



# IN SIGHT for Oregon Lawyers

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

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## INTERVENTION CAN SAVE AN ALCOHOLIC'S LIFE

People used to believe that alcoholics had the ability to control their drinking, but they just weren't willing to do so. Now we know that alcoholism is a progressive neurological disease strongly influenced by genetic vulnerability. We also know that willpower is as powerless to alter the neurochemical changes in alcoholics as it is to stabilize blood sugar fluctuations in diabetics.

Concerned family members and friends of an alcoholic can help the alcoholic by learning about the disease of alcoholism and the symptoms associated with its early, middle, and late stages. Once the alcoholic's family and friends understand the true nature of the disease, they are able to see that the addiction – not the alcoholic – is the true enemy. They can then help the alcoholic fight the disease of alcoholism. One way to help the alcoholic accept treatment is to use a technique called intervention.

### TYPES OF INTERVENTIONS

Intervention is a technique designed to "bring the bottom up" before alcohol destroys everything of value in the alcoholic's life. The approaches vary, but the general concept is to persuade the alcoholic to get treatment. In treatment, the alcoholic's denial – a primary symptom of the disease – can be broken down by letting the alcoholic know that he or she is loved and that friends and family members are concerned about his or her behavior.

An *informal intervention* is one in which physicians, friends, and colleagues individually offer their concern and sup-

## RECOVERY WEEKEND

On October 29–31, 2004, the OAAP will offer a weekend retreat for professionals in recovery at the Bonneville Hot Springs Resort. Jaclyn S. from Albuquerque, New Mexico, will be our facilitator. Please call 503-226-1057/1-800-321-OAAP or e-mail [Liisah@oaap.org](mailto:Liisah@oaap.org) for information and to register. Advance registration is recommended.

port to the alcoholic. Over the years, brief informal interventions can sometimes make a difference, but not all alcoholics will respond to this approach. If the disease has progressed too far, an informal intervention may not be able to penetrate the alcoholic's highly developed defense systems.

A *crisis intervention* is more immediate and forceful. When a crisis occurs, the event can be used to persuade the alcoholic to get help. Examples of crisis situations related to alcoholism include hospitalization caused by intoxication, a drunk-driving charge, a potentially violent child custody situation, or a suicide attempt. The crisis intervention focuses attention on the underlying cause of the emergency – neurological addiction to the drug alcohol – and then directs the alcoholic into alcohol treatment.

A *formal intervention* generally involves several weeks of planning and preparation. The first step is to find a counselor who will guide the family members through the intervention and treatment process. The process is likely to include a meeting with the alcoholic; inpatient or outpatient treatment; participation in 12-step programs; and regular sessions with an addictionologist, clinical

psychologist, or certified alcohol and drug counselor who understands the neurophysiological nature of the disease. The counselor can also assist with making all the arrangements necessary to carry through with the plan. In addition, the counselor can educate the participants about the disease process, encourage them to build up a support system, and act as a clearinghouse for community resources that help families cope with alcohol-related problems.

**EFFECTIVE APPROACHES**

The process of helping an alcoholic to help himself or herself often includes a face-to-face meeting in which family members, friends, and concerned others confront the alcoholic with specific facts pointing to the devastating impact of alcohol on the alcoholic’s life. Here are the essential elements involved in this type of meeting:

- The facts and data must be presented by people who are close to the alcoholic or exert a powerful influence on the alcoholic’s life. Examples include family members, friends, bosses, supervisors, co-workers, physicians, and clergy members.
- Specific firsthand evidence is especially convincing. The most powerful evidence describes events that have happened or conditions that exist. Use “I” statements, rather than opinions, generalizations, or accusations.

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**RECOVERY SUPPORT**

The OAAP offers support for recovering women and men. If you would like to participate in a 12-step meeting in your area, call Meloney Crawford Chadwick or Michael J. Sweeney at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-OAAP.

For example, “I was really sad when you were late for my birthday party because you had been out drinking with friends.”

