

Staying with Sobriety



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE CENTER

Spring 2005

April is Alcohol Awareness Month

The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency (NCADD) has selected this year's theme to be "Together we can stop underage drinking". There is a nationwide push to spread the message of communicating and educating Americans about the treatable and preventable disease of alcoholism.

The first weekend of April is designated to encourage all Americans to refrain from alcohol and raise public awareness about the use of alcohol and how it may be affecting individuals and families. Loma Linda University Behavioral Medicine Center joins the efforts of NCADD of this awareness and hope you and your loved ones will continue to support one another and educate our communities of the addiction. ■

We would like to hear from you! Please let us know what topics interest you for future articles.

When Losses Are Gains in Recovery Thinking, Feeling, and Acting

When becoming seriously involved in recovery from addiction, we have a strong tendency to remain focused on gains/results that are immediate. We desire increased insight and changed behavior. We want to embrace our feelings and improve our relationship with self and others.



During recovery, the focus needs to be partly but firmly guided on the necessary losses required to achieve gains. In addition, we need to maintain a quality recovery that results in serenity and peace of mind.

The following are a few examples of losses that are

required for true gains to be made in one's personal recovery:

1. The loss of interest in criticizing, judging, and degrading OTHERS.

It appears that we have been thoroughly trained to do just that! Since the position of judge has been taken permanently a long time

our job to fully accept ourselves for who we are, namely human beings, only able to learn by making mistakes. It is our job to change our behavior (our thinking, feeling, and acting) more than our "person".

3. The loss of interest in conflict.

We say that we are seeking solutions, but we become aware in our honest moments that we are highly interested in the drama of conflicts in the relationships with ourselves and others.

4. The loss of interest in interpreting the behaviors and actions of others.

We need to stop trying to make sense out of other people's behaviors (no matter how crazy or seemingly sane). Instead we would do well to focus and interpret our own behaviors, namely how we think, how we feel, and how we act.

These four losses, it appears, are prerequisites for genuine GAINS in personal recovery. ■

*Written by
Gunter Reiss, Dr. Ph, MFT*

ago, we would do well to lose interest on placing judgment and rather learn to accept others as they are.

2. The loss of interest in criticizing, and degrading OURSELVES.

We have done this for decades. Instead of judging and criticizing ourselves, it is

For more information call 909-558-9224.

The Source

The following sources will assist with any questions or concerns regarding sobriety.

Web Sites:

LLUBMC
www.llubmc.com

Recovering
Alumni Association
www.bmcraa.org

Alcoholics Anonymous
www.alcoholics-anonymous.org

Narcotics Anonymous
www.na.org

Southern California
Narcotics Anonymous
www.todayna.org

AA Newsletter
www.aagrapevine.org

Publication:

Title:
It Will Never Happen to Me
Author: Dr. Claudia Black
Review by: Sue J.

This is an informative book about what it is like growing up in an alcohol or drug addicted family. The book describes the family drama that is experienced when parents abuse alcohol or drugs and the long lasting effects that carry on into adulthood. The author identifies four common roles children of adult alcoholics take on. This is an insightful, validating, and informative book is not just for the adult children of alcoholic parents, but also for the general population to understand the phenomena that happens in alcoholic families. ■

FAQ

Common questions of those in recovery.

Q *What are some easy steps to help minimize conflict?*

A Some helpful tips include:

- Try to keep the conversation short. Respond to conflict in short sentences. Find common ground.
- Paraphrase what is being said to you. That way you demonstrate that you were listening as well as acknowledging the other person's feelings.
- Use "I feel" statements, such as "I feel angry when you call me names" rather than "You make me feel..." etc.
- Discipline yourself to slow down. Stop, think, and speak slowly rather than

going a mile a minute. Respond don't react.

- Avoid generalizations. Try to be as specific as possible. Instead of saying "you are always rude", describe what just happened by saying, "I feel irritated when you interrupt me."
- Give the other person the benefit of the doubt. If you're not sure what someone means, ask them.

Q *Are there some tips to help break some of the bad habits that may lead to conflict?*

A Ways to break some of the bad habits include:

- Don't interrupt someone's conversation.
- Don't answer for others.
- Don't assume the worst. Not everything is about us.
- Don't answer the phone during an emotional discussion.
- Don't act like a stone wall when someone asks for a response – give some feedback.
- Don't play "psychologist" with statements like, "I have figured out what your real problem is."
- Don't use loaded absolute terms such as "never" and "always" ■

Written by Elaine Coyazo

CSAM Legislative Day III A Smashing Success!

February 2, 2005 was Legislative Day III, where 135 physicians and health care professionals assailed California state legislature to press for better addiction treatment. The event attracted a press conference further aiding addiction issues back to the forefront of Sacramento discussion. Several talks focused on the stunning success and appeal to expand Prop 36 that California is now seeing the fruits from the initiative passed into law in 2000. The initiative provides community-based substance abuse treatment programs for non-violent defendants, probationers, and parolees charged with simple drug possession or drug use offenses.



Challenging our terminator Governor to terminate drug and alcohol dependency in California, a variety of other issues were discussed including the reform of managed care reimbursement, education for expansion of the needle sales/exchange laws, and our voice against combining the Department of Substance Abuse Programs with the Department of Mental Health

Programs. Generally, our points were well received; but, it was clear that our policy makers need more education to fully understand the magnitude of the issues at hand.

We will be back next year on Legislative Day to once again bring addiction treatment issues to the forefront of our legislators minds. Think about joining us then. You will have fun, contribute to the lives of millions of Californians, and enjoy an experience that you will always remember.

*Written by
Donald J. Kurth, MD
Chief of Addiction Medicine,
LLUBMC
President, California Society
of Addiction Medicine*

For more information call 909-558-9224.

