

# Together AZ

April 2025

Inspiring Success on the Road to Recovery

## The Rings and Springs of Recovery: *Facing Imperfection with Courage and Patience*

By Dr. Jon G. Caldwell

Early four-hundred years ago, St. Francis de Sales wrote the following pearl of wisdom for those of us on the healing journey:

**"Have patience with all things, but chiefly have patience with yourself. Do not lose courage in considering your own imperfections."**

As we do our recovery work and the fog of trauma, addiction, and emotional challenges begins to lift, one thing becomes crystal clear: our imperfections! Those pesky peccadillos, insidious idiosyncrasies, and craggily cracks in our character. Even when we muster the courage to tackle these imperfections, it can be disheartening to realize that some of our unhealthy patterns are terribly persistent, requiring repeated doses of courage and *"an ocean of patience"* (another quote by St. Francis de Sales).

thicket while hiking, only to re-encounter the same thicket hours later, with the path already overgrown. In those discouraging moments, it can feel like the recovery path has circled back on itself, leaving us stuck on a ring, destined to repeatedly stumble on our imperfections.

Our previously mustered courage can get pushed aside by anger, frustration, resentment, doubt, and shame. As for that ocean of patience... forget about it — sometimes we are lucky to find a puddle of patience!

Over the years, I have come to understand that this process of re-encountering our imperfections is perhaps better illustrated by an image of a spring, rather than a flat ring. While the healing process does involve circling back to our personal thickets of imperfection, these rings or patterns of experience are linked together like a spring, where each revolution takes us to an elevated place. At times, this upward progression can be gradual and difficult to perceive within us, especially when we are in the middle of the thicket! Trust the process and keep working at it, each time we come around to our imperfections,

On the pathway of recovery and healing, it can be hard to see our own progress — especially when we keep running into the same old character defects. It's like courageously cutting a path through a dense

**"Self-compassion isn't weakness, it is heartfelt recognition of our past pain and acknowledgment of our common humanity."**

we can have a little more insight, a little more skill, and a little more healing.

To increase that "springiness" in recovery and healing, I offer three suggestions: **compassion, connection, and comedy**. Hold on, let me explain!

When we re-encounter imperfections, it can be useful to remind ourselves that these patterns of feeling, thinking, and behaving are not so healthy now, but they probably served a purpose in the past.

Often, what helped us to survive eventually gets in the way of growth. Rather than cursing our imperfections, we can practice greater self-compassion. Instead of berating ourselves for familiar foibles, we might adopt a caring inner voice that says, "Ahhh, I see you unhealthy pattern, you were there for me when I didn't know how else to get by. Thank you. And now, I am committed

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## Inner Critic Vs. Inner Coach

### Changing the Voice in Our Heads to Be on Our Team

By Alexa Bailey, MSW, LCSW

We all have a little voice in our heads that talks to us all day long. Sometimes it muses on what we're doing, sometimes it's daydreaming about the person we're interested in, and, more often than not, it's pointing out all the flaws and mistakes we perceive ourselves to be making. This little voice is what we like to call the inner critic.

The inner critic is the self-talk that we experience as we go through life, and it always seems to have an opinion. It's that nasty thought that makes you question your decisions and nitpick your ideas and feelings.



iStock Credit: Mikhail Seleznev

How many times have you looked in the mirror after getting ready and thought to yourself some-

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# Publisher's Note

By Barbara Nicholson-Brown

## The Gift that Keeps on Giving

While I'd like to believe I'm in complete unwavering gratitude all the time—I'm not. I'm a work in progress, graced with a daily opportunity to grow and learn. Each sober day is a gift, a humbling reminder I'm not in control.

Years ago, I was told recovery was like peeling an onion. Each layer would reveal the symptoms of my dis-ease. It was about uncovering, discovering and discarding. Uncovering the reasons why I used; discovering how my way of living wasn't working (never had), and discarding the blame, shame, guilt.

Working the 12 steps is not a one-time fix for me. To maintain and enhance my recovery, I regularly need to ask: "Am I honest? When wrong, can I admit it? Do I feel good in my skin? Am I helping another? Am I in "my bubble" or being part of the collective group? Am I able to forgive myself and others? When forced to take a hard look at the woman in the mirror, am I okay with her?" If I am, it was a successful day.

I am deeply grateful for the collective effort that brought this Alcohol Awareness Month edition of *Together AZ* to fruition. My sincere appreciation to Dr. Jon Caldwell of The Meadows, whose expertise and insights are invaluable, and to each contributor, whose perspective enriches this important issue — of healing and recovery. Thank you for your commitment to raising awareness and inspiring success on the road to recovery to our community.

