

Lived Experience. Generational Change.

Sanctuary Recovery Centers mission is founded in the life and lived experience of the man who stands at the helm

By Brian Reinhart

Understanding the vision which drives Sanctuary Recovery Centers, must naturally begin with the story of the man who operates it. Characteristically of those in his position, he would rather talk about the work than about himself. For more than two decades Sanctuary has quietly served the Valley. It began in 2006 as a single sober living house in Phoenix with no logo, no paperwork, not even a formal company behind it. There was simply a name, an ethos, and an open door for people who needed somewhere to recover.

Joey Landin is the man behind it all. Having had struggles when he was younger, he understands the loneliness and despair brought about by substance use and the tough love that is sometimes used by worrying families. These struggles of life were somewhat behind him by the time he walked into Sanctuary's doors in 2010; not as the CEO but rather as a resident. He was out of options, and finally willing to try something different for a better way of life.



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Finding Purpose and Passion

The events which follow are the things people tend to remember. Recovery not only gave Joey back his life, but it provided a purpose and passion

for him to stay. Within a year he was managing the house, collecting rent from the residents, helping the next man find work, and most importantly, sitting up with someone on his first shaky night the same way others had once sat up with him. During the housing crisis in 2008, the original management allowed the house to slip into foreclosure. Imagine coming home one day to find a sign staked in the front yard announcing what feels like impending doom.

An entrepreneur at heart, Joey was following his first and longest passion; he had opened a small mechanic shop in the garage of the sober living home.

LIVED Experience continued page 9

—Freedom from Stigma—

Reclaiming Mental Health this July

By Ramsen Kasha, MBA, MS, LPC

July is a month of fireworks, celebration, and reminders of the freedoms we cherish. As our nation marks its 250th birthday, many will gather to celebrate independence and opportunity.

Yet beyond the flags and festivities lies another kind of freedom that deserves recognition: the freedom to care for our mental health without shame, fear, or stigma.

For millions of people, mental health challenges remain a quiet struggle. Anxiety, depression, trauma, and stress can feel isolating not just because of the difficulties themselves, but because of the stigma that often surrounds them. Many fear judgment, worry about being seen as "weak," or assume they should manage it on their own. But true independence is not about going it alone, it is about having the courage to recognize when support is needed and seeking it.

Breaking free from stigma begins with awareness. Mental health conditions are real, medical, and treatable, just like physical illnesses. Yet, while



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"Stigma weakens when conversations are open and honest."

most of us would not hesitate to see a doctor for a broken arm, many hesitate to seek help for persistent sadness or anxiety. The first step toward freedom is opening the conversation: talking openly, asking questions, and normalizing help-seeking behavior.

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Publisher's Note

By Barbara Nicholson-Brown

We All Have a Story

Every one of us has a story — a story that has shaped us into who we are today.

When I look at my time on this planet so far, many of the days, weeks, months, and years kept me hiding in shame. I never felt comfortable or safe sharing how certain events affected me, or how I viewed the outside world. It was easier to stay silent rather than fear being ridiculed. I wasn't going to talk about the dysfunction in my family, or the "less than," "not good enough" feelings that engulfed me. And then alcohol took control of me—or rather, I allowed it to. It was my so-called friend; and I counted on it to numb me.

I am forever grateful I found my way out of that monstrous way of living, and I openly share how I arrived at this beautiful space. I am sober and proud of it.

Recovery from addiction has opened the doors to life for so many! Two of those stories are highlighted in this issue: the story of Sanctuary Recovery Centers and my interview with Christin Day of Crossroads.

Thank you to our amazing contributors: Alexandra Daffner, Sherry Eklund, Abby Rallo, Ramsen Kasha, Amy Tilley, Marlo Archer, Jessica Parsons— your words are the foundation for this edition, always offering our community hope. I am honored to know and walk beside each and every one of you.

Together AZ *Inspiring Success on the Road to Recovery*

Recovery Together Enterprises, LLC 10105 E. Via Linda, Suite A103 #387 Scottsdale AZ 85258
www.togetheraz.com 602-684-1136 E: barb@togetheraz.com

Contributors

Dr. Marlo Archer

Alan Cohen

Alexandra Daffner

Christin Day

Sherry Eklund

Ramsen Kasha MS, MBA, LPC

Jessica Parsons

Abby Rallo, BSN, RN

Brian Reinhart

Amy Tilley, PsyD

Website: WISDIX

Images/Photos/ iStock.com

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Publisher/Production

Barbara Nicholson-Brown

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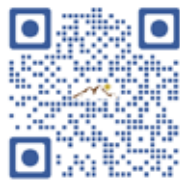
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58th Annual Southwestern School for Behavioral Health Studies

The 58th Annual Southwestern School for Behavioral Health Studies Conference will be held **August 17 - 20, 2026** at Gila River Resorts & Casinos – Wild Horse Pass in Chandler, Arizona.

This year's theme is "Listen, Learn, Grow."

La Frontera Arizona EMPACT-Suicide Prevention Center is hosting this event with the support of valued Sponsors and Exhibitors. The agenda will include a dynamic group of speakers on topics significant to mental health, addiction, cultural diversity, and ethics.

There will be numerous breakout sessions as well as four keynote sessions beginning Monday, August 17th. Earn up to 25.5 hours of continuing education for your attendance!

There will also be networking opportunities to share ideas with professionals from across the state of Arizona.

Visit www.azsws.org for more details on this annual educational event.

Spotlight: Thriving in Recovery

with Christin Day



Producing this publication comes with some wonderful perks, especially getting out into the community and connecting with like-minded people in the behavioral health and addiction recovery field. At the core, we are all about helping others, being of service, and offering hope. That is Christin's true purpose in life.

When we met at a networking event over six years ago, we hit it off instantly. Christin is one of the most generous, kind-hearted women I know.

