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## On Finding Forgiveness

by Mary Lous Logsdon

“When you forgive, you in no way change the past - but you sure do change the future.” Bernard Meltzer

Why is it so hard to forgive? We can carry our hurts and injuries like precious gems in a velvet pouch, admiring their many facets, their high cost, how they refract the light of what once was. We recall their origins, their rarity, how durable they are. How could I ever manage without them? Who would I be?

Over time these gems take on a life of their own. As we protect them, they grow in power and value. We share them with friends—let me tell you about how I got this one... the callous parent, the unfaithful lover, the costly divorce. The stories expand, the fury endures.

Forgive? How can I forgive the unforgivable?

This bag of gems holds within it my identity. If I let go of my story, my rage, my entitlement how can I continue to carry the mantle of victim? What if no one sympathizes with me, then what?

The truth is, forgiving is not condoning or approving or agreeing with bad behavior. It is accepting what is. It is reclaiming my story. It is learning from the past and moving on.

Forgiveness is not letting someone else go free, it is letting me go free. It is the key to the cage I keep myself in—the “if only” cage, the “poor me” cage; the “I had no choice” cage. How long do I want to be locked in these cages?

Forgiving another doesn’t mean I accept the behavior—it means I release myself from its grip. Desmond Tutu describes forgiveness like this, “a room can be dank because you have closed the windows, you’ve closed the curtains. But the sun is shining outside, and the air is fresh outside. In order to get that fresh air, you have to get up and open the window and draw the curtains apart.”

Forgiveness is not easy. It is a process that takes time. I need to attend to my wound and give it time to heal. If I attempt to forgive too quickly my unhealed resentments leak out—I explode with indignation at a slight bruise, I wield my knife of sarcasm to even the score, I slip into my pot of self-pity. Not ready yet!

The process of forgiveness follows a few basic steps. The first thing I have to do is be with my feelings, the ones under the initial anger. It is often hurt I feel but it might be loss or abandonment or neglect or rejection or humiliation or .... I sift through my feelings noticing which increase my heart rate, bring up a sweat, tighten my gut. Then I sit with those feelings to really feel them. I must admit, this is very hard for me to do. I am much better at thinking them, justifying them or denying them—not so much feeling them. This is a necessary step. If I don’t feel them I cannot release them. Sometimes I sit down with my journal and write it all out, describing in detail how this feels—why I am hurt, how badly I was treated, how unfair it was. I write big. I write fast. I write for me. I may even write a letter to the offender that I later destroy. Or I may write a letter of apology to me, from the offender—the

one I wish the person would write.

It is tempting to think I cannot forgive unless the other person apologizes. That may never happen. Then what do I do? Why should my freedom be dependent upon their self awareness, acceptance of responsibility, acknowledgement? Sally Kempton, author of *Meditation for the Love of It*, says forgiveness “is something you do for yourself, for the sake of your own inner freedom. You forgive so that you can live in the present instead of being stuck in the past. You forgive because your grievances and grudges—even more than hopes and attachments and fears—tie you to old patterns, old identities, and especially to old stories.”

Second, I spend time looking at how this injury is connected with my personal story. Was I vulnerable to this hurt? Does this person fit a pattern for me whereby I am susceptible to this kind of treatment? Has this happened before or after? This is my soul-searching time. If this injury happened to me as an adult, can I be more aware of my triggers, my boundaries, my

strengths? If this happened to me as a child, how has this injury been repeated over my lifetime? What coping skills have I used and are they still effective? Am I ready to retire them? This work in no way excuses the behavior but it does help me understand how it fits into my life.

Third, I decide to forgive. I may need to work with a therapist, a spiritual director or a good friend to get here. I decide to forgive because I refuse to carry a burden that belongs to someone else.

Finally, I ritualize the letting go. Perhaps I take my writing to a sacred place, read it aloud and then destroy it. Or I might treat myself to something that symbolizes a new beginning—a beautiful journal, a new hair style, a weekend away.

This forgiveness process does not require reconciliation. It may happen sometime in the future—but my forgiving neither requires an amends from the other nor absolves them from making an amends.

How do I know that I have really forgiven? Clarissa Pinkola Estes says, “You tend to feel sorrow over the circumstance instead of rage, you tend to feel sorry for the person rather than angry with him. You tend to have nothing left to say about it all.”

All major religious traditions carry a message of forgiveness. It is essential for a community of people to be able to forgive. Festering wounds too easily erupt into violence. We see evidence in our daily news whether it be neighbor against neighbor or explosions at nations’ borders. Unaddressed hurts, cultural transgressions, dangerous assumptions feed wounds that grow into generational stories of great magnitude. Forgiveness is an act of peace. Our simple acts of forgiveness heal the world and build an awareness of our interconnectedness.

That velvet pouch can be relegated to the dresser drawer that holds artifacts. Years from now, as I rediscover it, what I’ll remember is the sense of freedom I felt when I laid them aside. Who knows, maybe those stones once thought of as gems will have turned into dust, their energy dissipated. Unto dust we all return.

Mary Lou Logsdon provides spiritual direction and leads retreats in the Twin Cities. She also teaches in the Sacred Ground Spiritual Direction Formation Program. Ms. Logsdon can be reached at logsdon.marylou@gmail.com

Forgiveness is not letting someone else go free, it is letting me go free..





## Staying Sharp: Q&A with Doctors Henry Emmons & David Alter

By Women in  
Recovery

In their new book *Staying Sharp*, doctors Henry Emmons and David Alter have combined the latest neuroscience research with age-old wisdom about resilience, mindfulness, and stress reduction to show that vibrant aging is within reach. Together they demonstrate how to blend the best of modern science and Eastern holistic medicine to form a powerful drug-free program that will maintain a youthful mind and a happy life.



Dr. Henry Emmons



Dr. David Alter

We posed some questions to the doctors on how to live more joyfully, age more gracefully, and build intimacy in our relationships, no matter what our age.

*Q. What happens to our brains when we multi-task? How do we get to the middle when we have either too much information or there is so little?*

A. (Emmons and Alter): Excellent question! The short answer is that multi-tasking leads to mental inefficiency, more rapid mental fatigue, and forgetfulness. The reality is that our brains can't truly multi-task. The best way to get to what we call "the middle way" is to practice three things:

- Learn to focus attention through mindfulness practices that may also include meditation.
- Since we live in a world with 24-7 stimulation, it is important to actively practice discernment. This means selecting those things that are worthy of our precious attention while simultaneously learning to suppress the influence of constant but relatively unimportant distractions, each of which is seeking to seduce our attention.
- Actively seek to stimulate our mind's appetite for curiosity, connection and solitude. Curiosity and connection may be more obvious as they directly train us to be focused and engaged. Solitude, on the other hand, trains us to be at peace and content with ourselves. In turn, solitude practices help reduce our craving for constant stimulation, helping us learn to be present, aware and connected to whatever it is toward which we direct our focus.

*Q. Can you elaborate on Mindfulness? Be-*

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## The Next Step — Rediscovering the Whole Person

by Eleanor Ann Leonard

The landscape for alcohol and substance abuse recovery has been dominated for 80 years by Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and its guiding principles The Twelve Steps which became the gold standard for recovery. While the program is credited with helping millions of people around the world, the gold is losing some of its luster.

The National Academy of Sciences in a 1990 report to Congress noted AA's "lack of well-designed and well-executed studies that can be cited to support or negate the validity" of its claim to be "the most successful treatment for persons with alcohol problems." To date, that scientific data remains elusive.

AA's critics within the recovery world itself say it is outdated, sexist and too religious for a significant portion of today's population that values personal empowerment, choice and secularism. Spiritual teachers, therapists and counselors while encouraging us to move beyond self-criticism and inner defeatist dialogue remind us, as Dr. Wayne Dyer noted, "The state of your life is nothing more than a reflection of your state of mind." Yet 12-step models insist that participants, even those who have been clean for many years, continue to self-label, "I am an alcoholic/addict."

