

# Together AZ

MAY 2016

Inspiring Success on the Road to Recovery

## Older Adults' Health often at Risk from too many Medications

By Celia Vimont, Staff Writer Join Together

The growing population of older adults who are taking many medications prescribed by different doctors, combined with the growing opioid epidemic, is contributing to the increasing problem of drug misuse among the elderly, according to Harry Hanoutunian, MD, Director of the Professional Program at the Betty Ford Center.



Join Together asked Dr. Haroutunian about how children and caregivers of older adults can recognize drug misuse, how they can differentiate it from signs of normal aging, and what they can do about it. Dr. Haroutunian is the author of *Not As Prescribed: Recognizing and Facing Alcohol and Drug Misuse in Older Adults*.

**Why is the rate of drug misuse rising among older adults?**

**Dr. Hanoutunian:** An estimated 10,000 people per day are turning 65 in the United States. Many of them visit different providers to treat different problems, so they end up with a combination of pills (called *polypharmacy*), each with their own side effects. They don't have anyone monitoring all of the drugs they are taking. They may be taking different drugs from different doctors to treat the same condition.

We are also caught up in the middle of an opiate epidemic, and many older people have pain that is being treated with dangerous drugs.

The problem isn't all due to prescription drugs. Some of the most common over-the-counter drugs can cause memory problems, such as antihistamines like Benadryl, Advil PM and Tylenol PM.

**How can you tell if your parent's memory loss or odd behavior may be due to normal aging, dementia or mixing of prescription drugs?**

**Dr. Haroutunian:** That is almost impossible to evaluate so long as a patient is taking a steady stream of medication combinations on a daily basis. A caregiver should work with their doctor to do an assessment of all medications the patient is taking — including over-the-counter medications and supplements. Bring everything to the doctor's office for a thorough medication audit.

Most major medical centers have memory evaluation clinics. They will first wean the person off all medications, and then conduct the testing. This can often distinguish benign memory problems, which are a normal part of the aging process, from dementia.

Adults continued page 5

## Making Amends Heals Relationships

By Allen Nohre, Terros Health

Making amends for one's alcohol and drug behavior is an extremely satisfying part of recovery from addiction. Amends can heal relationships, but they are not always easy to make. Addiction behavior can cause harm to others. The outcome of this behavior can sometimes result in shattered relationships, law breaking, and physical abuse. Amends are more than just apologies. The Eighth Step of the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous calls for making a list of all persons who have been harmed during the addiction and making amends with them. An apology is telling a person you are sorry you spent the \$1,000 they gave you on drugs, while making amends is actually paying the money back.

The Ninth Step describes taking action to make amends with those people who were impacted during the addiction, except for when doing so would cause more hurt. Making an amend that heals requires honesty, caring and thoughtfulness. The making amends process can benefit from the guidance of a sponsor or counselor.

Sobriety and a commitment to recovery is the first step. Terros Health has specialized in outpatient and residential treatment programs to help get recovery started.

To learn more about amends, I interviewed three people, Marla, Ross and Tim, whose amends greatly contributed to their recovery. Their touching stories help us better understand amends, the courage it takes to make them, and the joy of renewed relationships and freedom once the amends have been made.

### We are a Family Again



In early December, Marla's apartment was decorated for Christmas and ready for a weekend with her children. It was the very first time Marla and her six children, ages two to thirteen, had been together as a family. "It was the best weekend of my life," Marla said. It was because of Marla's courageous decision to stop using drugs that made this reunion possible.

After Marla and her husband divorced six years ago, he received custody of their two children. "For the next six years, I used drugs excessively and fractured my relationship with my family. Sadly, drugs were more important than my family. I had a boyfriend who was my drug partner and the father of my next four children. Eventually, I was homeless, pregnant, and frightened, walking the streets with my little

children. Fortunately, the Department of Child Safety learned about our dire situation and took care of my four children.

Marla was then referred to *Terros Health's Families FIRST* program for substance use treatment and recovery. She was sober for a short period of time, but then went back to using. Finally, after realizing she needed residential treatment to make a serious attempt to get off of drugs, Marla entered Phoenix Rescue Mission on July 22, 2013.

"I knew in my heart I was going to change," Marla said. "That's my sobriety date, as well as the day I called my mother and said I was going to change. Of course my parents had heard that before, but this time I knew in my heart it was true."

Six months later, she re-enrolled in Families FIRST and continued her recovery work with the help of clinician April Brown. Marla couldn't find enough words of praise for April. "April is a professional with experience helping parents like me," Marla said. "She showed me how to advocate for myself and for my children. She never gave up on me and that helped me to not give up on myself. Without the support I received at Terros Health and, especially from April, I might have slipped."

Marla began to make amends and re-establish a relationship with her parents. According to Marla, "When I was my deep into my addiction, I continually hurt my parents and refused their attempts to help me. I accused them of pushing me away. Of course, that wasn't true; I was rejecting them. I hadn't spoken to them in two years when I entered rehab. In the midst of my addiction, they had finally given up on me. All trust between us was broken."

She wrote to them every week during her residential treatment. After rehab, enough trust had been established for Marla to move in with her parents while her children remained with their DCS foster parents. She continued with outpatient treatment three days a week at Terros Health and attended Narcotics Anonymous.

Now, after nearly three years of sobriety, and proving she is capable of being a good mother, her four youngest children live with her full-time. During the day, Marla's mother takes care of the children while Marla works as a Head Chiropractic Assistant. "Because of the trust we've built between us and our commitment to the kids, it is working well," Marla said. "At times it is hectic with four young kids, but it seems normal and manageable."

AMENDS continued page 8

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## Publisher's Note

By Barbara Nicholson-Brown

### What I Love About Sobriety

*When I first sobered up I was frightened, the 'too scared to live and too scared to die' feelings overwhelmed me. I was certain that entering a 12 step meeting would mean the end of life as I knew it—and thankfully it was.*

*With a commitment in my heart to stop destroying myself and those who cared about me, something told me everything would have to change — everything, most importantly me.*

*The way I lived was nothing short of reckless and selfish — I was a blamer, a victim and my own worst enemy. Being in blackouts, believing the lies I told myself, and trying to convince anyone who would listen, I wasn't an alcoholic, my motto was "I just over did it again."*

*I remember my bottom like it was last week – and know I do not ever wish to go there again or — ever forget it happened.*

*There isn't enough room on this page if I wrote out the reasons I love sobriety.*

*I've learned what gratitude means; what service is; that asking for help doesn't make me weak; I can tell my story and not feel shame; I've learned the power of forgiveness and being forgiven; that I can't change you or the world to suit my wants and needs; and a connection to a Higher Power is always available when I need it most— it is constant.*

*Today I can lean on you and you can lean on me. We share our history and we laugh and cry and most of all we feel grateful having another chance to do it right. By right, I mean staying on this amazing journey clean and sober. Let's stay on the path together and see what happens next.*

Email me at [aztogether@yahoo.com](mailto:aztogether@yahoo.com)

## From the Needle to the Paintbrush

By Carla D. Miller

In 2009 I found myself in the unfortunate, seemingly hopeless, situation of walking the streets for money to support my heroin habit. I was arrested for prostitution, drugs, and did stints of jail time over the course of a year. Staying in homeless shelters after I got out of jail, I made a promise to I would not let my mother die seeing me strung out. That began my journey on the road to recovery. It's hard to believe six and a half years ago I was standing on the side of the freeway flinging a sign, walking the streets and sleeping in the bushes.



