

Ask the Expert

Dr. Joseph Lee from Hazelden answers questions parents may have about their child's addiction

CELEBRATING

40

YEARS

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FINDING HOPE ISSUE

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Calendar / 2

Letter From the Editor / 3

Support Groups / 4

The State of Recovery
Meets the State of Hockey / 5

40 Years Timeline / 8-9

From the State of
Minnesota / 10-11

Books / 12

Ask the Expert:
Dr. Joseph Lee / 13

A Hopeful Gaze into 2020 / 16



Living with an emotionally distant, rageful father left Deanna Broaddus hungry for attention and solace. Men – lots of men – were her first recourse, and then alcohol and drugs.

Except for a suicide attempt at age 18, Broaddus did well, working and pursuing a master's degree so that she could follow her passion to teach. When she graduated, Broaddus was performing so well as a wine sommelier that her employer offered her the equivalent of a teacher's salary to keep her on. Abandoning her dream career, she said yes. "I could drink on the job," she explains.

Then the relationship she was in became "very destructive," she recalls. "I was in a very dark place. I remember looking in the mirror and saying, 'I hate you. I don't even know who you are anymore, Deanna.'"

VISIONS OF HOPE

Broaddus's first hint of hope came when a friend called her out on her behavior. "I yelled at her," she says. "But it planted the seed. I didn't want to get caught by my parents. I didn't want to lose my job. It scared me that people were starting to find out what I was doing."

One evening at home after heavy drug using, she was "just rocking back and forth," she says, "and I had a vision. I saw three paths. In the first one, I saw me continuing to just rock back and forth, and I knew that's where I was headed if I didn't change. Then I saw a second path that was completely black, and I recognized that to be death." She considered ending her life right then. "Then I saw a third path that had just a tiny glimmer of light. I got down on my knees. I prayed for the first time in many, many years, and I said, 'God, if you are real, I need your help.'" She threw away all her drugs.

GETTING THROUGH DARK TIMES to pg 6

JOHN H. DRIGGS, LICSW

Lessening Divisiveness (Polarization, Prejudice and Hatred) in Ourselves

"A house divided against itself cannot stand." — ABRAHAM LINCOLN

We live in the most divisive of times. Political parties hardly talk to each other. Sports teams are divided between the winners and losers. People can lose entire careers for an incorrect political opinion. Too many of us are alienated from each other: Rich and poor, city and rural people, Liberal and Conservatives, Pro-choice and Pro-life believers, white people versus people of color, men versus women, church goers versus atheists, and the list goes on and on. It's like none of us can get along with each other and there seems little room for compromise, forgiveness, compassion or commonality.

Some of us don't see ourselves as divisive. We may be rather smug. We're so sure of ourselves and "in-the-know" that we cannot imagine another reality besides the one we know. We may become indignant and self-righteous in our positions and insist on apologies from people we differ with. In the worst cases, we resort to self-justified haranguing or violence to assert what we believe.

LESSENING DIVISIVENESS to pg 14

ous and veiled in secrecy. It is as if every runner who has braved this section wants to talk about it – about conquering it – but also wants the novice to experience it for themselves, without any clue as to what awaits them. The gentleman said, "Last year when I made it to the top of the first hill, I passed out. When I woke up, there was an angel standing over me and feeding me frozen grapes."

We were waiting for the start of the Eugene Curnow Trail Marathon, 26.2 miles from Duluth to Carlton covering every type of terrain you can imagine in Minnesota. Mud so thick it sucks your shoes off, tall dry grass growing from slippery sand, narrow clay trails peppered with rocks and boulders, acres of tall pines and paths littered with fallen needles, trees that must be climbed over or under, icy blue streams, and hills so steep you have to pull yourself up them using your hands.

ONE STEP AT A TIME to pg 7



One Step at a Time

by Wendi Wheeler

I stood at the edge of a parking lot near the zoo in Duluth, Minn., waiting for the sun to come up and for the mosquitos to quit biting. They were merciless that July morning, and I had not thought to bring insect repellent. I paced and swatted, hoping my constant movement would make me a less desirable target.

A gentleman offered some bug spray, which I gladly accepted. He asked me my name and introduced himself and his companions. He then asked if I had run this race before, as if he could not tell from my pink shoes, pink socks, and pink tank top which made me stand out like a suburban housewife next to the others. I had sent a text message to my sister moments before: "Everyone here is way more gnarly than I am."

"Can you tell me about the Power Lines?" I asked. He laughed. My friend who had run the race and encouraged me to register for it would not enlighten me when I had asked. The Power Lines is a section of the course that is both notori-

BULLETIN BOARD

UPCOMING

The Dot at Stages Theatre Company: Running January 17 to February 17 at Stages Theatre Company, Hopkins Center for the Arts, 1111 Main Street, Hopkins, 55343. Tickets \$17 - \$24. For all ages. Just make a mark and see where it takes you. When Vashti's teacher asks her to draw a picture, Vashti insists she's not an artist and makes an angry dot to prove her point. But when Vashti's teacher frames her dot and hangs it up, Vashti is sent on a surprising journey of self-discovery. This charming fable about the power of the creative spirit comes to life through music and dance this winter with our continuing collaboration with Escalate Dance. Purchase tickets at stagestheatre.org.

2020 ACA Birthday Party: Saturday, January 25 from 9:00 to 11:30 am at Recovery Church, 253 State Street, St. Paul, 55107. Chris S. is the speaker. This is a free event. Friends and family are welcome. Several egg bakes will be provided. Please consider bringing orange juice, coffee, fruit or some other items to share. More questions, call 763-574-0903 or email minnesotaaca@gmail.com.

46th Winnipeg Winter Conference: Friday, January 31 to Sunday, February 1 at Victoria Inn, 1808 Wellington Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Special rooms available if you mention Winter Conference. For Minnesotans looking to venture up north for a weekend. Registration is \$25. Contact Dennis L. at wpgwinterconference@gmail.com for more information or visit aaminneapolis.org.

Ryan Hampton Community Event in Rochester: Tuesday, February 4 from 6:30 to 8:00 pm at Mayo Civic Center, 30 Civic Center Drive SE, Rochester, 55904. A leading recovery speaker, author, and advocate, Hampton shares perspectives from the national stage on the state of addiction. A former White House staffer, he has worked with multiple non-profits and national recovery advocacy campaigns. He is now a prominent, leading face and voice of addiction recovery and is changing the national conversation about addiction. Suitable for ages junior high and up. No child care is provided at the event. Free admission. Register on Eventbrite.

Ryan Hampton Community Event in Duluth: Thursday, February 6 from 6:30 to 8:00 pm at Denfield High School, 401 N. 44th Avenue, West Duluth, MN 55807. Suitable for ages junior high and up. No

child care is provided at the event. Free admission. Register on Eventbrite.

Happy Destiny's 2020 Workshop "Responsibility - The Hand of A.A.": Saturday, February 8 from noon to 4:00 pm at Crowne Point Church, 7121 Bloomington Avenue S, Richfield, 55423. Three speakers will share their experience, strength and hope through a panel discussion and answer questions during an open forum. No cost to attend.

LIKE Movie: A documentary about the impact of Social Media on our Lives: Thursday, February 13, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at Cottage Grove Middle School, 9775 Indian Blvd. S., Cottage Grove, 55126. By understanding the effects of technology and social media on the brain, on our lives and on our civilization, we can learn how to navigate it more safely together. A goal for this film is to inspire people of all ages, especially kids, to self-regulate. Free admission. Recommended audience 10+ with caring adult, community members and teachers.

Minneapolis Home & Garden Show: Wednesday, February 26 to Sunday, March 1 at Minneapolis Convention Center. Admission is \$14 (adults at the door or \$12 online), \$4 (children ages 6-12, under 5 are free). Mike Rowe, (*Dirty Jobs*) will be appearing Saturday, February 29.

Dr. David Mee-Lee Lunch and Learn Presentation: Thursday, February 27 from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm at NUWAY, 2118 Blaisdell Avenue, Minneapolis, 55404. This presentation will discuss what we really mean by recovery and recovery management. It will explore what is working with recovery management and what remain as challenges. David Mee-Lee is a leading expert in co-occurring substance use and mental disorders with over 40 years experience in person-centered treatment and program development. Free to attend. Register via Eventbrite.

ONGOING

Community Wellness Series: Second Friday of every month, from 6:00 to 8:00pm at 393 Dunlap St. N., 1st floor conference room. Free. More info: 651-222-9985.

All Recovery Meetings: Minnesota Recovery Connection is hosting All Recovery meetings throughout the Twin Cities. These meetings honor all pathways to recovery, acknowledging that each person's path is

unique. Call 612-584-4158 for more info or go to minnesotarecovery.org.

Dissonance Presents: Story Well: Mondays from 6:00 to 7:00 pm at The Warming House, 4001 Bryant Ave S, Minneapolis. Held the first Monday of every month — is a time to share and discuss the various ways we can help and care for each other and others. Whether you have substance use or mental health concerns, feel depleted by everyday life, have a friend or loved one who is sick or suffering, or just want to connect with others around the idea of being well, this is a place for you. Everyone welcome.

Hazelden's Second Sunday Retreats: The second Sunday of each month everyone in recovery is invited to Hazelden in Center City, MN (Cork Center) for an inspirational day of workshops, fellowship, sharing and fun. Open to anyone 18 or older involved in a 12-Step program. \$15 if you register online, \$20 (in-person) includes a buffet lunch and information packet. 9 am to 2:30 pm.

9 am - Register at the Cork Center
9 am - Introductions and orientation
10-11 am - Lecture
10:30 -12:45 - Small group discussions
12:45 - 1:30 pm - Sunday buffet
1:45 pm - Small group discussions or Meditation group
2:30 pm - Relaxation group

February 9
Healthy Boundaries - Key to Serenity and Purposeful Living

March 8
Navigating Intimate Relationships and Sexual Health in Recovery

The Recovery Church: 253 State St., St. Paul, 55107, offers worship services on Sunday at 9:30 am with fellowship, coffee and snacks following service. The mission is to provide a spiritual community for people in search of growth, healing, and recovery. For a list of recovery meetings, visit www.therecoverychurch.org or like [therecoverychurchstpaul](https://www.facebook.com/therecoverychurchstpaul) on Facebook.

To place a listing, email us at phoenix@thephoenixspirit.com. Or David Goldstein at david@thephoenixspirit.com to explore advertising or promotional offers.



WRITERS / ARTISTS

The Phoenix Spirit is interested in writers and artists with experience writing about recovery & addiction. Or are in recovery themselves.
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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Finding Hope

by Louise Elowen (pen name)

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." — LAO TZU

Hope is often found in the unlikeliest of places or presents itself at the unlikeliest of moments. It doesn't usually come with a fanfare or grand entrance, shouting "I am here! All is not lost! Make way, make way..."

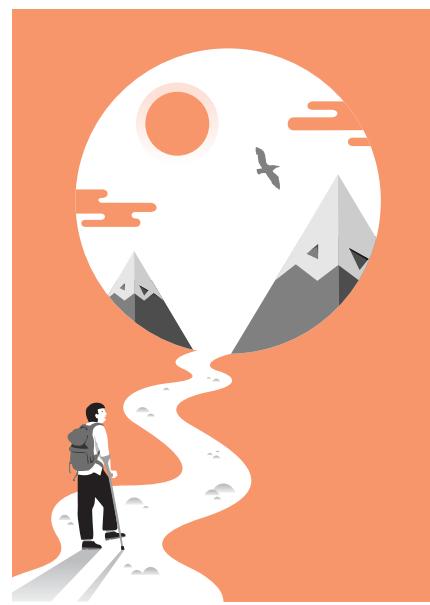
It is more likely to make its appearance when we truly believe we have nowhere else left to turn. When we have hit rock bottom. When we believe we are "done." But that's the time when we need to believe in its existence. To find the strength or desire once again to live. To move forward.

