

ROADS TO RECOVERY NEWSLETTER

Created by Dual Recovery at Warren Washington Association for Mental Health to support individuals in recovery

*A newsletter for you
and about you*

SPOTLIGHT TOPIC

Beating Boredom

BY GINGER MILLER

I think we've probably all experienced boredom before. That feeling of nothing to do, no one to talk to or hang out with, nowhere to go. We probably end up scrolling mindlessly through our phones or channel surfing on TV even though we aren't really watching it, or sleeping even though our bodies don't need it.

Boredom in recovery can be risky. In early addiction recovery, it can allow our minds to go into 'bad neighborhoods'. We might start thinking about regrets, fears of the future, or romancing the loss of our former 'friend', the addiction. For many in recovery from mental health conditions such as depression, it can be equally as dangerous because it allows time for similar thoughts that can then add to the depression (or other condition). So, for those of us in recovery, recognizing the early signs and symptoms of boredom and doing something about it is very important. Finding creative and healthy ways to beat boredom will improve our everyday lives.

Boredom can, in fact, be a good thing. It's an opportunity to take a break from the busyness of everyday life and just relax or try something new. Not to mention, boredom can also be a source of creativity. Some of the world's most famous paintings were created by artists who were bored. It has been said that the Mona Lisa by Leonardo da Vinci was painted while he was bored - he came up with the distinct smile that has made the Mona Lisa one of the most well known paintings in the world. Vincent van Gogh painted The Starry Night while bored. The painting is now one of van Gogh's most famous works, and it's thanks to his boredom that he was able to create such popular piece of art. I'll bet some of you might be thinking "Me???" Right! My creations wouldn't be worth anything" or "I'm too old to do that." Guess what though? Grandma Moses was 78 when she started painting (because her arthritis was too bad to embroider anymore) just to try a new hobby. She taught herself how and had little concern for perspective or proportions and now her paintings are famous and very valuable!

So, when you're bored, don't grab your phone to just scroll, turn on the TV to surf, or take a nap that you don't need. Instead, use that boredom as a chance to get creative; see what you can come up with, or try something new. You never know, you just might create something that will go down in history! Try doing something you've never done before. Trying new things can be scary, but it's also a great way to get a bit of satisfaction out of life. So, go out and explore new things - you might just find that you end up really enjoying it. Need some ideas? Check out the next page!



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Beating Boredom (Cont'd)

Learn a new language, give a try at photography, try cooking something you've never cooked before, maybe something international like French, Greek, or Turkish. Try a new craft - candle making, soap making, embroidery, wood burning, pottery, drawing/sketching, bead jewelry, string art, knitting, sewing, crocheting, and so, so many more... just google crafts for more ideas.

There are even kits you can purchase for some of the things listed and other things like models, 3D puzzles, diamond painting, latch hook, or Legos. Learn how to use a social media platform you haven't tried yet – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, start a blog, check out some podcasts. YouTube is a great resource for learning more about these things, or pretty much anything.

Get moving somehow; go for a hike (All Trails is a good app for this), play ball with your kids, nieces, nephews, or grandkids or exercise. Exercise doesn't have to be overly strenuous either; it could be a very low impact workout – again, YouTube is a great source for ideas. Pack a picnic basket and check out a park you haven't been to before. Want to go somewhere to cool off on a hot day? Visit a water park or tourist cave. Looking for adventure? Try out a zipline, white water rafting or mining. Get involved in a sport - maybe you enjoy bowling, golf, tennis, or swimming. Whatever activity you like to do and can safely do, get out and do it! Gather the tennis players you know or your golf buddies and make a day out of it.

Maybe you're the type that is result-oriented. Try decluttering - most of us have a room, closet, or cupboard that could use some organizing and clearing out. Or how about gardening? Gardens can be of any size, a back yard, a patio, a raised bed, or container gardening. Volunteering can be very rewarding as well.