I stumbled onto an amazing agency, National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD). They provided housing for me at Crossroads for Women, where I progressed and became the onsite Maintenance Technician for over four years. This enabled me to participate in their Level 1 Intensive Outpatient Therapy and take GED classes. When I completed treatment, I became a licensed Peer Support Specialist in the State of Arizona.

While still a client at NCADD, I enrolled in Art Awakenings, which gave me the opportunity to discover myself as a painter. Being in recovery has en-



abled me to be involved in a network of dynamic people who believe in giving back and helping one another out at a moment's notice. Through this close network of support, I have been able to start pursuing my true passion of art.

Today I am thrilled to have my first art exhibit at Carly's Bistro from May 5 – June 5 at 128 E. Roosevelt Street in downtown Phoenix.

As a new homeowner, I have my own studio and serene surroundings which allow me to continue pursuing my love of painting.

This past November my dear mother, who was an amazing painter herself, died in her sleep at the age of 95. With much gratitude I fulfilled the promise I made six years ago that I didn't want my mother to die seeing me strung out. The promise is complete, just another one of the many blessings of recovery.

To anyone who find themselves in the seemingly hopeless state of mind and body, let me be a testimony. If you are determined, stick with it and get yourself in the mix with the world of recovery, you will be amazed. I have a saying, "If you play in the mud you're going to get dirty." Jump in and see where it takes you.

**Have a success story? Email to [aztogether@yahoo.com](mailto:aztogether@yahoo.com)**



# Hot Topics

## PCS Young Adult Intensive Summer Programs

PCS Young Adult Intensives are targeted to single young adults ages 18 to 25. In this six day intensive, participants will connect with other young adults in group therapy. Also, time will be spent in individual sessions focusing on overcoming personal obstacles inhibiting them from being the person they want to be. PCS provides a safe and challenging environment for individuals and families to receive restoration and healing.

### What Young Adults and their Families can expect

PCS is staffed by a team of highly trained and nationally recognized mental health professionals. Our team concept delivers a powerful balance of compassion, support, and challenge that is action oriented and results focused. Each young adult's treatment is personalized and progress monitored. This commitment to their care, the diversity of professional skills, and integration of a systems approach to health, restoration, and healing allows PCS to maximize young adult growth even in difficult and challenging situations. June 5-10\* Registration deadline 6/1 Aug. 7-12\* Registration deadline 8/3 \* Space is limited. Deposit required.

To schedule a complimentary pre-intake assessment call Doug Withrow, Kris Keul, Cristine Toel or Catherine Asber at **480-947-5739**. [www.pcsearle.com](http://www.pcsearle.com).

### Can One Counseling Session in the ER Help Reduce Opioid Misuse?

A single 30-minute session with a trained therapist during an emergency room visit can motivate people who misused prescription opioid painkillers to reduce their use, a new study concluded.

In the six months after their ER visit, patients were less likely to misuse opioid drugs. They also reduced risky behavior that could lead to an opioid overdose. In contrast, a group of similar patients who did not receive counseling did not have as much of a drop in opioid misuse and risky behavior.

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- Discovery To Recovery: For Couples Healing From Sex Addiction

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



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The therapists conducting the counseling sessions used a technique called motivational interviewing, which helps people understand the risks they face from drug use. They learn about the factors that can increase that risk, such as drinking alcohol or taking other drugs such as benzodiazepines while they are taking painkillers. The technique is designed to help people increase their desire and commitment to change their behavior.

The study included 204 adult patients who had reported opioid misuse in the past three months. They were randomly assigned to receive moti-

vational interviewing by a therapist, along with standard care, or standard educational care alone.

Patients who had a motivational interview had a 40.5 percent drop in risky behavior, and a 50 percent reduction in non-medical use of opioids after six months. In contrast, among those receiving standard educational care, 14.7 percent had a reduction in risky behavior, and 39.5 percent had a decrease in non-medical use of opioids.

Findings are published in Drug and Alcohol Dependence. ([www.drugandalcoholdependence.com/article](http://www.drugandalcoholdependence.com/article))

"It's very promising that we see a reduction in risky behavior with this brief, one-time intervention, among people who weren't seeking treatment for their opioid use but had a history of non-medical use of these drugs," lead researcher Dr. Amy Bohnert said in a news release. "Further research is needed to understand if this leads to longer term impact on health."

### Scientists Warn about Mental Health Consequences of Using Marijuana

A group of scientists in the United States, United Kingdom, Europe and Australia is warning about the potential mental health consequences of marijuana use, *The Guardian* reports. They say frequent use of marijuana increases the risk of psychotic disorders in vulnerable people.

The scientists are calling for global

public health campaigns to warn the public about marijuana's risks. They say the vast majority of people who smoke marijuana do not develop psychotic disorders. But those who do can suffer from hallucinations, delusions and irrational behavior. Most people recover from these episodes, but some go on to develop schizophrenia, the article notes. Heavy marijuana use is associated with an increased risk.

"It's not sensible to wait for absolute proof that cannabis is a component cause of psychosis," said Sir Robin Murray, Professor of Psychiatric Research at King's College London. "There's already ample evidence to warrant public education around the risks of heavy use of cannabis, particularly the high-potency varieties. For many reasons, we should have public warnings."

HOT TOPICS — page 10

## Adolescent and Young Adult Specialists



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# Failure to Launch and Addiction

By Michael Rass



(Photo: George Hodan)

The film comedy **Step Brothers** is the story of 39-year-old Brennan Huff (played by Will Ferrell) and 40-year-old Dale Doback (played by John C. Reilly) both of whom are still living at home. They are very immature and show no intention of moving toward living independently.

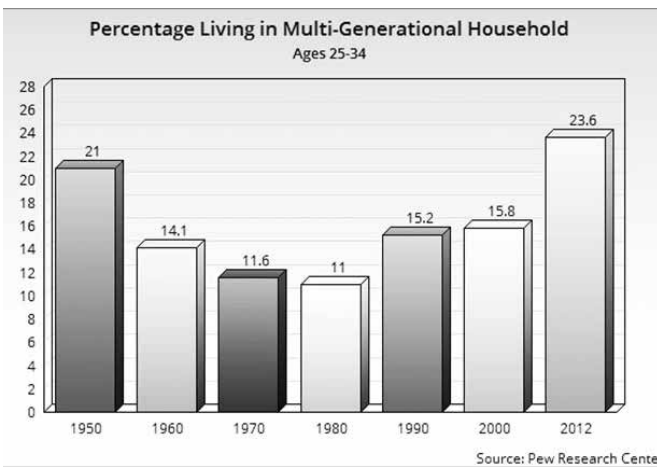
The 2008 movie satirized the “*failure to launch*” phenomenon, a situation in which young people appear unable to leave the security of the parental home to begin living independently. A corollary trend are the “boomerang kids,” who move out but fail to become independent and return home to live with their parents again.