Just over five years ago, after struggling for years in an abusive relationship, I had reached that point. I "bottomed" out. I ended up one day in the doctor's office, on the pretense of going for something else. Instead, I found myself crying uncontrollably over an insignificant little thing which lead to the outpouring of my grief and my inability to keep going. I suddenly found myself being questioned about anxiety, depression, self-harm, and even suicidal thoughts. Was it *that* obvious how I was feeling? And, *how on earth* did I get here? And how could I *possibly* come back from where I was to the place, and person, I used to be?

But that seemingly "non sequential" visit turned out to be the hope I needed to find. Someone else now shared my "burden" and believed me. I didn't have to struggle alone anymore. I had found support – and more importantly, hope – to take that single first step and find my way back to the expectation that I deserved good things to happen to me again.

And so, that little, big thing called hope had made its entrance. It had asked, "How do you want to change? Where do you want to go from here? What makes you truly happy?" And it had wrapped itself around me, gently, comforting, and wiping away my tears and hopelessness. My brain had found its voice again, quietly at first, then speaking louder and louder, and more confidently, until one day I found myself a long way from that dark, rock-bottom place.

Not many people know about those personal struggles I endured, and the dark days I went through, especially now, five years on. It's a difficult thing to explain to others, unless they too have been to that



And so, that little, big thing called hope had made its entrance. It had asked, "How do you want to change? Where do you want to go from here? What makes you truly happy?"

same place. How can you voluntarily hand over your life to the control of another, or an addiction or substance, without realizing the consequences?

Articles in this issue address some of these questions. A story of running which literally began with one step at a time, trading the addiction of alcohol for the hope of good things to happen once again, no matter the time it takes. A story of hope from the addiction of drugs and coming back from rock bottom. In addition, stories, or events, that give people hope as we move forward into a new decade. And how our perceived perception of people is not always correct – and how changing our attitude might bring forth a brighter future for us all.

Draw courage, strength, and inspiration from these stories and events. And if you are lost, I pray that they inspire you to find your own hope once again.

With hope and courage as we celebrate the start of 2020.



the Phoenix Spirit

RECOVERY • RENEWAL • GROWTH

Every trial, and every issue we find and face holds within it the seeds of healing, health, wisdom, growth and prosperity. We hope you find a seed in every issue.

THE PHOENIX NEWSPAPER is a bi-monthly publication for people actively working on their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being. We are committed to providing articles, advertising, and information about recovery, renewal, and personal growth to help people experience life in a balanced, meaningful way.

The opinions and facts presented in this publication are intended to be diverse and represent those of the writers and/or contributors, and are not necessarily those of THE PHOENIX SPIRIT. We seek writers and interview subjects who are willing to gift you with their honestly held convictions and insights. We seek to attract advertisers who offer products and services of integrity. But we urge our readers to research, and trust their instincts.

PUBLISHERS
Aaron and Jen Shepherd
4190 Vinewood Ln. N
Suite 111 PMB 403
Plymouth, MN 55442
612-615-9740

EDITOR
Louise Elowen
phoenix@thephoenixspirit.com

SALES DIRECTOR
David Goldstein
612-298-5405
david@thephoenixspirit.com

COMMUNITY RELATIONS DIRECTOR
Jen Shepherd
jen@thephoenixspirit.com

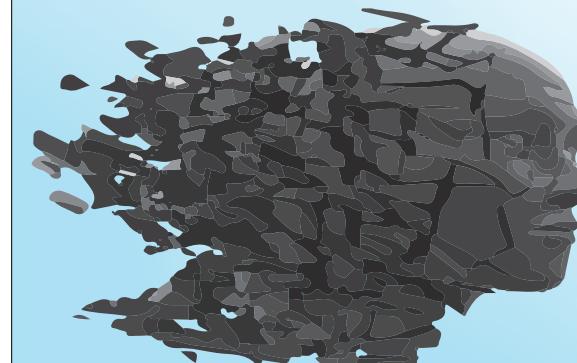
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
John Driggs,
Mary Lou Logsdon, Sol Ryan,
Pat Samples, Wendi Wheeler

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Vinland Center provides drug and alcohol treatment for adults with cognitive disabilities, brain injuries, and/or multiple disabilities.

There are many causes of brain injury, and each brain injury is unique. Our staff members are highly trained to work with people living with disabilities caused by brain injuries.



1 : 2

One out of two people living with a brain injury suffer from some form of substance abuse issue, according to the Office on Disability.

Walk-In Substance Abuse Assessment Hours:

Monday 8:00am-3:00pm

Tuesday 8:00am-3:00pm

Wednesday 10:00am-6:00pm

Thursday 8:00am-3:00pm

Friday 8:00am-3:00pm

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SUPPORT GROUPS

MONDAYS

1900 Mens Alanon: Monday 5:45-7:15pm, 12-Step meeting, step presentation and small groups, fellowship. 1900 Nicollet Ave., Plymouth Congregational Church. Tom W., 612-281-5230. Enter at parking lot.

Overeaters Anonymous: Monday mornings, 10-11am. 3rd floor, handicapped accessible. Minnehaha United Methodist Church, 3701 50th St Mpls 55407. For more info call Ana 651-592-7510

Online Gamers Anonymous and Olganon: Mondays at 6:30 at the Cavalier Club, 7179 Washington Ave. South, Edina. Cavalier Club is located on the corner of Valley View and HWY 169. Plenty of free parking! If video games or other excessive tech use is making your life unmanageable or if someone you care about is gaming excessively, we'd love to meet you. More info on this emerging 12 Step Movement at www.olganon.org

Understanding Eating Disorders, Treatment, and Recovery: First Thursday, every other month, 6-7:30pm. The Emily Program staff provides answers to common questions and concerns of families and friends "new" to eating disorders, treatment and recovery. 2265 Como Ave, St. Paul, 55108. Free, drop in. Visit www.emilyprogram.com or call 651-645-5323.

Friends and Families of Suicide: a place of support and comfort where those that have lost a loved one to suicide will be comfortable talking about their own loss as well as hearing about the losses of others. Meets the 3rd Monday of every month 7-9pm, Twin Cities Friends Meeting, 1725 Grand Ave., St Paul, 55105. For info email ffosmn@yahoo.com or call Tracy at 651-587-8006.

Debtors Anonymous: a group of men and women who use the 12-Step program to solve problems with debt and other money issues; www.damminnesota.org 952-953-8438. Check website for locations and different dates and times.

Richfield Codependents Anonymous: 7pm, men & women Richfield Lutheran Church, 60th and Nicollet or call 952-649-9514.

TUESDAYS

Recovering Couples Anonymous: 7pm. We are a 12 Step Group for couples wanting to find new ways to communicate. We provide strong couple support and model healthy couple-ship. Unity Church, 733 Portland Ave, St Paul, 55104. Enter the building through the parking lot door and take the elevator to the basement. Please check us out! Contact Dave at 651-214-5747 or Connie at 651-307-7964 for more information.

Families Anonymous (FA): First and third Tuesday evening of each month, 7pm. Support group for families and friends of those dealing with drug, alcohol or other behavioral issues. Is someone you love destroying family harmony by using drugs or alcohol? Free help exists! Join us at St. Timothy Lutheran Church: 1465 N. Victoria Street, St. Paul, MN 55117, or contact Dave E: 612-701-5575.

Debtors Anonymous: a group of men and women who use the 12-Step program to solve problems with debt and other money issues; www.damminnesota.org 952-953-8438. Tues, 7-8 pm, Unity Church Unitarian (H), 732 Holly Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104.

Recovery International Meeting at Mary Mother of the Church, 3333 Cliff Road, Burnsville, rm 9 at 3pm. It is a proven self help method to deal with mental illness including depression, anxiety, anger, mood disorders and fears using cognitive behavior therapy. Contact Rita at 952-890-7623.

Emotions Anonymous: For those dealing with emotional stress, depression, etc. 7:30pm at Christ the King Lutheran Church, Room 106, 8600 Fremont Ave., Bloomington. Take Penn Ave. south to 86th. Turn left and go to Fremont, just east of 35W. Brian at 952-888-6029.

Nicotine Anonymous: 7-8pm at St. Columba Church/School, 1330 Blair Ave., St. Paul, 55104. For more info call 952-404-1488. More locations.

Overeaters Anonymous Roseville: Meetings are held from 10-11am (and Saturday's from 8-9) at St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, 2300 N. Hamline Ave., Roseville, Room 218 Call Janie 651-639-4246 for more info.

A.C.A., 5:30-7 pm, Dakota Alano House, 3920 Rahn Rd, Eagan (Hwy 13 & Cedarvale Shop Ctr). 651-452-2921.www.dasinc.org/

A.C.A. 7pm, Saint Michael's Lutheran Church 1660 W City Rd B (at Fry). Roseville. Open to all. Step and Traditions meeting.

WEDNESDAYS

Get a Fresh Start! 12-Step AA group, open meeting Tues., 7pm, at Kingswill Church, 1264 109th Ave NE, Blaine. Denny, 763-757-6512.

THURSDAYS

AA Meeting, 6:30 – 8:30pm St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, 2300 N. Hamline Ave., Roseville. Call 651-639-4246 for more info.

FRIDAYS

Women's 12-Step Program: 7pm, Peace Presbyterian Church, 7624 Cedar Lake Road, St Louis Park. For women of all ages who find any part of life chaotic or out of control. Through reading *A Woman's Way through the Twelve Steps* by Stephanie S. Covington, members explore how the Steps help us overcome addictions and work to heal ourselves. Peace Presbyterian Church has a community dinner at 6pm on Wednesdays and provides free supervised childcare for 12-Step participants. Reclamation-Ministries.org. 952-545-2586.

Overeaters Anonymous: St. Paul Midway: Wednesdays 7-8 PM, Hamline United Methodist Church. Two blocks east of Snelling & Minnehaha. Park in south parking lot, use south entrance to education building. Press buzzer. For more info contact Susan at 651-295-7854.

Adult Children of Alcoholics: Wednesdays @ 7-8:30pm. St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1895 Laurel Ave, St. Paul. Meets downstairs, sign in the lobby. For more information call Mary at 612-747-0709.

Transitions: 7:30-9:30pm Support to men and women who are transitioning from incarceration to living in the community. Trained facilitators and peers provide emotional support in a safe, openly honest environment to discuss discouragements, frustrations, temptations. One of the trained facilitators is a woman. The Men's Center, 3249 Hennepin Ave. S. Minneapolis, 612-822-5892. TCM.org

Women's CoDA Group: Women's Only Codependents Anonymous Group. Meets every Wednesday at noon at Colonial Church of Edina, 6200 Colonial Way (Fireside room, S. end of bldg). For more information, call Valerie at 612.741.5281

Workaholics Anonymous: A 12-Step program of recovery for people addicted to non-stop work or continuous activity. Meetings every Wednesday, 12:30 p.m., Brooklyn United Methodist Church, Brooklyn Center. Call Pat with questions: 763-560-5199, or visit www.workaholics-anonymous.org.

