



COTTONWOOD  
tucson

March 2010

# Alumni News...

the journey continues

## Willingness

When I was a newcomer in recovery I often heard, “Willingness without action is pure fantasy.” I heard it again recently and it started me thinking. Is it possible to have willingness and not take action? If I’m willing to take my car in for repairs but I never go to the mechanic, the car stays unrepaired. Isn’t that the same way with our recovery? I say I’m willing, I can scream it from the top of a mountain, but unless I take action nothing happens.

Sometimes action requires us to do something we don’t want to do but we know it is good for us. For instance, working a fourth step, it’s not exactly fun. I have definitely balked at writing them. However, when the willingness came, I finished the work. Then I looked back and asked, “What was all the fuss?” Remembering this experience enables me to be more willing to do the next step... and then the next. The book of Alcoholics Anonymous says that willingness, honesty, and open-mindedness are the essentials of recovery (pg 568). I believe there is a reason that willingness is first on that list. Without willingness, do we have the desire to get honest? To have a truly open mind, won’t we need to set aside our prejudices? Doesn’t that take willingness? Our whole lives depend on this ability to take action. With alcohol, drugs, and other substances or behaviors we had no self-will, we were defined by and powerless over our addictions. Today, because of recovery, we have a choice. God keeps us sober and abstinent but we get to choose whether we will take action in our recovery or do the bare minimum.

So keep coming back because rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Willingness is the key, but action turns the lock and opens the door.

~ Peace, Sally

## The Cottonwood Experience

In March –April of 2008 several people searching for recovery met at Cottonwood de Tucson on their journey to wellness. They met every morning and inspired each other. Currently there are ten members of the Breakfast Club. This story is only a small part of their adventure. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

We all come to Cottonwood for various reasons, bringing along all shapes and sizes of baggage. The common denominator being the desire to get well. It goes without saying that some have a greater desire than others. At Cottonwood we are stripped bare and completely exposed in an environment that is safe and nurturing. It is because of the caring and sharing that goes on that amazing bonds are built while on campus. We have taken those bonds beyond the campus.

For the past two years, since our mutual time at Cottonwood we have stayed in close contact. The “Breakfast Club” began as a group that had early breakfast together on the upper patio. We come from all over the world and are bound by a common Cottonwood experience. Each breakfast began with going around the table one by one, giving our three core feelings for the day, and answering a ten question self-evaluation. We could then move on to having breakfast.

# The Cottonwood Experience

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We continue our experience via email, through the marvels of modern technology. We try to check in as often as possible and each email begins with our three core feelings. This is the safest place on earth. We can share any information that we choose and feel comfortable. Knowing that we are going to get responses that come from love and caring. If someone is not contributing for any length of time they are checked up on and reminded that whatever reason they are not communicating does not matter, we want to hear from them. They will never be reprimanded for not writing, whatever the reason. This is all done out of love.

The Breakfast Club has become a family. We visit each other, hold reunions, meet each others "real" families and are as close as people can be. We owe this to Cottonwood and our own individual experience there. Cottonwood introduced us, showed us how to open up and let others in with no judgment and helped us develop the ability to share. Being able to share is a key force in each person's recovery.

With all this said, we want to thank Cottonwood for giving each of us the knowledge and tools that brought the Breakfast Club together.

## Designer Drugs - Part Two

**Continued from February's newsletter**

The following is a handout that Jeff Friedman uses in his presentation on drug use and the effects it has on the brain. I found it fascinating and thought you might be interested in it as well. This is a continuation from the February newsletter

### **Meperidine Analogues**

Meperidine is the generic term for Demerol,® a synthetic opiate-like pain reliever. A large but unknown number of meperidine analogs have been successfully synthesized. Some of these substances are many times more powerful than morphine or heroin. Meperidine analogs are usually sold on the street as heroin or "new heroin." New heroin is actually the meperidine analog PEPAP {1-[2-phenylethyl]-4-acetyloxypiperidine). But the most widespread and infamous of the meperidine analogues is MPPP.

