

NEWSLETTER

Accept no one's definition of you life; define yourself H. Fierstein



JUNE IS MEN'S HEALTH MONTH

Celebrated each year during June, Men's Health Month brings awareness to the health issues all men face. Hosted by Men's Health Network since 1992, the month is dedicated to enriching men's health and wellness through a broad spectrum of national screening and educational campaigns.

Men's Health Month is an annual observance aimed at raising awareness of preventable health problems and encouraging early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys.

Across the country at health fairs and other health education and outreach activities, the focus of this month is encouragement of men, boys, and their families to take control of male health issues with the proper screenings and care.

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BUCK BREAKING

USING SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST ENSLAVED MEN AS PUNISHMENT FOR WRONGDOING

We've all watched movies, seen pictures, and heard stories of how terribly slaves were treated. But, the story of how sexual violence was weaponized and used by slaveowners against slaves is often forgotten. Yet, slaves — including men — were often sexually violated to keep them in line or as punishment against those that dared to rebel.

WHAT IS BUCK BREAKING?

Mainly utilized by slave owners in the Caribbean, buck breaking was used against male slaves who were seen as defiant. The process involved the slaveowner forcing the enslaved man to lower his pants and bend over a tree stump to ensure that his buttocks were propped up into the air. The enslaved man would then be flogged severely. This would weaken him so that he would not be able to resist the rape that followed. The white slaveowner would then proceed to rape the slave several times. This form of punishment was worsened by the fact that it would be done in full view of all the other enslaved people, including the slaves' family and friends. In an addition to being sexually violated the slave would also be publicly humiliated. This public punishment would instill fear in other slaves and thus prevent any further rebellion.



Enslaved men who were victims of this vile punishment often ran away from the plantations or killed themselves as they were unable to

deal with the humiliation that they had suffered. It was often too difficult for them to integrate back into a society that had watched them being emasculated in front of their wife, children, and friends. Buck breaking as a form of punishment grew amongst slave owners in the Caribbean. White men were able to travel from plantation to plantation raping male slaves. The punishment became so widely implemented that sex farms developed from the practice. These sex farms allowed multiple slaveowners to gang-rape male slaves as punishment for any supposed wrongdoing that they committed.

The massive popularity of the practice suggests that buck breaking may have been utilized as an outlet for homosexual slaveowners to act out their sexual desires on men, without attracting the stigma associated with being gay. Homosexuality during this era would have been shunned but shockingly raping male slaves as a form of punishment was acceptable.

By JustAnnet

THE DIFFERENCE OF HELPING & ENABLING

It is natural to want to help someone you care about, whether financially, physically, or emotionally. Helping those in need is certainly a good thing, but when that person has a drug or alcohol addiction, there is a fine line between helping and enabling. Many people who are trying to help are actually contributing to the problem. How do you know whether you are helping or hurting your loved one?

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HELPING AND ENABLING: In an article in *Psychology Today*, Karen Khaleghi, Ph.D., an addiction expert, says that "enabling means offering help that perpetuates — rather than solves — a problem." When you do something for another person that helps them gain control of their life, you are helping.



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JUNE IS MEN'S HEALTH MONTH

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Goal of Men's Health Month

Did you know that men, on average, die almost five years earlier than women? Part of the reason is that men are more reluctant to go to the doctor, according to menshealthmonth.org. In fact, studies show that women go to the doctor twice as much as men.

Additionally, Men's Health Network notes that certain conditions are more prevalent in men, which patients and their doctors should keep an eye on through regular appointments. Thus, the purpose of Men's Health Month is to heighten the awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among both men and boys.

This month gives health care providers as well as individuals an opportunity to encourage men and boys to seek regular medical advice and early treatment for disease and injury.

Focusing On Male Health In Seniors

It's important as a senior man to brush up on your health facts, listen to your body and be sure to get regular checkups. Not only will you live longer, you'll have a better quality of life. General Health – Even if you don't feel sick, it is important to see your doctor regularly and schedule annual exams. Here are some of the screening tests recommended by Johns Hopkins for men 65+:

- Abdominal aortic aneurysm
- Blood pressure
- Colorectal Cancer
- Depression
- Diabetes mellitus, type 2
- Lipid disorders
- STD

Illness – It seems simple but if you're sick — see your doctor. According to the Health in Aging Foundation, 40% of men said that when sick, they delay seeking medical care for a few days; and 17% percent said they would wait "at least a week." Don't wait. Prompt medical care can be the difference between life and

death.

Medications – It's important to take medications as directed, and especially for seniors to keep a complete list of medications and dosages handy. Always inform any doctor you visit about your medications — the more they know about your meds, the better they can look out for potentially life-threatening drug interactions. The older you get, it's common you may be on more daily prescriptions and medications; so with increased medications you run a greater risk of side effects and adverse interactions.