For decades, the animal and human phases of clinical drug trials had been conducted primarily on males; those outcomes informed dosage recommendations. When 2013 research findings revealed that women respond differently than men to many drugs including simple aspirin, even the FDA was forced to rethink the "one-size-fits-all" approach to health treatments. Results showed that in many instances women metabolized a drug at half the rate of their male counterparts. Consequently, women have likely



been experiencing higher incidences of severe side effects. Evidence now shows that not only gender, but ethnicity, age, weight, blood type, environment and personal history are all factors in determining individual responses.

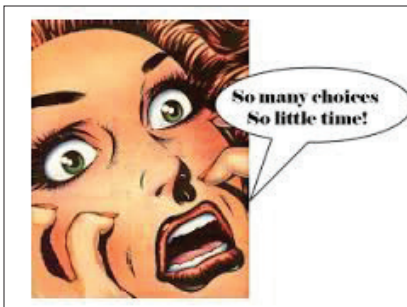
Recovery, too, is personal. Experiences and traumas that lead to addiction in the first place are different for each person. To maximize an individual's recovery journey, the tools and the path itself need to reflect this diversity. Simply put, no single program, no matter how successful it is with some or even a majority of its clients, can be expected to be equally effective for everyone. This is an important point to bear in mind when seeking a treatment program.

AA and its 12-step support groups are not going away any

time soon. They will continue to be available and in some locales may be the only option. AA is not a residential or outpatient recovery program; it is peer-to-peer support in small gatherings which people can attend as often as they want depending on the availability of meetings in their community. For many, AA will remain the program of choice and they will benefit from it.

But for those who do want an alternative, what is available? Fortunately, recovery has evolved toward a more conscious and calculated approach that serves the individual. Whether a peer support group, intensive outpatient or residential treatment program, many still incorporate the 12 steps but as one component of a larger and more inclusive recovery curriculum. The emphasis is on an "individualized treatment plan" that recognizes the intrinsic wisdom, strength and ability of an in-

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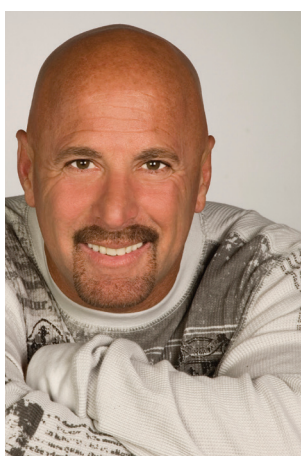
## Sometimes, Ya Just Gotta Laugh

*I've come to the conclusion that God put me on this planet to make people in sobriety and recovery laugh. This is the story of my journey to sobriety/recovery.*

by Bob Perkell

I was the attention-starved middle child of a typical middle-class family. Dad was in sales so we moved a lot. I learned how to make friends quickly by being the class clown.

As an adult, I started using drugs so I could drink more. I never thought I had a problem. My Dad, having been an alcohol-



ic, was in the program later in life. I remember my dad taking a five-year cake and I walked into his AA meeting all methed out with his cake. Everyone's looking at me, and I'm like, "What's wrong with you people?! I'm just trying to give my dad a cake!"

The business I chose was stand-up comedy; alcohol and drugs were occupational hazards. I rationalized my drinking by being an entertainer. The crazier my life got, the funnier my stand-up became. I

had an opportunity to go on the road for six months with another comedian who drank and used. We called it the "Where Do You Go To Give Up Tour." It was a non-stop party.

I was dating a dope dealer who would FedEx me drugs and stolen clothes. Back then my mindset was: I'll make it big and pay everyone back. But by the end of the trip, nothing was funny anymore. I was so delusional that I thought some producer would call to tell me that my sitcom was ready because I survived six months on the road, when in fact, I had completely fallen off the planet.

My first bottom came while living in La Habra with two dancers. The second

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# Calendar

## Upcoming

**Saturday, September 10**

**NuWay House Annual Picnic, 3-6pm,** 2118 Blaisdell Ave. S., Mpls. *Celebrating 50 years in the Heart of the Recovery Community!* Fun, food, music, prizes! Call 651-964-3680 for more information.



**The Annual Walk for Recovery, Sept. 17,** is a National Recovery Month event to express gratitude, convey hope, and to celebrate all in recovery and those who help recovery happen! Bring your family and friends—wheelchairs, strollers, and even the family dog! There is no registration fee to participate in the Walk for Recovery... start a Walk Team, join a Walk Team or walk as an individual. You can fundraise for the Walk as a team member or as an individual. Funds that you or your Walk Team raise will help MRC to continue our mission to strengthen the recovery community through peer-to-peer support, public education, and advocacy. Fundraising is encouraged, but not required.

Check-in/Onsite Registration: 9am.  
Walk 10:30am; Celebration 11:30am.-1pm. DJ! Food Trucks! Photo Booth! Activities for the kids!

For more information, to register for the Walk or create your Walk Team, please visit: [walk.minnesotarecovery.org](http://walk.minnesotarecovery.org)

## Don Shelby

Sept 16, 6pm at the Coyote Moon Restaurant aka Territory Golf Club. \$30 per person. Renowned news anchor, actor and public speaker Don Shelby will speak on alcoholism and addiction at the Coyote Moon Restaurant. Tickets are available at the St. Cloud Alano Club office or from an Alano Club Board member. Tickets are sure to sell out quickly. For more information call the Alano Club at 320-251-9876.

## September 28, 7 pm

**The Retreat's Women in Recovery** will host Dr Henry Emmons and Dr. David Alter for a discussion and book signing in Wayzata, MN. Visit [www.theretreat.org/women-in-recovery](http://www.theretreat.org/women-in-recovery), email us at [WIR@theretreat.org](mailto:WIR@theretreat.org), or call The Retreat at 952-476-0566 for more information.

## Fairs & Festivals

**Renaissance Festival - now through Oct 2:** Get thee to the Ren Fest, the largest in the nation, where you can watch a joust, gnaw on turkey legs, browse wares, try fencing and be wowed by three stages of troubadours, magicians and dangerous juggling acts. Shakopee; [renaissancefest.com](http://renaissancefest.com).

## Ongoing

**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. The meetings are an opportunity for social support focusing on the hope and healing found in recovery and to connect with others who are initiating and maintaining a recovery lifestyle.

Come, socialize, share - friends and family members welcome. Call 612-584-4158 for more info or go to <https://minnesotarecovery.org/upcoming-events/category/all-recovery-meetings/month/>

## Women's 12-Step Program

Wednesdays at 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. The chaos can be caused by addiction, eating disorders, relationship problems or self esteem issues. We use, *A Woman's Way through the Twelve Steps* by Stephanie S. Covington, Ph.D. Though this process, "we explore how the Steps help us overcome addictions and work to heal ourselves, creating the possibility of a new and different life." Peace Presbyterian Church has a community dinner at 6pm on Wednesdays and we provide free supervised childcare for 12-Step participants. Reclamation-Ministries.org or call 612-879-9642.

**The Dan Anderson Renewal Center, Hazelden, Center City, MN.** 12-Step-inspired weekend retreats focus on common issues faced in recovery: forgiveness, spirituality, healthy relationships, grief, and loss.

Sept 23 - Sept 25; Charting your Recovery Course: An Equine Retreat

Sept 30 - Oct 2; The Healing Power of Twelve Step Principles

Oct 7 - Oct 9; We Will Live Intuitively

Oct 13 - Oct 16; Silkworth Alumni Reunion

Oct 21 - Oct 23; Making Friends with Your Inner Critic

Oct 28 - Oct 30; Drop the Rock: The Ripple Effect of "Doing the Things We Can" Call 1-800-262-4882 for more info.

## Hazelden's Second Sunday Retreats

The second Sunday of each month everyone in recovery is invited to Hazelden in Center City, MN for an inspirational day of workshops, fellowship, sharing and fun. Open to anyone 18 or older involved in a 12-Step program. \$20/person includes a buffet lunch and information packet.

