

Together AZ

JUNE 2020

Inspiring Success on the Road to Recovery

Straight Talk *from* Claudia Black: *What Recovering Parents Should Tell Their Kids About Drugs and Alcohol*

Talking with your kids about alcohol, drug use, and addiction can be difficult for any parent. For recovering parents, conversations with your children about substance use disorders are even more complex, urgent and personal. While you can't make up for the past in a few conversations, and you can't completely protect your children from the ominous scope of addiction, you can, with Dr. Black's intelligent and sensitive guidance, move closer to becoming the parent your children deserve and the parent you most want to be. In this article we are providing a few excerpts from the book.

"On December 31, 1986, the day after I got sober, the last thing I wanted to face was what I had done to my kids. Prior to sobriety, as a father, what I had going for me was the law, the Ten Commandments, and the tradition that adult men protect their kids. So when I became sober, the first thing I wanted to do was quickly reassert their respect for me based upon everything I had going for me. This might have worked when they were small and I had drank only a short period, but, by the time I got sober, nobody could say I deserved all the respect that the law and the Ten Commandments provided for. I realized I was going to have to get to know the kids and vice versa. For me it meant being friends first. The kids really wanted me to be a parent, and I wanted to regain their respect. Today I have been in recovery for several years and have regained that respect, but not by asserting what I had in the first place— but by "letting go" of the outcome of my relationships after I had done all I could to change, trusting that God would then do His thing."

—Wally

It has always been my belief that parents truly love their children and genuinely want what is best for them, yet the message often becomes convoluted, inconsistent and sometimes nearly non-existent when addiction begins to pervade the family system. As much as parents want to correct this, the focus of early recovery is often on recovery practices, the marriage or partnership, and job or career. This is coupled with parents frequently just not knowing what to say to their children, or how best to interact with them. This confusion can be as true for the adult child as for the adolescent or younger child. In many cases it is easy to ignore the issue

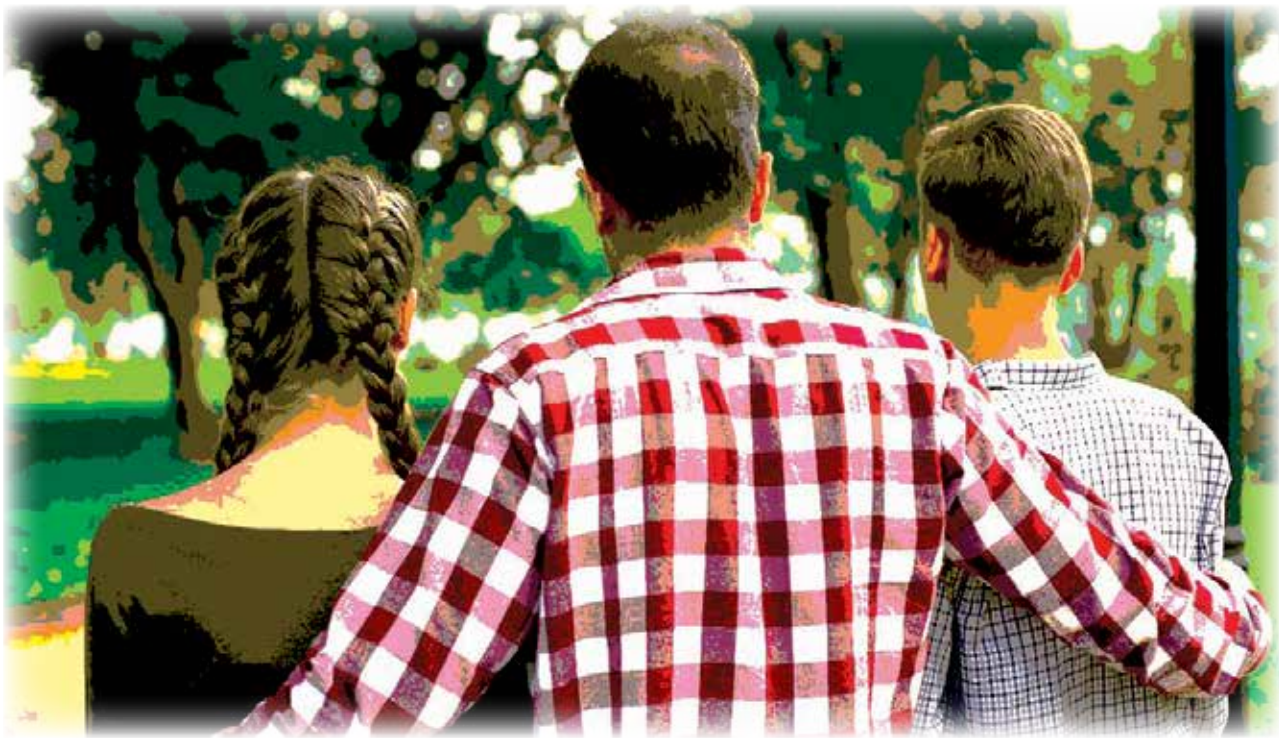


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of what to say or how to interact with your children if someone else, such as an ex-spouse or grandparents, predominantly raises them, or they are adults living on their own. Children can also impede the process by pretending all is fine between you and them because you are now clean and sober. And, in fact, for many it is better already. Or they distance themselves from you with aloofness or anger.

The inability to be intimate, to share yourself with your children, to be there for them, is one of the most tragic losses in life. Having worked with thousands of addicted parents, I've seen their eyes shimmer with tears and glow with love when they talk about their children. As I wrote this book, I interviewed a host of parents, and I was inspired by the depth of love and vulnerability shared as they talked about how addiction impacted children, and the hope their recovery would provide them the positive influence and connection that they would like to have with their children.

What Do You Say to Your Children?

In recovery there is a lot of wreckage of the past that needs to be addressed, and there is a lot of moving forward that will happen as well. What your children want most is to know you love them. They

"Addiction ravages one's physical, mental, emotional and spiritual being. The greatest pain is that it impacts those we love the most— our children."

want you to be there *for* them and *with* them. That can be hard to recognize if your children are angry or distant. It can be hard to do, given the priority needed to learning how to live clean and sober. Creating new relationships or mending old relationships doesn't happen overnight. The most important thing you can do for your children is to stay clean and sober. Yet while you are do-

ing that, there are so many little steps you can take with your children to begin to be the parent they need and the parent you want to be. It is my hope this book will help you in this journey.

