

Love: the Great Healer

A verse in the New Testament Book of 2 Timothy 1:7 states, “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

The two primary emotions are love and fear. At any given moment we are either living in fear or in love. All of the negative emotions we experience are manifestations of fear while the positive emotions are manifestations of love. For example a feeling of insecurity results from the basic fear of being without support and guidance. This may often manifest itself as intense anger toward an individual or group who we feel may have done something to take away our security.

It is important to note that fear is not a part of our original response to life. It is a learned response. We were not born to fear, quite the contrary, we were born

to love. The verse clearly states that the spirit with which we are endowed at birth is a spirit of love not fear. It is the experiences of life that have taught us to fear. Jesus himself taught that the greatest commandment is to love! Love God first, love ourselves and others. Love is the great antidote to fear. John writes, “there is no fear in love, perfect love casts out fear” (1 John 4:8). When we understand this statement, we understand Jesus’ direction to “love your enemies.” It really is the happiest state in which to live. Hate is a form of fear. To hate our enemy is to live in fear that makes us unhappy and sad. Addiction is a form of self hate, and opening our spirit to the influence of the divine is the most effective form of recovery.

Conroy Reynolds, Chaplain

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Can “Food Addiction” Turn Into “Addiction”?

to fill that void with alcohol, drugs, food or other behaviors. Whenever the choice is made to stop using the “drug of choice”—whether it is food, alcohol, etc.—a common reaction is to try to substitute something else to fill that void.

The spiritual malady can best be helped through an honest recovery program and working the 12 steps. Finding and connecting with a Higher Power is essential to maintaining sanity and sobriety. Working to change any and all addictive behavior can lead to the goal of a healthy, balanced life.

Elaine Coyazo



Internal Struggle

In every struggle grows strength.
In every doubt lies hidden hope.
In every fear lies hidden courage.
In every lie there is a fragment of truth.
In every deceit there is a fear of trust.
In every nightmare there is a hope of freedom.
In every entrapment there is a sight of release.
In every sorrow there is a need for love.

Justin L.



LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY
BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE CENTER

Staying with Sobriety

Chemical Dependency Services
1710 Barton Road
Redlands, CA 92373

Please write to the address below if you wish to have your name removed from the list to receive announcements or notices introducing new services, health educational programs and events, or products of Loma Linda University Behavioral Medicine Center. All reasonable efforts will be taken to ensure that your request is honored.

Promotional Services
c/o Access Center
245 East Redlands Blvd. Suite A
San Bernardino, CA 92408

LLUMCMKTG@LUMC-175-08-0708/4000



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SUMMER 2008

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Poem: Internal Struggle

We want to hear from you

To inspire our readers and recognize your accomplishments, we would like to feature your story in one of our upcoming newsletters. Please send us a personal article or poem depicting your experience with addiction and/or alcoholism to:

**Attn: Elaine Coyazo,
LLUBMC, 1710 Barton Road,
Redlands, CA 92373**

Can Food Addiction Turn Into Addiction?

In recent months at Loma Linda University Behavioral Medicine Center (LLUBMC), we have been treating a number of patients addicted to alcohol or drugs, who have previously had gastric bypass surgery for weight loss. What we are seeing are patients who appear to have an untreated food addiction, who then cross addict to other substances when they can no longer consume large amounts of food.

Food addiction is a disease characterized by compulsive, excessive craving for and consumption of food. It is also demonstrated in obsession with weight and body image. Food addiction is similar to drug and alcohol addiction. Very often a food addict craves foods that are in themselves harmful, in much the same way an alcoholic craves alcohol or a cocaine addict craves cocaine.

Food addiction, as with any other addiction, is a loss of control. The individual suffers negative consequences, but continues the destructive behavior anyway. Like the drug addict, the food addict experiences withdrawal when attempting to cut down on foods that trigger cravings. They can experience both physical and emotional withdrawal such as tremors, cramps, and depression.

Many food addicts in recent years have been turning to gastric bypass surgery in order to lose weight gained through addictive behavior. However, surgery, in and of itself, does nothing to address the food addiction. Although some gastric bypass patients have had treatment for



food addiction, unfortunately some have not. Unless the addictive behavior is addressed, it frequently simply “mutates” to another addiction. A person who can no longer physically tolerate eating large amounts of food may begin to “fix” their feelings with other substances such as alcohol or drugs. In addition, due to the bypass surgery, alcohol and other substances are absorbed much more quickly which leads to a quick “high”. As one former patient stated, “I’m a cheap drunk”.

Those who have been in and around the recovering community are generally aware of the fact that alcoholics and drug addicts rarely limit their addiction to one substance or behavior. Are we perhaps seeing a new trend with food addicts cross addicting to drugs and alcohol?

The “spiritual malady” is one thing that all addictions have in common. This typically presents itself as a void or the feeling of something missing. The addict tries

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Gastric Bypass Surgery and Alcohol Addiction

Denise always struggled with her weight, even as a child. Her weight gain was especially noticeable after the age of eighteen. Tired of continuous diets and no results, Denise opted to undergo gastric bypass surgery. This procedure, designed for weight loss, makes the stomach smaller and allows food to bypass part of the small intestine.

Gastric bypass surgery alters physiological functions in the body.

After surgery, Denise was forced to change her eating habits drastically as her stomach was unable to digest large amounts of food. If she overate, she would become ill and vomit any excess food contents her stomach was unable

to hold in. Denise lost a lot of weight, especially after her surgery and seeing her results, her husband who also was overweight decided to have the surgery as well. Unfortunately, he suffered complications, which resulted in a three-month hospital stay. This only further strained their marriage and shortly thereafter, the two separated.

