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*How I Networked My
Way Into a New Life*

Page 1

*Regaining My Life After
Compulsive Overeating*

Page 3

*Mindfulness Without
Meditating*

Page 6

*Control-Your-Stress
Checklist*

Page 7

*Lawyers in Transition
Presentation Calendar*

Page 8

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IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

HOW I NETWORKED MY WAY INTO A NEW LIFE

I was born and raised on the East Coast, but I always wanted to leave. It just never felt like a good fit for me. I moved around some after college but ended up back in my hometown to finish law school. After clerking for a federal magistrate judge, I went down to the Caribbean to my parents' native country to do much needed human rights work. I had always wanted to give back to that community and finally could with my law degree. I went to work as a pro bono lawyer, then got an offer to work for the government doing international compliance work. I stayed for almost four years. In the meantime, I got married and had a daughter. I was "exiled" when the government collapsed in 2004. I again found myself in my hometown where I had most of my professional contacts. Sure enough, I landed a government job and ended up staying for 10 years. After caring for two aged and dying parents, I finally said, enough is enough. It's my time now. I never wanted to be here in the first place.

Initially, I had no idea where I wanted to move. For a long time, I told very few people that I was planning to make a move. I knew that people might question my decision, and I enlisted core support from a few close friends and family members.

I began to methodically research cities that would be more affordable and easier to manage. For a while I even moved to the suburbs, but it was just as difficult and expensive. Then Portland

came on my radar. Though I'd never been there, I met someone from Portland literally at a party and I thought, "that sounds like a cool place for my daughter and me." Suddenly, *The New York Times* had a new article about Portland almost every week. The city seemed like it might be a good fit for us, but I still wasn't sure how I would manage a move across the country and finding a new job in a city I'd never even been to.

Even though I would be breaking into a whole new legal scene, everyone said it was a city of transplants. I approached my job search methodically. I started with my undergraduate and alumni networks and contacted a few alumnae who lived in Portland. The first person I emailed is now known as my "Portland fairy godmother." She was the first person I actually met, and she was amazing. Her son lived on the East Coast and she was planning a trip to see him, so I met her for lunch while she was in town. We chatted for hours and the stage was set. She was and still is wonderful to me. She took me under her wing and really encouraged me to make the move by sharing her passion and her contacts. It just mushroomed from there.

My daughter and I first visited Portland in December 2013 for one week. I must admit that I didn't tell my daughter right away that I was thinking of moving here. We had a blast! We were back just six weeks later to look at schools. She shadowed at a middle school that ended up being a great fit for her. Meanwhile, I

networked, networked, networked. On the first visit, I talked to more than a dozen people over coffee. Wired! When I came back in February, I had another 20 or more meetings over coffee. In total, there was probably a universe of 45 people that I wanted to talk to, and I talked to them all. I maximized the time I had, and I was energized.

In April 2014, I applied for the position I currently have. I had a genuine interest in working here, and I really embraced their vision. They seemed interested but were not convinced I was actually going to pick up and move across the country. I kept in touch and emailed the office every couple of weeks.

I applied for other jobs as well, but I started wondering whether I needed to actually be here in order to persuade employers that I was serious about Portland. I decided to resign, take a month off, withdraw some savings, and just drive west. I enrolled my daughter in school and found a place to live. Most people thought I was totally insane. I thought, well, I'm not going to starve. I'll do temp or contract work if I have to until I find something permanent. Somehow I'll make it work. But I need to be there in person. I was totally motivated. It was a leap of faith. Faith in myself.

When I arrived, my first call was to my current office. "I'm here!" After a meeting and a lunch, I was told that there were no current openings. Then, I got the call. Temporary at first, then a permanent position came in the next budget cycle.

I had put in almost a year of laying the groundwork from the time I made those first phone calls to the time I started my first day at work.

This is a wonderful position. The learning curve has been steep at times, but also really enriching. This office has a sense of Northwest camaraderie that did not exist on the East Coast. I've found my place. My daughter has found her place. I'm already volunteering on various boards. I never would have had time to do that before. I'm in a fulfilling relationship. On the East Coast I was just kind of subsisting, but here in Portland I am thriving.

My move to Portland was the right move at the right time. Everything clicked. People thought I was

Finding Meaningful Work: A Job-Search Skill-Building, Networking, and Support Group

The OAAP holds an ongoing, six-session networking and support group for lawyers making job or career transitions entitled "Finding Meaningful Work." The rotating topics are designed to assist lawyers in creating and executing a personalized job-search plan; developing a mission statement and elevator speech; learning and practicing networking skills; and honing their job-search skills. Once a month, we feature a "Lawyers in Transition" guest speaker.