Thomas, a recovering parent, shared this story with me.

"My daughter was grown by the time I got sober. More than anything I loved her and wanted her to know that. I wanted her to know that the parent she saw all of her growing up years wasn't the real me — there was this whole other me, this place of love that I had for her that I had lost control of due to my drinking and drugging lifestyle. The hardest part was being honest. Then I had to be willing to listen and not argue with her about how she saw me. I know what she saw. She saw the addict. She

STRAIGHT TALK continued page 9



Publisher's Note

By Barbara Nicholson-Brown barb@togetheraz.com

12 steps to 30 years

On the 17th of this month I'll be 30 years without a drink or a drug. While it is quite a milestone, none of this would be possible without the help of many, many people and an amazing 12 step program.

Like most addicts and alcoholics I lived in denial; I also lived with extreme shame, guilt and remorse every single day, before and after a binge. When I drank I got drunk, seriously drunk. Falling down drunk. Blackout drunk. Not a pretty picture, and nothing to be proud of.


After years of this behavior, those closest to me were done. There was no talking to, or reasoning with me. As I was spiraling down, the only friends left were the ones who drank and used like I did, some in worse shape than me.... others not. Every excuse I could imagine was the cause of my very unhappy life.

I clearly remember how it all unfolded. I felt like dying when the 'god moment' happened. I believe my Higher Power took the reins and before I realized what was happening, I was dialing a friend who I knew was sober (and avoiding), crying desperately for help. She was at my door within a half hour of the call and didn't leave my side until she walked me into my first 12 step meeting. I was scared, in a fog and didn't quite grasp what was going on. I do remember feeling a sense of relief. My secret (*which was not a secret to anyone who knew me*) was out. After that meeting I was able to breathe a little easier.

On that day I made a commitment to give sobriety a chance. I said it out loud, and day by day I started to believe if I listened to those who had days, weeks, months and even years of sobriety — maybe I had a chance. There was nothing left to lose at that point.

It has not been all peaches and cream on this road, but by staying on this road I have lived the best years of my life. The last 30 years is nothing short of a miracle. No matter how you get to your first day sober, stay on the road and see where it leads you. In gratitude,

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Are You in the 10-50 or 10%?

By Dina Evan, Ph.D

I never realized I led a sheltered life, probably because I worked my whole life raising kids and teaching. But I had a wake-upcall watching my favorite show, “The View.” They had an amazing author on, Ben Sherwood who wrote, *The Survivor’s Club*, and recently just released, *The Survivor’s Club, The Pandemic*.

I had no idea this pandemic was not only expected, but we had experienced many in our history as human beings. Not only that, but Sherwood discovered there was pattern to how we all react in dire circumstances. We do one of three things. His perspective is that 10% of us jump in immediately to offer and give support. Fifty percent of us just hang out and wait until it's over.... or someone else fixes it, and the last 10% do nothing. Which are you?

Well that knocked me back about three feet and I suddenly realized that's exactly what we do in every life circumstance and challenge. I immediately wondered what is it in our DNA or genes that makes that decision and can we change it?

Every day we are threatened with news about war, toxins, medical issues, tragic events and scary statistics, and we start to get worried about how in the hell we could survive any of it. Life at times feels like one big alligator pit we must run through. And, when you get to be my age, you'd really rather just sit on the side of a pool and dangle your feet occasionally. However, we don't get to do that in life. One of those challenges will come along and push us into the deep end. So what's a girl to do?

I think we need to get a tool bag because the more tools you have the more willingness you'll have to jump in and fight for change. So let's see what we might want in that bag.

- One thing that we talked about last month is change, this time I am talking about change in perspective. Ask yourself whether you have survived other challenges and made it. Did the fear kill you, and by the way, if you can answer that it didn't.
- Give it a minute. Sometimes things seem less overwhelming if you step back and put them into perspective. Like now. Can we survive if we don't go to the movies or flock to the park and sit on top of each other?
- Break it down a bit. What small steps can you take in the moment to give you sense of power and not be so overwhelmed?
- What friends, family members and support people do you have in your life you can pow-wow with and come up with some suggestions for maintaining your sanity. Set up your network of support.
- I know you have heard me say this before, but it is my best tool and it's, ask what the circumstance or challenge is here to teach you.
- Remember a time when you went through a difficult challenge and pull up some of those skills.
- Einstein said *"In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity."* What have you been wanting to do that you could not do before, but can do now? What great thing are you about to discover within yourself or about yourself?
- One of the attributes of resilient people is that they do not get paralyzed by obstacles life throws their way.
- *"Only those who dare to fail greatly can ever achieve greatly."* – Robert Kennedy
- Try to remember that courage is only developed in the face of challenge or fear and fear is more often than not, just a feeling rather than a fact.

All of this is well and good and I hope it helps, but I certainly don't want to minimize the loss right now. The courage of our caregivers is evidence that there is a big 10% who jump in. Next time you are at your doctor's office, say thank you to the staff.

Once you determine which 10% you are in, congratulate yourself if you are in the **jump in group**. Ask yourself what you're waiting for if you are in the just hang out group or in the do-nothing group. The reason you need to ask yourself is because it's not about what's happening out there that is important. It's about what's happening in here, to our soul, our integrity and our character. After all, that is what matters most.



Dr. Evan is a Marriage, family, child therapist and consciousness counselor. She has presented nationwide seminars and workshops, written several books and created meditation CDs for couples, individual and mental health professionals. She has also won national acclaim as a human rights advocate. Visit www.drдинаevan.com or call 602 571-8228.