Marijuana Anonymous, Bloomington, 6-7pm, Minnesota Valley Unitarian Universalist Church 10715 Zenith Ave S. (2 Blocks south of Old Shakopee Rd, on the East side of Zenith) Contact: bloomingtonma@hotmail.com

Atheist/Agnostic Alcoholics Anonymous, 3249 Hennepin Ave S., #55 (Men's Center, in the basement) Mpls, 7-8 pm., Open to Men and Women. For more info write tcAgnostic@gmail.com

FRIDAYS

Workaholics Anonymous: 12 step group for finding balance between work, activity and fun. Meets every Thurs. 6-7:15 p.m. Chris Presbyterian Church, 6901 Normandale Rd. Room 210 North entrance, enter door on left. Call before attending for any schedule or location updates. Liz 612-229-8930, Gretchen 615-423-9444 email: wafindingbalance@gmail.com

New CoDa East Metro Group: Rasmussen College, 8565 Eagle Point Circle N, Lake Elmo (exit north to Radio Dr. on I-94 E). 6:30-7:30pm. Joseph H. at 715-497-6227 or La'Tosia 651-319-2554.

Red Book ACA/ACOA: Recovery Church, 253 State, St. Paul, 7-8:30pm. For more info call Jacob at 612.819.9370 or Bruce at 651-407-6336.

Recovery International Meeting, St Phillip Lutheran Church, 6180 Highway 65 N, Fridley at 7pm. It is a proven self help method to deal with mental illness including depression, anxiety, anger, mood disorders and fears using cognitive behavior therapy. Ken, 763-571-5199.

Adults with ADHD Support Groups: (first time free) Every Thursday morning 10am-noon and every Thursday evening (except last Thurs of the month) 7pm 8:30pm. LDA Minnesota, 6100 Golden Valley Road, Golden Valley, MN 55422. Tel. 952-582-6000 or www.ldaminnesota.org.

FRIDAYS

Food Addicts Anonymous: a 12-step program dedicated to food addiction. Fridays 8-9pm, Living Table United Church of Christ, 3805 E 40th St, Mpls, 55406. LGBT friendly. For more info call Shea at 612-722-5064 or sheahnsn@gmail.com or www.foodaddictsanonymous.org.

SUPPORT GROUPS

SUNDAYS

Recovering Couples Anonymous: Friday Night @ Minnehaha United Methodist Church, 3701 E 50th St, Mpls, 55417, 6:30 - 8pm. 12-Step couples group meets as couples in recovery from any addiction. The only requirement is the desire to remain committed to each other, and find better ways to communicate and develop intimacy. Call Kathy 612-545-6200 or Allan 612-309-5632.

Recovery International Meeting at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 4100 Lyndale Ave S., Mpls at 7pm. It is a proven self help method to deal with mental illness including depression, anxiety, anger, mood disorders and fears using cognitive behavior therapy. Ruth 612-825-4779.

SATURDAYS

Overeaters Anonymous Meeting: 9am at Macalester-Plymouth United Church, St. Paul. For those still suffering from compulsive overeating, bulimia and anorexia.

Nicotine Anonymous: Sat. 10am at Linden Hills Congregational Church, 4200 Upton Ave South, Mpls. Enter at the back door. 952-404-1488. Call for locations.

Spenders Anonymous: Our purpose is to stop spending compulsively and work toward serenity in our relationship with money. 1-2 pm at Bethany Lutheran Church, 2511 East Franklin Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55406; street parking or in the church lot; enter through the gate on Franklin and ring the bell; www.spenders.org

Northeast Minneapolis CoDependents Anonymous (CoDA) Group: East Side Neighborhood Services, 1700 2nd Street NE, Mpls, 55413 (corner of 2nd Street NE & 17th Ave NE). Park in lot behind building, use rear entry door Saturdays: 1-2pm. Contact Ralph W. at rwwink@aol.com or 612-382-0674.

CoDA Group: Shoreview, Shepherd of the Hills, 3920 North Victoria Street, 1 blk north of 694. Please enter from the back/north side of building off of Gramsie. Door "G". Follow signs to room #265. 9-10am. Dana, Shoreviewcoda@gmail.com

Overeaters Anonymous Newcomer Meeting: Third Saturday of the month, 1pm-2pm. Sumner Library, 611 Van White Memorial Blvd, Mpls, 55411. For more info contact Allison @ 612-499-0280, Gene @ 952-835-0789 or visit www.overeaters.org.

Overeaters Anonymous Courage to Change Meeting: Saturday mornings 8-9am at St Christopher's Episcopal Church, 2300 Hamline Ave N. Roseville. Contact Donna with questions at 651-633-3144.

Clutterers Anonymous: St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, 2300 N. Hamline Ave., (Hwy 36) room 220, Roseville. 12 step support group meets the first, third and fifth Sat. of the month, 10-11:15am. www.clutterersanonymous.org

Debtors Anonymous: men and women using the 12-Steps to solve problems with debt and other money issues.; www.damminnesota.org 952-953-8438. 9-10am, Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church, 4120 17th Ave. S., Mpls, 55407 (rooms 7 & 8, enter sliding glass door facing parking lot.)

Overeaters Anonymous: 8-9 am, Falcon Heights Community Church, 1795 Holton Street, Falcon Heights. Lisa 651-428-3484.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Support Group: 1st and 3rd Sat. of the month, 11am -1pm at Faith Mennonite Church, 2720 E. 22nd St, Minneapolis. Website: tinyurl.com/toccdsg. Call before coming for direction. Burt at 612-547-6388.

Adult Children of Alcoholics & Dysfunctional Families: Saturday, 10am, ACA Club Fridley, Moon Plaza, Boardroom in the lower level of Unity Hospital, 550 Osborne Road, Fridley. Please see www.acafridley.com for info.

Men's & Women's Support Group: Meetings every Saturday (including holidays) at 9am. Prince of Peace Church, 7217 W. Broadway, Brooklyn Park. (north entrance.) Informal, safe place to share experiences of joy and concerns. We promote growth & positive change to meet the challenges of our lives. Call 763-443-4290.

South Side Men's Group: Saturdays, 8:20 to 10am Support for men working toward positive personal change. Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Ave. S. Bloomington. Visit www.southsidemensgroup.org.

ABOUT THE LISTINGS

Big Red Book ACA: 11:15am at the Cavalier Club, 6123 Wooddale Ave., Edina, MN 55424. Call Therese S. at 952-927-6761 for more info.

Calix Society: A group of Catholic Recovering Alcoholics and their family/significant others who desire to strengthen their spiritual growth, meets the 3rd Sun. of the month at Cathedral of St. Paul. Mass at 8am., breakfast/speaker meeting at 9am. 651-773-3117.

Opiates Anonymous: Sunday Evenings at 7 pm at Unity of the Valley Spiritual Center, 4011 West Hwy 13, Savage, MN. OA is the first 12-step-based group in the state of Minnesota offering help and support for anyone with a desire to stop using opiates and all other mind altering substances. If you think that you may have a problem with opiates or other mind altering substances, attending one of our meetings may help you decide if you are an addict. If you want to tap into help and support from people and a program with proven success, this is the place for you. No sign up or registration is needed. Just show up at 7 pm on Sunday evenings. If questions contact Ron Benner at 952-657-9119

ABOUT THE LISTINGS

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the support groups on this page. However, we recommend that you contact the group before attending. If you have a listing and need to make a change OR you would like your group included (and on our website), please reach out to us at phoenix@thephoenixspirit.com. Thank you.

But I know,
somehow,
that only
when it is
dark enough
can you
see the
stars.

MARTIN LUTHER
KING, JR



SPOTLIGHT ON RECOVERY

The State of Recovery Meets the State of Hockey

by Sol Ryan



The news that Minnesota will host the 2021 Bridgestone NHL Winter Classic is a brass-ring opportunity to celebrate all things State of Hockey, from pond and muni-rink pickup games to high school and college rivalries, beer leagues and pro-level playoff runs.

This “big tent” is part of hockey’s great appeal. And with nicknames like Gump, Rocket, Moose or anything with a “-sie” or “-er” tacked on, even players at the highest levels somehow seem just a little more relatable to the rest of us.

The Wild-Calgary Flames tilt Sunday Jan. 5 at the Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul was great proof of just how big hockey’s tent is, and how relatable its biggest stars can be. Among the 17,204 in attendance were more than 600 puck-heads who also happen to be in recovery, all taking part in the third annual Minnesota Wild Recovery Night. These fans came for the game, and also to hear former NHL star Kevin Stevens talk beforehand about his descent into and recovery from addiction.

Stevens is an amazing story of recovery and redemption, not to mention a cautionary tale on the dangers of substance abuse among elite athletes. He was a Lemieux line-mate, two-time Stanley Cup champion and perennial 40-goal scorer until an on-ice collision left him with massive head and facial injuries, addiction to painkillers and, ultimately, jail time for trafficking opiates. Now three years into his own recovery, Stevens dedicates his life to helping others find sobriety.

Minnesota Wild Recovery Night grew out of Recovery Community Hockey, a Wednesday night skate at St. Paul Academy’s Drake Arena that is open to men and women in recovery. The first event at the X two years ago drew 200 fans from the recovery community (organizers hoped 50 would show up), and last year 500 came to hear former Boston Bruin Derek Sanderson’s riveting tale of going from being the world’s highest-paid athlete to sleeping on park benches.

Once you get past the “beer league” associations, recreational sports are a great outlet for people in recovery, says Doug Anderson, Evening Program Coordinator for The Retreat and one of the founders of Recovery Community Hockey. Shared



Pictured from left are: Jared Jenkins, Minnesota Wild Senior Premium Service Executive; NHL star and head of Power Forward 25 Kevin Stevens; Sol Ryan. Photos courtesy of John Shaughnessy.

love of sport is the attraction, and a willingness to help others becomes the glue that makes participating more meaningful. It’s also a good recipe for long-term recovery. “People think they have to give up things like hockey and softball,” Anderson says. “We’re proof that you can be in recovery and still participate.”

Stevens says helping others is essential to his own recovery – a peer-to-peer approach that is central to the Minnesota Model of recovery. This gets to the heart of Stevens’ (unpaid) day job, the Power Forward Foundation, which provides education, outreach and prevention programming to help people overcome addiction. Other teams around the NHL are paying attention as well: the Tampa Bay Lightning sent representatives to Minnesota to talk with organizers about holding recovery events, and NHL brass are watching too.

In an interview with the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette in 2018, Stevens said, “People did it to me. What they gave me to help me get clean and sober, you have to give it back. If someone needs help, you have to be there.” Sunday night at the X, more than 600 hockey fans joined Stevens in being there, and giving back.

Sol Ryan is Director of Sober Living, Alumni & Community Relations, The Retreat, and also one of the organizers of Minnesota Wild Recovery Night. Submit your Spotlight on Recovery story to phoenix@thephoenixspirit.com.

Resource Directory

Counseling

Lehmann Counseling

Help for individuals and families dealing with addiction. Kate Lehmann is an experienced professional offering client-centered substance use counseling. Discrete, flexible, private pay. www.katelehmann.com for more information.

Eating Disorders

Melrose Center

Melrose heals eating disorders for all genders and ages. Our experienced team offers specialty programming for those struggling with an eating disorder and substance use disorder – whether they are in recovery or treatment. Melrose Center has 5 metro area locations. Visit melroseheals.com or call 952-993-6200.

Living Proof MN

A mentoring program for those who’ve been impacted by eating disorders. We know healing comes from within; we are here to guide you, from the heart, with real world experience and love, through the darkness to take back control and to live life as you deserve. Visit www.LivingProofMN.com, email shira@livingproofmn.com or call 612-207-8720

Drugs and Alcohol Treatment

Minnesota Teen Challenge

If you or a loved one is struggling with drugs or alcohol, we’re here to help. In addition to our effective and affordable residential Licensed Treatment, faith-based Long-Term Recovery and convenient Outpatient program, we have extensive prevention and transitional/aftercare services. Freedom from addiction starts here. 612-FREEDOM or mmtc.org

Narcotics Anonymous Helpline

Drug Problem? We Can Help! Call Now 24-hour 877-767-7676. Also, check out www.namimnnesota.org For a complete listing of meetings, upcoming events, camp-outs, and service opportunities.