She's incredibly open about her own path to recovery, which had its share of many rough patches. Yet through every

single up, down, scrape, and burn, she has emerged as a powerhouse of positivity (with the perfect tagline: "Hope Dealer").

She brings this incredible energy to her role as Communications and Outreach Manager for Crossroads, Inc. and as the host of the Recovery On Air podcast.

Thank you for sharing your journey Christin! — Barbara

Through your work at Crossroads, you've become an inspiration to the recovery community. Looking at your life now, did you ever imagine you'd be where you are today?

No, I honestly never imagined I'd be where I am today. There was a time when addiction had completely taken over my life, and I couldn't see a future beyond my next fix. If someone had told me then that I'd be sober, helping others, working in the recovery field, and sharing my story to inspire hope, I wouldn't have believed them. Today, I get to serve others through my work at Crossroads, advocate for recovery, and show people that change is possible. One of the greatest blessings is being able to go into jails and prisons, bringing recovery meetings and sharing my story with people who may be experiencing some of the darkest and most vulnerable moments of their lives.

I have the opportunity to plant a seed of hope and show them that no matter where they are today, recovery is possible. I also get to be a mother, a wife, and a leader—roles I don't take for granted. They remind me daily of my responsibility to live in a way that reflects the life I've been given. My life is proof that recovery works and that God can take even our darkest chapters and turn them into something beautiful. I don't take any of it for granted. Every day is a reminder of how far I've come and how much is possible when you refuse to give up. If my story can help one person believe in a better future, then it's all worth it. And, I manage all social media, marketing, public relations, and community engagement efforts to increase awareness of our services.

How do recovery groups, sober communities, and peer support lift you up in your daily life?

Recovery groups, sober communities, and peer support have played a huge role in my journey. They remind me that I never have to do life alone. Through accountability, encouragement, and shared experiences, I've found people who understand both the struggles and the victories of recovery. They keep me grounded, help me continue growing, and remind me where I came from. Today, the recovery community isn't just part of my sobriety—it's part of my purpose. Together, we prove every day that recovery is possible. Recovery gave me my life back, but the recovery community taught me how to truly live it.

Rebuilding trust with family and friends can be tough. What was that process like for you?

Rebuilding trust was one of the hardest parts of my recovery because I knew my words alone weren't enough. My family and friends had heard promises before, so I had to let my actions do the talking. It took time, consistency, and patience. I had to show up, do what I said I was going to do, and accept that

trust would not be rebuilt overnight. Some relationships healed quickly, while others took years. Today, I'm grateful that recovery gave me the opportunity to repair those relationships. I learned that trust isn't demanded—it's earned one day at a time through honest actions and living differently.

What advice would you give to someone new in recovery on handling social events where alcohol or substances are around?

My advice is to put your recovery first, especially in the beginning. It's okay to avoid certain people, places, and events if they threaten your sobriety. Recovery has to come before everything else. Have a plan before you go, bring a sober support person if possible, and always have an exit strategy if you start feeling uncomfortable. Don't be afraid to say no or leave early. Most importantly, remember that protecting your recovery isn't selfish—it's necessary. The party, event, or gathering will come and go, but your recovery is something worth fighting for every single day.

Have you had to walk away from certain relationships to protect your sobriety and peace of mind? If so, how did you handle that?

Absolutely. One of the hardest lessons I had to learn in recovery was that not everyone could come with me on this journey. Some relationships were built around drugs, alcohol, chaos, or unhealthy patterns, and staying connected to those relationships put my sobriety at risk. I had to make the difficult decision to create boundaries and, in some cases, walk away completely. It wasn't about judging anyone—it was about protecting the life I was working so hard to build. I handled it by focusing on my recovery, surrounding myself with healthy people, and trusting that some relationships are meant for a season. Today, I understand that choosing my sobriety and peace of mind was not a loss—it was an investment in my future.

Sometimes the most loving thing you can do for yourself is walk away from what no longer serves your growth.

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America's 250th Birthday

The Changing Landscape of Mental Health Recovery

By Amy Tilley, PsyD

July 4, 1776–July 4, 2026—Happy Birthday, America! 250 years of freedom!

This month America celebrates a very special milestone, and many cities across the country are going all out to mark the occasion as a 4th of July to remember. The theme of freedom got me to thinking about how recovery gives us freedom: from addiction, from mental illnesses, from toxic relationships, from poor choices we made in our past. I also wondered about how the landscape of mental health recovery has changed throughout the last 250 years. I'll try to keep this brief, as there have been significant changes throughout the course of time.

- **The 18th and 19th century insane asylums were typically overcrowded and had poor living conditions.** There was little understanding of mental illness, and the stigma was profound in the 1700–1800's. The United States has gone from institutionalizing and hiding people with mental illness (think *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*) to mainstreaming mental wellness and well-being, community integration, and personalized care.

- **Mid-19th Century:** Dorothea Dix was a champion for mental health advocacy, helping to change the prison system and insane asylums, to establishing state-run psychiatric hospitals that were designed to be more humane and with a focus on recovery and reducing stigma.

- **In 1963, President John F. Kennedy signed the Community Mental Health Centers Act,** focusing on funding local mental health centers and deinstitutionalizing large state hospitals, allowing care to be client focused and providing more individualized care.

