

# NEWSLETTER

"If you're always trying to be normal, you will never know how amazing you can be." Maya A.



## THANK YOU FOR BEING A FRIEND

On the first Sunday in August, National Friendship Day encourages people across the country and world to connect with friends. Make a new friend or reconnect with an old one.

Friendships come in many forms, and we begin developing them when we're very young. Throughout our lives, friendships and their meanings evolve. Our classmates and neighborhood pals explored the world with us.

Together we shared experiences and made plans for the future. Eventually, paths diverge and new friends find a place in our social experience. Our world expands and our culture changes.

With each new friend, we expand our view of the world. Their experiences contribute to new meaning in our lives. Through friendships, we grow and broaden our horizons. Eventually, the world becomes even smaller and more connected.

Take a moment and reach out to an old friend, call them up or reach out virtually. You never know how you could make someone's day. You can even accept an invitation to meet new people, why not expand your network with positivity. Either way remember to always show yourself friendly, not just on friendship day, but everyday!

# IF NOTHING CHANGES, NOTHING CHANGES

During the last few months I was in prison, I lived with two other women in a three-person cell.

Even though they were comparable – coming from similar backgrounds with similar drug-related charges – their outcomes couldn't have been more different.

## Diverging Paths

When my first cellmate was released, she was determined to make a fresh start.

Within days of leaving prison, she moved to a new state, changed her phone number, and immediately joined her local AA chapter. She knew the importance of eliminating her known triggers and cutting ties with the people she used to drink and do drugs with. Her discipline and determination to change her life paid off. Now, almost five years later, she's married, works as a dental hygienist, and is still committed to her sobriety.

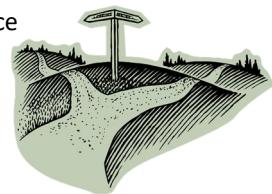
My other cellmate? Well, she went down a very different path. After release, she went back to her hometown and back to her same group of friends – all whom continued to use. She frequented the same haunts and put herself in situations that created great temptation, her reason being that her desire to stay clean would be enough.

Even though she had the best of intentions and she had made significant progress in our substance abuse treatment program, in the end, her addiction was too strong. She relapsed months later, violated her probation, and is now back in prison. And it's all because she hadn't taken the steps towards making a lasting change.

## Yes, You Have to Make a Fresh Start

Breaking the routine of drinking and drug abuse can be a challenge; it requires commitment and strength to change lifestyles and activities. It's as they say in support groups, "if nothing changes, nothing changes." This means we won't see change unless we change something. At the end of the day,

recovery from substance abuse isn't as much about having willpower as it is about making a lasting transformation.

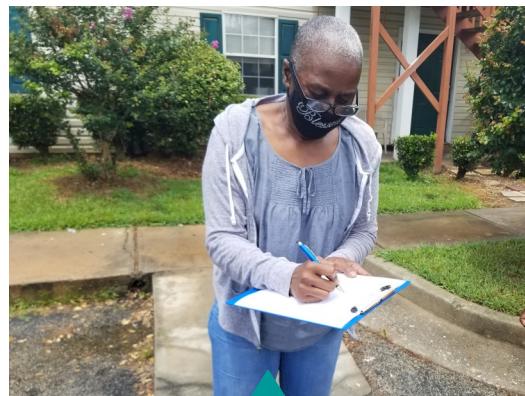


Luckily, change can come in many different forms. When it comes to recovery, however, there's nothing more important than changing the people, places, and things from your past. These factors can keep you trapped in drug-seeking behavior and addiction, forcing you to relive the old days when you were actively using.

To succeed, we have to change who we spend time with, where we hang out, and even how we think. It's crucial if we want to make our sobriety a success.

Feeling overwhelmed because you don't know where to start? We get it, change is hard. But all it takes is making that first step forward, whether it be big or small.

*Written by Natalie Baker*



**DID YOU KNOW:** August 26th is known as Women's Equality Day, which commemorates the August 26, 1920, certification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that gave women the right to vote. Congresswoman Bella Abzug first introduced a proclamation for Women's Equality Day in 1971 and it has been given a proclamation by each sitting President since.



# RECOVERY & PROBATION

## SHOULD A RELAPSE EARN JAIL TIME?

If a person relapses while on probation, should they be sent to jail? A top Massachusetts court tackled this issue, unanimously ruling that, yes, a judge can send defendants to jail if they relapse and break the “remain drug-free” condition of probation bestowed on them.