The millennial generation (defined as people born between the early 1980s and the early 2000s) in particular has been staying in the family home much longer than previous generation.

## The many reasons for this trend

Today’s 18-34-year-olds face tremendous financial insecurity combined with a challenging job market. The skyrocketing cost of a college education has led to formidable indebtedness. Millennials also tend to postpone marriage or stay single. Home ownership hasn’t been this low since the 1960s.

At the same time, the young adult population is increasing in size. In 2015, there were nearly 3



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million more adults ages 18 to 34 than there were in 2007.

Over the course of the recent recession and recovery the share of young adults living independently declined. Pew Research Center data indicates that in the “first third of 2015, 67 percent of Millennials were living independently, compared with 69 percent of 18-34-year-olds living apart from family in 2010 and 71 percent in 2007. Most of the decline in independent living since 2007 can be attributed to more young adults living in their parents’ homes. In the first third of 2015, 26 percent of Millennials lived with their parents. At the beginning of the recovery in 2010, 24 percent of young adults were living with parents, and in 2007 only 22 percent were.”

Often there is a perceived lack of purpose which combined with the failure to achieve independence can lead to feelings of anger and anxiety as well as inadequacy and aimlessness.

If the young person has not developed the emotional maturity to deal confidently which life’s challenges, this state of mind can all too easily lead to substance abuse. Failure to launch and substance use disorders are often closely interlinked. The substance use can suppress all motivation to go out and seek an independent life. On the other hand, the anxiety caused by the failure to find a job or finish a college degree can lead to self-medication with illicit drugs or alcohol.

Once the serious consequences of drug abuse become apparent, it becomes even harder for the young adult to strike out on their own. If life has become unmanageable because of substance use, managing a household or a career is no longer possible.

Sometimes, the substance abuse is the reason the parents ask the young adult to come back home. They want to help but might be defensive about seeking treatment because they feel stigmatized (“what does that say about us as parents?”).

If the substance use disorder is severe, parents can easily be overwhelmed and residential treatment is often the best option. If failure to launch is an important factor in an SUD, it needs to be addressed as part of a comprehensive treatment approach.


Decision Point Center employs a Emotional Maturity & Motivation model designed to help young people develop the mentality to successfully gain momentum in life. Our mission is not just cessation but engagement. Stopping substance abuse and misuse is essential to restoring health. At Decision Point, we recognize the symptoms of failure to launch and address these in our 90-day residential treatment program.

*Michael Rass is an experienced broadcast and web journalist with a passion for global humanitarian issues, and policies and practices affecting the health of individuals and communities. In addition to Michael’s extensive reporting background, he also consults on digital and social media (@mikerass). Michael also does first-hand reporting and writes articles for Decision Point Center about alcohol and drug addiction treatment, the societal and cultural impact of the illegal drug epidemic in the US and abroad, and healthcare policy regarding treatment of drug abuse and co-occurring mental health disorders.*

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# The Pharaoh Chewed Juicy Fruit

By Alan Cohen

While visiting Egypt, a member our tour group named Gloria found an unusual stone at the base of a sacred pyramid. The pink, round stone glowed with a mystical light, and as she held it in her hand she could feel a special energy about it. She wondered if it had been used by ancient priests for healing, or perhaps even adorned the headdress of a pharaoh.

Immediately Gloria stole off to a private place and began to meditate, stone in hand. Psychically she asked for images of the sacred ceremonies the stone may have once been used for. After a few minutes she was amazed to feel that the stone getting softer. Visions of alchemy flooded her consciousness; perhaps this stone was magic, a shape-shifter, transforming with prayer.

As Gloria continued to meditate, the stone became even softer, to the point of being slightly gooey. Gloria could wait no longer; she looked down to see what the stone had become, only to find long pink strands stretching across her hand. The stone was a wad of chewing gum.

Our minds are powerful indeed, powerful enough to connect with God through a wad of chewing gum. What, then, is sacred, but that which we use to focalize our sacred thoughts? Everything is potentially sacred or profane, depending on how we think about it. As Shakespeare said, “thinking makes it so.”

True alchemy takes place in our minds. We transform lead into gold, devils into gods, and fear into triumph, by choosing vision that matches our intentions. A mystic finds God in the strangest places: As Blake penned, *“To see a World in a Grain of Sand, And a Heaven in a Wild Flower, Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand, And Eternity in an hour.”*

You and I might be in heaven right now and

not even know it because we are paying attention to hell. We may be in the midst of great love, caring, and healing light. God may be in the person sitting next to us on the bus or the presidential candidate we didn’t vote for or even the security guard who tickets cars at the airport. God might even be in you just as you are.

The mind is capable of creating vast yet contradictory realities, demonstrable by our experience. A woman with multiple personalities was severely allergic to citrus in one personality (she would break out in profuse hives), yet utterly unaffected by citrus in another personality. A man had diabetes in one personality, requiring him to take insulin supplements; in another personality he was perfectly healthy; if he took insulin in that personality, it would have killed him. Perhaps this man is symbolic of all of us, who are healthy by nature, but via societal training, have taken on belief systems that make us feel and act smaller than we are.

The game of life is won by finding beauty and good wherever we go, no matter what opinion or appearances would indicate. Free will means that we may choose our viewing point on the universe and live in the world our view has generated. God has decided to explore creation through billions of different vantage points (called you and me) for the fun of infinite self-discovery. One poet said that “God is a flower that grew a nose to smell itself.”

The story is told about a man who went to India to find a certain saint he had heard about. The man traveled far and wide, putting together bits and pieces of information. Finally he found his way to an obscure village where a shopkeeper told him that indeed the saint lived in that town, where he sat by a certain tree.

Eagerly the pilgrim rushed to the tree and found a man who fit the description. When he tried to converse with the man, however, the “saint” was disheveled and drunk. Put off by the erroneous information he had been given, the pilgrim returned to the shopkeeper and complained

“Oh, that was the saint, alright,” the shopkeeper insisted.

“But the man was drunk!” the pilgrim protested.

“Yes, he does drink a lot. But if you had stayed with him for a while, you would have heard great wisdom. You see, he is an enlightened soul who had but one more lesson to learn, compassion for those who drink. So he took that experience on to complete all of his earthly lessons. Besides that one habit, he is an utter genius. If you could see beyond that one trait, you would have found your saint.”

And so it is with all of us. As we set out on our year, we recognize that everyone’s garden has both weeds and flowers. We all have things about us could be used for condemnation or redemption. Nothing is any one way, and everything is a matter of viewing point. We make or break our lives with our thoughts. Yet God is in everything, and we find God if we look. Who knows, maybe the Pharaoh chewed Juicy Fruit?

Rumi said, “Beyond your ideas of right and wrong, there is a field. Meet me there.”



Alan Cohen is the author the new bestseller *A Course in Miracles Made Easy: Mastering the Journey from Fear to Love*. Join Alan in Hawaii for a life-changing retreat, *Destiny Calls*, June 10-15. For more information about this program, his free daily inspirational quotes, online courses, and weekly radio show, visit [www.alancohen.com](http://www.alancohen.com).