Workaholics Anonymous Meeting

Burning out? Workaholics Anonymous provides steps and tools to break free from non-stop work and activity — or work avoidance. Meetings are every Wednesday, 12:30 p.m., Brooklyn United Methodist Church, Brooklyn Center. Newcomers welcome. Learn more: 763-560-5199 or [www.workaholics-anonymous.org](http://workaholics-anonymous.org).

To place a Resource Directory listing call David at 612-298-5405 or email at david@thephoenixspirit.com



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from page 1

Getting Through the Dark Times: Two Stories of Hope

Broaddus continues: "A week later I got with this guy one more time and we were fighting and drinking, and I said, 'I'm really nervous for my mental health.' He said, 'Are you that big of a loser that I need to take you to a treatment center?' I cried myself to sleep. In the middle of the night I felt, clear as day, something jump on my chest, and then I saw myself at the foot of the bed saying, Deanna, you better get out of here now or you're going to lose your mind. I was scared straight. I got up, took my stuff, and left. I've never seen that man again. And that was the hardest cord to cut. He was my drug dealer, and I loved him."

Once I walked away from him, I was able to walk away from everything else."

Broaddus believes that the visions were "God reaching out to me. I had a lot of people praying for me."

From there, she says, "I started telling people the truth about what I had been doing. That's what gave me hope. It was the one thing that made me feel safe. I had been lying for so long, it was refreshing to tell the truth." This included telling her boss at work. "Male authority figures can really trigger me. My boss is male, and a couple times we've had fights and it was just misplaced anger. I had to come clean and tell my boss that, and he deeply appreciated my honesty. I don't know if I would have known how to do that without going through recovery."

TRUTH GOT A HUG

Broaddus went to her psychiatrist, fearful to tell her the truth. "I had tricked her into prescribing me some drugs I was abusing," she says. What she got from her doctor was a hug and a referral to the Twelve Steps program. Broaddus joined a Christian Recovery program and found a sponsor with the same faith as she had. She recalls: "That gave me a lot of hope." At first when she called others in her program for help, she says, "I was afraid I was wasting everyone's time, but they said 'Just lean on us for now,' so that was a blessing."

Using the Twelve Steps' inventory process, Broaddus examined her relationship with her father. "Not so I could blame him," she says, "but to understand a bit about where I came from and why was I making such poor choices, dating men who were emotionally unavailable."

DONE WITH DEBT

Broaddus had gone through bankruptcy and lost her house. She assumed she would always be in debt. But she found someone who showed her how to create a plan for financial health and she stuck to it. "I cut back, bigtime," she says. Besides living rent-free with her parents for a year, she stopped spending money on outings with friends. "I'd call them and say, 'Do you want to go for a hike?' or 'Do you want to get together and play a board game?' I realized I was no less happy doing some of these things. It was the relationships I valued, and I didn't have to spend any money."

Now Broaddus uses what she has learned to offer hope to other addicts. She also offers money-managing guidance to women through her blog (www.recoveringwomenwealth.com) and personal coaching. Getting on top of your finances "just takes intention, a plan, and accountability, and it can be fun," she says. "Get some cheerleaders, accountability partners," she advises. "There are lots of meetups and other groups where you don't have to feel like you're doing it alone."

CAN'T BREAK THE HABIT

For Pat Williamson, living in the French Quarter in New Orleans meant ready access to alcohol. "Everything I did revolved around drinking," he says. "I was either thinking about drinking, drinking, or recovering from drinking. I can remember getting up in the morning and saying today I'm not going to do this. At 4:00 or 5:00 pm, I was right back at it."

Scrapes with the law because of his drinking landed him in jail overnight. "That was scary," he says. "Also, one time I picked up someone in my drunken stupor, brought them home, and was robbed. I didn't remember anything about it, but the next morning I woke up and my door was open, and all my things were gone. I realized then that I could have killed someone and not even remember doing it."

A terrible hangover one day kept him home from work. The next day, he says, "My backdoor neighbor came over to where I was sitting on the stoop and invited me to my first Twelve Steps meeting. I said, 'I don't want to go.' She said, 'You're going.' I'm very grateful to her today for insisting that I go. I've been sober ever since." He went to 90 meetings in 90 days. "I knew my resolve was not enough. I had to have help."

FIRING HIS GOD

Williamson, who now serves as a minister at Unity Minneapolis in Golden Valley, says that his spiritual awakening came as the result of the Twelve Steps, especially through Step Three, which speaks of surrendering one's life and will to the "God of my understanding." Says Williamson, who is gay, "The God of my understanding that I grew up with did not work for me. It was not a God who was accepting of my sexual orientation, not accepting who I was. My sponsor told me to fire that God of my understanding. I thought: 'Oh yes!'"

Now he believes that "I'm made in the image and likeness of God and that I'm an expression of God, that God loves me. With that definition of God, I can listen to intuition guiding me what to do."

Williamson still goes to Twelve Steps meetings every week. The program, he says, "continues to provide me with a lot of hope. It gives me so many wonderful things to live by, to structure my life around." Williamson also keeps his hope alive by reading program and other spiritual literature every day, journaling to sort out what's troubling him, praying and meditating, and saying affirmations that move him in the direction he wants to go with his life.

FOLLOW GOOD ORDERLY DIRECTION [GOD]

Recently, he applied the lessons of recovery during an experience with cancer, using the Serenity Prayer as his anchor. "I kept following instructions," he says, "as

I had learned to do in the Twelve Steps program. I kept following instructions from my doctors and their staff, following Good Orderly Direction [GOD] with the cancer treatment."

As a minister, Reverend Pat, as he is affectionately known in his church community, frequently gives counsel to people in recovery as well as others hungry for hope. Often, he finds himself passing on the lessons he has learned in recovery, mixed with his characteristic warm-hearted humor. "I spoke to someone today who is very depressed and who has also had battles with alcoholism," he says, "and I know her well enough that I could say, 'Have you taken your medication?' And to say, 'Get your derrière in this office to see me and promise me you're not going to hurt yourself.'

"I think of another case about a woman who was anticipating suicide. And I listened to her, and I prayed, 'Spirit, what do I do?' I went to her and said, 'Look, I'm very busy. Don't do anything crazy. I don't have time for a memorial service this week.' She laughed. And I laughed. She's still with us. I was doing it for a joke, intending to lighten her up. And, my God, it did."

Pat Samples is a writer and a facilitator for creative aging, body awareness, and creative writing. www.patsamples.com.

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One Step at a Time

from page 1

This was to be my fifth marathon and by far the most challenging I had ever experienced. I was nervous and a little bit fearful, but as I stood at the start, mentally preparing to begin the first ascent that ends on a ski hill with a breathtaking view of Lake Superior, I had faith that no matter what I faced on the trails ahead of me, I would finish the race. And so it has been with my sobriety. I have been blessed with the belief that if I put one foot in front of the other and continue on the path, I can live a life that is happy, joyous, and free.

For two seasons during my high school years, I was a member of the track team. I was the only person in our small school willing to run the 1600-meter race, or the mile, which is perhaps the only reason I was allowed to remain on the team. I was surely the worst runner in our entire conference, and during the race I would be lapped once, if not twice, by the fastest runners. Still, I finished every race often cheered on by my teammates and my mother.

It was not until years later, when I was encouraged by the fact that Oprah Winfrey ran a marathon, that I was tempted to take up the sport of running again. For several years I completed the *Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure* on Mother's Day in Minneapolis, but I never trained for it and suffered through every minute of the 3.1-mile race.

Then in the spring of 2010, two and a half years after I accepted I was powerless over alcohol and made the decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of the God of my understanding, I laced up some shoes and attempted to jog. Two times a week, I would drive one mile to Lake Harriet, run one 2.6-mile lap around the lake, and then drive myself back home to replace the calories I had just burned.

At first, I hated it, and I marveled at the people who laughed and talked and

I applied the same tenacity and dedication toward training for marathons that I had used to destroy my life when I was drinking.

appeared to be enjoying themselves while running. I was in constant pain, which must have been obvious to the runners who gave me a double thumbs-up and a huge smile of encouragement as they met me on the path.

One day I set out from my apartment determined to run for an entire hour, which I had never done in my life. I mapped out my course after I had finished and was pleased to see I had run five miles. I told a friend who said, "Wendi, if you can run five miles, you can run a 10K," so I signed up for the *Get in Gear*, downloaded a beginner training plan, and completed my first 10K a few weeks later. To celebrate my achievement, I took myself to a bed and breakfast in Duluth. The very next morning while lounging in my room and looking out onto a stormy Lake Superior, I registered for my first half marathon. The running bug had caught me, and as we say, I was off and running. I ran several half marathons in 2010 and my first three marathons in 2011.

For me, running was another step on my recovery journey to spiritual, emotional, and physical wellness. I applied the same tenacity and dedication toward training for marathons that I had used to destroy my life when I was drinking. Where alcoholism had been a way for me to slowly kill myself, running became an affirmation of life and a form of meditation.

I lost 75 pounds while training for my first half marathon and gained many friends who were members of both the recovery and running communities. With every step I took, and every "X" I marked on my marathon training calendar, I gained confidence in my abilities and pride in my accomplishments. As

an alcoholic, I felt like a failure, but as a runner I was a winner every time even if I crossed the finish line hours after most of the other racers had received their medals and gone home to shower and rest.

In some areas of my life, I still struggle with feelings of hopelessness and despair. At times I believe I am a failure but running and recovery have given me hope and have shown me that I am not. If I am ever in doubt, I need only to look at the rack of medals hanging in the front entry of my apartment, all of which proclaim me a "finisher."

Just before I reached the halfway point of the Curnow marathon, I stepped down a two-foot drop to cross a stream and my foot slipped out from under me as it touched a wet rock. I landed hard and paused for a moment to determine if I was seriously injured. My shin and arm were badly bruised, but I was able to get up and continue.

Then, as I approached the Power Lines, I realized that my GPS watch had stopped working. This turned out to be a blessing because, as there were no mile markers on the course, I had no idea how far I had to go to the finish. Instead of worrying and wondering, I tried to be present in the moment and to enjoy the beauty of the Superior hiking trail.

I crossed the finish line at 7 hours and 35 minutes, number 207 out of 248 runners. My friend who was there to greet me asked if I would ever do it again. Most of us crazy runners would answer emphatically, "Yes!" I said, "No, never again. I only want to run on flat pavement for the rest of my life." Then I moved to North Dakota, and I got my wish.



Wendi Wheeler is a plant-based athlete, writer, and member of the recovery community. She currently resides in Fargo with her old cat, Melvin. Find her at beingwendi.wordpress.com.

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CELEBRATING

40

YEARS

1980

First issue of *The Phoenix*

Standup comic, Maxine Jeffris, debuts issue of a recovery-based newspaper. States she started it to "mostly entertain people" knowing there would be a large audience in the Twin Cities.



1980

Sold

Jeffris sells the newspaper in 1986.

1990

Rejuvenate Your Recovery

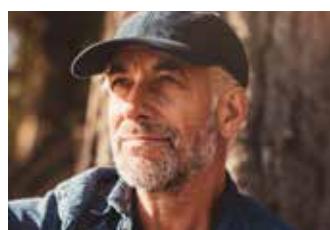
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1998

Ramstad featured

Former Representative Jim Ramstad featured as a person in recovery and recovery advocate.

March 1999 issue

1990S-2000S

Changes

Pat Samples becomes editor in 1996. The newspaper is eventually sold off to a printer in White Bear Lake in early 2000s and then editor and eventual publisher, Julia Edelman comes aboard to purchase the paper back.



A brief timeline of some of the *The Phoenix Spirit's* highlights over the last 40 years. We thank the many people who have come together to produce its issues. The readers who've read. And, the advertisers who have helped support it.

