

# NEWSLETTER

*"Your willingness to wrestle with your demons will cause your angels to sing." - August Wilson*



## THE AWAKENING

Have you ever woken up wondering what the hell is going on with your life? Lots of people do. It happens to all of us at some point in our lives, and often multiple times. Joseph Campbell assured us of this uncertainty, saying, "If the path before you is clear, you're probably on someone else's."

Between everyday life responsibilities and the daily upkeep of simply living life, it can seem like we don't have the time or space to examine the direction of our life -- that is, until we are forced to. We may be going about our business when suddenly we are struck with misfortune. We lose our job. Someone close to us gets sick or passes. We are faced with some kind of major loss that is often unexpected. Our lives aren't the same and now we are faced with making new choices. What can we do when life changes suddenly, or when we know it's time to change?

There are plenty of phrases for these occurrences in our lives. Call it mid-life crisis, a personal breakdown or a spiritual awakening.

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THE CRANE



# BINGE DRINKING INTENSIFIES IN U.S.

Adults throughout the US are drinking more and more during episodes of binge drinking. This pattern of imbibing alcohol is already dangerous and increasing the amount of alcohol inevitably leads to more serious consequences.

## THE AFFECTED GROUPS

Research shows the majority of this increase takes place in specific wealth brackets. Poorer and less educated people seem to be drinking much more than in previous years. Americans without a high school diploma saw an increase of 296 drinks per year from 646 to 942. Those with household incomes lower than \$25,000 saw an increase of 130 drinks per year from 543 to 673.

## BINGE DRINKING

The growth of binge drinking among these groups mirrors a growing popularity of binge drinking in general. Health organizations define a binge as 5 or more drinks for men and 4 or more drinks for women within one two-hour event. Whether that event is a party, bar crawl, or drinking at home, the drinking has to take place in 1 continuous period of time.

These numbers may seem surprisingly low, and that surprise is a product of the drinking culture developing in the US. The ubiquity of alcohol and its expected place at social events gives people the chance to overuse it frequently. The uptick in binge drinking throughout the US may be linked to higher mortality rates and lower age expectancy, especially among poorer POPULATIONS.

## PROBLEM DRINKING AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Alcohol and poverty often feed off of and support each other. Poorer neighborhoods show increased levels of bingeing and problematic drinking. These relationships register more significantly in men rather than

women. The gender difference in drinking has been studied for years and the gap may be narrowing in modern times.

The relationship between race and socioeconomic standing may also play a role in this interaction. Studies including race as a variable found that, in communities with wealth disparities associated with race, the poorer group suffered even more greatly with problem drinking and bingeing. These effects showed the strongest connection with poorer Black and Hispanic communities near richer, white communities.

## THE DANGER OF BINGE DRINKING

This pattern of drinking can lead to deadly consequences. Drunk driving, alcohol poisoning, and more occur more frequently during episodes of binge drinking. If you're struggling with the effect of dangerous alcohol consumption, don't hesitate to reach out. Whether it's your use disorder or that of a loved one, there are resources available to help heal.



*By Michael Muldoon*

## COLD HARD FACTS

- 13 is the average age children experiment with drugs.
- 50% of all suicides, and over 50% of all violent crimes are cause by alcohol and/or drugs.
- Over 50% of all traffic accidents involve alcohol or drugs.
- 80% of all domestic violence reports are somehow related to alcohol or drugs.
- An estimated 60% of poor work performance can be tied back to drugs or alcohol.
- 34 of 35 alcoholics have never received treatment.
- More that \$600 billion is lost annually due to substance abuse.



## PET ADDICTION

Animal hoarding is a complex issue and occurs when an individual is housing more animals than he or she can adequately care for. It is a complex issue that encompasses mental health, animal welfare and public safety concerns. Animal hoarding is defined by an inability to provide even minimal standards of nutrition, sanitation, shelter and veterinary care—often resulting in animal starvation, illness and death. In the majority of cases, animal hoarders believe they are helping their animals and deny this inability to provide minimum care. Not everyone who has multiple animals is an animal hoarder. There are several signs that may indicate someone is an animal hoarder:

- They have numerous animals and may not know the total number of animals in their care.
- Their home is deteriorated (i.e., dirty windows, broken furniture, holes in the wall and floor, extreme clutter).
- There is a strong smell of ammonia, and floors may be covered with dried feces, urine, vomit, etc.
- The individual is isolated from the community and appears to neglect him- or herself.
- Fleas and vermin are present.

- Animals are emaciated, lethargic and not well-socialized.
- The individual insists that all of their animals are happy and healthy—even when there are clear signs of distress and illness.