- Everyone involved in the intervention should avoid moral judgments and any tone of censure. All the facts presented should be used to support the reasons that the family members and friends are concerned. Here is an example: “Jane, three weeks ago this Saturday you insisted on driving Alison and her friend to a slumber party. You had been drinking wine all afternoon. I tried to take your keys away, but you got very upset, yelled at the kids to get in the car, and drove off. I waited in agony for you to come home, scared to death that you would all be killed in a car wreck. I know how much you love your children and how devastated you would be if anything happened to them. I want you to get well. We all want you to be healthy again.”
- Whenever possible, the facts should center around the use of alcohol. Highlighting the contradictions or conflicts in values caused by drinking can make the point even stronger. Here is an example: “I’ve seen how your personality changes when you drink, and it scares me. I know you are not a violent person when you’re sober, but last Wednesday, I commented on your drinking, and you slapped me several times. I was shocked and hurt. I still have the bruises on my face. I love the person you are when you’re not drinking. Please get help.”
- Vivid details are particularly effective because they give the alcoholic a wide-screen view of his or her behavior at a particular point in time. Videotapes and home movies that show the alcoholic drinking or intoxicated are very convincing because they leave no room for denial.

**AL-ANON**

Al-Anon is a support group for people whose lives have been impacted by an alcoholic spouse or family member. The OAAP will offer an Al-Anon group on Tuesdays from noon to 1 p.m., starting September 14, 2004. If you are interested in attending, call the OAAP at 503-226-1057.

- Arrangements for assessment and treatment should be made in advance by the professional counselor who assists you, so that if the alcoholic agrees to accept help, the process can begin immediately.

Conducting one or two rehearsals or practice sessions can help the discussions go much more smoothly. When family and friends are properly educated and the facts are carefully gathered and lovingly presented, this approach can be extremely effective.

**RESOURCES**

Whether intervention consists of the informal act of telling an alcoholic that you care about him or her and are concerned about his or her drinking, or the formal act of family, friends, and treatment professionals meeting with the alcoholic to outline their concerns and present a step-by-step course of action, the goal should always be to give a gentle but firm push toward accepting help.

If you are concerned about the drinking of someone you know, call one of the attorney counselors at the Oregon Attorney Assistance Program. They can help with arranging an intervention, discussing treatment options, and guiding you to other resources.

Katherine Ketcham and William F. Asbury

*This article has been excerpted and adapted with permission from Chapter 9 of Beyond the Influence: Understanding and Defeating Alcoholism, by Katherine Ketcham and William F. Asbury (Bantam Books, 2000). Ms. Ketcham is also the author of Teens Under the Influence: The Truth About Kids, Alcohol, and Other Drugs – How to Recognize the Problem and What to Do About It (Ballantine Books, 2003).*

**THE FIXER**

Ted was a lawyer in his mid-thirties who came into counseling with complaints of sleep problems and a general feeling of unhappiness with his life. Outwardly he had great success: a job in an up-and-coming law firm, a family, and a home. Yet inwardly, especially when he wasn't busy, he felt uneasy and even a bit sad. That others could count on him to get things done – once a source of pride for him – now felt like an endless burden.

I recommended that Ted come to a group for children of alcoholics and other dysfunctional families. He was shocked by this suggestion. Sure, there had been some problems growing up, but dysfunctional? Neither of his parents were alcoholics, nor did they abuse or mistreat him. Why would I suggest this? Ted was especially wary of a group. "It depresses me to listen to others' problems." As a clinician, I knew that Ted's statement confirmed I was on the right track. It told me that Ted had never learned to differentiate between others' problems and his own responsibility. He couldn't tolerate hearing about others' difficulties, because it triggered a feeling of obligation to fix their problems. Now in his thirties, he was confronted with what many people face in this stage of their lives – situations they cannot fix. He felt helpless. My hunch was that he had experienced a similar feeling of helplessness while growing up.

After several individual sessions, Ted decided to give the group a try. Over the next several months, he discovered that he felt like a failure when he wasn't able to fix a problem. He had experienced

**GROUP FOR ADULT CHILDREN OF DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES**

This fall, the OAAP will be starting a facilitated 12-week group for Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families. The group, facilitated by Sandra Srofe, M.Ed., LPC, will meet at the OAAP on Mondays from noon to 1 p.m. for 12 weeks, will cost \$180 per person, and requires the participation of eight people. Call Shari R. Gregory at 503-226-1057 for more information.

### FAMILY ROLES

A child raised in a highly stressed or problematic household often adapts by assuming specific family roles. Frequently, the child then carries aspects of these roles into adulthood as coping mechanisms.

