

The Ice Breaker

Moms and Dads Against Meth, Inc.

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“Love is not blind - it sees more, not less. But because it sees more, it is willing to see less.”

Rabbi Julius Gordon

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Open House

The Butterfly House

June 22

11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

336 N. Washington Ave.

St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin

Join us in celebrating the one-year anniversary of the Butterfly House, and take a tour around this beautiful Victorian home. If the milkweed in our garden is doing its job, there should be Monarch butterflies in various stages of development, and perhaps you will meet some of the “human butterflies” who are transforming their lives in the house.

Otto Bremer Foundation Supports

M.A.D.A.M.

Moms and Dads Against Meth, Inc. and The Butterfly House were recently awarded a \$15,000 grant from the Otto Bremer Foundation, a charitable trust that authorizes grants to nonprofit organizations in Minnesota, North Dakota, and Wisconsin.

The grant will help pay for the running of the Butterfly House, a place for women recovering from addiction, as well as other projects that advance M.A.D.A.M.’s mission to eradicate meth.

The history of the Bremer Foundation began when Otto Bremer arrived in the United States from Germany in 1886. Over the next 35 years, he became a successful banker and a deeply involved citizen. In 1944, Bremer's knowledge and concern for the strengths and hardships of the rural and immigrant experience, coupled with his commitment to countryside banks, led to the formation of the Otto Bremer Foundation. In creating a foundation, Bremer sought to insure the perpetuation of the Bremer banks and the ultimate return of his personal wealth to his "family" of communities. Sixty plus years later, the Otto Bremer Foundation continues to honor Bremer's wishes by carrying out his expressed interests and concerns. As a major shareholder of Bremer Financial Corporation, the Foundation gives priority to communities where Bremer banks are also present.

The M.A.D.A.M./Butterfly House organization is proud to have been found worthy of such a generous grant, and we want to extend our sincere thanks to the Otto Bremer Foundation for its support.

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DRAMA QUEENS: Can you afford to stay for the show?

There's at least one in every family, group of friends, workplace, and social gathering: the Drama Queen. She or he (yes, there are definitely *male* Drama Queens) can take the simplest circumstance and turn it into an EVENT, with our Queen as the star, whether fighting for justice ("This sandwich is *not* what I wanted!") or seeking pity ("... and the waitress was so *mean* to me after I changed my order!").

As a rule, the Drama Queen is self-absorbed, selfish, and egotistical, and seems to be ever on the alert for an occasion to drum up some excitement or controversy. The D.Q. often gets a high from the rush of adrenaline that comes with the excitement of the drama she creates. When he or she is confronted, challenged, or angered, the excitement and drama is escalated to ethic proportions, and the real trouble is that *nearly everything* in the D.Q.'s life is dissatisfactory, disappointing, or provocative. This person is actually *addicted* to the drama!

Everyone needs attention and affirmation, but the D.Q. craves it in an unhealthy way, wanting all attention in the room to be focused on her, and doing everything she can to get it. That can make for entertainment at parties and other social settings, but it is a distraction at work or in meetings.

The D.Q. might be great fun to have as an acquaintance, and if her bubbly personality makes up for her selfish disregard for others, she might even make a good friend. The flip side of that, however, is that she can be so demanding and dramatic, she wears people out.

We all have a little Drama Queen in us, but if you answer yes to more than four of the following questions, you could be a full-fledged D.Q..

Do you complain more than you feel gratitude?

Do you have some sort of crisis or emotional outburst on a daily basis?

Do you demand perfection from others, while cutting yourself a great deal of slack?

Are you manipulative, trying to control others' actions and behaviors?

Do you blame others for your own shortcomings?

Do you consistently judge others based on appearance and reject them accordingly?

Do you try to "read between the lines" to such an extent that you often draw wrong conclusions and see conspiracy where there is none?

Do you often criticize and rarely encourage others?

Does being the center of attention make you feel complete?

Do you feel the need to change others, rather than adopt a "live and let live" philosophy?

A lot of people who are addicts are also Drama Queens. Inherent in the Drama Queen's character is a lack of self-esteem and self-love, which may have led to the addiction. It's an odd dichotomy, a person who craves attention and even demands it, but doesn't really feel worthy of it.

Being a Drama Queen is not conducive to a life of serenity and peace, obviously, and it can derail an addict's attempts at recovery. Therefore, delving into whether or not one has D.Q. attributes and behaviors is important. An honest and searching moral inventory, such as one does in Step 4 of a 12-Step program, is an essential part of the self-discovery process, and can help us understand where we need to improve.

