

RAA Recovery Alumni Association

The summer heat did little to slow down our active Recovery Alumni Association (RAA) this year! On June 2, RAA held the Board of Directors election. The new officers include:

Tom S.
President

Fred T.
Vice President

George G
Chief Financial Officer

The board members include:

- | | |
|------------|-----------|
| Dixie S. | Mark P. |
| Beverly D. | Robert O. |
| Dan C. | Sharon C. |
| Darlene H. | Todd F. |
| David C. | Jeff A. |

The installation dinner for the new board members was held in July to honor the tremendous work of our previous members and welcome those in new positions. The evening closed with an old fashioned square dance complete with a professional square dance caller to teach some basic and fun moves.

On July 22-24, RAA went camping at Lake Perris with



over thirty campers scattered along the shore. There were some generous members who owned boats who took everyone skiing, boarding, and site seeing. There was also a nice beach to swim and catch the warm sunrays. On Saturday night, the campers enjoyed a potluck dinner and gathered around a bonfire to share their gratitude and thoughts about the clean and sober weekend.

The summer activities came to a close with an Inland Empire 66er's baseball game on August 26th and a train ride to San Clemente beach on September 24th.

If you are looking for fun in recovery, join RAA on Thursdays at 6:00 pm in the BMC cafeteria. There are lots of new activities planned this year for you and your family.

Food for Thought

Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference; living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardship as a pathway to peace; taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it; trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your will; so that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with You forever in the next.

Amen.

Let Go – Let God

God's every strength he will supply love and peace you can't deny. You only must look so quiet and still and ask your Lord to do His will. He'll take your hand and guide you too. Your weary heart He will renew. Trust and believe your answer is near. Let Go – Let God and have no fear. For when you trust and turn to Him; no matter what, you are sure to win.

By Edna Louise, "Hand to Hold" Mark 9:23



Staying with Sobriety

Chemical Dependency Services
1710 Barton Road
Redlands, California 92373



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE CENTER

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

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

LLUMCMCTCFBMC-108-US09050000

For more information call 909-558-9224.

Staying with Sobriety



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE CENTER Fall 2005

The Addictive Family System

Defining the Roles

In my many years of working with recovering families, I have seen the unhealthy roles individuals play to maintain the homeostasis of the family. Homeostasis is a term that describes the phenomena of “keeping balance” in the family. In the addictive family system, this is done by using unhealthy family roles to maintain the addiction cycle. These unhealthy roles have been identified as “The Family Trap” by internationally known author and Marriage and Family Clinical Counselor, Sharon Wegscheider-Cruse. In the addictive family system, each member of the family has been affected by adapting their behavior to the addict’s in order to decrease personal stress. The substance abusing person and their family members suffer from self-delusion in regards to the addiction. This phenomenon allows one to build a wall of defense for protection from pain.

The family environment will naturally produce specific roles each member will utilize to maintain a position in the family. If the family system is a healthy



one, family members will express themselves without fear of punishment or rejection. Their feelings will be validated and respected. Their personal boundaries will be honored. When the family system is unhealthy, the opposite will be experienced. The unhealthy roles Sharon Wegscheider-Cruse identified in the Addicted Family System (The Family Trap) are:

1. The dependent (substance abuser)
2. The prime enabler (co-dependent)
3. The family hero
4. The mascot
5. The scapegoat
6. The lost child

The role of the hero is to bring pride to the family. The mascot, often referred to as the clown, eases the tension. Likewise, the scapegoat carries the blame, and the lost child causes “no problems”.

The roles in the family are established by the rules. In an unhealthy family system, the rules consist of not talking about what is going on at home, especially about the drinking or drug use. Due to the inconsistent and unpredictable behavior of the substance abusing family member (this may include the co-dependent or prime enabler) the, “do not trust” rule develops. This

rule has two components: a) don’t trust your feelings and b) don’t trust others. Children of the addicted family system come to believe that they somehow caused the addiction and chaos of the family. They take responsibility and use their roles to function within that system. While working with children whose parent is in treatment, I hear them share how they truly believe that they can control and/or even cure the addicted parent from the addiction. This magical thinking on the child’s part is the hope that they can change the family into what I call the “Fantasy Family”. Their fantasy family becomes the one they hope to have one day, the family of their dreams. Maintaining the role they play in the family is the insurance, faulty as it is, that one day their family will be the one they hoped for.