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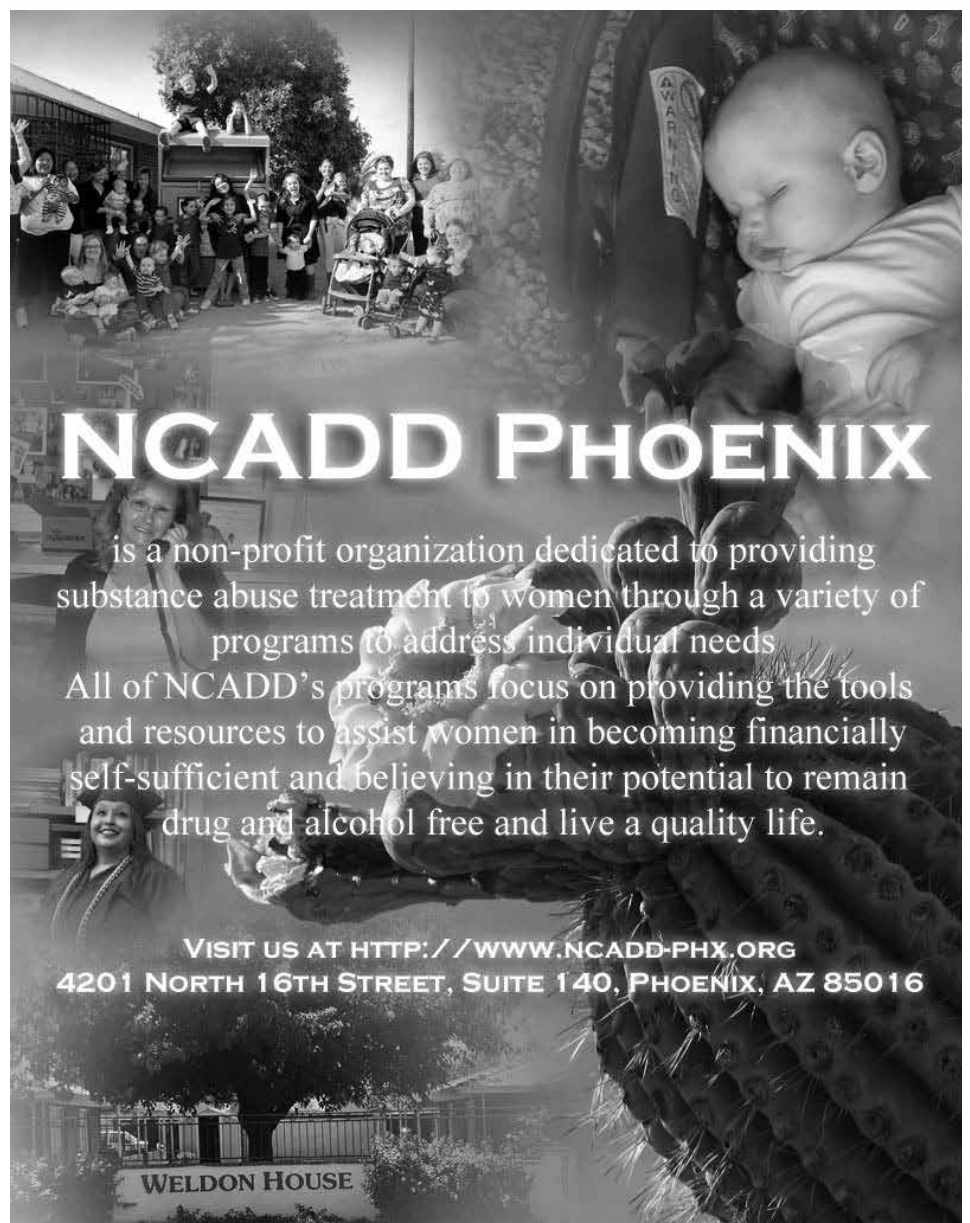
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Alcohol Treatment and Physical Distancing

If you need alcohol treatment while practicing physical distancing, there are several professionally led treatment and mutual-support group options available to you:

Professionally Led Treatment

Many healthcare professionals and programs have offered telehealth alcohol treatment for years. These are phone or video sessions for talk therapy or medical care. Now, with the COVID-19 emergency, more providers are offering telehealth services. Medicare and other insurers are expanding coverage of telehealth services as well. Check with your insurance company about coverage.

The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism’s (NIAAA) Alcohol Treatment Navigator (<https://alcoholtreatment.niaaa.nih.gov/how-to-find-alcohol-treatment>) can help you find telehealth alcohol treatment by healthcare professionals: You can search for:

- Find treatment programs “telemedicine/telehealth.” *Note: More programs are likely adding telehealth services during the COVID-19 emergency. If needed, search without the filter and call to check availability of telehealth services.*
- Find therapists with addiction specialties and filter for “video counseling.” *Note: More therapists are adding telehealth services during the COVID-19 emergency. If needed, search without the filter and call to check availability of telehealth services.*
- Find doctors with addiction specialties and ask office staff whether they offer telehealth services.

Mutual-Support Groups

Mutual-support groups can be particularly helpful during this challenging time. A growing number of groups have online communities. These groups can vary widely, so it’s important to try different ones to find a good fit.

The Navigator can help you find some mutual-support groups to consider. (<https://alcoholtreatment.niaaa.nih.gov/support-through-the-process/long-term-recovery-support>)

In addition to support groups, people in recovery should also maintain a connection with their treatment counselor. While mutual help groups are an excellent source of support and encouragement, they are usually not run by professional clinicians. Some issues may require the help of a trained health professional.

Other Resources

If you’d like to get started with something right away, see this list of online support groups, apps, and podcasts from the American Society of Addiction Medicine. <https://www.asam.org/Quality-Science/covid-19-coronavirus/support-group#OSG>

Overall, regardless of where or how you seek treatment, it’s important to look for approaches that are “evidence-based.” This means the treatments are backed by large, well-designed studies. The Navigator will help you spot signs of higher-quality care.

(Source: <https://www.spectrum.niaaa.nih.gov/>) NIAAA: Understanding the impact of alcohol on human health and well-being.