The group is facilitated by OAAP Attorney Counselor Shari R. Gregory, LCSW, JD, and meets at the OAAP on Thursdays at noon. To participate, please contact Shari at 503-226-1057, 1-800-321-OAAP, ext. 14, or at sharig@oaap.org.

crazy to leave a government job that I'd had for 10 years. But I believed in the pot of change. I believed in me. I convinced myself that I'm competent, capable, and experienced. I was not living the life I wanted, so I soul-searched, researched, prepared, waited, and then the time came to head west.

What can I share? Do not look back. Don't second-guess yourself that now is the right time. Your time. That doesn't mean that you can just sit around waiting for something to happen. You have to be committed. Make it your job to network. Hook onto whatever connections you have. If someone shares a contact, call the person right away. If people don't respond to you right away, be persistent. Portland is a small town where people are very accessible. Make the call, send the email. Then get on a plane or pack your car and take a journey. Embrace it. Hey ... you never know.

BLOOMING IN PORTLAND
(NO SHOWERS, NO FLOWERS)

REGAINING MY LIFE AFTER COMPULSIVE OVEREATING

I have an eating disorder called bulimia/compulsive overeating (COE). I suffered from obesity from ages 6 to 14, then bulimia from age 14.

I can remember overeating as a child, as far back as I can recall. I was seeking comfort and relief from anxiety, worry, stress, and loneliness by using excess food. It became a habit and an obsession.

As I received input or pressure about my overweight body, my obsession turned to body image and I used purging to lose and manage my weight. I believed that if only I were thin, life would be perfect. This thinking pattern fueled my obsession with and compulsive behaviors around food.

I remember the first time I purged. I was watching a TV show and the woman being interviewed was talking about how she warded off a sexual assault by sticking her fingers down her throat so she would vomit. I thought, "This is a good way to purge food." Initially, I felt empowered and in control. Later, as the behavior became out of control, I felt unwell and out of control.

The belief that purging was my golden ticket to controlling my weight while eating excessively caused me to continue to do it again and again. Later, when I was out of control and having adverse physical manifestations of the disease, I kept telling myself that eventually I would get help, once I had the time and resources to check myself into an in-patient eating disorders program. That day never came. In addition, the shame and embarrassment factor engendered isolation, which in turn fueled the vicious cycle because I was not seeking help. I believed that if my friends and family found out, I would be ruined and lose respect and love.

COE and purging was my "go to" substance and coping mechanism for every emotion, good or bad. It allowed me to disconnect from my emotional and spiritual self. In reality, it never helped me cope in any healthy or meaningful way; instead, it arrested my ability to develop normal, healthy coping skills, such as fostering and nurturing healthy relationships, constructive problem-solving, nurturing a healthy

Creating Healthy Habits

Are you interested in breaking unhealthy habits and creating new healthy habits? If you would like to find solutions for changing patterns you have with things like food, Internet and media use, excessive worrying, shopping, etc., the OAAP's Creating Healthy Habits workshop may be a good place to start.

This 1.25-hour-long, 4-session, noontime (12-1:15pm) introductory workshop on forming and maintaining healthy habits to improve personal and professional well-being will begin in June. The workshop is free and confidential. Space is limited.

For more information, contact Doug Querin, JD, LPC, CADC I at 503-226-1057, ext. 12, douglasq@oaap.org, or Shari R. Gregory, LCSW, JD, at 503-226-1057, ext. 14, sharig@oaap.org.

body, and pursuing spiritual growth and well-being on a daily basis.

COE is a progressive, deadly disease and I am no exception. My life was consumed with engaging in, and hiding, the behavior. It routinely took time away from work, family, and friends. My self-esteem was crushed by the understanding that I could not stop the behavior through my own self-will. I damaged my teeth and was constantly exhausted. I realized and admitted that it would eventually kill me. I knew I needed help.

I sought help from a counselor. I attended group support meetings for women with eating disorders, which were led by counselors who specialized in eating disorders.

Unfortunately, counseling and support groups did not resolve my problem. I benefited from associating with people suffering from the same or similar illnesses and my condition improved, but only intermittently. I was unable to be honest with my counselors, the other group members, and myself about my disease, and I just could not attain lasting abstinence from COE.

