safety and eventually I went to bed.

At quarter to five in the morning my phone rang with a text message from Lynn. "Jeanne was dying...would I call?" I did and for the next two hours Lynn, Jeanne's beloved partner of more than twenty-six years and I walked our precious Jeanne home.

Lynn was in agony, hearing the painful moans of her partner and could no longer bear it. I asked her to put the phone next to Jeanne's ear and we began our talk gently...just as we had for so many years before. I reminded her that she had done what she came here to do. Jeanne was an activist for gay rights, women's rights and the right to free speech. She had riled people's ire from one coast to the other until people gave in just to get rid of her. They also gave in because in their secret, politically no-so-correct hidden places in their character, they also knew she was right.

I told her she was so loved and that she could breathe through the pores in her body now and rest her lungs.

I told her to hold Lynn's hand and go check out the other side and then come back. I told her when she was ready to stay there, that her mom, whom I had prayed to the night before, would come and get her and walk her home. Within about thirty minutes the moaning and the pain in the fearful resistance that death creates stopped and there was peace in Jeanne and in the room. "She's stopped breathing," Lynn said tearfully. Jeanne was gone, leaving behind only a cancer torn body that was no longer of use to a mighty spirit.

This is not meant to be a sad story! I write about it this month, because it is the month of Valentines and love and because it is about the most meaningful connections in our lives. They are the ones with depth and angst and ups and downs and sometimes years between. They provide meaning and truth and realness. They are the ones that permeate our hearts with commitments beyond human understanding and never let go, no matter what. They are the relationships of recognition through space and time that change the very tapestry of our soul. They crack our hearts open and demand integrity and presence from our spirit. They are amazing and a true gift of love from the Universe. Jeanne with all her edges, just like each of us with ours, was a gift from the Universe to my life. And today, and in each tomorrow, I will celebrate her.

Don't miss the gifts of love in your life. Sometimes they come in the form of a child, a boss, a teacher, an ex-partner, a friend, a beloved partner, a grandchild or even a stranger in a single moment whom you see and who truly sees you. These are the real blessings of life. Hold them close. Nurture them. Respect them and give them their due. They deserve to be the priority in your life. They deserve your commitment, your presence and your integrity for as long as you have them. Love doesn't always have to be romantic, or sexual. It only has to be real, because these relationships are the ones that last a lifetime and beyond. Here's to you Jeanne. I will see you on the other side and we'll catch up creating new moments wrapped in blankets and love.



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



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Secrets & Lies

By Suzanne Phillips, Psy.D., ABPP

You need only glance at the newsstand at any store checkout to read about the latest secret or lie exposed in the lives of the Rich and Famous. Why are we interested? Do we understand the impact of secrets and lies in our own relationships?

Secrets

A secret is defined as something done, made or conducted without the knowledge of other people. When one of those is a spouse or partner — we not only wonder why, we wonder how it jeopardizes that relationship.

Separation vs. Secrets

- Realistically, no relationship involves full disclosure at all times.
- One definite way to destroy a relationship and dilute passion is to demand constant connection, disclosure and no space away from your partner. No one fantasizes about someone who never leaves his or her side.
- Strong couples are usually made up of independent people who are comfortable being dependent on each other but retain a clear sense of self and identity.
- Whether you have a hamburger at work or get a pedicure at lunchtime, it is probably not necessary that

such events be shared. The fact that you thought the woman on the coffee line looked great or you secretly hate the holidays may or may not matter.

The fact that you have stopped talking about a man at work because you can't wait to email or have lunch with him is different. A measure of whether you are doing something that will jeopardize your relationship is whether or not you need to keep it secret from your partner.

Reasons for Secrets

There are many feelings that prompt the keeping of a secret from a partner. Secrets depend upon the nature and trust in the relationship and the personalities of the partners.

- If a marriage is demanding and authoritative, fear of judgment or anger for everything from going out with friends to spending too much on groceries may be kept secret.
- If a partner feels shame or self-blame for addictive behavior, misfortunes like the loss of a job or even fear of medical results, secrets might be kept.
- In the case of interest in someone outside the relationship, secrets are often driven by the fantasy, flirta-

tion or wish for something that is not happening in the relationship. Often there is the illusion of having a marriage and a secret relationship.