Every year in the United States, a quarter of a million animals fall victim to hoarding. Animals collected range from cats and dogs to reptiles, rodents, birds, exotics and even farm animals. Animal hoarding is covered implicitly under every state's animal cruelty statute, which typically requires caretakers to provide sufficient food, water and veterinary care. However, only two states, Illinois and Hawaii, currently have statutory language specifically addressing animal hoarding. In most cases, criminal prosecution of animal hoarding can be a difficult process and may not be the most effective route, since hoarders are often emotionally troubled rather than criminally inclined.

If you think someone you know is struggling with animal hoarding, pick up the phone and call your local humane law enforcement department, police department or animal welfare organization to initiate the process. A phone call may be the first step in getting the individual—and the animals—the help they need.

*From ASPCA*



**DID YOU KNOW:** Caffeine Intoxication is classified in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 5th ed. It is the consequence of very high doses of caffeine consumption, caffeine intoxication is marked by symptoms including restlessness, nervousness, insomnia, flushed face, gastrointestinal disturbance, muscle twitching, rambling thoughts and speech, cardiac rhythm disturbances, periods of inexhaustibility, and psychomotor agitation. Treatment is available. Visit Clayton Center's website: [claytoncenter.org](http://claytoncenter.org) or call 770.473.2494 for information.

# THE AWAKENING

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I believe major life changes are invitations to grow. They are times that require us to move beyond what we know, into the unknown, and to expand who we are. It makes us go deeper, wondering, "Who am I? What is my true purpose?"

During these times, we may be at a total loss as to what to do next. Life is uncertain. It can be uncomfortable, but it's not necessarily a bad place to be. Of course our ego likes to "know" everything and be in control. But when we realize this isn't true, we might find ourselves back at square one. When we're at a crossroads, transitioning into a new phase of our life, it's important to be totally honest with yourself, feel your true feelings, and let yourself unwind and let go. Life changes are a time of healing and self-introspection. Gaining perspective is key. It often makes the difference between resisting or accepting the new changes that are happening in your life.

Life changes as we change. It's a natural part of life. Accepting these inevitable changes are instrumental to our personal health and happiness. Making new decisions can be challenging. We tend to fear whether or not we are making the "right" decision, as if the decision we make would spell the end of our life and career. However, it is less about the result of our decision than it is the quality of presence

and care we take for ourselves through the process. Learn to nurture yourself through life changes. Forgive yourself and anyone else for what's happened. Let self-love be your guiding principle. Ask yourself, "If I really loved myself, would I choose this? Is this what I truly want?"



*By Meditation Coach Sura*

## BERNICE'S CORNER

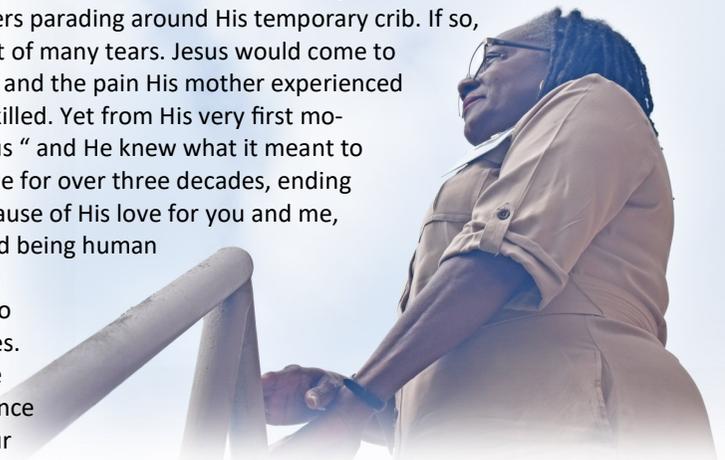
"the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us.")

A stable? What a place to give birth to the Messiah! The smells and sounds of a barnyard were our Savior's first human experience. Like other babies, He may even have cried at the sounds of the animals and the strangers parading around His temporary crib. If so, they would have been the first of many tears. Jesus would come to know human loss and sorrow, and the pain His mother experienced as she saw Him tortured and killed. Yet from His very first moments, Jesus was, "God with us" and He knew what it meant to be human. This would continue for over three decades, ending at His death on the cross. Because of His love for you and me, Jesus became fully human, and being human allows Him to identify with us.

Never again can we say that no one understands us, Jesus does.

May the light that entered the world that night cast its brilliance into the deepest corners of our

souls, giving us the peace on earth of which the angels spoke so long ago. I am thankful for this very moment sharing with all of you!!!!





# 10 WAYS TO GAIN PERSPECTIVE

## 1. Get Away

Consider

taking a

break by going on a retreat or traveling somewhere new. Being away from the content of your everyday life helps you get out of the rut and gives you space to clear your mind. New faces and fresh experiences do wonders for gaining perspective.