9 a.m. - Register at the Cork Center

9 a.m. - Introductions and orientation

10-11 a.m. - Lecture

10:30 -12:45 - Small group discussions

12:45 - 1:30 p.m. - Sunday buffet

1:45 p.m. - Small group discussions or Meditation group

2:55 p.m. - Relaxation group

800-257-7810; Plymouth alum welcome.

**Pancake Breakfast:** 3rd Sunday of each month, 10am-12:30pm; The Recovery Church, 253 State Street, St. Paul, MN, [www.therecoverychurch.org](http://www.therecoverychurch.org). Pancakes, sausage, juice and coffee (free refills on pancakes and coffee). \$5 per person/10 and under \$2.50 at the door (No one turned away due to lack of funds!)

**The Recovery Church** offers worship services Sun. at 9 & 11am., 253 State St., St. Paul, 55107. Fellowship between services. Devoted to expanding spirituality & the 12-Step experience. All invited. 651-291-1371 or [www.therecoverychurch.org](http://www.therecoverychurch.org).

To place a listing, email [phoenix@thephoenixspirit.com](mailto:phoenix@thephoenixspirit.com) or call 612-805-1959.

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RETREAT COMMUNITY



# Slogans

by Karen Gasgell

## YOU'RE LOOKING AT THE PROBLEM

(To be placed on mirror)

There's no doubt in my mind that the numerous slogans I've heard repeatedly over the years in the rooms of A.A. have impacted my psyche one degree to another. Perhaps the most familiar commonsense catchphrase "One day at a Time" has definitely helped carry me through countless rough and tumble days in my sobriety.

The famous A.A. saying "First things First" has often come in handy as a gentle reminder to slow down when I've felt overwhelmed by a bombardment of thoughts rushing into my head too quickly.

The frequently heard tried and true line "Easy does It" has rarely if ever failed to have a calming impact on nerves.

I know when my mind starts focusing only on the negative and everything seems to be all about me the poor victim, the short but to the point "stinking thinking" often works to jolt my brain back into a more reasonable and objective state.

Still the one slogan that seems to have had the greatest impact and been the most life changing for me I heard while sitting in a small A.A. discussion group several years ago. One of the members was talking about how a "poor me" mentality can threaten our sobriety. He suggested sticking a "post-it" note on our mirror that reads "You're Looking at the Problem."

To admit to myself in a mirror that I am "looking at the problem," I instantly become aware of my role in a given situation. As a result my tendency to fall into the victim role dissipates. I am admitting that I am responsible for my contribution to each one of my encounters and their outcomes regardless of how wronged I may feel. It is a very empowering slogan because it has taught that with something as simple as a smile or a deep breath that allows me to think before I act, I can change the outcome of a situation and potentially change my life.

The slogan "You're Looking at the Problem" is a quick, foolproof and slightly humorous reminder that I create my own destiny. Whenever I share the quote it never fails to bring about a few chuckles and smiles. Humor aside, the sentence has been one enormously beneficial to my continued sobriety to remind myself that when all is said and done I am ultimately responsible for both my own joy and pain.

# Ya Gotta Laugh... from page 1

dancer moved out and now three months behind on rent, I hit my knees, looked up at the ceiling with tears in my eyes, and asked God for help. I'd never prayed before in my life. I made some phone calls and started going to meetings.

I moved to the San Fernando Valley and got humble working construction and community service for my two DUIs. A friend asked me if I wanted to do a show at a treatment center. It was there that I got my first standing ovation. And even though I was going to a lot of meetings, I would show up late, leave early, and had a fake sponsor. I had no foundation.

I held it together this way for three years. Then this adult film actress started pursuing me and convinced me to move in with her. She was taking me to expensive dinners, penthouse suites and skydiving. It turned out she was a heroin addict. With no recovery and no foundation in me, I was like, "Sure, let's try that."

Eight months later, I'm in the hospital critical care unit for a drug-induced heart attack. I had started getting hooked on it and didn't even realize it. I thought I was having anxiety attacks. My using progressed and got worse, and I knew I needed to get out of the relationship.

I moved to Orange County and got humble. I became willing, got a spon-

sor, took some direction, and went to four meetings a day and worked my steps. I kept going back to LA trying to save my ex. I would get chunks of recovery time, then relapse every time I saw her. Someone finally called me out on it. I called and told her that I couldn't see her anymore; that I had to work on myself. That was on my clean date of May 3, 2001.

There is nothing I miss about that lifestyle. I love my life today. I'm married to an amazing woman and we have a two-year-old daughter, and I get to tour the world sharing the gift of laughter to everyone in recovery.

I've been a comedian for 26 years, but only remember the last 15. I've come to the conclusion that God put me on this planet to make people in sobriety and recovery laugh.

There is no bigger gift than having a newcomer come up to me after the show and say, "Dude, my cheeks hurt. I haven't laughed like that since I got clean and sober." And I reply, "See, you don't have to be hammered to laugh your ass off and have a great time."

To book Bob Perkell for a clean and sober event, contact him at (714) 381-3972 or [www.bobperkell.com](http://www.bobperkell.com)

## Classified ads

### sober housing



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recovery, renewal, and personal  
growth to help people experience  
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## Support Groups

### MONDAYS

**Mindfulness and the 12 Steps** at Clouds In Water Zen Center, St. Paul. Near University and Western – 445 Farrington Street, St. Paul, MN 55103. Mondays, 7-8:15pm. Meditation and one step/month. Ongoing. Open to all.

**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

**Understanding Eating Disorders, Treatment, and Recovery:** Second Monday of each month, 6-8:30 p.m. 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](http://www.emilyprogram.com) or call 651.645.5323.

**Eating Disorders Anonymous:** second and fourth Monday of every month, 6:7:30pm in Little Falls at St Gabriel Hospital in the Rose Room, 3rd. St. entrance. JoAnn at 320.232.9576, or [edalittlefalls@hotmail.com](mailto:edalittlefalls@hotmail.com)

**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](mailto:ffosmn@yahoo.com) or call Tracy @ 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.daminnnesota.org](http://www.daminnnesota.org) 952-953-8438. Monday, 7-8:30 p.m., St. Mary’s Greek Orthodox Church, 3450 Irving Ave. S., Mpls, 55408. (from the south parking lot use the door next to the flag)

**Bloomington Codependents Anonymous:** 7p.m., men & women at Unity South Church, corner of 1st Ave. and American Blvd. For more info go to: <http://www.unitysouth.org/calendar.aspx> or call 952.469.3303

**Support group for married and divorced fathers.** Parenting, partnering, and anger management issues. Mondays, 7 to 9 p.m. in Hopkins. Call Kip 763.783.4938.

**Nicotine Anonymous:** 7-8pm, 1655 Beam Ave. Maplewood. Maplewood Professional Bldg. St Johns Watson Education Center, 2nd Floor, #20, Room 4. 952.404.1488 or 800.234.81MN.

**Eating Disorders Anonymous:** St. Paul, MN, Mondays @ 6:45:7:30 PM at Hamline Midway Library, 1558 W. Minnehaha Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104. Venita Johnson 612.964.2387 or [eda.diverse@gmail.com](mailto:eda.diverse@gmail.com) for more information.

### TUESDAYS

**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.daminnnesota.org](http://www.daminnnesota.org) 952-953-8438. Tues, 7-8 p.m., Dayton Ave. Presbyterian Church, 217 Mackubin St., St. Paul, 55102. (1 block n. of Selby and 2 blocks e. of Dale. Meets in the parlor.

**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. Columbia Church/School, 1330 Blair Ave., St. Paul, 55104. Sherry for more info at 651-644-8682.

**Overeaters Anonymous Roseville:** Meetings are held from 9:45 – 10:45 a.m. 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 p.m., Dakota Alano House, 3920 Rahn Rd, Eagan (Hwy 13 & Cedarvale Shop Ctr). 651.452.2921.[www.dasinc.org/](http://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.

