

## Happy New Year! - Jana's Corner

Happy New Year! A new year full of possibilities. How exciting! Or daunting... What are you committed to in 2011? We'd love to hear from you and what you're working on this year. Let us know if you need any help getting to where you want to be. Maybe you need to consider coming back for another InnerPath program, by yourself, with your spouse, and/or your family. Or

you might need a therapist referral or some local resources. We're always here for you.

In this issue, Rokelle Lerner writes about coping with the internal critical dialogue and developing a new year's resolution to use affirmation in "Does the Noise in My Head Bother You?" Sounds like a great way to start the year to help you on your journey. Cottonwood Tucson trauma specialist

Maggie Morton has contributed an article, "The Power of Compassion", exploring how this is so necessary in healing from traumatic experiences and often lacking. We also have a delicious and healthy recipe from Chef Richard as well as some very useful nutritional information from our dietician Lisa MacDonald. Enjoy and be well.

## Does the Noise in My Head Bother You? by Rokelle Lerner

Years ago I saw a film called *The Gods Must be Crazy*. There was a scene at a bar where one gentleman on a bar stool turns to the woman next to him and says, "Excuse me, does the noise in my head bother you?" For many of us, the clamor in our brains feels so out of control that this comment is not as absurd as one might think.

There isn't a person who comes through InnerPath that doesn't complain about the internal dialogue in their brains that dampens their spirit and contaminates their joy. For those of you who aren't sure what I'm referring to, let me clearly



state that I'm not talking about schizophrenia. I'm talking about the barrage of self-deprecating messages and insults that seep into our waking moments. For some of us this inner dialogue is so rampant that we could be holding groups by ourselves in our cars!

Where does this internal attack originate? It's an accumulation of stored up negativity that came to us at a young age perhaps from parents, teachers, or even bullies on the playground. Since children don't have clear emotional boundaries, these messages lodge themselves in our limbic brain and we play them back on a regular basis. Scientists would call these responses "neuronal firings" in the brain over which we do have some control. However without some sort of discipline, we don't need our parents or old abusers giving us these hideous assaults, we just give them to ourselves and drown in our own abuse.

There was a time in my life when I felt like I was under a siege of paralyzing criticism and shame. The

negative 'voices' would occur primarily when I was alone and without any specific plans. To buffer this negativity I made sure that I was busy day and night, throwing myself in a perpetual state of exhaustion! One day after work when I was driving home, the messages became so loud that I felt paralyzed and I knew I had to do something about it. That's when I started doing what my mentor suggested which is using affirmations. This technique was so life changing for me that I decided to write my own affirmations. Through this process a book was born called *Affirmations for Adult Children of Alcoholics*.

The purpose of affirmation is not to put "frosting on a rotten cake". The purpose of using this discipline is to feed our brain with different thoughts in order to see the world differently. It's the antidote to the toxic messages in our limbic brains. However, in order for affirmation to be effective, you must slow down

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## Does the Noise in My Head Bother You? *(continued)*

and think about what you're saying. By doing this you'll begin to feel the emotion associated with what you're telling yourself.

Many people tell me that when they start using affirmation it feels awkward, phony and they don't believe what they're telling themselves. This response is to be expected and it's where many of us give up. So don't be dismayed if, for example, you're telling yourself that you deserve a loving relationship and the voice in your head chimes in, "Are you kidding? You'll never find someone to love you." Again this is a typical response of an old pattern that will change with time.

Most of us have spent years with these messages swirling around

in our brains. In fact, I remember one man in InnerPath who began using affirmation for a couple of days. He grew up with physical and emotional abuse and needed something to counteract the barrage of internal self-hating messages he received daily. One morning at the retreat, he raised his hand and asked impatiently, "Rokelle how long does this take to work?" My response was, "How long were you a child?" In other words, we must realize that this storehouse of shame has been accumulating over a lifetime and it takes more than using this tool a couple of times to change the neuronal firings in our limbic brain. However, I can tell you that after a month's regular use, you can expect to start feeling better, more optimistic and energized. The 'voices'

get quieter.

