



June 2017

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THE ROLE OF SELF-CARE IN SUCCESSFUL RECOVERY

Most of us would generally agree that self-care is an important part of successful recovery from addiction and substance abuse. What can be more challenging is appreciating the role that self-compassion plays in creating a foundation for self-care. Having compassion for others is something we experience when we notice their suffering, feel moved by it, and desire to help relieve the suffering in some way.

Self-compassion, on the other hand, is the willingness to grant to ourselves the same feelings of care, empathy, understanding, and acceptance that we grant others. Often, this is no easy task. We may feel undeserving of such compassion; we may criticize or judge ourselves about our substance use or our inability to maintain our recovery as well as we would like. Self-compassion may seem like a luxury for which we are personally ineligible.

Elements of Self-Care in Recovery

1. Physical – Physical self-care means caring for our body internally and externally. Our physical self-care could be ensuring we get eight hours of rest every night, taking a long walk, or preparing a healthy meal for ourselves. By prioritizing things like sleep and nutrition, we can optimize our energy levels and improve our ability to maintain focus on our recovery.

2. Emotional – Emotional self-care is also important for our internal and external health. We can take care of our emotional well-being by processing and

verbalizing feelings with trusted friends, family members, or a therapist. We can also release negative emotions through an expressive art form, such as listening to music, singing, drawing, or dancing.

Additionally, it is important to avoid situations and people that cause us undue emotional distress, practice setting healthy boundaries, and learn to be in touch with our thoughts and feelings. By releasing our emotions rather than bottling them in, we can move through painful experiences that may otherwise threaten our recovery.

3. Mental – We can practice mental self-care by trying new activities that challenge and stimulate us mentally. Engage in an inspiring, philosophical, or meaningful conversation with a friend; try a puzzle; or delve into a new book. It's common to get caught in stagnation traps and stick to what's familiar, so trying a new activity or hobby can help shake off mental cobwebs and further our recovery efforts.

4. Spiritual – Spiritual self-care can often be achieved through activities such as meditation or yoga or by donating time to a worthy cause or spending time in nature. For others, spiritual self-care can be found in books, in a wilderness environment, or in quiet contemplation. Our spirituality is uniquely personal. This aspect of self-care can help create feelings of connectedness, oneness, and universality and thereby diminish the feelings of isolation and loneliness that often can lead to relapse.

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5. Social – Social self-care means taking time to nurture our important relationships. We can practice social self-care by spending quality time with individuals who uplift us and are supportive. These might include family, friends, close colleagues, and others in recovery.

If we are trying to escape negative social circles that don't support our sobriety and recovery, social self-care might mean looking elsewhere to create new friendships and connections. This could include attending community-based recovery meetings; volunteering our time helping others; offering pro bono legal services; or generally engaging in some new, healthy, and recovery-consistent activities. Getting outside ourselves in a way that is of service to others is one of the best ways to build strong recovery.

6. Practical – Practical self-care involves caring for the necessary, but routine, aspects of life – things we may have let slide before we got into recovery – such as housework, finances, grocery shopping, office organization. Many of these tasks may feel like mundane chores – that's because they are! These basic tasks of daily living as a responsible adult, when done consistently, are rewarded with a sense of accomplishment that reinforces in us the value of living a life in recovery.

Self-care is a product of self-compassion, of accepting ourselves and our imperfections, of honoring the fact that we are worthy of being cared for, and of making meaningful efforts to nourish ourselves in recovery. When we learn to attend to our needs in recovery, we eventually come to realize that only through healthy self-care can we truly be of service to our family, friends, and others.

This article was adapted with permission from www.chopratrementcenter.com/blog/2017/02/12/self-care-priority-recovery-and-important-all. Adapted by OAAP Attorney Counselor Douglas S. Querin, JD, LPC, CADC I.

HOW MENTORSHIP GUIDED ME TO THE RIGHT CAREER PATH

In law school, my career focus was plaintiff-side environmental law. Midway through law school, however, I shifted my focus to incorporate environmental justice, which encompasses the strategic and disproportionate targeting of people of color with environmental waste. Employment opportunities were limited when I graduated from law school, so I broadened my options to consider other areas of practice.

At the time, Judge Angel Lopez had a law firm that primarily practiced criminal indigent defense. Judge Lopez became my mentor and profoundly shifted my career direction. He helped me to cover the cost of the bar exam and offered me a job after passing the exam. I attribute my success today, in large part, to him. I worked for Judge Lopez for a year and a half and loved it. I felt good about what I was doing.