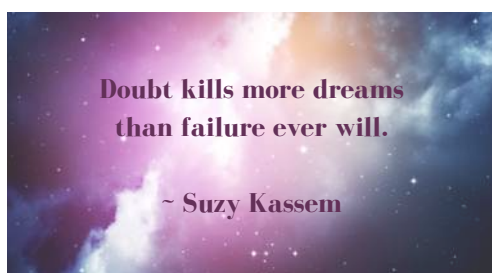
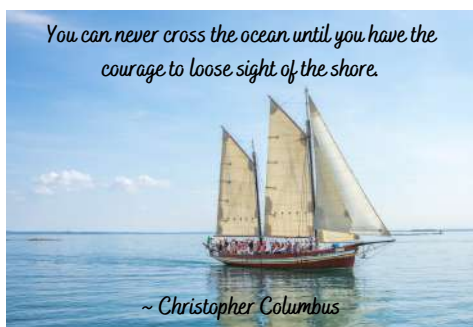


Are you more of a homebody? Why not join a book club – locally or virtually. There are plenty of hot summer days that can be spent enjoying a great book. Take a class – many are offered virtually now and there are more free ones now than ever. How about trying some virtual travel? Check out Metopera.org – Metropolitan Opera, Broadway and off Broadway shows, Ted Talks, Museum Tours, or an Art Gallery Tour. You could use Travel Vlogs to visit national parks, WebCams or Google Earth to “travel” other countries and go ‘walking’ about to see the tourist sites or visit remote areas. You could be a world explorer from your couch!

While trying new hobbies is fun, here are some things to keep in mind. Don't over-do it when exercising. Be aware of the heat at this time of year. We all need to be cautious of becoming over-heated by paying close attention to our bodies and respecting our limits. So, stay cool by carrying a full water bottle with you to stay hydrated. Follow the Covid-19 precautions in your area – if you travel to another state, region, or country be aware of their restrictions and follow them – even if you have been vaccinated. Know what the CDC guidelines are for when you return home as well.

Let's take a break from our busy lives, have fun, and try not to take life too seriously. Beat the doldrums and boredom! Enjoy this month and make it a great one! Happy Summer everyone!

INSPIRATION & MOTIVATION





UNDERSTANDING THE DIAGNOSIS

Psychotic Disorders

BY GINGER MILLER



According to Mental Health America (MHA), "psychosis" is a general term to describe a set of symptoms of mental illnesses that result in abnormal thoughts and perceptions (sights or sounds), behaviors, and emotions that, in turn, cause someone to lose touch with reality. Psychosis is a brain-based condition that is made better or worse by environmental factors - like drug use and stress. While these experiences can be scary and confusing, it is possible to recover and get better. Psychotic disorders can cause great distress and functional challenges in everyday life, which is why it is important to tackle these types of symptoms early on, if possible. Below are some of the most common forms of psychotic disorders:

- **Schizophrenia:** characterized by hallucinations, delusions, unusual behavior, and withdrawal. People with schizophrenia may have trouble distinguishing what is real and what is imaginary and it affects how a person thinks, feels, and acts.
- **Schizophreniform Disorder:** consists of the same symptoms of schizophrenia but occurs for a time period of at least one month but no more than six months. If symptoms last longer than this period, a person is given a diagnosis of Schizophrenia.
- **Schizoaffective Disorder:** a combination of psychotic features such as delusions and mood symptoms like depression; characterized by persistent symptoms of psychosis resembling schizophrenia with additional periodic symptoms of mood (or affective) disorders.
- **Delusional Disorder:** is characterized by irrational or intense belief(s) or suspicion(s) which a person believes to be true. These beliefs may seem outlandish and impossible (bizarre) or fit within the realm of what is possible (non-bizarre). Someone with this disorder experiences delusions without the other symptoms or unusual behaviors seen with schizophrenia.
- **Brief Psychotic Disorder:** includes symptoms of psychosis that last at least 1 day but no longer than 1 month. Symptoms are typically sudden and can be responses to a stressful life event. While an individual may experience severe distress during the episode, the duration of psychotic symptoms may be quite brief where people are able to quickly return to their daily lives.
- **Schizotypal (Personality) Disorder:** a personality disorder that can easily be confused with schizophrenia, since people with schizotypal personality disorder have "magical" or eccentric beliefs, unusual thoughts and paranoia. An individual may experience brief psychotic episodes with delusions or hallucinations, but the episodes are not as frequent, prolonged or intense compared to schizophrenia.
- **Substance/Medication-Induced Psychotic Disorder:** psychotic episodes that can be traced to starting or stopping alcohol or other drugs, including hallucinogens such as LSD.

