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Tuesday

September 23, 2014

4:00 to 6:00 p.m.

520 SW Yamhill Street,

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Portland, Oregon, 97204

*Please join us to meet our new
attorney counselor, Kyra Hazilla,
and tour our remodeled space.*

RELAPSE AFTER LONG-TERM SOBRIETY

Joe was a successful trial lawyer with an active practice in a small, well-respected firm. Colleagues, clients, and friends liked him and saw him as accomplished in every aspect of his life. Well known in his community, he served on the local school board, was active in his church, and directly worked on behalf of several charitable community organizations. His wife was a community leader; he had a daughter in law school and a son studying at an Ivy League college. He appeared to have the perfect life.

Only his wife and a few close friends remember the difficult days when Joe struggled with his alcoholism, but that was 24 years ago. Once he sought treatment and went to Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), his life turned around and he seemed unstoppable in his success – until the day so many years later when he was arrested for drunk driving, disorderly conduct, and resisting arrest. What happened to this life of recovery? Why did no one see it coming? What happened to the sobriety that gave Joe a good life?

Unfortunately, lawyer assistance programs confront this scenario more often than you might think. Every

year or two, there is another story of a lawyer or judge who relapses to alcohol or drug addiction after long-term sobriety. With help, some get themselves back onto the road of recovery in spite of losses to reputation and to relationships. Unfortunately, some do not.

Relapse is the return to alcohol or drug use after an individual acknowledges the presence of addictive disease, recognizes the need for total abstinence, and makes a decision to maintain sobriety with the assistance of a recovery program. According to a survey of members of AA, 75 percent experience a relapse during their first year of recovery. For those who are sober five years, the relapse rate drops to 7 percent. People who successfully complete a formal treatment program, such as a 28-day inpatient program or an intensive outpatient program, have significantly higher recovery rates than those who do not.

Relapse is not uncommon in early recovery because individuals are learning what changes they must make to live a sober life. The relapse can be a learning experience in how to develop better coping skills and get through difficult experiences without the use of alcohol or drugs. When relapse comes after many years of continuous sobriety, it is a clear indication that something is missing in the recovery, even if it appears intact to those who associate with the individual.

At any stage of life, heavy alcohol or drug use alters the brain. When people stop drinking or using drugs, the brain does not return to normal. But with treatment and AA, these people learn to manage the resulting symptoms. They remove shame and guilt by working the 12 steps of AA. They manage stress with prayer and meditation and by living life one day at a time. They reduce conflict by mending relationships. They make their lives better with rigorous honesty. When they need help, they turn to other people for support and encouragement.

Over time, the sober lifestyle becomes a way of life, and concerns about relapse fade. If these individuals are successful in the eyes of the world, it is easy for them to become complacent. They may become

(Continued on page 4)

2014 Annual Fall Retreat

September 12-14, 2014

Newport, Oregon

A Very Special Time for Recovering Members of the Legal, Medical, Dental, Pharmacy, and Mental Health & Addiction Treatment Communities.

Registration includes featured speaker JoBen W., ocean settings, meals, the Michael J. Sweeney Golf Tournament and fellowship!

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If you have registration questions or would like scholarship information, please contact Min or Jim O. at 503-221-1425 or mpa@jfolaw.com or jfo@jfolaw.com. For room reservations, please call 1-888-448-4449, Hallmark Resort, 744 SW Elizabeth St., Newport, OR 97365.

MISTAKEN BELIEFS ABOUT RELAPSE

Mistaken Belief #1: Relapse comes on suddenly and without warning. The relapse process begins long before alcohol or drug use starts. The relapse process is often triggered by pain and discomfort experienced while sober.

Mistaken Belief #2: So long as you do not use alcohol or drugs, you are recovering. Abstinence is only a prerequisite to recovery. It is not recovery. Recovery is switching from a lifestyle centered around drinking and using to a lifestyle centered around healthy living.

Mistaken Belief #3: Relapse occurs because people drop out of treatment or stop going to AA meetings. Most people stop going to treatment or AA because they are already in the process of relapse. Discontinuing treatment and AA is often the result of the relapse process rather than the cause.

Mistaken Belief #4: Recovering persons will be consciously aware of the warning signs of relapse. Most people who relapse are not consciously aware of the warning signs as they are occurring. Only when they look back later can they see all of the things that were going on. This is often owing to lack of information or denial.