- **1979: The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)** was founded by two mothers who were frustrated with the medical community's tendency to blame parents for their children's mental illness. It has grown into a nationwide grassroots organization to reduce stigma, provide support, and train peers to run support groups for individuals, families, and children across the lifespan. NAMI has been a pivotal part in helping establish legislation for research on mental illness, advocating for mental health parity in 1996, and providing thousands of support groups throughout the country for clients—all at little to no cost to the consumer. (www.nami.org)

- **Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter was an advocate for mental health and reducing the stigma around mental illness.** In 1980, she supported the Mental Health Systems Act, established the Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers in 1987, and co-founded The Carter Center Mental Health Program to shape national policy and promote equal healthcare. After leaving



the White House, she founded The Rosalynn Carter Institute for Caregivers, eventually merging with The Carter Center Mental Health Program. These two programs are linked together, as caregivers need support for their mental well-being as they take care of their loved ones. She is quoted as saying, "We have a great opportunity to change things forever for everyone with mental illness. The solutions are truly within our reach." –Rosalynn Carter (www.cartercenter.org)

- **1996: The Mental Health Parity Act was passed into federal law,** mandating that commercial insurance plans establish equal annual and lifetime dollar limits for mental health and medical benefits. Insurance companies had to start recognizing mental illness as a valid diagnosis and be willing to cover the care so that the consumer was able to access treatment.

- **2008: The Mental Health Parity and Addiction Act was signed into law,** expanding the original law from 1996. This law brought substance use disorders under the same umbrella as mental illnesses. It mandated that financial requirements (copays/coinsurances) and treatment limitations (maximum number of visits) for mental health and/or substance use treatment be no more restrictive than medical benefits. 2008 also introduced the Affordable Care Act, which extended the parity act requirements to small-group insurance plans, making health care more affordable and accessible, recognizing health care as an essential need for the American people.

- **2020: The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline was signed into law on October 17, 2020,** and launched nationwide on July 16, 2022. It was established by Congress to allow everyone easy access to mental resources, by only needing to remember three digits, as opposed to the old 800-number. It runs

24 hours a day, 7 days a week and cooperates with over 200 local crisis centers throughout the United States. Anyone can access it through voice, text, and chatting. It is available in English and Spanish and via videophone for people who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. (www.988lifeline.org)

As you are celebrating the 4th of July and 250 years of freedom this month, take time to reflect on this historical anniversary.

Milestones and round numbers (think decade birthdays: 40 / 50 / 60 / 70) tend to prompt people to reflect on the past, set personal goals, and focus on healthy life changes. Regarding your mental health, it can be a time to rest, recover, reconnect with family and friends, and build a stronger community.

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 co-occurring conditions.

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Why Anxiety Isn't Always Bad for Our Teens

By Jessica Parsons

No parent likes to see their child struggle.

Whether it's nervousness before a big test, disappointment after not making the team, conflict with friends, or simply feeling bored and restless during summer break, our instinct is often to step in and make things better.

But mental health professionals warn that discomfort isn't always something parents should rush to fix. In fact, anxiety, frustration, and uncertainty are normal parts of growing up. Experts at Artemis Adolescent Healing Center in Phoenix and Tucson say learning how to navigate those emotions is what counts to help a child develop resilience, confidence, problem-solving skills, and emotional strength that will serve them long into adulthood.

"Anxiety gets a bad rap, but it's part of our built-in survival system," says Shawna Beckman, Chief Clinical Officer at Artemis Adolescent Healing Center. "It helps us prepare, stay alert, and navigate challenges. The goal isn't to eliminate anxiety altogether. The goal is to learn how to manage it."

Beckman says she has seen parents inadvertently robbing their children of one of life's most important lessons: how to cope. And urges parents to think twice before jumping in too quickly to save the day.

"Anxiety can actually be helpful. And I think as a society we have gotten away from accepting uncomfortable feelings to the point that it becomes a detriment to young people," explains Beckman. "We need to learn how to sit in our discomfort, it's the only way to build the coping skills we need to face the challenges and struggles life throws our way."

A little anxiety before a test, performance, or job interview can actually be motivating, according to Beckman. That sense of urgency often encourages preparation, focus, and follow-through. Anxiety can also serve an important

protective function, alerting us to potential risks and helping us make thoughtful decisions.

The key, Beckman says, is understanding the difference between healthy stress and clinical anxiety. Healthy stress is typically temporary and tied to a specific situation. Clinical anxiety, on the other hand, is persistent, excessive, and begins interfering with daily life, relationships, school performance, sleep, or overall well-being.



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"As soon as you stop being the fixer and start being the listener, you create space for your child."

For parents, that distinction can be difficult to recognize, especially when they see their child struggling. But Beckman encourages parents to resist the urge to immediately solve every problem their teen encounters.

"As soon as you stop being the fixer and start being the listener, you create space for your child to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills," she says. "When parents constantly step in, children miss opportunities to learn that they can handle hard things."

That doesn't mean parents should ignore a child who is struggling. Rather, Beckman recommends offering support, asking questions, and helping teens work through challenges instead of removing them altogether.

For parents looking to support their teens through life's inevitable ups and downs, Beckman recommends asking more questions and offering fewer solutions. Instead of immediately fixing a problem, she encourages parents to ask questions such as:

"What do you think your next step should be?"

"What's the hardest part of this situation?" and

"How can I support you while you work through it?"

These conversations help teens build confidence in their own ability to solve problems, manage stress, and cope with challenges independently.

"Confidence doesn't come from avoiding anxiety," says Beckman. "It comes from facing something difficult, getting through it, and realizing you're capable. That's how resilience is built."

For more information about Artemis Adolescent Healing Center, visit <https://ArtemisAZ.com/>

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“BE A MAN!”

Breaking the Stigma Around Men’s Mental Health

By Abby Rallo, BSN, RN

“Be a man.” “Man up.” “Tough it out.”

For generations, men have received these messages loud and clear. While the intention of these messages is generally to encourage strength and resilience, they could be incredibly harmful as they reinforce the notion that vulnerability is a weakness, and asking for help is something to be ashamed of. The result is a culture where many men suffer in silence.

What’s the Issue? Just Man-Up!

The problem with this “be a man” mentality, is that being a man includes everything that society tells men not to be. What is more human than emotions? Joy? Sadness? Pain? That is why last month was recognized as Men’s Mental Health Awareness Month - A time to change outdated stereotypes, break the stigma, and remind our men that strength is not found in suffering alone, it is found when one has the courage and bravery to speak up, seek support, and show up for themselves.