Vaccines and Inoculations – Keep up with recommended shots, including for flu, shingles, pneumonia and diphtheria/tetanus, is vitally important — especially for the elderly men in our lives.

These are just a few ways for men to pay adhere to staying healthy as they age and a great time to commit to better health is during Men's Health Month! Do it for yourself — and your family.

From Unicity Healthcare



THE POWER OF OUR WORDS

We should never underestimate the power of our words or deeds. With a kind word we could change a person's life. I believe we are all put in each other's lives to impact one another in some way. We are weakened by negative words and energized by positive ones. What we plant will harvest.

So, I need to ask myself before I speak, do I want a briar patch, or a beautiful garden...

*By Robin
Quintero-Juez*

THE CRANE

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JUNE CELEBRITY BIRTHDAYS

JUNE 1 Morgan Freeman	JUNE 1 Heidi Klum
JUNE 2 Wayne Brady	JUNE 3 Anderson Cooper
JUNE 4 Angelina Jolie	JUNE 5 Mark Wahlberg
JUNE 7 Liam Neeson	JUNE 8 Keenan Ivory Wayans
JUNE 9 Johnny Depp	JUNE 9 Michael J. Fox
JUNE 10 Destiny Adams	JUNE 10 Johnnie Watkins
JUNE 11 Gene Wilder	JUNE 13 Chris Evans
JUNE 13 Tim Allen	JUNE 13 Silvia Robinson
JUNE 14 Faizon Love	JUNE 14 Boy George
JUNE 14 Ice Cube	JUNE 18 Nelson Mandela
JUNE 18 Paul McCartney	JUNE 19 Paula Abdul
JUNE 20 Nicole Kidman	JUNE 21 Chris Pratt
JUNE 14 Ice Cube	JUNE 22 Meryl Streep
JUNE 22 Cyndi Lauper	JUNE 23 Randy Jackson
JUNE 27 Toby McGuire	JUNE 28 Mel Brooks
JUNE 28 Demetrius Davenport	JUNE 30 Mike Tyson



JUDGEMENT

These are some of the things I have learned through my experiences with Judgment. I have been known to look at people and observe their actions trying hard to understand their motives without a clue about why they do what they do. From where I sit it may seem that certain people should know better, they should be better and they know they should be doing better. The truth is that every time I should someone I make a judgment. When I make a judgment I make a decision that the things are not the way things need to be. My judgment reflects my belief in right and wrong based on what I may or may not know. My judgment reveals my attitude of superiority that says I have the right to determine what must be done, how it must be done and who must do it. My judgment shows that I resist accepting things the way they are. A judgment is a means of control. It is an attempt to get people to do what you need and want them to do in order to feel better about self. A judgment is a sign of fear. It is the foundation of discontent. Most important of all judgment is the way I set myself up to be judged by others.

By Donald Moye



FACTS: June is Immigrant Heritage Month, established in June 2014, gives people across the United States an opportunity to annually explore their own heritage and celebrate the shared diversity that forms the unique story of America. It celebrates immigrants across the United States and their contributions to their local communities and economy.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN THE **LGBTQIA+** COMMUNITY

June is LGBT Pride Month. Pride came about as a result of individual and systemic traumas endured by the LGBT community, including the Stonewall Riot, which occurred in New York in June 1969. Science has confirmed the link between trauma and addiction, so it should not be surprising that members of the LGBT community would struggle with substance use disorder at a higher rate than the general population.

DISPELLING MYTHS

According to Dr. Elizabeth Hartney, there are many misconceptions about substance abuse in the gay community. These are the result of:

- Research bias – using non-representative sub-populations of drug-using gay men to represent gay men as a whole.
- Focusing disproportionately on newly out gay men, who may be more isolated and inclined toward drug use

than an LGBT person who has established networks of support and is less likely to access socialization hubs that promote unhealthy behaviors including substance use.

- False narratives promoted by drug dealers attempting to take advantage of young, naïve LGBT people, by convincing them that this is part of the culture.
- Homophobic individuals who may buy into and spread narratives promoted during the 1980s, to unfairly place blame for the AIDS epidemic on the gay community.

STATISTICS OF LGBTQIA+ TRAUMA

While it is widely known that LGBT individuals are often targeted for their orientation and sexual identity, the CDC reports some lesser-known facts about the bullying experienced by LGBT youth:

- 10 percent have been threatened or injured with a weapon on school property
- 34 percent have been bullied at school
- 28 percent have been bullied electronically
- 18 percent had been forced to have sexual intercourse at some point in their lives

Trends in LGBT Substance Use

According to a toolkit for LGBT health published by SAMHSA, several studies have shown that:

- Only 6 percent of treatment programs nationwide offer any form of special programming for LGBT participants.
- “Butch” lesbians are much more likely to smoke and use marijuana than young “femme” lesbians. Internalized homophobia, emotional distress, and other gay-specific stressors were found to account for most of this difference.
- Lesbians are significantly more likely to drink heavily than heterosexual women. Bisexual women were more likely than heterosexual or lesbian women to report heavy drinking.