## Serenity House Empowering Women to Embrace New Beginnings

At Serenity House in Goodyear, AZ, a transformative journey awaits women who are navigating the challenges of life after recovery or justice involvement. Dr. Khadijia White-Thomas, CEO of Decree It! Sober Living, LLC shares the Serenity House as a unique sober living community; it's a sanctuary for healing, growth, and empowerment, offering a supportive space where women can rediscover their strength and create future sustainability. Dr. Khadijia, a passionate advocate for change and a visionary leader, has crafted a unique approach to transformation that blends faith, resilience, and mindfulness. Dr. Khadijia is committed to her mantra of "New Beginnings, Mighty Faith, and Purposeful Living!" Through her work, she always envisioned creating an environment where women are not only supported in their recovery but also empowered.



The Serenity House is certified by the Arizona Recovery Housing Association (AzRHA) and licensed by the Department of Health Services, ensuring that residents receive the highest level of support. It is a place where women transitioning from recovery or a justice impacted status can find safety, structure, and a renewed sense of purpose.

One of the cornerstone initiatives of the Serenity House is the HERJourney© - Empowering Women - Empowering Lives strategy. This is a holistic approach designed by Dr. Khadijia to foster transformation and lasting change. HERJourney© is a comprehensive, multi-faceted program that helps women reclaim their lives by focusing on critical areas: power and resilience, financial savviness, mental well-being, health and wellness, and creative expression.



Dr. Khadijia's vision is clear— create a community where women are empowered to live lives full of purpose, faith, and unshakable strength. Visit [www.decreconsult.com](http://www.decreconsult.com) to learn more about the community and programs. Find the Serenity House (Goodyear, AZ) on Facebook @Decree It Sober Living for the latest updates and inspiration.

## Legality Does Not Equal Safety



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# ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

April is Alcohol Awareness Month—a time to raise awareness and understanding of alcohol use and misuse. It offers communities a chance to gain more understanding of how individuals struggle with alcohol use and offers resources and support.

This April, as we observe Alcohol Awareness Month, we have the opportunity to highlight the positive impact of the effectiveness of underage drinking prevention strategies and messaging at all levels.

### For parents and caregivers

Any time is a good time to build your teen's skills and strategies for avoiding drinking and drug use. Even if you don't think your child wants to drink or try other drugs, peer pressure is a powerful thing. Having a plan to avoid alcohol and drug use can help children make better choices. Talk with your children about what they would do if faced with a difficult decision about alcohol and drugs. Check in with them frequently for quick chats and keep the lines of communication open.

SAMHSA has resources to help parents, caregivers, and other caring adults who talk with young people about the risks and harms of using alcohol and other substances of misuse. <https://library.samhsa.gov/>

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[www.togetheraz.com](http://www.togetheraz.com) 602-684-1136 E: [advertising@togetheraz.com](mailto:advertising@togetheraz.com)

#### FOUNDER

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#### Publisher/Production

Barbara Nicholson-Brown

#### Contributors

Dr. Marlo Archer

Alexa Bailey

Dr. Jon Caldwell

Andrea Dermott

Dr. Khadijia White-Thomas

Amy Tilley

#### Advisors

George J. Nicholson

Matt Schor

Stephanie Siete

Michelle Smith

Website: WISDIX

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to a healthier way of living.” Self-compassion isn’t weakness, it is heartfelt recognition of our past pain and acknowledgment of our common humanity, and when coupled with commitment to change, it is powerful.

Connection and community are critical to the healing journey – it is difficult to experience the fullness of recovery in isolation.

Like black mold, imperfections that are hidden and buried in the dark crevices of our being fester and grow into toxic shame. Alternatively, in the safety of trustworthy connections and community, when we courageously shine light on our character defects, toxic shame recedes, and we discover our true value. Knowing our inherent worth facilitates healthy change.

**“To make mistakes is human; to stumble is commonplace; to be able to laugh at yourself is maturity.” – William Arthur Ward**

The healing journey can be intense, and the consequences of our unhealthy behavior can be serious. But, when working with those recurring rings of imperfection, sometimes it helps to not take ourselves so seriously. Our expectation should be that we are going to stumble and fall, and when we do, it can be healing to chuckle at our human nature as we pick ourselves up or reach for an outstretched hand. We keep those rings of recovery springy when we have the humility to recognize “we are just another bozo on the bus” and turn up the corners of our mouth as we exercise the courage to change the things we can.

