

# RECOVERY SUPPORT SPECIALIST NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2012

Issue #36

RISE

University of Arizona

this issue

## Hope

to me is: being able to wake up happy and not having to find a reason to get out of bed; being financially secure; [having] a bright future and good friends; and, not [having] to think about how messed-up the world is. Hope is light and joyful without the darkness and pain of depression. Hope keeps me positive and looking forward to the future and not thinking of reasons to die.

Hope, for me, is basically meaning *life* and not *death*. —

Shawn McNary

RSSI #30



Upcoming RSS Institute Dates

Healthy Sleeping Tips

Did You Know?:

The Wonders of Berries

The Healthy Menu:

Strawberry-Mango Smoothie

Tips to Beat Depression

Word Search—Local Agencies



Marci James

## Hope in the Midst of Despair

**I**f you would have asked me to write about hope 10 years ago I would have said, "Hope is a feeling that I have given up on." Hope was something I simply did not have. Events that happened to me did not put me a happy place. I was in a very abusive relationship for many years and lived in despair on a day to day basis. Darkness filled my life, and each day became worse and worse. Instead of seeing sunshine I saw dark clouds. I gave up on even the thought that there was still a full and rich life ahead of me.

An amazing person entered my life. This person inspired me and taught me that in a world of darkness there is always hope. The definition of hope, according to Webster is: "The feeling that what is wanted can be had; or that events will turn out for the best." So, I took that to heart. What is wanted can be had. My day to day life didn't change immediately, but in the midst of despair came a new hope that I could make a choice and turn my feelings of fear into a useful tool to get out of a situation that I could and did take control over.

As time went on I started to believe in myself again; to regain self-esteem; to rebuild a life that was long since forgotten. Remembering the past is what keeps me moving forward.

To be able to give hope to another person is what I strive for. I heard a quote once which said, "*Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened.*"

RSSI #30



UA RISE

Upcoming  
Recovery Support Specialist  
Institutes

**Institute #31**

October 31, November  
1, 6, 7, 8, 14, and 15

**Institute #32**

February 13, 14, 20, 21,  
22, 27, and 28

**Institute #33**

May 15, 16, 22, 23, 24,  
29, and 30

For additional information  
Please contact:

UA RISE Office  
520.626.7473

Or Visit the CPSA  
Website

[http://w3.cpsa-rbha.org/  
rss/](http://w3.cpsa-rbha.org/rss/)



# EXPERIENCING HOPE

On December 5th, 2011, I was brought to Pima County Jail for my 6th visit. Being a full time Meth addict meant I was to end up there. It had only taken twenty months to lay ruins to my entire life and every aspect of it. My college education didn't save me, nor did my success serving my country as a Marine, or my good upbringing, or my previous career choices as a project manager, analyst or director of operations or my intense entrenchment in musical salvation. I was engaged actively in my self-destruction... I was and still am a person with chronic destructive addictions to anything that will get me high. I am a sober addict, and I am in recovery and will be for the rest of my natural life.

On December 23<sup>rd</sup>, having spent nearly three weeks detoxing from Meth, I attempted suicide in Jail. It would be my first and last unsuccessful attempt. I did not wake up and find God, or have some kind of out of body experience; I had simply decided that if I was supposed to die, I would have. Since I and my loved ones were spared my death, I made a decision with resolve. I would engage in life and put as much effort into saving it as I had previously put to-

wards destroying it. That meant getting help and letting go of who I was. I began to read the big book of Alcoholics Anonymous... I began to work my steps.

On February 7th, I was released from custody and transported directly to an



intensive court ordered inpatient drug rehab... I was told I was dual diagnosis. "You're bipolar type 2 and an addict." To me that was saying: "there's a footprint, there must have been a foot that made it". I believe that there are very complex goings-on within me.

Some say that I am mentally ill with a drug problem - some say I am a person with an addiction that now suffers from mental illness. Things are how they are, and what is more important is recovery and the goings [with] that. My experience and the hope I have, the support system that I have established, my continued education about all things mental health and a commitment to help others are all key towards my lifelong recovery. Struggle does not have to be part of my undertaking, it has been, and there is letting go and acceptance.

My responsibility to myself is that of love and peace and hope. I have been given a chance to be grateful for all that I now see are blessings and opportunities. Ingratiated with that, my journey through recovery and helping others with their recovery is worth looking forward to.