Mistaken Belief #5: Relapse can be avoided by willpower and self-discipline. Self-discipline and willpower alone will not prevent relapse. Relapse occurs because there is something missing in the recovery program. There are problems or conditions that are not being effectively managed or treated. There is something the person

needs to do, or needs to learn, or needs to learn to stop doing.

Mistaken Belief #6: People who relapse are not motivated to recover. Most people prone to relapse are motivated to get well. They try everything they know to find comfortable sobriety. Some cannot stay sober because they lack the knowledge of their personal relapse warning signs. Others recognize the warning signs but are powerless to control them once they develop.

Mistaken Belief #7: When people relapse, it means that they have not hit bottom yet and that they need more pain. Many people prone to relapse have hit bottom. They may make the decision to stop drinking, but a life of sobriety may be so intense that it can interfere with the ability to stay sober.

Mistaken Belief #8: Those who relapse over and over again are hopeless because they are “constitutionally incapable” of recovery. Those who relapse repeatedly are not incapable of recovery. They have just not learned how to prevent relapse. They can learn how to get better.

Mistaken Belief #9: Thinking about relapse will bring it about. Ignoring the possibility of relapse is more likely to bring it about. Those who acknowledge the possibility and think about how it is apt to occur can take action to prevent it.

Adapted from Mistaken Beliefs About Relapse by Terence T. Gorski and Merlene Miller (Independence, Missouri: Herald House/Independence Press, 1988).

Oregon Lawyer Assistance Foundation



Helping lawyers in need
receive addiction and
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Women In Recovery

Beginning September 9, a support group for women in recovery will meet at the OAAP on Tuesdays from noon to 1 p.m. All women in the legal community are welcome, including paralegals and law students.

For additional information, contact OAAP Attorney Counselor Kyra Hazilla, JD, MSW at 503-226-1057, ext. 13, or at kyrah@oaap.org.

less rigorous about applying all the coping skills they developed when they first learned how to live a sober life. Then, when stress levels increase or conflicts arise, as they do even in normal lives, the altered brain remembers what used to take away those feelings immediately and effectively. So these individuals pick up the drink or the drug – and everyone wonders how this could have happened.

Individuals in recovery sometimes believe that they no longer need to focus on their recovery efforts; they are convinced they will never drink or use drugs again. When drinking is the furthest thing from someone's mind, then not drinking is no longer a conscious thought either. It can be dangerous to lose sight of the

Did You Know?

The OAAP Offers Help for ...

- Alcohol and drug addiction
- Recovery support
- Burnout and stress management
- Career transition and satisfaction
- Depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues
- Compulsive disorders including gambling, sex, and Internet addiction
- Procrastination
- Relationship issues
- Retirement planning
- Time management

principles of recovery (honesty, openness, willingness) because everything is going well. More relapses occur when life appears to be going well than when it is not.

Addiction is cunning, baffling, and powerful – these words are taken directly from the “big book” of AA. This is never more evident than when someone whose life seems so good returns to a destructive lifestyle. Could it be that those who experience success on so many levels of their lives forget that their sobriety is the reason for the success that has come in recovery?

There are also those who relapse during times of extreme difficulty – the loss of a loved one, the onset of serious or debilitating illness, or the loss of a career that has been important both for financial reasons and for a sense of well-being. During difficult times, it is more important than ever for these individuals to focus on a recovery program of openness and honesty with themselves and with those who can help and support them.

In some cases, physicians prescribe pain medications following surgery or other health issues without knowing that the individual is in recovery. Although the use of addictive or mood-altering prescription drugs is sometimes necessary, it is important that the recovering person and the physician communicate openly and work together to prevent drug abuse.

In this pharmaceutical era that constantly reminds us that there is a medication to help with any problem, taking a pill can seem quite normal. Medications that keep us from feeling physical or emotional pain, that help us relax, or that enable us to sleep can also lead to abuse and addictive use.

Major events come along in everyone's life and will challenge a lawyer's recovery even when there is a carefully thought-out relapse management plan. Although such events as illness, death, divorce or the end of a relationship, and loss of job are not unique to recovery, it is even more important that recovering lawyers learn to handle these situations so their sobriety is not threatened.

Relapse is a process, not an event. Many who relapse are not consciously aware of the warning signs even as they are occurring. Those who are successful

in recovery learn to recognize their own particular warning signs and high-risk situations. They take a daily inventory of active warning signs and then proactively seek the right way to handle them. They learn to recognize the spiral that leads to relapse and set up intervention plans ahead of time that they can activate before they reach the point of taking a drink or a drug.