The case at issue involved defendant Julie Eldred, now 30, who had been convicted of larceny for stealing jewelry to support her heroin habit. She was given a year’s probation by a trial judge and faced up to a 30-month sentence if she violated any of her probation’s conditions.

Two of these conditions were to begin outpatient treatment and remain drug-free. Though Eldred enrolled in a program and began taking Suboxone to treat her withdrawal symptoms, she tested positive for fentanyl 11 days into her probation. The judge ordered her to go to inpatient treatment, but no placement could immediately be found.

### Prison as an Alternative to Treatment

As a result, “The judge was faced with either releasing the defendant and risking that she would suffer an overdose and die, or holding her in custody until a placement at an inpatient treatment facility became available,” Justice Lowy wrote in his decision.

Eldred ended up spending 10 days in a medium-security prison while she waited for an open bed at a treatment facility. Suboxone was never prescribed while she went through withdrawal.

Though the prosecution and defense believed the justices had the opportunity to debate the nature of addiction itself, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial

Court declined to take a stance on the issue. Instead, they questioned the timing of the appeal, stating that Eldred should have raised the issue when her probation condition was first imposed, when it could have been fully argued before a trial judge.

Still, the defense felt the decision was a “massive blow” and that it missed an opportunity to incorporate mainstream medical opinion about addiction – namely, that it is a chronic, relapsing brain disease that compromises an individual’s ability to abstain. Lisa Newman-Polk, one of Eldred’s lawyers, said through its decision, the court had “rubber-stamped the status quo, dysfunctional way in which our criminal justice system treats people suffering from addiction.”

### Criminalization is Not The Answer

As someone who’s been in the prison system and lived amongst hundreds of women struggling with addictions, I agree. Incarceration is focused primarily on punishment, rather than rehabilitation, and is a dysfunctional solution to dealing with addicted individuals. All it does is force abstinence for a period of time, not address the root cause of the behavior that causes these people to use in the first place. As a result, many go right back to the same environment, the same group of friends and the same drugs the minute after they’re released. It doesn’t matter if harsher punishments are imposed upon someone to not use — the lure of addiction is so much stronger.

In short, criminalization is not the answer for those struggling with addictions, and there have to be better alternatives than sticking them behind bars.

Written by  
Kerry Nenn



# DOING THE D.E.W WITH DATHON

Staying Healthy Is Crucial to Living Your Best Life.

"My mom would always tell my sister and me, "Whatever you do, never stop exercising, drinking water and eating right". It is doing the D.E.W. – diet, exercise, and water.

**DIET** is not eating a certain regime of food, but the quantity and the time you eat it.

You can eat just about whatever you want in moderation and timing. Small portions, like my grandfather would say, "just a serving spoonful only" of food quantity and be sure to schedule your food intake before 6:30pm. This timeframe helps your body to be able digest what you have eaten before bedtime.

**EXERCISE** is important to your physical, mental and spiritual being. With my exercise, it is not so much the quantity of reps, but the consistency. Being consistent with whatever the exercise routine, is the key. Whether it is running, walking, playing basketball, or pushing the vacuum cleaner, it is imperative to do it 4 to 5 times a week. Like my Uncle says, "you owe yourself at least 1 hour and a half of the 24 hours a day to keep your physical body strong."

**WATER** is the well of life. Our bodies are approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  water weight and our intake of water should be at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  your body weight in ounces. Example: if you are 100lbs..., your intake of water per day should be at least 50 ounces.

*Written by Dathon Brown*



## WHY DO WE NEED SLEEP?

We tend to think of sleep as a time when the mind and body shut down. But this is not the case; sleep is an active period in which a lot of important processing, restoration, and strengthening occurs. Exactly how this happens and why our bodies are programmed for such a long period of slumber is still somewhat of a mystery. But scientists do understand some of sleep's critical functions, and the reasons we need it for optimal health and wellbeing.

One of the vital roles of sleep is to help us solidify and consolidate memories. As we go about our day, our brains take in an incredible amount of information. Rather than being directly logged and recorded, however, these facts and experiences first need to be processed and stored; and many of these steps happen while we sleep. Overnight, bits and pieces of information are transferred from more tentative, short-term memory to stronger, long-term memory—a process called "consolidation." Researchers have also

shown  
that  
after  
people



sleep, they tend to retain information and perform better on memory tasks. Our bodies all require long periods of sleep in order to restore and rejuvenate, to grow muscle, repair tissue, and synthesize hormones.