FACTS: The first pride flag had eight colors, however the traditional and still most common variant of the flag consists of six stripes: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet. The flag is typically flown horizontally, with the red stripe on top, as it would be in a natural rainbow. In the LGBT version of the rainbow flag, each color has a different meaning: Red = Life. Orange = Healing. Yellow = Sun. Green = Nature. The flag was originally created with eight colors, but pink and turquoise were removed for production purposes, and since 1979 it has consisted of six colored stripes.

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WHAT'S COMING UP AT THE CRANE



JUNE 8TH Meditation & PIYO

Learn self care techniques through meditation at 12 pm and stretch your muscles and get limbered up and in shape with our new Pilates and Yoga Class: PIYO

JUNE 10TH Bracelet Workshop

Do you love bracelets, but can't find the right one to suite your personality? Come by at 12 and make one for yourself, followed by a life skills class starting at 1 pm

JUNE 11TH Movie Day

The Crane is famous for their movie days, featuring Dolby Sound, huge screen and all the snacks you can eat, all for free! Movie starts at 12, don't be late!!

. EVERY MONDAY & WEDNESDAY IN MAY

No, we are not officially opened to the public, but if you have registered with us, you can join us as we host virtual NA & AA Meetings, at 12 noon.

PEER GROUPS

With Certified Addiction Recovery Empowerment Specialists
2:00 pm ■ M-F ■ Virtual on Zoom

JUNE 15TH ZUMBA Weight Training

Get your boogie on learning ZUMBA routines in our full cardio workout followed by weight training with our body toning specialist. We will provide electrolytes and water, just bring your energy.

JUNE 17TH Nature Walk

Join us as we journey on a new trail, all while reflecting inwardly on ourselves. You can ride with us or meet us there, call 770.960.2009 for more information about this brand new adventure.

JUNE 18TH Dialogue Diaries

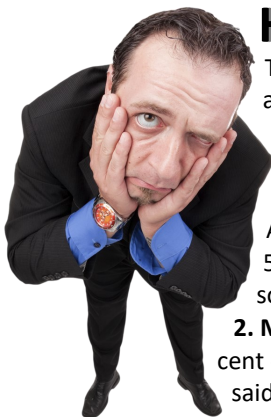
Our luncheon series continues with guest speaker Robin C. Join us in person or via zoom for this great event. If you plan on attending in person, make sure to RSVP your lunch at 770.960.2009

ALL OF JUNE

We provide HIV and HEP C testing and education Monday through Friday by appointment only. Just call 770.960.2009 and we'll be happy to schedule you.



FACTS: If someone was asked to name the first things that come to their mind when they hear 'chess player', it would be 'old', 'smart', 'talented', 'genius' and many other things unrelated to everyday people... But this is a misconception – it is a false belief injected to people by mass media. But did you know that it actually is an incredibly beneficial pastime, because playing chess results in better brain function, improved memory and cognitive abilities, strategic thinking and attention improvement. All of these benefits are directly related to the practice of chess, both in real-life and virtual environments, which means that chess is the answer to the question – 'Is there a game where I can have fun AND get benefits from?'



HOW MEN RESPOND TO ADDICTION

There are distinct differences between men and women when it comes to addiction. The two genders don't use drugs in the same manner and they respond to them differently. To understand more about this topic, let's take a look at some facts about men and addiction.

1. Men Are More Likely Than Women to Use Most Types of Illicit Drugs:

According to the 2016 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, (NSDUH) 52.3 percent of male respondents aged 12 or older said they had used some type of illicit drug during their lifetime.

2. Marijuana Is the Most Popular Illicit Drug Among Men: Forty-eight percent of male respondents aged 12 and up who participated in NSDUH 2016 said they had tried marijuana during their lifetime. Hallucinogens were next on the list, with 18.7 percent of respondents stating they had tried them,

followed by cocaine (17.9 percent), inhalants (11.6 percent), methamphetamine (6.5 percent), and heroin (2.5 percent).

3. Men Are Twice as Likely to Binge Drink: The majority of adult men (58 percent) report having consumed alcohol during the past 30 days, and men are more likely to binge drink than women, according to a fact sheet published by the Centers for Disease Control. Most of the men (90 percent) who binge drink are not alcohol dependent or alcoholics.