While differing in rationale and threat to the integrity to a relationship, the problem with secrets is they disqualify authenticity with a partner and preclude discussion or resolution of feelings or issues. The existence of a secret relationship is incompatible with commitment to a partner.

Self-Reflection on Secrets

Recognizing the realistic need for separate space with partners, it is worth reflecting on the reason you may be keeping something secret from your partner.

Are you adjusting to rigid demands? Are you hiding with fear? Are you acting out anger? Are you getting the attention that is missing with your partner?

Secrets may be reconsidered as unspoken communications to self or partner that should not be ignored. Unaddressed they close doors and erode a relationship.

Lies

A lie involves making a false statement to another person with the in-

tention of having them believe that it is true. When people are involved in secrets, they often engage in lying to maintain the secrecy. Lying to a partner makes intimacy and trust impossible.

Truth Bias

One of the painful parts of finding out that your partner has been lying is the self-blame for believing the lie. In reality, when people are in a relationship they are more likely to judge their partner as truthful than to detect deception. Essentially it is emotionally and cognitively dissonant to believe anyone you love could be betraying you. Consciously you can't quite take it in.

"The Cover-up"

If you ask partners how they feel after they find that their partner has been lying, they will tell you that the cover-up was worse than the behavior being hidden. As with secrets, most lying is driven by fear and presumption, not a rationale perspective of how the partner would really react if he/she knew about the fender-bender, the online flirtation, or the use of porn. As a result couples get caught in vicious cycles of "Lying-Exposure-Explosion."

The partner being deceived blows up because of the cover-up and the lying partner becomes defensive, "See, I knew you would react that way!"

The real issues or even authentic arguments never get addressed or resolved. Hurt, retaliation, on-going resentment grows. The opportunity for understanding, remorse, trust and working it out together is lost.

An Honesty Policy

In his continued work to help partners make their marriages the best they can be, marriage expert, M Gary Neuman, draws upon research and clinical experience to suggest that a commitment to honesty in the small and big issues is actually a protective commitment for a couple.

It greatly reduces the chances of cheating because the marriage is built on an infrastructure of trust and safety for disclosure. There will be room to verbalize upset, loneliness or disappointment rather than secretly acting it out.

In his book, *Connect for Love*, Neuman suggests an action/inaction honesty policy. When it comes to whether she made the deposit for the bank or he made the plan for childcare—the truth matters because it is the basis for ongoing trust and respect. Safety of disclosure re-enforces honesty as the fabric of the relationship.

No Room For Secrets

In a marriage, the problem with secrets and lies is that they just don't fit. Surprisingly one of the worst kept secrets in a marriage is love and appreciation of one partner by another. Daring to disclose the positive secrets may be the ones overlooked and the best guarantees of love and loyalty a couple can find.

Suzanne B. Phillips, Psy.D., ABPP is a licensed psychologist. She is Adjunct Professor of Clinical Psychology in the Doctoral Program of Long Island University and on the faculty of the Post-Doctoral Programs of the Derner Institute of Adelphi University. Learn more at couple-saftertrauma.com.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FREE Professional Networking Luncheon — Psychological Counseling Services (PCS) invites you to join us for a free networking luncheon experience from 12:15 pm to 1:45pm. Mark your calendar—**February 16**. If you have attended in the past, feel free to join us anytime. If you are new, please send your email request for an invitation to pcs@pcsearle.com or call 480-947-5739 to speak to Ellen Hamilton for details.

Clinical Breakfast Series — First Wednesday of the month from 8-9 a.m. **St. Luke's Behavioral Health** Learn more about trends and treatments in the behavioral health field, network, one CEU credit. St. Luke's Behavioral Health Center Auditorium. Continental breakfast served. 1800 East Van Buren Street.

Every Monday— Scottsdale – FAMILY RECOVERY GROUP at The Meadows Outpatient Center. Facilitated by Brough Stewart, LPC. 5:30 -7:30 p.m. A group designed to help begin and continue family recovery. Stop enabling behaviors and learn how to set healthy boundaries based on Pia Melody's Model. **No reservations needed, no charge.** The Meadows Outpatient Center, 19120 N. Pima Road, Suite 125, Scottsdale. Contact: Jim Corrington LCSW, **602-740-8403**.