**Get a Fresh Start!** 12-Step AA group, open meeting Tues., 7pm, at Kingswill Church, 1264 109th Ave NE, Blaine. Denny, 763.757.6512.

**Eating Disorders Anonymous:** 6:30-7:30pm, Zimmerman Evangelical Church, 25620 4th St. W, Zimmerman, 55398. Jodi A.: 763.244.6803 or [eda.zimmerman@gmail.com](mailto:eda.zimmerman@gmail.com) for more info.

### WEDNESDAYS

**Women’s 12-Step Program**  
**Wednesdays at 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. The chaos can be caused by addiction, eating disorders, relationship problems or self esteem issues. We use, A Woman’s Way through the Twelve Steps by Stephanie S. Covington, Ph.D. Though this process, “we explore how the Steps help us overcome addictions and work to heal ourselves, creating the possibility of a new and different life.” Peace Presbyterian Church has a community dinner at 6pm on Wednesdays and we provide free supervised childcare for 12-Step participants.**

**Reclamation-Ministries.org**  
**612-879-9642**

**Eating Disorders Family & Friends Support Group:** Open to the public, 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month, 5:45 p.m. – 7:15 p.m. at The Emily Program, 2265 Como Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108. 8.5

**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 pm. 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:** 7:30:9:30p.m. 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. [tcmc@freenet.msp.mn.us](mailto:tcmc@freenet.msp.mn.us)

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

**Workaholics Anonymous:** for people who are chronically preoccupied with work. Meets every Wedn. 12–1pm in the east bldng at Fairview Riverside Hospital, 2450 Riverside Ave. Mpls. Take elevator inside main hospital entrance to level B, follow signs to east building and dining room E. - 952.985.1368.

**Marijuana Anonymous,** Bloomington, 6-7 pm, 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](mailto:bloomingtonma@hotmail.com)

**AA Meeting:** 6:30 – 8:30pm St. Christopher’s Episcopal Church, 2300 N. Hamline Ave., Roseville. Call 651.639.4246 for more info.

**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](mailto:tcAgnostic@gmail.com)

### THURSDAYS

**Workaholics Anonymous:** 12 step group for finding balance between work, activity and fun. Meets every Thur. 7-8:15 pm. Christ Presbyterian Church, 6901 Normandale Rd. Room 305 - North entrance, enter door on left and up stairwell on your left. Call before attending for any schedule or location updates Jeff 952-465-4928, Liz 612-229-8930, email: [wafindingbalance@gmail.com](mailto:wafindingbalance@gmail.com)

**Downtown women only non-smoking Alanon Step Group.** Noon, 2nd floor First Baptist Church on 10th St. and Harmon Place. Parking and entry in back. Ring office buzzer for entry. Andrea, 612-868-9982.

**Red Book ACA/ACOA:** Recovery Church, 253 State, St. Paul, 7:30-9pm. For more info call Deb @ 651.291.1371 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.

**CoDA Group:** Co-Dependents Anonymous 12-Step Support. 6-7:30pm at Unity North Church, 11499 Martin Street NW., Coon Rapids, MN 55433. SW corner of US Hwy 10 and Hanson Blvd. Call Chris @ 763.438.3583 for more info. Also check [www.coda.org](http://www.coda.org)

**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. 952.922.8374 or [www.ldaminnnesota.org](http://www.ldaminnnesota.org)

**Eating Disorders Family & Friends Support Group:** Open to the public, 2nd and 4th Thursday of each month from 5:45 p.m. – 7:15 p.m. at The Emily Program, 5354 Parkdale Drive, 2nd Floor, St. Louis Park, 55416.

**A.C.A.:** 6:30pm Prince of Peace Lutheran Church 200 Nicollet Blvd #E Burnsville. Step meeting, open to all.

### FRIDAYS

**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

**Eating Disorders Anonymous:** 5:45-6:45pm, Grace University Lutheran Church, 324 Harvard St SE, Mpls on U of M East Bank Campus. Free parking in Lot AA across street. Open. [edaminneapolis@gmail.com](mailto:edaminneapolis@gmail.com), 612.305.8367

**Women’s AA Meeting.** TGIF Meeting. 6:15pm at Epworth United Methodist Church, 3207 37th Ave. S., Mpls. Handicapped accessible. Meeting consists of lesbian, bi, and straight women, many of whom have maintained long term sobriety. Chris A. 612.722.1936.

### SATURDAYS

**Nicotine Anonymous** meeting on Sat. morning, 10am at Linden Hills Congregational Church, 4200 Upton Ave South, Mpla. Enter at the back door. 952-404-1488.

**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; <http://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 [rwink@aol.com](mailto:rwink@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](mailto:Shoreviewcoda@gmail)

**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](http://www.overeaters.org).

**Overeaters Anonymous Courage to Change Meeting:** Saturday mornings 8-9a.m. at St Christopher’s Episcopal Church, 2300 Hamline Ave N. Roseville. Contact Donna with questions at 651.633.3144.

**Clutterer’s 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.net](http://www.clutterersanonymous.net)

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

**Guided Himalayan Meditation:** Step 11: Learn to relax, learn to control your thinking and emotions, improve your sleep, acquire peace, serenity, improve ADD and PTSD. For people in recovery. \$1. New Brighton Alano. 2284, County Rd I, Mounds View. Saturdays, 9:29.10:29. Call Roger @ 763.350.0629

**Overeater’s Anonymous:** 8.9 a.m., Falcon Heights Community Church, 1795 Holton Street, Falcon Hgts. Lisa 651.428.3484.

**Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Support Group:** 1st and 3rd Sat. of the month, 11am -1pm Central Community Center, 6300 Walker St., rm. 215, St. Louis Park, MN. Call Burt at 612.722.1504.

**Choosing Healthy Sexual Boundaries,** Saturdays 10am-noon. Concerns about your sexual behavior? Receiving negative feedback about your sexual choices? Safe, non. confrontational, nonjudgemental place to talk with other men re healthy sexual boundaries. The Men’s Center, 3249 Hennepin Ave. S., Mpls, 612-822-892.

**Adult Children of Alcoholics & Dysfunctional Families:** Saturday, 10a.m., ACA Club Fridley, Moon Plaza, Boardroom in the lower level of Unity Hospital, 550 Osborne Road, Fridley. Please see [www.acaf-ridley.com](http://www.acaf-ridley.com) for additional information.

**Men’s & Women’s Support Group:** Meetings every Saturday (including holidays) at 8:30a.m. 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.



## Mindfulness from page 1

cause many may think it is just meditation. A. Mindfulness overlaps with meditation but they are not synonymous. Meditation is an ancient set of practices developed by many of the world's wisdom or faith traditions as a way of linking together our physical body and our mental awareness with our higher spiritual nature. Today, meditation is not necessarily religiously oriented but science has discovered a multitude of physical and mental/brain benefits that regular meditation practices bring. Meditation involves a practice of focusing attention and awareness in particular directions. For example, there are meditation traditions that train our ability to focus very narrowly for longer periods of time. There are meditations that train our mind to focus on ideas or concepts, such as gratitude, compassion for self and others, or even to meditate on our mortality as a means of becoming more able to be deeply engaged in life.

**M**indfulness meditation refers to a particular form of practice that aims to increase our ability to expand our awareness to the present moment while suspending judgment about what is flowing through each present moment. But, mindfulness (without the capital M) is also a term for paying attention, being aware, learning to observe without being swept away by what we observe, and of being present to what is going on

without judging it. We can be mindful with or without engaging in a meditation practice, just as we can engage in a meditation practice that doesn't focus primarily on mindful awareness as does Mindfulness meditation.