### HOW MUCH SLEEP DO WE REALLY NEED?

Healthy sleep is critical for everyone, since we all need to retain information and learn skills to thrive in life. But this is likely part of the reason children—who acquire language, social, and motor skills at a breathtaking pace throughout their development—need more sleep than adults. While adults need 7–9 hours of sleep per night, one-year-olds need roughly 11 to 14 hours, school age children between 9 and 11, and teenagers between 8 and 10.

*Continued on page 14*

# IT'S TIME TO FORGIVE...YOURSELF

We're imperfect beings. It's hard enough to forgive someone else when they hurt you, but how are you doing with forgiving yourself?

Many of us are terrible at letting go of all our self hatred. We replay our regrets so often they become constant reminders of our perceived failures. We become our own worst enemy by dragging ourselves down in a cycle of self-criticism.

It's defeating; it's unhealthy; it leads to relapse.

**BREAK THE CYCLE:** So, how can you avoid this dangerous cycle of self recrimination? Here's some advice to help you learn how to forgive yourself.

## Tip # 1 – Throw Away the Rule Book

Have you created a set of rules for yourself that are impossible to follow? This list might include "I need to succeed at everything I try," "I should be perfect," "I must be the most attractive person in the room at all times," or "I should be more interesting." Toss this book. In fact, burn this book. Get rid of these unrealistic expectations. Replace those with some healthy affirmations: "It's okay to make a mistake." "It's okay to be boring sometimes." "It's okay not to be the best at everything." Cut yourself a little slack. We're not talking about rationalizing bad decisions. It's a simple acceptance that you, like everyone else, are imperfect – and that's okay.

## TIP #2 – THINK OF LIFE AS A LEARNING

**EXPERIENCE:** Hindsight is 20/20. Sure, you can look back now and see all of the terrible choices you made in a certain situation. But, you didn't know then what you know now. Accept you messed up – and learn from it. Realize no one knows it all up front. We all have to learn from experience, and life is one big learning experience. An education that might be painful at times. Don't make it more painful by expecting to have the entire lesson mastered already.

## TIP #3 – MAKE IT

**RIGHT:** Is there something you can do in retribution for your mistake? Do you need to apologize to someone?

Repay money?

If your regrets are based on actual events rather than unrealistic expectations, consider taking action to make amends.

Keep in mind, you can't control anyone else. If you sincerely apologize, and they don't forgive you, that's their choice. Once you've done your part, you have to let it go.

## TIP #4 – DO A FLIP

Try to focus on your strengths rather than your slip-ups. Find something that went right today and write it down. Give yourself credit for daily accomplishments. It doesn't matter how small. Did you exercise today? Did you resist a trigger? Did you complete a work shift? Apply for a job? When you flip your focus to your strengths and accomplishments, you're more likely to continue doing these positive things. Make moving forward the goal, rather than looking back at past mistakes.

*Written by Kary Nenn*



**DID YOU KNOW:** The month of August has been designated as National Catfish Month has been officially observed since 1988. It's also dedicated to the versatile and sustainable food that catfish has become throughout the years!

## NOTHING IS AN ACCIDENT

I am not an accident, and neither are incidents of my life. I belong to the Creator. I have been in His care even before my creation.

My birth was and is for His purpose. He will fill His purpose for me and my life. He knows me inside and out, as He does you. He knows every bone in my body; He knows how I was made, bit by bit, how I was sculpted from nothing into something.

He saw me before I was born and scheduled each day before I began to breath. Every day is recorded in the Book! It all has explicit meaning.

God decided to give me life through word of truth. We are the most important things he has made. We are made for His Glory and purposed as His greatness, goodness and wondrousness. This is another day that He has made I will continue to rejoice and be glad in it!

*Written by Yolanda James*



## KIND CORRECTION

The early spring weather was refreshing and my traveling companion, my wife, couldn't have been better. But the beauty of those moments together could have quickly morphed into tragedy if it weren't for a red and white warning sign that informed me I was headed in the wrong direction. Because I hadn't turned wide enough, I momentarily saw a "Do Not Enter" sign staring me in the face. I quickly adjusted, but shudder to think of the harm I could have brought to my wife, myself, and others if I'd ignored the sign that reminded me I was going the wrong way.