MPPP, 1-methyl-4-phenyl-propionoxypiperidine, was originally synthesized in the 1950s and was tried as a substitute for morphine. The drug never gained wide acceptance in the medical community - probably due to fact that it caused unpleasant side effects in a significant minority of human subjects who served as test subjects for the drug. Underground chemists in California started making MPPP in the late 1970s and marketed it as heroin around Los Angeles and in the bay area. It was in the bay area that an MPPP related tragedy occurred twenty-five years ago.

In 1982, six bay area heroin addicts arrived at local hospitals with a shocking and confusing set of symptoms. These six were frozen like statues. They could neither speak nor move and, though the six were relatively young, all seemed to have full symptomology of severe, end-stage Parkinson's disease. Doctors called in to treat these unfortunate addicts were puzzled; they had never seen Parkinson's develop so quickly especially in patients that young, and suspected that the addicts' parkinsonism was the result of some powerful neurotoxin that they had unknowingly and mistakenly ingested. Fearing a wider-outbreak of this new acquired Parkinson's-like syndrome, the doctors searched furiously for the toxin responsible for disabling the six frozen addicts.

The doctors were eventually able to get samples of the "heroin" that the six frozen addicts had used. It turned out to be MPPP contaminated with a small amount of a common by-product of MPPP synthesis, MPTP.

# Designer Drugs - Part Two

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When MPTP (1-methyl-4-phenyl-1,2,3,6-tetrahydropyridine) was injected into laboratory monkeys, it induced instant, end stage Parkinson's symptoms in the test animals. After exhaustive research the doctors found that when MPTP is ingested by humans or primates, the chemical passes through the blood-brain barrier and actually enters brain tissue where it binds with naturally occurring endorphin and enkephalin receptor sites. Once inside the brain the MPTP becomes oxidized into a chemical called MPP<sup>+</sup> (which, because it is positively charged cannot get out of the brain).

The doctors were well familiar with MPP<sup>+</sup>, and knew it as the herbicide Cyperquat, which is structurally related to the better-known herbicide Paraquat. The commercial use of Cyperquat had been banned worldwide a decade earlier, due to its extreme neurotoxicity in humans and other animals. In the brain, MPP<sup>+</sup> destroys dopamine producing cells in a part of the brain called the *substantia nigra*. Without the dopamine produced by the substantia nigra, a person, in just a few days, loses all capacity for voluntary movement in any part of their body - a condition that, in the case of idiopathic Parkinson's disease, often takes decades.

The frozen addicts were initially treated with a commonly used Parkinson's drug called L-dopa, which helped several of them regain substantial voluntary movement throughout their bodies. The un-freezing effects of the L-dopa, however, came at a high price. In all of the frozen patients, L-dopa eventually caused uncontrolled and bizarre gesticulations and severe hallucinations. In addition, those taking L-dopa suffered regular "off periods" when the medication inexplicably quit working, and the addicts froze up again for hours, days or even weeks.

Eventually, three of the frozen addicts underwent experimental fetal tissue transplants in an attempt to repair their destroyed substantia nigra. The three who had this surgery regained some voluntary movement and were, in time, able to significantly reduce their dose of L-dopa. Three of the other frozen addicts were disqualified as candidates for the fetal tissue transplant surgery for a variety of reasons. One of these three has since died and the other two are still almost completely frozen - twenty-five years after using the contaminated MPPP.

## Fentanyl Analogues

Fentanyl was introduced in 1968 by the Belgian pharmaceutical company Janssen as a synthetic narcotic to be used as an analgesic in surgical procedures because of its minimal effect on heart functioning. In the early 1980s, however, crude clandestine laboratories began manufacturing fentanyl derivatives that were pharmacologically more similar to heroin and morphine.

These fentanyl analogs create addiction similar to that of the opiate narcotics and present a significant potential for overdose. The most commonly known fentanyl analog" alpha-methylfentanyl, which is known on the street as "China White". Other fentanyl analogs go by the names "synthetic heron", "Tango and Cash," and "Goodfella." As with other narcotics, respiratory depression is the most significant acute toxic effect of the fentanyl derivatives. Fentanyl analogs are 80 to 1000 times more potent than heroin, and depending on how they are made, can be up to 2000 times more potent than morphine.