## 2. Treat Yourself

This is not to be confused with retail therapy or maxing out your credit card. This is about practicing true self-care. What experiences would allow you to feel greater self-love and nurturing? It could be a massage or a lazy afternoon at the beach. What feels most healthful and loving for you right now?

## 3. Look At Your Trajectory

Take a moment to close your eyes and imagine what your life would look like 10 years from now, 20 years from now? What would it look like if you had stayed on the same path? Notice how you feel. Does it give you a sense of happiness, excitement or peace?

## 4. Be In Good Company

During life changes, it's important to surround yourself with pure-hearted spirits who will genuinely support you in your path. This includes yourself and your own self-talk. If you were your own best friend, what would you tell yourself?

## 5. Spend Time In Nature

Nature is the ultimate healer. It has a rhythm of it's own that is deeply nurturing. Take long walks. Take your shoes off and lie down on the ground. Let yourself be alone in nature. Notice what you observe through nature, how you feel and what arises in your consciousness.

## 6. Do Something Fun

Allowing yourself to enjoy and receive pleasure in life creates new pathways for openness and inspiration. It elevates your mood

and energy, giving you greater perspective on what happened and what's possible. It frees up stuck energy.

## 7. Take A Bird's Eye View

From 1,000 feet above, imagine taking a snapshot of your past/present/future in all directions. What are the pathways and patterns you notice about the direction your life has taken? Look at your whole life as though you were watching a movie, staying detached and neutral. What would you tell yourself 300 years from now about your life situation? Is it terribly serious?

## 8. Tune In

Take time to be quiet and meditative. Open yourself to receiving any guidance or new information about your life. Simply having the intention to be open to receiving guidance can often set off a new stream of experiences naturally leading you to your next steps. Trust in the process of life. Trust what feels right in your heart.

## 9. Be Healthy

When we're under great amounts of stress, it's easy to fall off the bandwagon, stop exercising and eat heavier foods. This can throw us off balance. Staying healthy can help us make the right decisions. Notice exercise sounds a lot like "exorcise." Moving can help us purge our tension and inner demons. Being healthy keeps us in flow.

## 10. Spend Time Alone

When you're going through major life changes, being alone may be the last thing you really want to do. Often times we want to fill up empty space we feel with TV or an overly-chatty friend. Being around too many people and ideas can drown out the still, inner voice that resides within you when you are quiet. Solitude gives you the space and clarity to see what's really true for you.

*Written By Meditation Coach Sura*

## PATRICK'S STORY: GETTING TO THE ROOT

"There's a couple different ways that obsession happens. Some obsessions are just unwanted, repetitive thoughts – they feel like a really intense craving. Then there's the type that happens but doesn't have that feeling behind it. It's just a thought. For me, I could be driving down the road, completely sane, thinking, 'Oh I'll just stop for a couple beers.' And it could end up ruining my life."

Patrick's road to recovery has been long and difficult, but in the end, rewarding. His substance use began when he was a teenager. And like many types of progress, his improvement did not always happen in a straight line. "I got in a fight with a cop at 16 years old. My first rehab was at 17, got kicked out of it after 10 days, then back in there 3 months later. I had 6 or 7 months sober, maybe even a little bit longer. Then I went back out and drank. "I got sober again when I was 24. During that period of time I had 11 years' sobriety. At 35, my wife and I went through a divorce – and a lot of stuff happened. I just drank. It would take me 10 years to get more than 30 days sober."

"I was in and out of Alcoholics Anonymous, that was constant. I would go to meetings and nothing would happen, I would still want to drink. Really bad obsessions. That went on for about 10 years. I lost everything. I lost a really nice house, my car was repossessed, and my 401k was gone."

Even though Patrick had hit bottom after bottom, he was unable to stay sober. Eventually he decided to ask for help from his father, who had 28 years sobriety.

"I showed up at my dad's house with two gym bags. I finally said, 'This is it. I'm spiritually broken – I can't do this anymore.'

"I was able to stay sober for 9 months – meetings every day, praying every day, really in the middle of the program. But the day came when I drank again'.

"I went into rehab for about 10 days, and I just kept thinking to myself, 'I'll do anything, please God, I do not want to drink ever again.'

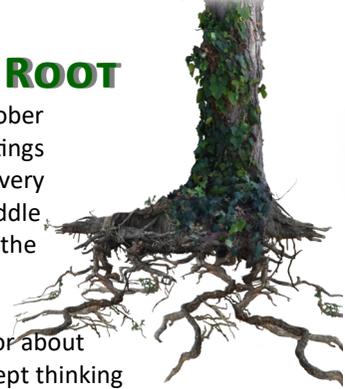
"After rehab, I went to another meeting. A guy there recommended I go to someone's house that was having a Big Book study. I went to the house, and he started talking, and everything he was talking about, I was like, that's me – he knows what I'm going through. So he started taking me through the Big Book and the steps, and I started to get freedom from stuff that was causing me to drink."