Recovery from trauma and addiction requires courage to face our imperfections and patience as we face them again and again. We may never completely rise above our imperfections, but each time we encounter them on the spring of recovery, we find ourselves in a slightly elevated place. This gradual shift in perspective allows us to get a better view of our imperfections, altering how we see ourselves and others. In time, we begin to see the process of re-encountering our imperfections as a natural part of the healing journey. We find our true worth and value, warts and all, as we face our pain with compassion, connect with others through authenticity, and chuckle at how our imperfections have helped us to heal.

— About Jon G. Caldwell —

Dr. Jon G. Caldwell, DO, PhD, is a board certified psychiatrist who specializes in the treatment of adults who have experienced relational trauma and addictive behaviors.

He is the Medical Director of Meadows Behavioral Health and Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Arizona. His theoretical perspectives are heavily influenced by his PhD training at the University of California at Davis, where he began researching how early childhood maltreatment and insecure attachment relationships affect cognitive, emotional and social functioning. His clinical approach has become increasingly flavored by contemplative psychology and by the practice of mindfulness and self-compassion. Dr. Caldwell has published a number of articles on child maltreatment, attachment theory, emotion regulation and mindfulness and he is a noted international speaker and trainer on these and other topics.



— About The Meadows —

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# April Showers

## The Benefits of Dancing in the Rain

By Amy Tilley, PsyD

April can be a lovely month. Spring is in the air, trees are blooming, grass is growing, and colorful plants and flowers are ready to be potted and planted in your front yard and garden. It is time to play in the dirt and get grounded in nature. April can also bring spring rain showers, helping to rejuvenate nature after a long winter of dormancy and clean out all the pollen and pollution in the air.

### April is Stress Awareness Month

Now, don't let that stress you out! Stress is a normal reaction to situations or events that make us feel overwhelmed, uncertain, or threatened. Since 1992, April has been the month to educate the public on: the causes and effects of stress, coping with stress in healthy ways and developing new habits, and increasing conversations around stress and how it affects mental health, in hopes of reducing the stigma. Stress can become debilitating if we do not recognize it and handle it in a timely manner.

The Stress Management Society ([www.stress.org.uk](http://www.stress.org.uk)) is the founder of Stress Awareness Month. Each year they promote a theme; this year is **#Lead with Love**. It focuses on unconditional love, self-compassion, and positive regard for others. The website offers many tips and free resources for you to use in your own life or your organization. The founders want individuals to remember the care and kindness they are giving to others also needs to be given to themselves to promote a healthier lifestyle and physical, mental, and emotional wellness. Don't put yourself on the back burner!

### What does dancing in the rain have to do with stress awareness month and your mental health?

Lots of significant benefits! Being outside puts you in touch with nature and can help you get grounded. Dancing can help reduce your stress, improve your mood (want to feel like you are 5 years old and jumping in puddles again?!?!), produces endorphins (those feel-good hormones), give you a sense of joy, and provide you with a great workout.



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*The sound of rain can be so calming, and provide a sense of relaxation, peace, and tranquility.*

Make sure it is safe to go outside (no lightning or thunder in the area) and have a blast getting soaked! Dancing can be done solo, or with a partner. Dancing with a partner can teach you skills and you can foster strong connections while dancing in your driveway or backyard.

Dancing also has cognitive benefits. It exercises your brain in new and challenging ways: learning new dance moves can improve short- and long-term memory and utilizes both fine and gross motor skills. It also requires focus and coordination, which aids in memory function. Research also shows that dancing may help combat the onset of Parkinson's Disease or dementia, because your brain is being stretched in different ways as you learn new dances.

Next time you experience a rainy day, you can make a choice: sit inside and watch TV and grumble about the gloomy day or go dance in the rain and bring out your inner child. There are many physical, mental, and emotional health benefits to being outside with nature. Which will you choose to brighten your day?

Amy Tilley, PsyD, has 20 years in the mental health and addiction recovery field. Her clinical interests include working with young adults and adults diagnosed with cooccurring conditions.



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# Managing Urges to Drink

In early recovery it's not unusual to have strong feelings that may make you think you want a drink. Those 'urges' or 'cravings,' can be anything from a thought popping into your head to a physical feeling, or wave of emotion. It's like your brain is pulling you in two different directions, and it can feel like you're losing control.