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Adults from page 1

What is the best way to approach a parent if you think they need help weaning off painkillers?

**Dr. Haroutunian:** Taking too many painkillers can cause forgetfulness like leaving the stove or iron on. The disease of addiction can sneak into this situation quietly, and can escalate in no time at all. Your mother can be taking Vicodin for pain, and having a glass or two of sherry in the afternoons, and when no one is around she falls and breaks her hip.

If you are concerned about your parent’s use of painkillers, you will need the doctor’s help to do an accurate assessment of how much they are taking. With this information, the doctor can predict whether the person can be safely tapered from the medication, or whether they will likely exhibit some withdrawal effects. Weaning someone off pain medication should always be done under medical supervision—you should never just hide the pain pills.

Why is it so important to catch an older person’s polypharmacy early?

**Dr. Haroutunian:** Many signs that people assume are those of early aging, such as memory loss, forgetfulness, and the inability to perform tasks of daily living, could be caused by medication.

.....  
**“The disease of addiction can sneak into this situation quietly, and can escalate in no time at all.”**  
.....

We want to catch this at an early stage, before this combination of drugs affects the organs, particularly the liver. What we take yesterday may still be in our system today, and taking more every day has an additive effect. It taxes the liver’s ability to detoxify the body.

What advice do you have for caregivers of older adults who are concerned about their loved one’s medication use?

**Dr. Haroutunian:** Aging is not a disease. Older people deserve the right to live their golden years in a state of awareness and vibrancy. They shouldn’t be in bed taking different medications. After caring for my mother in my home for 25 years, I experienced the beauty and joy of seeing her in vibrant health, and the meaningful work that was required when her health was failing. I commend all caregivers in doing this noble task. I wish them a sense of awareness that keeps their loved ones as safe as possible.



# Fetal Alcohol Syndrome is Preventable

## NCADD Healthy Connections for Moms-To-Be

**Services include:**

- Education
- Case management
- Peer support
- Outreach and engagement
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# Trust and Intuition

By Carrie Schubert

Our intuition develops more the longer we are sober. As the inner chatter minimalizes, we begin to hear and feel the connection we have with a ‘Higher Power.’

As I begin to trust and rely on a power greater than me, I become aware of the sensations in my body when I’m heading in a direction or on a path that isn’t right for me. I begin to trust the feelings instead of analyzing and dismissing them.

When I’m upset — whether frightened or angry — it’s hard to see what choices are available. How can you see clearly through a dust storm of fear or anger? If I bring it back to faith of a ‘Higher Power’ that has my back, I can remain calm enough to see there are choices in front of me. They say the path gets narrower. That is so true.

### Stopping the Chatter

The advantage to staying clean and sober is that I get to be aware of my

thinking, it becomes loud and clear. I realize I am not my thinking and I don’t always have to act on it. If the dialogue in my head is self-deprecating, I can notice it and not have to buy into it. It is possible to actually ‘change the channel’ and replace our thinking with a pleasant outcome or visualization of a happy place; beach, mountains, waterfall.

Taking a walk, hike, or run and focusing on my surroundings, helps to bring me back to where my feet are and gives me a calming effect.

In early sobriety, my head was not my friend. It was the voice of a critical and judgmental person. It was the kind of dialogue that would put me into a funk. They were the thoughts that would always tell me the worst case scenario. With a lot of practice, the only voice that speaks loud and clear, is the one that’s loving, supportive, and encouraging. Try it and practice, practice, practice.



Carrie is in long term sobriety and the author of **In The Wake of Lies**. She is also a clairvoyant/psychic consultant, medium, and certified hypnotherapist. For more visit [carrieschubert.com](http://carrieschubert.com).



# LIFE 101

By COACH CARY BAYER [www.carybayer.com](http://www.carybayer.com)

## Star Wars, the Force, & YOU

**S**tar Wars: The Force Awakens has become America’s highest grossing film, and is moving at light speed to being the highest grossing film worldwide, too.

The franchise has featured Yoda, one of my all-time favorite spiritual cinema characters. This gnome-like lookalike could have been called Yoga, as he esoterically taught Luke Skywalker about consciousness and its latent abilities. The pint-sized 800-year-old guru showed Luke many latent super-human abilities: telepathy, clairvoyance and psycho kinesis. What’s more, Luke learns how to influence the minds of and intuit the feelings of others, and even levitate. In battle, he senses his opponent’s moves, and can engage in combat for hours without getting fatigued. Like the X-Man Wolverine, he can heal physical injuries, and quickly at that.

### George Lucas & Yogi Patanjali

The Yoga Sutras, written by Yogi Patanjali some 1600 years ago, records similar skills that can be developed through sanyama, Sanskrit for subtle intention from consciousness settled in the steadiness in the Transcendent.

The Jedi Knight Luke must kill his evil father Anakin (Darth Vader), who’s so seduced by the Force’s dark side, that he lives behind a black mask, becoming more machine than man. Obi-Wan taught Luke that Jedis “were the guardians of peace and justice in the Old Republic.”

Luke’s killing of his father echoes what the Bhagavad Gita’s military hero Arjuna had to do to his cousins and uncles, who were spreading evil throughout the land. Arjuna is encouraged to justly kill out of dharma, or purpose, in society to protect it from evil. Luke must do the same, and succeeds in destroying his evil father in the series’ third film.

Yoda, teaching his Jedi disciple the power of commitment, says, “Do or don’t do. There’s no trying.” He’s about results, not efforts or wishy-washy waffling. But he’s not just teaching commitment, he’s also teaching conscious use of language. He doesn’t want the word “try” entering into Luke’s consciousness or pass through his mouth as speech.

### The Force

“**May the Force be with you,**” the saga reminds us. The Force actually always is with you. It’s only your unconscious thoughts, speech, and action that make it appear as if you’re disconnected from it. Since the Force pervades our being, not having it be with you is much like a fish not having water be with it. Not only does the Force pervade our being; it is our being, but that insight

.....  
**“Fear is the path to the Dark Side. Fear leads to anger, anger leads to hate, hate leads to suffering.”**

**— Yoda**  
.....

dawns only in the highest state of consciousness. When you live consciously connected to the Force life flows like a river, and the Universe works to fulfill your desires. As Luke’s other teacher—Obi-Wan Kenobi—tells him, “*The Force obeys your commands.*”

To Obi-Wan, the Force “surrounds us and penetrates us. It binds the galaxy together.” Like the Tao, an interpenetration of light and dark forces, it has a light side and a dark. Yoda teaches Luke that he’ll know the difference between the Light and the Dark sides of it when he is “calm, at peace.” He adds:

“For my ally is the Force. And a powerful ally it is. Life creates it, makes it grow. Its energy surrounds us and binds us...You must feel the Force around you. Here, between you...me...the tree...the rock...everywhere! Yes, even between the land and the ship!”

Yoda also added, “Fear is the path to the Dark Side. Fear leads to anger, anger leads to hate, hate leads to suffering.” This is the temptation that Luke’s father Anakin Skywalker succumbed to.