Why Don’t They Just Ask for Help?

Worldwide, evidence shows that the influence of gender as a social determinant of health is a well-established barrier driving men’s resistance to seek help (Sharp, 2022). Socially, men are taught that self-reliance, toughness, and emotional restraint are the key ingredients to masculinity. This conditioning has made it a major challenge for men to not only recognize when they need help, but to ask for help as well. The stigma that surrounds men’s mental health leads to fear and avoidance of seeking mental health services (Ahad, 2023). The consequences of actively avoiding help are severe. Men account for 75% of deaths from suicide, and yet consistent evidence shows that globally, men are less likely to seek support for mental health challenges such as depression or anxiety (Sharp, 2022).



What Does Struggle Look Like in Men?

In one study by Sharp et al., male participants in a focus group on the subject agreed that to align with masculine norms is to be on auto pilot: Work, care for one’s family, work, family, repeat (2022). As a result, stress goes unnoticed, unaddressed, and it compounds. This boiling point is not always recognized until it’s too late, described by one participant as “death by a thousand cuts”.



For many men, mental health struggles often show up as irritability, anger, fatigue, substance use or risk-taking behaviors rather than the more obvious signs of distress. For others, it may be easier to fake being happy than be vulnerable and share how they’re actually feeling.

So, What Helps?

Connection & Physical Health

Raising awareness is the first step to breaking the stigma and getting men to “speak up” instead of “man up”. Education on how to view mental health is beneficial, specifically when it is compared to physical health. Both are areas of self-improvement that men are capable of working on, when they have the right tools.

But the solution is not exclusively getting men to talk, it’s creating the right environment where meaningful conversations can take place. Research suggests that men are often more willing to engage in conversations about mental health when those discussions happen naturally through shared activities such as sports, fitness, woodworking, or other hobbies they enjoy.

Nutrition and Brain Health

Nutrition is a major determinant on how well the human brain functions. Proper nutrition also helps to prevent and treat mental illnesses (Tiwari et al., 2025). Fueling the body with nutrient-dense foods such as lean proteins, fruits, vegetables, healthy fats, and whole grains can support mood, energy, focus and stress management.

Another simple and nutritious way for men to protect and heal their brain is through the incorporation of seeds in their diet. Sesame seeds help prevent brain dysfunction and neurodegenerative diseases, while chia, flax and sunflower seeds can help to improve cognitive function (Tiwari et al., 2025). Furthermore, sunflower, flax and pumpkin seeds boost serotonin and dopamine, the happy chemicals in our brains. Seeds are easy to incorporate into any diet, just sprinkle a tablespoon of seeds on yogurt at breakfast or on a salad at lunch. While many factors influence men’s mental health, nutrition is one area where men can take an active role in improving their own well-being.

The Takeaway

Supporting our men means understanding them. Meeting men where they are and integrating wellness into activities that foster connection, purpose, and health. When we offer support in ways that align with men’s interests, values and preferences, men are far more likely to engage, highlighting the importance of creating approachable, stigma-free pathways to mental wellness. Most men are not going to show up for themselves, but we can change how we show up for our men. (For article references see page 14)

About Abby Rallo:

As a purpose-driven optimist, Abby Rallo pairs her experience as an educator with her duty to serve as a registered nurse to provide hope to humans. She is a firm believer that ‘giving makes you richer’ and even on her worst day, she aims to spread joy and kindness to others. Learn more about how Abby combines her values with innovative, evidence-based therapeutic programming at vialindabehavioral.com



(Original graphics for this article submitted)

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FREEDOM from page 1

July is the perfect time for this reflection. Amid the fireworks and celebrations, we can ask ourselves: are we truly free if we are carrying silent burdens? Mental wellness is a form of independence, one that affects how we relate to others, handle stress, and even enjoy life's simple pleasures. Reclaiming that independence can transform everyday experiences, from family gatherings to career ambitions.

Small steps can lead to big changes. Mindfulness exercises, journaling, daily movement, and setting healthy boundaries are all ways to reclaim a sense of control over mental wellbeing. Building a support system comprised of people like friends, family, or community groups, creates safe spaces to share struggles without fear of judgment. And when these efforts are not enough, professional guidance can help create a personalized path toward lasting wellness.

"Mental health freedom thrives when supported by a network of caring individuals and thoughtful guidance."



iStock credit: kieferpix

Integrated Care

Treating mental and physical health together can make this journey even more effective. Stress and anxiety affect the body, from sleep disruptions to increased inflammation, while untreated medical conditions can intensify emotional struggles. Approaches that address both mental and physical health simultaneously help people achieve balance and regain control over their lives.

Focusing on this integrated model, as we do at Sahara Wellness Center, provides care that supports the whole person rather than just isolated symptoms. This makes it simpler to make sure that patients are not just receiving treatment, they are learning strategies to navigate life more confidently, regain control over daily routines, and take proactive steps toward their wellbeing. These programs are built around empowerment, helping individuals feel equipped to live fully, without the weight of stigma holding them back.

Community also matters. Stigma weakens when conversations are open and honest. Celebrating stories of resilience, sharing resources, and simply listening without judgment can make a profound difference. This July, we can each contribute by fostering environments whether at home, work, or online, where seeking help is celebrated as strength, not weakness.

Recovery is more than the absence of symptoms. It is the presence of hope, purpose, and connection. Every day, individuals in recovery demonstrate extraordinary courage by choosing growth over fear and healing over isolation. Likewise, recovery professionals, family members, peers, and advocates help create pathways toward wellness through compassion, encouragement, and unwavering support. Every conversation that reduces stigma and every act of understanding helps build a community where people feel safe asking for help and empowered to keep moving forward.