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

SIERRA TUCSON— Alumni Groups. Scottsdale, Tuesdays, 6:00-7:00 p.m. Valley Presbyterian Church 6947 E. McDonald Drive Paradise Valley, AZ 85253. (480-991-4267) Alumni meet in the Counseling Center (Parlor Room). Park in the west parking lot and follow signs to the Counseling Center, which is located in the chapel complex. For more information, please contact Rob L. at 602-339-4244 or STSCOTTSDALEALUMNI@GMAIL.COM

SIERRA TUCSON— Continuing Care Groups in Phoenix. Wednesdays — for Family Member Alumni (18 years 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 Road, Scottsdale, .5:30 – 7:00 p.m. Facilitated by the clinical staff of Psychological Counseling Services. No charge for Patient and Family Member Alumni.

On Going Support 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., Scottsdale Fellowship Hall 480-225-1555.

Thursdays— Men's General Therapy Group empowering work through blockages to living. Dennis Ryan, M.C., L.P.C. 602-381-8003. Every Thurs., 5 - 6:30 p.m., 6:30-8 p.m. Transformation Institute. 4202 N. 32nd St., Suite J, Phoenix.

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

HOPE, STRENGTH, SUPPORT for Jewish Alcoholics, Addicts, Families and Friends (JACS*) 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 7:30 PM. Ina Levine Jewish Community Campus, 2nd floor Conference Room. 12701 N. Scottsdale Rd., Scottsdale 85254. 602.971.1234 ext. 280 or at JACSarizona@gmail.com

PSA Behavioral Health "The Guild" Monday 5:30 -7:30 pm. A fun-filled, educational, supportive get-together. The Guild is open to the community and brings the community together in raising awareness of mental illness and recovery. PSA North, 2255 W. Northern Ave. in B109. Call Barbara 602-995-1967 x 207.

WAAT- Women's Association for Addiction Treatment Monthing meetings. November 17th: Speaker, Elisabeth Davies, December 15th: Christmas Party Paradise Bakery, 101 and Raintree. Sue Shipman 480-633-7292

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.

WOMEN FOR SOBRIETY — www.womenforsobriety.org meeting

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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 Roller-Coaster"** 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 — ACT Counseling & Education. 11:00 am to 12:30 pm. **602-569-4328** for details. 5010 E. Shea Blvd. D202, Phoenix.

INCEST SURVIVORS ANONYMOUS—North Scottsdale Fellowship Club, Saturdays, 1:30-2:30pm. Gloria, **602-819-0401**.

Alumni Meeting—COTTONWOOD TUCSON. Ongoing: First Wednesday of month 6:00-7:30 p.m. **Cottonwood campus in Tucson.** 4110 W. Sweetwater Drive. 5:00 p.m. 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. www.aca.arizona.org

[arizona.org](http://www.aca.arizona.org)

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, 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-

continued page 13

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Hard Lessons about Mental Illness

Looking back, the signs were there, she realizes now. The extreme bursts of energy and creativity, the sudden low moods, the sleep problems, the sensitivity to sounds and light, even the infidelities. But at the time, all that seemed clear to Sheila Hamilton was that her brilliant and passionate husband, David, the father of her child, was becoming someone she no longer recognized.

It was a transformation that would not be explained until almost a decade into their marriage, when he was diagnosed with bipolar disorder.

"I just couldn't piece it together. David was incredibly intelligent, very high functioning. And his doctors said they'd never seen a case in which a person with such a severe mental disorder was able to compensate without hospitalization or any medication," Sheila said. "I think that he probably knew that something was wrong, but he was raised in a family that believed that mental illness was a moral weakness, a failing. And so he was very ashamed to ask for help and did everything he could to hide, to deny, to compartmentalize."

In December 2006, six weeks after his bipolar disorder diagnosis and the day after his release from an enforced hospitalization, David took

his life, leaving behind an emotionally devastated wife and 9-year-old daughter. That devastation increased when Sheila discovered hundreds of thousands in debt David had hidden when his construction business became too overwhelming for him to handle.

