

FREE



All 4 Ur

ADDICTION RECOVERY

Vol. VII Issue I Spring 2019

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Referral Resource Guide
Florida / California / Arizona



Letter from the Publisher

I established the All 4 Ur Addiction Recovery Guide in 2013 as a resource magazine for those suffering from the cunning, baffling, and powerful disease of addiction. Our publication provides not only information about the disease, but assistance in locating detox facilities, in and out patient treatment facilities, counseling services, life coaching and more. This directory includes available legal help, sober living facilities, and community services. We supply a list of resources to include free community services, transportation, sober events and activities and more. We offer assistance to family and friends affected by the disease as well.

I have worked in the health care industry for over 10 years, specifically in Chemical Dependency for over five years. My experience includes Peer Counselor, Intake Coordinator, Admissions, and Marketing at several different health departments and treatment centers over the past 10 years. I assisted in developing a new treatment center on the Treasure Coast, establishing the Admissions and Business Development departments. My love for people and serving those in need has resulted in the development of the All 4 Ur Addiction Recovery Guide.

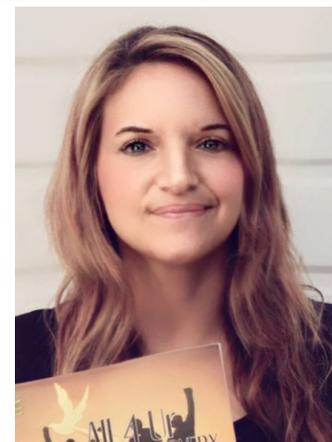
Being affected by a family member with the disease of addiction, I have experienced the pain of addiction in my own family life. I am dedicated to my own personal recovery and to providing help to those in need.

All 4 Ur Addiction Referral Recovery Guide takes great pride in our relationships. Every addict deals with specific issues, and every addict should be treated with compassion and care. Entering recovery is very taxing on the mind and body, but that should not be a deterrent. It is important that the right decision be made for the sake and well-being of the affected suffering addict. To find quality addiction help in Florida, California and Arizona make sure you call professionals. All 4 Ur Addiction has great resources at hand to aid you in making a new beginning. We are a means to help you or a loved one find sobriety, and most importantly, happiness. Our mission for this quarterly resource guide is to bring awareness and resources available to those suffering from addictions and their families who are affected by this disease.

If you have found this resource guide to be helpful, you may visit us online at www.All4UrAddiction.com
Sincerely,

Jenny Clark Spades

info@All4UrAddiction.com



Jenny Clark Spades
Publisher

Important Helplines

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AA Intergroup Orange County, CA	714-556-4555	www.oc-aa.org
NA World Services	818-773-9999	www.na.org
NA Florida Regional	863-683-8224	www.Floridana.org
NA Treasure Coast Area, FL	772-905-4409	www.treasurecoastareana.com
NA New York Area	212-926-6262	www.nycna.org
NA Orange County Area, CA	714-590-2388	www.orangecountyna.org
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NA Nar-Anon Treasure Coast, FL	888-425-2666	http://nar-anon.org/Nar-Anon/Florida.html
OA Anonymous	505-891-2664	www.oa.org
Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous	210-828-7900	www.slaafws.org
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211 For Teenagers	211	www.teen211pbtc.org
Florida Abuse Hotline	800-962-2873	www.dcf.state.fl.us/programs/abuse/
Family Anonymous	847-294-5877	www.familiesanonymous.org
Celebrate Recovery Florida	772-287-6388	www.celebraterecovery.com



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Karina Priest, LMHC

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Adulting

By Karina Priest LMHC

Adulting... a new word.... it means living a life of being a mature and responsible person of adult age. It can sound pretty scary for some people. It means being accountable for your life's choices, and for the decisions you make. It means you can no longer blame others, but that it's time to look in the mirror. It most certainly doesn't mean the end of fun times. Quite the opposite..... it means the beginning of responsible and real fun times. No longer doing things without thinking, but rather making good choices. Doing things you will not need to regret. There are different areas in which we need to become a responsible adult. I'll just address some of the areas that often come up in counseling. Self care....as an adult, you're in charge of keeping your body functioning. That means to stop the negative behaviors, such as use of drugs and alcohol, unprotected sex, lack of needed medical care, to name a few. Also, the start of positive behaviors such as seeing a general dr at least once a year, a Dentist, and getting needed bloodwork, or other needed tests. As an adult, you should know to do these things without being told by anyone. It's part of taking care of yourself. If you're sexually active, you should be seeking proper protection, as well as getting yearly check ups. Unfortunately, there are