Yoda’s teaching is reminiscent of Krishna’s teaching in the Bhagavad Gita. As Krishna said,

“These bodies are known to have an end; the dweller in the body is eternal, imperishable, infinite, Therefore, O Bharata, fight!” (Maharishi Mahesh Yogi translation)

It’s obvious that Lucas intended Star Wars to be a political, military, and spiritual saga. He read some 50 books on religion preparing for his tale. His greatest influence him was mythologist Joseph Campbell, especially his A Hero with a Thousand Faces. As Lucas said, “The stories I found most interesting are stories of Zen education or the Zen master teaching a pupil how to transcend physical prowess into some kind of mental process. That’s what all the training sequences are about.”

*Cary is life coach specializing in helping people create breakthroughs in their finances, careers, relationships, and sense of purpose. Be sure to visit [carybayer.com](http://carybayer.com).*

believe  
you can  
and  
you’re halfway  
there.





# Are You Here YET?

By Dr. Dina Evan

I recently talked to a person who had 700 friends on Facebook, friends to whom she told everything, in vivid detail, ...daily. Before I knew they “Were the center of her life,” I blabbed on about how we don’t really connect with each other any more and how Facebook makes that harder. Her face turned the shade of hot steam and she left the table with a glance back over her shoulder that screamed, You know nothing. You are old! Part of that was true. I am old.

When it comes to connecting however, I do know some things. I first learned the importance of connected relationships, or the lack of them from, growing up in an empty room filled with beer cans and sinks filled with unwashed dishes.

The first relationship I ever had was with my self, and a tiny spider who sprinted from linoleum tile to linoleum tile across the bathroom floor, in a space otherwise known as my hideout. At the ripe old age of four or five I was listening to the voice inside and trying to understand feelings I couldn’t even name. Now, I invite the feelings in for tea and we talk...why are you here, what do you want, how can I help?

I learned early on, that the most important relationship one can have is the one we have with our self and it has to be based in truth or we can and do con ourselves into a mess it could take a lifetime to clean up. I also learned not to lie. My mom and Dad were liars and the cost of that was the loss of any safety.

I wasn’t always present in my own life or anyone else’s. However, I learned that you miss the gold when you’re absent. Whether it’s with a family member, a friend or a beloved, nothing that ignites your heart, expands your soul or pushes your spirit forward can happen if you are not truly present. That means you need a willingness and the ability to be uncomfortable temporarily with the unfamiliar, scary or hurtful feelings such as loss, betrayal or disappointment. Yes, it can be hard, and the truth is that I have never lost a client, friend or family member to a feeling.

And more importantly, no feeling can be resolved or healed unless we embrace it. Feelings are temporary and most of the time feelings ARE NOT FACTS, even if we act as if they are. If you are not willing to embrace all your feelings — all of which are normal including the ones you dislike — there is no way to be present in your life or anyone else’s. So if you really want the gold in your life and relationships, you have to learn how to embrace and process your feelings. Here are some simple tools.

*I learned early on, that the most important relationship one can have is the one we have with our self and it has to be based in truth or we can and do con ourselves into a mess it could take a lifetime to clean up.*

- **First breathe and then identify the feeling.**

Name it and literally invite it into your awareness. Ask it to sit on the couch with you. Your mind doesn’t know that isn’t really happening and it allows you to feel separate, not be engulfed by the feeling so that you can explore it better.

- **Second, ask yourself what percentage of the feeling is from the past and how much is present day.**

Once you identify that, you can make a decision about what to do. You can store the feeling from the past until you feel safe enough to work on it with a friend, a sponsor or a therapist. Create a little safe box or room in your head to store the feelings in and lock it until you feel safer. This is called Emotional EQ or learning to safely process emotions no matter what you experience.

Then, you can explore what steps you need to take in the moment, to deal with the part of the issue that is a now concern. Under almost every feeling, there is a fear that is creating the feeling. When you identify the fear, you will be able to decide whether it is real or imagined and what you need to do about it.

When you are able to embrace and process your own emotions, you will feel much safer in sitting with the emotions of those you love. You can only help heal another to the same extent you have helped yourself. After a while the process becomes easier and you’ll be excited as you watch yourself resolve old feelings from the past that no longer bother you. When you do that, there is much more room for joy! Showing up for yourself opens the door to showing up for others in a profound way that deepens your connection and the amount of love in your life.



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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AMENDS from page 1

Marla makes it clear that making amends and building trust with her parents is an ongoing process. “We’ve made wonderful progress and we are a great family, but sometimes there is concern,” she said. “For example, last night, my Dad asked me if I had seen my former boyfriend, who is the father of my four youngest children. My parents have some understandable fear that I will get back with him and do drugs again. There’s no way I will do that. I have a full-time job, I’m a full-time mom, and I’ve changed from being an addict to a recovering addict.”

Marla has also made amends with her former husband, the father of her two oldest children. She’s had honest, heart-to-heart conversations with him and told him, “When I was using drugs, I accused you of trying to take the two kids from me. Now I know that wasn’t true. You were doing what you could to protect our children from my erratic drug-affected behavior.”

At one point, Marla was struggling to make child support payments and was \$12,000 behind. “Out of the blue, my former husband went to court and had my child support payments nullified. He said, ‘Let’s wipe the slate clean and start from scratch.’ I was shocked and thankful.”

“I am so grateful to my Mom and Dad, my loving and understanding children, my former husband, April Brown, and to many others who have supported me in my recovery,” Marla said. “They have responded to my amends and now our relationships are healing and becoming healthy. I have also made amends with myself. I am finally able to lovingly re-connect with the true me.”

Marla is a Head Chiropractic Assistant at a health clinic.

An Amend Gives Ross Freedom



Ross is an active member of Alcoholic Anonymous and has been sober for 42 years. However, in his 16th year of sobriety and recovery, he hit a crisis. He had been following the Twelve Steps of AA, including Step Eight, making a list of persons he had harmed when he was drinking, and Step Nine, making direct amends to those people, but there was a big amend he had not made. Sixteen years earlier, while he was drinking heavily, he had destroyed a place of business.

“I was hired to start a fire that destroyed a construction company building,” Ross said. “Through the years, I couldn’t find a way to start the amends for what I had done. I just prayed about it”

Sixteen years later, Ross was leading an AA meeting, when he met a new member. He asked the new member to lunch and found out he was from Ross’s hometown. In fact, the new member lived on the same street where the construction company was located.

In a moment of openness, Ross said to him, “I have a very uncomfortable feeling when that street is mentioned because I started a fire there back in 1963.” As he said that, Ross saw the shocked look on his lunch partner’s face. His lunch partner grimaced and said, “That building was my father’s construction company and I have always said I would kill the S.O.B who did it if I ever met him.” Ross said he was so shook-up and frightened that he could hardly speak. “It was probably because we were brothers in AA that the two of us managed to continue a civil, but awkward conversation,” Ross said.