The closing words of James emphasize the importance of correction. Who among us hasn't needed to be "brought back" by those who care for us from paths or actions, decisions or

## EVERYTHING I NEED

I asked for strength and  
*God gave me difficulties to make me strong.*

I asked for wisdom and  
*God gave me problems to solve.*

I asked for prosperity and  
*God gave me brawn and brains to work.*

I asked for courage and  
*God gave me dangers to overcome.*

I asked for patience and  
*God placed me in situations where I was forced to wait.*

I asked for love and  
*God gave me troubled people to help.*

I asked for favors and  
*God gave me opportunities.*

I received nothing I wanted  
*I received everything I needed.*

My prayers have all been answered...

desires that could've been hurtful? Who knows what harm might have been done to ourselves or others had someone not courageously intervened at the right time.

James stresses the value of kind correction with these words, "Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins" (5:20). Correction is an expression of God's mercy. May our love and concern for the well-being of others compel us to speak and act in ways that He can use to "bring that person back" (v. 19).

*Written by Arthur Jackson*

**REFLECTION:** What risks or rewards are associated with helping a wanderer find his or her way back to where they belong? When did your higher power use someone to bring you back from a not-so-good place?

## AN ISLAMIC FABLE: LESSON FROM A BUTTERFLY

"One day, a small opening appeared in a cocoon; a man sat and watched for the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole.

Then, it seems to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could and it could not go any further.

So the man decided to help the butterfly: he took a pair of scissors and opened the cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily. But it had a withered body, it was tiny and shriveled wings.

The man continued to watch because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would open, enlarge and expand, to be able to support the butterfly's body, and become firm. Neither happened!

In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life

crawling around with a withered body and shriveled wings. It never was able to fly. What the man, in his kindness and his good-will did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening, were God's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings, so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.

Sometimes, struggles are exactly what we need in our life.

If God allowed us to go through our life without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as we could have been. Never been able to fly.



## THE SOCIAL STIGMA OF COVID-19

**WHAT IS SOCIAL STIGMA?** Social stigma in the context of health is the negative association between a person or group of people who share certain characteristics and a specific disease. In an outbreak, this may mean people are labelled, stereotyped, discriminated against, treated separately, and/or experience loss of status because of a perceived link with a disease. Such treatment can negatively affect those with the disease, as well as their caregivers, family, friends and communities. People who don't have the disease but share other characteristics with this group may also

suffer from stigma. The current COVID-19 outbreak has provoked social stigma and discriminatory behaviors against people of certain ethnic backgrounds as well as anyone perceived to have been in contact with the virus. **WHY IS COVID-19 CAUSING SO MUCH STIGMA?**

The level of stigma associated

with COVID-19 is based on three main factors: 1) it is a disease that's new and for which there are still many unknowns; 2) we are often afraid of the unknown; and 3) it is easy to associate that fear with 'others'. It is understandable that there is confusion, anxiety, and fear among the public. Unfortunately, these factors are also fueling harmful stereotypes.

**WHAT IS THE IMPACT?** Stigma can undermine social cohesion and prompt possible social isolation of groups, which might contribute to a situation where the virus is more, not less, likely to spread. This can result in more severe health problems and difficulties controlling a disease outbreak. Stigma can:

- Drive people to hide the illness to avoid discrimination
- Prevent people from seeking health care immediately
- Discourage them from adopting healthy behaviors.

*Next month we will address how to properly address the stigma. Article from WHO*





## BOOSTING YOUR SELF ESTEEM

Before I got sober, I relapsed...a lot. I would feel so confident in my sobriety, and then something would happen and there I was at the corner store, buying a twelve pack of cheap beer. Again.

Tears leaking from my eyes and a twelve pack on the floor, I'd sit on the couch staring out the window, thinking of all the responsibilities I was avoiding or leaving behind...and of the dangers of losing everything and everyone in my life.

### Restoring Self Respect After a Relapse

When I relapsed, I would feel weighed down by shame and guilt. These negative thoughts and feelings would often lead to my further substance abuse. But once I got up the resolve to quit and get sober again, I managed to rebuild my damaged self esteem.

Here's how I got my groove back...and finally, got it back for good.

### #1 Take Care of Business:

After a relapse, there's damage control to be done. Catching up on work or school, making sure the bills are paid, even just doing the laundry can seem terrifying, but you've got to take care of the essentials before you can refocus your efforts on recovery.

### #2 Make Amends:

A relapse can harm relationships with friends and family. There are people you need to immediately talk to, and talk honestly. Take responsibility, and ask for forgiveness if you've missed responsibilities or scared your loved ones to death.

### #3 Forgive Yourself:

The quickest way to relapse again is through self-condemnation. Take it from me – I was the queen of negative self-talk. Recovery is hard – if it wasn't, everyone would be doing it! Picking up the pieces and getting on the road to long term recovery is only possible if you can make peace with yourself.