2000

20th anniversary

The newspaper is featured in a July, *StarTribune* article to highlight its 20th year in existence. The article states *The Phoenix* is one of the leading recovery publications in the country. Then editor, Fran Jackson is interviewed – as well as former editor (current writer), Pat Samples and long-time writer, John Driggs. Jackson states: "The Phoenix's namesake is a creature of rebirth, rising from the ashes of its own destruction. Anyone on a journey of recovery has wrestled with painful demons, and many of those demons remain even after they've put down the bottle, the needle or the Twinkie."



2010

30 years

The Phoenix Spirit survives the Great Recession while many other newspapers continue to dwindle. Edelman brings on David Goldstein in 2009 as Sales Director to forge new partnerships and support for the newspaper.

2000



March 2003 issue

2010

Writers

Pat Samples and John Driggs continue to be the longest serving writers.



2007

Paper renamed

To avoid it being confused with a publication out east, the newspaper is renamed, *The Phoenix Spirit*.



Because no historical records have been kept and the newspaper has passed through several owners, some of the dates may not be accurate. We've done the best to give a general overview of its history and timeline based on information available.

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FROM THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

We Need to Take a Closer Look at Tobacco

by **Randy McCallum**, Human Services Program Consultant,
Behavioral Health Division, Minnesota Department of Human Services



Let's talk tobacco. If you're reading this article, it means recovery is important to you or someone you know. Maybe you've put in the work and made recovery a priority in your life. If so, honor yourself for that hard work. Maybe someone in your family is struggling and you just want to find some answers to help them. Once again, honor yourself for being willing to help. Or maybe you're a treatment professional, wondering about how you can help the people you work with to get healthy.

But what does tobacco have to do with recovery? And we're not talking about the sacred use of tobacco by American Indians or other groups. We are talking about commercial tobacco. We're talking about cigarettes, chewing tobacco, cigars, pipes, even vape devices. So again, what does tobacco have to do with recovery?

Substance Use Disorder (SUD) is classified as a mental health issue. Tobacco is listed as the number one killer of people with mental health issues. In fact, estimates are that Minnesotans with a serious mental health issue will on average die 24 years earlier than people without. How does this impact recovery? People with mental illness smoke at two to four times the rate of the general population. And there's this: 25% of people living in the United States have been diagnosed with a mental health or substance use disorder. These people smoke 40% of all cigarettes. Tobacco affects people with substance use disorders, and people in recovery, at a disproportionate rate.

Consider this: In 2017, over 70,000 people died from an overdose. Shortly after these figures were released, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services declared a nationwide public health emergency regarding the opioid crisis and nationwide attention was brought to bringing down the number of overdose deaths. In the same year, over 480,000 people died from tobacco-related causes in the U.S. That's the equivalent of three fully loaded Boeing 747s crashing every single day. Those deaths are disproportionately distributed among people with substance use or mental health issues.

At the Minnesota Department of Human Services, we are working with our partners and providers across the state to

make a dent in these statistics. Our goal is to increase the number of SUD treatment facilities that offer nicotine treatment and work towards tobacco-free facilities.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) conducted a survey of licensed residential SUD treatment facilities, asking about tobacco policies and tobacco assessment and treatment. We found that:

- 77% allowed smoking on their grounds;
- While 90% of residential SUD treatment facilities assessed for tobacco dependence, only 59% addressed tobacco dependence as part of treatment;
- Almost 75% offered access to nicotine replacement therapy;
- While 69% offered nicotine treatment individually and only 42% offered it in group.

These results show that we definitely have our work cut out for us.

DHS next worked with three residential treatment programs over the last 18 months to provide nicotine treatment to clients that wanted it using evidence-based best practices. As a result, 11% of cigarette smoking clients stopped smoking and 7% quit using all tobacco products. Interestingly, compared to a similar group, people were more likely to finish substance use treatment with better results. Plus, smoke-free policies and nicotine treatment had positive impacts on staff attitudes and opinions, creating a more supportive environment.

Our community partners have been working hard at tobacco and treatment as well. The American Lung Association has been working for several years on what is now called the Lung Mind Alliance, bringing together a number of organizations, including DHS, to make tobacco treatment the norm in SUD and MH treatment and to encourage tobacco-free grounds. In addition, this fall, HealthPartners hosted a summit of Minnesota organizations working to improve health broadly for people with severe mental illness. Nationally, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is also in on the act, having published a tobacco cessation toolkit for substance use disor-

der treatment programs. You can find a range of information and resources at www.samhsa.gov/find-help/atod.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

SAMHSA has some great advice on this. First, if you are thinking about quitting tobacco:

- The best time to quit is now. If you are in treatment, quitting smoking while in addiction treatment may help improve your chances of achieving and maintaining recovery from other substances.
- There are several different smoking cessation medications that can help you quit. Taking these medications AND finishing the program make quitting easier.
- You could save thousands of dollars each year by quitting smoking.
- Quitting heals your body and your mind. Studies show that your mood will improve, and your anxiety can lessen.

There's free help available and right now there are many options if you want to quit. If you have insurance, you can ask your medical provider what they have available. Most insurance companies offer two quit attempts per year using nicotine replacement therapies (NRTs) such as nicotine patches, gum, or lozenges. Minnesota also offers Quitplan, which provides free services in English and Spanish for anyone that qualifies and wants to quit. You can sign up at www.quitplan.com or by calling 1-888-354-PLAN (7526). If you use their services and tell them you've gone to treatment or have a mental health diagnosis, you are eligible for enhanced services. Most folks will receive four weeks of NRTs and four coaching sessions. Enhanced services, for those that self-report either a mental health diagnosis or a substance use issue, are eligible for 12 weeks of NRTs and seven coaching sessions. For American Indians, culturally responsive services are available at www.aquit.com or by calling 1-888-7AI-QUIT (1-888-724-7848)

If you're not sure if your insurance covers quit attempts you can use the Quitplan website to call most insurance carriers tobacco treatment services at www.quitplan.com/minnesota-quitline-network.html

Remember: Tobacco is a drug. Nicotine replacement therapy can help to manage cravings.

There is help available, both for those using tobacco and for treatment providers building tobacco treatment into their programs.

If you are in treatment, or you know someone who is, speak up. Ask for help with tobacco. Make sure it is part of your treatment plan. See this as a fresh start to a healthier you.

Treatment is the time to get healthy in mind, body and spirit. Seize the opportunity; a lot is at stake.

Tips for treatment programs from the American Lung Association

- Tobacco-related illnesses claim more than six times as many lives as drug overdoses.
- Treating tobacco dependence not only helps improve overall health but mental health as well. When people quit tobacco, their mental health improves, including significant decreases in anxiety, depression and stress.
- People who receive tobacco treatment are 25% more successful in long-term abstinence from alcohol and other drugs.
- Tobacco dependence is in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-V).
- In Minnesota, 89% of people seeking services who smoke said they wanted staff to ask them about quitting; 92% of people felt that avoiding tobacco was very important for them to be healthy.
- Eliminating tobacco use helps the people you serve be as healthy as possible.
- Most of the people you work with want to quit; you can provide the resources they need to be successful in treating their tobacco addiction.
- Do you smoke yourself? Step outside of your personal experiences to provide support for your clients. If they want to talk about tobacco use, use your motivational interviewing skills. And maybe use this as an incentive for you to quit as well!
- Most of all, remember that tobacco is a drug. Nicotine replacement therapy can help manage cravings while people are on-site. There are free resources in Minnesota to connect people to nicotine replacement therapy. There is help available, both for those using tobacco and for treatment providers building tobacco treatment into their programs.



FROM THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

Fast-Tracker Connects People Directly to Treatment (Update)

by **Neerja Singh**, Deputy Director, Behavioral Health Division, Minnesota Department of Human Services



Former Commissioner Emily Piper told *Phoenix Spirit* readers in August 2018 about Fast-Tracker, a new online service to help connect people to substance use disorder and mental health treatment services. Now, a little over a year later, how has Fast-Tracker been working, and what's next?

First a bit about Fast-Tracker: It is an online, searchable database of mental health services and substance use disorder treatment programs and resources. Fast-Tracker not only provides information about what services are out there, but where they are available. This easy, intuitive website is designed for both professionals working with a person seeking treatment and for the general public. Whether you are a treatment provider, a family member, friend, or a person seeking treatment for yourself, Fast-Tracker is there to help you find what you need when you need it.

You can take a look at Fast-Tracker at www.fast-trackermn.org. Fast-Tracker is managed by the Minnesota Mental Health Community Foundation and funded in part by grants from Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS).

Fast-Tracker is an exciting tool that makes finding and getting substance use disorder and mental health treatment easier. We know that getting connected to treatment is critical, because treatment works. Most Minnesotans who enter substance use disorder treatment complete it and show considerable improvement. Successful treatment can improve employment, housing, and lawful behavior. Further, participation in recovery and support groups, and abstinence from substance use and other benefits of treatment tend to continue over the long term. Studies show that people experiencing mental illnesses can and do get better, and many

recover completely. There are more treatments, services, and community support systems than ever before. Finding them is now easier because of Fast-Tracker.

So that's Fast-Tracker. Is it making a difference?

We believe that the hard work of the Minnesota Mental Health Community Foundation is paying off: Fast-Tracker is connecting people to substance use disorder treatment and mental health treatment and making a real difference in the lives of many Minnesotans.

Many providers have been vocal in their support. Todd Archbold, LSW, MBA, of PrairieCare and PrairieCare Medical Group, one of the region's largest providers of psychiatric services, wrote recently that, "Fast-Tracker has proven to be a valuable and reliable tool for our mental health community." He added that, "Our staff benefit from access to the Fast-Tracker on a daily basis."

Jin Lee Palen, executive director of the Minnesota Association of Community Mental Health Programs, writes that, "Our clients benefit from this FREE service, accessing treatment much faster. We all know timing is critical to accessing mental and chemical health services. Yet, too often, our staff struggled to find openings for clients when they are ready to start treatment."

Ruth Parriott, CEO of the Twin Cities Medical Society and Twin Cities Medical Society Foundation, writes that, "Twin Cities Medical Society Foundation has been a steadfast supporter of the Fast-Tracker program, established by the Minnesota Mental Health Community Foundation, since its inception." And that, "The Fast-Tracker Program has proven to be an excellent (free) on-line resource to not only the physician community where they are able to post and

Users can find mental health and substance use disorder resources and see real-time availability.

promote real-time availability of mental health services/appointments, but also to the community as a whole as they are able to readily locate and access local services and resources at their time of need, including access to licensed addiction treatment programs."

The numbers reinforce why these organizations support Fast-Tracker. For example, from July through the end of September of 2019, the substance use disorder side of Fast Tracker had nearly 3,000 different users. The average time they spent on the site searching was 1 minute and 40 seconds — evidence that users were likely to be both in the right place and finding what they are looking for.

Fast-Tracker has been out and visible in the community as well. Staff are frequent participants at community events throughout the state, such as Farmfest, Stomp Out Suicide, the Walk for Recovery at the Capitol, the NAMI Walk in Minneapolis, and Mental Health day at the State Fair. They've offered trainings to case managers across the state and visited college campuses.

Their twice-monthly newsletter is reaching mental health and substance use treatment professionals with updates from Fast-Tracker and the behavioral health community, and they've done intensive outreach to counties and treatment programs across Minnesota.

It seems clear that Fast-Tracker is off to a fast start. But we are not stopping there. Now we ask both what's the future of Fast-Tracker, and how can we continue to improve how people can get the services they need when they need them?