The good news is, it will get easier! As you learn new ways to handle these urges, they'll start to feel less intense. You'll also start to feel more confident you can deal with them, if they pop up now and then. Remember, if you're struggling with cravings at any point, don't hesitate to reach out to a therapist, sponsor, or friend in recovery. Don't let feeling embarrassed stop you from getting the help you need.

## Recognize triggers

An urge to drink can be set off by:

- **External triggers.** People, places, things, or times of day that offer drinking opportunities or remind you of drinking. These “tempting situations” are more obvious, predictable, and avoidable than internal triggers.
- **Internal triggers.** These can be puzzling because the urge to drink just seems to “pop up.” But if you pause to think about it when it happens, you’ll find the urge may have been set off by a fleeting thought, a positive emotion such as excitement, a negative emotion such as frustration, or a physical sensation such as a headache, tension, or nervousness.

Consider tracking and analyzing urges to drink for a couple of weeks. This will help you become more aware of when and how you experience urges, what triggers them, and ways to avoid or control them.

## Avoid tempting situations

In many cases, your best strategy will be to avoid taking the chance that you'll have an urge, then slip and drink. Socially, avoid activities involving drinking. If you feel guilty about turning down an invitation, remind yourself that you are not necessarily talking about "forever."

When the urges subside (and they will!) or become more manageable, you may decide to ease gradually into some situations you now choose to avoid. In the meantime, you can stay connected with friends by suggesting alternate activities that don't involve drinking.



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## Cope with triggers you can't avoid

It's not possible to avoid all tempting situations or to block internal triggers, so you'll need a range of strategies to handle urges to drink. Here are some options:

- **Remind yourself of your reasons for making a change.** Carry your top reasons on a wallet card or in an electronic message you can access easily, such as on a mobile phone or saved email.
- **Talk it through with someone you trust.** Have a trusted friend/sponsor on standby for a phone call, or bring one along for support in situations where you might be tempted to drink.
- **Distract yourself with a healthy, alternative activity.** For different situations, come up with engaging short, mid-range, and longer options, like texting or calling a trusted friend, working out, meditating, taking a walk, yoga, or doing a hobby — even taking a power nap!
- **Challenge the thought that drives the urge.** Stop it, analyze the error in it, and replace it. Example: “It couldn't hurt to have one little drink. WAIT a minute—what am I thinking? One could hurt, as I've seen ‘just one’ lead to lots more. **I am sticking with my choice not to drink.**”
- **Ride it out without giving in.** Instead of fighting an urge, accept it as normal and temporary. As you ride it out, keep in mind that it will soon crest like an ocean wave and pass.
- **Leave tempting situations quickly and gracefully.** It helps to plan your escape in advance.

(Source: Visit <https://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/tools/worksheets-more/handling-urges-drink>)

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# We Do Recover!

By Andrea Dermott

April is Alcohol Awareness Month, a time dedicated to educating individuals and communities about the dangers of alcohol misuse and the importance of prevention, treatment, and recovery. I believe awareness and education efforts play a crucial role in reducing stigma, promoting early intervention, and encouraging those struggling with alcohol to seek help.



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## Why Alcohol Awareness is Important

Drinking alcohol is accepted in many social settings, making it easy to overlook its risks. However, drinking can lead to impaired judgement and serious health complications. Despite these risks, many people are unaware of the warning signs of alcohol use disorder. Some may assume that drinking is only problematic when it reaches extreme levels. Early intervention and education can prevent the progression of alcohol-related problems and significantly improve the lives of individuals and their families.

Raising awareness also helps break the stigma associated with addiction. Too often, those struggling with alcohol feel ashamed or isolated, making it harder for them to reach out for support. By fostering open conversations, we can create a more supportive environment where individuals feel empowered to seek help without fear of judgment.

## Recovery is Possible

In 2018, I sought professional help for alcohol use at Scottsdale Recovery. Seeking help is the vital first step to recovery. I was scared, ashamed and embarrassed. Through inpatient treatment, months of intensive outpatient treatment, support, and a commitment to change, I was able to rebuild a happier healthier life.

Some of the most powerful aspects of my recovery are healthy coping strategies, structure, support, and connection. Whether it is family, friends, a therapist, or recovery community, having people who understand and encourage you to make positive changes makes all the difference. Developing positive ways to manage stress and incorporating physical wellness into my routine are also keys to my success in recovery. Recovery is not about perfection; it is about progress, resilience, personal growth, healing, and self-discovery.

My journey of advancing from a client at Scottsdale Recovery to Director of Business Development at Scottsdale Recovery reflects my commitment to recovery and passion for helping those who are still struggling. This position allows me the opportunity to educate our community about resources and treatment options available to show others that it is ok to ask for help. My influence extends far beyond my title, and I share my story to show others that recovery is possible!