many people not using protection, and unknowingly passing on STD's. Other adult responsibilities I hear about that seem to cause difficulties are budgeting, relationships, and spirituality. Needless is to say, as an adult, you need to learn to make a budget for yourself and live within your means. A lack of a clear budget makes people think they have more money than they do, and end up spending more than they make. This is a difficult bad habit to break. There are many APPS available to help you set a clear and good budget. Relationships..... the best suggestion I can give here, is to make sure your personal issues are resolved before you become involved with another person. Your unresolved problems will without a doubt interfere in your relationships. Lastly, spirituality..... you may have grown up in a home with a particular religion or religious view. It's up to you now to choose which way to go. A belief in God and prayer is a great way to move ahead, and very helpful to make good decisions, as you pray about them and put it all in God's hands. GOD... Good Orderly Direction. Adulting is not a bad thing.... it's actually great to get to a point where you can decide how to live your life. Just remember that all choices have consequences. Some are great..... and some choices not so much.



SPECIAL EVENTS



All 4 Ur Addiction Recovery Guide, is not in any way associated with or endorses Any events in any way. And as such, they do not accept responsibility or liability for any events.

Florida

3rd Annual Unity Under the Stars Camp Out

Friday 03/29/2019 – Sunday 03/31/2019
At 2019 River Forest Groupsite 45700 River Forest Blvd, Deland, FL. For more information please visit <http://www.aanorthflorida.org/events/2019-03Dist19Campout.pdf>

NA Step Retreat

Friday 04/12/2019 – Saturday 04/13/2019
At 3076 95th Drive, Live Oak FL. For more information please visit https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YXdy1X_al0VVcMpV_D5rMpN2ZdEDaRBR/view

FUN in the SUN 41

Thursday 04/25/2019 – Sunday 04/28/2019
At Panama City Beach, FL. For more information please visit <http://www.funinthesunconvention.org/home.html>

Spring into Sobriety 2019 Women's Conference

Friday 05/03/2019 – Sunday 05/05/2019
At 425 U.S. 41 Bypass North, Venice FL. For more information please call 941-681-0747 or email: womensis@gmail.com or visit <https://www.sisconference.com/>

89th Leesburg Retreat "CAME TO BELIEVE" Recovery Retreat

Friday 05/03/2019 – Sunday 05/05/2019
At the Life Enrichment Center, Leesburg, FL. For more information please visit https://www.cametobelieve.org/leesburg_fl_

29th Spring Conference – The "Woodstock" of AA – Orlando

Friday 05/24/2019 – Sunday 05/26/2019
At the DoubleTree Orlando East – UCF, 12125 High Tech Ave, Orlando, FL. For more information please visit <http://serenityclubswfl.org/2018/10/19/29th-spring-conference-the-woodstock-of-aa-orlando-2019/>

California

39th Annual Woman To Woman 2019

Friday 04/05/2019 – Sunday 04/07/2019
At the Sacramento Marriott Rancho Cordova, 11211 Point E Drive, Rancho Cordova, CA. For more information please visit <http://www.ncwomantowoman.org/program.html>

NCCNA XLI HYATT REGENCY SACRAMENTO

Thursday 04/18/2019 – Sunday 04/21/2019
At the Sacramento Convention Center 1400 J St. Sacramento, CA. For more information please visit https://www.norcalna.org/pdf/NCCNA%2041%20Brochure_8.5x11_FINAL_web.pdf

To get your event listed free, email us at info@all4uraddiction.com

San Diego Spring Roundup

Thursday 04/18/2019 – Sunday 04/21/2019
At the Town and Country Resort, 500 Hotel Circle, San Diego, CA. For more information please visit <http://www.sandiegospringroundup.com/>

34th Annual OCAAC Convention

Friday 04/19/2019 – Sunday 04/21/2019
At the Hilton Orange County Costa Mesa, CA. For more information please visit www.ocaac.org

IAAMC 2019

Friday 04/26/2019 – Sunday 04/28/2019
At the Los Angeles Airport Marriott Hotel, 5855 W Century Blvd, Los Angeles, CA. For more information please visit <https://www.iaamc2019.org/>

GELAACNA V

Friday 05/03/2019 – Sunday 05/05/2019
At the DoubleTree by Hilton Whittier, 7320 Greenleaf Ave, Whittier, CA. For more information please visit https://todayna.org/wpactivities/mc-events/gelaacna-v-2/?mc_id=2356

Arizona

32nd Annual Spring Woman to Woman" a daily reprieve"

Friday 03/22/2019 – Sunday 03/24/2019
At the Tubac Golf Resort, 1 Avenida de Otero, Tubac, AZ. For more information please visit <https://sites.google.com/view/springw2w>