Lawyers who were raised in highly stressed or problematic families, commonly labeled “dysfunctional” families, most often played the role of the family fixer. Stephanie Covington, author of *Leaving the Enchanted Forest: The Path from Relationship Addiction to Intimacy* (HarperSan Francisco, 1988), uses the term “family hero” and describes these characteristics:

independent	leadership qualities	low self-esteem
meets goals	high achiever	unable to label feelings
powerful and in control	survivor	feelings of inadequacy
focused	loyal	fear of failure
attentive	motivates self and others	guilt
generous with praise	fear of rejection	procrastination
organized	avoidance of risk taking	fear of confrontation
responsible	perfectionism	drive to produce
successful	unable to get personal needs met	unreasonably high expectations of others

this feeling growing up when he couldn't get his father's attention or his stepfather's approval. Even though he did well in school and with most anything he undertook, his father's absence and his stepfather's distance and lack of praise left him feeling as though something were wrong with him. He believed he wasn't good enough, focused on what he didn't do well or hadn't done, and derived little satisfaction from his obvious accomplishments. The message he longed to hear and never did was, “That's good enough,” or “You've done enough.”

The group continued, and Ted was able to uncover more of his negative beliefs. He used the group's feedback and his reactions to other members to unearth, label, and experience how he genuinely felt. The sadness he felt before coming to therapy eventually became grief for the approval he didn't receive growing up. Over time, Ted's grief metamorphosed into a healthy respect for his own limits. He realized that, at one time or another, we are all confronted with situations over which we are powerless. It is not always in our power to be the “fixer.” With the group's help, he was able to face the realization that sometimes he cannot change situations. Once Ted was able to accept this, as well as to feel proud

of all he had accomplished, he experienced ongoing peace and serenity.

Ted's situation is not unique or limited to men, who traditionally have been expected to “do” and “achieve” to earn self-worth. The female version of Ted has traditionally derived self-worth from her ability to establish and maintain relationships. To accomplish this, she acquires skills in the language of feelings. Rather than face her helplessness to change a situation or person, she may resort to self-criticism. While growing up, she probably learned that to sustain a connection with overburdened parents, she had to try harder, be more flexible, and understand better. In working to maintain the relationship, she had to give up a part of herself. This coping mechanism provides a fertile breeding medium for self-doubt and feelings of failure. She and Ted both have difficulty accepting powerlessness.

If any of your parents or grandparents were alcoholics or struggled with some other significant impairment or dysfunction, you may continue to be challenged by the coping mechanisms and survival skills you developed as a child. Rather than viewing this as bad news, you should recognize the unique opportunity to experience meaningful personal

growth. You can stop repeating past patterns and move on to repair old wounds. You can become aware of how the patterns of your past are determining your reactions today. You can face and accept your own powerlessness. You do not have to wait until stress, depression, or burnout engulfs you, or until another significant relationship turns sour, before you address these issues. By changing your interactions and beliefs, you can move from lack of self-satisfaction to pride in your accomplishments.

If you are interested in taking the first step of this journey, call the OAAP and ask about the Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families group. (See page 3.)

Joe Alexander, LCSW

## HOW A LEGAL RECRUITER CAN HELP YOUR CAREER

This article is a summary of information provided to *In Sight* by several recruiters. It explains the nuts and bolts of legal recruiting so that you can determine whether this is a step you'd like to explore in your search for job satisfaction.

**I've heard the term "headhunter." Is it the same as "legal recruiter?"** Yes. The term "headhunter" is often used to refer to the part of the process when an employer contacts a recruiter to locate an employee. This process is one aspect of the services a recruiter provides. Recruiters also help people find new jobs or refine their career goals. A legal recruiter can serve as a "headhunter," a "job hunter," or a career counselor.

### How does a recruiter help with my job search?

A recruiter can tell you what the current market looks like for lawyers in your specialty and geographic area. A good recruiter should be able to give you very specific firsthand information about the local legal community. He or she can help you compare your current situation with other opportunities.

A recruiter can also act as a career counselor in trying to find the right fit for you. Working with a legal recruiter is typically a coaching process. The recruiter may help you revise your résumé or prepare different versions of résumés. He or she may talk to

## TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR CAREER

On September 20, 2004, from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., the OAAP will offer *Taking Control of Your Career* at the Benson Hotel in Portland. The featured presenter is Kathy Morris, JD, a nationally known speaker, author, career counselor, and director of the ABA Career Resource Center.

The seminar costs \$25 and includes materials. For registration information, visit [www.oaap.org](http://www.oaap.org) and click on the seminar tab or call Liisa Heard at 503-226-1057. Registration deadline: 9-15-04.

you about presentation and interview preparation. The recruiter may also advise you about the firms you interview with and guide you through the decision process, keeping you focused and on track. Some recruiters can help you develop your long-term career goals and a strategy for reaching them.