Chemical Dependency Graduation

Celebrating Your Success!

One of the most satisfying experiences for our staff is looking at the audience filled with our former patients and their loved ones during graduation. Approximately 170 individuals completed treatment last year, and were invited to celebrate during a commencement ceremony on Sunday, February 27 in the Loma Linda University Behavioral Medicine Center Gym. The evening was packed with activities including a pre-event BBQ hosted by our Recovery Alumni Association. The events continued with devotion, amusing skits of the trials and tribulations of treatment and recovery, presentations given by family members, graduates, and our Medical Director, and of course, presentation of certificates and coins. We are pleased to highlight these individuals and their courageous families for their work, dedication, and success in recovery. ■

On February 16, the Redlands Drug Court honored the BMC for support of the Drug Court program.



Judge Brian Saunders, Treatment Court Judge; Art Earll, Director of CD program at LLUBMC; Susanne Pastuschek, Probation Officer, Redlands Drug Court

At a Glance

April

Hemet's 15th Annual Women's AA Banquet

Saturday, April 16, 2005

Anchor Restaurant, 41024 E. Florida Ave., Hemet

Doors open at 5:00 p.m., dinner at 6:00 p.m., meeting at 7:00 p.m.

For more information, call Gina at 951-306-2664.

RAA Roller Skating Party

Sunday, April 17, 2005

California Skate, 22080 Commerce Way, Colton

Come show off your skating moves or just join in the fellowship!

For more information, call Darlene H. at 909-393-6681.

13th Annual Inland Empire A.A. Roundup 2005

Sunday, April 23, 2005

3891 Ridge Road, Riverside

Six workshops, lunch, dinner, and open speaker meeting for \$5.

Please call Rick J. at 951-360-9421 between 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

May

21st Annual Tri-State Round-up

Friday – Sunday

May 20-22, 2005

Riverside Resort Hotel and Casino Laughlin, Nevada

Includes ice cream social, banquet, speaker, meetings, dance,

golf tournament, fishing derby, and bowling tourney. For

information call Leslie S. 928-392-9744 or Debbie A.

928-681-2217 or visit www.tristate-roundup.com.

RAA Men's Retreat

Friday – Sunday, May 13-15, 2005

Wrightwood, CA, Methodist Camp

A weekend of fresh air, beautiful surroundings, and fellowship.

For more information, please call Darlene H. at 909-393-6681.

RAA Volleyball, Softball, and Picnic

Sunday, May 22, 2005

Brookside Park, Redlands

Spring is here! Gather your bat, ball, and glove and we will see

you on the field! For more information, please call Darlene H.

at 909-393-6681.

June

Board of Director's Elections at Alumni Meeting

Thursday, June 2, 2005

LLUBMC Cafeteria

Cast your votes for the upcoming RAA Board of Directors.

For more information, please call Darlene at 909-393-6681.

Installation Dinner and Ho-down

Sunday, June 12, 2005, 1:00 pm

LLUBMC Gymnasium

Come kick up your heels! Event is open to all Alumni. For more

information, please call Darlene H. at 909-393-6681.

Volleyball Tournament

Sunday, June 26, 2005

LLUBMC Gymnasium

Amateurs and professionals are welcome! For more information,

please call Darlene H. at 909-393-6681.

For more information call 909-558-9224.

Recovery Alumni Association

It is difficult to keep up with all the wonderful activities carried out by our Recovery Alumni Association (RAA). We are incredibly grateful for the tireless efforts and the dedication of the board members that keep the Association going! The countless activities and continued fellowship prove they not only touch our hearts, but yours also! Here are a few of their latest highlights:

December

Taking advantage of the season, they read *A Christmas Carol* as a group during their weekly Alumni meeting. Wanting to further spread the joy of the season, they headed off to a local senior citizen home and sang Christmas carols to the patients. The Alumni also made gift baskets for the families in treatment and gave gift cards to the children.

January

With a fresh new calendar for the year, the activities committee met at one of the member's home for a potluck

and planned this year's events. They have already scheduled at least one outside activity per month through July in addition to their weekly Thursday night Alumni meetings. Keep your schedule open.

February

February 20th brought a bowling tournament to Empire Bowl in Redlands. The lanes were filled with approximately 30 bowlers and a handful of spectators. Some friendly competition came about with the three games that were played and the trophies that were awarded.

RAA meets every Thursday night at 6:00 p.m. in the cafeteria at the LLUBMC. All meetings and activities are for the entire family.



Defending God

"I hate God!" Danny was angry and continued. "Every time something good is about to happen to me, He ruins it—this has happened to me time and time again—why doesn't He just leave me alone!"

The members of the Chemical Dependency group listened, concerned—some agreeing, while others wanted to defend God.

Danny is raising the age old question—is God big enough to handle these types of feelings, and furthermore, does God need defending?

After all, Danny's cry for help reverberates with every sufferer—why indeed do terrible things happen—some on a huge scale such as the tsunamis in Asia, while others on a more personal level?

Danny's expression softened as he felt accepted and connected to his peers. Yes, it is indeed okay to ask these types of questions. We may not answer theological questions, but the power of His presence just might be enough!

*D. Leigh Aveling, DMin, MFT
Chaplain*



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Chemical Dependency Services
1710 Barton Road
Redlands, California 92373



**LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE CENTER**

Please write to the address below if you wish to have your name removed from the list to receive announcements or notices introducing new services, health educational programs and events, or products of Loma Linda University Behavioral Medicine Center. All reasonable efforts will be taken to ensure that your request is honored.

Promotional Services
c/o Access Center
245 East Redlands Blvd. Suite A
San Bernardino, CA 92408

For more information call 909-558-9224.