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towards my lifelong  
recovery...*

**Adam Frank**  
**RSSI #30**

The end of my 15 year addiction with opiates, benzodiazepines, and heroin, began in my usual, shameless, free-from-peering-eyes-and-judgment parking spot in an empty Walgreens parking lot.



So, when I was on the floorboards of my car, desperately searching for the last of my stash, hope came crashing into my mind as if I were just hit by another car in that dank parking lot; It smacked me in the face. I felt as though I was having an out of body experience, floating above, looking down on myself. For the first time in many years I felt shame. At that point thoughts started racing through my head. My stomach felt nauseous and I became warm and sweaty. My first thoughts were, "I am better than this. I have so much more to give. I can't succumb to my biggest weakness... hopelessness." Shame, for me, was the beginning of my hope.

From that parking lot of Walgreens, I called my family, who have always

been next to me; loving, and supportive no matter the path I chose in life. We all decided together the best road to take was the road to recovery. I hadn't even admitted to myself at that point that I had a problem. I was in denial. I still carried the shame. But my burden was not so heavy. The corners and curves of my shame were outlined with hope. All I knew was that something needed to change, and that change began with me.

Hope is within all of us. Hope is the universal language and feeling for positive change. We can all relate to hope. We have all had hope, lost hope, supported and encouraged hope, and empowered hope within ourselves and others. As long as human kind, no matter the age, race, disability, or social status, always believe in hope, then each one of us have done our duty for the betterment of each other.

*"I still carried the shame. But my burden was not so heavy. The corners and curves of my shame were outlined with hope."*

**Casandra Pollack**  
*Hope: After 15 Years*  
**RSSI #30**



## Did You Know?

**Berries** are low in calories, high in fiber (helps you feel full and eat less), a good source of anti-oxidants (cell repair and anti-inflammatory), aid in lowering blood pressure and cholesterol levels, and have recently been shown to decrease memory loss as we age. Berries are often used in food preparation by people living with diabetes and/or various types of arthritis.

**Ways to add berries to your diet:** mix with low-fat yogurt for a smoothie, mix with nuts and whipped cream for a refreshing sundae, mix with your favorite granola for some quick energy or as a snack on the hiking trail, add to your salad or blend with your low-calorie dressing to add the zing without the calories, and top your cereal with them to add the sweetness without the sugar.

**Check out our Mango-Strawberry Smoothie recipe later in this issue**



# Riding the Storm Out

I'm sure the word hope has different meanings to all of us as individuals. ...One day when I was about 10 years old, my dad and I were driving on the freeway on our way back home from Tucson. All of a sudden, out of the blue came a huge storm. All I could hear was the thunder, the strong wind, and the sound of the water hitting our car. My dad said he couldn't see at all, and that he wasn't even sure if it was safe to stop, since he couldn't even tell if there were cars ahead of us and how close they were to our car.

At that point, I was afraid we wouldn't get to our destination safely, and for the first time, I sensed that my dad was scared. It was dark, and I seriously thought there was no way out of that darkness and that I would never get back home. It was a fear I had never experienced before. After a few seconds of silence, the overwhelming noise started to gradually turn into a peaceful quietude, and my dad said he could see

some sunlight. At that moment, I knew we would come out of it okay, and that we would get home safely. To me, that is hope, the belief and conviction that something will change for the better, *no matter what*.



I was diagnosed with a serious mental illness a little over 9 years ago, and I now realize that in all these years, I've felt hope very few times. I have been in that car where all I can see is darkness so many times, almost constantly. I have seen that small ray of sun, and I had never really acted on it. In fact, I wonder if the feeling of hope only counts when you act on it, and if you don't its false hope. Is there such a thing?

I began to train in the RSS institute one week ago, and I feel that it is safe to say that in this short time, I've actually felt hope and have acted on it.

I'm a human being, therefore, I have rights and I want respect. Yes, I believe I will always be on the road of recovery, and in that path I will continue to make mistakes and to struggle, and I will also continue to have successes and accomplishments. I believe it is part of being human! I'm still working on all this and have a long way to go, but I have the rest of my life to keep getting better at it. Finally, I have learned over time that no matter how long it takes, I always end up seeing that small ray of sun that leads me to my destination, and that in the end, despite the thunder and darkness, *I will be okay*.