Independence is deeply personal, but it does not happen in isolation. Mental health freedom thrives when supported by a network of caring individuals and thoughtful guidance. By recognizing the importance of mental wellness, embracing small daily practices, and connecting with professional resources when needed, people can reclaim a sense of autonomy over their minds and lives.

This month, as we celebrate independence, let it serve as a reminder that freedom is not only about rights. It is also about living fully, openly, and without fear. True liberty includes the courage to face our struggles, the wisdom to seek support, and the commitment to treat our mental and physical health with equal care. When these pieces come together, living well becomes not just possible, but deeply rewarding.

Ramsen Kasha, MBA, MS, LPC, has been in the field of addiction treatment and mental health since 2000. He is Chief Clinical Officer at Sahara Wellness Center. Visit saharabehavioralhealth.com/sahara-wellness-center



LIVED Experience from page 1

It later become “**Helping Hand Auto**”, a vocational training program and second chance employer, hiring and servicing those in the recovery community. Joey made the only decision he could have made at the time; by putting up his own money to save the home that gave him his life back. He took over operations and taught himself the business from the ground up. The client had become the caretaker. The caretaker would become the CEO.

In the intervening years Joey stopped thinking like a house manager and started planning for the future. And he knew from experience that sobriety was rarely enough to ensure the health and wellness of those entrusted to his care.

When individuals enter Sanctuary struggling with both co-occurring mental health symptoms and substance use, a bed and a set of rules aren't enough. True recovery requires addressing both sides of the crisis, not just half. Knowing the gravity of this situation, Joey expanded the mission and vision of Sanctuary and created Sanctuary Recovery Centers. Designed to be a broader scope of care built to truly meet the needs of those most affected. He has stayed mostly out of the spotlight ever since, more comfortable running a serious organization than being the face of a story.

The pattern is hard to miss when one knows where to look. The vision has been shepherded and built by someone who needed it first. Joey's lived experience functions more like a blueprint than a backstory. Here, more than anywhere else, lived experience is paramount. Having stood at the crossroads, having faced his own struggles, and now providing a place where individuals can cultivate resilience and restoration is foundational to building an organization that overcomes any barrier.

He understands that struggles are almost never really about the substance, they are masking the pain a person was never taught to name, let alone begin to treat. It is why Sanctuary Recovery Centers leads with mental health and dual-diagnosis care by treating the wound rather than only the symptom, so sobriety finally has something solid to stand on. Sanctuary meets people exactly where he once stood by delivering care without judgment. Care is delivered by people who understand. Joey believes that peers helping peers will change the world. He understands the stigma of being reduced to a diagnosis and the power of teaching people they are so much more.

The Reentry Program

This is why Sanctuary Recovery Centers built a reentry program, and why the small shop, started in a garage, has grown into an honest and affordable car repair shop. Helping Hand Auto is staffed by people in recovery. Having used grant funds to fix cars for women with children and veterans, today it mentors young people from Sanctuary's adolescent program, handing them real job skills, the same skills Joey was once handed. Reminding him of the connection to his grandfather with whom he shares a passion for cars.

The goal was never one man's comeback. Sanctuary Recovery Centers does not exist because of buildings or licenses; it exists because people have chosen to give back.

Leading from experience rather than theory, Joey and programs like this pave the way for individuals to experience a life better than they have ever known or could even imagine. That is what makes Sanctuary worthy of its name. A place where men and women, at their lowest, can begin the slow work of generational change in a way that does not stop with them, but reaches the family that comes after, and the one after that.

Sanctuary's vision now runs across a full continuum of care, from Residential Treatment, PHP, IOP, Transitional Living, Adolescent, Women's, and Reentry programs.

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In April, Joey Landin and the Sanctuary Recovery Centers team celebrated 20 years of delivering hope, healing, and recovery.

Sanctuary has been recognized by the City of Phoenix and Arizona Department of Health Services for the quality of care delivered. Every level of care that Joey and the Sanctuary team has created represents a powerful moment in lived experiences driven by a passion to truly help people.

Today, Joey Landin has a beautiful family, a loving wife and three amazing kids that will only know him as a man who serves others and builds a community that creates the path to lasting generational change.

Twenty years ago, a door was left open for people who had nowhere else to go. Sixteen years ago, a young man walked through it. He has never walked back out.

From the outside, it looks less like a traditional career and more like a debt being repaid—one open door at a time. Door after door—Sanctuary is growing rapidly and illuminating the dark to help the next generation into the light.

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Welcome to the New I Am Teen Strong Website

By Sherry Eklund, Founder

At I Am Teen Strong, we believe that every teen deserves access to trusted resources, encouragement, and opportunities to grow stronger through life's challenges. That's why we're excited to announce the launch of our newly redesigned website, a more engaging, teen-friendly experience created with the voices of teens at the center of the process.

This redesign is more than just a fresh new look. It's a reflection of our commitment to making mental wellness resources, educational content, and community connections easier for teens and their families to access.

One of the most meaningful parts of this project was the involvement of our Teen Advisory Council. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to three incredible young leaders who generously shared their ideas, feedback, and perspectives throughout the redesign process: Raquel Hajar, Isabella Register, and Chloe Knutsen.

Their insight helped us better understand what today's teens are looking for when they visit a website. From navigation and design preferences to content presentation and engagement opportunities, their feedback influenced many of the improvements visitors will experience. Because of their contributions, the new website feels more welcoming, relatable, and accessible to the teens we serve.

The updated website features a cleaner design, improved navigation, and a more interactive experience, which makes it easier for visitors to explore articles, programs, events, and community resources. Whether a teen is looking for encouragement, learning new life skills, or seeking support, we want them to feel seen, supported, and empowered from the moment they arrive on our site.