Criminal Defense to Legal Aid

About a year and a half later, I wanted to broaden the category of people I protected, and I wanted to do it in a civil, rather than criminal, capacity. I started looking for another job – this time more strategically. My mentor sent me to a diversity conference where I met legal aid attorneys and the director of the farm worker program. Everything gelled for me. The work would

Divorce Support Group for Lawyers – Washington County

Beginning in September 2017, the OAAP will offer a support group in Washington County for lawyers experiencing the challenges and issues of divorce. This 8-session group will be facilitated by OAAP Attorney Counselor Bryan Welch, JD, CADC I. The times and location will be determined based on the needs of interested participants. There is no fee, but advance registration is required.

To participate in this group, set up a meeting with Bryan at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227, ext. 19, or e-mail him at bryanw@oaap.org.

include environmental justice advocacy, as I would be representing migrant and seasonal farm workers on health and safety, wage and hour, and discrimination claims.

A position opened up with the Oregon City Legal Aid office and I applied. I was hired for a split position that served both farm-worker and non-farm-worker clients. I did everything under the sun – employment, housing, family law, domestic violence, and public benefits. I did outreach with legal aid lawyers and paralegals to advise workers about their employment, housing, consumer protection, and health and safety rights. Over a five-year period, I had the opportunity to litigate several cases in these areas of law on behalf of all legal aid low-income populations.

In 2004, Oregon Law Center opened up a position at the Portland office, and I jumped at it. It was a generalist position covering 10 counties. I narrowed the scope to housing and employment and was eventually promoted to managing attorney. I formed a unit that, for the next five years, did primarily civil rights work in consumer, housing, employment, and public benefits. The position was challenging because I had never managed before, but I had a supportive boss. It was very fulfilling and was one of the happiest periods of my employment history. I might have stayed there for the rest of my career, if not for what happened next.

From Legal Aid to DOJ

In 2009, the incoming Attorney General recruited me to create a civil rights unit within the Oregon Department of Justice. Working for the DOJ was a real transition for me because I had never worked for the government before. It was a great honor to represent the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) in fair housing enforcement. I also enjoyed litigating cases under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) and under state consumer protection statutes against notarios publicos. The position expanded to providing general counsel and working on policy and legislation in the areas of consumer protection and hate crimes.

From DOJ to Private Practice

After almost four years at DOJ, I decided that it was time to make a transition in employment. While I

New CLE Offerings

The OAAP has recorded two new programs that are available on the PLF website, www.osbplf.org>CLE>Past.

PRACTICING LAW WITH ADHD

Practicing law is difficult, and it's even more challenging when you have ADD or ADHD. This program will help you to understand ADD/ADHD; provide you with simple and realistic tools that improve your ability to organize, plan, and follow through; and offer you strategies to enhance your communication skills. These tools and strategies will also help you to lower your stress level and manage your law practice more effectively.

USING YOUR RESILIENT LAWYER BRAIN TO OVERCOME LIFE'S CHALLENGES

Sponsored by the Oregon Attorney Assistance Program (OAAP) and the Oregon Lawyer Assistance Foundation (OLAF), this CLE features OAAP Attorney Counselors Douglas Querin and Bryan Welch, and Dr. Anthony J. Mele, Chief Clinical Officer, Sovereign Health. Topics include the recent national study on lawyer health, what lawyers can do to improve their own health, and how lawyers can draw on the brain's resiliency.

wanted the security of a steady paycheck, I had difficulty imagining working for anyone else. Two positions and other avenues for reemployment opened up during this period, but I could not commit to submitting applications. This steered me ultimately to conclude that it was time to open my own law practice. With the encouragement of my spouse, who is my biggest supporter and source of support, I took a leap of faith and started my practice in September 2013. I was fortunate to have the support of my colleagues both within and outside the legal community, who sent me referrals, primarily on employment matters. I attribute my success to that support and the benefit of great clients along the way.

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At this point in time, I am incredibly satisfied with private practice. I work a mile from home. I bring my dog to work. I get to pick my clients. I get to pick my cases. I get to monitor my caseload (a work in progress). I can focus on quality rather than quantity. It's validating to get paid to do the work I love.

I just completed a two-week jury trial with a large verdict on behalf of two workers who experienced race discrimination and retaliation in their employment. This further reaffirms that I am on the right path and that there is no limit to what we can accomplish with the benefits that the practice of law has to offer to the community.