Fentanyl analogs are marketed as potent heroin alternatives to the heroin-using population. China White (alpha-methylfentanyl), which appeared in Orange County, California in 1979, was the first synthetically produced fentanyl that resulted in overdose deaths. Between 1980 and 1985, China White and several other fentanyl analogs were responsible for over 100 unintentional overdose deaths in California alone. In 1985 another fentanyl analog, 3-methyl-fentanyl or TMF; was identified in 16 unintentional overdose deaths in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. In 1991, the fentanyl analog "Tango and Cash" was implicated in at least 28 deaths, primarily in New York and other northeast areas. In 1992, China White was found to be the cause of death in 21 overdoses during two-month period in Philadelphia.

I hope that you found this handout of Jeff Friedman informative and interesting. I know with addiction self knowledge avails us nothing, but I also believe than being self warned is being self armed. I think we can all do well to prepare ourselves against the enticement of the so called "Designer Drugs." I have an addicts mind and it can sometimes whisper to me, encouraging me to investigate these so-called better drugs. I hope I remember this paper and the warning it holds. My hope and prayer is that recovery will always win out for me and you.

## InnerPath Retreats

### Beginnings & Beyond

Mar 15-19 • April 19-23 • May 10-14

### Developing Healthy Relationships

Dec 2-5

### Women's Retreat

Apr 12-16 • June 21-25

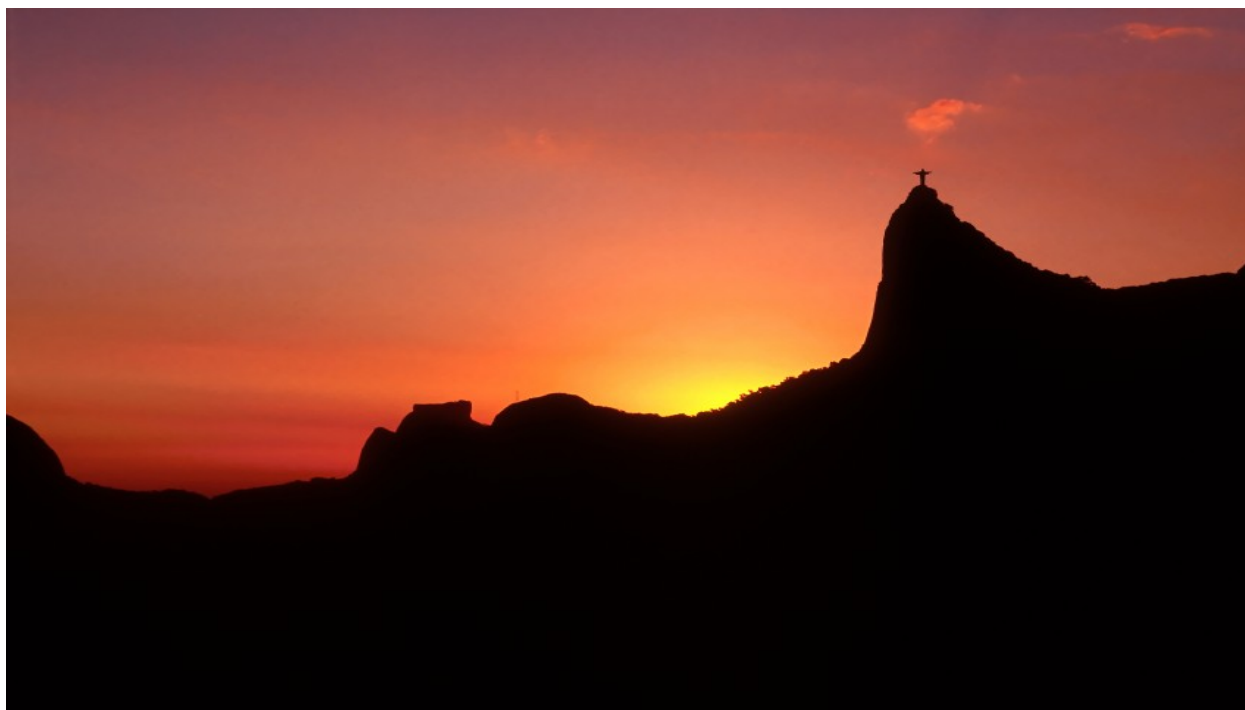
### Developing Healthy Families

5 days: Monday - Friday  
Contact us to schedule

We offer several 4 and 5 day programs for individuals, couples, and families who want to focus on codependency, relationships, communication, grief, loss, trauma, and anger. InnerPath is like a mini-Cottonwood experience where you can come back for a boost to your personal recovery plan. All of our retreats are held at the Cottonwood Nash House, meals and lodging included, and are limited to 8 people. Rokelle Lerner who is a therapist, author, and codependency expert, is our facilitator. Please contact Jana Zeff at 520-743-2141 or e-mail her at [jzeff@cottonwoodtucson.com](mailto:jzeff@cottonwoodtucson.com) for more information about InnerPath.