Symptoms of Psychosis

- Hearing or seeing something that isn't there
- A constant feeling of being watched
- Disorganized or bizarre speech or writing
- Inappropriate or unusual behavior
- Strange body movements or positioning
- Feeling indifferent or numb about important situations
- Deterioration of academic or work performance
- A change in personal hygiene and appearance
- A change in personality
- Increasing withdrawal from social situations
- Irrational, angry, or fearful responses to loved ones
- Inability to sleep or concentrate
- Extreme preoccupation of fears that seem bizarre



Psychotic Disorders (Cont'd)

When trying to figure out if something is going on, it's important to keep a few things in mind. A change for one or two days might be related to sleep or stress, but experiencing symptoms for more than a few days or weeks is worthy of an evaluation by a mental health professional. If you're concerned about a loved one, pay attention to sudden changes in their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Changes that seem really out of character might be early warning signs of psychosis. Keep in mind that recovering from psychosis is possible, and treatment can make a big difference.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), traditional treatment for psychosis involves psychotherapy and medication. Several types of therapy have successfully helped individuals learn to manage their condition. In addition, medication targets symptoms and helps reduce their impact. Research has shown significant success using a treatment approach called Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC). CSC uses a team of health professionals and specialists who work with a person to create a personal treatment plan based on life goals while involving family members as much as possible. CSC consists of case management, family support and education, psychotherapy, medication management, supported education and employment, and peer support.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Seeking Growth & Change

BY GINGER MILLER



I felt I lacked self-discipline for long time. Why couldn't I just make myself do what I knew I need to do? Sometimes I felt like the stubborn girl I could be in my teen years – "I'll do it when I want to" or "I don't want to and you can't make me!", which was terribly confusing considering there wasn't anyone telling me what or what not to do, it was just me making decisions for myself. I couldn't understand why I'd be excited at the thought of planning to go somewhere or doing something, only to find that when the time came I just couldn't make myself go or do what I was looking forward to. And worse yet, later I'd be kicking myself for not just doing it.

Shortly after I began attending AA meetings, I heard for the first time that addiction stunts the spiritual, emotional, and mental growth of a person. The person literally stops wanting to learn or advance themselves on any level other than the one they are already on. They explained that this is why many individuals with alcoholism are emotionally stunted and struggle with their emotions. Total sobriety takes more than abstinence – it takes a spiritual and mental awareness through healing and growth. There have even been discussions at AA meetings about emotional sobriety. This made a lot of sense to me, it seemed very logical - perhaps this was part of my problem. After several years of sobriety and working on my spirituality, mental health, and emotional sobriety, I still felt as though I lacked self-discipline. So, I started asking questions and looking for more answers, maybe it has more to do with my mental health.

I have learned that the dictionary is a fantastic resource for me. I'm very conscious of words, their meanings, and how they can affect people; therefore, the dictionary was my first stop. I didn't want to assume my understanding of self-discipline was completely accurate. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the definition of self-discipline is, "correction or regulation of oneself for the sake of improvement". The Oxford dictionary's definition is, "the ability to control one's feelings and overcome one's weaknesses; the ability to pursue what one thinks is right despite temptations to abandon it". I am glad I checked the dictionary! This cleared things up a little for me and I realized I must have some self-discipline with all the progress I've made in my recoveries.