Denise became the sole income provider, working two jobs, providing for her children, and taking care of household tasks. She became so overwhelmed and stressed that she began drinking a glass of wine as a “nightcap” to calm down. Her drinking became worse and lasted for about three years. Alcohol became her food of choice leaving her body depleted of the necessary nutrients she needed to function. Denise realized she needed help but was especially motivated when she



lost her job due to her drinking. Her family became so concerned that they intervened and helped her seek treatment.

At Loma Linda University Behavioral Medicine Center, Denise has been given the tools to deal with her addiction to alcohol and feels equipped to identify

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At a Glance

RAA Women’s Retreat

Friday - Monday, August 15 – 18

Come and enjoy the food, fun, and fellowship of recovering women in the beautiful San Bernardino mountains. For more information, contact Jennifer at 909-227-4308.

Inland Empire Women’s 11th Annual AA Banquet

Saturday, August 23

This year’s banquet will be held in the Renaissance Room at the Orange Show Center in San Bernardino. For more information, call Kimberly 909-553-7631 or Sherry 909-798-6611.

RAA 17th Annual Golf Tournament

Saturday, September 13

El Rancho Verde Country Club, Rialto, CA

Join us for a day of golf! The day will include refreshments, awards, luncheon, prizes, etc. For more information, contact James at 909-215-4779.

Southern California AA Convention

Friday - Sunday, September 19 – 21

Town and Country Hotel, San Diego, CA

Fellowship and sharing the message is what this convention is all about. Events include AA marathon meetings, dances, banquet, fishing tournament, bowling tournament, etc. For more information, visit aasocal.com

Woman to Woman San Diego

Friday - Sunday, September 26 – 28

The Dand on Mission Bay

Conference for recovering alcoholic women. Registration is: \$150.00 per person. Events include dynamic speakers, discussion meetings, banquets, etc. For more information, visit womantowomansandiego.com

CD Graduation Ceremony

Sunday, September 28

LLUBMC Gymnasium

In honor of those who completed CD treatment from January-June 2008. Invitations will be mailed soon. For more information, please call 909-558-9309.

Family Connection: Healing From Shame

What unseen force can cause low self-esteem and a myriad of emotional, and often physical problems? Shame! Shame is a silent enemy that may develop at an early age within a dysfunctional family system. Shame limits a person's ability to develop self-esteem and may cause anxiety and depression. This characteristic, which one may be unaware of, can inhibit a person's ability to build meaningful relationships and may keep them from experiencing the true joys in life.

Therapists remind us that shame and guilt are not the same. Guilt is a healthy response to situations and may act as a catalyst for change while shame often leads to further destructive behavior. An example often used is, "guilt says I

made a mistake, shame says I am a mistake."

Shame is felt deeply, involving all of a person's emotions. John Bradshaw, an expert on healing, explains that shame can be a motivator for a person's self-defeating behaviors. These behaviors may lead to compulsions, co-dependency, addiction, and the desire for perfection. These behaviors destroy personal lives and can be felt by each member in a family system. Shame in families may cause distrust, fear, depression, and anxiety leading to a breakdown in family connections.

Fortunately, individual and family shame can be healed through the process of recovery. The 12 Steps of Alcoholics

Anonymous provide an excellent pattern of recovery to heal shame. Recovery means beginning to live life without shame. It is to come out of hiding and be honest with yourself and those around you in thoughts, words, and interactions. A person may heal from shame by exposing reality in working through resentments and learning to forgive yourself and those who have hurt you. Recovery involves finding inner peace, developing emotional intelligence, and enhancing interpersonal relationships. As a person develops their inner strength, guiding them through recovery, they will be able to live a joyful life without shame no matter what experiences they encounter.

Susan Jackson, MFT

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Gastric Bypass Surgery and Alcohol Addiction

and cope if and when this addiction crosses into another addiction. In hindsight, Denise wished she could have been counseled on her underlying addictive personality, which started with an addiction to food, and after surgery manifested into an addiction to alcohol. If her underlying addictive personality was identified and treated in the beginning, she may not have lost so much before seeking treatment here at LLUBMC.

Jennifer, a young mother of three children claims she also had an addiction to food which she never realized until she came to LLUBMC. Gastric bypass surgery was not a procedure Jennifer put much thought into. Her mother underwent the surgery and had positive results so Jennifer decided to do the same as a quick fix to her weight problem.

Dealing with the stresses of raising children, Jennifer, like Denise, was not

a frequent drinker but decided to drink alcohol to unwind. Within six months, what started as only one drink a night led to five drinks and intoxication. When she realized she was neglecting her children and straining her marriage, Jennifer sought help. A few months prior to coming to LLUBMC, Jennifer went into a treatment facility but did not follow through with the treatment and fairly quickly relapsed. When she heard LLUBMC treated past patients who underwent gastric bypass surgery and alcohol addictions, she was intrigued and decided to seek treatment here.

At the time of this interview, Jennifer had only been at LLUBMC for three days. She was looking forward to finding out more about her alcohol addiction and whether her surgery had anything to do with how her body metabolizes alcohol.

Gastric bypass surgery is an invasive procedure that alters a number of physiological functions in the body. First, the stomach is smaller after surgery, so



everything, including alcohol is absorbed much more quickly. Also, an enzyme, responsible for metabolizing alcohol, is decreased. This contributes to alcohol staying in the system longer. While these may be contributing factors in how both Denise and Jennifer rapidly began drinking more alcohol, the main issue is the awareness of their underlying addiction and the risk of cross addiction.

Huma Shah, MPH, CHES