## How You Can Help

Alcohol Awareness Month is an opportunity for all of us to take action. Whether you have personally struggled with alcohol use, know someone who has, or simply want to contribute to a healthier community, there are many ways to make a difference. One way is to educate yourself and others to learn about the signs of alcohol misuse and share information with those around you. Encourage open conversations and if you suspect someone is struggling, offer a listening ear without judgment.

Let this month serve as a reminder of the importance of education, prevention, and the power of re-

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*Andrea was born and raised in Phoenix, Arizona. She became part of the SRC® family January 2019 after completing their treatment program in 2018. She understands the struggle of addiction and shows clients firsthand that recovery is possible. She attended Northern Arizona University to study business management and has a strong passion for helping others.*



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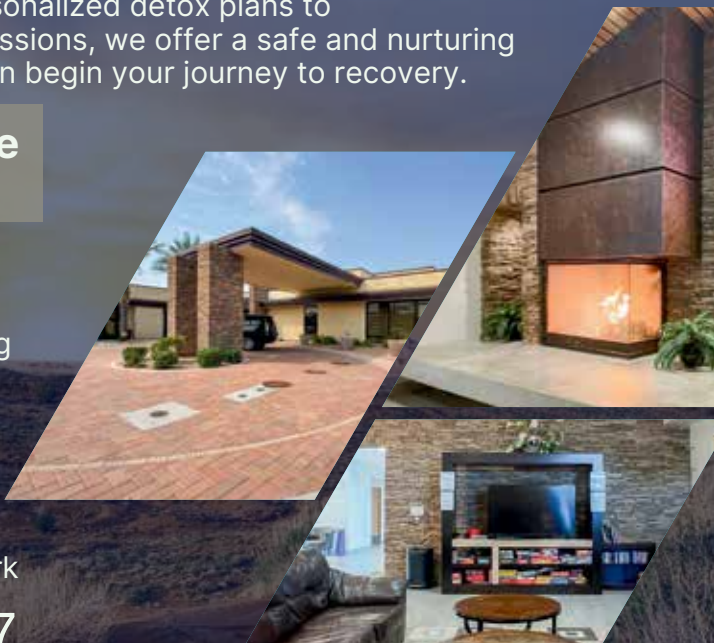
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Inner Critic from page 1

thing that sounds like: "Oh, you don't look good" or "you can't pull off that color" or "you just really shouldn't go out today"? That voice can often be loud and debilitating.

## From Critic Coach

Our inner critic, however, doesn't always have to be a critic. In fact, it's possible to get her on our side and turn her into our inner coach. An inner coach sounds a lot more like an encourager and validator, than a critic. The inner coach is the voice that tells you "you can do it!" and "it's okay". You can almost imagine these two voices looking like the metaphorical angel and devil, sitting on your shoulders, both trying to talk, but sometimes one being louder than the other. To give volume to our inner coach and quiet our inner critic, we have to be able to differentiate between our own voice and that critical voice. We do a good job sometimes of taking on the negative words and thinking to ourselves, "well, that's just how I am." But that isn't true.

**"The negative things we say about ourselves are not true, they are just that: negative words."**

And let's be clear about something. Having the inner critic in your head doesn't make you crazy and usually isn't something you decided to take on. The messages we internalize that become our inner critic often have roots in the negative and hurtful words we've received from people around us, in the media, and from many different sources. The difference now is that it's no

longer an external thing voicing those words, it's now coming from inside, which can feel much different.

Part of healing our hearts and minds is being able to identify and recognize what is impacting it. To practice this awareness and separate from those hurtful words and messages, we need to get to know those voices and question its validity instead of taking on the critic's words. You can ask questions like, "where is this coming from?" or "where's the evidence that says this is true or untrue?". Become aware of how it sounds and write down the messages you are getting. When we can take the looping, pressing thoughts of the critic and put them in the light of day outside our heads, it becomes easier to recognize that maybe, just maybe, she isn't as powerful as it seems she is. From there, we begin our journey of countering that voice and giving the power back to ourselves to say: "I am worth it. I am good. I am okay".