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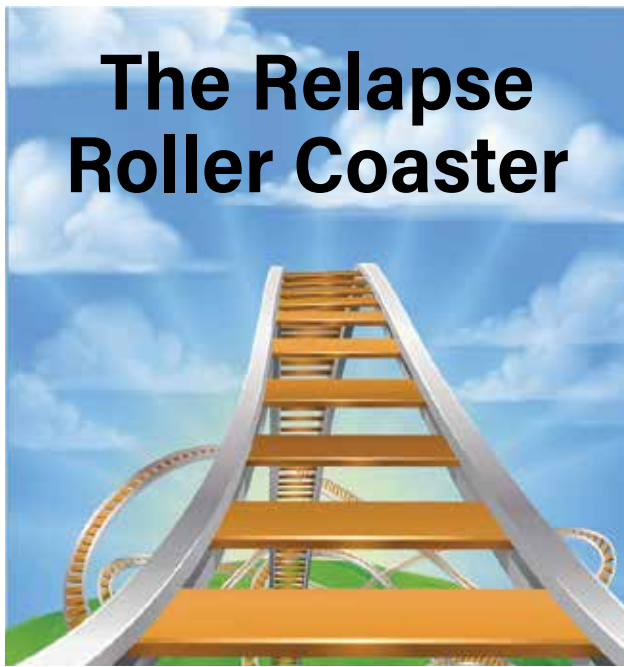
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The Relapse Roller Coaster

By Ken Wells, MDiv, LPC, CSAT-S
from his blog **Velvet Steel**

Every day in the life of a recovering addict embraces the roller coaster experience that addiction recovery entails. In the beginning days, there is the euphoric high that comes from knowing there are no more lies and secrets that you need to hide. Getting honest with yourself is so difficult, but when you do there is freedom. In a liberating sense you embrace Janis Joplin's phrase that "freedom's just another way to say you got nothing left to lose".

Nonetheless, on another day, or even during the same day, you can be on the edge of acting out. Your body craves its drug of choice. You can think of nothing else but thoughts of getting hammered, screwing your brains out or getting wasted. You may be with family and friends physically but in your head you are craving for a hit so bad that even those who know you best are aware that you're gone in your head to your addiction.

There are many shades of withdrawal

None of them are pretty. For the most part it is pure hell. Then there are times in recovery when there is fear of being some place in public with your family and running into an old act out partner. It's so riddled with feelings of anxiety and panic and can be so unnerving.

Some people look like they get traction from the very start and don't appear to look back. But, then there's the rest of us. At first getting sustained traction and sobriety is impossible. You keep coming back and picking up a 24 hr. chip until it seems like your pockets are full. **No one creates long term recovery without facing some days when you just want to quit.** Many do just that. The ashen taste of never getting it figured out or knowing that you could have gone to a meeting, picked up the phone, not isolated, stayed away from your drug of choice and a myriad of other things you could've, should've and wish you had done but didn't do them.

There's this unbearable hollow emptiness and deep seated loneliness inside that dominates every corner of your brain. You wonder will you ever learn and practice what you know? You tell yourself it's not rocket science. You are not mystified. You know any choice you could have ever made would have been better than the one you made. In recovery, relapse is a reality for most. Most times you are not bewildered, trying to figure out how you fell into the hole of relapse. Most times you know you decided that you wanted what you wanted when you wanted it— and decided to pay whatever price it took to get it. Now you sit in a hole of thought and emotional pain not wanting to face what you have to do to crawl out and stand up again. You just want to quit and disappear. Most addicts in recovery know this experience well.

Those who crawl out of the hole never feel good about it

It just beats the hell out of wallowing in the mud. There is no real infusion of inspiration and emotional warmth in standing up once you get out of the hole.

"The magic is when an addict turns the faucet on and washes the mud off. It requires self forgiveness which means to walk in the opposite direction of addictive behavior, once again, and to practice not holding the act out against themselves."

For a while, that seems like an eternity, you live a different type of double life. Inside you feel like you want to withdraw into a nondescript isolated place and die. Yet, on the outside you know you have to muster the energy to do the next right thing, like going to a meeting and once again step up for yet another damn 24-hour chip! At home, it's likely worse. Your partner feels traumatized, betrayed, isolated and discouraged. Likely, you experience their withdrawal and encounter their interrogation, mistrust and rage about your behavior. It's so easy to surrender to the "f--- its". At this point, most addicts just go down the slippery slope of acting out again to get away from the intense emotional and physical pain. To avoid the pain, an addict will return to self-absorbed narcissistic behavior.

The whole world is about them

To escape the riveting pain of reality through addictive demand an addict will take up all the space in the relationship room. It's like your addiction becomes this huge exercise ball in the room and gets blown up to occupy all the space and your family gets smashed against the wall. Your addiction takes up all the room, even in your recovery. Families tiptoe around your recovery wanting to be sure everything is done to keep you sober, only to watch you fall off the wagon again.

This is the often described roller coaster recovery ride described by addicts and their families. How do you get off the roller coaster? How do you do the next right thing when every corner of your brain tells you to quit- that it's too hard and that it doesn't matter anymore?

Here are a few considerations:

- Embrace the next right thing while wallowing in the mud hole. I get calls from addicts sitting in the middle of the mud of their addiction. There is nothing I can tell them that is inspirational while they sit with the mud of their addiction smeared all over themselves. The only thing that I tell them is to do the next right thing— to get up out of the mud hole. This usually means going to a meeting and telling on themselves to their recovery support, including their partner if they are in a relationship. Nothing spectacular and always intensely painful. This is true whether the acting out is habitual or has been a rare and distant experience after years of sobriety and recovery. The experience described is pretty much the same and the prescription for healing the similar for all. It's not rocket science.
- Take a shower and get all the mud cleaned off. Sometimes, this is literal. To wash away the emotional grit and gunk that clogs an addict's brain is a critical step toward addressing relapse. Sometimes this can be best done with a sponsor and a 12 step group. Other times, being sequestered in rehab is necessary, but not magic. The magic is when an addict turns the faucet on and washes the mud off. It requires self forgiveness which means to walk in the opposite direction of addictive behavior, once again, and to practice not

holding the act out against themselves. This is hard work and will require outside support. It will require applying the lotion of gentleness and self-care, particularly at a time you don't want to.

- Take a deep breath, get yourself dressed and stick your nose right back in where you were before you jumped in the mud hole. Go back to your recovery program right where you got off. In recovery, knowing what is the right thing to do becomes blocked by and mesmerized by the bewitching power of addictive behavior. You can know what to do but not have the motivation and recovery energy to do it. You will need to lean on and depend upon your recovery support to take initial steps. Do the steps where you left off. You may need to go back and address step work to strengthen recovery. In truth, none of us ever really go back and start all over because wherever we crawl out of the mud hole, we take all of those experiences of addiction and recovery and build on that.