2019 Roundup

Friday 04/12/2019 – Sunday 04/14/2019
At the Verde Valley Fairgrounds - Cottonwood, AZ. For more information please visit <http://www.verdevalleyroundup.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/aaFlyer-01.png>

24th ANNUAL APACHE LAKE ROUNDUP

Friday 04/12/2019 – Sunday 04/14/2019
At the Apache Lake Marina & Resort, 229.5 MILE MARK-ER, ROOSEVELT, AZ. For more information please visit <http://dev.caarizona.org/pdf/events/alru.pdf>

4th Annual Sedona Camp Out

Thursday 05/09/2019 – Sunday 05/12/2019
In Sedona, AZ. For more information please call Frankie 602-434-6059 or visit http://www.arizona-na.org/events/flyers/20190509_sedona.pdf

Tri-State 35th Annual Round-Up

Thursday 05/16/2019 – Sunday 05/19/2019
At the Don Laughlin's Riverside Resort Hotel & Casino, 1650 S Casino Dr, Laughlin, NV. For more information please visit https://localendar.com/event?DAM=PublishedEvent&m=417711&event_id=356&calendar_id=417711&more_info=N&export_date=May%2016,%202019&category=104

ARCNA XXXIII
 Friday 05/24/2019 – Sunday 05/26/2019
 In Scottsdale, AZ. For more information please visit
<https://arcna.arizona-na.org/>

2019 Flagstaff RoundUp
 Friday 05/31/2019 – Sunday 06/02/2019
 In Flagstaff, AZ. For more information please visit <http://flagstaffroundup.com/>



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Natural Medicine & Detox

By Malissa Stawicki

Natural Health Advocate at Natural Medicine and Detox

Alcohol and drug addiction is an epidemic in AZ and throughout the USA, and is destroying many individuals and families lives. There are many ways a person can become addicted to alcohol or drugs but what's really important is how to address the problem. What is the best way to help a person get off and stay off harmful substances?

Addiction is a serious problem and can even be life threatening so finding the right "professional" approach and program is very important. There are different levels of care needed for someone struggling with alcohol or drug addiction so where does one start? Look for a comprehensive program that offers a holistic approach that includes the body, mind and spirit.

If you have private insurance or personal funds available to pay for professional care, two great options are Inpatient and Outpatient rehabilitation programs.

Inpatient rehab program may include the initial detoxification process and offer 30, 60 or 90 day's stay. When choosing a rehab center, look for one that offers a holistic approach, one that strengthens the immune system. Nutritional IV's and oral supplementation can help aid in recovery and lessen withdraw symptoms. Other helpful therapies are acupuncture, homeopathy, hypnotherapy, infrared saunas, individual and group counseling, meditation, yoga and or 12-step.

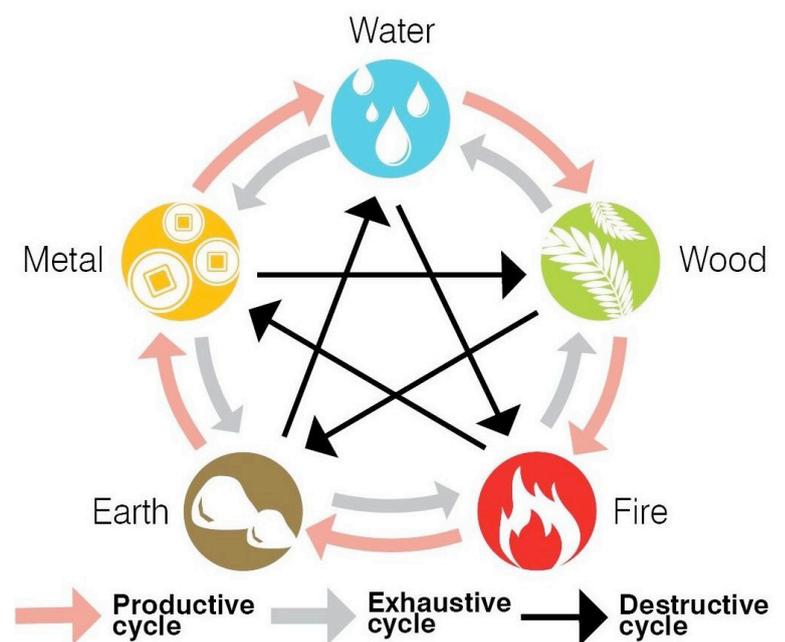
Outpatient program is ideal for someone who can't take time away from their job or has children at home. Always choose a comprehensive program that offers nutritional support, acupuncture, homeopathy, hypnotherapy, infrared saunas, individual and group counseling, meditation, yoga and 12-step.