4. Men Are More Likely to be Diagnosed with Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD): According to numbers released in the 2015 NSDUH, 15.1 million men over age 18 were diagnosed with Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD). This figure represented 6.2 percent of the population, compared to 4.2 percent of women (5.3 million women)

5. Alcohol-Related Death Rates and Hospitalizations Are Higher for Men: When men are the drivers in fatal motor vehicle traffic accidents, they are more than twice as likely as women to be legally drunk (having a blood alcohol content of 0.08 percent or higher). Men are also more likely to die as the result of suicide than women, as well as more likely to have consumed alcohol before taking their own life.

6. Heavy Alcohol Use Can Hinder Male Hormone Production: As a result of the reduced levels of male hormones, men who consume excessive amounts of alcohol may experience issues with impotence and infertility. They may also notice a reduction of secondary male sex characteristics (chest and facial hair).

7. Excessive Alcohol Use Increases Risk of Cancer in Men: Cancers of the throat and mouth, esophagus, liver, and colon have been linked to alcohol use in men.

8. Men Experience More Intense Symptoms of Alcohol Withdrawal: The Journal of Neuroscience Research reports that while alcohol withdrawal is more difficult for men, women tend to experience more powerful withdrawal symptoms during smoking cessation.

From English Mountain Recovery

MY SERENITY PRAYER

Lord, grant me the serenity
to accept the ignorant
people the way they are,
courage to maintain my
self, and control and wis-
dom to know that if I act on
it, I will go to jail.



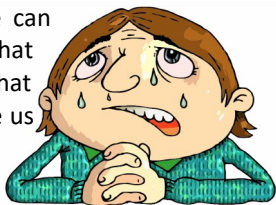
Remember, most of your stress comes from the way you respond, not the way life is. Adjust your attitude, and all that extra stress is gone.

IT'S OKAY TO LAMENT

I dropped to my knees and let my tears fall to the floor. "God, why aren't you taking care of me?" I cried. It was during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. I'd been laid-off for almost a month, and something had gone wrong with my unemployment application. I hadn't received any money yet, and the stimulus check the US government had promised hadn't arrived. Deep down, I trusted that God would work out everything. I believed He truly loved me and would take care of me, but in that moment, I felt abandoned.

The book of Lamentations reminds us it's okay to lament. The book was likely written during or soon after the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem in 587 bc. It describes the affliction (3:1, 19), oppression (1:18), and starvation (2:20; 4:10) the people faced. Yet, in the middle of the book the author remembers why he could hope: "Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness" (3:22-23). Despite the devastation, the author remembered that God remains faithful. Sometimes it feels impossible to believe that "the Lord is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him" (v. 25), especially when we don't see an end to our suffering. But we can cry out to Him, trust that He hears us, and that He'll be faithful to see us through.

By: Julie Schwab



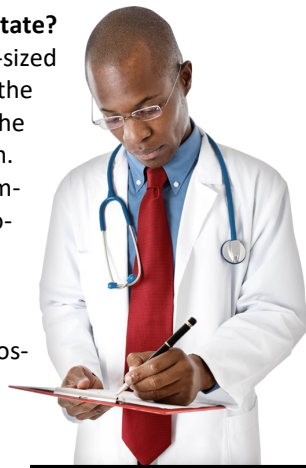
PROSTATE CANCER

WHAT EVERY MAN SHOULD KNOW

According to the American Cancer Society, prostate cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related death in American men. It is also estimated by the American Cancer Society that more than 170,000 American men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer this year, making it critical that all men know the risk factors and symptoms to look for:

What is the Prostate?

A ping-pong ball-sized gland located in the groin, between the penis and rectum. The prostate is important for reproductive health. Prostate cancer begins when cells from the prostate begin to grow out of control.



Risk Factors

Often thought of as an old man's disease, prostate cancer has a multitude of risk factors that influence one's chances of developing the disease. The risk factors can include:

- **Age:** Although 60% of those diagnosed with the disease are over the age of 65, a man's risk of developing prostate cancer continues to increase after the age of 50. Prostate screenings

should start at age 50.

- **Ethnicity:** Prostate cancer develops more often in people of African descent; when it does develop in this group, it also tends to develop earlier on in life. For those with family history, screenings should start at age 40.
- **Family history:** Having a brother or father who has had prostate cancer more than doubles one's risk of developing the disease.
- **Genetics:** Inherited genetic mutations of the BRCA1 and/or BRCA2 gene or men with Lynch syndrome are at an increased risk of developing prostate cancer.

A MORAL STORY: ANGRY NAILS

THE STORY: There was once a boy who became angry so frequently with his friends at school that he was constantly getting sent home. His temper was disruptive to the class and hurtful to other students.

His father came up with a strategy to try to deter the boy from getting angry so easily. He gave his son a hammer and some nails and told him to hammer a nail into the family's fence every time the boy got angry in the future.

The following day, the boy got angry 37 times, and had to hammer as many nails into the fence.