The article, "Arrested Development" published by the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation, Tim Portinga, PsyD, LP, and Clinical Supervisor, states how substance abuse can profoundly threaten a young person's psychological and emotional development by explaining, "development of the brain's prefrontal cortex—the center for logical thought, judgment, and higher-order decision making—continues until people reach their early- to mid-20s. Use of alcohol and other psychoactive substances, including marijuana, other illicit drugs, and prescription painkillers, can alter or impair healthy brain development." "Adolescents and young



Seeking Growth & Change (Cont'd)

adults learn delayed gratification through practice and experience. For example, a young person learns he must study to earn good grades, or show up for work on time in order to receive a paycheck. Emotional health and a sense of well-being come as a result of making small efforts on a day-to-day basis that lead to long-term benefits. This important learning curve is interrupted for teens who use—and come to rely on—alcohol or other drugs as a shortcut to feeling good.” For me, this supported what I learned in AA.

Next, I started taking a look at the mental health side of things. I deal with PTSD and depression, so I decided to look at them. I read an article on PsychCentral, "Can You Get 'Stuck' at the Age You Experienced Trauma?". The article started out by saying, “some events can keep you emotionally stuck at the age of trauma. But as you begin to heal, it's possible to get “unstuck.” It went on to explain that, “when trauma impairs your ability to develop full emotional maturity, this is known as arrested psychological development. Trauma can “freeze” your emotional response at the age you experienced it. With proper treatment and support, you can begin to understand the reasons behind your emotional responses and behaviors and move toward healing.”

I also refreshed my memory on what the symptoms of depression are. I looked at the Mayo Clinic's list of symptoms for depression, and in relation to this particular struggle, the symptoms that could apply are: 1) Loss of interest or pleasure in most or all normal activities, such as sex, hobbies or sports, 2) Tiredness and lack of energy, so even small tasks take extra effort, 3) Trouble thinking, concentrating, making decisions and remembering things, and 4) Often wanting to stay at home, rather than going out to socialize or doing new things.

Now, with all this information in hand I could put some careful thought into how it fit into my circumstances. I could evaluate the situations with fresh information. I pulled out some of the tools I'd learned in recovery such as being honest with myself, being gentle with myself, keeping it simple – don't overcomplicate it, working on the solution and not the problem, and reviewing my conclusions with my therapist and some of my other recovery supports. Doing this made it a little easier to see that I don't lack self-discipline altogether, maybe I just need to work on it a little in a couple of areas. **I realized I am much stronger than I thought I was.** Addiction and mental health have both played a part in my struggles with having self-discipline. Other more personal, specific things became clearer through this examining process as well. It was time well spent.

This is a peek into one example of what working a dual recovery program can look like. It took time, practice, and hard work to learn what to do but now I know I can do it, and I can be proud of myself for building this skill to add to my toolbox. If you or someone you know struggles with thoughts like mine (any topic, not just self-discipline), they to can learn how to do the same type of thing to help themselves with their recovery as well. This skill can be used even if someone is working on only one recovery – mental health or substance use disorder. There is hope and there is help. Recovery is real. Everyone can work on it and everyone deserves recovery.



THE FUN SPOT

CRYPTOGRAM: "Alice in Wonderland"

Decode the message. Each letter in the phrase has been substituted with a different letter. Two letters have been provided to help you get started.

Did you know that July 4th is also Alice in Wonderland Day?!

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
						U			

K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T
			I						

U	V	W	X	Y	Z

R J T I F G T A M F R I M

C L D U J F E A T J A Y Z L E

C A D L G T A R K L T L

Z R B B A Y A I J O A Y T F I

J H A I



WWAMH FARMER'S MARKET IS NOW OPEN

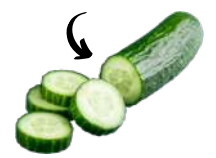
The WWAMH 2022 Farmers Market is now open! We are currently offering produce as it becomes available. All produce is first come, first served, so be sure to get your orders in as soon as possible! Staff and members are encouraged to have orders in by FRIDAY for pick-up at The Gazebo at 230 Maple Street on either MONDAY or TUESDAY between 12:00 and 2:00.