At DHS, we continue to work to improve mental health care by building a spectrum of services to better meet individual needs. From mobile crisis services to intensive residential treatment services, from children's therapeutic services and support to psychiatric residential treatment facilities for children, we need to be able to provide the right services for each person.

We continue to work toward substance use disorder treatment reform because we need to decrease barriers for people seeking treatment services. We are working to make sure people get timely access to treatment services and

that people have a choice in a continuum of services that match their needs.

In the past two years, Minnesota has made several improvements to substance use disorder treatment services. These improvements include expanding services such as withdrawal management, telemedicine, peer services, treatment coordination/care coordination.

We are continuing to work to make sure Minnesotans can access treatment services just like they can access other health care services, by choosing the provider directly. There remains a lot of work to do, but we are working with many communities and partners around the state to make this a reality.

Meanwhile, there is a range of needed changes still ahead of us, all complex, difficult to explain, and all very, very important. (Go to mn.gov/dhs/sudreform/ for more information). In short, we are always working to make sure Minnesota's substance use disorder and mental health treatment system is not only the best in the country, but that it meets the needs of each person seeking services.

To that goal, Fast-Tracker has been, and will continue to be, a key piece of the puzzle.

People interested in treatment can find treatment programs and information about availability at www.fast-trackermn.org.

John H. Driggs

LICSW

Psychotherapist

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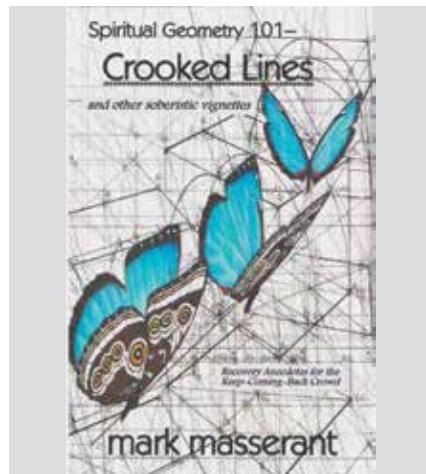
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Books



Crooked Lines

Recovery Anecdotes for the Keep-Coming-Back Crowd

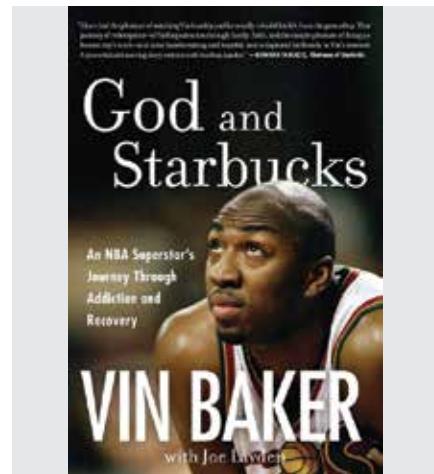
By Mark Masserant

SELF-PUBLISHED / BLUEBOOKS / AMAZON

This is not your typical self-help book. Creative, inspiring and sometimes hilarious, Masserant's collection of stories reflects back on his journey through early sobriety, with all the twists and turns a spiritual guppy could navigate. Now over thirty years sober, his twenty offerings include misadventures, thinking problems and wisdom from unlikely messengers, with laugh-out-loud moments spread throughout.

The book shares his personal struggles with alcoholism, spirituality and himself, but also provides a strong message of hope. The blend of insight and humor keeps you reading.

The stories are road signs through his recovery. There's one about his peculiar twelfth step call, which he did get sideways, and the detox experience that knocked his socks off. A piece of pie that almost got him drunk was an eye-opener, and a futuristic awards ceremony to relieve a group's boredom is just plain fun. *Crooked Lines* shows there really is a reason to believe, and to hang in there despite all the detours.



God and Starbucks

A NBA Superstar's Journey Through Addiction and Recovery

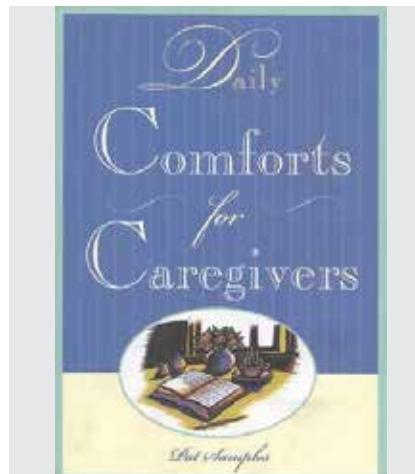
By Vin Baker

HARPERCOLLINS

Vin Baker, an NBA all-star, Olympic gold medalist, and clean-cut preacher's son, harbored a dark secret: a dependence on drugs and alcohol that began shortly after he turned pro. Eventually becoming a full-blown yet functional alcoholic, Vin convinced himself that he played better under the influence—until his addiction cost him his basketball career, his fortune, and his health.

But Vin's story isn't a tragic fall from grace. It is an enthralling testimony of salvation. For Vin, hitting rock bottom was a difficult yet transformative experience that led him to renew his relationship with God and to embrace life. Howard Schultz of Starbucks and Calvin Butts of Abyssinian Baptist Church offered Vin a helping hand and led him to find more security and happiness in his ordinary working life than he did in all of his years in the glamorous world of professional basketball.

God and Starbucks is a wise, unflinching look at addiction and at the necessity of taking charge and claiming one's blessings. It is a powerful memoir about reaching the top and beginning again from the bottom—an inspiring personal tale of humility and grace that reminds us of what is truly important.



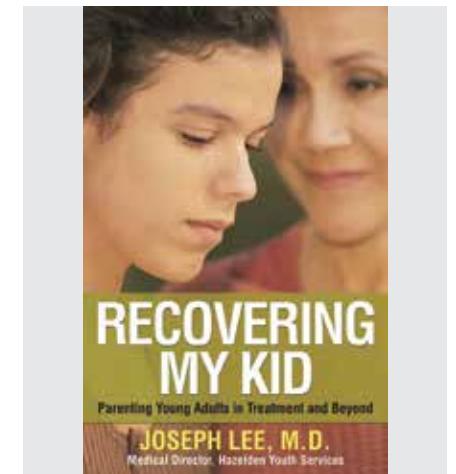
Daily Comforts for Caregivers

By Pat Samples

FAIRVIEW PRESS

Caregivers have one of the hardest jobs in the world. Beyond all their usual personal and family demands, they must take on the special responsibility of caring for family members or others with long-term health problems. All the stresses that come with the territory can be overwhelming and make a caregiver feel hopeless at times. With 366 days worth of wisdom and affirmations, *Daily Comforts* addresses one caregiving issue per day. An index of topics allows caregivers to find the readings most pertinent to their immediate concerns.

Written in the first person, each page of *Daily Comforts* acts as a caregiver's monologue--as if what is on the page is coming directly from his or her mind. Few meditation books offer this approach. The idea is for the reader to transition from "venting" to thinking about the issue from a different perspective, to finding a solution. *Daily Comforts* works like a support system in a pocket by helping both family and professional caregivers cope with isolation, guilt, exhaustion, and frustration. Each reading concludes with an inspiring, practical affirmation designed to help caregivers better care for themselves.



Recovering My Kid

Parenting Young Adults in Treatment and Beyond

By Joseph Lee, M.D., ABAM

HAZELDEN PUBLISHING

National expert Dr. Joseph Lee explains the nature of youth addiction and treatment, and how families can create a safe and supportive environment for their loved ones during treatment and throughout recovery. Raising a child is tough as it is, but when your kid becomes addicted to alcohol or other drugs, it can feel as if you're living a nightmare. In *Recovering My Kid*, Dr. Joseph Lee, a leading youth addiction specialist, takes worried, confused, and angry parents by the hand and addresses their most pressing questions and fears: What is addiction? What happens when my child returns home from treatment? How can my family support his or her recovery? What if my child relapses? How can my family get well again? Getting your child and your family well again requires the support and understanding of the whole family, even if feelings and trust were damaged. Lee explains the difficult concepts of addiction, treatment, and recovery in a way parents and families can understand and gives them concrete strategies they can put into practice. This book will help family members begin to understand what their loved one is going through and how they can help the addict adjust to a clean-and-sober life while still taking care of themselves.

The synopsis of these books were taken from the publisher's overviews. If you have a book you'd like featured or have an old favorite you'd like to share with others, please contact us at phoenix@theophoenixspirit.com.

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Joseph Lee, M.D.,
ABAM

Medical director for the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation Youth Continuum and is based at the nonprofit's center for adolescents and young adults in Plymouth, Minnesota. A triple-boarded physician, he completed his Adult Psychiatry residency at Duke University Hospital and his fellowship in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry from Johns Hopkins Hospital. He is a diplomate of the American Board of Addiction Medicine and a member of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry's Substance Abuse Committee. Dr. Lee's experience with families from across the country and abroad provide him with an unparalleled perspective on families, emerging drug trends, co-occurring mental health conditions, and the ever-changing culture of addiction. He is the author of *Recovering My Kid: Parenting Young Adults in Treatment and Beyond*, which provides a guide for parental leadership in times of crisis.

Ask the Expert

We'll feature an expert in the mental health and substance use disorder field to answer questions

Q In terms of addiction, how does the adolescent or young adult brain differ from an adult's?

The adolescent brain is still developing. Young people tend to have less physical effects from drug use (i.e. hangovers, withdrawal) but their brains are much more adversely affected. Their ability to limit risky decision making is also not on par with adults so they may need more help when trying to stop using.

Q What are some key signs and symptoms that indicate an adolescent / young adult may need treatment for mental health and substance abuse?

What a parent should be looking for are changes in behavior. If a child's interests change dramatically, they begin to associate with a different crowd, their grades plummet, their weight changes significantly, their eating and sleeping patterns change, they begin stepping outside the values you know them to have – those sorts of things are all worth noticing. It's all about paying attention, and then having open, compassionate conversations—tak-

ing care of each other. We're getting better about this when it comes to mental health. When, for instance, a boy gets dumped by his girlfriend, we now know to worry that he may get dejected. We've learned to keep an eye open, to check out if he is OK. We tend to the relationship. But we don't often do that with the warning signs of substance use, we hope it's just a phase and wish it away.

Q If a parent / caregiver is in recovery, does that mean their child is at great risk for addiction?

Family history of addiction is the greatest risk factor we know of, so the risk is indeed greater, which is important for families to understand. But having a family history of addiction doesn't guarantee addiction or necessarily make it likely. There are many other factors as well, and a parent's recovery can also be a protective factor in some ways. When talking to your kids about risk, think of it like the conversation you're probably having about texting and driving. If your teen has a history of car accidents or has ADHD or exhibits risk-taking behavior, then your talk about the dangers of texting and driving would probably take on more urgency. As

a parent, you also need to outline norms and expectations and model safe behavior for your kids. You can't say, "Don't text and drive" and then text and drive. Same with substance use.

Thank you to Dr. Lee, Julia Edelman, Jeremiah Gardner and Samantha Moy-Gottfried for helping to facilitate this Q&A.

If you have a question for the experts, or you are an expert interested in being featured, please email phoenix@thephoenixspirit.com. Experts have not been compensated for their advice.

TO BE IN YOUR CHILDREN'S
MEMORIES TOMORROW,
YOU HAVE TO BE IN THEIR
LIVES TODAY.

BARBARA JOHNSON



*"I've been in recovery
from alcohol/meth/heroin.
I didn't know
gambling can be
an addiction."*

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Lessening Divisiveness in Ourselves

from page 1

The reality is that all of these divides we see outside of ourselves already exist inside of ourselves and what we hate in others is also what we dislike in ourselves. When we are crying out against injustice in others, we may be quite blind to the injustice in ourselves. When we despise prejudice, we may turn a blind eye to our own. In fact, the enemy we see in others already exists inside each and every one of us. Living a divided life, whether from others or ourselves, is not sustainable. It cannot stand.