If you do not have private insurance or money to pay out of pocket, there are programs that accept public insurance such as Access. Most of them are detox only and are not very holistic. However if this is your only choice, it can be the safest option.

Alcohol abuse is one of the most difficult substances to detoxify from. Seizures are risks associated with alcohol detox. Benzos are also very difficult to get off as brain chemistry that has to balance out and seizures may occur. Opiate addicts may feel like they are going to die when coming off the drug and thus often turn to other drugs for help such as suboxone.

Dr. Rebecca Gustavson is a Naturopathic Doctor in Northern CA, she who works a lot with addiction as well as chronic condition. This is what she said about addiction, "If you are on the Titanic in one chair and you think by switching chairs you are going to be alright, you still are going down. Taking another drug like suboxone to get off opiates is just prolonging it because at some point you're going to feel the pain. Opiate detox is painful and it's hard. That's why we use nutritional IV therapies to support and help manage the pain".

malissa@NaturalMedicineAndDetox.com



Staying Sober Is Worth It In The Long Run

By Stan Popovich

Some alcoholics have a difficult time maintaining sobriety. It can be challenging to deal with the temptation of not drinking alcohol especially when your friends get on your case. Here are six ways to maintain your sobriety and remain alcohol free:

1. Learn how to stay sober

Your best bet is to learn the techniques that will help you remain sober. It is important to be aware of what you should and should not do when trying to maintain your sobriety. Talk to other addicts to see what they do to avoid alcohol.

2. Take part in a support group

Join a local support group to meet other people who are in your situation. Get to know the other members of the group and try to learn new ways in dealing with your mental health issues. Many people will be willing to help you if you ask for some assistance.

3. Work with a professional

Find a person that you can work with who will help you to stay sober. You can find someone at your local treatment facility or you can talk to your doctor for more information. You can also talk to an addiction counselor to see if they know of anyone who can help you.

4. Learn to take it one day at a time

Instead of worrying about how you will get through the rest of the week or coming month, try to focus on today. Each day can provide us with different opportunities to learn new things and that includes learning how to deal with your problems. Focus on the present and stop trying to predict what may happen next week.

5. Don't give in to peer pressure

Do not let your friends and relatives pressure you into drinking alcohol. Politely say that you do not want to drink and stay firm in making your decision. Don't let others pressure you into drinking when you are trying to remain sober.

6. Use the help of God

Talk to God as if you were talking to a friend. Read faith-oriented material and pray hard. Be persistent and be open in the avenues that God or a Higher Power of your understanding may provide to you in solving your problems. It is not always easy, but try to trust that something greater than yourself is in control and will help you as long as you make an effort.

BIOGRAPHY:

Stan Popovich is the author of "A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear Using Psychology, Christianity and Non Resistant Methods". Stan's managing fear book has become very popular with over 300 positive book reviews and counting. Please read the many book reviews of Stan's popular book by going to Stan's website at <http://www.managingfear.com/>

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Combat Narcissists' and Abusers' Primary Weapon: Projection

By Darlene Lancer, JD, MFT

Projection is a defense mechanism commonly used by abusers, including people with narcissistic or borderline personality disorder and addicts. Basically, they say, "It's not me, it's you!" When we project, we are defending ourselves against unconscious impulses or traits, either positive or negative, that we've denied in ourselves. Instead we attribute them to others. Our thoughts or feelings about someone or something are too uncomfortable to acknowledge. In our mind we believe that the thought or emotion originates from that other person.

We might imagine "She hates me," when we actually hate her. We might think someone else is angry or judgmental, yet are unaware that we are. Similar to projection is externalization, when we blame others for our problems rather than taking responsibility for our part in causing them. It makes us feel like a victim. Addicts often blame their drinking or drug use on their spouse or boss.

Our coping strategies reflect our emotional maturity. Projection is considered a primitive defense because it distorts or ignores reality in order for us to function and preserve our ego. It's reactive, without forethought, and is defense children use. When used by adults, it reveals less emotional maturity and indicates impaired emotional development.

Boundaries

Klein famously said that a mother must be able to love her child even as it bites her breast, meaning that a good mother, like a good therapist, with appropriate boundaries and self-esteem, won't react to the anger and projected badness from her baby. She will love her baby nonetheless. If instead

we had a mother who reacted with anger or withdrawal, her boundaries were weak, and a child's are naturally porous. We absorbed our mother's reaction, as if it was a negative statement about our worth and lovability. We developed weak boundaries and shame ourselves. The mother-infant bond may have become negative. The same thing can happen with a father's reactions, because a child needs to feel loved and accepted unconditionally by both parents.