As a type of therapy, Sheila began to write about what had happened. "It was an attempt to try to figure out my own trauma," she explained, "and hold

myself accountable for the signs and symptoms I had missed and why I had been so wholly unprepared to deal with someone with a mental illness."

Somewhere along the way, she shifted from memoir to include an investigation of the nation's mental health crisis, calling upon her experience as a journalist to do so; she's a writer, a broadcaster, a well-known Portland radio personality and news director, and a five-time Emmy winner.

The result of that effort is *All the Things We Never Knew: Chasing the Chaos of Mental Illness*, a book that combines a heart-wrenching narrative of upended lives with practical information for others who find themselves struggling to understand and deal with a mental illness, whether their own or that of a loved one.

"What I found was the outcome that our family had experienced wasn't at all uncommon, and that's why I ended up publishing the book," she said. "I felt very much like other people could learn from my experience since it turned out to be quite a universal one."

Inside the Trauma

Each chapter in the book begins with personal narrative and concludes with a concise exploration of mental health issues related to her husband's story. She examines hypersexuality, for example, which many of those with bipolar disorder report experiencing when in a manic phase and which she believes played a part in David's relationships with other women during their marriage. There are also discussions of involuntary hospitalization, suicide, denial, children and grief, and the troubling consequences of privacy laws, which can keep even the spouse of a patient from being informed of a diagnosis.

Most troubling, she said, is the heavy dependence on and the shortcomings of psychiatric drugs, especially those known as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs). These are often prescribed for illnesses such as depression and bipolar disorder despite the fact that numerous studies indicate such drugs can sometimes make bipolar disorder worse by sparking rapid cycling of moods, she said.

It's what happened to her husband, Sheila said. He finally reached out for

help from a friend who was a physician and was prescribed SSRIs. "He didn't sleep for almost five and a half weeks. He lost about 35 pounds in a month. He was pacing all night long and having olfactory hallucinations," she said. "And so during that time he attempted suicide twice and was finally hospitalized."

Instead of helping, the hospitalization "actually traumatized him further because all that happened was that doctors would see him for a med check, prescribe more pharmaceuticals that weren't actually working for him and told him that his life as he'd known it was over and he'd have this disability for the rest of his life. So the day after he was released from the hospital, he died by suicide."

What she wishes David had known, and what she learned in the aftermath of his death, is that much can be done to address and recover from mental illness, especially with early treatment. And, as she explains in the book, each passing day brings greater understanding of mental health issues in both the medical community and society, and better and more holistic treatment strategies.

Most encouraging to her is the sense that the stigma that keeps so many from admitting to their struggles and reaching out for help is slowly lessening — a state of affairs she credits in large part to the young. "If you go in the Twittersphere, there is a lot of conversation about 'I have an anxiety disorder; this is how I cope.' 'I have PTSD.' 'I have bipolar.' There's not that kind of damnation around it. So I do think that stigma is going to die away with older generations. I believe 10 years from now we'll be able to talk about mental illness like we talk about breast cancer or diabetes or any other type of illness."

One of those enlightened young people is Sophie, her daughter with David, who is now a college student studying psychology and business at Stanford. "She's really interested in how she can use the experience of her life, the most defining experience really, to help other people."

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have found that long-term recovery is best achieved through long-term treatment. Prescott House is committed to providing precisely that: excellent clinical care in a close-knit recovery community. This commitment is founded on a firm belief in recovery of the mind, body, and spirit.

Melissa has been an active member of Prescott's 12-Step recovery community for over seventeen years. She began her journey in recovery at a nationally renowned treatment program here in Arizona, back in 1998. Since that time, she's graduated Magna Cum Laude from Northern Arizona University's Electronic Media Program where she focused on communications and worked in broadcasting in both radio and television. Her combination of personal recovery and work experience makes her a perfect fit for carrying the message of Prescott House to both professionals and families seeking treatment for men with substance use and/or process disorders, such as sexual addiction.

Melissa carries Life and Health Insurance Licensure in all fifty states, is a 200-Hour Registered Yoga Instructor and has completed both Bessel Van Der Kolk's Trauma Sensitive Yoga Certification and her first year in Peter Levine's Somatic Experiencing Practitioner Program. *For more on Prescott House visit prescottthouse.net.*

Mailing Free Nicotine Replacement Patches to Smokers Can Help Some Quit

Mailing free nicotine replacement patches to smokers who are interested in giving up cigarettes can help some of them quit, a new study finds. The smokers in the study did not receive counseling or other support, *HealthDay* reports.