That evening, Ross read and re-read Steps Eight and Nine, spoke with his sponsor, and asked for a discussion of Steps Eight and Nine at the AA meeting the next morning. Listening to the discussion, Ross came to the conclusion that he needed to try making amends with the owner. Also, now the owner’s son was now carrying a secret that was Ross’s responsibility. He said, “I felt God was instructing me on how to make this amend.”

After the son consulted with his sponsor, he gave Ross his dad’s phone number. Ross was fully aware that the result of this phone call could be prison for him, because there was no statute of limitation on arson.

Ross remembers that when he reached for the phone he began to cry. He said, “My cry was a deep, guttural sob and I told God this going to any length to make amends is so, so hard.” When he got control of himself, Ross dialed the number and a man answered.

The moment of truth had arrived for Ross. Despite his apprehension, he

said, “Sir, my name is Ross and I just met your son in AA. He knows why I am calling and he gave me your number. Sir, I know that in 1963 you had a fire at your construction company. I am calling to tell you that I was the one who started it. I never, until now, had a way of approaching you. I want to make amends for what I did, even if that means going to prison.”

There was a long silence on the phone, as the business owner was trying to understand what he had just heard and Ross was anxiously wondering what the man was going to say. Ross said, “When he began to speak I could hear and feel the emotion in his voice and then I was stunned by what he said.”

The voice on the other end of the line said, “Ross, calling me after all of these years takes guts. I’m sure you paid dearly for your actions, and I have no ill feelings toward you. I believe it is very important that you’ve met my son and he will need your kind of courage to stay sober. You are an example for him. Ross, you can sleep in good conscience. Please continue to follow your God’s instructions and enjoy your sobriety.”

After Ross recovered from hearing this unbelievably good news, he called his new AA friend, the owner’s son, and thanked him for helping him with this very difficult amend.

Thinking back on this incredible experience, Ross reflected, “For 16 years I had lived in fear. If a cop pulled me over for a broken taillight, I panicked and this fear was holding me back from being free. My fear left me, and my burden was lifted. This whole experience, including the coincidence of meeting the owner’s son, had everything to do with guidance from my Higher Power. It was a miracle in my life. During my 42 years in AA, I have seen other miracles like these.”

Ross is a Peer Health and Wellness Coach at Terros Health.

Some Amends Require Cash and Some Take Time



Tim began his recovery from a chaotic and destructive life of methamphetamine addiction more than five years ago.

“My life was crashing down on me,” Tim said. “I had stolen a car, and had a court order for more than \$20,000 of restitution — money I didn’t have. I was looking at about three years of prison. I tried outpatient treatment but kept using. I admitted myself to residential treatment, but I was high on the day I walked in, and I left in two days. My life got more chaotic and I became more desperate. Every day I would resolve not to use meth, and every evening I would get back from construction work and use again.

“My probation officer again told me I needed residential treatment. I finally admitted myself to the Terros Health Maverick House residential treatment program. That day was the beginning of my new life as I committed myself to using the Twelve Steps of recovery.



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“To keep my recovery going, I attend several groups every week and talk to my sponsor frequently. I have a passion to bring the message that recovery is absolutely possible. I lead a group at the Salvation Army and one at Tent City, and I help others by being their sponsor.”

Tim was enjoying his new life without the misery and chaos of methamphetamines. But, the court order of \$20,000 restitution was still hanging over his head. Then an amazing thing happened — Tim inherited \$20,000. He was now facing a critical ethical decision. Tim was familiar with Steps Eight and Nine, the process of making amends for any harm he had done, but he wanted to use the money to buy a Harley motorcycle. With the guidance of his sponsor, he decided the right thing to do was to make amends by paying the restitution.

“I was relieved,” Tim said. “The restitution was paid off and the heavy burden was off of me. I knew I did the right thing. In fact, it was what I had to do for myself.”

Amends don’t always bring immediate reconciliation. With nearly a year of sobriety, Tim went to his son, who was in his mid-20s, to make amends for being such a lousy father during all those years of using methamphetamine. His son’s initial response was reserved. He listened to his dad and said, “You’ve told me you are sorry so many times, and I am skeptical.” Then he added, “Dad, we’re good.” Rebuilding the relationship took a while as Tim continued to grow in his recovery. Now they have a good relationship and Tim loves visiting his son and grandchildren.

Tim also had another amend to make — he had not seen or talked to his dad since he was 17-years-old. His dad had been a heavy drinker and Tim didn’t know if he was dead or alive. One day, out of the blue, Tim’s half-brother called and shocked Tim by saying, “Dad is here.” Tim could hear his dad in the background say something like why would I want to talk to that S.O.B., but they got on the phone and his dad asked if he wanted to meet for breakfast.

“On a Saturday morning I was driving to the restaurant, crying and telling my sponsor on my cell phone, ‘I don’t want to do this.’ When I did my Fourth Step, my father was my number one resentment. My sponsor said, ‘Take this opportunity to make amends.’ I parked my car and saw a man waiting outside. My father had been a big burly man. The man in front of the restaurant was much older and smaller than I had remembered. When he saw me, we both started crying. We talked about many things and I learned my dad had stopped drinking 27 years ago.

The tried and true principles of recovery are the center of Tim’s life. Interestingly, his dad is sober but has never gone to recovery groups. However, Tim was thrilled and deeply touched when his father came to Tim’s recovery group on the anniversary of his fourth year of sobriety. His father saw Tim get his four-year chip, and his father came the next year and saw Tim get his five-year chip.

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Tim concluded our conversation by saying, “I now have a normal life like I’ve always wanted. My dad is proud of me and I am happy to have him, my son, and my grandchildren back in my life. And I’m doing ordinary things, like paying my bills. My normal life is so amazing and satisfying.”

Tim is a Facilities Technician at Terros Health

Thanks to Marla, Ross and Tim for sharing their amends experiences.



About the Author

Allen Nohre is a writer for Terros Health. Terros Health provides culturally responsive, integrated and evidence-based

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**Clinical Breakfast Series** — First Wednesday of the month from 8-9 a.m. **St. Luke's Behavioral Health** Trends and treatments in the behavioral health field, one CEU. St. Luke's Behavioral Health Center Auditorium. 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.**

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**SIERRA TUCSON— Alumni Groups.** Scottsdale, Tuesdays, 6:00-7:00 p.m. **Valley Presbyterian Church** 6947 E. McDonald Drive Paradise Valley, AZ. (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 information contact: Rob L. at 602-339-4244 or [STSCOTTSDALEALUMNI@GMAIL.COM](mailto: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. and 6:30-8p.m. Transformation Institute. 4202 N. 32nd St., Suite J, Phoenix.

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**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.

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**WOMEN FOR SOBRIETY** — [www.womenforsobriety.org](http://www.womenforsobriety.org) meeting every Saturday —10am-11:30am. All Saints of the Desert Episcopal Church-9502 W. Hutton Drive. Sun City, AZ 85351. Christy (602) 316-5136

**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.

**COTTONWOOD TUCSON. ALUMNI**—Ongoing: 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.** [cottonwood-tucson.com](http://cottonwood-tucson.com)

**ACOA** Thursdays, 7:00 p.m., North Scottsdale United Methodist Church, 11735 N. Scottsdale Rd., Scottsdale. [www.aca.arizona.org](http://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. Classroom A (Follow the signs). Michael **520-419-6723.**

**Overeaters Anonymous** - 12 Step program for addictions to food and food behaviors. 18 meetings scheduled per week. **520-733-0880** or [www.oa-southernaz.org](http://www.oa-southernaz.org).