Using affirmation changes lives. But in order for this healing to take place we must use patience, persistence, compassion and discipline. These are all the ingredients we would hope for in a loving parent. In essence, by using this tool we're learning to re-parent ourselves. Not only that, we're taking charge of our own healing and relieving others of the responsibility to do this for us.

Instead of letting your experience at InnerPath fade, let it be a new year's resolution for us all that we attend to ourselves with loving kindness and strength by utilizing the powerful tool of affirmation.

## The Power of Compassion by Maggie Morton, LCSW

It's no secret that living with the legacy of painful events-fear, guardedness, loss of hope, loss of self trust-is extraordinarily trying. But it's sometimes surprising to realize that, for a while at least, living with forgiveness and compassion for yourself can also tax you deeply.

Many of you may remember that, when starting to process traumatic legacies, one starting point is to **require compassion** for yourself. That may sound simple, or like a "feel good" tactic, but I often see it as one of the hardest things we ask of ourselves. For some, the idea of letting go of self blame means sitting with profound fear- fear of living with risk, fear of living without clarity, fear of being powerless. But here's the great irony-it's the most powerful step you can take to reclaim your life, your sense of choice, your sense of self.

What might it take for you to confront the lessons of past pain? How many of us have carried the weight of others' daunting or exco-

riating statements to us? How often have we worried that perhaps our demons were deserved, were a fitting punishment? I think it takes all our courage to stand up to these memories, to these voices from the past, and challenge them as strongly as we can. (Do any of you remember the affirmation "not one more day..."? As in, "not one more day will I say the same awful things to me that they did?")

I have a client who has learned (through childhood trauma) to blame herself whenever she feels pain. This has led, of course, to years of depression and anguish, and has become a self reinforcing process. To my delight, she recently said to me, "I'm through with this, this blaming myself for everything. I've had it. I'm not willing to do this anymore." Now, *that* is a person who is choosing to confront the bullies in her past, rather than simply believe their messages. That's a person who wants to find a kinder way to live in this world. And that's a person who is doing trauma work-by confronting the

lies of the past and reclaiming her sense of compassion.

But she's not doing it by being meaner to herself, or telling herself she has to earn every kindness. She's doing it by demanding that she confront the cruel voices that have whispered to her all her life, and replacing those messages with-you guessed it-Compassion. Forgiveness. Understanding. The willingness to reach out to the part of her that was so bruised and sitting with that pain differently. She is starting to find that she can find advocacy, healing, kindness, and forgiveness, from herself! And that is the *opposite* of powerlessness.

*Maggie Morton, LCSW, is a therapist in private practice with 20 years experience in family, couples, individual and group therapy. Maggie conducts trauma resolution groups at Cottonwood Tucson and has worked in diverse setting such as private practice, inpatient rehab, and in-home family therapy. Maggie has been trained in a systemic, strengths-based approach to therapy. Recent training has included developmental approaches to intimacy issues and trauma issues.*

# Nutrition in Recovery: It Starts with Breakfast by Lisa MacDonald, MPH, RD



With addiction and mental health issues, the body often gets neglected. Inconsistent eating patterns and imbalanced nutrition influence emotional well-being as well as play a role in perpetuating the addiction cycle. How a person eats impacts their energy, concentration, moods, cravings and ability to moderate eating. It is so important that those in recovery view nutrition as supportive in the recovery process.

Even though an individualized approach to nutrition in recovery is vitally important, let's start with the basic principles of bringing consistency and balance to eating. Consistency and balance are the mantra for nutrition in recovery and works for both men and women. Consistency means eating three or more (hope-

fully at least 4, but as many as 6) times per day and balance means including carbohydrate, protein and fat each time.

It all starts with breakfast. What our moms and grandmothers taught us is true, breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Unfortunately, many skip breakfast or rely on highly refined or sugary foods such as bagels and doughnuts. The worst scenario is when coffee or other highly caffeinated beverages become breakfast. Even though caffeine feels like fuel, it is not. Breakfast truly sets the stage for the rest of the day. What we eat, or don't eat, at breakfast impacts our energy levels, moods and eating behaviors for the entire day. Try starting the day with a very well-balanced meal and experience the difference.

- If you are a cereal eater, try sprinkling some almonds or walnuts into your cereal to increase its protein content and contribute to longer lasting energy.