We can grow up with shame-based beliefs about ourselves and are set up to be manipulated and abused. Moreover, if one of our parents is a narcissist or abuser, his or her feelings and needs, particularly emotional needs, will come first. As a result of shame, we learn ours are unimportant. We adapt and become codependent.

Self-Judgment

It's common for codependents to have internalized or toxic shame and strong inner critic. As a result, we will find fault with others just as we do with ourselves, often about the same characteristics. We might project our critic onto others and think they're criticizing us, when in fact it's our own self-judgment that is being activated. We assume people will judge and not accept us, because we judge and don't accept ourselves. The more we accept ourselves, the more comfortable we are with others. We're not self-conscious thinking that they're judging us.

Declining Self-Esteem

In an adult relationship with an abuser or addict, you may not believe you have any rights. Naturally, you go along or put your partner's needs and feelings, sometimes self-sacrificing at great lengths to please and avoid conflict. Your self-esteem and

independence steadily decline. As your partner behaves like a king or queen, you become increasingly dependent, even though your needs aren't being fulfilled. This allows your partner to easily manipulate, abuse, and exploit you. Your self-doubt grows as your partner projects more shame and criticism onto you.

Meanwhile, you accept the blame and try to be more understanding in the relationship. In vain attempts to win approval and stay connected, you tread on eggshells, fearful of your partner's displeasure and criticism. You worry what he or she will think or do and become preoccupied with the relationship. You stay to prevent your greatest fear—abandonment and rejection and losing hope of finding lasting love. In time, you may believe that no one would want you or that the grass isn't greener. Your partner might even say that in an attempt to project their shame and fear onto you. After whittling down your self-esteem, you're prime to believe it's true.

Projective Identification

When we have a strong sense of self and self-esteem, we have healthy boundaries. When someone projects something onto us, it bounces off. We don't take it personally, because we realize it's untrue or merely a statement about the speaker. A good slogan to remember is QTIP, "Quit taking it personally!"

However, when we have low self-esteem or are sensitive about a specific issue, such as our looks or intelligence, we are susceptible to believing a projection as a fact. We introject the projection. This is because internally we agree with it. It sticks like a magnet, and we believe it's true. Then we react to the shaming and compound

our relationship problems. Doing so validates the abusers' ideas about us and gives them authority and control. We're sending the message that they have power over our self-esteem and the right to approve of us.

Responding to Projection

A projector can exert enormous pressure on you to accept the projection. If you're empathic, you're more open, less psychologically defended. If you also have poor boundaries, as described above, you may absorb a projection more easily and identify with them as your own trait.

Understanding how projective identification works is crucial for self-protection. Recognizing the defense can be a valuable tool, for it's a window into the unconscious mind of an abuser. We can actually experience what he or she is feeling and thinking. Armed with this knowledge, if someone shames us, we realize that he or she is projecting and reacting to his or her own shame. It can give us empathy, which is helpful, provided we have good self-esteem and empathy for ourselves! Building self-esteem by disarming our inner critic is our first defense against projection.

Still, you may feel baffled about what to do. When someone projects onto you, simply set a boundary. This gives the projection back to the speaker. You're establishing a force field – an invisible

wall. Say something like one of the following:

“I don't see it that way.”

“I disagree.”

“I don't take responsibility for that.”

“That's your opinion.”

It's important not to argue or defend yourself, because that gives credence to the projector's false reality. If the abuser persists, you can say, “We simply disagree,” and leave the conversation. The projector will have to stew in his or her own negative feelings. See “Do's and Don'ts in Confronting Abuse.” Learn how to communicate with a narcissist in *Dealing with a Narcissist* and how to overcome toxic shame in *Conquering Shame and Codependency*.

Biography:

Darlene Lancer, M.A., MFT, J.D. brings a wide range of professional and life experience to her practice as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and relationship and codependency expert. She wrote Codependency for Dummies and Conquering Shame and Codependency: 8 Steps to Freeing the True You. For more information please visit her website <https://www.whatiscodependency.com/> or contact her directly at 310.458.0016 or email her info@DarleneLancer.com.

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12 Step Recovery – Why It Works & Why It Doesn't Always Work

By Jeff Rounds

I have been blessed, with a very addictive personality. In my life, I have had many chemical dependencies, have abused alcohol and several illegal substances. However, my primary addiction was the approval of others, Codependency. I experienced a great deal of growth getting a sponsor and being an active member of Alanon (recovery for the friends and family of addicts).

Many people do not realize, dealing with an addict when they are consumed by their addiction, triggers empathetic people and we become part of their problem. Always trying to fix them, get them to stop hurting themselves, we stop taking care of ourselves and start enabling the addicts.