Parents and caregivers will also find expanded support through our growing resource directory. We understand that finding trusted behavioral health, wellness, and support services for teens can be overwhelming. That's why we continue to add carefully selected resources that help families connect with organizations, professionals, and programs dedicated to supporting adolescent well-being.



As our community grows, so does our commitment to providing valuable information and meaningful connections. We are continually expanding our network of trusted partners and resources to ensure families have access to the support they need when they need it most.

The launch of this redesigned website represents an exciting new chapter for I Am Teen Strong. It reflects our mission of connecting, empowering, and inspiring teen girls while creating a stronger support system for the adults who care about them.

We invite you to explore the new website, discover valuable resources, and learn more about the programs and opportunities available through I Am Teen Strong. Whether you're a teen, parent, caregiver, educator, behavioral health professional, or community supporter, there's something for you.

Thank you to everyone who has supported our mission and helped make this redesign possible. And a special thank you once again to Raquel, Isabella, and Chloe for helping us create a website that truly reflects the needs and voices of today's teens.

Together, we are building a stronger future...one teen at a time.
www.iamteenstrong.org

BACK-TO-SCHOOL EVENT


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Time: 8:30am - 12:00pm
Location: Mesa High School
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Freedom to Survive

By Dr. Marlo Archer



iStock credit: Boonyachoat

At a bare minimum, we need air to breathe, water, food, and rest to sustain our life. As witnessed on many survival shows an enterprising adult can survive naked and alone for quite some time without anyone's assistance.

Before long they will most likely desire the added protection of clothing and shelter, which can be generated by the enterprising solo adventurer. If

that were enough, most of us would be living castaway-style on some tropical island far from the annoyances of modern life. However, we know even when basic needs have been met, people don't necessarily survive — unless they also get fulfillment of psychological and social needs. We need friends and lovers, meaningful work, freedom to make choices, and ways to express ourselves, or we become sickly.

When these essential elements are not available, our health suffers. If the air is not clean, we develop respiratory ailments and cannot robustly use our bodies. If we are forced to drink dirty water or beverages with harmful chemicals, our cells begin to degrade and will eventually fail. If we continually run around on 3 to 4 hours' sleep a night, or if our sleep is continually interrupted by sirens or explosions, our thoughts become confused, our judgment impaired, and we will make choices that don't improve our situation.

We might choose to sacrifice safety for style or status. For instance, skipping the sun protection in Arizona to look fashionable, wearing revealing clothing, choosing a trendy but unsafe neighborhood to live in, or move in with people we hardly know in order to save money. Ironically, we might spend those savings on hyped sneakers that make us a target for a mugging.

And.... if you're not rested, fueled mainly by junk food, wearing ridiculous clothing in sketchy environments, you're bound to meet terrible people over and over until they become so familiar you hardly question the fact that everyone here is carrying a weapon or can get drugs in 20 minutes. You will find your friends and lovers in these places and these are the folks that will let you know when a job opens up at the dead-end place they work, so you can work together for the 6 weeks and tolerate it, then quit together and maybe start bartending. Eventually choices become more limited and every day seems the same. Seeking some sort of personal growth or recreation, many will turn to mind-altering substances to facilitate a sense of expansion or relaxation.

Lots of folks may plateau at that level, relatively satisfied with their life, but that type of lifestyle has an expiration date. For each person it might be different, it can become unmanageable with a pregnancy, an arrest or two, large fines, a resume full of broken commitments, or when people 20 years' younger than you start competing with for your entry-level job, then passing you by while they further educate themselves. You will find yourself trapped, feeling hopeless, and helpless.

If you want freedom, give your body what it needs to succeed, starting with the basic elements of clean air, fresh water, nutritious food, and adequate rest. If you want the freedom to truly live a vibrant life, protect yourself from degradation by using adequate coverage and functional attire, living in secure shelters, and frequenting places where people are mostly trying to be cooperative. Freedom of expression requires your friends, lovers, and those you regularly encounter are the sort of people who encourage you to be yourself and who help you build your strengths.

Finally, freedom to think and make choices requires that you not poison your body with anything that diminishes your ability to function. If you think you might be addicted to any chemical, substance, process, or activity that is clouding your judgement, help is available through 12-Step programs whose goals are to help you be happy, joyous, and free!



Having enjoyed 30 years providing mental health services to kids, teens, and parents, Dr. Marlo Archer is now focused on educating, training, and mentoring health professionals, primarily employing Deliberate Practice methods to teach Psychodrama, Sociometry, and Group Psychotherapy to the next generation of healers. **Learn more at www.AzPsychodrama.com**



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From the Mat

Freedom From Within: Finding Independence Through Mindfulness and Movement

By Alexandra Daffner

July is often associated with freedom. We celebrate Independence Day, gather with loved ones, and reflect on what it means to live freely. But for those on a recovery journey, freedom takes on a deeper meaning. Recovery is about more than abstaining from substances or changing behaviors- it is about reclaiming your life.



Being in recovery means learning how to respond rather than react, how to trust yourself again, and how to find peace without needing to escape discomfort. True freedom begins from within.

Here in Arizona, July invites us to slow down. The desert heat reminds us that not every season is meant for constant action. While spring encourages growth and momentum, summer asks us to conserve energy, listen to our bodies, and practice intentional self-care. Recovery follows a similar rhythm.

Mindfulness is one of the most powerful tools for cultivating inner freedom. At its core, mindfulness is the practice of paying attention to the present moment without judgment. Rather than getting caught up in regrets about the past or worries about the future, mindfulness teaches us to anchor ourselves in the here and now.

Research continues to show that mindfulness practices can reduce stress, improve emotional regulation, decrease anxiety, and support long-term recovery outcomes. Even a few minutes of mindful breathing each day can help create space between a trigger and a reaction. In that space, we gain the freedom to choose a healthier response.