Over the next few weeks, the boy got tired of hammering nails into the fence and he gradually started to control his temper. Slowly, the number of nails he was hammering into the fence started to decrease. The boy realized that it was easier to remain calm when he started to feel angry than to gather the tools, go outside, and start hammering.



Eventually, the boy stopped losing his temper altogether. His dad noticed, and told the boy to remove a nail from the fence every day that he was able to keep his temper under control.

Eventually, as the weeks went by, all of the nails had been taken out of the fence. The father and son then stood in front of the broken fence, which was completely scattered with holes.

The father turned to his son and said, "You have done well, but look at the holes in the fence. They cannot be repaired. When you get angry at other people, it leaves a scar just like the holes you see in front of you. It doesn't matter if you say I'm sorry one hundred times, the injury is still there."

THE MORAL: Control your anger toward other people. While you may not see the damage that it does, it can leave irreparable wounds that can eventually break them. Be kind to others and think before you let your emotions get the best of you.

SYMPTOMS OF PROSTATE CANCER

Unfortunately, early stages of prostate cancer often come without any symptoms, which is what makes regular screenings so important. However, when prostate cancer reaches more advanced stages, some, though certainly not all, of the below symptoms may be present:

Slow or weakened urine stream, Urinating more frequently, Painful/burning sensation while urinating, Blood in urine or semen, Erectile dysfunction, Decrease in ejaculated fluid, Pain or pressure in the rectum, Pain in the lower back, hips, thighs, or chest

It is important to remember that the presence of these symptoms do not necessarily mean you have prostate cancer and could point to other underlying medical conditions.



THOUGHTS: Don't ever chase after another person. Instead, chase your passions. Chase your growth and your dreams. Strive to become better. Instead of trying to convince someone that you fit in their world build your own.



Addiction to drugs or alcohol can affect anyone, but among military veterans, the rate of addiction to certain substances is higher than that of the general population. Often, veterans have a difficult time readjusting to civilian life. Many suffer from disabilities, mental and physical health problems, traumatic brain injuries, and PTSD as a result of their experiences while being on active duty. Once they return home, some veterans self-medicate with drugs or alcohol. Studies show that veterans with exposure to combat, who have sustained combat-related injuries or have been deployed multiple times, have the highest risk of developing a substance use disorder.

VETERANS AND ALCOHOL ADDICTION

According to an article in the US National Library of Medicine, the most frequently abused substance by active military and veterans is alcohol. The study found that the more a person has been in combat, the greater the chance they will engage in binge drinking or heavy drinking. Studies reported by the National Library of Medicine show that more than forty percent of military veterans have suffered from an alcohol use disorder at some point in their lifetime.

DRUG ADDICTION IN THE VETERAN COMMUNITY

Veterans are often given prescriptions for highly addictive medications to treat conditions such as chronic pain, injuries, PTSD, and many other conditions. In many cases, this is how drug addiction begins. Once the person finds relief from the medications,

VETERANS & ADDICTION

their continued use can spiral into dependence and addiction. Some medications are potentially addictive even when taken as prescribed. The Department of Defense conducted a study that found that the misuse of prescription drugs by military personnel is two and a half times higher than that of civilians.

The following are the most common addictive medications prescribed to veterans:

- Painkillers – OxyContin, Vicodin, Lortab
- Sedatives – Lunesta, Ambien
- Benzodiazepines – Valium, Ativan, Xanax

A RELUCTANCE TO GET HELP

Many veterans try to hide their problems with drugs or alcohol, and some even see addiction as a sign of weakness. Others believe they are a failure. Often they continue their denial of the problem until something drastic happens. They may lose their loved ones, become homeless, or engage in domestic violence. They feel lost and alone. Tony, an army veteran, felt alone and used alcohol to self-medicate. Alcohol was his crutch, his escape. After struggling for years, Tony got the help he needed and was able to become sober. “So, what I would say to other veterans is know that there are people here to support you, in that, people do care about you,” said Tony. “If you need help, there’s modalities here to support you getting your help.”

DON’T “BITE THE BULLET” OR “SUCK IT UP” WHEN IT COMES TO ADDICTION

Veterans have learned to become experts at “sucking it up” and “biting the bullet” as a way of staying alert and safe in a war zone. Once they return home, it often takes some time for them to understand and accept that they need help.

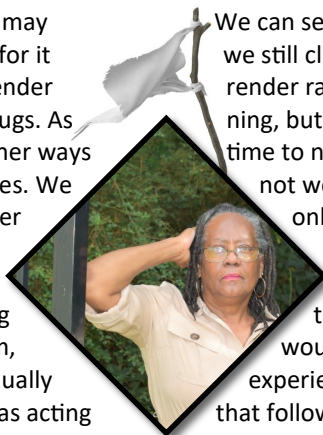
Sam, a Navy veteran, used alcohol and crack cocaine and watched his life deteriorate during that time.