Maybe the most striking part of Patrick's personality is his acute self-awareness. It's a trait that he sharpened while in recovery, and it's a significant reason why he's finally found so much success staying sober.

"It was primarily my self-centeredness, my ego. And I don't mean like egotistical. I mean selfishness, resentments, fear, the things that engulf people with drinking problems. The steps are designed to look at that from a different point of view. There's got to be that internal surrender for sobriety to happen. It helps for you to be other-centered. Gets you out of yourself. It keeps you really connected to other people.

"I've been going pretty regularly for the past year or two into jails to meet with people who have a drinking problem. Even though I was never in jail, I can relate to some of them who are near low-bottom with their drinking.

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# COVID 19 & THE VACCINE FACTS

This month, staff of The Crane opted into being vaccinated with the COVID-19 Pzier-BionNTech dose. After personal debates with themselves, it was concluded individually for those that opted in, that they would rather take the vaccine than take the risk of contracting the virus with unknown effects as to how the virus would affect them and possibly their loved ones in which they could expose. Below are important facts from the CDC that the staff also took into consideration. So if you were on the fence as to whether or not you should when your chance comes, please take these facts from the scientist, not the politicians, into consideration. For more information visit the CDC website.

## **Can a COVID-19 vaccine make me sick with COVID-19?**

No. None of the authorized and recommended COVID-19 vaccines or COVID-19 vaccines currently in development in the United States contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

There are several different types of vaccines in development. All of them teach our immune systems how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Sometimes this process can cause symptoms, such as fever. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that the body is building protection against the virus.

It typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity (protection against the virus that causes COVID-19) after vaccination. That means it's possible a person could be infected

with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and still get sick. This is because the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection.

## **After getting a COVID-19 vaccine, will I test positive for COVID-19 on a viral test?**

No. Neither the recently authorized and recommended vaccines nor the other COVID-19 vaccines currently in clinical trials in the United States can cause you to test positive on viral tests, which are used to see if you have a current infection.

If your body develops an immune response—the goal of vaccination—there is a possibility you may test positive on some antibody tests. Antibody tests indicate you had a previous infection and that you may have some level of protection against the virus. Experts are currently looking at how COVID-19 vaccination may affect antibody testing results.

## **If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine?**

Yes. Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that re-infection with COVID-19 is possible, vaccine should be offered to you regardless of whether you already had COVID-19 infection. CDC is providing recommendations to federal, state, and local governments about who should be vaccinated first.

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## SIMPLY GRATEFUL

On December 7, 1968, I came into this world and my parents named me James Anthony Mosley. I want to give God, my Creator thanks for bringing me into this world. I didn't have the best parents and I didn't have the best upbringing/childhood. Even though, I'm still grateful for the bad, alongside the good because it has made me who I am today.

I believe nothing happens in this world by mistake. You may think I'm crazy that I would include the bad things that happen to me.

I believe it's the bad things that build character because it defines who I am and who I will become, so once again, thank you. I am deeply grateful; there is a long list of things I could name and now as I look back, I realize that it was God who got me through, who rescued me, and who delivered me from drugs, alcohol, mental illness, homelessness as well as rejection from loved ones.

I'm still here and my possibilities are endless. I choose to fight for my life and for the life of my kids and wife. I'm grateful for the ability to never give up.

Today and daily, my life is changing. I am becoming that productive member of society and for that I am grateful. I thank God for Shelter, healthy relationships and a healthy mind.

I was once told that a grateful addict will never use again. So, thanks to the God of my own understanding, I am grateful.

*Written by  
James Mosely*

## WHAT MAKES ONE MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO ADDICTION?



**YOUR BODY:** Everyone's bodies react to drugs differently. Some people like the feeling the first time they try a drug and want more. Other people hate how it feels and never try it again. Some are more likely to get addicted.

**USING DRUGS WHEN YOU'RE YOUNG:** When kids use drugs, it can change how their bodies and brains finish growing. Using drugs when you're young increases your chances of becoming addicted when you get older.

**MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS:** People who have mental health problems are more likely to get addicted. This is because drug use and mental health problems affect the same parts of the brain. Some mental health problems might be:

- Feeling so sad or worried about something that it is hard to live your life normally
- Having trouble paying attention
- Having quick mood changes

**HANGING AROUND OTHER PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS:** Friends or family members who use drugs can make you more likely to use drugs.

**TROUBLE IN SCHOOL, TROUBLE AT WORK, TROUBLE WITH MAKING FRIENDS:** Trouble at school or work or trouble getting along with people, can make life hard. You might use drugs to try to get your mind off these problems or use drugs to make friends. Remember: true friends would not pressure you to use a drug.