### #4 Make a Plan:

I remember after my final relapse, one of the people in my support group asked me, "What's your plan for things to be different now?" I thought I'd been doing everything right: going to meetings, doing recovery reading, staying away from people, places and things. I realized that I needed to reduce stress in my life, up my meditation game, and avoid dramatic people and situations if I was going to avoid another relapse.

*Continued on page 15*

# Happy Birthday!!

The season of Leos and Virgos is amongst us and we would like to send special birthday shoutouts to all that fall within the dog days of August!!

<b>BARAK OBAMA</b> August 4	<b>NEIL ARMSTRONG</b> August 5
<b>SMOKEY BEAR</b> August 9	<b>HULK HOGAN</b> August 11
<b>BILL CLINTON</b> August 19	<b>WILT CHAMBERLAIN</b> August 21
<b>DATHON BROWN</b> August 25	
<b>MOTHER TERESA</b> August 27	<b>MICHAEL JACKSON</b> August 29

I shall pass through this life but once.  
Any good therefore that I can do,  
or any kindness I can show,  
let me do it now.  
Let me not defer or neglect it.  
For I shall never pass this way again

*Etienne de Grellet*



## BERNICE'S INSPIRATIONAL CORNER

I would like to focus on the fathers of the civil rights movement. I am so please to have been a part of this great time in history. During the start of the civil rights movement I was about 14 years old living in Marietta, Ga., and then I moved to Atlanta, Ga., to stay with my mother and my siblings. While living with my Grandparents I did not experience prejudice until I came to Atlanta, Ga. There was unrest and protesting all over the South, but I remember the struggles and how we had to overcome; yet there was still work to be done. There were so many freedom fighters called "linchpins" which means "holding it together for a common cause". I believe that all the men that fought for equal justice and our rights were prophets that God put here in the earth to do His work.

One of these angels was Congressman John R. Lewis, who was an outstanding man and an American hero, Politician, and Civil Rights leader. He served for thirty years as our congressman and he was called, "The Conscious of Congress". One of his famous quotes was: "Do not get lost in a sea of despair, be hopeful, be optimistic. Our struggle is not the struggle of a day, a week, a month, or a year, it is the struggle of a lifetime. Never ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble." #good trouble!

My belief, is that the people or persons that are coming behind him will do greater works. For all he achieved, I say well done, congressman Lewis, for the journey and your walk. I will continue to keep my faith and hope alive and remember, we all live in the same house, God Bless!!

*Written by  
Bernice T.Davis*





# DONALD'S 2¢ : FREEDOM FROM THE MIND

For the vast majority of my life I've lived in fear and doubt which has imprisoned me in my own mind. I've discovered through life experiences that doubt kills more dreams than failure ever could. In making a conscience decision to embark on a journey to change my life I'm learning to live by faith which dispels doubt. This way of life has made a major difference in my life whereas I'm able to make decisions rooted from courage. I'm even more comfortable with making choices and pursuing dreams even the thought of it may fell. If I fell a lesson has been revealed and I can try a different approach. I would like close with what I've discovered. If you fail never give up because F.A.I.L means FIRST ATTEMPT IN LEARNING. End is not the end, in fact E. N.D means EFFORT NEVER DIES. If you get no as an answer remember N.O. means NEXT OPPORTUNITY. So let's be positive.

*Written by Donald Moye*



## SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS: CLASSIFIED INFO



The medical world currently views substance use disorders according to the class of drug that is used. As a result, it defines 10 distinct disorders. All share the defining features of addiction: They directly and intensely involve reward and reinforcement systems of the brain, stimulating compulsive use that typically leads to the neglect of normal activities and negative consequences. With some variation, they also share common symptoms, although withdrawal symptoms differ significantly among them and do not occur for some classes of drug such as hallucinogens and inhalants. Below are seven of "forgotten disorders."

**CAFFEINE INTOXICATION:** 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.

**CANNABIS USE DISORDER:** Cannabis use disorder is highest among 18-to-29-year-olds (4.8 percent) and prevalence of the disorder de-

creases with age.

**PHENCYCLIDINE AND OTHER HALLUCINOGEN USE DISORDER:** These substances alter perception. Phencyclidine is commonly called "angel dust" or PCP and produces feelings of separation of mind from body.