*Q. Optimism has to be increased. Is this more than just projecting gratitude? Can you explain how optimism has to be hardy?*

A. Optimism is one of the three core mental skills we highlight in Staying Sharp. We usually think of optimism as an attitude, but it is ultimately a skill that we can develop. Hardy optimism is not the same as gratitude. But, I will say that people who are optimistic may be more likely to be grateful. Why is that?

A person higher on the optimism spectrum shares two characteristics. First, they recognize that the world is constantly changing, that the future is unpredictable, and that they don't know with any certainty what they might encounter next in their lives. But, instead of being a source of worry or anxiety, optimism leads such people to the second characteristic. They tend to trust that no matter what life brings their way, they have the ability to face it, respond to it, and that the result will be alright, maybe even great. That is why optimism is so dependent upon the skills of curiosity and flexibility to be fully expressed. Curiosity engages you in the

world as it is while flexibility helps you to respond effectively to what you encounter in the world you face. Together, this triad of mental skills helps us survive and thrive in an uncertain world, grateful for the opportunities we encounter and full of hope and faith we can persevere to better times even when what we encounter is challenging.

*Q. Can you elaborate on the phrase "Watch where you put your mind?"*

A. Let's first briefly describe what we mean by mind. Mind ≠ Brain. The brain is a physical structure or organ that floats inside our skulls. It is one part of an immensely interconnected system that enables us to interact with our internal and external world. Mind, on the other hand, is not a physical "thing." It is a quality or a capability. Mind is what allows us to consciously and deliberately select what it is toward which we choose to direct our brain. We direct the brain's abilities toward something using attention. We might say that mind involves directing our brain's attention with intention. The critical point here is that unless we train our brain through our mind to focus our attention with positive intention, our brain can default to a focus that may be unhelpful. We may default to thoughts that breed anxiety, foster unhealthy cravings, feed depression, anger, fear or desperation. Left unchecked, these unregulated thoughts can and do have an impact on our physical bodies. The impact can show up in all manner of stress-mediated conditions such as migraine, irritable bowel syndrome, insomnia, eating disorders, myofascial pain conditions, sexual dysfunction, or any of a wide number of other negative health consequences.



Learning to "watch where we put our mind" is a way of saying that we have the ability to influence our physical health, our emotional health, our general mental health, and ultimately the quality of our long-term life health by fully engaging the built-in connections that exist between our body, our brain and our mind. Our brains and bodies will play whatever music our mind directs them to play. Our message is to employ our mind as the powerful conductor that it is, and choose our life's music wisely.

On September 28, Women in Recovery will host Drs. Emmons and Alter for a discussion and book signing at 7pm at The Retreat. Women in Recovery is sponsored by The Retreat – a community based recovery program grounded in the spiritual principles of Alcoholics Anonymous and located in Wayzata, MN. Visit [www.theretreat.org/women-in-recovery](http://www.theretreat.org/women-in-recovery), email us at [WIR@theretreat.org](mailto:WIR@theretreat.org), or call The Retreat at 952-476-0566 for more information.

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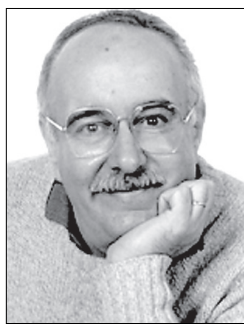


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John Driggs, LICSW

*I never fails. About this time of year every year I start getting a pain in my gut and dread with no clear explanation why. Upon later reflection I realize why. It's because I have to see my family — who are incredibly crazy... and the holidays are coming. I feel guilty thinking this way. Shouldn't I feel grateful for even having a family? Doesn't everybody have to put up with relatives they don't like? Am I not responsible to love them all no matter how they act? After all, my relatives are family. They are the only family I have. So what if my siblings are constantly bragging about their success and children's accomplishments. Do I have to make a big deal about my dad's leering eyes at family dinners or my mom's imbibing a little too much? Everybody knows about my Uncle's temper when someone doesn't laugh at his racial jokes. Shouldn't I be able to put up with these shortcomings for just one day? Actually, the worst part is nobody asking how I am doing and everybody zoning out in front of the TV to watch the big game. And I am no angel either. I do the same myself. Where I feel the pain the most though, is on my children's faces. They sit quietly off to the side and try to make the most of it. I don't know how to talk with them about all this.*

## Do I Really Need to put up with my Crazy Family

*I don't want to badmouth my family to them either.*

### How families makes us crazy

Most of us have a certain level of denial about our families. We may hope that this year it will be different than last year or we don't see the pain our family causes us until it's too late. The most important human need is the need to belong. We all have a certain level of attachment hunger, particularly around the big family occasions. We want so much for things to go well that we tune out how they don't go well. Some of us simply space out or imbibe too much just to not see how bad things really are in our family. Just because we were born into a family doesn't mean that we would automatically choose this group of people to spend time with if they weren't our family. We all have a loyalty to loved ones and that implies a responsibility to others we love and a wish to be loved in return. Family bonds are way more powerful than friendship ties or even love relationships because they go back into our history and tug at our core heartstrings. Essentially family members live inside us whether we want them to or not. When our loved ones go crazy, so do our insides. When we know how they live inside us we will be more in control of how they affect us. Most of us don't know how family members live inside of us and we suffer at family gatherings. On a more positive note, when family gatherings are particularly loving, our insides sing and we become transformed

in a positive way.

To get a handle on how to be around family it's best to notice how we are being affected by loved ones in our body. Body awareness helps us identify our feelings, thinking, and possible remedial behaviors. It's all in our body.

### Why can't they see how nuts they are?

Probably other family members do see how nuts they are and perhaps also think of our behavior as nuts as well. We do the best we know how to do. Also, despite the bonds of family we are each individuals and have had different experiences growing up and perhaps being loved differently by our parents. Who is to say we are right and everybody else is wrong? Clearly there are limits of acceptable behaviors in family. Hurtful behaviors have no place in families. Yet there is a huge spectrum of ways of seeing our family, based largely on what we want to see. It's far better to let differences be differences in family and not expect others to conform to our way of seeing things. We can try to get other kin to see our point of view but it's useless to force our view on other loved ones. Part of being an adult is accepting differences and knowing how to live with them. Our relatives will be less prone to act out if we let them be who they are as we try to be who we are.

Family bonds are way more powerful than friendship ties or even love relationships because they go back into our history and tug at our core heartstrings.

do so. You are not responsible to heal or save your family. The only time you may have to suffer to be around your family is when a loved one is dying and you want to comfort that relative. Other than dying you can and do have the right to set limits with how and for how long you interact with your family. It's best to pay attention to your gut to see when and for how long family interactions are tolerable. When you have reached your limit of tolerance it's best to say goodbye for now and make other plans for your holiday celebration. Your relatives may dislike that you are essentially picking and choosing what parts of family gatherings you attend. But go ahead anyway. You have the right and responsibility to yourself to pick and choose. Generally it's not best to completely cut your family out of your life — a part of you always loves and needs your family no matter how awful they are. You are not required to put up with violence, excess drinking, inappropriate sexual expression or continuing unwanted attention from a family member who has abused you. Allowing yourself to get hurt will never heal things between you and your family. You are also not required to tolerate odious parts of family gatherings for another's sake. It's best to meet separately with relatives who respect you and cordially distance from relatives who do not respect you. It's wise to treat all relatives with respect as this only respects yourself. It's also wise not to hang out with relatives that scare you to death, even when you can't identify why you feel the way you do. Ask a trusted friend or relative if your reactions make sense and then follow those instincts. If you feel you have to toe the line with some relative for some hidden gain it's best to not make deals with