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THE LIFELONG PRACTICE OF SURRENDER

Our understanding of surrender may change over time, but our need for it does not. In the beginning, surrender might just be about not using drugs. As times goes by we start to see other ways our addiction plays out in our lives. We become willing to surrender other behaviors, sometimes one by one. We come to understand that using whatever we are using is just a symptom of our problem, which is spiritual in nature. Gradually we start to let go of things such as acting out, denial, anger, resentment, the need to be right, the feelings of superiority or inferiority, shame, remorse, and fear.

As our understanding of the First Step grows, we surrender more deeply. Our trust grows, and we become a little more willing to let go.



We can see more areas of our lives where we still cling to the illusion of control. Surrender rarely looks appealing in the beginning, but it takes us progressively less time to notice when what we are doing is not working. At first, we may let go only when we are beaten, but our tolerance for pain diminishes as we recover. We are less willing to go along with things that wound our spirit. As we have more experience with the hope and healing that follows, we can recognize surrender as a way we put our feet back on the ground. The shift from thinking that we surrender to our disease to realizing that we can surrender to our recovery is a spiritual awakening itself. (Living Clean--- pg. 227)

Submitted By Bernice Taylor-Davis



THE DIFFERENCE OF HELPING & ENABLING

When you do something for a person that they could and should do for themselves, you are enabling. You are keeping them from being accountable and having to experience any negative consequences of their actions. When a person does not have to experience consequences, they have no reason to change their behavior. An enabler prevents their loved one from coming to terms with their addiction and seeking help for it.

FIVE WAYS TO TELL IF YOU ARE ENABLING OR HELPING

- Giving your loved one money that will end up being used to buy alcohol or drugs is a way of enabling them. Buying their groceries or paying their bills is also enabling, if they are spending their own money on substances. When your financial help enables them to continue their habit, they have no incentive to change.
 - If you handle the responsibilities your loved one is neglecting because of their addiction, you are enabling. Several examples include picking up their children from school, cleaning the house, cooking their meals, and taking care of their yard.
 - Making excuses for a person with a drug or alcohol addiction is a way of denying that the problem really exists. An enabler has a fear of conflict with the addict and will not confront them. Instead, they justify or make excuses for their behavior and convince themselves the problem will disappear on its own. A definite sign of enabling is avoidance or denial.
 - Telling lies to cover up for the person's mistakes and wrong-doings is another way of enabling them. They need to be held accountable for their actions or they will keep making poor choices.
 - When a person is an enabler there is generally codependent behavior. You may enjoy feeling needed and feel proud of yourself for making a sacrifice for your loved one.
- Enabling may help you feel like you are in control of the situation.

TRUE STORY: JORDAN COLE LUNSFORD

After using heroin once, Jordan died. He was a good kid, a happy kid, a kid that was going through a rough moment and his bad choice and the company he kept that night was a recipe for his death.

Let me begin by telling you a little about my son Jordan Cole Lunsford. Jordan was a very loud, happy and loving kiddo. He never met a stranger, and was always loved by all that met him. Jordan began struggling with mental illness at a young age. At the age of 14 years, Jordan was diagnosed with Bi-Polar Disorder. Though he had many obstacles he never gave up. When Jordan turned 17 years, he decided he was going to move out. Unfortunately, at that time we learned that there was nothing we could do about that, he was considered an adult by the State of Missouri. Jordan began staying with individuals that participated in illegal drug use and drinking. He and I spoke every day and I encouraged him daily to come home. Jordan then decided he wanted to move to Texas to stay with his biological father that he had not lived with since the age of 2. This did not last long and he decided to come back to Missouri and still would not move home because he did not want to live by the rules of the house.

On October 7, 2014 our 3-month-old daughter (Jordan's baby sister) Gracie Meshelle Clodfelter passed away at daycare from SIDS. This of course sent our family into complete devastation. Jordan immediately came home and stood by us and decided he wanted to get his life back on track. This went well for a little over 2 weeks and Jordan once again left wanting to stay at his friends. Jordan and I spent many nights talking on the phone, and I continued to beg him to come home and finally he agreed to come stay the night on November 13, 2014. After I got off work I went to pick him up and he was not where he agreed to be. I messaged him, called the home he was at and was informed by a lady that he left that morning with some other

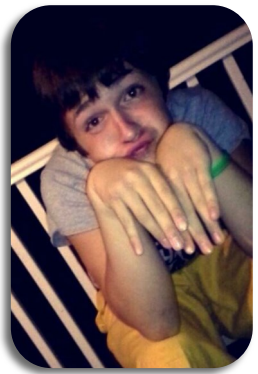
individuals and she would tell him to call me. I had no idea at that exact moment my husband Sheldon (Jordan's stepdad that has raised him) and 4-year-old daughter were actually face to face with Jordan at Wal-

Mart and Jordan told them he would be to the house later. Jordan hugged his baby sister for the last time at that moment. My husband came home and BBQ'd on the grill, we made our plates (including Jordan's) and waited. Jordan never came. After losing my daughter, I had not slept well at all but for some reason that night I slept and I slept hard enough I did not hear my phone (it only vibrates when charging it doesn't ring).