**INHALANT USE DISORDER:** Inhalant substances are volatile hydrocarbons—toxic gases that are released from glues, fuels, paints, and other volatile compounds and have psychoactive effects. The disorder occurs primarily among those ages 12 to 17.

**SEDATIVE, HYPNOTIC, OR ANXIOLYTIC USE DISORDER:** Addiction to sleeping pills and anti-anxiety medications falls into this category. Like alcohol, these agents are brain depressants. Rates of the disorder are highest among 18-to-29-year-olds.

**TOBACCO USE DISORDER:** The nicotine in tobacco acts as a central nervous system stimulant. Studies show that 68 percent of adult smokers want to quit, and 50 percent have made attempts to quit.

**OTHER (OR UNKNOWN) SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER:** Substances ranging from antihistamines, betel nut, and cortisol to steroids may also have effects on the central nervous system that lead to compulsive use causing serious problems.

*Article from Psychology Today*

# INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY

*International Overdose Awareness Day is a global campaign that works towards preventing overdose, reducing the stigma associated with it, and providing support to families and loved ones of overdose victims. The unofficial awareness day is observed every year on August 31.*

The day was established in 2001 by Australians Sally J. Finn and Peter Streker as a way to commemorate those who have lost their lives to overdose, and to support the loved ones whose lives have been affected by drug abuse.

Since 2012, the responsibility of organizing International Overdose Awareness Day has been taken over by the Penington Institute, an Australian non-profit health organization. Despite its Australian roots, the day is now observed all over the world.

## **Recognizing Symptoms of Overdose**

Medical professionals define overdose as the accidental or intentional use of a drug or a substance such as alcohol or a narcotic beyond the recommended dosage. An overdose can have serious consequences, with effects ranging from mild disorientation to seizures, brain injury, and death.

Part of International Overdose Awareness Day's agenda is to spread information about how to detect signs of substance abuse and overdose, and what to do when encountering a person who may be having an adverse reaction to a drug. Disorientation, agitation, difficulty in breathing, and vomiting can be signs of overdose and should not be ignored.

## **A Global Problem**

Overdose is an increasing global problem. A 2014 report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimates that about 183,000 people succumb to overdose around the world every year. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an American public health organization, drug overdose is the leading cause of accidental deaths in the United States.

A vast majority of overdose deaths occur due to opioid abuse. Opioids are a class of drugs that reduce the intensity of pain by

interacting with proteins called opioids found in the human brain, spinal cord, and other organs. Opiates include illegal substances like heroin, as well as legally prescribed medication such as oxycodone, codeine, and morphine.

## **Serious Consequences**

Overdose is not the only consequence of drug dependence. In many parts of the world, the shared use of needles and drug injecting equipment can make users vulnerable to hepatitis C and HIV. According to UNODC, an estimated 13% of all drug users globally live with HIV.

Drug trafficking and drug-related illnesses and crimes can also negatively affect families and communities. One of the main purposes of International Overdose Awareness Day is to help reduce the stigma surrounding overdose by talking about it and by bringing attention to the fact that substance abuse and drug overdose is preventable.

## **What Happens on International Overdose Awareness Day?**

International Overdose Awareness Day is not an official holiday, so businesses, schools, and government offices are open. Community health groups, needle exchange organizations, educators, medical professionals, and policy-makers organize outreach drives, conferences, and workshops to bring attention to the growing problem of overdose. They also provide information to the general public about how to identify substance dependence and overdose.

People are encouraged to wear silver badges to show their support for overdose awareness.



## RAKSHA BANDHAN: A HINDU FESTIVAL

Celebrated on the full-moon day of the Hindu month of Sravana (August 3rd, this year), this festival celebrates the love of a brother for his sister. On this day, sisters tie rakhi on the wrists of their brothers to protect them against evil influences, and pray for their long life and happiness. They in turn, give a gift which is a promise that they will protect their sisters from any harm. Within these Rakhis reside sacred feelings and well wishes. This festival is mostly celebrated in North India.

The history of Rakshabandhan dates back to Hindu mythology. As per Hindu mythology, in Mahabharata, the great Indian epic, Draupadi, wife of the Pandavas had torn the corner of her sari to prevent Lord Krishna's wrist from bleeding (he had inadvertently hurt himself). Thus, a bond, that of brother and sister developed between them, and he promised to protect her.

It is also a great sacred verse of unity, acting as a symbol of life's advancement and a leading

messenger of togetherness. Raksha means protection, and in some places in medieval India, where women felt unsafe, they tie Rakhi on the wrist of men, regarding them as brothers. In this way, Rakhi strengthens the bond of love between brothers and sisters, and re-vives the emotional bonding. Brahmins change their sacred thread (janoi) on this day, and dedicate themselves once again to the study of the scriptures.