—Karla Guzman  
RSSI #30

Karla Guzman was born in Nogales, Mexico. In 1991 she moved to Tucson to attend high school at the Arizona State School for the Deaf and the Blind.

Karla is a person living with a visual impairment. She stated that she “wanted to know what it was like to be around other people who have the same disability as me.”

Karla graduated high school in 1995 and attended the University of Arizona for a few years.

Karla became a United States citizen in 2000, “after a long and successful struggle.” Karla just completed the Recovery Support Specialist training, and is currently a volunteer at Camp Wellness.





Seated

(left to right)

- Erica S.
- Nancy B.
- Marci J.
- Karla G.
- Diane L.
- Lisa C.
- Casandra P.

Photos taken by:  
Arrow Foster



**RSSI #30 Graduates**

Standing

(left to right)

Middle

Adam F.

Cedric Ray F.

Lyle F.

Jayne T.

Patricia W.

Melanie S.

Kathaleen C.

Tamera P.

Back

Shawn M.

Jose R.

Thomas A.

Richard Y.

Jason K.

Carrie J.

Jay Douglas J.

Alex S.



A Special Thank You to the CRSS Panel

**Tippy V . Atkins-Haumesser**, CRSS, Recovery Support Coordinator CODAC (standing)

**Steve Conn**, CRSS, BHT, Crisis Response Center (left)

**John McElroy**, CRSS, Lead Recovery Support Specialist, COPE Community Services, Inc. (middle)

**Kyle Long**, Recovery Coach II, BHT, MSW, CODAC (right)

**CONGRATULATIONS  
INSTITUTE XXX  
GRADUATES!**





# Nighty-Night

## 5 Tips for Healthy Sleeping

- Don't climb into bed too early. Wait until you're sleepy.
- Wake up at the same time each morning, even on weekends.
- Cut out big meals, alcohol, nicotine, and caffeine for at least three to four hours before you go to bed.
- Get regular exercise — but your workouts should end three or four hours before bedtime. Exercising too close to bedtime can act as a stimulant.
- Reserve your bedroom for [slumber and intimacy] only. Avoid eating, watching TV, or using a computer when you're in bed.
- Relax for one hour before bedtime. Try listening to soothing music or reading a good book. When you are winding down, avoid the computer, video games, TV, and other sources of bright lights.

Retrieved 9/25/2012 from <http://www.everydayhealth.com/health-report/healthy-sleep/sleep-and-stress-management.aspx>



# Practicing Self-Care?

## 4 tips to beat depression

- ◆ Get up, Get out – even a small amount of exercise can boost your serotonin and dopamine levels that give you that “feel-good” mood. Using the stairs when possible, walking to the corner grocer, or taking a hike with some good friends can all add to the recommended 30 minutes of daily activity (Laskowski, 2011)
- ◆ Nighty-Night – getting the recommended seven to eight hours a night of sleep can eliminate one trigger for depression. Remember, it is the quality of your sleep that counts (Mrazek, 2008) so turn off those lights keep the bed for sleep and sex only - no TV, laptop, or food consumption. (see the column to the left for more information on healthy sleeping).
- ◆ Eat rice, Not fries – foods high in refined carbohydrates/sugar (chips, alcohol, fries, dense breads, etc.) can cause a spike in blood sugar levels that drop rapidly and can cause fatigue and crankiness. Alcohol may take away some symptoms initially, it is a depressant and will make the depression symptoms worse and can lead to an addiction (Mrazek, 2009).
- ◆ No more Negative-Nellies – grandma used to quote “bad association spoils useful habits”. You ever hear the phrase “they had an addictive smile”; it’s true – we can “catch” a mood from those around us. If you feel “down”, associating with energetic, positive, supportive, and active people can lift your spirits.

So get out there with positive people and share a healthy meal; when all is done, relax in a warm, comfortable bed.

Laskowski, E. (2011, September 21). How much should the average adult exercise every day?

Mrazek, D. (2008). Quality of sleep helps treatment.

Mrazek, D. (2009, September 21). Alcohol and depression: What are the risks?

## The Healthy Menu: Mango-Strawberry Smoothie

### Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cup(s) orange juice
- 1/2 package(s) tofu, silken-style firm, light
- 1 mango(es), pitted, peeled and cut up
- 1 cup(s) strawberries, unsweetened whole
- orange(s), sections
- Mango(es), chunks

### Preparation

In a blender, combine orange juice, tofu, the cut-up mango, and the 1 cup strawberries. Cover and blend until smooth. If desired, for garnish, thread additional mango chunks, strawberries, and orange sections on 3 small skewers. Add a skewer to each serving. Serve immediately.