Here is what is currently available:

- Rhubarb (5 stalks) - \$1.00
- Raspberries (1/2 pint) - \$2.00 (max of 2/order)
- Bell Peppers – small .25 large .75
- Eggplant - \$2.00
- Fresh Oregano (1 bundle) - .50



COMING SOON!



Please reach out to Rebecca Ryan at rryan@wwamh.org to place orders and specify a pickup date.



THE JULY CHALLENGES

CHALLENGE #1

Beating Boredom

How are you beating boredom this month? Have you tried something new? Tired of doing the same old things in your free time? The Beating Boredom article on pages 1-2 might have some new ideas for you to check out. Write to us and tell us what you are doing to stay active this month!



CHALLENGE #2

Recovery Resources



Every month the last page of our news letter has a list of Recovery Resources. Have you had a chance to check any of them out? Is there a resource you find helpful that isn't listed? Tell us which resource (s) you've tried and if you like them or not? And why?



CHALLENGE #3

New Dual Recovery Meeting

We are looking into starting another Dual Recovery meeting in the Glens Falls area! This means there will be two Dual Recovery meetings that are open to everyone in the recovery communities; the current one at the Hope & Healing in Hudson Falls on Tuesday's at 4:00 and this new one in Glens Falls. We are doing a little survey for anyone interested in attending. We would like to know what time of the day works well for you and if there is a particular day of the week that works best. We are also wanting to get an idea of what part of Glens Falls would be most convenient for people - east side (Warren St area), central (downtown area), or west side (Broad St area). Let us know what you think!

Everyone who chooses to participate in any of July's challenges and writes to us before July 25th will win a Stewart's Ice Cream gift card! You will also see your response next month in our "Your Voice" section! If you don't want your name on it just let us know and we will put "anonymous" on it.

Email us at: gmler@wwamh.org or mail it in to "WWAMH Dual Recovery" at 230 Maple Street, Glens Falls, NY 12801 to participate.



YOUR VOICE



June's "Playtime Challenge"

I always carve out a little time in my day to play Solitaire Grand Harvest. It is fun and challenging. It's rewarding to build my farm. I especially like when I win the 24 half an hour bonus on the lucky wheel.

~ David M.

June's "Newsletter Challenge"

My favorite article is the Spotlight Topic because it's always informative. I especially like this months topic on LGBTQIA+ terms because even being a part of the LGBTQI+ community I don't understand all of the terms.

~ David M.



Cryptogram Answer Key
It's no use going back to yesterday, because I was a different person then.

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

RECOVERY

Resources

WEBSITES

- Al-Anon and Ala-teen Groups** – Hope and help for families and friends of alcoholics: al-anon.org
- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)** - Local group schedule and information: district13.aahmbny.org
- Celebrate Recovery (CR)** – Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered, 12-Step recovery program for anyone struggling with hurt, pain or addiction of any kind: celebraterecovery.com
- Debtors Anonymous** - Debtors Anonymous offers hope for people whose use of unsecured debt causes problems and suffering in their lives and the lives of others: debtorsanonymous.org
- Digital Recovery Support** -Online recovery support groups are available daily. They are open to anyone who is dealing with substance use, mental health conditions, and any other quality of life concerns. Meetings are led by peer recovery support specialists who have firsthand experience and understand what you're going through: www.recoveryanswers.org
- Gamblers Anonymous (GA)** – Online services for anyone struggling with a gambling addiction: gasteps.org
- Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing (GRASP)** – For those who have lost someone to substance use or addiction: grasphelp.org
- In the rooms** - A global online recovery community who share their strength and experience with one another daily through live meetings, discussion groups, and other tools in the rooms: intherooms.com
- My Recovery** – Online 12-step meetings: myrecovery.com
- Narcotics Anonymous (NA)** - local group schedule and information: narcotics.com
- Overeaters Anonymous (OA)** – Online support groups for anyone who wants to stop eating compulsively: oarecovery.com
- The Phoenix** – Recovery community organization offering daily live stream cross-fit, yoga and meditation every two hours through the COVID Crisis: thephoenix.org