Researchers sent a five-week course of nicotine patches to 500 smokers. After six months, the rate of participants who said they hadn't smoked in the past month was more than double the rate of 499 smokers who did not receive free nicotine patches. About half of participants returned saliva samples, which researchers tested to confirm they had stopped smoking.

The rates of smoking cessation in both groups were low—2.8 percent among those receiving patches, compared with 1 percent among those who didn't receive the patches.

The findings are published in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

In another study published this week, researchers found smoking ces-

sation pills are no more effective than nicotine patches or lozenges in helping people quit, according to Reuters.

The study included more than 1,000 smokers who received counseling to help them quit. They were randomly assigned to receive three months of treatment with either nicotine lozenges plus patches; patches alone; or varenicline (Chantix).

After one year, about one-fifth of smokers were able to quit, regardless of which treatment they received, the researchers report in *JAMA*. Smokers who took varenicline had more side effects, such as insomnia, nausea and constipation.

45,000 Arrests on College Campuses for Drug- and Alcohol-Related Offenses in 2014

There were almost 45,000 arrests on college campuses in 2014 for drug- and alcohol-related offenses, according to a new report. There were also more than 250,000 disciplinary actions on campuses related to drugs and alcohol, according to U.S. News & World Report.



The findings come from a report by **ProjectKnow.com**, an online referral service for drug and alcohol addiction treatment centers.

Project Know analyzed data from colleges that receive federal funding, which are legally obligated to provide annual reports about crimes that occur on and around their campuses. The report analyzed data from colleges with enrollments of at least 5,000 students, totaling about 1,000 medium- and large-sized colleges.

The researchers found drug arrest rates on college campuses were highest in Montana, West Virginia, South Dakota, Wyoming and Delaware. Those states had on-campus arrest rates that were at least 2.3 times higher than the median state average of 1.08 per 1,000 students. Alabama, Florida and South Carolina accounted for some of the largest jumps in drug arrests on campus when measured by arrests per capita.

New York alcohol arrests rose 44.4 percent between 2013 and 2014, while Nevada alcohol arrests increased 40.7 percent. Six of the top 10 states for drug arrests were also in the top 10 for alcohol arrests: Indiana, Montana, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

The state with the largest drop in drug and alcohol arrests was Rhode Island. The article notes the state enrolls a small number of students, which means any change is amplified.

The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence

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Events from page 11

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. Phoenix/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, 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 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 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

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

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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Aurora Behavioral Health	623-344-4444
Carla Vista	480-612-0296
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
CBI, Inc. Access to Care Line	877-931-9142
Cottonwood de Tucson	800-877-4520
Crisis Response Network	602-222-9444
The Crossroads	602-279-2585
Decision Point Center	928-778-4600
Dr. Marlo Archer	480-705-5007
Dr. Janice Blair	602-460-5464
Dr. Dina Evan	602-997-1200
Dr. Dan Glick	480-614-5622
Franciscan Renewal Center	480-948-7460
Gifts Anon	480-483-6006
Intervention ASAP	602-606-2995
Geffen Liberman, LISAC	480-388-1495
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
Sundance Center	844-878-4925
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Drug Traffickers Seek Safe Haven Amid Legal Marijuana

By SADIE GURMAN, ASSOCIATED PRESS DENVER

In this Dec. 31, 2013 file photo, employees tends to marijuana plants at a grow house in Denver. According to law enforcement officials, Colorado's legal marijuana marketplace is in some cases serving as cover for a host of illegal drug traffickers who hide their product among the state's many legal growing operations, then covertly ship it elsewhere and pocket millions of dollars from its sale. (AP Photo/Brennan Linsley, file)



Seeking a safe haven in Colorado's legal marijuana marketplace, illegal drug traffickers are growing weed among the state's sanctioned pot warehouses and farms, then covertly shipping it elsewhere and pocketing millions of dollars from the sale, according to law enforcement officials and court records consulted by The Associated Press.