Jordan had called at 12:38 am and left a voicemail. It was nothing outrageous, basically just apologizing that he lost track of time and he was sorry and he loved us all. I would not hear that voicemail until I was standing in the ER.

Shocking Overdose

At approx. 6:50 am, everything went crazy. My phone began vibrating nonstop, someone was banging on my door, the dog was barking. I answered the phone to hear a woman ask if I was Jordan Lunsford's mom. I replied yes and she said something had happened and Jordan was in the emergency room. Then my phone began beeping. It was my husband. He said something happened to Jordan and his friend Dan was on his way to come take me to the hospital and he would meet us there. Then there was a Cop at the door who informed me something happened to my son I needed to get to the hospital as soon as possible. But none of these people would tell me what happened. A million thoughts ran through my head, but the one that never entered my mind was the one they would tell



TRUE STORY: JORDAN COLE LUNSFORD

me as I ran through those same hospital doors that I ran through only 5 weeks prior to my daughter. They said he overdosed on heroin. I just knew they were confused my son didn't do heroin, he smoked weed. He ONLY smoked weed.... I ran into his room to find him hooked up to machines, lifeless, just perfectly still. He wouldn't respond to me. My baby boy was laying there and there was nothing I could do. On November 15, 2014 at 3:00 pm, he was looked at by a doctor and told Jordan was declared brain dead. My child, my baby boy had died. At that moment I had to walk across the hall, look at all my family (including his older brother), friends and people who had not left our side since this began and say Jordan would not make it, and that he was only being kept alive by machines. All in the same breath we also announced that we would be allowing Jordan's organs to be donated to save others' lives. That night I stayed with my beautiful son until the organ donation crew came and I walked him out to an ambulance and kissed his warm face for the last time, then I watched them take him away. The next time I kissed his face it was cold.

Jordan was surrounded by people all older than he was the night he overdosed. The thing

is they were more concerned about if they would get into trouble than if my son would live. They drove Jordan over 20 miles to a hospital, passing fire stations, EMS stations, stores etc. Where they took him and dropped him off. The ER staff worked on Jordan for 40 minutes before getting his heart to work. Needless to say, during that time his brain had went without oxygen too long and had died.

The Aftermath

It is now going on 17 months after losing Jordan. Not a single day goes by that I don't feel lost. I struggle daily to find my way through whatever obstacles I am handed. I no longer feel a desire to do anything in the business world except advocate. I do all I can to get into schools, businesses, town meetings etc. To share our story in hopes to help others recognize the problem we are facing. The thing is YES drugs have been an issue for as long as I can remember, but there is one thing that is different today. That difference is that there is a drug called heroin, it is easily accessible and it is killing our youth. Jordan was not a heroin addict, he picked it up for the first time in a moment of depression after losing his sister and he died. He did not put a needle in his arm, he did a line and he died! There are so many misconceptions in the world to how heroin or any other drug can kill a person that kids don't even realize what they are doing, the chances they are taking. We have to educate people and truly let them know the dangers. As hard as it is to share Jordan's story I know I must. I have to be the REAL face of what heroin can do. My son was a good kid, a happy kid, a kid that was going through a rough moment and his bad choice and the company he kept that night was a recipe to his death. Brigit Kleen pled guilty, was charged with distribution, and sentenced on August 11, 2015 to 8 years in prison. Brigit is 37 yrs old.

JUST MAYBE

Maybe some things don't get better, but we do. We get stronger. We learn to live with our situations as messy and ugly as they are. We fix what we can and we adapt to what we can't. Maybe some of us will never be fully okay, but at least we're here. We're still trying. We're doing the best we can. That's worth celebrating too. If you're reading this, congratulations, you made it to today. You made it.



A TRIBUTE TO MOTHERS BY D. BROWN

I would be remiss, if I did not make this month's notes to you about Mothers. Did you know, you can have a mother by blood and spirit? Mothers by blood are those women who nurture and care for you because they physically bore you. Mothers by spirit are those women who also nurture and care for you and did not physically give birth to you. I hope you have or had both – your mother by blood who loves and care for you and a mother by spirit, who in many cases are/were your school teachers, aunts, cousins, women at church, your Sunday school teacher, or a good neighbor. There is no love like a mother's love. It is next to God's unconditional love. My Mom brought us up to love and tell the truth.

MY TRIBUTE TO MOTHERS:

"There is no love like a mother's, she sacrifice for her children, her heart is filled with care.