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

**Pills Anonymous—Glendale** Tues. 7-8:00 pm. HealthSouth Stroke 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., 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. Janice **602-909-8937.**

**CELEBRATE RECOVERY— Chandler Christian Church.** Weekly Fridays 7 p.m. Room B-200. For men and women dealing with chemical or

continued page 13

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# Mental Health Awareness

**National Mental Health Month** raises awareness about mental illness and related issues in the United States. In recent times, attitudes towards mental health issues appear to be changing. Negative attitudes and stigma associated with mental health have reduced and there has been growing acceptance towards mental health issues and support for people with them.

Despite this shift in attitude, the idea of a mental health awareness campaign is not a recent one. In the late 1940's, the first National Mental Health Awareness Week was launched in the United States.

During the 1960's, this annual, weekly campaign was upgraded to a monthly one with May the designated month.

Many mental health problems can be avoided by taking positive lifestyle choices in how we act and think before they can manifest.

An estimated 26.2 percent of Americans ages 18 and older—about one in four adults—suffer from a diagnosable mental illness in any given year. Not only are these adults affected by one mental illness; 45% of these adults meet criteria for two or more disorders.

These range from fairly common mood disorders to the much more serious anxiety and schizophrenia disorders. Among these, anxiety disorders were the most common, as some 40 million American adults ages 18 and older suffer from some form of anxiety disorder. Despite the large number of Americans affected by such disorders, stigma surrounding mental illness is a major barrier that prevents people from seeking the mental health treatment that they need.

Programs during Mental Illness Awareness Week are designed to create community awareness and discussion in an effort to put an end to stigma and advocate for treatment and recovery.

To coincide with Mental Health Awareness month, Other mental health campaigns & activities also run during this month. National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day is one such campaign. This event is sponsored by the American Psychological Association (APA). Other activities have included 'Blogging for Mental Health' and 'Help For People Seeking Psychological Services'.

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## Mental Health By the Numbers

Millions of Americans are affected by mental health conditions every year. Here are some facts about the prevalence and impact of mental illness.

### Prevalence of Mental Illness

- Approximately 1 in 5 adults in the U.S.—43.8 million, or 18.5%—experiences mental illness in a given year.
- Approximately 1 in 25 adults in the U.S.—10 million, or 4.2%—experiences a serious mental illness in a given year that substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities.
- Approximately 1 in 5 youth aged 13–18 (21.4%) experiences a severe mental disorder at some point during their life. For children aged 8–15, the estimate is 13%.
- 1.1% of adults in the U.S. live with schizophrenia.
- 2.6% of adults in the U.S. live with bipolar disorder.
- 6.9% of adults in the U.S.—16 million—had at least one major depressive episode in the past year.
- 18.1% of adults in the U.S. experienced an anxiety disorder such as posttraumatic stress disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder and specific phobias.

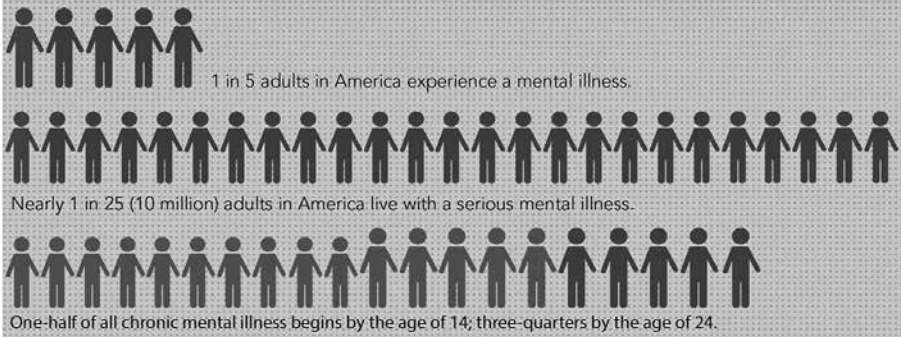
Among the 20.2 million adults in the U.S. who experienced a substance use disorder, 50.5%—10.2 million adults—had a co-occurring mental illness.

- An estimated 26% of homeless adults staying in shelters live with serious mental illness and an estimated 46% live with severe mental illness and/or substance use disorders.
- Approximately 20% of state prisoners and 21% of local jail prisoners have “a recent history” of a mental health condition.
- 70% of youth in juvenile justice systems have at least one mental health condition and at least 20% live with a serious mental illness.
- Only 41% of adults in the U.S. with a mental health condition received mental health services in the past year. Among adults with a serious mental illness, 62.9% received mental health services in the past year.
- Just over half (50.6%) of children aged 8-15 received mental health services in the previous year.
- African Americans and Hispanic Americans used mental health services at about one-half the rate of Caucasian Americans in the past year and Asian Americans at about one-third the rate.

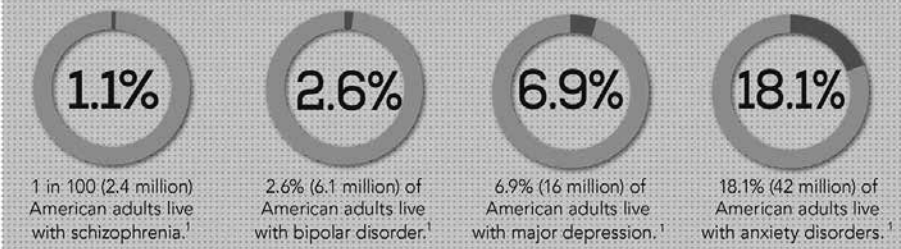
[www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-By-the-Numbers#sthash.fIP1ph7d.dpuf](http://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-By-the-Numbers#sthash.fIP1ph7d.dpuf)

## Mental Health Facts IN AMERICA

**Fact:** 43.8 million adults experience mental illness in a given year.



### Prevalence of Mental Illness by Diagnosis



[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

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## Staged Accidents Send Strong Message About Drunk Driving on Prom Night

Prom is about dresses and corsages, tuxedos and bow ties, but it's also all too often about drinking. It's no surprise that teenagers about to be launched into independence often want to sneak a few drinks — or more than a few — during the biggest party of the year. Unfortunately, it's also no surprise that some of these teens make the dangerous decision to drive under the influence.

Car accidents are the leading cause of death for teenagers in the United States, and in 23 percent of fatal accidents among drivers ages 15 to 20, the driver was under the influence of alcohol.

### Staged Car Accidents Dramatic Reminders of Danger

Schools and parents are aware of these statistics, and the start of prom season often means a redoubling of efforts to convince students of the dangers of driving drunk or getting into a vehicle with an intoxicated driver. At some schools, these efforts include dramatically staged car accidents that are intended to send a visceral message to the student body and make the hypothetical risks of drunk driving very real.