The roles in the addictive family system are unhealthy and negative. The hero role is fueled by fear of being rejected. They often become perfectionistic and fear failure. They will set unreasonably high expectations for themselves. The mascot or
Continued on page 3.

For more information call 909-558-9224.

The Source

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

Publication:

Title: Siblings Without Rivalry: How to Help Your Children Live Together So You Can Live Too

Written by: Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish

Review by: Elaine Coyazo

This is a wonderful follow-up book to the author's *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk*. The basic premise is very simple – avoid comparisons between your children. The value of this book is that it is simple and direct without talking down to the reader. There are many situations highlighted and suggestions to get parents through each. The authors offer a wealth of good advice on managing inevitable rivalry and diffusing explosive situations.

Web Sites:

LLUBMC
www.llubmc.com

Recovering Alumni Association
www.bmcraa.org

Alcoholics Anonymous
www.alcoholics-anonymous.org

Narcotics Anonymous
www.na.org

Southern California Narcotics Anonymous
www.todayna.org

AA Newsletter
www.aagrapevine.org

Recovery source for upcoming events
www.anonymousone.com

Life's Journeys

Young People in Recovery

In their late teens and twenty's, many young adults are studying for college entrance exams, starting a career, and looking for a life partner. Sadly, there are those simply looking to get through the day without drugs or alcohol. Glenn, Desiree, and Ruthie are young adults faced with addiction. Glenn took his first drink at the age of 12. Throughout high school, he experimented with a variety of drugs and found himself addicted to heroin at the age of 22. He sought treatment but had the misconception that he had enough control to continue to drink and use marijuana. Five years later he found himself once again addicted to heroin. Glenn returned to the BMC this past February hoping to beat his addiction. He recognizes a different driving force that pushes his sobriety. At a younger age he felt pressured by his friends to use and pressure by his family to stop. This time it has been his decision.

Desiree has had to deal with addiction as a young child – her mother's addiction. At the age of three her parents divorced. While her mother lived down the street, Desiree never saw her. Her father remarried and her stepmother began to fill the void. Regardless of the new family environment, the genetic disease of addiction found Desiree as a teenager. Popping pain pills from a sports injury, drinking, and

using became the norm throughout high school. Desiree is now clean getting her strength from a variety of sources including family members, staff, others in recovery, and supportive friends. While a bit scared of how she will deal with her 21st birthday, she is grateful for getting her life back.

Ruthie took the New Year on with the goal of becoming clean and sober. She has succeeded and proudly counts back to her sobriety date of January 7, 2005. Her life is almost unrecognizable to what it was a year ago. She now resides in a local sober living home and attends Valley College. Her relationships with loved ones are slowly mending; she has a job and is clearing her legal issues. While Ruthie is taking positive steps, she is constantly confronted with the negative temptations found on college campuses.

When talking with individuals in recovery, most admit they wish they had received treatment years before they did. They are saddened at the thought of the countless memories stripped from them because of the disease. Glenn, Desiree, and Ruthie are blessed to have their whole life ahead of them. While sobriety will continue to be a struggle, they are grateful to have been given a second chance at life. ■

Miracles at the BMC

As our patients and family members begin the journey of recovery, miracles begin to happen. There have been countless individuals that have entered our doors broken – a broken family, a broken self-esteem, and a broken spiritual relationship. Their souls are void.

As a nurse on unit 100, I feel tremendously privileged to help nurture these individuals and their families back together. My guidance comes from God. I have a well-worn Serenity



prayer in my office with numerous pinholes in it as I am constantly pulling it down to read. Together with the Let Go-Let God prayer, I gather my strength to get through the day

helping individuals as I believe Jesus would want me to.