## Sweetwater Adolescent Program

Cottonwood Tucson is pleased to announce the opening of our newly restructured ***Sweetwater Adolescent Girls Treatment Program***. The new 90-day ***Sweetwater Program*** for girls ages 13 - 17 has been designed to help girls and their families to recover and make those changes necessary to improve the quality of their lives. The ***Sweetwater Program*** places a strong emphasis on scholastics, offering both structured classroom hours as well as a therapeutic curriculum designed to further the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth of each girl. Our Sweetwater program is a recipient of the **Woodbury Reports, Inc. "Excellence in Education Award"** having been selected on the basis of our excellent reputation for producing positive and consistent results with at-risk young girls and their families. Additionally, Cottonwood Tucson is a proud member of [National Association of Therapeutic Schools and Programs \(NATSAP\)](#). If you know of anyone who is struggling with addiction or depression please contact us Cottonwood Tucson and let us help you and your family experience recovery and health.



## Farmington/Durango Alumni Meetings

Dear Farmington and all our New Mexico alumni,

I am looking forward to the March Alumni meeting. Our topic will be sharing on the ninth step promises. I'm hoping you will show up to support your alumni meeting. We have a great group of alumni who are serious about supporting each other. I hope to see you there, all are invited. The 2010 meetings will be held at the **First Baptist Church at 511 W. Arrington, 87401 in Farmington, NM.** (west side of building)

### 2010 Farmington Alumni Meeting Dates

**March 29—May 24—July 26—September 27—November 29**

**7:00 pm- 8:30 pm**

## Phoenix Alumni Meetings

The Phoenix alumni are now meeting in a new place. We will be meeting every other Tuesday night at ABC Wellness Office, located at **7219 E. Shea Boulevard Scottsdale, AZ 85260** it is on the corner of Shea and Scottsdale Road. The meeting is from **7:00 pm until 8:30 pm**. The 2010 dates are listed below. Hope to see you there.

### 2010 Phoenix Alumni Meeting Dates

**Mar 2 & 16 • Apr 6 & 20 • May 4 & 18 • Jun 1 & 15**

**Jul 6 & 20 • Aug 3 & 17 • Sept 7 & 21 • Oct 5 & 19 • Nov 2 & 16 • Dec 7 & 21**

## Alumni Reunion

Dear Alumni,

We will be postponing the Cottonwood reunion this year. But we promise to keep you posted about when and where the next reunion will be. Please update your addresses so that we have all your current information. I will miss seeing all of you this year but I have faith that it won't be long until we will once again be dancing and playing on the Cottonwood campus with all our friends and family.

*~Yours in Service, Sally Hicks*



For more information, click here [shicks@cottonwoodtucson.com](mailto:shicks@cottonwoodtucson.com) or call 520-743-0411 extension 2517 or toll free 800-877-4520 [www.cottonwoodtucson.com](http://www.cottonwoodtucson.com)