### Do I really have to suffer just to be in my family?

The answer is "Yes" and "No." Being around your family if it is healthy will cause you great joy. Being around dysfunction on your family will likely weigh heavy on your heart. It is not your duty to

to page 9

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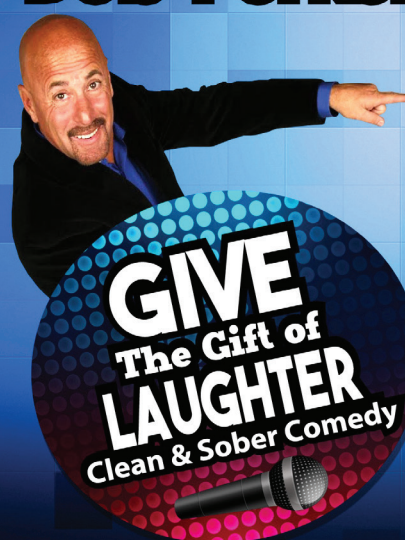
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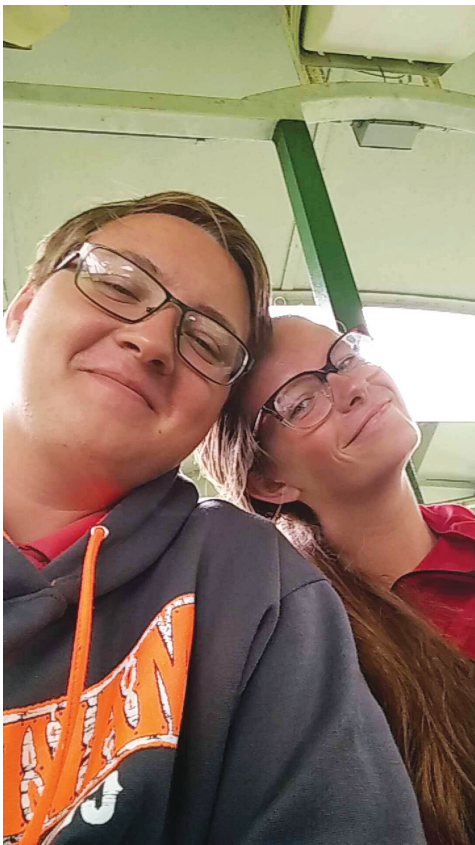


## my crazy family from page 4

the devil, although the choice ought to be yours to make. Some devils we live with because we are too scared to live without them. There is nothing wrong with being too scared and waiting until you get support and get stronger for later assertiveness. Small changes with family are generally the best way to go as it will give you a much needed sense of control.

### What can I expect when I become more adult around my family?

Setting limits with family, paying attention to how we are affected by family, speaking up about our needs and maintaining loving connections to relatives we don't necessarily like can make us more mature and proud of ourselves. If you lessen your overall involvement in family turmoil, holiday gatherings may become more tolerable, at least for you. But make no mistake, rocking the boat often has a price to pay and will not go unnoticed. Generally, the terrible things we think will happen do not happen as relatives may adjust to the new "you." However, like a tsunami wave wheeling up in the ocean, small waves can have big consequences, not all of which are bad. Generally the waves in families dissipate over time or else raise some unanswered question and perhaps result in healthier ties. We are each small potatoes in the bigger scheme of family dynamics and we have less to actually fear in speaking up for ourselves than we imagine. In some fam-



ilies speaking up for ourselves can be initially catastrophic but over time the waves calm down back to normal. The fact of the matter is that we all need each other in our families and we usually find ways to tolerate each other no matter what. One of the best payoff's for speaking up and being ourselves is that it improves our relationships outside our family. We become different people when we speak up and it really shows up

in our public life. Just remember there is always someone else out there who can care for us who isn't a member of our family. Finally, never make changes in how you relate to your family until you have authentic support from some trusted friends, support group or therapist. Never face your family alone.

### Life beyond your family

Yes, there is life beyond your family of origin. When you get a strong support system in your life it can feel like the best thing that ever happened to you, so much so, you can hardly believe it is real. But it is real, often times more real than the family you grew up in.

The real place to work on family is in your life beyond family. You carry your

family inside of you all the time and you will unconsciously relate to others as if you — and they — are in your family. So if your dad was controlling you may expect all men to be controlling and react with a defensive posture towards all men. You may wonder why relationships with men never work out or why men start off being kind but later turn into tyrants with you. This is called "Repetition Compulsion," where we can't stop turning others into old family members or acting like our parents. This negative pattern can be changed if we become consciously aware of how we participate in old family patterns and know how to be open to love with some skills and good judgment. For instance, in this example you may want to go slow in relationships and discern if the person you're with really is controlling or not. If you have ample evidence don't even dream of changing him, just have a friendly goodbye ASAP. Perhaps you need to be open with strong men who actually respect your wishes and can tune into your heart.

Most of us persist in reinventing our families in other people until we have finally learned our lessons. Most of us are too scared to find true love and we'd rather settle for old familiar patterns which hurt us again. Most of us have the darndest times convincing ourselves that we deserve true love. True love freaks most of us out until we can settle down and accept the magic of love. Often in long-term quality relationships, even after years of being together, people have to pinch themselves to believe they deserve what they have with another person is real and will last. True love with a friend or life partner is as good as it gets and is all we'll ever need.

*John H. Driggs, L.I.C.S.W., 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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# What's the Trick to Fulfillment?

By William Schiemann, Ph.D

Are there real tricks to becoming fulfilled in life? You bet. Research suggests that there are key street-smart actions that those who are most fulfilled use every day in their professional and personal lives. I interviewed over 100 successful people — some who were fulfilled and others who were not — to understand why success does not always bring about fulfillment. There was amazing convergence around several things that fulfilled people do at work and home. Here are the top five:

**1. Have strong values — and stick with them.** Does your work environment, family and friends allow you to behave consistent with your values? Having to behave contrary with your values can be debilitating.

**2. Practice resilience.** The ability to face adversity and bounce back. One part of resilience is having grit, a firmness of character, or as psychologist Angela Duckworth describes it based on her studies, the “perseverance and passion for long-term goals.” It was a rare person who could pursue their long-term goals without setbacks in their lives — divorces, failed promotions, cancer, family members coming off the rails. Many people who I knew to be successful in their professional lives had many hidden stories of failures and bounce backs.

They used a variety of approaches to get around those adversities that you can borrow in your own life, such as building a great support network of friends, or family that can support you as you plough through challenges. Those who had developed mentors found them particularly helpful. Some dug deep into their long-term vision or spirituality to help them overcome setbacks. We all have setbacks, it's how you get up that makes the difference.

**3. Take risks.** A really interesting finding in my research is the quantity of people who either took risks and vouched that those risks stretched them and enabled them to reach new heights, or those who regretted not taking more risks. It appears that wisdom brings with it perspective. What appeared to be huge risks to many when they were young, now seems insignificant in hindsight. Although hindsight is often 20-20, it would be too easy to dismiss this advice simply as sages looking through the rear view mirror. Instead, many felt so strongly about this that they have gone overboard in encouraging their children to take more risks. This is one of the most difficult lessons in the art of fulfillment, but you can help yourself by have a longer term vision, with many intermediate lighthouse goals along the

way—stepping stones—that allow you to see the big picture. Imminent risks are often much less threatening when viewing the big picture.



Another key is talking to those who have faced those risks before, often providing sage advice that allows one to reduce the fear and anxiety that comes with perceived risk.

**4. Find a good network.** One of the most frequent pieces of advice among our sages was taking time to build networks. One out-of-work pharmaceutical executive told me that the only time he networks is when he is out of work, lamenting that he has not learned from past mistakes. It takes so much longer to reconnect with

people and build trust, he shared. This is an increasing challenge to those who are overloaded at work today. Many interviewees commented that time pressures reduced their attendance at meetings outside work, limited hobby and family time, and reduced the time to simply keep up with friends and professional colleagues on Facebook or Linked-In. Most realized that having a good network is a key skill, particularly in the world we live in where networks and connections are increasing key to scoring the next great job, or finding a life partner or getting into the right school. If you are not building your network continuously, you are falling behind.