Warning signs of relapse change with more recovery. Some of the typical warning signs in early recovery may be denial of addiction, craving (physical and emotional), and euphoric recall (remembering only the positive experiences of previous alcohol and/or drug use). There is also the tendency to “awfulize” sobriety by focusing on the negative aspects of life without alcohol or drugs and failing to see the improvements that have come with abstinence.

In later recovery, warning signs are more likely to be dissatisfaction with life, inability to find balance in lifestyle, complacency, and a gradual buildup of stress and emotional pain. Lawyers in general often struggle with stress and finding lifestyle balance. So it is no surprise that recovering lawyers face these challenges in their recovery and can be vulnerable to relapse if they do not constantly monitor and manage these aspects of their lives.

The danger of relapse is always present, even if the person in recovery has decades of sobriety. Those who are successful at maintaining their sobriety seem to be always mindful of the benefits that have come to them in recovery. Acknowledging those gifts on a daily basis and continuing to focus on a good recovery program, no matter how many years have passed, are the surest ways to avoid relapse and maintain the good life of sobriety.

JANET PIPER VOSS

Janet Piper Voss is the former executive director of the Illinois Lawyers' Assistance Program, a not-for-profit organization that helps lawyers, judges, law students, and their families with alcohol abuse, drug dependency, and mental health problems.

Bumps in the Road IV, GP Solo Magazine (October/November 2009) Reprinted with permission.

Depression/Anxiety Support Group

Beginning mid-September, the OAAP is offering a confidential support group for lawyers who have depression and/or anxiety. The group will focus on effective coping strategies and building resilience. This ongoing group meets bi-weekly in the evenings and is co-facilitated by Attorney Counselors Shari R. Gregory, LCSW, JD, and Kyra M. Hazilla, JD, MSW. The group is free, but space is limited.

To participate in this group, please set up a meeting with Shari R. Gregory at sharig@oaap.org or at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-OAAP ext 14.

Family Ties Support Group: Improving Coping Strategies and Communication

Are you interested in exploring your coping styles and learning new ways to communicate and face challenges at work and at home? Would you like to leave behind strategies you learned growing up? This fall, the OAAP will start an 8-week confidential support group for lawyers who want to address issues regarding their family of origin. The Family Ties Support Group will meet at the OAAP on Wednesdays, from noon to 1 p.m., and will be co-facilitated by OAAP Attorney Counselors Shari R. Gregory, LCSW, JD and Kyra Hazilla, JD, MSW. Participation by skype or phone is also an option. For more information, contact Shari Gregory at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227, ext. 14, or at sharig@oaap.org.

Domestic Violence CLE On DVD

The OAAP seminar, "Domestic Violence: Threat Assessment, Managing Risks, and Protecting Your Clients," presented March 7, 2014, is now available on CD and DVD. The seminar discusses how to recognize victims, sensitively respond to disclosures, navigate the legal issues, and refer clients to other resources. Learning more about abuse, and understanding the red flags of targeted violence, can also help you assess any potential danger to yourself and your workplace. To order or to download the materials, go to www.osbplf.org, then select Programs on CD/DVD. If you have questions, call Julie Weber in PLF CLE Resources at (503) 639-6911.

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A MINDFUL RETREAT

The Seventh Annual Women's Wellness Retreat for Lawyers saw a record turnout of 53 participants learning techniques for increasing mindfulness in our lives. The retreat took place at the lovely Oregon Gardens in Silverton and provided much opportunity for exploring in nature. We began with a delicious lunch and an opportunity to get to know one another better.

Lewis and Clark Professor Amy Bushaw kicked off the CLE portion of the event with amazing insights into what creates satisfaction professionally and personally. We learned that particular pitfalls for satisfaction are specific to lawyers. The role of advocating for other people can distance us from our own well-being; thinking like a lawyer can distance us from our emotions and the emotions of others; and the terrible combination of high stakes and low control over the outcome is a recipe for dissatisfaction. In addition, for many lawyers, these challenges are intensified by the pressures of child-rearing and home-tending with little time for self-care.

Professor Bushaw offered wonderful ideas for how to cultivate the skills and values that contribute to well-being. Switching our mental "to-do" list to a goal-oriented endeavor informed by our intrinsic values can change our perceptions of these looming tasks for the better. Aspiring to meet three important psychological needs – for autonomy, connectedness and competence – can help us all in our quest for contentment.