You can't solve your addiction problems by using the same kind of thinking you used to create them

You will need to continue bathing yourself with affirmations. This can be hard work in itself. What you think about always expands. If you wallow with hangover thoughts from addictive behavior that is what will expand in your reality. Guilt will remind you that your addictive behavior hurts, you and others. Once it has served its purpose get rid of it by ignoring it. Take control of your thoughts by acting that what you would like to be is the behavior toward yourself and others you will do, independent of feelings that dominate you. You must act on the unrepeatable miracle of the universe you are regardless of painful feelings. Eventually your actions will create the feelings that will be congruent to your recovery behavior. Mascot Peck wrote in his seminal book *The Road Less Traveled* that "life is difficult." Recovery is difficult. Yet, when you think of the emotional stench of mud hole behavior, it is the only exit from the roller coaster of addiction. —KW

You can read more insights about the importance of embracing every day experiences in recovery from Ken's newly released book "Dare to Be Average-Finding Brilliance in the Commonplace" - published by Daily House Publishing and currently on sale through Amazon.com

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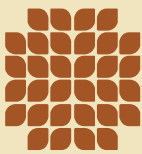
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The Link Between Stress, Alcoholism, and Domestic Abuse

Nearly 55% of domestic violence incidents involve alcohol. This is partly due to a complex relationship shared between stress, alcohol consumption, and domestic abuse. Stressful times can cause a person to feel emotionally and physically overwhelmed. Many may try to use alcohol as a type of self-medication to numb feelings of stress. For those who commit acts of domestic violence, chronic alcohol abuse may lower their inhibitions and exacerbate violent tendencies. As survivors of domestic violence, alcohol may serve as a way to numb emotional and physical pain.

The COVID-19 pandemic is hard for many people; even if you manage to avoid sickness, the disruption of your daily routines or economic insecurity can cause significant stress. It's also worth noting that sales of both alcohol and firearms have increased. Since firearms tend to be the main cause of death in incidents of domestic violence, this trend is deeply worrying.

For those with alcoholism, COVID-19 is not the only immediate danger

Since the pandemic has caused people to reconsider traveling, many domestic violence survivors may find themselves trapped. The high stress, alcohol consumption, and daily disruption caused by the coronavirus appears to have created a perfect storm. However, there are ways that those at risk of being survivors of domestic violence can protect themselves.

Domestic violence hotlines have led the charge and adapted their strategies to the realities of the coronavirus lockdown. While physically escaping from abusive partners and relationships can be difficult, experts recommend keeping a journal of abuse incidents for protection down the line. Individuals should also avoid small areas such as kitchens or bathrooms as much as possible, where they may have difficulty escaping if a situation turns violent. Sleeping in a car is another recommended strategy until you are able to leave your home and stay with friends and family.

But there is help out there for survivors of domestic abuse including domestic violence hotlines that can assist individuals in finding safety, solace, and healing. Treatment for alcohol abuse and alcoholism can also help address not just problem drinking, but the underlying trauma that may have led to excessive alcohol use. Additionally, if your partner is ready to seek treatment for alcoholism, their path to sobriety may be the change needed to ensure a safer environment for you.

If you're in immediate danger, call 911 immediately, your safety should be your top priority.



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Impacts of Mental and Emotional Health on Employee Wellbeing

As the impact of COVID-19 is felt around the world and governments implement “physical distancing” and isolation measures to help stem the spread of the disease, concerns about the immediate and long-term effects of the virus — on both physical and mental wellbeing are being raised.

The High Cost of Stress?
The global economy loses \$1 trillion annually due to depression and anxiety.

The relationship between an individual's mental health and other aspects of their wellbeing (whether physical or financial) has long been discussed. As organizations are recognizing the tangible impact wellbeing can have on workplace performance and productivity, many employers have begun addressing employees' mental health.

The impact of mental and emotional health on workers is significant. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), depression affects 264 million people and is one of the leading causes of disability. Meanwhile, the global economy loses \$1 trillion annually due to depression and anxiety.

“Historically, organizations tend to pretend that an individual's mental health issues aren't a factor in the workplace,” notes Rod Hart, vice president of health transformation at Aon. “Now people are becoming more aware of the need to provide some form of intervention much sooner. And lately, with the added demand that we self-isolate by sheltering and working in place, COVID-19 has pushed employees' mental wellbeing to the forefront for employers — along with their physical wellbeing.”

A broad range of issues could affect a person's mental health. These can include divorce and separation, the 24/7 “always on” culture and its effect on sleep, the need to juggle multiple responsibilities and roles at work, financial pressures and, for many, the despair of isolation and loneliness.

Aon's 2019 Emotional Health Survey found 86 percent of employers surveyed rated emotional health as one of the top three drivers of overall employee wellbeing, while 85 percent believe the employer plays a key role in supporting their employees' emotional health.

Paying Attention

“We're seeing more and more employers paying attention to mental health, whether it's increasing awareness, anti-stigma campaigns or, on the other side of that, training managers and supervisors to better respond,” observes Matthew Lawrence, chief broking officer for health solutions at Aon Europe, the Middle East and Africa. “And given mental health's impact on our overall wellbeing, there's a lot more work to be done.” ACROSS SOCIETY, COVID-19 MEANS INCREASING ISOLATION

One aspect of mental and emotional health getting attention recently is loneliness and isolation. “Isolation is becoming a major factor,” says Stephanie Pronk, senior vice president and leader of the health transformation team at Aon U.S. “It's especially apparent now, the COVID-19 outbreak means we must intentionally distance ourselves from our communities. It's an unusual but important choice we're making for the benefit of both our own and our communities' physical wellbeing.”

A 2020 trends report from Ford Motor Company found that loneliness was becoming a global epidemic and that its impact on physical health was comparable to obesity or smoking 15 cigarettes a day. Ford's report also found that 43 percent of millennials and Gen Zers reported that social media often makes them feel lonely.

“Isolation can be both a perpetrator of mental health challenges and a byproduct,” adds Hart. “Someone may isolate themselves as a way of coping with other issues. The same is true of addictions: substance use can be a coping mechanism.”