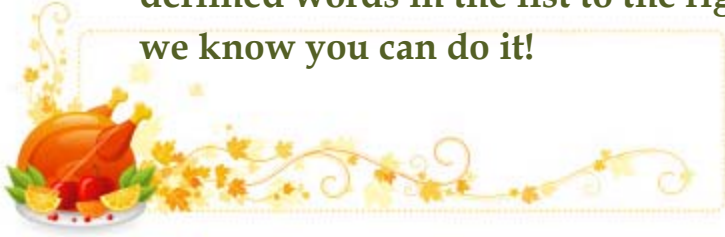
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# WORD SEARCH



This edition of the RSSI Word Puzzle tests your knowledge of regional agencies. How many agency names can you find in the puzzle? Look for the underlined words in the list to the right. Good luck - we know you can do it!



C	B	D	M	P	A	Z	N	T	Z	K	H	A	X	X	R	A	Q	R	T
C	O	V	W	B	Y	F	I	I	O	A	O	O	Q	Q	W	M	U	R	L
Z	X	D	W	P	L	A	A	V	V	U	J	M	W	S	P	L	E	K	A
X	U	L	A	X	V	A	T	E	V	M	C	R	Z	W	T	C	V	A	X
T	V	Z	C	C	Y	S	N	E	V	S	P	H	X	A	N	U	L	E	Y
U	K	S	A	L	Q	Q	U	V	O	P	S	I	S	E	L	F	S	A	C
C	L	R	I	O	R	B	O	B	Z	W	F	A	D	T	M	J	H	D	N
D	S	M	N	L	W	L	M	S	V	A	I	I	P	G	O	Y	W	V	K
P	A	P	D	E	Q	K	R	X	I	C	V	O	Q	M	Q	N	G	O	F
F	W	N	E	G	R	H	E	Z	T	O	W	N	C	Q	O	S	E	C	I
B	I	O	J	P	I	I	T	C	R	E	V	A	E	U	X	C	H	A	M
D	I	C	V	S	O	H	N	P	N	X	P	T	G	Z	P	I	L	T	A
C	O	Y	O	T	E	H	I	Q	T	T	E	N	K	Z	L	R	U	E	S
E	P	O	C	R	N	S	K	D	H	X	L	A	H	D	K	A	O	S	A
N	W	A	W	A	K	E	N	I	N	G	S	P	R	K	P	D	E	J	M
K	C	S	T	D	G	E	V	Y	Y	A	R	E	T	N	O	R	F	Y	H
H	O	N	G	P	J	J	D	O	Q	Z	N	G	D	J	B	Y	T	O	C
J	N	S	X	Y	B	P	C	C	P	B	U	F	G	M	I	J	Q	A	U
T	G	Y	C	Z	L	Z	L	R	K	G	D	I	R	F	J	N	L	X	P
J	Q	M	V	A	U	Z	N	P	O	K	G	K	E	X	H	F	G	F	S

Arizona's Children Association

CODAC Behavioral Health Services

Compass Health Care

COPE Community Services

DK Advocates

HOPE, Inc.

Intermountain Centers for Human Development

La Frontera Center

Our Family Services

Our Place Clubhouse (Part of Coyote Taskforce)

Pantano Behavioral Health Services

Providence Service Corporation

PSA Art Awakenings

Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation (SAAF)

Southern Arizona Mental Health Corporation (SAMHC)

The Haven



**R.I.S.E. promotes recovery and expanded opportunities for people with mental illness, substance use, and dual diagnosis by employing a collaborative approach to advocacy, service, education, and research.**

**Make sure you get your Winter issue!**

If your contact information has changed, you would like to be removed from this list or you have any questions or comments please contact UA RISE Office at

afoster@email.arizona.edu

P: 520.626.7473

**Beth C. Stoneking, PhD, MSW, CPRP- Publisher**  
**Beverly McGuffin, MSN, RN, CPRP- Editor**  
**Aaron Dion Foster, BS, CRSS, BHT - Page Designer**



University of Arizona RISE  
1450 N Cherry Ave  
Tucson, AZ 85719  
520.626.7473



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