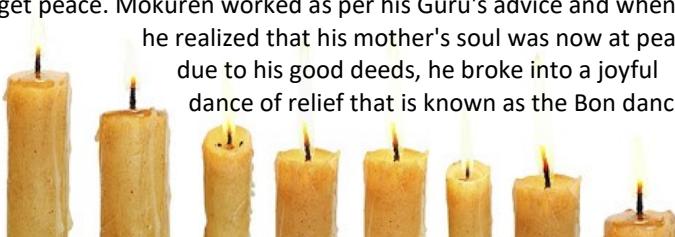
## OBON: FESTIVAL OF SOULS

The Festival of Souls also referred as Obon, is a Buddhist celebration, celebrated during July in Japan and August in China. This is not an official national holiday.

The Japanese believe that during this period the souls of their ancestors return to their homes on earth. This is the time when people can guide and help their ancestors' spirits to find peace. During this festival of period 3 days, families hang lanterns outside their houses and beside the graves to welcome the souls to home, variety of food are offered to the souls of ancestors. During this period people gather for outdoor dances known as Bon dance.

There is a story behind this festival, there was a Buddhist monk named Mokuren. After his mother's death, he had a vision that her mother's soul is not in peace because of the life she lived on earth. He asked his Guru how he could help his mother. His Guru told him he had to perform good deeds within the community in order to balance his mother's bad deeds so that her soul could get peace. Mokuren worked as per his Guru's advice and when

he realized that his mother's soul was now at peace due to his good deeds, he broke into a joyful dance of relief that is known as the Bon dance.



**DID YOU KNOW:** August 17 is known as Marcus Garvey Day, which celebrates the birthday of the Jamaican politician and activist who is revered by Rastafarians. Garvey is credited with starting the Back to Africa movement, which encouraged those of African descent to return to the land of their ancestors during and after slavery in North America. Ideologically a black nationalist and Pan-Africanist, his ideas came to be known as Garveyism.

# HIJRI NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

Awal Muharram or Hijri New Year is celebrated by Muslims as the day symbolizes two important events in the Islamic year.

Awal means beginning in English and Muharram is the name of the first month in the Muslim calendar. The first day of Muharram is therefore the Islamic New Year's Day and on this date the Hijra, the historic journey from Mecca to Medina began. This year it will be celebrated on August 19th in US.

## The Islamic Calendar

Islam has a calendar based on the revolutions of the Moon rather than the sun. Thus, it is only 354 days long. Islamic New Year is celebrated on the first day of Muharram, the first Islamic month.

Compared to Western calendars, the Islamic year goes backwards by about 11 days every year.

## Islamic New Year

- This day is a public holiday in most Islamic countries and this year's date for New Year in each country along with the name of the day in that country is shown in the table of countries to the right.
  - Islamic New Year represents the starting point of the Muslim era as it coincides with the Hijrah, the Prophet's journey from Mecca to Medina on the first of Muharram in 622 CE.
  - Prophet Mohammed needed to relocate because somebody had intentions to execute him. Consequently, the Prophet chose to go to a town known as Yathrib, some 320 km north of Mecca.
    - Yathrib is known today as Medina, in modern-day Saudi Arabia, which translates to 'the city'.
      - Hijrah gave freedom from suffering for the Muslims in Mecca.
  - When the Prophet emi-
- grated to Medina, Muslims there were indirectly saved from further persecution by the Meccan pagans.
- After the Hijrah, it was then declared by the Prophet in the Constitution of Medina that Muslims are a universal brotherhood with a unique identity in faith and ideology.
  - Umar ibn Al-Khattab, a close companion of Prophet Muhammad and the second caliph, subsequently adopted Hijrah as the reference point for the Islamic calendar, either in 638 CE or 639 CE.
  - The customs of Awal Muharram vary from country to country, though they generally involve attending various religious activities, spiritual singing and religious meetings. The traditions and customs for Muharram also vary between Shia and Sunni Muslims.
  - For both, the marking of the beginning of the new year is usually quiet, unlike New Year's celebrations associated with other calendars. It is a time for Muslims to reflect on the passing of time and their own mortality.
  - To mark Muharram, Muslims will recite Koranic verses and hold special prayers and sermons at public halls and mosques.
  - The New Year itself is known to Muslims as Maal Hijra.
  - Muharram is the second most holy month of the Islamic year, after Ramadan. On 10 Muharram, many Muslims mark Ashura which commemorates the martyrdom of Hussain ibn Ali, the grandson of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad.
  - Hotels and bars are asked to refrain from hosting live entertainment and alcohol is not served for 24 hours.