Mental and Emotional Well Being

For employers, the potential impact of including mental and emotional wellbeing in their broader wellbeing initiatives is significant.

Of the companies participating in Aon's Emotional Health Survey, 91 percent indicated that improving employee engagement was a major objective of their wellbeing strategy. Yet 80 percent said that while they believe in promoting emotional wellbeing, they don't have the budget to invest in that area.

Employers have a role in providing education and support programs to employees. But a uniform approach won't work across diverse workforces. Instead, organizations must customize their emotional and mental wellbeing programs based on what they're experiencing, adds Pronk.

Mental health becomes even more important in an era of constant change. As businesses undertake broader transformation initiatives, employees' wellbeing, including how valued they feel, is critical in helping achieve an organization's broader change objectives.

“An individual's experience at work can have a big impact on their emotional wellbeing and quality of life,” says Amber Harris, senior relationship manager for talent consulting at Aon U.K. “If employers can help employees feel valued and align their work with the right roles that suit their personalities and life objectives, that could have a positive impact on their performance, lower risk and attrition — which is critical during times of significant organizational change.”

When employers embrace employee wellbeing, it's critical that they include mental and emotional health in their efforts.

As with other aspects of wellbeing, the focus of employers' efforts should be moving from reactive to preventive. Employers should ask themselves, “What do we need to do differently to make sure that our employees and their family members have access to the right types of solutions?”

couldn't see my place of love; it was too well hidden. So I listened and I didn't need to argue, I was now in my place of love. But I really wanted her to know the things I had said or done was not the real me. Yet it could sound like a cop out. I wasn't trying to cop out. She had her experiences because of how I acted in my disease.

Addiction—A Devastating Disease

Addiction ravages one's physical, mental, emotional and spiritual being. The greatest pain is that it impacts those we love the most — our children. In recovery we learn that addiction is a disease, it is not a matter of will power or self-control. We surrender to our powerlessness over alcohol and other mind-altering chemicals. We put one step in front of the other, often following the direction of other recovering alcoholics and addicts before us. We rejoice and celebrate recovery. For the first time in a long time, we begin to like ourselves. We begin to let go of our insecurities, fears, and angers.

We begin to look beyond ourselves, and when we do, many of us are confronted with the reality that this disease is not just ours alone. Addiction belongs to the family. Confronted with that stark realization, how do we empower ourselves to make a difference in our children's lives so that they do not repeat our history?

Most children raised with addiction vow to themselves and often to others, *"It will never happen to me. I will not drink like my father, or use drugs like my mother."* They believe they have the will power, the self-control, to do it differently than their parents. After all, they have seen the horrors of addiction, and shouldn't that be enough to ensure that they don't become like their parents? If I were to meet with a group of children under the age of

nine who were raised with addiction, and ask them if they were going to drink or use drugs when they were older, it is very likely that nearly 100 percent of them would vehemently shake their heads no. If I were to come back six years later when these children are teenagers, half of them would already be drinking, using drugs or both. The majority of others would begin to drink or use within the next few years.

These children will begin drinking or using out of peer pressure, to be a part of a social group, to have a sense of belonging. Kids often start to experiment just to see what it is like, and many simply like the feeling. Some will find that alcohol and drugs are a wonderful way to anesthetize or medicate the pain of life. Alcohol and drugs momentarily allow their fears, angers, and disappointments to disappear. For some it produces a temporary sense of courage, confidence, and maybe even power. Aside from the emotional attraction that alcohol or drugs may provide, the genetic influence may be such that these children's brain chemistry is triggered within their early drinking or using episodes, and they quickly demonstrate addictive behavior.

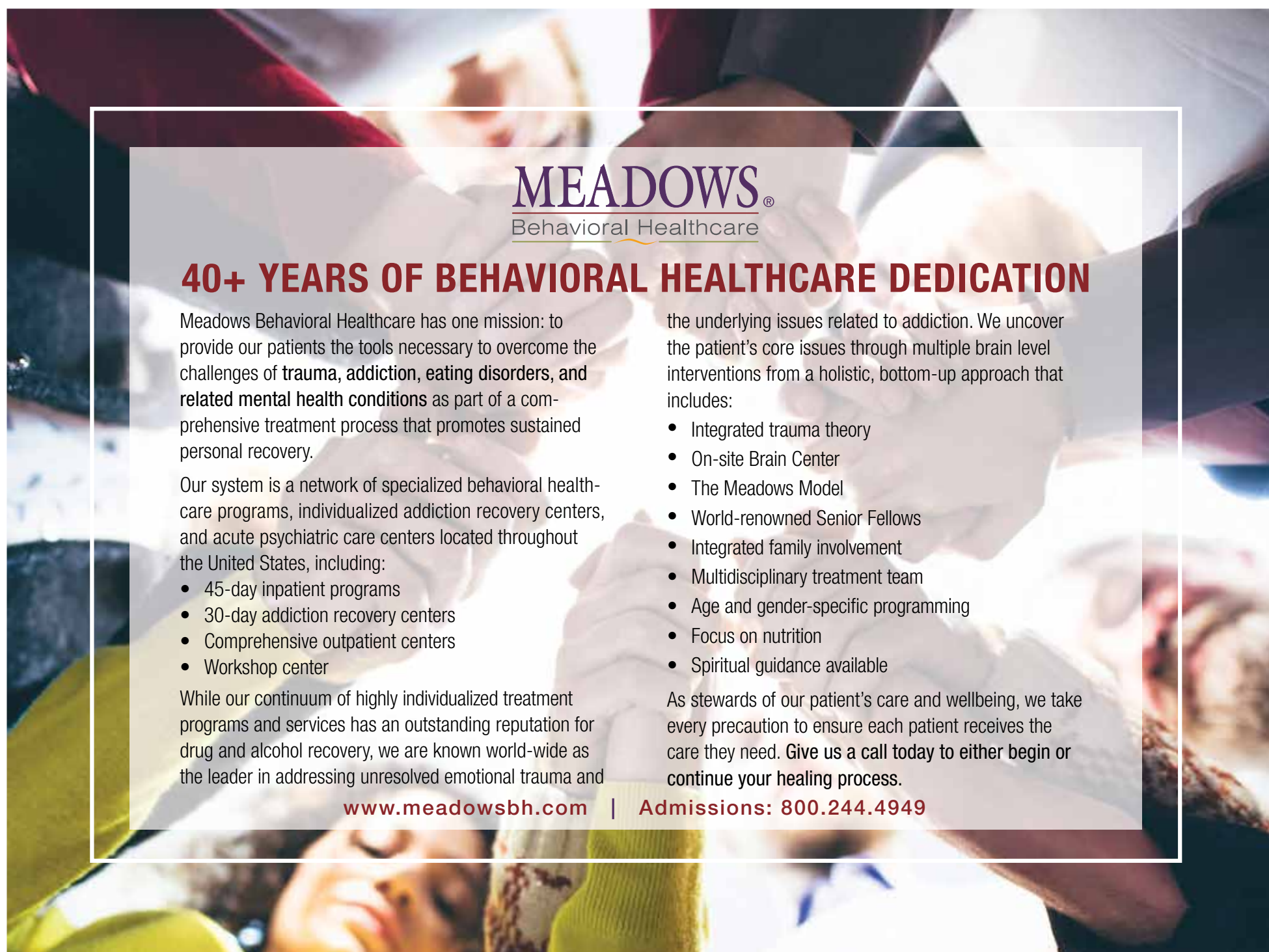
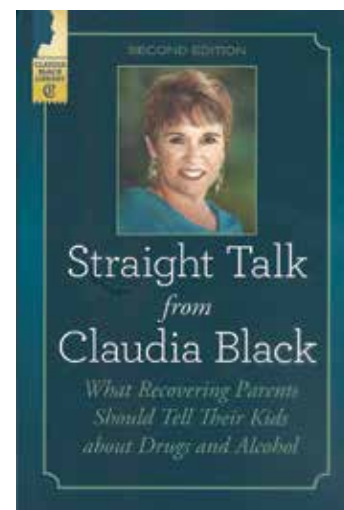
Before you begin a discussion about addiction with your children, it is helpful to clarify your motives and expectations in talking to them. If your children have lived with addiction, they have the right to understand it. Even if they did not live with addiction, your children still deserve to understand addiction for a number of reasons.