*Alexa Bailey is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) experienced in treating several different populations and areas, including trauma, anxiety, depression, relational challenges, and life transitions with both young adults and adolescents.*



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<b>TERRY'S PLACE</b> Coparenting women	<b>THELMA'S HOUSE</b> Transitional housing for women and children		

Treatment | Housing | Education

**602-264-6214** [azwomensrecoverycenter.org](http://azwomensrecoverycenter.org)



# Mistakes

By Dr. Marlo Archer

I was a teenager in the late '80's, already disillusioned and cynical, when **Successories'** motivational posters began papering the walls of corporate and educational settings. A single, striking, vividly-colored photograph took up 95% of the poster space, under which would stand an inspirational word like, "**COURAGE,**" "**INTEGRITY,**" or "**HOPE,**" followed by a thought-provoking elaboration of the notion like: "*When the sun rises, it rises for everyone.*"

Like others my age and ilk, I was immediately repulsed by the seemingly pollyanna view these posters were trying to convey and was so overjoyed and delighted when Despair, Inc. began their parody of those happy-crappy abominations that were continually trying to remind me of how much better I could be if I would just believe or try.

Despair, Inc. came out with outstanding look-alike offerings like: **MEETINGS** — None of us is as dumb as all of us; or **AMBITION** — Sometimes the journey of a thousand miles ends very, very badly — this one featuring a gorgeous, high-quality photo of a spawning salmon leaping upstream into the mouth of a waiting brown bear.

**"Every 12-Step program offers a simple, but not easy solution to just about any mistake you can make. You don't even have to be an alcoholic or addict to use the mistake-fixing magic."**

However, the one that caught my attention and still sometimes holds my heart hostage was **MISTAKES**. A glorious red-orange-yellow sunset over a still, azure ocean allows one to briefly mis-perceive the dark silhouette rising out of the ocean as a grateful Beluga's waved goodbye to the sailors who freed her from carelessly discarded fishing nets. However, in just a moment, it becomes clear that the pointy end of what protrudes from the ocean is not a pectoral fin, but rather, the bow of a hopelessly sinking ship.

In smaller type, the thought left for you to ponder is as follows: *It could be that the purpose of your life is only to serve as a warning to others.*

I instantly invested the majority of my next paycheck with Despair, Inc., and adorned everything I could with my logo and motto. This served me in so many ways ranging from making me look, to my educators, like I had bought into the positive motivational trend; to giving me something to stare at while being reprimanded to remind myself that even now I was serving a special purpose — warning others not to get caught doing what I'd done; and as a source of protection when a meaner cynic would begin to badger me for the tiny motivational pin on my Member's Only jacket, only to stop themselves, laugh, and move on without harassing me further when they actually read what it said.



As you can guess, I continued to make mistakes throughout my teenage years and well into my early twenties. And late twenties. And actually early 30's if I'm being honest. Oh heck, who am I trying to fool? I pol-luted my 40's with mistakes and am nearly through my 50's with rarely a mistake-free day to my name, in fact, a mistake I made this morning inspired the topic of this article. What's different today, that wasn't present in my earlier years, is that today I know how to fix most mistakes and that the embarrassment of having made a mistake is not fatal.

Every 12-Step program offers a simple, but not easy solution to just about any mistake you can make. You don't even have to be an alcoholic or addict to use the mistake-fixing magic. If you honestly take a look at any harm you have done to someone else and make a sincere and compassionate effort to make amends to them, it really fixes just about any mistake you can make, especially the "stupid" ones.

What you have to do first, though, to allow yourself to approach the situation is to understand fully and completely that embarrassment is not fatal and that it is not worse than just leaving what might be a slight insult to someone else get swept under a rug by you both. Those tiny injuries, ignored year after year are the things of which divorces, family cut-offs, and unjustified firings are made. If you cannot allow yourself to believe that embarrassment is temporary, bearable, and largely up to you to dismiss by making amends, please use my life as both a warning and an example. If you have not already seen me make a mistake, you just don't know me well enough yet. Introduce yourself, you'll see one before long. I believe you could ask most of the advertisers, half of the columnists, and the very publisher of this newspaper for examples of mistakes they've seen me make over the years.

Mistakes, even small ones, left uncorrected, definitely sink ships. However, a ship's bow reinforced with multiple mended breaches may be even stronger than when it first set sail.



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# Navigating the Tricky Topic: Talking to Your Kids about Underage Drinking

Having a real conversation with your teen or young adult about underage drinking doesn't have to feel like an interrogation. It's about building understanding and trust.



iStock Credit: nortonrsx

Here's how to make those conversations more productive and less stressful:

## Listen First, Judge Later

Instead of jumping to conclusions, strive for objectivity. Truly hear what your child has to say. Open-mindedness creates a safe space for them to be honest.