The most important human need is the need to belong, even to people we disagree with. It is not enough to belong to the group of people who think like us. In fact, we don't have all the answers and we need to be challenged by people who don't think like us. Let us have the wisdom to need each other and integrate the broken halves inside of ourselves and between ourselves and others. This can be done on a personal level even when the battles of divisiveness rage outside of us. Divisiveness is a choice, not an inevitability. Each of us can learn to appreciate the complexities of life and to learn to "live and let live." We are all not that much different from each other, no matter how much we differ from each other. We need each other way more than we already know.

Hatred is like swallowing poison and waiting for the other person to die.

WHAT IS DIVISIVENESS?

Divisiveness is the quality within and between people that creates hurtful separation from others through prejudice, polarization or hatred. It is sometimes unconsciously used as a power tactic by people in power in a "divide and conquer strategy." Often such people are reluctant to get emotionally close and get other people to fight one other. Any of us can have our moments when we become divisive with others even when we are generally peace-loving. If you can allow me to show my vulnerability to you, I will give you examples from my own life to illustrate the point of this article, how one can learn from personal shortcomings.

I am not that proud of this story, but I am very glad it happened because I grew from it. I like to think of myself as an open-minded person who accepts people of all races. Actually, I am quite liberal.

So, I wound up joining an athletic club in a predominantly African American neighborhood because it offered complete gym services for \$30 per year due to a grant from the city. It was a great deal! Since I grew up in a largely black neighborhood in my early childhood, I never thought of it as a big deal to be the only white person in an athletic club with mostly black people. I just didn't see myself as racist in any way. Was I in for a surprise! As soon as I went down to the club I noticed a certain tension in me. I started checking on my car in the parking lot several times a day to see if I had been robbed. I always left things locked in my locker. I was actually quite suspicious of the desk people to see if they would accept me. I stood out like a sore thumb!

I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skins but by the content of their character. — MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., AUGUST 28, 1963

Well I put a stop to that as I didn't want to be separate. Just the opposite happened. I decided to risk getting to know the people of color at the club. I chose to reexamine my own attitudes and not get polarized. I took a wait-and-see approach. Actually, my fears and prejudice were transformed into affection for people at the club. My car was never disturbed. I never had anything stolen from me and the people at the desk were so incredibly welcoming. This happened over and over. In general, we overcome prejudice by making personal connections. My initial fears of being robbed seemed rather foolish. My wife asked me if I would react this way at our all white club in our upscale neighborhood. I answered her with, "I guess not." She told me that African American people are used to being around white people all the time, so I didn't really need to be uncomfortable. Actually, I found that many of the black people at the gym were way more friendly and humorous than the people in our predominantly white status-conscious neighborhood. I was often personally touched by their kindness. I never checked my car again. Over time I became so relaxed that I loved going to this club and made many good friends, most of whom were black, some of whom I continue to see today. I'm sure my attitude made me more appealing to people I met.

Now I wouldn't be so embarrassed to tell you this story if I had originally focused on real crime in the neighborhood. Instead I focused on race and I mentally assigned imagined danger to people of color. When I was a child I lived in a crime-ridden neighborhood where having eyes in the back of your head made sense. However, I carried those irrational fears into my current adult life. I certainly understand better when people say that racism is a major issue in today's world and that we are not over it as a society. My fears actually melted when I over and over again found people of color generally to be kind, welcoming and honest. At the core we are very much alike. I began realizing that people of color would not necessarily have the same experience if they were surrounded by all white people. We have a long way to go for true racial justice. It starts with ourselves and our attitudes.

Some of us get separated by income inequality as the following story illustrates.

I grew up in a poor working-class neighborhood with a strong work ethic. Everything you owned was not handed to you. You had to work to earn it. To fit in you never wanted to show off what you owned; you just owned it. These same blue-collar attitudes operate in me today. I drive a 20-year-old Toyota sedan and dress casually. I think of myself as grateful for having had humble beginnings. So, you can imagine my reaction to seeing this suave businessman with blond hair in a tailored suit stroll into a local coffee shop after coming

out of his beautiful blue Maserati. He looked like an image from the magazine GQ. So, I went up to him, asked his name, and then pressed him, "So what are you? Some kind of lawyer or something?" He smiled at me and said "No. I own my own accounting business." He asked my name and we were off to a good start. I asked about his car. He told me he had three other cars like his Maserati, lived in several mansions all over the world and employed over two hundred people in a major accounting firm. I became jealous and judgmental. Clearly, he represented the image I wish I had of myself. So, I said, "Life can be hard at times." He laughed again and we initiated a good connection with each other. I told him I worked as a psychotherapist and helped people with problems. Over time he went into a painful melodrama about his new girlfriend and I said it sounded difficult. We met for coffee fairly regularly, me in my sweats and my new friend in his tailored suits. He told me about his working-class upbringing and about how hard he worked for all his money. Often, he would be rudely approached by several people at this working-class coffee shop who might say, "Who do you think you are? It's exactly people like you who are ruining this world." My friend mostly stayed quiet but sometimes got into it with people. He would say, "You really don't even know me!"

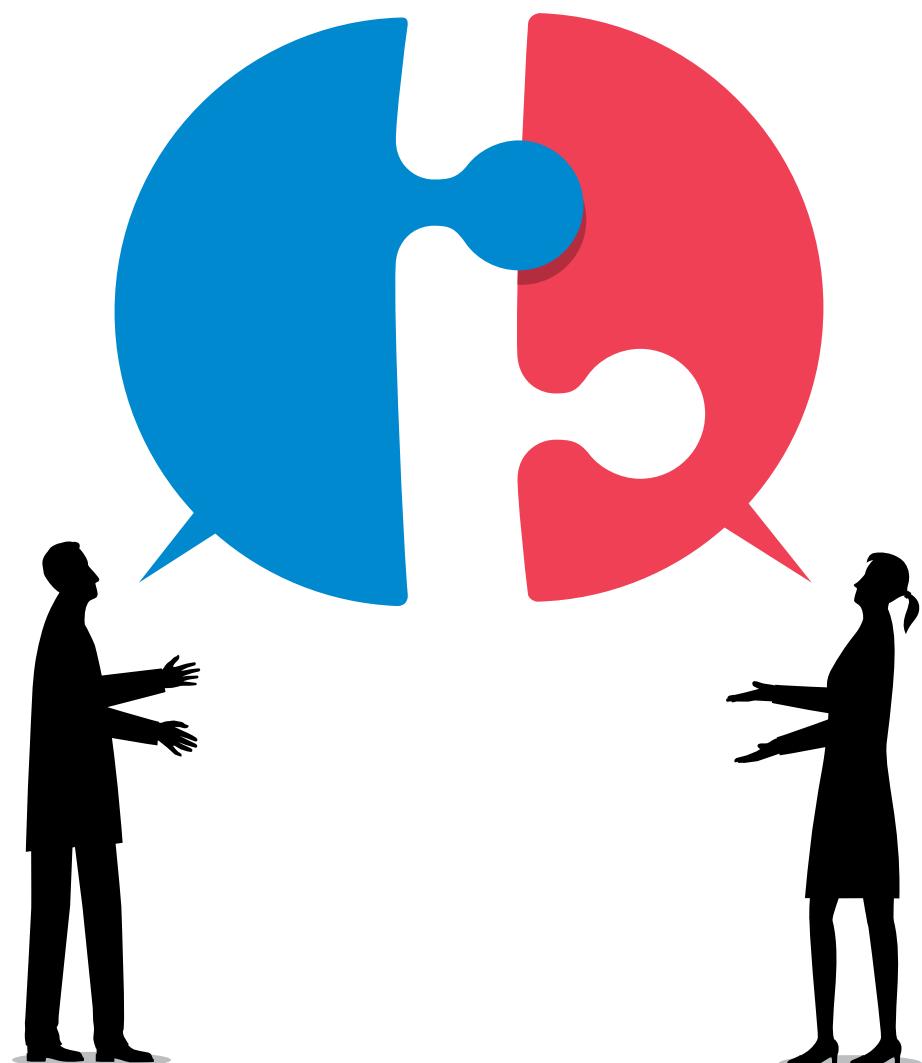
Well indeed I didn't even know him either. I had many judgments of my own about wealthy people that were quite prejudiced. So, I decided to change things and get close to a rich person who originally turned me off. I questioned my own preconceptions towards this wealthy man. I asked him many questions about himself and found out that, quite contrary to his public persona, my friend was quite a deep and generous person. I found out that he gave millions of dollars to youth program in the Twin Cities and mentored many young people in their work lives. His acumen as a businessman gave

him "a lot of smarts" when understanding the national news. He continued employing more people in his firm. He was interesting and entertaining to listen to and had a vast appreciation of what it takes for people to go from a rags-to-riches story because that's what he had done in his own life. My buddy frequently invited me to see his mansions and have dinner at his amazing houses. I was never overly impressed by his lifestyle but I did get personally moved by just how much he really cared for others and how well he treated his employees. He reminded me many times that wealthy people in his gated community often have the same good character he has and are not like the stereotyped rich person. He and I continue to be good friends, he in his designer suits and me in my sweats. I treat him like a regular Joe, and he shares his acumen with me. I am so glad I decided to not let my envy divide us.

We have met the enemy and it is us. — POGO IN WINNIE THE POOH

OVERCOMING DIVISIVENESS

Building bridges with people we dislike can often seem impossible, makes us very uncomfortable and totally turn us off at times. That's exactly why we ought to do it! As long as it is safe to do so, getting to know people different from yourself may help you discover hidden, darker sides of yourself and may reap many awesome rewards. You may find that many personal fears are ungrounded, that there is a hidden, more hopeful, side of life beyond what you already know, and that you yourself are capable of healing wounded, hidden parts in yourself. You may feel much less alone in a troubled world. So, let us take the risks to get to know people who are difficult for us to know and see where life take us. After all, nothing ventured, nothing gained.



Continued from page 14

Prejudice is the disowning of our own inadequacies by assigning them to others.

Remember that opening ourselves up to people who are different from us doesn't mean we have to agree with them or do as they do. We simply need to listen to who they are and see what we have in common with them. For many of us, we certainly can be secure enough with ourselves to do so. In fact, if we make friends with people we dislike we may develop a whole new level of peace and confidence we never knew we had. So, let's get curious, not judgmental. The following story illustrates what I mean.

My wife and I were on a bus trip through a local travel agency in the Twin Cities. Several miracles happened on this trip. Our group was required to meet up with a smaller group of people from the back wood hills of Tennessee. We were all off to the mountains of Colorado. At first, I couldn't imagine hanging out with some hill people from Tennessee. After all what we would we talk about? What would we have in common with a bunch of hillbillies who were likely Bible thumpers and Trump supporters? I had stereotyped people I didn't even know.

So, we met the hill people and the first thing I noticed is that I couldn't understand their language with all the twangs and colloquialisms from their area. I didn't want to be alienated from them and decided to get to know these folks and used humor to make a bridge with them. I said, "So what kind of English are you guys using?" They obviously understood each other and laughed at my confusion. As they began apologizing for their language I said, "No, no don't apologize. It's a beautiful dialect you're speaking. Please explain what you're

saying and teach us how to say things." They laughed again and apologized for not being educated like us. They taught us all to say "Looville" instead of "Louisville" and "Crick" instead of "Creek" and a whole slew of other words in their dialect. Clearly a certain healing was occurring as we bonded with these hill folks from Tennessee, whose language we still couldn't understand but very much admired. Actually, we were communicating to each other beyond words.