It is truly amazing to witness the full recovery process. Children begin to have the nurturing family they deserve, addicts begin to understand the disease, spouses begin forgiveness. Throughout your sobriety, remember the powerful message behind these prayers and continue to witness the miracle of yourself. ■

Pam Cork
Nurse Manager

The Addictive Family System

Continued from page 1.

clown of the family seeks attention that is usually negative and will act in irresponsible ways. The scapegoat also tends to be irresponsible and also seeks out negative attention by acting in self-defeating or self-destructive ways. The scapegoats take on the addicted persons manipulative and controlling behaviors. Scapegoats will rationalize or even lie to insure a place in the family dysfunction. Lastly, the lost child's negative behavior is experienced in withdrawing, isolating, and becoming sad, often depressed. The lost child trusts no one and believes they cannot depend on anyone.

Fortunately, there is a way out of these unhealthy roles. When a family makes the decision to recover together, the unhealthy roles are given up and healthy positive roles are developed. This is accomplished by changing the rules.

Remember it is the family rule that creates the family role. The family learns how to talk about how they feel. The family in recovery together learns how to be consistent with these healthy new rules and all family members experience sobriety. The co-dependent becomes "independently healthy". The family hero, with his or her fears of rejection, now becomes hopeful, able to motivate self and learns to be flexible. The hero can appreciate the joy of survival after having experienced the adversity that comes from the addictive family system. The mascot no longer seeks attention but attracts positive attention due to joy and trust being restored to the family. A sense of humor emerges and responsibility replaces irresponsibility. The scapegoat learns to handle stress without substance use or abuse. They can now adapt easily and feel confident without fear of rejection. They also learn how to

be truthful and are able to trust in the consistent recovering family experience. The lost child will eventually stop isolating and withdrawing. He or she will develop healthy coping skills by trusting that they will be respected and can enjoy solitude and work independently.

In chapter five of *The Big Book of AA*, the disease of addiction is described as being cunning, powerful, and baffling. This definition is true for the addicted family system. Each family member is in crisis and understanding of each member's role in the addicted family system is necessary for full family recovery. When the family changes the dysfunctional rules to healthy ones, new roles will emerge. It can happen. It does happen one day at a time. ■

*Written by
Sue Jackson, Clinical Therapist*

At a Glance

October

AA Convention

Friday – Sunday, October 21-23, 2005

San Bernardino Hilton

A weekend with too many activities to list! There will be AA, Al-Anon, and Alateen events going on at all times. Any women interested in being hostesses can contact Trish E. at 909-790-8443. Any men interested in being ushers can contact Gary M. at 909-790-0685. Any individual interested in getting involved with Al-Anon can contact Carmie F. at 951-927-3311.

Pumpkin Patch

Saturday, October 22, 2005

NEED

Pick the perfect pumpkin in the patch! Gather your family and join RAA in selecting this year's Jack O' Lantern. For more information, call Dixie S. at 915-237-7648.

Harvest Party

Thursday, October 27, 2005

BMC Gymnasium

Fall festivities will be held during the regular Thursday night alumni meeting. For more information, call Dixie S. at 915-237-7648..

November

Annual Men's Retreat

Friday – Sunday, November 11 – 13, 2005

Wrightwood

A perfect excuse to make s'moores around the campfire and celebrate your sobriety. Plan to attend this popular event! For more information, call Bob H. at 909-820-2964.

Gratitude Dinner

Sunday, November 20, 2005

BMC Gymnasium

A classic dinner with all the trimmings! Mark your calendar, come hungry, and express gratitude for all the blessings in your life. For more information, call Dixie S. at 915-237-7648.

December

Christmas Caroling

Thursday, December 22, 2005

Senior Citizen Home

Help spread the yuletide cheer to our seniors! Professional and amateur voices are welcome. For more information, please Dixie S. at 915-237-7648..

New Year's Eve Party

Saturday, December 31, 2005

BMC Gymnasium

Celebrate your sobriety and the new year together by joining others in recovery for a night of fun. For more information, please call Dixie S. at 915-237-7648..

For more information call 909-558-9224.