The main benefit for anyone in recovery, is accountability. When we attend meetings, we are in a safe place where we can talk about our problems. Often, there are members who have a great deal of experience with working the steps and when they share, they admit how their thinking was wrong and how recovery helps them realign with who they really are. When a healthy member is open and honest about their faults, it gives everyone else in the room permission to admit having that same behavior or similar. This act of mutual confession, is very healing and we learn to place the focus back on ourselves.

Sadly, that is not always the case. If someone in recovery only goes to meetings, they will never know the true benefit of the program. It is imperative that we find a sponsor and actually work the steps.

Those who fail to do so, become stuck on Step 1; they feel better about themselves talking and never find the courage to change anything they are doing. Week after week, members with 10, 20, 30 years of recovery and more, simply come into complain. Each share becomes a copy of the last with only minor details changing. Completely unwilling to admit their own part in the sickness, they use the meetings to develop a sense of “Better Than” other people.

Another factor in recovery, is the rules and traditions. People blindly accept the rules and traditions and this limits what help can be offered in meetings. Literature and resources that are not specifically recognized by the organization, are not allowed to be share despite their relevance and effectiveness.

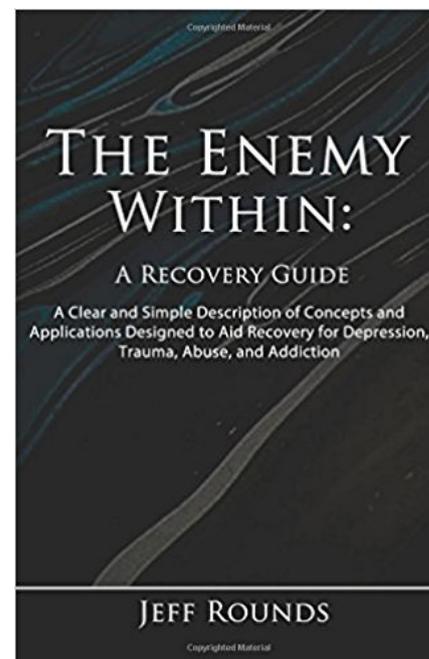
In this way, 12 Step recovery becomes somewhat of a religion with everyone agree to practice the program a certain way.

Overall, I have nothing but respect and gratitude for 12 Step Recovery and the wonderful people I was able to connect with. I recommend it as a starting place

for any type of addiction and many other forms of mental disorder. At the same time, my advice would be to respect their traditions, but do not limit yourself to just one thing. If it is your intention to feel better about yourself, your life, your relationship; use every means available and stick with the ones that work. Acceptance, is the key to all personal growth... when things in our life are difficult, keeping an open and accepting mind will lead you to all the right places. Step one does not mean failure, it simply means we are willing to learn something new, “We admit that we are powerless, and our lives have become unmanageable”

There is Grace in Surrender, may my words serve you well.

Namaste – Jeff Rounds



Here's How Much it Cost One Woman to Fund Her Drug Abuse, Then Get Sober

By *Desiree Stennett*

The first time Amanda McKiernan took drugs intravenously, she was sitting on the edge of her then-boyfriend's bed. At 21, she was nervous but ready for a stronger high. She had used opioids in the past but had stuck to swallowing the pale blue, 30mg Roxi-codone pills whole or snorting them crushed. This was different. "It was an overwhelming, foreign feeling," McKiernan, now 30, told *The Penny Hoarder*. "This really strong drug just hits you all of a sudden. You just feel it throughout your whole body. I remember panicking for a minute. "It passes, but then that feeling is what it becomes about," she added. "That's the feeling you're trying to get to. It's terrifying at first, but then that's all you're after."

It's impossible to quantify everything McKiernan lost each time she got high in her 10 years of misusing drugs — a relationship with her younger sister, lifelong friendships, the career in photography she dreamed of as a high schooler. It's easier to measure those years, and her three years of sobriety since, in cash. That high cost her \$15.

Cough Syrup, Then Cocaine, Then Opioids

Her addiction didn't start with opioids. When McKiernan was a 14-year-old cheerleader,

a friend told her if she took enough cough medicine, she'd feel a buzz. After that, it was marijuana. By 16, she was using cocaine. For her first six months on the drug, she and a friend would spend \$60 on 1 gram of cocaine every Friday. That would be enough to last them the weekend. By the end of her junior year of high school, that went up to 2 grams. Her senior year, it was 3 1/2 grams, or an "eight ball." That would last them the week.