## Ask Questions that Spark Dialogue

Skip the "yes" or "no" questions. Opt for open-ended inquiries that encourage your child to elaborate. For example, "What are your thoughts on parties where alcohol is present?" or "How do you see alcohol fitting into your life?"

## Explore the "Why" Behind the Interest

Gently ask why they're curious about drinking. This prompts them to consider the potential consequences, like missed opportunities, risky behaviors, or health issues. It also helps you understand their motivations, allowing you to offer healthier coping strategies.

## Validate Their Feelings

Show that you're actively listening. Reflect back what you hear, both the words and the underlying emotions. For example, "It sounds like you're feeling stressed, and you think alcohol might help you relax. Am I understanding that correctly?"

## Present the Facts, Not Just the Fears

Discuss the real impact of alcohol on mental and physical health, decision-making, and long-term well-being. Focus on factual information, not just scare tactics.

## Extend Empathy and Compassion

Acknowledge that adolescence is challenging. Let them know you understand that everyone faces struggles, but alcohol isn't a healthy solution. Reassure them that they can confide in you.

## Address Family History, Honestly

If addiction runs in your family, be upfront about the increased risk. Treat it like any other hereditary health concern. Openly discuss how this could impact them.

## Focus on healthy coping mechanisms

Instead of just saying no, offer alternatives. Brainstorm together healthy ways to deal with stress, peer pressure, or any other reasons why they might want to drink.

By approaching these conversations with empathy and a willingness to listen, you can create a more open and supportive environment for your child.



**talk**  
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## HELP KEEP THEM ON A POSITIVE PATH.

Make sure they know you're there for them.

The adults in kids' lives can significantly affect their decisions about alcohol and other drug use. Talk with youth in your community. Show them you'll always be by their side. For tips on how—and when—to begin the conversation, visit

[talktheyhearyou.samhsa.gov](http://talktheyhearyou.samhsa.gov)



#TalkTheyHearYou

PEP23-03-01-038



## Why Do So Many Kids Drink?

As children mature, it is natural for them to assert their independence, seek new challenges, and engage in risky behavior. Underage drinking is one such behavior that attracts many adolescents. They may want to try alcohol but often do not fully recognize its effects on their health and behavior.



Other reasons youth drink alcohol include:

- **Peer pressure**
- **Increased independence or the desire for it**
- **Stress**

In addition, many youth have easy access to alcohol. In 2023, among adolescents ages 15 to 17 who reported drinking alcohol in the past month, 84.3% reported getting it for free the last time they drank. In many cases, adolescents have access to alcohol through family members or find it at home. (Source: <https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/>)

**U.S. teens encounter alcohol ads regularly.**

Exposure to alcohol ads can fuel underage drinking.

**CDC**  
[cdc.gov/alcohol](http://cdc.gov/alcohol)

**Teen Challenge of Arizona**  
Helping Youth, Adults & Families

**HOME OF HOPE**  
Women & Women with Children  
520-252-3523

**PHOENIX MEN'S CENTER**  
Men 18 +  
602-708-9475

**SPRINGBOARD**  
Home for Girls (12-17)  
520-730-4269

**TCAZ.ORG**

**In an Emergency  
Dial 911**

# Resources & Support

**Suicide Crisis  
Call 988**

## Recovery Partners and Contributors

ACT Counseling & Education	602-569-4328	actcounseling.com
AZ Women's Recovery Center (AWRC)	602-264-6214	azwomensrecoverycenter.org
Aurora Behavioral Health	877-870-7012	auroraarizona.com
Birches Health	833-483-3838	bircheshealth.com
CBI, Inc.	877-931-9142	communitybridgesinc.org
Copper Springs	480-418-4367	coppersprings.com
The Crossroads	602-263-5242	thecrossroadsinc.org
DaVinci Consulting Services	480-606-8602	davinciconsultingservices.com
Desert Star Addiction Recovery Center	520-638-6000	desertstarARC.com
Dr. Marlo Archer	480-705-5007	DrMarlo.com
Gifts Anon	480-483-6006	
Hushabye Nursery	480-628-7500	hushabyenursery.org
The Meadows Behavioral Health	800-632-3697	meadowsBH.com
Mens Teen Challenge	520-792-1790	tcaz.org
Mercy Care 800-631-1314	602-222-9444	mercycazeaz.org
Newport Healthcare	888-675-1764	newporthealthcare.com
NotMYKid	602-652-0163	notmykid.org
Psychological Counseling Services (PCS)	480-947-5739	pcsintensive.com
Recovery In Motion	844-810-1599	recoveryinmotion.com
Revive Recovery Center	480-405-5396	reviverecoverycenters.com
Scottsdale Providence	480-210-1734	scottsdaleprovidence.com
Scottsdale Recovery Center	888-663-7847	scottsdalerecovery.com
Sierra Tucson	800-842-4487	sierratucson.com
Brough Stewart, MC, LPC, NCC	602-316-3197	
Valley Hospital	602-952-3939	valleyhospital-phoenix.com
Virtue Recovery Center	866-338-6977	virtuerecoverycitywest.com
Teen Challenge AZ	602-708-9475	tcaz.org