Recruiters can also help in other ways. At the associate level, salary ranges are somewhat fixed, so the recruiter can't do much salary negotiation for you. They can, however, help you understand the bonus system, other benefits, and cost-of-living comparisons. Recruiters can also help negotiate complex partner-level compensation, as well as in-house corporate compensation and benefit packages.

### Does a recruiter search only within the pool of firms that have called the recruiter with a specific hiring need?

No. Most recruiters will present your résumé to any firm they think might be a good match for you, regardless of whether the firm has already contacted them. The opposite is also true. When a firm engages a recruiter to find a new hire, most recruiters not only look at their database of candidates, but also contact other lawyers in the community who they think might be interested in the position.

### Who pays the recruiter's fees? Does the recruiter represent me or the firms?

The recruiter's fees are usually paid by the law firm or corporate legal department, so some people say that the recruiter's allegiance lies primarily with the firm. However, it is in everyone's interest (including the recruiter's) to accurately represent all aspects of the

recruiting process to both parties. The recruiter is not likely to “sell” you on a firm that you wouldn’t otherwise want to join, because they want to find a good match for you and to place you where you will stay. If it doesn’t work out for either party, then it isn’t an effective placement, which doesn’t enhance the recruiter’s reputation in the legal community. So recruiters have a personal interest in brokering a “double sale” that is sweet for both you and the firm. Their loyalties are actually fairly evenly divided.

#### **Is my relationship with a recruiter exclusive?**

Most recruiters say that it’s best if it is. Often, lawyers looking for a new firm will contact multiple recruiters, thinking that they are increasing their odds of getting hired. On the contrary, it really muddies the waters, duplicating the recruiters’ efforts and frustrating the in-house recruiters or hiring partners. Conflicting presentations of the same candidate by different recruiters might even cost you your chances to land a particular job. Most recruiters will advise you to find one recruiter you feel comfortable with, whose style matches yours, and stay with that recruiter throughout the process.

On the other hand, sometimes an exclusive relationship doesn’t make sense for the candidate. For instance, if you are looking at other markets as well as the Northwest, you probably would want to work with recruiters who are familiar with those communities. For candidates who want to stay in the Northwest, however, the best relationship is exclusive.

**How do I find a recruiter?** The *Oregon State Bar Bulletin* has a section where recruiters and staffing companies can advertise their services. That’s an easy place to start when looking for a local recruiter. You can also check for recruiter ads in the *National Law Journal* and *The Business Journal* of Portland. The National Association of Legal Search Consultants maintains a directory of legal recruiters, as does FindLaw. Many recruiters get business from referrals, so a very effective way to find a recruiter is to ask colleagues you trust whether they can recommend someone. Another resource for researching recruiters is the Internet.

**How can I get a recruiter’s attention?** You must first do some self-appraisal. Presenting a candid pic-

### **SUPPORT GROUP FOR WOMEN LAWYERS**

The OAAP is sponsoring a 10-week confidential support group for women lawyers. If you would like support for issues related to practicing law, managing stress, or balancing your life, contact Shari R. Gregory, MSW, JD, at 503-226-1057, ext. 14, [sharig@oaap.org](mailto:sharig@oaap.org), for more information. The group will be formed this summer and will begin in September in Portland.

ture of yourself – detailing your experiences (or lack of) in a particular practice area – helps the recruiter immensely. Bring your professional accomplishments to the recruiter’s attention. If you are new to the legal profession, or for some other reason need help developing your “package” of marketable skills, you may first want to consult with a career counselor. The attorney counselors at the Oregon Attorney Assistance Program (OAAP) can help you get started on this part of the process. You can reach the OAAP at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227.

**How should I evaluate potential recruiters?** Recruiters should be willing to answer the following questions: How long have you been in the recruiting business? What was your professional experience before becoming a recruiter? What is your educational background? Do you have any knowledge of the legal market in addition to being a recruiter? Do you have a specialty? What is your placement record in the target market I am interested in?

Some other questions you might want to research indirectly are: What is the recruiter’s reputation in the legal community? Does he or she have established relationships with the hiring authorities at firms you would be interested in working for? Has the recruiter changed recruiting firms several times?

Finally, you should evaluate your comfort level with the recruiter. Do you agree with his or her placement philosophy? Do you think the recruiter will be a good career coach for you? Do you trust him or her to help you manage your career? Would you feel comfortable calling the recruiter to ask “dumb” questions? These are questions that only you can answer, and they will differ for everyone.