PHONE NUMBERS

- The Trevor Project** - Support for youth in crisis: thetrevorproject.org/hotline: 866-488-7386
- International Bipolar Association Crisis Line**: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders Helpline**: 630-577-1330
- National Center for PTSD Helpline**: 1-800-273-8255
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)**: Hotline staff are prepared to answer any mental health questions you may have. You can also text NAMI to 741741 for free support. (800) 950-NAMI (6264)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**: Available 24/7, 365 days a year: (800) 662-HELP (4357). The professionals on the phone can provide treatment information and referrals in English and Spanish.
- MentalHealth.gov**: Available 8am to 8pm EST to provide mental health information and treatment referrals: (877) 726-4727
- National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)**: Available 8:30am to 5pm EST: (866) 615-6464 or (866) 415-8051 (TTY). Professionals can answer any mental health related questions in English or Spanish.
- Boys Town**: Specially trained counselors are available 24/7, 365 days a year to provide crisis support specifically for children and their families: (800) 448-3000

PODCASTS

- This Naked Mind** - Some of the episodes discuss alcohol withdrawals, the link between drinking and binge eating, how to deal with loneliness, and more.
- Recovery Rocks** - Our varied paths show listeners that there are a myriad paths to recovery and countless songs to rock out to along the way.
- Mental Health - Hope and Recovery** - They share inspirational true stories and a host of recovery skills. You'll learn about treatment options, coping skills, goal setting, relationships, and mindfulness.
- Mental Illness Happy Hour** - Weekly interviews with comedians, artists, friends, and the occasional doctor.; exploring mental illness, trauma, addiction and negative thinking.

APPS

- Addiction Apps**: Twenty-Four Hours A Day (Free), Quit That! Habit Tracker (Free), NoMo (Free)
- Counseling Apps**: TalkSpace (\$\$) BetterHelp (\$\$) Larkr (\$\$) ReGain (\$\$) TeenCounseling (\$\$)
- Suicide Prevention Apps**: MY3 (Free) notOK (Free)
- General Mental Health Apps**: What's Up (CBT; Free) Mood Kit (CBT; \$)
- Anxiety Apps**: MindShift (Free), Self-Help Anxiety Management – SAM (Free), CBT Thought Record Diary (Free)
- Bipolar Disorder Apps**: IMoodJournal (\$), EMoods (Free)
- Depression Apps**: Talk Space Online Therapy (\$\$), Happify (Free), MoodTools (CBT; Free)
- Eating Disorder Apps**: Recovery Record (Free), Rise Up & Recovery (Free), LifeSum (Free)
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Apps**: nOCD (Free), Worry Watch (\$), GG OCD (Free)
- PTSD Apps**: PTSD Coach (Free), Breathe2Relax (Free)
- Schizophrenia Apps**: UCSF Prime (Free), Schizophrenia Health Story Lines (Free)
- Mindfulness & Meditation Apps**: Headspace (\$), Calm (\$), Serenity: Guided Meditation & Mindfulness (Free)
- Wellness**: Wellness Recovery Action Plan (Goal Setting; Free)

THANKS FOR READING! :)

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBSCRIBE TO
OUR NEWSLETTERS, PLEASE EMAIL US
AT GMILLER@WWAMH.ORG
OR CALL 518-401-5991



WWAMH DUAL RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUPS

EVERY TUESDAY FROM
4:00-5:00 PM AT THE
HOPE & HEALING
RECOVERY CENTER:
2 MAPLE STREET, HUDSON FALLS
ATTEND IN PERSON OR
VIRTUALLY - ZOOM MEETING ID:
844-2214-0148

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