With Christ as her example, a mother's love

is unconditional, her Savior's love she will share.

A mother's love is endless for her children from 1 to 99, not changing or wavering at any time.

When our days on earth are over, well past tomorrow or next week, a mother's love lives on.

Through many generations, you will call her blessed and God's anointing on each one. Let's be thankful for our mothers by blood and or by spirit, who loves us with a higher love, From power God Has given them and strength, all from up above."

Keep calling your mothers blessed and sharing love each day. This is Dathon D. Brown, and in parting "I wish you love, peace and soul" (In honor of Don Cornelius parting saying from "Soul Train").



VETERANS & ADDICTION

Clean and sober for seven years, Sam now works with a community service group that is an alternative to incarceration for those addicted to drugs. He practices a program of recovery that includes a 12-Step group. He believes the 12-Step program helps him have long-lasting sobriety and "be a better person." Sam tells people "Hey, I did it, you can do it too."

Michael, an Army veteran, found it hard to readjust to civilian life. Suffering from PTSD, he hid his feelings and turned to alcohol. He thought no one would understand what he was going through. Michael finally found the courage to get help. "I got to be a man about it and get some courage and quit being a coward and do something about it," he said. Today Michael is in recovery and says, "Your attitude on life just changes completely when you realize you don't have to have alcohol to live or to enjoy yourself."



Bob....oh Bob

Bob was in trouble. He forgot his wedding anniversary. His wife was really angry. She told him "Tomorrow morning, I expect to find a gift in the driveway that goes from 0 to 200 in 6 seconds AND IT BETTER BE THERE!" The next morning he got up early and left for work. When his wife woke up, she looked out the window and sure enough there was a box gift-wrapped in the middle of the driveway. Confused, the wife put on her robe and ran out to the driveway & brought the box back in the house. She opened it and found a brand new bathroom scale. Bob has been missing since Friday.



A stylized illustration of a mouth with lips colored in a rainbow gradient. The mouth is open, showing white teeth. From the bottom of the lips, thick, colorful paint drips down in various colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) and some drips have small dots at the end. The background is white.

- At Clayton Center, our recovery program proudly Individuals who are members of the LGBT community and their support systems.

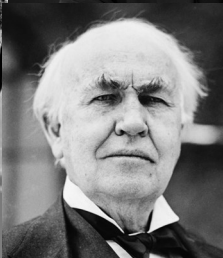
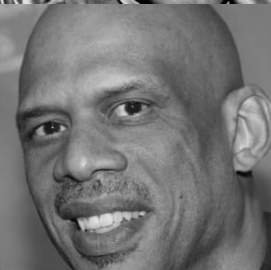
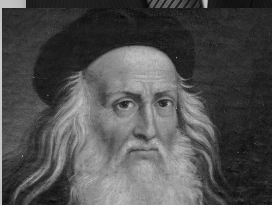
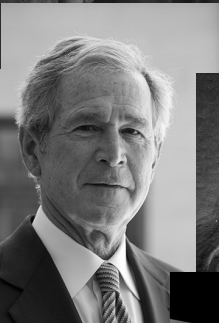
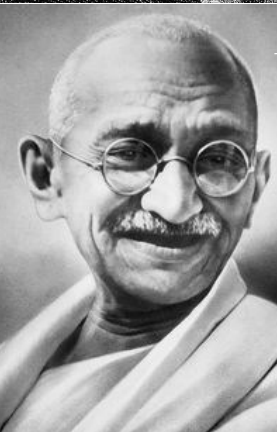
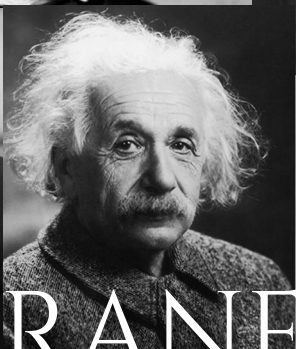
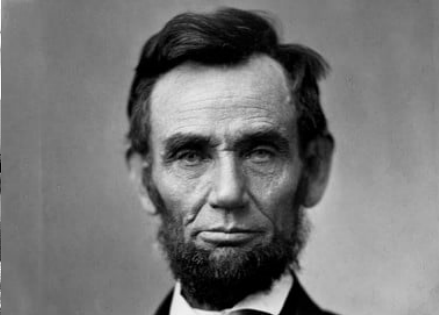


Husband: "I'm just kidding!"

A man and a woman are sleeping when suddenly there is a noise in the house, and the woman rolls over and says, "It's my husband, you have to leave!" The man jumps out of bed, jumps through the window, crawls through the bushes, and out on the street, when he realizes something. He goes back to the house and says to the woman, "Wait, I'm your husband!" She replies giving him a dirty look, "So why did you run?"



Imagine
up pass
negative



THE CRANE