*Article from Office Holidays*

# SOMETIMES WE NEED TO SMILE OR LAUGH!!

Do not let them take your temperature going into the grocery store!! It is a scam!! They're erasing your memory. I went for bread and eggs and came home with Blue Bell Ice Cream and Snickers...



"Madam, your son just called me ugly!"

The mother apologizes shamefacedly, "I'm so sorry, I must have told him like a thousand times it is wrong to judge people just from how they look..."



I asked my daughter if she'd seen my newspaper. She told me that newspapers are old school. She said that people use tablets nowadays and handed me her iPad. The fly didn't stand a chance!!



An ironing board is simply a surf board which gave up on its dreams and decided to just go to work.

## DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE?

The terms use, abuse and dependence (or sometimes addiction) are used frequently – and sometimes interchangeably – when talking about alcohol and drugs. But what do they really mean?

**Use:** Substance use is any consumption of alcohol or drugs. Something as commonplace as having a beer with friends during dinner is considered substance use. Substance use may not be a problem or lead to abuse or dependency in some people.

**Abuse:** Substance abuse is when someone continues to

use drugs or alcohol even when it causes problems, such as trouble with work, family, or their health. For instance, continuing to use drugs knowing you'll be fired if you fail a drug test is a sign of abuse.

**Dependence:** Substance dependence is an addiction to alcohol or drugs. You may be unable to stop drinking or using drugs, and have physical withdrawal symptoms when you try to quit.

*Article from  
Crozer-  
Keystone*



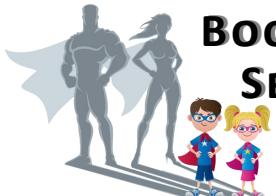
## WHY DO WE NEED SLEEP?

*Continued from page 4*

During these critical periods of growth and learning, younger people need a heavy dose of slumber for optimal development and alertness.

Unfortunately, a person can't just accumulate sleep deprivation and then log many hours of sleep to make up for it (although paying back "sleep debt" is always a good idea if you're sleep deprived). The best sleep habits are consistent, healthy routines that allow all of us, regardless of our age, to meet our sleep needs every night, and keep on top of life's challenges every day.

*Article from the Sleep Foundation*



# BOOSTING YOUR SELF ESTEEM

*Continued from page 8*

I made some scary decisions, including walking away from a stressful job and a long term but toxic relationship. But none of those things were scarier to me than the prospect of crying on that floor again with an empty twelve pack of beer cans.

## #5 Ask for Help:

Now isn't the time to grit your teeth and go it on your own. Whether you get help from support groups, therapists, religious leaders or friends and family, get help. Not everyone in your circle of family and friends will be prepared to help, so try to find professionals such as therapists whose job it is to understand and be there for you.

## Picking Up the Pieces

Picking up the pieces after a relapse is one of the scariest parts of recovery. The feelings of failure, the fear of disappointing everyone, and the thought that you've lost all you've worked so hard to gain can be overwhelming. But we've all done it, and you can do it too.

*Written by April Smith*



**DID YOU KNOW:** The United Nations' (UN) International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition is annually observed on August 23 to remind people of the tragedy of the transatlantic slave trade. It gives people a chance to think about the historic causes, the methods, and the consequences of slave trade.

# WHAT'S COMING UP AT THE CRANE?

## AUGUST 19TH

Education Registration  
Portal Opens at 9 am on [thecrane.org](http://thecrane.org)

## TOOLBOX GROUPS

9 am and 12 pm • M-F  
Virtual on Zoom

## PEER GROUPS

2:30 pm • M-F  
Virtual on Zoom

## JULY 1ST - JULY 31ST

HIV Appointments  
Appointments Online

## D'S BODY TONING

Mon, Tues, Thurs at 1:30 pm Virtually

## ONE ON ONE APPOINTMENTS

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

## RESUME BUILDING

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

**ALL MEETINGS ON ZOOM:  
MEMBER ID: 838.951.2807**

FOR SCHEDULE CHANGES OR  
UPDATES FOLLOW  
US AT [THECRANE.ORG](http://THECRANE.ORG);  
ALL SERVICES FREE OF CHARGE!!



# THE CRANE

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