Typically, students are not aware of the staged crashes ahead of time so

that the shock of seeing the wrecked car and the victims is as powerful as possible. The students in the staged crash are made up to have realistic-looking injuries, and emergency service personnel are on hand to get the victims out of the vehicle and prepare them for the hospital or declare them dead at the scene. The incident doesn't end with the staged crash. The student who was driving under the influence is "arrested" and booked in court or sentenced through a trial staged on school grounds with volunteer lawyers and judges from the community.

### Numbers Down, But Many Teens Still Dying in Crashes

The evidence suggests that staged accidents and other teen drinking prevention efforts are having an impact. Since 1991, the number of high-schoolers who have driven while intoxicated has decreased by 54 percent, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

However, drunk driving is still a major problem among teens, and the CDC reports that 1 million teens drove while intoxicated in 2011. Talk to your teen, make a plan, and follow through.



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Events from page 11

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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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/](http://www.oaphoenix.org/) 602-234-1195.

**SLAA—Sex and Love Addict Anonymous** 602-337-7117. [slaa-arizona.org](http://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](http://www.arizonada.org).

**Crystal Meth Anonymous** [www.cmaaz.org](http://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](http://cmaaz.org/god-zombies-the-awakening).



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AZ. Dept. of Health	602-364-2086
Office of Problem Gambling	800-NEXTSTEP
Aurora Behavioral Health	623-344-4444
Carla Vista	480-612-0296
Calvary Addiction Recovery Center	602-279-1468
Celebrate Recovery with Chandler	
Christian Church	480-963-3997
Chandler Valley Hope	480-899-3335
Chapter 5	928-379-1315
Choices Network	800-631-1314   602-222-9444
Community Bridges	480-831-7566
CBI, Inc. Access to Care Line	877-931-9142
Cottonwood de Tucson	800-877-4520
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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
Elements Behavioral Health	844-294-3838
Franciscan Renewal Center	480-948-7460
Gifts Anon	480-483-6006
Governor's Office of Youth, Faith & Family	
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Hunkapi Programs	480- 393-0870
Intervention ASAP	602-606-2995
Geffen Liberman, LISAC	480-388-1495
Lafrontera -EMPACT	800-273-8255
The Meadows	800-632-3697
Mercy Maricopa Integrated Care	602-222-9444
	or 1-800-631-1314
NCADD	602-264-6214
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
Rio Retreat Center	800-244-4949
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
St. Luke's Behavioral	602-251-8535
Teen Challenge of AZ	800-346-7859
Turn Your Life Around	520-887-2643
TERROS	602-685-6000
Valley Hosptial	602-952-3939
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# Codependent Traits that Breed Anger and Resentment

by Michelle Farris, LMFT

A hallmark of codependency is when seeking approval becomes more important than self-care. Over time this creates a pattern of control. Melody Beattie, author of *Codependent No More*, defines a codependent as: “Someone who has let another person’s behavior affect him or her, and who is obsessed with controlling that person’s behavior.”

This article focuses on three common traits of codependency: control, people pleasing and the lie of being “fine.” Here you’ll learn how to transform these traits into relationship assets.

### Trait #1 – The illusion of control

Trying to change someone else’s behavior is exasperating. If you keep trying to help, you assume the other person will eventually change. Even as a therapist, I cannot make anyone do anything. People change when they’re ready.

In addictive relationships, the alcoholic is addicted to alcohol and the codependent is addicted to the alcoholic. This means the codependent’s happiness is wrapped up in the alcoholic. If their partner is happy and sober, life is perfect. But, living with an alcoholic is far from perfect.

This control fuels unrealistic, unspoken expectations. You don’t express your needs but assume they should be met. This can lead to years of resentment and anger until you finally realize you don’t have control.

Admitting you can’t change others is the first step in recovery. It takes effort to take the focus off of others, but this is how you learn to let go. When trying to control, you lose sight of your priorities. Learning what you need takes time and a willingness to let others be.

The antidote for control is acceptance. Accepting people as they are is a big task, not just for people struggling with codependency. Al-Anon is a 12 step program that teaches how to let go of control while increasing self-care. The group is a gentle support to the harsh reality of addiction and self-neglect.

### Trait #2 – Being a superhero

At the heart of each codependent person lies a generous soul. You have a sincere desire to ease suffering. It’s uncomfortable when your partner is hurting. Helping feels like its own reward — until it stops working.

For instance, you find that you’re a people-pleaser and can’t say no. Doing favors for friends and family now feels overwhelming. You can’t ask for help because you have the belief that you should do it by yourself. Saying no is considered selfish rather than good self-care.

You are the superhero because you do it all without breaking a sweat. Internally, you’re getting sick and tired of it. You keep up the smiles until it finally starts to leak out. Sarcastic comments are made you didn’t mean to say. This gets scary because you’re beginning to lose control. You can no longer say yes and mean it.

The anger of being the hero is in feeling unappreciated. Wanting recognition but never asking for

it sets others up for confusion and you for resentment.

The antidote to being the superhero is being honest about your limits. Family, physical health and leisure time get tossed aside when you try to be everything to everyone. This creates an intense level of stress both mentally and physically.

### Trait #3 – The lie of being FINE

Being a superhero means on the outside you look really good. You’re known for being invaluable and generous to a fault. If you give at your own expense it starts a pattern of resentment. You think nothing of it because it feels good to say yes.

Soon people start expecting continued favors. You feel indispensable which reinforces that people pleasing behavior.

Saying “I’m fine” instead of admitting overwhelm creates resentment. Ignoring your own feelings in order to be liked becomes a bad habit. You hope these feelings of resentment will go away but they don’t.

It doesn’t even occur to you to ask for help. But you’re getting tired and it’s beginning to show up in emotional outbursts. You may start getting sick. Expecting others to step in just doesn’t happen. You end up stewing all by yourself. The antidote for the lie of being fine is to admit how you feel. Let it out! Admit to yourself that you want a change. Write in a journal. Talk to a trusted friend and share your overwhelm. Start counseling if you need more support.

### How to Recover

Don’t expect others to anticipate your needs. Ask for them directly. By doing this you’ll see if your relationships are reciprocal. If they aren’t, you might reconsider how much you want to participate. You may choose to leave. Either way, these relationships can be great teachers for practicing self-care.

Once you start setting limits you’ll be surprised at how easily most people accept the answer no. However, family and friends may not like it. It takes time to reestablish a new, healthier connection. Start with the people you feel most comfortable with and practice saying no or expressing your honest opinion.

Being codependent often means putting all of your emotional eggs in one person’s basket. That makes it tough when things start to unravel. Instead, increase your support system. Al-Anon is a great way to do that.

Remember most fears never come true. In 12 step programs the acronym FEAR is known as False Evidence Appearing Real. It’s just your mind trying to get you not to change. Those negative thoughts within ourselves are powerful but if we let them rule us, we don’t heal.

Being sick and tired of doing the same thing and expecting different results is Al-Anon’s definition of insanity. Be willing to do something different.

*Michelle Farris is a licensed psychotherapist is San Jose, CA who helps people with anger, codependency, relationship issues and substance abuse. She is also the author of The 4 Essential Steps for Building Your Confidence.*



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