Yoga offers another pathway to freedom in recovery. Through intentional movement, breath awareness, and connection to the body, yoga helps individuals rebuild trust with themselves. Many people in recovery spend years disconnected from their physical and emotional experiences. Yoga provides a safe opportunity to reconnect.

The beauty of yoga is that it meets you exactly where you are. Whether you are attending a class, stretching at home, or simply taking a few deep breaths when you are feeling overwhelmed, the practice reminds us that healing does not require perfection. It requires presence.

This July, consider creating your own “Declaration of Independence” for recovery. What habits, thought patterns, or beliefs are you ready to release? What supports, routines, and practices help you feel grounded and empowered?



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Perhaps freedom looks like asking for help when you need it. Perhaps it means setting healthier boundaries, spending more time outdoors in the early morning hours, attending a meeting, or committing to five minutes of mindfulness each day.

Recovery does not mean you are required to become someone brand new. It is about returning to who you were before fear, pain, or addiction convinced you otherwise. Remind yourself that freedom is not something you have to earn- it is something you practice. One breath, one choice, and one mindful moment at a time.

Wishing you a safe, healthy, and freedom-filled July! See you on the mat!
For class schedules visit www.spirituallyfitco-op.com



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Questions or want to collaborate? Contact Kenny Flack

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Be A Man References from page 7

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Recovery Realities & the Hard Truth

By Kara Janssen

This....

One of the harsh realities of recovery is realizing that sobriety and recovery are not the same thing.

It's possible to put down the drink and still think like the person who picked it up.

It's possible to stop using drugs and still carry the same fear, resentment, selfishness, impulsiveness, dishonesty, victim mentality, and unhealthy coping mechanisms that fueled the addiction in the first place.

That's a hard truth. But it's an important one.

*Because addiction isn't always just about the substance.
A lot of times it's about the thinking.*

It's about the obsession. It's about the constant search for comfort.
It's about wanting immediate relief from uncomfortable feelings.
It's about trying to control everything around us.
It's about wanting life to happen on our terms.

The addict state of mind doesn't always show up holding a bottle or a bag of drugs.

Sometimes it shows up in our relationships.
Sometimes it shows up in our finances.
Sometimes it shows up in our expectations.
Sometimes it shows up in our reactions.
Sometimes it shows up in our inability to be patient.

Read that again.

I've met people with twenty years sober who still struggle with addict thinking.

And I've met people with six months sober who are actively doing the work to change the way they think, live, and respond to life.

*The difference isn't the amount of clean time.
The difference is the willingness to grow.*

Because if we're honest, the addict mind ALWAYS wants more.

More attention. More validation. More control. More comfort.
More certainty. More of whatever makes us feel better right now.
That's why recovery requires constant self-awareness.

I still have moments where my mind wants immediate results.
I still have moments where I want to control outcomes.
I still have moments where fear tries to make decisions for me.

I still have moments where old thinking patterns try to resurface.
The difference today is that I recognize them.
I challenge them. I pray about them. I talk about them.
I don't let them drive the car.

Recovery isn't about becoming perfect.
It's about becoming aware.

It's about catching yourself when old patterns try to reappear.
It's about recognizing when your thinking is drifting back toward the mindset that nearly destroyed your life.

The older I get, the more I realize that recovery isn't something I achieved.
It's something I practice. Every day.

One day at a time.

Because the goal was never just to quit drinking or using.
The goal was to become a healthier, happier human being.

And trust me, that's a journey that lasts far longer than putting down a substance.



Reach Kara at
kjconsultingcommunity@gmail.com

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"My addiction had grown into something I could no longer control. Then I found Teen Challenge. Now I have a new life, free from drugs!" **TCAZ.ORG**
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Some Kind of Higher Power

By Alan Cohen

There's been a lot of buzz in the news lately about the U.S. government's release of large batches of previously classified files and videos pointing to possible contact with UFO's. This is a bold and unprecedented move to give the public access to information hidden for nearly 80 years.

While reading comments on the subject by YouTube viewers, I was struck by one in particular: "I am an atheist. The idea of being visited by civilizations far advanced beyond ours excites me with the possible reality of a higher power."



iStock credit: Antonel

One of the deepest angsts that pervades humanity is that we are alone, separated from God and each other, and we live a jungle-like existence, fighting for survival. Who would not be fearful under such a world view? The belief in some kind of power higher than humanity alone is comforting and gives us hope.

What we call that higher power is less important than that we acknowledge it and connect with it. I have the greatest respect for 12-step programs like Alcoholics Anonymous, in which participants admit, "We were powerless over our addiction, and our lives had become unmanageable" and "We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity." This is the reason I believe that 12-step programs are the most effective therapy of the current century.

I also find it fascinating that the YouTube commenter regarded possible communication with extraterrestrials in a positive light. This is a huge statement of faith over fear. When I was growing up, all the UFO movies portrayed aliens as bloodthirsty warmongers coming to destroy the earth or subjugate us as slaves. Steven Spielberg changed all that with his characterizations of kindly, good-willed visitors from outer space, in the form of E.T. and in Close Encounters of the Third Kind.

The two possible interpretations of extraterrestrials as either hostile or friendly provide a very clear projective test of the mindset of humanity. A Course in Miracles tells us that there are only two thought systems: love and fear. Everything we think, feel, say, and do represents the thought system we are in. Belief in benevolent visitors to earth is a statement of higher consciousness embedded within the human psyche. Belief in malevolent, aggressive visitors is a statement of our primitive, jungle, survival-of-the-fittest mentality.