(Continued on page 4)

About a decade after first attempting to address my disease through individual and group counseling, I went to my first Overeaters Anonymous (OA) meeting. What prompted me was the fact that a close family member was in crisis, and one component of her situation was compulsive overeating. I asked myself, who was I to judge her or attempt to “fix” her (or anyone else for that matter) when my own relationship with food was also out of control. I invited her to join me in going to OA. It was the first time attending a meeting for both of us.

During and after that first meeting, I felt overwhelmed with hope, relief, and joy. I felt as though I had finally found a place and a method by which I could arrest the disease, recover, and stay abstinent, surrounded by people who shared a common, core identity with me. The only requirement for OA membership is a desire to stop eating compulsively. I felt like I had hit my bottom, in terms of being out of control. I had a deep desire to stop eating compulsively, and OA gave me much more!

I had always dismissed 12-step programs. Though I really knew nothing about them, I was put off by the “religious” component. Once I reached the point where I was willing to admit that I was powerless over food and that my illness had rendered me out of control, I became humble enough to possess an open mind about the Higher Power aspect of OA. That state of humility and powerlessness allowed me to read OA and AA literature with an open mind and heart. I discovered that the Higher Power (“God”) aspect of OA, for me, was like the “Higher Con-

Women in Recovery

A support group for women in recovery is meeting at the OAAP. The group is open to all women members of our legal community who are working on their recovery from any substance abuse or addictive behavior.

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

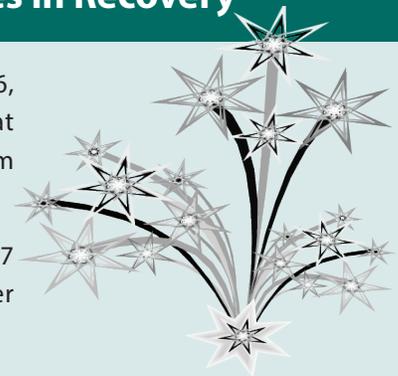
sciousness” philosophies espoused by Fichte, Kant, Hegel, and other figures in German Idealism, blended with the teachings of Karl Jung and Eastern mystical teachings. I was already familiar, intellectually, with these ideas, but until I put “prayer and meditation” into practice, none of it really came alive. My sense of a higher consciousness or higher power continues to deepen and evolve because I continue to “work my program.”

Since my first OA meeting 10 years ago, I have stayed in OA, worked a progressive 12-step program, and maintained a healthy body weight through abstinence from COE. I use the tools of the program, which are (1) a plan of eating; (2) sponsorship (getting a sponsor and being a sponsor); (3) attending meetings (at least once a week); (4) reaching out to other OA members; (5) reading OA and other 12-step literature; (6) journaling; (7) anonymity; (8) action plan; and (9) OA service.

28th Annual Dinner Celebrating Lawyers and Judges in Recovery

Please join the Oregon Attorney Assistance Program on Friday, May 13, 2016, at the 28th Annual Dinner Celebrating Lawyers and Judges in Recovery at The Sentinel Hotel (formerly the Governor Hotel) in downtown Portland from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. in the Library Room.

For a registration form or more information, call the OAAP at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227. The deadline to RSVP is Wednesday, May 11, 2016. Dinner is \$40 per person.



By practicing anonymity in OA, we refrain from talking about our jobs, our families, or our status in society, and we avoid gossip. These practices place us in the frame of mind that's necessary to achieve abstinence. Anonymity prevents me from focusing on food and on "Me" and allows me to shun self-will and negative behaviors, in favor of humbleness, honesty, and service. Once I got over myself and put my focus on a higher power and on being of service to it and to others, recovery and abstinence have naturally followed.

My earliest challenge in recovery was to forge a whole new relationship with food and, over time, my thinking and behaviors changed. Living abstinely literally rewired my brain so that the urge to eat compulsively dissipated. The urges have not left me completely, but I no longer act on them. Before recovery, food served as a treat, a comfort, entertainment, and a substance to abuse to allow me to disconnect from anxiety and turmoil. Now food is a source of fuel. When I am following my honest plan of eating, I can enjoy food and take much comfort in the feeling of eating the right quantities at the right times for the right reasons, without the accompanying guilt, shame, and self-loathing. I lean on my plan of eating so that I don't have to take that first compulsive bite. I never fully lived until I started working a 12-step program and using the tools of OA. Now that my days and nights are not spent focused on bingeing and purging, I am FREE to live my life! OA's 12-step program provides the perfect structure through the 12 steps and 12 traditions, in which I can live out my life to the fullest, one day at a time, with integrity and freedom from COE.