### How often should I check in with my recruiter?

In the recruiting process, time is often of the essence. When your recruiter contacts you or asks for more information, respond immediately. In a stagnant market or one without many options for a particular candidate, checking in with your recruiter every few weeks is appropriate. Establish a communication pattern that allows you to gauge the recruiter's performance and still keep tabs on your career. Stay involved and follow up – your career is an important aspect of your life.

**How long will it take for the recruiter to place me?** Anywhere from two weeks to a year. In the current, relatively slow market, some recruiters say it takes an average of six months. In a market with more openings, two to four months is more the norm. Even the most straightforward placement – such as when a firm has a clear and compelling need – can still take months. Set a realistic time frame for your search. Typically, January and February are months of increased job movement. If you're thinking of moving to a new firm and the end of the year is approaching, you may want to adjust your strategic planning accordingly.

**Should I use a local or national recruiting firm?** It depends on the scope of your search. If you are looking for a job in several legal markets, then a national firm might be perfectly positioned to help you. If you can get one of the large, international recruiters to devote resources to your particular case, you would likely be well-served. But if you are focused on a smaller market like the Northwest, work with a local recruiter who knows the local market and its history.

More often than not, it's the smaller, regional recruiting firms that have the inside market data, connections, and relationships that are so important in making a placement. Local knowledge is key – not only of the legal community but also of specific practice areas. It really comes down to the relationships the recruiter has established with local law firms.

**What if I live outside the Portland-metro area?** Generally, recruiters are based in the more populated areas, and most of the lawyer hires in smaller cities and towns are not done through a recruiter. Firms in other areas of the state occasionally call recruiters,

## Thinking of Changing Jobs or Careers?

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but for the most part they do their own recruiting. However, some recruiters do have connections in other areas of the state and occasionally make placements outside Portland. If you live in a smaller city or town or want to move to one, one of the first questions you should ask when interviewing potential recruiters is whether they have connections with firms in the area you live or would like to live.

**Can I get placed at small or medium-sized firms or only at large ones?** Some recruiters only work with large firms, or with spin-offs, branches, or satellite offices of large firms. Although bigger firms have the resources and generally are more willing to pay recruiters, some smaller firms also use recruiters. Sometimes big-firm recruiters will pass along information about potential openings with smaller firms to candidates they think might be interested. If you want to work in a small firm, ask potential recruiters whether they've made any placements in the size and type of firm you are interested in.

**Should I look for a job myself while I have engaged a recruiter?** Recruiters suggest that you use a recruiter first and see what he or she can do for you. You may gain a great deal by using a prepaid source first – and it doesn't cost you anything. You can always fall back on your individual contacts if the recruiting process doesn't yield any offers. If you explore your own contacts before hiring a recruiter, the recruiter can work with you in the rest of the market, but he or she can't help negotiate a deal with that particular firm.

*Our thanks to legal recruiter Gregory MacCrone; Northwest Legal Search, Inc., recruiters Linda Green Pierce and Bob Shea; and interviewer/writer Tanya Hanson for their assistance with this article.*

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## LAWYERS IN TRANSITION CALENDAR

Lawyers in Transition is a networking, educational, and support group for lawyers making job or career transitions. A guest speaker is featured the first Thursday of each month at noon in the OAAP office at **520 SW Yamhill, Suite 1050, Portland**. In addition to these monthly presentations, the OAAP offers career workshops to assist lawyers 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.

The following speakers are scheduled for Lawyers in Transition. If you would like additional information about the Lawyers in Transition program or the OAAP career workshops, call Mike Long, Shari R. Gregory, Michael Sweeney, or Meloney Crawford Chadwick at 503-226-1057.

September 9, 2004*	<b>Mary Chaffin</b>	<i>Sole practitioner to bank executive, U.S. Bank, to legal counsel, Mercy Corp.</i>
October 7, 2004	<b>Adina Flynn</b>	<i>Civil defense attorney to personal financial advisor, American Express Financial Advisors</i>
November 4, 2004	<b>Don Mazziotti</b>	<i>Executive director of Portland Development Commission</i>
December 2, 2004	<b>Rick Lamb</b>	<i>Physician to lawyer</i>
January 6, 2005	<b>Laura Potter</b>	<i>Private practice to contract lawyer to community development director, American Cancer Society</i>

\*Second Thursday of the month

***IN SIGHT*** *for Oregon Lawyers*  
NEWSLETTER OF THE OREGON ATTORNEY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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