- They may be genetically predisposed to addiction.
- Addiction is a significant part of who you (their parent) are, and talking openly about it allows for the potential of intimacy.
- You can help them to understand your behavior of the past—and your commitment to recovery

- You can help the child understand how his or her life has been affected.
- Finally, because we live in an addictive culture, they will have others in their lives that will experience both substance and process addictions.

Take time to examine your motives before talking to your children. Remember, discussion is not a onetime event but a process in which conversations occur over time. Opportunities will arise naturally and spontaneously for some discussion, while other conversations will need to be more intentional. The personal experiences shared in this book will offer you direction.

*Dr. Claudia Black is a renowned author and trainer internationally recognized for her pioneering and contemporary work with family systems and addictive disorders. In the mid-1970s, Claudia gave "voice" to both young and adult children from addictive homes, offering a framework for their healing. This cutting-edge work would be critical in creating the foundation for the codependency field and a greater understanding of the impact of family trauma. For more information visit www.themeadows.com or call 866-330-1925. **Straight Talk** is available at www.themeadowsbookstore.com, online and wherever fine books are sold.*



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COVID: 19 Lessons

The isolation that Nature has forced with its deadly Covid-19 virus, that governments around the world have wisely implemented, as well, has clearly restricted our physical movement, but it has also provided us with a wide range of lessons that we can learn. Because it's a novel virus, we need novel changes in how we adapt to it. Instead of focusing on the restrictive changes it has caused in us, I invite you to focus on the positive changes it can inspire in us to help us become bigger and better people.

Here are 19 such lessons from this Coronavirus:

- Meditate:** If you can't go outside, why don't you go inside? Put another way, if you have to stay inside, why not stay inside to the deepest part of yourself. To your Self itself. It's situated at the transcendental level of your being; it is, in fact, your very Being itself.
- Create:** Here's your chance to write that novel you've always wanted to write but never had the time to do so. Now there's one thing you most definitely have: TIME. Or perhaps draw, or paint. Or perhaps redecorate the furniture.
- Connect:** If you can't see your friends and loved ones in person, connect with them on Zoom, Skype or Facetime.
- Love:** If you hate being cooped up, don't let the desire to express love to the people you care about also be cooped up inside of you, unexpressed. Let out these feelings to these people.
- Learn:** There are myriad things you can learn on You Tube. Just go on the Internet and discover.
- Read:** Take a look at all those books you bought on Amazon or yard sales. As Maharishi, my guru, used to say, "Knowledge in books tends to stay in books." See what awaits you inside their pages.
- Music:** What applies to books, applies to CDs. Why not give yourself an indoor concert of your favorite music?
- Cook:** Why not go into the kitchen and become the top chef in your home?
- Become More Intimate:** If your intimacy level with your significant other has fallen to the back burner, why not move it up to the front burner which is quite hot?
- Laugh:** Here's a revision of a well-known axiom: When the going gets tough, the tough get laughing. Check out Comedy Central, HBO's comedy channel, funny films, stand-up acts, written humorists, etc.
- Sleep:** Most people have sleep debts built up over the years. Now is the time to heal that debt; don't set any alarms, and let your body sleep until you wake up.
- Exercise:** Some people have been so busy that they haven't had the time to exercise or play sports. While, sports are not possible during isolation, walking, jogging, or rollerblading are certainly available to you.
- Respect Nature:** It's my contention that this worldwide outbreak of Coronavirus has come as a response to our abuse of Nature. Our killing off of species, our pollution of air and water, and so forth. So come to respect the power of Nature. In prehistoric times, mankind was in awe of the power of the sun, the moon, the tides, and so forth.
- Enjoy Nature:** If you have access to parks, beaches, or hiking trails and they are open for use, enjoy their beauty in a socially distant manner.
- Pray:** Let your heart speak openly to the Higher Power.
- Affirm & Visualize:** Now that you have the time, let your mind become empowered through the use of verbal affirmations. Also visualize yourself happy and successful in different areas of your life.
- Purpose:** If you're not clear why you're here, here's the opportunity to discover who you are and why you're here in this world.
- Do What You Love:** If there are things you've long wanted to do, now is the time to do them—in the comfort of your own home.
- Surprise Yourself:** Why not surprise yourself by doing something you ordinarily wouldn't do—or even think of doing.