I have achieved a level of physical, emotional, and spiritual health that, before recovery, I would only fantasize about. The quality of my relationships has improved. I possess the ability to handle situations – including painful and challenging situations – without using excess food to cope. I feel authentic integrity. I no longer feel like I am living a lie. I used to feel as though I was someone other than who I held myself out to be, and nobody knew the dark side; meanwhile, I was utterly consumed by my dark side. No more! I no longer procrastinate my

OAAP and OWLS Present the Ninth Annual Women's Wellness Retreat for Lawyers April 8-9, 2016



The OAAP and OWLS are pleased to offer the Ninth Annual Women's Wellness Retreat for Lawyers on Friday and Saturday, April 8-9, 2016.

This year's theme is "Cultivating Calm and Kindness." MCLE credits are pending.

A block of rooms is reserved for attendees at a special discounted room rate at The Hallmark Resort and Spa, Cannon Beach, Oregon. The deadline to reserve rooms at the discounted group rate is March 29, 2016. Reserve your room by calling the Hallmark Resort directly at 503-436-1566. Please reference the group code OAAP to reserve at the group rate. The group rate is available for up to three nights before or after April 8 (subject to availability).

To register for the retreat, download the registration form at www.oaap.org, or call the OAAP program assistant at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227, ext. 10. The deadline to register is Monday, April 4, 2016. For more information, contact Shari R. Gregory at 503-226-1057, ext. 14 or sharig@oaap.org.

recovery. Instead, I take simple but profound steps each and every day to stay free from COE and to grow as a human being.

If you know someone who suffers from an eating disorder, please share my story with them.

If you are struggling with an eating disorder or issues around food, the OAAP can connect you with resources and is here to help. Call the OAAP and ask to speak with an attorney counselor: 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227. It's free. It's confidential.

LIVING IN HEALTH AND INTEGRITY

MINDFULNESS WITHOUT MEDITATING

Articles about mindfulness and meditation are seemingly everywhere these days. Meditation is one way to cultivate mindfulness, but not everyone is ready for or interested in meditating. While the scientific benefits of meditation are well documented, it's not necessary to meditate in order to be mindful.

Merriam Webster defines "mindfulness" as the practice of maintaining a nonjudgmental state of heightened or complete awareness of one's thoughts, emotions, or experiences on a moment-to-moment basis. Another way of saying it is: paying attention to what is happening in the moment, with curiosity and without judgment. Often we just tune out, ruminating over the past or worrying about the future. But opportunities to be present in the moment abound in everyday life.

Being mindful can mean simply focusing on your senses and the information they are taking in. Here is a list of some readily available opportunities, but you can use any experience or situation as an opportunity to be mindful. Happy practicing!

- Hearing the phone or email tone
- Listening to or feeling the rain
- Watching a candle
- Smelling the trees
- Using your non-dominant hand
- Walking, running, or working out
- In a conference or meeting
- Savoring interactions with friends or family
- Consciously interacting with difficult people
- Petting a dog or cat
- Cooking or eating
- Washing dishes
- Drawing or painting
- Listening to or playing music
- Gardening or doing yard work

Recommended Reading on Mindfulness

Chapman, Susan Gillis. (2012). *The Five Keys to Mindful Communication*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.

Chozen Bays, Jan. (2011). *How to Train a Wild Elephant & Other Adventures in Mindfulness: Simple daily mindfulness practices for living life more fully and more joyfully*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.

Hanson, Rick. (2013). *Hardwiring Happiness: The new brain science of contentment, calm, and confidence*. New York, NY: Harmony.

Hanson, Rick & Mendius Richard. (2009). *Buddha's Brain: The practical neuroscience of happiness, love & wisdom*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger.

Henepola Gunaratana, Bhante. (2002). *Mindfulness in Plain English*. Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications.

Kabat-Zinn, Jon. (2005). *Coming to Our Senses: Healing ourselves and the world through mindfulness*. New York, NY: Hyperion.

Kabat-Zinn, Jon. (2011). *Mindfulness for Beginners: Reclaiming the present moment – and your life*.

Kabat-Zinn, Jon & Myla. (1998) *Everyday Blessings: The Inner Work of Mindful Parenting*. Hachette Books.