After a substantial and restorative break, we visited over a fantastic dinner. Yoga was a participant favorite and was packed in both the evening and following morning sessions.

In a session called "Lawyering From Your Center: The Mind-Body Connection to Inner Peace," Denise Gour taught us the importance of deep breathing (and the vast difference between a shallow breath, providing only four ounces of air, compared to a full breath that gives us a whole liter of air). Responding to our thoughts and experiences on "auto pilot" can mire us in a negative cycle that impacts both our physical and mental health. When we mindfully appraise our thoughts and feelings, check in with their effect on our bodies, and

treat ourselves with compassion, we are better able to return to a state of calm.

Dr. Jillayne Sorenson taught “Cultivating Emotional Resilience Through Mindfulness.” We talked about how our emotions function and the useful information they provide us. Positive memories and emotions don’t stick in our brains the same way that negative things do. Thankfully, concentrating on a pleasant moment for just 10 to 30 seconds can encode it in our memory with the same strength as a distressing experience. The ability to access positive emotions is the biggest factor in building resilience, and this is a skill we can cultivate for ourselves!

Professor Bushaw closed the retreat with wonderful ideas about how to bridge the gap between intention and action. We left with tools to support our own well-being by nourishing our ability to be present in all senses of the word.

KYRA M. HAZILLA
OAAP ATTORNEY COUNSELOR

Managing Strong Emotions: What To Do With Anger

Tempers flare in the practice of law. Strong negative emotions can have destructive effects on our physical and emotional well-being as well as on our relationships with others. Stifling our anger can also have harmful effects. The task is to recognize our negative emotions and identify healthy and appropriate ways to express them.

Beginning September 29, 2014, the OAAP will be leading a six-week group for lawyers who would like to manage strong emotions and develop effective conflict resolution skills. The group will meet at the OAAP on Monday, from noon to 1:15 p.m. and will be co-facilitated by OAAP Attorney Counselors Douglas S. Querin, JD, LPC, CADC I, and Kyra M. Hazilla, JD, MSW. For more information, contact Kyra Hazilla at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227, ext. 13, or at kyrah@oaap.org.

Discover Your Hidden Power of Discipline

Some people think having a healthy lifestyle requires the discipline of a Marine drill sergeant. It would, if you think of every choice you make as a battle. But if you think longer term and set goals, your whole perspective can change.

It’s the difference between:

“I don’t feel like going to the gym, so I won’t go,”
and

“I feel tired today, so I am going to warm up gradually before I get into my workout. I know I’ll feel great when I’m done.”

If you can answer these five simple questions, you’ll feel the power of discipline in every decision you make:

- What life do I want?
- Why do I want that life?
- What steps will I take to achieve that life?
- What are some of the obstacles, temptations, and barriers that I will face?
- What healthy coping strategies will I use to pursue my goal when I am tempted to stray from that life?

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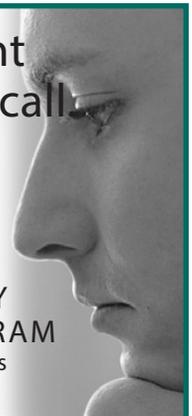
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LAWYERS IN TRANSITION CALENDAR

Lawyers in Transition is a networking, educational, and support group for lawyers and judges making job or career transitions. The group meets on Thursdays at noon in the OAAP offices at **520 SW Yamhill, Suite 1050, Portland**. If you are interested in attending, please contact Kyra M. Hazilla, 503-226-1057, ext. 13, or Mike Long, ext. 11. A guest speaker for Lawyers in Transition is featured on the first Thursday of each month. These meetings are open for anyone to attend. See the calendar below for scheduled speakers.

The OAAP also occasionally presents career workshops to assist lawyers, judges, and law students in identifying satisfying job and career opportunities. These workshops typically meet one evening per week from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. for six consecutive weeks. If you would like additional information about the OAAP career workshops, call Kyra M. Hazilla or Mike Long at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227.

Sept. 4, 2014	Tichelle Sorenson	Private practice to Academic Director of MBA Program at Portland State University
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Oct. 9, 2014*	Gwyneth McAlpine	Private practice associate to Director of Knowledge Management at Perkins Coie
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Nov. 13, 2014*	Gina Atwood	Private practice to Senior Program Manager for Governance, Global Product Licensing at Nike
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* Second Thursday of the month

For current information on upcoming Lawyers in Transition speakers and topics, please visit the OAAP website at www.oaap.org and click on CLEs/Workshops.