Truly our group of "educated" folks cuddled up to this Tennessee group. We found out that practical knowledge and know-how was way more important to them than a formal education. Many of these folks lived in the hills and had at best a high-school education. They helped each other out all the time, running each other's farms when one of them was disabled, getting together for blue grass playing on their porches and fixing each other's plumbing, heating and medical problems. They, despite being Bible thumpers, were extremely moral. Despite voting for President Trump, they hated his morals and only liked him because he told them they were important. Much of their region was politically and socially neglected and Trump made them feel they were worth something. They were not sure they would continue tolerating his behaviors for the next election. What they disliked about Minnesota was how everybody, in their eyes, was looking for a handout. In their area each person took care of their own business. They didn't like "free loaders."

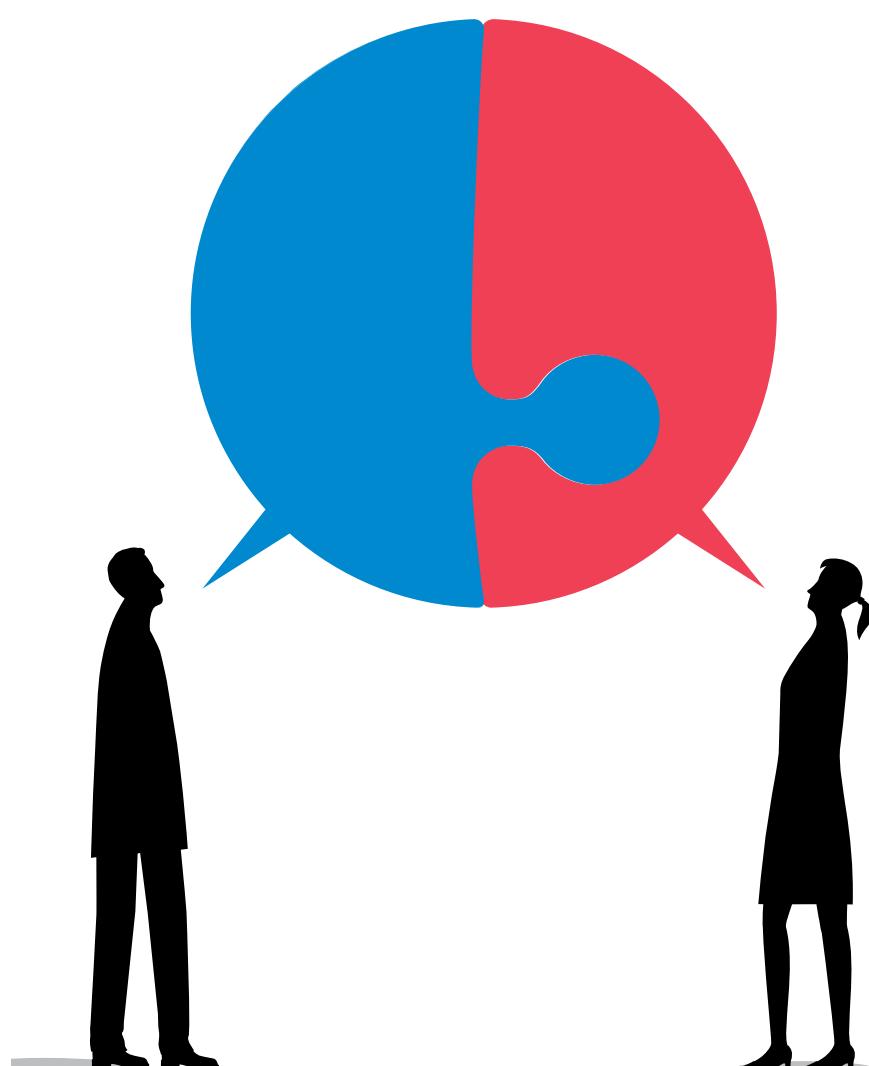
Just as we were having this discussion, an ironic event happened. Our bus, in the mountains of Colorado, broke down. I turned to my wife and said, "Oh we better call AAA!" All of the Tennessee folks burst out laughing. They said, "It will take hours for AAA!" and then they

Remember that opening ourselves up to people who are different from us doesn't mean we have to agree with them or do as they do. We simply need to listen to who they are and see what we have in common with them. For many of us, we certainly can be secure enough with ourselves to do so.

asked where the tool box was kept on the bus. Several of the older gents found the tool box, replaced two broken belts, and had the bus on its way in 30 minutes! "That's just how we do things back home" they said. I was way impressed by the brilliance, good-heartedness and amazing sense of humor of these folks. They, on the other hand, realized we could be down-to-earth too and "real." At the end of the trip the highlight was having them invite us all for a wild boar hunt in their neck of the woods. Actually, the best part of our Colorado trip was hanging out with these Tennessee folks. I didn't even need to see the scenery of Colorado. The Tennessee folks were the whole trip for me!

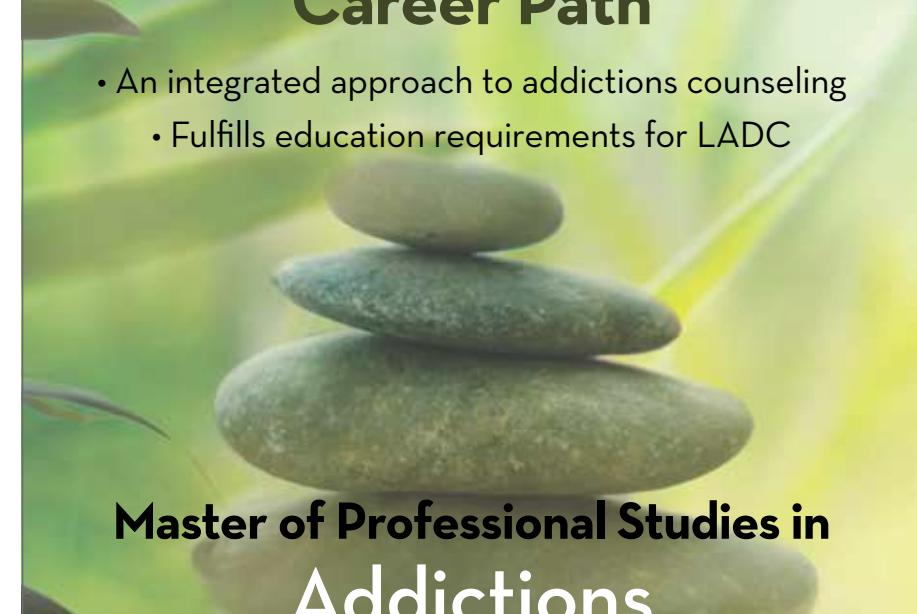
"When the discord within us dies, we are never alone. When love overcomes fear in us, there is hope. And we become one."

John H. Driggs, LICSW, is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker in private practice in St. Paul and co-author of *Intimacy Between Men* (Penguin Books, 1990). He can be reached at 651-699-4573.



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A Hopeful Gaze into 2020

by **Mary Lou Logsdon**



"Hope is passion for what is possible." — SØREN KIERKEGAARD

I am looking into the New Year with a hopeful gaze. As a glass-half-full person, I grab for ribbons of hope rather than entangle myself in webs of despair. Moving into a new year and a new decade I ask myself, what gives me hope?

Greta Thunberg, the 16-year-old woman who withstands social criticism and personal challenges to fight for our endangered earth, gives me hope. She is joined by many young people across the world clamoring for climate awareness, insisting we recognize the huge problems we are leaving for the young and those not yet born. Sometimes it takes a child to see with clarity what is obvious. I remember my then five-year-old sister, the baby of our family, being the impetus for my mother to quit smoking. My sister had not yet learned that we didn't dare ask our parents to change. Greta is asking us to change. Her bold bravery gives me hope.

I found hope at the funeral of an 87-year-old man. The youngest of his five children told the early story of a surly and mean father who drank to excess, adding vodka to his thermos of coffee each morning. She went on to describe his ensuing 40 years of sobriety and service. After retirement he engaged with young men in treatment, telling his addiction-to-recovery story, a living example of hope. Next a granddaughter shared her memories of a grandfather whose love overflowed to each of his grandchildren. The man this granddaughter knew was not the same man his daughter had grown up with. His transformation story gives me hope.

News that Liberian immigrants will be eligible to apply for permanent status after living among us for the last 30 years on Deferred Enforced Departure immigration status gives me hope. Displaced by civil war in their country of origin, they have made a home here. Many care for our elderly and infirm, support our communities and own businesses. Their persistence, and our welcoming, gives me hope.

My neighbors give me hope as we reach across generations and culture to create community. We celebrate birthdays, provide backup when parents run late for kids' buses, cover mail, take care of pets and do snow duty when someone is out of town or ill. We gather for a book group with a cross section of ages from mid 30s to early 80s. My house sits on the corner of the block where buses come from four schools to gather and release children, leaving a trail of laughter as they come and go. We are choosing to live interdependently. That gives me hope.

Miracles of modern medicine give me hope. In my lifetime many diseases that were once death sentences are now cured or contained in chronic form. I am thinking of AIDS for one, but several manifestations of cancer fit this category as well. A close friend has lived with AIDS for 35 years. He has had several near encounters with death but survived to the next drug discovery that has kept him alive until the discovery after that. As is often the case, the drug came with a cost. In his case, it was a kidney. An altruistic donor provided him with a kidney ten years ago and another lease on life. At the age of 67, he leads a fairly normal life, supported by pharmaceutical miracles. That people gratuitously donate organs, blood and bone marrow gives me hope, along with the

medical advances that continue to eradicate deadly diseases.

Another thing that gives me hope is that so many people have been touched by the movie, *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood*. Fred Rogers' warmth and sincerity influenced several generations of children. He dared to demonstrate kindness, to talk about difficult subjects, to respectfully engage with children. Adults, not given to sentimentality, leave the movie theater dabbing their eyes. That so many of us are moved by this genuine and gentle man with his message of unconditional positive regard gives me hope.

My hope is fueled by a sense of transcendence. There are ideals, values and truths that cross cultures, geography and time. Our country was founded on the ideal of freedom for all. We continue to grapple with who "all" includes as we grow in consciousness of what it means to be a citizen with rights and responsibilities and who belongs. Throughout our history we have grown toward inclusion. I find this hopeful. Bill W. built a network of hope out of the truth of his own brokenness. He knew the devastation of alcoholism personally. He discovered a way to manage the disease through recognizing his own powerlessness, turning his will and his life over to the care of God, claiming his defects of character and seeking ways to repair relationships. He did it with the support of fellow alcoholics. Once he experienced the freedom of recovery, he brought his spiritual message of hope to others. His hope, truth and values are celebrated in local meeting rooms all over the world. Some things are bigger than our individual lives.

Anniversaries can give me a shot of hope. I look back to see from where we have come, amazed at how we got here. Fifty years ago, we landed on the moon. Less than ten years earlier, John Kennedy's goal seemed like a fantasy. Yet on July 20, 1969, two people stepped onto the surface of the moon, changing forever our relationship with outer space.

Thirty years ago, the Berlin Wall came tumbling down, freeing families to reunite and re-form a united Germany where all could participate in the promise of prosperity. I could not have imagined that such a radical change would happen in my lifetime. It did. When outlandish dreams become reality, I am filled with hope.

Thich Nhat Hanh says, "Hope is important because it can make the present moment less difficult to bear. If we believe that tomorrow will be better, we can bear a hardship today."

These spurts of hope give us the courage to change the present and to believe in the future. When I see what can be done, I can turn my passion to what may not be impossible after all.

What gives you hope as we move into 2020? Hope expands in community. We imagine more fiercely when we imagine together. We dream more spaciously arm in arm.

Happy Hope-filled New Year!

Mary Lou Logsdon, is a Spiritual Director and retreat leader in the Twin Cities. She can be reached at logsdon.marylou@gmail.com.