## A NOTE OF GRATITUDE

I'm grateful for My Brother's Keeper for allowing me to come into their program to get help with things in my life such as self-justification, self-condemnation, and guilt. I want to give thanks to my Higher Power, Jesus Christ, for saving me from destruction. God has delivered me from drugs and alcohol and He has bestowed upon me the gift of allowing me to know who are my friends.

Yes, I have made a lot of bad choices in life and I had a rough childhood, but now I'm trying to leave all of that in the past and look toward the future.

By Maurice Dowdell



## SPICE: NOT FOR COOKING

Spice is an illegal drug. People make it by spraying chemicals onto shredded, dried plant materials. They also can make it a liquid.

Some of the chemicals are similar to the ones in the marijuana plant. This is why people call it "fake weed." It is important to know that Spice is not the same as marijuana. Spice may affect your brain more strongly than marijuana. You can't predict what will happen when you take Spice. The effects can be very serious and can even cause death.

People usually smoke Spice. Some people use a liquid form to vape (like in e-cigarettes) or they put it in a drink. Others burn the liquid and use it as incense.

Some names of other similar products are: K2, Black Mamba, Herbal Incense, Joker, Kush, and Skunk.



## JANUARY CELEBRITY BIRTHDAYS

**CUBA GOODING JR.**  
January 2nd

**AVA GALE ALLISON**  
January 4th

**NICOLAS CAGE**  
January 7th

**TRAKELL FEARS**  
January 8th

**DOROTHY FONDI**  
January 8th

**TINA BURROUGHS**  
January 11th

**MARY J. BLIGE**  
January 11th

**LL COOL J**  
January 14th

**PITBULL**  
January 15th

**BETTY WHITE**  
January 17th

**STEVE HARVEY**  
January 17th

**BERTHONY ARISTOR**  
January 18th

**CAROL BROWN**  
January 19th

**JANICE RAY**  
January 19th

**DOLLY PARTON**  
January 19th

**JANICE SARDINE**  
January 22nd

**NEITL DIAMON**  
January 24th

**ALICIA KEYS**  
January 25th

**ELLEN DEGENERES**  
January 26th

**LIL JOHN**  
January 27th

**TISH STEVENSON**  
January 29th

**OPERA WINFRY**  
January 24th

**MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.**  
January 15th

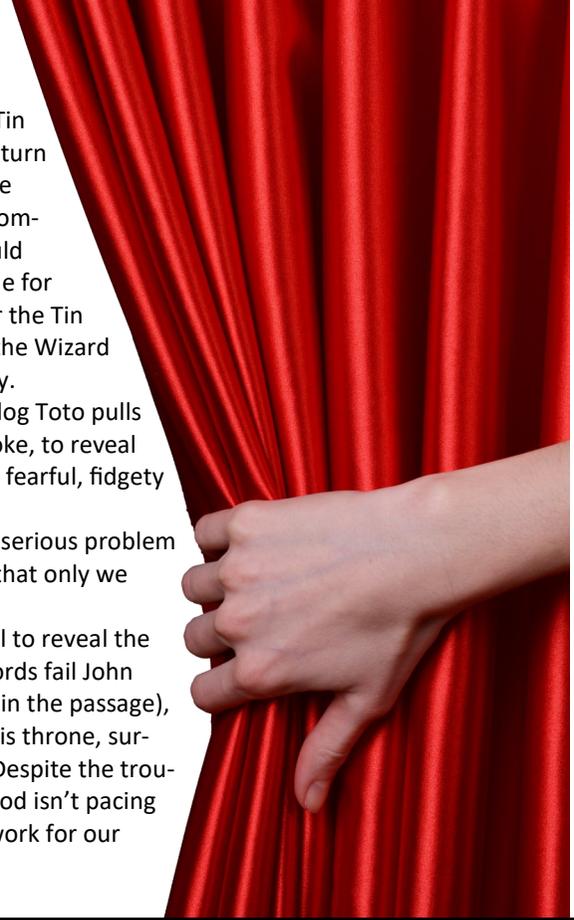
# THE WONDERFUL ONE

In *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, Dorothy, the Tin Man, the Scarecrow, and the Cowardly Lion return to Oz with the broomstick that empowered the Wicked Witch of the West. The Wizard had promised, in return for the broomstick, that he would give the four their deepest desires: a ride home for Dorothy, a brain for the Scarecrow, a heart for the Tin Man, and courage for the Cowardly Lion. But the Wizard stalls and tells them to come back the next day. While they plead with the Wizard, Dorothy's dog Toto pulls back the curtain, behind which the Wizard spoke, to reveal that the Wizard isn't a wizard at all, he's just a fearful, fidgety man from Nebraska.