- Peanut butter or almond butter stirred into oatmeal or any hot cereal is delicious and sustaining.

- Peanut butter or almond butter on whole grain bread is energy and nutrient

packed.

- For a refreshing and satisfying breakfast, try cottage cheese or yogurt topped off with a healthy granola (see recipe below) and fruit.

- Eggs paired with whole grain toast or a medley of roasted potatoes supply lasting energy for the morning.

Chef Richard Serna's recipe for Cottonwood's Housemade Granola is delicious and packed full of nutrients. The oats in this recipe are an excellent source of complex carbohydrate, fiber as well as biotin, folic acid, iron, vitamin E and zinc. The seeds provide vitamin E, magnesium and zinc. Raisins and currants are good sources of iron, potassium, B vitamins and dietary fiber. Remember, granola is best used as a sprinkler into yogurt or cottage cheese as it tends to be very high in calories.

*Lisa MacDonald, MPH, RD, is the director of Nutrition Services at Cottonwood Tucson. Lisa is a Registered Dietitian with expertise in nutrition education, weight management and eating disorders. She has worked in a managed care organization, a public health agency and in the health and wellness/spa setting. Lisa is committed to scientific integrity and the "non-diet" approach to weight management.*

## Cottonwood Housemade Granola

Number of Servings: 24 (43.42 g per serving)

Amount	Measure	Ingredient
1.00	cup	Juice, apple, unswtnd, cnd/btl
1/2	tsp	Flavor, vanilla extract or bean
1/2	tsp	Spice, cinnamon, ground
1/2	cup	Honey, light
3.00	cup	Oats, rolled, old fashioned, dry
1/2	cup	Currants, dried
1/2	cup	Cranberries, dried
1/2	cup	Seeds, sunflower, kernels, dry rstd, unsalted
1/2	cup	Seeds, pumpkin & squash, kernels, rstd, unsalted
1/2	cup	Raisins, seedless, unpacked cup

## Directions

- Preheat the oven to 300° F.
- In a small saucepan, combine the apple juice, vanilla bean or extract and cinnamon. Cook over medium high heat until the juice is reduced by half (approximately 5 minutes). Stir in honey and bring to a boil. Remove from heat.
- In a large bowl, combine the oats, currants, cranberries, raisins, sunflower seeds and pumpkin seeds. Pour in the apple juice mixture, stirring and tossing until evenly moistened. Spread the mixture evenly in a large rimmed baking sheet. Bake, stirring 2 or 3 times, until toasted and fragrant (approximately 30 minutes).
- Let cool completely.
- Store at room temperature in an airtight container for up to one week.

## Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/4 cup	
Servings Per Container 24	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories 130</b>	<b>Calories from Fat 35</b>
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat 4g</b>	<b>6%</b>
Saturated Fat 0.5g	3%
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol 0mg</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium 0mg</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate 22g</b>	<b>7%</b>
Dietary Fiber 2g	8%
Sugars 12g	
<b>Protein 4g</b>	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 2%	Iron 8%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Saturated Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	

InnerPath at Cottonwood Tucson  
4110 West Sweetwater Drive  
Tucson, Arizona 85745



520.743.2141  
800.877.4520 x2141  
[www.cottonwoodtucson.com](http://www.cottonwoodtucson.com)  
[innerpath@cottonwoodtucson.com](mailto:innerpath@cottonwoodtucson.com)



## InnerPath 2011 Schedule

### **Beginnings & Beyond**

1/24-1/28  
2/14-2/18  
3/21-3/25  
4/18-4/22  
5/23-5/27  
6/27-7/1  
8/1-8/5  
9/19-9/23  
10/17-10/21  
11/14-11/18  
12/5-12/9

### **Developing Healthy Relationships**

2/10-2/13  
12/1-12/4

### **Women's Retreat**

1/10-1/14  
4/11-4/15  
6/20-6/24  
7/25-7/29  
9/12-9/16  
10/10-10/14

### **Developing Healthy Families**

Contact us to schedule

**Contact us to schedule at 520 743 2141  
or  
[innerpath@cottonwoodtucson.com](mailto:innerpath@cottonwoodtucson.com)**