**5. Give back.** An often forgotten element that brought fulfillment to many was giving back. Sharing your skills and experiences with others can bring an incredible sense of fulfillment when you see what it can do for others. I began volunteering for not-for-profits later in life and I can attest that it has been one of the most rewarding experiences. One group I encountered during my investigations was Rosie's kids — a program to help inner city kids go ahead in life by teaching them stage skills — dancing and singings their hearts away. I first heard the backstory of so many of the disadvantaged kids — crack houses, abusive parent, abandoned, homeless —and then I saw these kids performing with huge smiles on their faces—and one child summed it up for me when I spoke with him at the end. He said that he was excited about his future—his chances. And with a tear in my eye, I realized that one of our greatest sources of fulfillment is enabled others to become fulfilled.

Take a moment to think about your own fulfillment. Do you have a vision, are you taking enough risks, have you built the networks to help you during difficult setbacks, and are you giving back to others more in need? Try it. I think you will find yourself more fulfilled.

*William A. Schiemann, Ph.D. is CEO of Metrus Group. He is a thought leader in human resources, employee engagement, and fulfillment and author of Fulfilled! Critical Choices – Work, Home, Life.*

## Resource Directory

### A DIFFERENT KIND OF GRIEF

Individual coaching & on-going coaching groups for those who have a family member/friend who has died from addiction. Contact: gloria@recoveringu.com /612-866-1056 for time, day, fee, and location.

### BETTORS ANONYMOUS

Bettors Anonymous now meeting in MN. Men and women using AA's spiritual solution to recover from gambling addictions. www.bettorsanonymous.org. 612.298.8593.

### COACHING SUPPORT, FAMILY/FRIENDS OF OPIOID & ALCOHOL ABUSERS

Individual coaching & on-going coaching groups for those who have family or friend who is addicted to heroin, Rx opioids or alcohol. Contact: gloria@recoveringu.com /612-866-1056 for time, day, fee, and location.

### DEBT MANAGEMENT PLANS AND FINANCIAL COUNSELING

**LSS Financial Counseling** – Conquer Your Debt™ offers debt management plans to consolidate your debts into one monthly payment, with a lower interest rate and good credit outcomes --and free financial counseling to help you gain financial confidence. LSS provides tools and guidance to put you on the path to a debt-free future. Call 1-888-577-2227 or www.ConquerYourDebt.org

### COUNSELING

**Maple Grove Therapy and Wellness** is a collaborative of therapists working to serve primarily adolescents and young adults struggling with chemical and mental health issues. 612-460-0427, www.maplegrovetherapyandwellness.com

**Amethyst Counseling Services** - 651.633.4532

### EATING DISORDERS

**Melrose Center-** Melrose heals eating disorders for both males and females of all ages. Our experienced team offers specialty programming for those struggling with an eating disorder and substance abuse - whether they are in recovery, treatment or still struggling with substance abuse. Locations in St. Louis Park, St. Paul and Maple Grove. Visit melroseheals.com or call 952-993-6200.

**The Emily Program** offers a wide range of eating disorder treatment services to individuals concerned about their relationship with food and/or body. Our caring and experienced

staff develop personalized treatment plans to help individuals recognize and change unhealthy behaviors and restore hope for the future. Six locations. www.emilyprogram.com or 651-645-5323.

### RECOVERY WORSHIP

Recovery Worship is open service of evening prayer that includes recovery resources like the Twelve Steps and the Serenity Prayer. We meet at 6:45pm on Wednesday evenings at Zion Lutheran Church in Minneapolis. For more information, visit www.zionchurchmpls.org/recovery or call (612) 824-1017.

### JEWISH RECOVERY NETWORK

A group of addicted people in recovery or in need of recovery, as well as their families and friends Open meetings second Sunday of the month..... 763-544-4446

### NAROTICS ANONYMOUS HELPLINE

Drug Problem? We Can Help! Call Now 24-hour (877)767-6767. Also, check out www.NAMINNESOTA.ORG For a complete listing of meetings, upcoming events campouts, and service opportunities.

### SOBER SCHOOLS

**Pease Academy**, “Peers Enjoying A Sober Education” is the oldest recovery high school in the U.S.; 612.378.1377

### SOUL READINGS/CLASSES

**Soul Readings/Psychic Development Classes:** beginning, advanced, and workshops. **Cindy Lehman;** 612.669.1861; www.cindylehman.com; or email cindy@cindylehman.com

### SPIRITUALITY

**Sacred Ground Center for Spirituality** 651.696.2798; www.sacredgroundspirit.org. Explore your spiritual journey with the help of a spiritual director familiar with the 12-Steps.

### SUFI HEALING

**Four Layers of the Heart; Learn to Live in the Divine Love, Call Jess Fauchier;** 763.537.4907, fauchier@goldengate.net or www.suficentermn.org

### WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH

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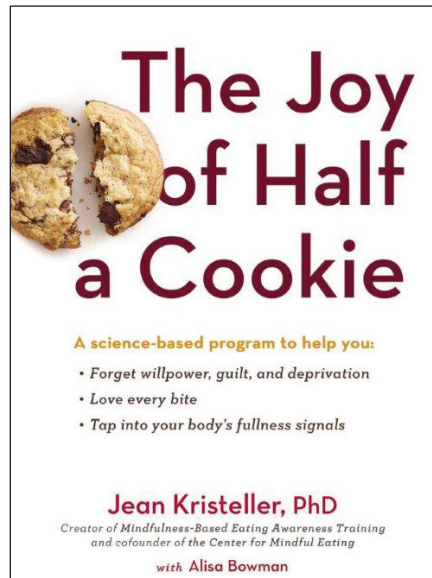
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## Books by Barbara Kummer

**The Joy of Half a Cookie: Using Mindfulness to Lose Weight and End the Struggle with Food**

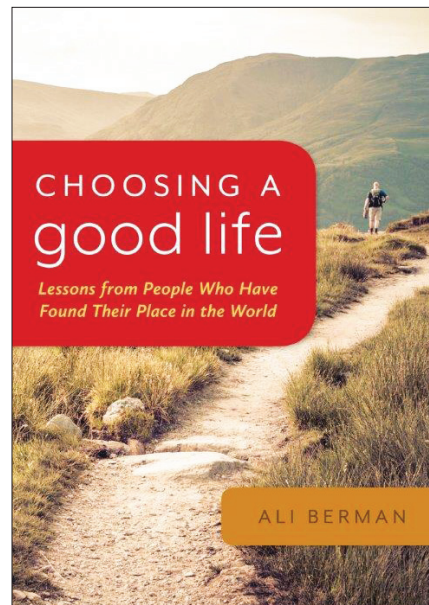
By Jean Kristeller with  
Alisa Bowman Perigee



Based upon many years of experience and research, Kristeller identifies the myths of dieting. Using mindfulness practices specifically targeting eating, she helps readers understand why they overeat and how to change their relationship with food. To do that, she suggests letting go of calorie anxiety and incorporate mindfulness meditations. She provides information to help break the habit of mindless eating and establish a better relationship with food. In each chapter there are practices to help the reader better understand how emotional experiences and eating are related; these exercises help deepen one's awareness and understanding of eating patterns and emotions. Among other things, Kristeller suggests, "Consider what you really want and why." She says one of the benefits of emotional awareness is to "Choose mindfully, without judgment, and it will become comfortable and effortless."

"In the deep dark silence, my mind dances with the moonlight and feels the joy of this precious ephemeral life."

— Debasish Mridha



**Choosing a Good Life: Lessons from People Who Have Found Their Place in the World**

By Ali Berman  
Hazelden Publishing

Berman interviewed ten people from diverse backgrounds to discover the key to balance and fulfillment. She learned how they achieved harmony despite unimaginable hardships, illness, and loss. She shares their stories here.

When asked how they handled stress, some stated that they asked themselves, "Can I do something about it or can't I?" They told her they changed the way they processed negative information. Berman says that following their examples, she is now living the life she wants and that she no longer feels "overwhelmed, tired, and deeply unhappy."