It's said that the author, L. Frank Baum, had a serious problem with God, so he wanted to send the message that only we have the power to solve our problems.

In contrast, the apostle John pulls back the veil to reveal the truly Wonderful One behind the "curtain." Words fail John (note the repeated use of the preposition like in the passage), but the point is well made: God is seated on His throne, surrounded by a sea of glass (Revelation 4:2, 6). Despite the troubles that plague us here on earth (chs. 2–3), God isn't pacing the floor and biting His nails. He's actively at work for our good, so we can experience His peace.

*Written By David H. Roper*



## ABUNDANTLY

I am grateful for God's grace and mercy. I thank Him every day, all day. He has given me life to live abundantly. He has given me the opportunity to prosper. I am just thankful to be able to praise His name.

*By Kim Baker*



## KUMBH MELA: THE PILGRIMAGE

January 14 through April 27th is known as Kumbh Mela, a mass pilgrimage event which takes place every 12 years and is of deep religious significance to Hindus. Millions of devotees and pilgrims congregate on the banks of the Ganges River to take part in a ritual bathing on various dates through April 27th. It is believed that taking a dip in the holy water cleanses devotees of their sins. It is known as the world's largest religious and cultural human gathering.



**DID YOU KNOW:** World Braille Day is observed on January 4th in order to raise awareness of the importance of braille as a means of communication in the full realization of the human rights for blind and partially sighted people. It is celebrated on Louis Braille's birthday, who was the inventor of braille. His system was unused by educators for many years after his death, but posterity has recognized braille as a revolutionary invention and adapted it worldwide.



# THE PEASANT & THE BOULDER

**THE STORY:** There once was a king who decided to do a little experiment. He had a giant boulder put right in the middle of the street. He then hid near the boulder to see who, if anyone, would try to move it out of the way.

First, some wealthy merchants walked by. They walked around the boulder, complaining that the king hasn't been maintaining the roads very well.

Next, a peasant walked by, heading home with his arms full of food for his family. When he noticed the boulder, he put his groceries down and attempted to move it out of everyone's way. It took him a while to move it, but he eventually succeeded. After the peasant gathered up his groceries to carry on home, he noticed a bag lying in the middle of the road, just where the boulder once was. He opened the bag to find that it was stuffed full of gold coins, along

with a letter from the king saying that the bag's gold was a reward for the peasant to keep because he had taken the time and energy to move the boulder out of the road for the convenience of others who would be traveling the road in the future.

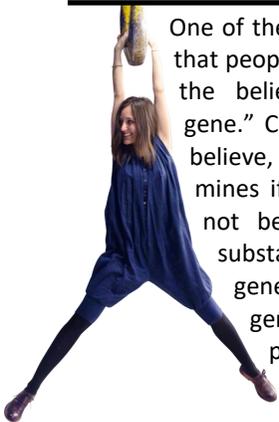
**THE MORAL:** The peasant in this story was taught by the king that every obstacle you face offers an opportunity to improve. If you're able to push through moments that are challenging, you may end up being much better off than you were before you started trying. This story also offers a lesson of personal responsibility. If you see a job ahead of you, don't leave it for the next person to do. Rather, step up and get the job done to help the people who come after you.



# THE ADDICTION GENE

One of the many addiction facts that people tend to get wrong is the belief in the "addiction gene." Contrary to what many believe, no single gene determines if someone will or will not become addicted to a substance. There are many genes and combinations of genetic material that can play a role in addiction.

But many scientists believe that genetics are only 50 percent responsible for the probability of developing an addiction. Lifestyle and environmental factors play a big part in the likelihood of becoming addicted to a substance. Stress levels, physical health, social and intellectual engagement all can impact a person's likelihood of seeking drugs or alcohol.



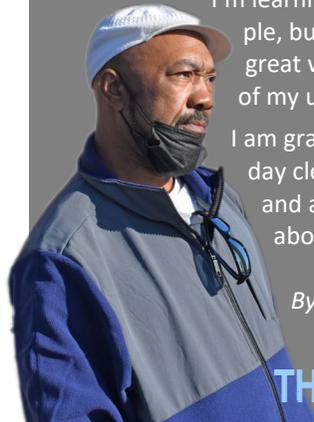
# ANOTHER DAY

I am thankful and grateful for My Brother's Keeper for giving me the help I need and in teaching me how to be patient and honest. I am truly thankful for my teachers. I am also especially thankful for my God, who loved me despite my defects. It is a process, but I am willing to go through whatever length it takes.

I'm learning to keep it simple, but I can't do or be great without the God of my understanding.

I am grateful for another day clean and sober and another day above ground.