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Let's face it

The jungle survival mentality has not served humanity very well at all. At the moment there are over 130 armed conflicts occurring around the planet. War has been a dominant theme in the history of humanity. Depression, starvation (usually a result of war), and poverty scar the magnificence of the planet were given to live on. **We need help from a Higher Power.**

Whether you find that Higher Power in Jesus Christ, Allah, Buddha, or E.T. is less important that we are willing to accept help from a mind smarter than the one we have been using. It may be appropriately humbling for us to realize we are not the smartest and only kids on the block. If we were visited by an extraterrestrial civilization, they might be able to provide us with technology to heal our environment and enjoy free, unlimited, non-polluting energy. Or they might instruct us in ways to get along better with each other. If a civilization is advanced enough to be able to traverse distances totally impossible to our current technology, and they have not blown themselves up, they might aid us to move toward a more sustainable future, technologically, socially, and spiritually.

The government has promised to release more and more UFO files, likely with more and more revealing information. We'll just have to see. One thing is for sure: we will reap the results of our beliefs.

Steven Spielberg has stated that if we do have contact with E.T., he would like to represent humanity. Barack Obama has said the same. If you could designate one or a few people to be contact ambassadors, who would you choose? I would designate Spielberg, Paul McCartney, the Dalai Lama, and Bono. If you could speak for humanity to visitors from space, what would you say?

Jesus said, "In my Father's mansion there are many rooms." We may be on the threshold of opening some more doors to those rooms. We may be entering an era where E.T. phoning home is not a long-distance call after all.

Alan Cohen, M.A., is the author of 31 popular inspirational books, Visit <https://alancohen.com>, to learn more and sign up for his newsletter and daily reflections.



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Via Linda Behavioral Hospital	480-476-7210	vialindabehavioral.com
Virtue Recovery Center	866-338-6977	virtuerecoveryuncitywest.com
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Domestic Violence	800-799-SAFE
Families Anonymous	602-647-5800
Fentanyl Anonymous	520-338-9307
Food Addicts foodaddicts.org	435-764-1461
Gamblers Anonymous	602-266-9784
Gam-Anon 602-303-7876	National Hotline 844-475-4213
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

Additional Resources

ACT Counseling & Education	602-569-4328	actcounseling.com
AZ. Dept. of Health	602-364-2086	
AZ Holistic Approach Counseling	602-529-1967	
Arizona Opioid Assistance Helpline	888-688-4222	
Birches Health	833-483-3838	bircheshealth.com
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	
Mental Health Center of America	602-704-2345	
NotMYKid	602-652-0163	
PAL Parents of Addicted Loved Ones	palgroup.org	
Recovery Café	480-530-7090	
TERROS Health	602-685-6000	

Refuge Recovery

Wednesday, 6:00-7:00 pm, Red Tree Meditation Center, 1234 E 16th St. Tucson
Saturday, 5:00- 6:30 pm,*Palo Verde room*
Saint Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church. 4440 N Campbell Ave., Tucson

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 P.M.
New Happiness Meeting
Crossroads
2103 E Southern, Tempe. Rotating format- Step, Topic, Big Book, Speaker.

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	

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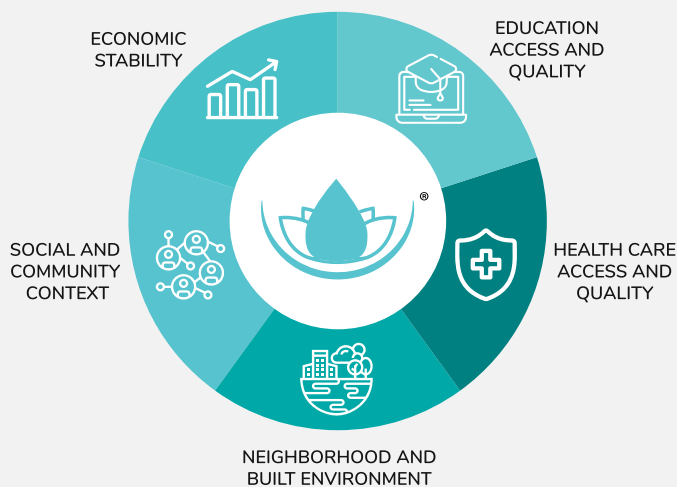
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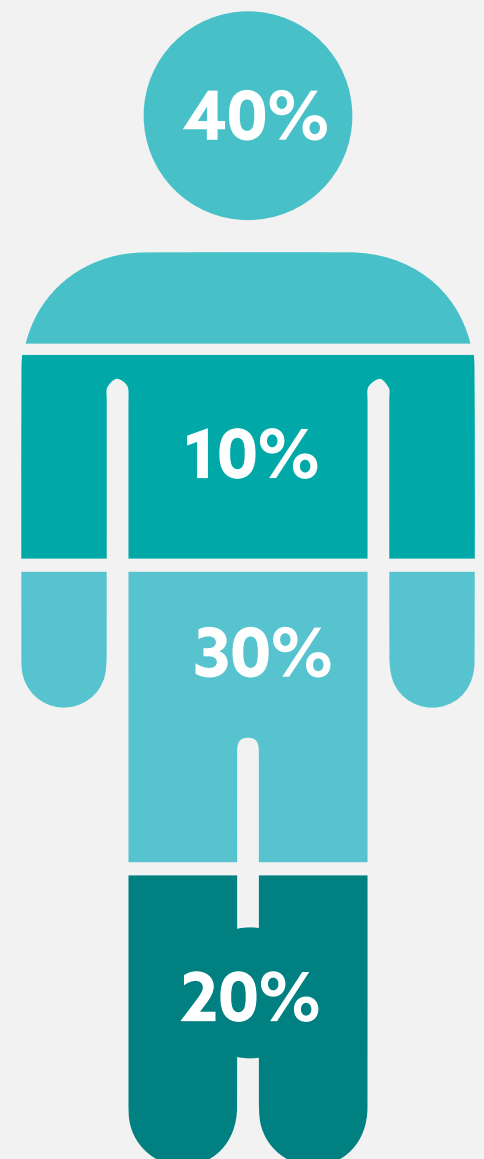
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