She and the friend she used with had their daily ritual: They both caught the bus to school, and whoever got there first would wait for the other in the bathroom near the art classrooms. They could usually count on that hallway being deserted. The walls and floors in the small two-stall bathroom were covered in white tiles. The first stall was larger — big enough for both girls to fit inside. "We definitely tried to make sure — if at all possible — that no one was in there. But if someone was, we would either flush the toilet or turn the sink on, so if we were snorting a line, they couldn't hear it." They wouldn't talk much in there. They had to be quick if they were going to make it to class. At lunchtime, they met up again — this time in the concrete outdoor bathroom near the cafeteria.

Estimating conservatively, McKiernan and her friend used more than \$9,300 worth of cocaine during their final two years of high school. That doesn't include the money she spent on Parrot Bay rum nearly every weekend or the times she was short on cash and someone else

would cover the cost. It doesn't even include her summertime drug use, which was often more frequent but varied too widely to calculate. To fund the drug abuse, McKiernan worked part time at a grocery store, and then at a pizza shop. Her friend worked as well, and the two split the cost of the drugs.

After high school, McKiernan's drug use rose and fell depending on how much money she was making, and which friends she saw most often. First, she stuck to cocaine. Then she tried meth and crack, but neither became a habit. Later, she tried muscle relaxers. By 21, her drug use grew to include heroin and powerful prescription painkillers. Prescription opioids and illegal opioids like heroin caused more than 42,000 overdose deaths nationwide in 2016, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported. Last year, President Donald Trump said the ubiquitous cases of opioid addiction and deaths had become a national health emergency. The first time McKiernan tried the Roxi-codone pills, she balked at the \$15-per-pill price tag. But then, "I did it and it was so strong, and I thought, 'This is why this costs so much money,'" McKiernan said. Within a year, she was shooting up Roxi-codone with the help of her boyfriend, who would eventually father her daughter Calie, 8.

At Least \$300 a Day on Drugs

When McKiernan was addicted to drugs, the responsibility of caring for Calie fell on her parents. Tina Russell/*The Penny Hoarder* By 22, McKiernan was a single mom to a 6-month-old daughter. She took a job as a dancer at a South Florida strip club.

There, she could make more than \$1,000 in a single night. Suddenly flush with cash, McKiernan and her friends had more access to drugs. She went from one pill at a time to buying 30 pills at once. At the time, that was only enough to last three days. Then she moved on to the Dilaudid pills, an even stronger opioid that cost her up to \$30 each. She spent two years taking between six and 10 Dilaudid pills a day.

While working at the strip club, McKiernan said she got close to one of her regulars, a



wealthy South Florida businessman. Soon, she stopped going to the club, because he covered her expenses. He rented her an apartment in a building near the beach. He bought her a series of high-end cars that she either wrecked or failed to maintain. And every time she saw him, he'd give her money that she would spend on drugs.

One weekend, he gave her \$14,000 and she spent every penny of it on a hotel suite, drugs and alcohol for a party she had with a few friends. On an average day, she spent about \$300 on Roxicodone, Dilaudid or other drugs.

A conservative estimate of the cost of her regular drug abuse over the span of a decade is nearly \$385,000. That number does not include the amount she spent on alcohol or the periods she spent using less expensive street drugs. During those times, the cost of each drug and the length of time she used it varied too widely to come up with an accurate estimate. Still, those costs were only slightly lower. When she was tight on cash and couldn't afford the painkillers, she'd get heroin instead. That could cost between \$80 and \$120 a day. Except for a few brief stints in rehab — one lasting 24 hours and the other 48 — that were each thwarted when the withdrawal symptoms kicked in, McKiernan didn't give quitting a serious try until she was arrested in Martin County, Florida, with pills, marijuana and a crack pipe in her car in 2015. She was 27 and faced a felony drug possession charge.

The Cost of Getting Sober

To avoid a felony conviction, McKiernan agreed to enroll in drug court, a substance abuse treatment program for first-time offenders. The agreement was that if she made it through the program successfully, her charges would be dismissed. But as she soon learned, sobriety comes with costs, too.

McKiernan went through two rounds of drug court. The first lasted about four months. Each week, she had to pay \$30 to cover the cost of mandatory drug testing and another \$30 for counseling. If she missed or failed a drug test, she was off to jail. That happened twice. The first time, she spent three nights in jail, and the second time it was two weeks.

"I used to pray for her to get arrested," McKiernan's mother, Pam, said. "If she's in jail, she can't do drugs. She won't die." After being jailed the second time, McKiernan had two options left: Spend a court-ordered 10 months in a Pembroke Pines, Florida, rehabilitation facility for mothers fighting addiction or spend that time in jail. She chose rehab, where she could be with her daughter.

For the next 10 months, McKiernan's parents bore the brunt of the cost of their daughter's addiction. Every Friday, they drove the 90 miles south from their home in Hobe Sound, Florida, to Pembroke Pines to see McKiernan and pick up Calie. Then every Sunday, they would drive down again to bring Calie back to her mother. It cost about \$45 in gas for the two round trips each weekend.