In one case, the owner of a skydiving business crammed hundreds of pounds of Colorado pot into his planes and flew the weed to Minnesota, where associates allegedly sold it for millions of dollars in cash. In another, a Denver man was charged with sending more than 100 pot-filled FedEx packages to Buffalo, New York, where drug dealers divvied up the shipment. Twenty other drug traffickers, many from Cuba, were accused of relocating to Colorado to grow marijuana that they sent to Florida, where it can fetch more than double the price in a legal Colorado shop.

These cases and others confirm a longstanding fear of marijuana opponents that the state's much-watched experiment in legal pot would invite more illegal trafficking to other states where the drug is still strictly forbidden.

One source is Colorado residents or tourists who buy retail pot and take it out of state. But more concerning to authorities are larger-scale traffickers who move here specifically to grow the drug and ship to more lucrative markets.

The trend also bolsters the argument of neighboring Nebraska and Oklahoma, which filed a lawsuit in late 2014 seeking to declare Colorado's pot legalization unconstitutional, arguing that the move sent a tide of illicit weed across their borders. The Obama administration last month urged the Supreme Court to reject the suit, saying that the leakage was not Colorado's fault.

No one knows exactly how much pot leaves Colorado. When illegal shipments are seized, it's often impossible to prove where the marijuana was grown. But court documents and interviews with law enforcement officials indicate well-organized traffickers are seeking refuge in Colorado's flourishing pot industry.

"There's no question there's a lot more of this activity than there was two years ago," said Colorado's U.S. attorney, John Walsh.

Some in the legal industry say police have exaggerated the problem and put unfair scrutiny on people who legally grow pot on behalf of patients. Lawmakers last year limited unregulated pot growers to no more than 99 plants in an effort to crack down on those selling untaxed pot.

The federal government allowed Colorado's experiment on the condition that state officials act to keep marijuana from migrating to places where it is still outlawed and out of the hands of criminal cartels. Federal authorities acknowledge that both things are happening but say that, because the state is trying to

keep its industry tightly regulated, there's no reason to end the legal pot trade.

The pot industry also acknowledges the criminal activity and insists it is doing all it can to keep legally grown weed from crossing state lines. Among other safeguards, Colorado law requires growers to get a license and use a "seed-to-sale" tracking system that monitors marijuana plants at every stage.

Many of the illicit growers come from elsewhere, never obtain a growing license and "don't even attempt to adhere to the law," said Barbra M. Roach, special agent in charge of the Drug Enforcement Administration's Denver field division.

"It's like hiding in plain sight," she said.

Authorities in Washington state, which also allows recreational marijuana, have noticed more marijuana leaving the state. But more reports are coming from Colorado, which has the nation's most robust commercial market and an international reputation for producing premium, high-potency pot.

"It's a brand name now," Roach said.

Jason Warf, head of the Southern Colorado Cannabis Council, said people are "coming from out-of-state, buying products from licensed stores and being arrested on their way home."

That "is really hard to curb," he said. "We can't essentially babysit adults and their behavior."

The Colorado Department of Revenue's marijuana-enforcement division cites shops if pot is unaccounted for but "after it's sold, we have very little control what happens to the marijuana," Director Lewis Koski said.

Police agencies seized nearly 2 tons of Colorado weed from drivers who had intended to take it to 36 other states in 2014, the year legal pot shops opened, according to the Rocky Mountain High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area, a federally funded drug task force. By comparison, they seized less than a ton in 2009.

U.S. postal inspectors seized about 470 pounds of Colorado pot from the mail in 2014, up from 57 pounds in 2010, according to the task force, whose findings are based on voluntary submissions from law enforcement agencies and are largely anecdotal.

Some operations are more sophisticated, like the one in which authorities say 32 people used skydiving planes and posed as licensed medical marijuana caregivers and small business owners to export tens of thousands of pounds of pot grown in Denver warehouses, usually to Minnesota. The organization made more than \$12 million over four years, according to a state indictment.

When they busted illegal pot farms in southern Colorado in September, state and federal agents found 28 guns, more than 1,000 plants and \$25,000 in cash.

A local UPS facility intercepts about 50 pounds of pot headed out of state each week, said Todd Reeves of the Colorado Drug Investigators Association. "We don't have the resources," he said, "to be able to go after every single one of these cases."



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