STAY CONNECTED

We are a community armed with resources for support.
The providers listed below are available to assist you.

TOGETHER AZ 602-684-1136

ADVERTISER LISTINGS

Arizona Addiction	602-737-1619
Arizona Addiction Recovery	888-512-1705
Aurora Behavioral Health	877-870-7012
Buena Vista Health & Recovery	866-739-1642
Calvary Healing Center	866-76-SOBER
CBI, Inc.	480-831-7566
CBI, Inc. Access to Care	877-931-9142
Continuum Recovery Ctr.	877-893-8962
Cohn Media	866-578-4947
(Online Marketing/SEO)	
Dept.Problem Gaming	800-NEXTSTEP
Gifts Anon	480-483-6006
The Meadows	800-632-3697
Meadows Ranch	866-390-5100
Men’s Teen Challenge	520-792-1790
Mercy Care	602-222-9444 /800-631-1314
NCADD	602-264-6214
Psychological Counseling Services (PCS)	480-947-5739
Rio Retreat Center	800-244-4949
Scottsdale Recovery Center	888-663-7847
Sierra by the Sea	877-610-4679
Sierra Tucson	800-842-4487
Sober Living AZ	602-737-2458
Sunlight Medical	480-300-6065
Stewart Counseling Services	602-316-3197
Valley Hospital	602-952-3939
Teen Challenge of AZ	800-346-7859

RESOURCES

ACT Counseling	602-569-4328
AZ Center for Change	602-253-8488
AZ. Dept. of Health	602-364-2086
AzRHA	602-421-8066
Building Blocks-BBC	602-626-8112
Chandler Valley Hope	480-899-3335
Choices Network	602-222-9444
Compass Recovery Center	800-216-1840
Cornerstone Healing Center	480-653-8618
Crisis Response Network	602-222-9444
The Crossroads	602-279-2585
Desert Drug Dog	602-908-2042
Fit FOUR Recovery	480) 828-7867
Governor’s Office Youth, Faith & Family	602-542-4043
Hunkapi Programs	480- 393-0870
Lafrontera -EMPACT	800-273-8255
River Source	480-827-0322
Scottsdale Providence	480-210-5528
TERROS Health	602-685-6000
VIVRE	480- 389-4779

Therapists/Interventionists/Coaches

Dr. Marlo Archer	480-705-5007
Carey Davidson	928-308-0831
Dr. Dina Evan	602-997-1200
Dr. Dan Glick	480-614-5622
Bobbe McGinley	602-569-4328
Julian Pickens, EdD, LISAC	480-491-1554
Susan Tepley-Lupo	602-919-1312

TUCSON

ACA	aca-arizona.org
Alcoholics Anonymous	520-624-4183
Tucson Al-Anon Information Service Office	520-323-2229
Amity Foundation	520-749-5980
Anger Management	520-887-7079
Behavioral Awareness Center	520 629 9126
Center For Life Skills Development	520-229-6220
Co-Anon Family Groups	520-513-5028
Cocaine Anonymous	520-326-2211
Cottonwood Tucson	800-877-4520
Crisis Intervention	520-323-9373
The Mark Youth & Family Care Campus	520-326-6182
Narcotics Anonymous	520-881-8381
Nicotine Anonymous	520-299-7057
Overeaters Anonymous	520-733-0880
Recovery in Motion	520-975-2141
Sex/Love Addicts Anonymous	520-792-6450
Sex Addicts Anonymous	520-745-0775
Sierra Tucson	800-842-4487
Sonora Behavioral Health	520-829-1012
Suicide Prevention	520-323-9372
Turn Your Life Around	520-887-2643
Workaholics Anonymous	520-403-3559

Are you a resource?
Send your request by email to
barb@togetheraz.com

If you or a loved one are facing a crisis, we encourage you to call for professional guidance. Every moment counts.

Alcoholics Anonymous	602-264-1341
Al-Anon	602-249-1257
Tucson Al-Anon Information	520-323-2229
Adult Children of Alcoholics	aca-arizona.org
Arizona Addiction	602-737-1619
Bipolar Wellness	602-274-0068
Child Abuse Hotline – Support & Information	800-422-4453
Cocaine Anonymous	602-279-3838
Co-Anon	602-697-9550
CoDA	602-277-7991
COSA	480-385-8454
Crisis Help Line – For Any Kind of Crisis	800-233-4357
Crisis Text Line	Text HOME to 741741
Crystal Meth Anonymous	602-235-0955
Debtors Anonymous	(800) 421-2383
Domestic Violence	800-799-SAFE
Families Anonymous	602-647-5800
Gamblers Anonymous	602-266-9784
Grief Recovery	800-334-7606
Heroin Anonymous	602-870-3665
Marijuana Anonymous	800-766-6779
NDMDA Depression Hotline – Support Group	800-826-3632
Narcotics Anonymous/Phoenix	480-897-4636
Narcotics Anonymous/Casa Grande	520-426-0121
Narcotics Anonymous/Flagstaff	928-255-4655
Narcotics Anonymous/Prescott	928-458-7488
Narcotics Anonymous/Tucson	520-881-8381
Nar-Anon Family Groups	(800) 477-6291
National Youth Crisis Hotline	800-448-4663
NCADD	602-264-6214
Overeaters Anonymous	602-234-1195
PAL (Parents of Addicted Loved Ones)	480-300-4712
Parents Anonymous	602-248-0428
Phoenix Metro SAA	602-735-1681
RAINN (Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network)	RAINN.ORG
Rape Hotline (CASA)	602-241-9010
Sexaholics Anonymous	602-439-3000
Sexual Assault Hotline (24/7, English & Spanish)	800-223-5001
Sex/Love Addicts	602-337-7117
Sex/Love Addicts	520-792-6450
Sex Addicts Anonymous	602-735-1681
S-ANON	480-545-0520
Sober Living AZ	602-737-2458
Suicide Hotline	800-254-HELP
Suicide Prevention Lifeline	800-273-8255

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