Over the span of 10 months, that's \$1,800 in gas alone. On average, her parents spent another \$100 a week paying for food and clothing for McKiernan and her daughter, while also making sure Calie had toys. That's another \$4,000. But the thousands of dollars they spent in the 10 months McKiernan was in rehab was just the most recent of the expenses her parents took on from her addiction.

"The emotional part you can imagine," Pam McKiernan said. "Lots of sleepless nights, lots of crying, lots of begging... But there's the financial part, of course. We took care of Calie most of the time. So we had the extra expense of that."

Before Amanda McKiernan went to rehab, most of the responsibility and the expense of child care for Calie fell on her parents' shoulders. Day care alone cost between \$85 and \$120 each week for four years — more than \$17,000 total.

Pam McKiernan estimates she and her husband spent at least an additional \$10,000 helping to care for Calie and buying groceries for Amanda over the years. And the expenses didn't stop once McKiernan left rehab. She immediately had to begin her second round of drug court. That meant another six months of drugs tests and counseling sessions for \$60 each week. Her parents covered the cost for the first three months before McKiernan got a job at Dunkin' Donuts. Her minimum wage pay was nothing compared to what she had pulled in as a dancer.

If she made that kind of money now, she probably wouldn't be sleeping in a bottom bunk bed in her parents' two-bedroom house. Her daughter sleeps on the top and her sister sleeps in a separate twin bed in the same room. McKiernan said she visited her old strip club a couple times after she completed rehab and drug court. "I would have to be high to work there, and I didn't want to get high," she said, making it clear that even if sobriety meant a financial setback, it was worth it.

The Lasting Costs Are Financial, Emotional

This summer, McKiernan was invited to speak to a group of people in drug court. Some were graduating, while others were just starting. Among them was a graduate who managed to stay sober even after her sister's overdose death and another just starting out who wasn't sure if she'd be able to go without using for the next two weeks before her drug court officially began.

"I'm scared for them and their families," McKiernan said after she spoke to the graduates who

would no longer be required to take weekly court-ordered drug tests. "Tonight is going to be a hard night."

For McKiernan, the past three years of sobriety have been about slowly forgiving herself, regaining the trust of her parents, rebuilding the relationship with her sister and making up for all the years she lost. Weeks before her drug court speech, she quit her job at Dunkin' Donuts. She graduated from a medical assisting program and got a new job that pays a bit better. She still can't move out of her parents' home yet, but that's OK. She doesn't want to rush things and get in over her head.

Her father is proud. He said he never thought he'd get to see her graduate from the medical assisting program. He couldn't be happier about the change he's seen in his oldest daughter. The costs her parents bear now are minor in comparison to the years prior — their electric bill is a bit high because of the extra people at home.

But they don't focus on that. Instead, they revel in having their daughter back. They work quickly to build up their retirement funds now that they have the money to do so. "You don't see the pain and the hurt that you're causing while you're in it," McKiernan said. "Now, I have a kid. I would never want to go through what my parents went through — just not having any control and just wanting and wanting and wanting your kid back, and you can't do anything about it."

Occasionally, McKiernan will drive past where she was arrested or a place she used to use drugs. She has even crossed paths with her old dealer. He was happy to see her sober and didn't try to offer her drugs.

These run-ins with her old life were tough at first. Now, they simply remind her of how far she has come.

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Recovery

By Shelby Booth

*Not too long ago that was to be my life, or so I thought.
But the things I desire most cannot be bought.
So before I mess up everything and get caught.
I have to remind myself that I still have a shot.*

*I was so broken, in the pits of despair.
I would look up to the stars and just stare.
I had no clue if this time would be different.
Please bear with me, I need y'all to listen.*

*I'm not a perfect person and I don't have answers.
But the disease is killing me as if it was cancer.
I feel trapped in a cage, dying to break free.
Free from what? That what is a who! And that who is me.*

*I have no desire to use drugs today.
But there's always tomorrow, and tomorrow I just may.*

*I'm an addict when I say I am.
However, I can recover if I reach for a hand.
Some say never alone, never again.
But when will something change within?*

*Where do I run to get away from the person I hate the most?
You see, her and I are too close. She lives inside me.
Trying to cover the ones that bleed.
And I don't know her name, but she drives me insane!*

*Some days, I pray I don't wake up.
On those days, my mind is closed shut.
Then it says I should see the world through a new set of eyes,
Because on this last relapse there were new kinds of highs.*

*In the end I'm stuck with the whys of my choices.
Then I realized we as addicts have voices.*

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