12  
the retreat  
women in recovery

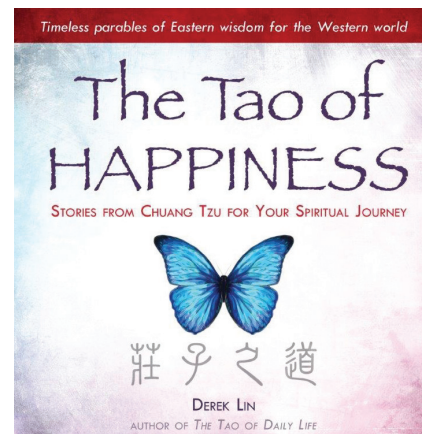
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**The Tao of Happiness: Stories from Chuang Tzu for Your Spiritual Journey**

By Derek Lin  
Tarcher Penguin



Lin reviews parables from Tzu, a Taoist philosopher who lived twenty-four hundred years ago and influenced Chinese culture through stories. He incorporates these translated teachings into today's Western world. For example, "The end of one's life marks the completion of one's work." Therefore, instead of mourning the death of a loved one, Tzu taught that it made more sense to celebrate a life well lived.

Another example, "May you go far in life, live up to your potential, and achieve great things," is translated from a story where the flight of a bird that transforms from a fish is a metaphor for a journey of great achievement.

Readers will enjoy these simple but profound perspectives on spiritual stories.



**Finding the Blue Sky: A Mindful Approach to Choosing Happiness Here and Now**

By Joseph Emet  
TarcherPerigee

Positive Psychology is the scientific study of what actually makes people happy and what makes life most worth living. Emet trained with Thich Nhat Hanh and shares how Positive Psychology compliments Buddhism.

Each chapter has three sections: a story, a meditation or reflection, and a practice section with exercises to help the reader integrate the message. Emet recommends that readers choose to read the book in the order it was written, chapter by chapter, or randomly select a page and see what it brings.

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# Rediscovering the Whole Person from page 1

dividual to make personal choices. Even within culturally-specific programs or previously underserved populations such as LGBTQ, Native American, Women Only, Men Only, Teens and Jewish, treatment is often further personalized.

Thousands of recovery entities have an online presence with varying degrees of helpful information. Some are available across multiple platforms offering interviews, online meetings, chat rooms, message board and 24/7 support. The website for an entity that may not in and of itself be an appropriate match might nevertheless hold extensive research data and relevant information. Recovery is a collaborative process; it is in everyone's best interests – providers, clients, families and friends – to stay current with developments in the field.

Terminology can be confusing. Most used is the word “alternative” meaning a program other than AA even when it incorporates the 12 steps. More apt in most cases is “complementary” or “integrative” – a mixture of conventional and newer approaches. Many treatment plans take a “holistic” approach that embodies the physical, emotional, spiritual and mental aspects; in other words, the “whole” person. All incorporate some combination of cognitive behavioral therapy, motivational structuring, family therapy, coping with cravings, lifestyle balancing as well as meditation, yoga, guided imagery, acu-

puncture, massage, nutrition, aromatherapy, homeopathy, music and art.

Some plans incorporate Health Realization which focuses on the present rather than on past mistakes suggesting that an individual's negative thinking has a direct impact on their reality. The key is learning to calm the mind in order to allow positive thoughts and feelings to emerge that are fundamental to restoring wellness.

Offered here are just some of the alternative approaches and just a few of the many programs for specific groups: women, Native Americans, LGBTQ. Others will be highlighted at a future date.

**“How can I go forward when I don't know which way I'm facing?”  
— John Lennon**

Promoting a harm-reduction approach to alcohol use rather than total abstinence is Moderation Management. It is based on research which suggests alcohol abuse (versus dependence) is a learned behavior for problem drinkers and not a disease and that related problems exist on a spectrum from moderate to severe; therefore, a reasonable early option for problem drinkers is moderation. Recognized by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, its website offers a link to a booklet entitled “Rethinking Drinking: Alcohol and Your Health.”

LifeRing, a national network of peer-to-peer support groups, helps participants formulate an individual recovery path using the group as support. LifeRing differs from AA/NA in that it believes people can “get clean and sober regardless of your belief or disbelief in a ‘higher power.’”

Thus religious and spiritual beliefs remain private and are not an issue at meetings. You are not required to label yourself as an “alcoholic” or “addict” to participate.

SMART Recovery (Self-Management and Recovery Training) offers world-wide mutual help groups. Relying on scientific research, it provides tools to help: sustain abstinence motivation; cope with urges and cravings; find rational ways to manage thoughts, feelings and behaviors; and balance short-term and long-term pleasures and satisfactions.

SOS (Secular Organizations for Sobriety/Save Our Selves). Recognizing that 20% of the population (over 60 million

people) is secular and not associated with a religion, SOS welcomes religious and nonreligious participants in a secular setting. The emphasis is on making sobriety the top priority and developing strategies to remain sober even when facing situations that might encourage old habits such as turning to alcohol or drugs.

Women for Sobriety was the first national self-help program to help women alcoholics create an addiction-free lifestyle. Participants focus on emotional and spiritual growth using the program's 13 affirmations (rather than the 12 steps) that are designed to enhance self-image and encourage taking charge of one's life; for example: I am a capable, competent, caring, compassionate woman. I am responsible for myself and for my actions; I am in charge of my mind, my thoughts and my life.

Wayside House in the Twin Cities offers “innovative, holistic, gender-responsive services that empower women most in need to recover from chemical dependency, trauma and mental illness while building stable, successful lives.” Providing treatment, housing and support, individualized treatments address core patterns that contribute to self-destructive behaviors; clients receive life-long support. One service is a Family Treatment Center where women can live with their children 11 and younger while in treatment. The Supportive Housing program provides safe, affordable permanent housing for families committed to sobriety.

Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center in south Minneapolis centers on empowerment of American Indian women to “achieve sustainable life ways” through the “principle of taking care of each other.” The center provides primary and relapse treatment, long-term sobriety

maintenance support and referrals. The Center's outpatient chemical dependency treatment program, Grandmother's House, uses “traditional counseling methods provided by Elders in Residence and long-term sobriety maintenance support to assist American Indian women in healing from mental illness, sexual trauma, and chemical addiction.”

The Native American Community Clinic in Minneapolis offers counseling, stress management services and referrals helpful to someone moving into or through recovery: “Healing doesn't mean the damage never existed; it means the damage no longer controls our lives.” The clinic honors native traditional practices; sage is available for smudging. Various weekly meetings are open to anyone in the community from “all cultural perspectives.”

PRIDE Institute in Eden Prairie provides residential, outpatient, detoxification and partial hospitalization through programs that focus on issues unique within the LGBTQ community. At PRIDE Institute “gay is understood; being LGBTQ+ is the norm not the exception.” Treatment plans address drug and alcohol addiction, sex addiction, depression, anxiety and HIV/AIDS-related stress and grief.

Out & Sober Minnesota is dedicated to reconnecting LGBTQ addicts and alcoholics with the community and helping build healthy, clean and sober networks. “We sponsor low or no-cost social, educational and informational events...including our flagship MinneSober two-day recovery event. We also maintain a list of LGBTQ friendly recovery meetings in the Twin Cities area on our website.”

Finally, comprehensive holistic treatment is the focus at Sanctuary at Sedona (Arizona), an addiction recovery and trauma healing center that “addresses ALL of you – your body, mind, soul and spirit.” The Sanctuary has been monitoring brain activity using neuroscience technology noting that healing the brain itself has “more fundamental and lasting effects than can be attained with only pharmacological or behavioral interventions.” They differentiate between being recovered and being in recovery: “Being recovered means you are no longer defined by or identified with a disease....You are NOT your disease or diagnosis. We focus on root causes not symptom or disease management.”

Clearly, there are many paths and many options for recovery, renewal and growth. Deepak Chopra said, “The most creative act you will ever undertake is the act of creating yourself.” It's your choice.

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