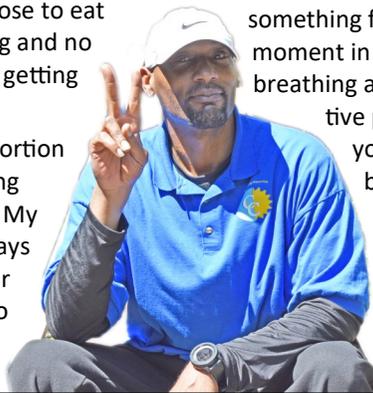
*By: Smith, James*



# A NEW YEAR, A BRAND NEW START!!

Last year, 2020 I shared about Doing the D.E.W. This year 2021, I want to share about Paying your “D.E.W.S” for a healthy body, mind, and spirit. Many of our resolutions this year includes some type of diet plan. May I suggest the “spoonful Diet”. This is a phrase coined by my mother about my grandfather’s eating habit that allowed him to stay the same size as in his 20’s throughout his life. The “spoonful Diet” is simply enjoying the foods he liked, but small portions. My grandfather would only accept one (1) serving spoonful of any food he chose to eat and no more. No measuring and no deleting certain foods, just getting ONLY a spoonful.

Not only controlling your portion size when eating, but getting your Exercise is important. My uncle, a personal trainer, says “you deserve to take 1 hour out of 24 hours everyday to exercise your body”. One (1) hour of exercise per



day. He suggests, alternating cardio and weight training. Many of our gyms and workout venues now offer this type of combination class. With your spoonful Diet, Exercise daily, you must add Water.

The average daily water intake was 8 glasses. However, 8 glasses did not conform to every weight. It is now one-half your body weight in ounces. If you weigh 128 pounds, then you should drink 64 ounces of water (1 gallon) per day. It is just that simple. With a simple diet, exercise, and water plan, I am adding something for the spirit and mind, take a moment in Spiritual medication with deep breathing and then read or recite a positive poem, or prayer to encourage your mind and spiritual mind to breathe out the negative and breathe in the positive.

This is Dathon Brown with “paying your D.E.W.S.” for a better 2021.

## IMPOSSIBLE ISN'T POSSIBLE

A person who is still facing the day-today challenges of substance addiction might feel like recovery is impossible. They may have relapsed before. They may doubt themselves; but by entering rehab for the first time or the fourth time, they’re demonstrating a resolve that will lead to positive change. One may find it hard to believe that recovery is possible because of the way they feel now prevents them from seeing a brighter tomorrow. Addiction actually changes the brain’s chemical structure, making a person feel anxious or depressed. Tell them that those feelings will change when treatment signs of progress and the effects of drugs and alcohol addiction subside.

## AIN'T GOD GOOD!

Lord, I can't even begin on how much you have helped me. Your grace and mercy....

So, today, I will say that I am grateful that I am alive. I am also grateful for my daughter being with me through this journey. I have so much support, that I thought, at first, would not be behind me.

Just being able to live drug free and being able to wake up with money in my pocket is a blessing....

To God be the glory.

I thank Him for my life, strength and health, I am grateful for all that has helped me concerning my addiction.

Ain't God Good!!!

*By Jurea Robinson*



# AS I SIT BACK AND THINK...

As I sit back and think about life, I wonder 'what are the things you are grateful for?' First of all, I am thankful for my life, His mercy and His love. I have been through a lot of hardships that should have broken my spirit, but God said, "No, My child, you are weak, so I will carry you."

My life has been so full of pain, sorrow, and anger, yet God still has blessed me to feel all of these things and endure. I wake up so full of joy, just to be alive and for that I am thankful.

I live a life full of hope, inspiration, love, peace and for that, I am grateful. Life is not easy, but it's my life. God has seen fit to bless me and entrusted me with all of my beautiful children as well as allow me to see myself for whom I really am. I couldn't have done this without My Sister's Keeper for whom I thank. There are a lot of things to be grateful for such as food, clothes, a home, life, love, and yes even pain. It is the combination of all of these things that allows me to be human.

Yes, my God has blessed me enough to be grateful for all of these things and more.

By Latoyna Hammond



## SOMETIMES YOU HAVE TO SMILE

### FRIENDLY CLOTHES

My going out clothes have missed me so much!! I put them on yesterday and they hugged me so tightly I couldn't move!



### THE FACTORY WORKERS

Two factory workers are talking, Betty and Sally.

Betty says, "I bet I can make the boss give me the day off."

Sally replies, "And how would you do that?"

Betty replies, "Just wait and see." She then hangs upside-down from the ceiling rafters.

The boss comes in and says, "Betty, what are doing!"

Betty replies, "I'm a light bulb."

The boss then says, "You've been working so much that you've gone crazy. I think you need to take the day off."