Neff, Kristin. (2011). *Self-Compassion: The proven power of being kind to yourself*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Nhat Hanh, Thich. (2001). *A Pebble for Your Pocket: Mindful stories for children and grown-ups*. Berkeley, CA: Plum Blossom Books.

Scheff, Leonard & Edmiston, Susan. (2010). *The Cow in the Parking Lot: A Zen approach to overcoming anger*. New York, NY: Workman.

Shafir, Rebecca. (2000). *The Zen of Listening: Mindful communication in the age of distraction*. Wheaton, IL: Quest.

Siegel, Ronald. (2010). *The Mindfulness Solution: Everyday practices for everyday problems*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Strosahl, Kirk & Robinson, Patricia. (2015). *In This Moment: Five steps to transcending stress using mindfulness and neuroscience*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger.

CONTROL-YOUR-STRESS CHECKLIST

Many situations can cause your stress response to kick in ... if you let it. The key is to recognize what leads you to feel stressed and when, and then develop ways to prevent or handle it.

Are you often late? Look at your time management. Make it a habit to plan your day, task by task (in advance), and give yourself enough time for your to-dos. Overestimate the time each task will take. Insert spaces into your schedule to avoid back-to-back meetings.

Are you overextended? If you're juggling too much, determine what's truly essential and important and what you can put on hold or eliminate.

Are you easily angered or irritated by anyone or anything? Pause to ask yourself if you're making something into a bigger issue than it is, leaping to conclusions, or letting your emotions impact your reasoning.

Are you feeling pessimistic in general? Stop and remember all the things you have to be grateful for, and practice not comparing yourself to others.

Are you burned out? Consider self-nurturing activities to recharge and/or find help so you don't have to do tasks alone.

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Control-Your-Stress Resources

The OAAP has many articles on topics of controlling your stress. Go to www.oaap.org and select *In Sight*.

● Time Management:

"Simple Time Management Tool," *In Sight*, June 2011

"Organizing Your Life Your Way," *In Sight*, December 2011

● Work-Life Balance:

"How to Say 'No,'" *In Sight*, September 2011

"Lessons from Lawyers: Achieving Work-Life Balance," *In Sight*, March 2013

● Managing Your Anger:

"Managing Your Anger," *In Sight*, December 2006

"Controlling My Storm," *In Sight*, March 2004

● Happiness:

"Humor Your Way to Happiness, Health, and Success," *In Sight*, July 2007

"Leg-Up on Happiness," *In Sight*, March 2012

"Ten Happy Tips for Lawyers," *In Sight*, January 2011

● Burnout and Resilience:

"Bouncing Back – A Short Guide to Resilience," *In Sight*, April 2014

"Building Stress Hardiness," *In Sight*, March 2011

Suicide Prevention Webinar

On March 21, 2016, 10:00 a.m. to 11:35 a.m. (PT), the ABA is presenting a webinar, "I've Got Your Back; You've Got My Ear: Suicide Prevention in the Legal Profession." The webinar is free to ABA members. Register at <http://shop.americanbar.org/ebus/ABAEventsCalendar/EventDetails.aspx?productId=214713350&>.

Mindfulness Group – Washington County

Beginning March 28, 2016, the OAAP will be forming a six-week group for lawyers in Washington County who want to learn how to implement mindfulness-based practices in their lives. The group will be facilitated by OAAP Attorney Counselor Kyra Hazilla, JD, MSW, and will meet Mondays from noon to 1:15 p.m. at a downtown Hillsboro location. If you are interested in this group or for more information, please contact Kyra Hazilla at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227, ext. 13, or at kyrah@oaap.org.

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Finding Meaningful Work: A Job-Search Skill-Building, Networking, and Support Group

Finding Meaningful Work is a confidential networking and support group for lawyers making job or career transitions. In this group, lawyers will create and execute a personalized job search plan; develop a mission statement and elevator speech; learn and practice networking skills; and hone their job search skills. If you are interested in attending, please contact OAAP Attorney Counselor Shari R. Gregory, LCSW, JD, at 503-226-1057, ext. 14, or at sharig@oaap.org.

Career Self-Assessment Workshops

The OAAP also 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, or Shari R. Gregory at 503-226-1057, ext. 14, or at sharig@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.

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| April 7, 2016 | Heather Decker | from private practice to Director of Attorney Professional Development and Recruiting |
| May 5, 2016 | George Finch | Using Your Law Degree to Expand Your Role Beyond Your Job Description |
| June 2, 2016 | TBD | |
| July & August | SUMMER BREAK | |

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.