### Additional Resources

AZ. Dept. of Health	602-364-2086
Arizona Opioid Assistance Helpline	888-688-4222
Eric's House	855-894-5658
Desert Drug Dog	602-908-2042
Hunkapi Programs	480-393-0870
Kid in the Corner	kidinthecorner.org
EMPACT/La Frontera	800-273-8255
I Am Teen Strong	480-396-2409
Recovery Café	480-530-7090
Spiritually Fit Co-op	602-809-0854
TERROS Health	602-685-6000

### TUCSON

ACA	aca-arizona.org
AA	520-624-4183
Al-Anon Info Service	520-323-2229
Anger Management	520-887-7079
Behavioral Awareness Center	520 629 9126
Co-Anon Family Groups	520-513-5028
Cocaine Anonymous	520-326-2211
Cornerstone Behavioral Health	520-222-8268
Cottonwood Tucson	800-877-4520
Crisis Intervention	520-323-9373
Narcotics Anonymous	520-881-8381
Nicotine Anonymous	520-299-7057
Overeaters Anonymous	520-733-0880
Recovery in Motion	520-975-2141
Sex Addicts Anonymous	520-745-0775
Sierra Tucson	800-842-4487
Suicide Prevention	520-323-9372
Teen Challenge	888-352-4940
The Mark Youth and Family Care	520-326-6182
Workaholics Anonymous	520-403-3559

### In Tucson

#### Refuge Recovery

- **Wednesday, 6:00 - 7:00 pm,** Red Tree Meditation Center, 1234 E 16th St. Tucson.
- **Saturday, 5:00 pm - 6:30 pm,** \*We meet in the Palo Verde room\* Saint Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church. 4440 N Campbell Ave Tucson, AZ 85718. Refuge recovery is a non-theistic alternative to 12 step programs.

#### EDA Meetings

**Sat. 10:30 am**  
New Freedom Meeting — Pigeon Coop  
4415 S Rural Rd, Ste 8, Tempe AZ.  
Step and big book study.

**Thur. 7:00 pm,** New Happiness Meeting Crossroads  
2103 E Southern in Tempe.  
Rotating format - Step, Topic, Big book, Speaker.

## Helplines & Support

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)	602-264-1341
Al-Anon	602-249-1257
Tucson Al-Anon Information	520-323-2229
Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACA)	aca-arizona.org
AZ Women's Recovery Center	602-264-6214
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
Copper Springs	480-418-4367
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
Food Addicts foodaddicts.org	435-764-1461
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
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 Tucson	520-792-6450
Sex Addicts Anonymous	602-735-1681
S-ANON	480-545-0520
Teen Life Line	800-248-8336

### Brough Stewart, MC, LPC, NCC

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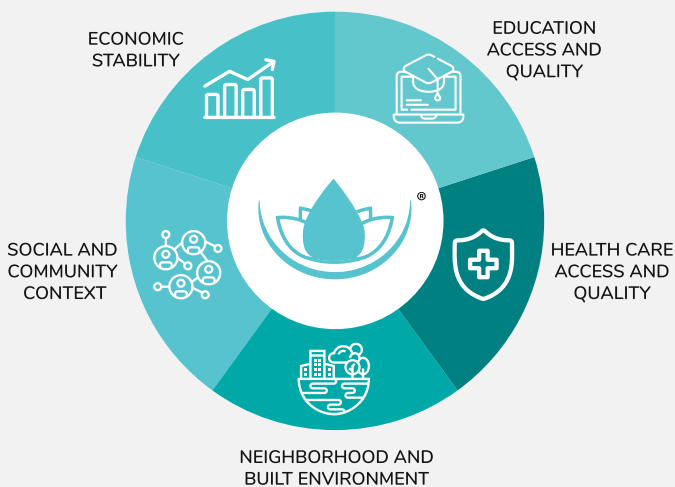
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