Sally starts to follow Betty out the door when the boss yells, "And where are you going Sally?"

Sally replies, "I'm going home, too. I can't work in the dark!"

You know, the problem with kleptomaniacs is that they never take things figuratively, they always take things literally....



## PATRICK'S STORY

*Continued from page 8*

When I talk, I describe my experience and what happened to me with my recovery. I say to them like I say to my sponsees, 'We're going to go through this book. Line by line. Page by page. And we're going to have a load of work to do.'

"I get a lot of contentment from helping other people. Companionship. Because of that, I have freedom from my addiction."

Patrick found freedom by surrendering, taking the steps through the Big Book, and clearing the path for his relationship with God. By doing so, he reclaimed a part of himself that was missing while he was drinking.

"It starts with surrendering. And the first thing in surrendering is asking somebody for help. Whatever that help is. And hopefully you get to a place that can offer the help you need. It's worth it."

*From Recovery Centers of America*



## A NEW ADVENTURE

Life is an adventure. And while not all adventures are positive, sober living allows a person to choose healthful experiences that complement their recovery journey. Addiction absorbs much of their life. When drugs and alcohol are banished from that life, a person experiences freedom but also avoids it. Help them fill their time with new positive experiences. Encourage them to try new activities like rock climbing, hiking, painting, or writing. A new pastime is a new adventure that has the potential to exponentially improve a person's life and state of mind.

Anyone who is struggling with a serious problem may feel vulnerable and alone. That's why it's so important to let your loved one know how much you care about them by offering words of encouragement to inspire them to keep going. A few well-timed words can help your loved one make it through a rough day and even prevent them from leaving rehab before they're fully ready to return to their life.



## WHAT'S COMING UP AT THE CRANE?

**JANUARY 22ND**

Virtual Job Fair with Horizon Staffing. Registration for event begins January 8, 2021. Sign up for great career opportunities and a chance to win many prizes.

**ALL JANUARY**

Education Registration will resume late January. Please visit our website [thecrane.org](http://thecrane.org) or call for details.

**ALL JANUARY**

HIV Appointments  
Call for an Appointment  
or book your own appointment online

**Resume Building**

Monday - Friday, Call or visit website to book appointment With Certified Write

**Peer Groups**

2:00 pm ■ M-F  
Virtual on Zoom

**One On One Appointments**

Monday - Friday, Call or visit website to book appointment With CARES Specialists

**All Meetings on Zoom:**

Member ID: 838.951.2807  
No Password Required!!

For more on what we're planning, sign up for notifications on our webpage: [thecrane.org](http://thecrane.org) or follow us on Instagram at The Paula Crane Center!!

# COVID 19 & THE VACCINE FACTS

*Continued from page 7*

At this time, experts do not know how long someone is protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. The immunity someone gains from having an infection, called natural immunity, varies from person to person. Some early evidence suggests natural immunity may not last very long.

We won't know how long immunity produced by vaccination lasts until we have more data on how well the vaccines work.

Both natural immunity and vaccine-induced immunity are important aspects of COVID-19 that experts are trying to learn more about, and CDC will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.

Will a COVID-19 vaccination protect me from getting sick with COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 vaccination works by teaching your immune system how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19, and this protects you from getting sick with COVID-19.



Being protected from getting sick is important because even though many people with COVID-19 have only a mild illness, others may get a severe illness, have long-term health effects, or even die. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you, even if you don't have an increased risk of developing severe complications. Learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work.

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## THE SMILING POSTURE

Smiling has multiple benefits for both mental and physical health. While power postures trick the brain into feeling powerful, smiling tricks the brain into believing you are happy. In other words, we don't just smile because we are happy — we are happy because we smile.

It's a cliché to tell someone to smile when they are down — and when you're seriously depressed it's an insult. Once when I was in a severe depressive episode, I had a psychologist tell me to just smile and I would feel better. She also told me that I couldn't be very depressed because my toenails were painted (that was the first and last time I saw that psychologist).

In any case, for people who are mildly depressed, feeling a little down, or just want to maintain a positive mood, smiling can help a lot.

**HOW TO DO IT:** Everyone knows how to smile, but if you're feeling down it can be rather difficult to muster one up. "Genuine" smiles may have more of an effect than "fake" smiles, but even smiles that are forced are beneficial.

**WHAT IT DOES:** Smiling can make you feel more positive, calm, centered and confident. You may notice that smiling relieves stress, reduces muscle tension and makes you feel more present in the moment. Smiling while doing a difficult or frustrating task can make it more pleasant. Smiling has been found to: Increase endorphins, the body's "feel-good" natural painkillers, it also increases serotonin and dopamine, neurotransmitters associated with antidepressant functions; lastly, it reduces cortisol and lead to relaxation.



# THE CRANE

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