Parting Thoughts

Going back to the beginning, what I've learned is not to foreclose opportunity. When doors open, jump if it feels right, even if it was not what you originally intended. We work in a very supportive legal community. If you're doing good work, the private bar, government, and nonprofit employers will honor you for it by providing opportunities for employment.

My success has largely been due to mentors I have met along the way, whether they were in my intended practice field or not. Trust your gut. Find people you respect in the practice and learn from those individuals. Cultivate those relationships. I wouldn't be here today but for a number of people who were key to guiding me along the way. Even if you have a fixed idea of what you want to do, don't be exclusively wed to one employment path because opportunities will present

ADHD Support Group for Lawyers

Beginning in September 2017, the OAAP will offer a support group for lawyers experiencing the challenges of practicing law with ADHD. This 6-session group will meet at the OAAP, 520 SW Yamhill St., Ste. 1050, Portland, OR 97204. The group will be facilitated by OAAP Attorney Counselor Bryan Welch, JD, CADC I and will focus on providing peer support and practical skills. There is no fee, but advance registration is required.

If you are interested in participating in this group, contact Bryan at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227, ext. 19, or e-mail him at bryanw@oaap.org.

themselves along the way. I still rely on mentorship within the legal community.

Finally, avail yourself of resources. Contact the Bar for ethics advice to check your analysis. This has been invaluable to me. The PLF is also a huge resource. If you want to start your own practice, meet with a practice management advisor who can give you practical advice on how to run a business. They are very helpful and poised to help you succeed.

DIANE SYKES

DIANE S. SYKES ATTORNEY AT LAW PC

The author's name has been included at her request.

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we'll help with any
baggage.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT 12-STEP PROGRAMS

There are many paths to recovery for those struggling with alcohol and other substance use disorders. In fact, there are many definitions of what it even means to be “in recovery.” For some, the term simply means abstinence, not using a problematic substance. For most, however, recovery is a more holistic experience: a lifelong process of developing meaningful ways of living without the use of alcohol or other drugs, acquiring valuable skills that help sustain abstinence over the long term, and improving relationships.

The most frequently used recovery program is the 12-step program. Though there are other recognized paths to recovery, the preeminence, growth, and success of the 12-step program as a recovery resource for over 75 years suggest that it offers something of significant value to the recovery community. The lack of understanding people frequently have about the 12-step program tends to be the result of confusion and differences of opinion about what constitutes healthy recovery and the best way to create and sustain it over the long term.

Some frequently asked questions about 12-step recovery programs are as follows:

Q. Are 12-step programs effective?

A. While individual experiences vary widely and there is need for further research, recent empirical studies are finding support for the clinical effectiveness of 12-step approaches. Studies of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA), both major 12-step recovery programs, have demonstrated that active participation is associated with:

- A greater likelihood of abstinence for prolonged periods,
- Improved psychosocial functioning, and
- Greater levels of self-efficacy.

The studies’ findings “provide increasingly supportive evidence for the hypothesis that 12-step involvement ‘works.’”

Q. Do I have to be religious or believe in God to participate in a 12-step program?

A. The short answer is No. While there are references in the 12 steps to “God as we understood Him” and “a Power greater than ourselves,” the overarching emphasis of the program is to encourage recognition that the solution to alcohol and drug dependence must come from outside oneself. The reason is simple: By the time most people even consider a 12-step recovery program, they have already made multiple efforts, often over many years, to control their problematic substance use and have been consistently unsuccessful.

The 12-step program encourages women and men to recognize and accept the reality of their own powerlessness in this area of their lives. The program suggests that individuals rely on some power or resource other than themselves – which seems reasonable since their own best efforts, relying on self, have not worked. In this respect, the 12-step program has a very intentional spiritual component. Successful participants in 12-step recovery programs would be the first to give credit for their sustained abstinence and healthy recovery, not to themselves, but to some power or force greater than themselves. That power or force might be a god, a recovery community, or any other entity or concept.

There is, however, no required religious dogma or orthodoxy. Dr. Harry Haroutunian, Physician Director at the Betty Ford Center, has stated this issue most simply: “The Twelve Steps were never meant to be a religious program but one of a spiritual nature What’s important is that we acknowledge that there is a power greater than ourselves.”

Twelve-step recovery programs have no theological mandates – people with or without theological affiliations are equally welcome. Members are encouraged to periodically attend 12-step recovery meetings of their choosing and learn the steps with the help of another, more experienced, member (a “sponsor”). How they do this, if at all, is an entirely personal decision.

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Q. Do I have to follow a lot of rules in a 12-step recovery program?

A. The 12-step recovery programs have remarkably few rules. Even though the steps themselves are the foundational principles of the program, they are merely “suggested as a program of recovery.” A distinct feature of the 12-step recovery program has always been its unique ability to survive and prosper without being rule-based.

Q. Who attends 12-step recovery programs?

A. A common denominator of problematic substance use is that it is a disease; it affects all genders, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds. A few visits to 12-step meetings reveal the vast diversity of those seeking recovery and quickly confirm that all kinds of people from all kinds of cultural, social, educational, and economic backgrounds attend. They

support one another and learn that they each share a common desire to find a healthier way of life free of substance use.

The Oregon Attorney Assistance Program, which has served the Oregon legal community for 35 years, makes available four confidential recovery meetings every week. The meetings follow the 12-step program template. The people attending OAAP’s recovery meetings find a community of colleagues who support one another and share their experience, strength, and hope in a safe, welcoming, and confidential environment. Those coming to the meetings have various amounts of sustained recovery: Some are quite new to recovery, some are in their first few years, and some have over 30 years in the program. The OAAP groups have equally diverse backgrounds, practices, and challenges with different substances (e.g., alcohol, marijuana, heroin, cocaine, and prescription drugs). Their common bond is their shared desire to live healthy personal and professional lives free of alcohol and other drugs.

DOUGLAS S. QUERIN, JD, LPC, CADC I
OAAP ATTORNEY COUNSELOR

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OAAP Recovery Meetings – Weekly

The Oregon Attorney Assistance Program offers four confidential recovery meetings every week for Oregon attorneys, judges, and law students. The meetings are 12-step-based and open to those seeking healthy and sustainable recovery from alcohol and other drugs. Our meeting schedule is:

Mondays at 5:30 p.m.

Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m.

Thursdays at 12:00 p.m.

Fridays at 12:30 p.m.

All meetings are confidential, free, and held in our offices in downtown Portland: 520 SW Yamhill Street, Suite 1050.

For questions or more information, please contact OAAP Attorney Counselors Doug Querin at DouglasQ@oaap.org, or at 503-226-1057, ext. 12, or Bryan Welch at BryanW@oaap.org or at 503-226-1057, ext. 19.

Are You Going Through the Disciplinary Process?

Dealing with a discipline complaint can be an extremely difficult, stressful, and isolating experience. Beginning this fall 2017, the OAAP is offering a *confidential*, four-week support and discussion group to help lawyers through these challenging issues.

This four-week support group will meet at the OAAP on Tuesdays in downtown Portland. The workshop facilitator will be OAAP Attorney Counselor Douglas Querin, JD, LPC, CADC I.

There is no fee for this support group.

If you are interested in participating in this group, please contact Doug Querin at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227, ext. 12, or at douglasq@oaap.org, to set up a meeting.

THE RIGHT WAY TO SAY “I’M SORRY”

Want to apologize and really mean it? According to research, effectively saying “I’m sorry” includes six components:

1. Express regret.
2. Explain what went wrong, but don’t make it an excuse.
3. Take responsibility.
4. Declare that you won’t do it again.
5. Offer to fix the problem.
6. Ask for forgiveness.

The research found that although the best apologies contain all six elements, not all components are equal. The most important element of an apology is to take responsibility – to admit your mistake. The second most important element is to fix what is wrong.

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Choosing OLAF makes a difference!

The Oregon Lawyer Assistance Foundation (OLAF) provides grants and loans to Oregon lawyers who need financial help in order to obtain the addiction or mental health treatment they need.



Oregon Lawyer Assistance Foundation

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OAAP is funded by the Professional Liability Fund.

In Sight is published quarterly.

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Career Self-Assessment Workshops

The OAAP offers career self-assessment workshops several times each year 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 five consecutive weeks. If you would like additional information about the OAAP career self-assessment workshops, contact Mike Long at 503-226-1057, ext. 11, or at mikel@oaap.org.

Lawyers in Transition Presentation Calendar

A “Lawyers in Transition” guest speaker is featured on the first Thursday of each month at noon at the OAAP, 520 SW Yamhill, Suite 1050, Portland, Oregon 97204. These presentations are open for anyone to attend. See the calendar below for scheduled speakers.

JULY & AUGUST - SUMMER BREAK

Sept. 7, 2017	Lea Kear	Litigation (criminal and civil) to appellate law
Oct. 5, 2017	Talia Stoessel	In-house union lawyer to law firm partner
Nov. 2, 2017	Ray Young	Private practice to the ministry to city manager

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.