Whether you are a Drama Queen or find that you have them in your family or group of friends, you

will need to learn to avoid buying into the drama. Try to view it as if you were in the very back of a theater, stay detached and see if you can understand what is motivating “the characters” to do and say things. Since you’re just watching it, there’s no need for you to jump up on the stage yourself, and you may gain some insight into what motivates the Drama Queens in your life (even if you are one of them!). It will amaze you how much more serene and peaceful you will be when you leave the drama to the movies!

T.O.A.D.

(Think Over And Discuss)

Topics



This is boring!

Ah! Sobriety at last! After a seemingly endless struggle with addiction, you’re free! The meetings you attend are interesting and you love being able to add to the discussion. You embrace your Higher Power and pray with all your heart; you even go back to church! It’s all like a wonderful vacation from being yourself; you’re

this terrific new person who gets praise and love from everyone . . .

Vacations end, however, and in time, the newness wears off. People get used to you being sober; they’re not as excited about it, and you don’t get as many pats on the back as you did a few months ago. You’re still glad to be drug-and-alcohol-free, but it’s not as fun as it was at first. It’s kind of . . . well, boring.

Sometimes the meetings seem to drag as you listen someone else’s problems and you don’t feel like adding comments. Sometimes your mind wanders to things you’d rather be doing than sitting in a meeting.

Then someone says “the rest of my life” and it makes you think “Really? This is how it will be for the rest of my life? Wait a minute, I didn’t sign on for ‘bored to tears for the rest of my life!’”

You’re in dangerous territory now. As much as you have liked being sober, your addiction can still wedge doubts into it and make you believe that it’s not all it’s cracked up to be. If you keep following this line of thinking, you’ll be using or drinking again in no time. STOP!

Think. Was it the fun things you did while you were high or just the being high that made it fun? Be honest, now. Wasn’t getting high the point? That being high made things seem more interesting, more fun, than they actually were? (The time you took apart the stereo and cleaned every wire and circuit with a cotton swab . . . Fun or Meth? The time you got drunk and drove through your neighbor’s garden . . . Fun or lawsuit? Every time your family has looked at you with that mix of pity and horror at yet another thing you’ve done because of your addiction . . . Fun or Done?)

Let’s take a look at what the AA *Big Book* has to say:

We have been speaking to you of serious, sometimes tragic things. We have been dealing with alcohol in its worst aspect. But we aren't a glum lot. If newcomers could see no joy or fun in our existence, they wouldn't want it. We absolutely insist on enjoying life. We try not to indulge in cynicism over the state of the nations, nor do we carry the world's troubles on our shoulders. When we see a man sinking into the mire that is alcoholism, we give him first aid and place what we have at his disposal. For his sake, we do recount and almost relive the horrors of our past. But those of us who have tried to shoulder the entire burden and trouble of others find we are soon overcome by them.

So we think cheerfulness and laughter make for usefulness. Outsiders are sometimes shocked when we bust into merriment over a seemingly tragic experience out of the past. But why shouldn't we laugh? We have recovered, and have been given the power to help others.

To love is to receive a glimpse of heaven.

– Karen Sunde

Perhaps the early love we experience can give us an idea of our Higher Power's love for us. Like our mothers, He loves us unconditionally, supports us, hopes we make the right decisions, but is there to pick us up when we don't. He can overlook our flaws and sins and see our potential (wouldn't it be great if more of us could do that for ourselves?). Also like our mothers, He allows us to make our own mistakes and suffer the consequences. Most mothers know when to step in (grabbing our hands before we run into traffic) and when to let go (allowing us the purple hair dye, even though it would still be there for school pictures). It could be that our Higher Power does the same for us, allowing for our free will (and boy, can we be willful!) to make mistakes and learn from them.

Love is an act of endless forgiveness, a tender look which becomes a habit.

–Peter Ustinov (1921 - 2004)

Another aspect of love can be learned when we find ourselves in love with another person. At its best, it's selfless, kind, and reciprocal; at its worst, it's painful and humiliating. A first love that doesn't work out can leave a scar on your heart forever; a long, loving marriage can soothe away all the hurts you've ever suffered.

Learning to love yourself is the greatest love of all.

–Michael Masser and Linda Creed

A surprising number of people don't get wonderful lessons in love from their mothers. Mothers who are addicted, mentally ill, self-absorbed, resentful, or who suffered abuse as a child are often not equipped to give unselfish, unconditional love to their child. In cases like that, it would be wise for the rest of us to keep in mind the African saying "It takes a village to raise a child" and extend love to all the children we meet.

Those early lessons in love from our families are essential keys to our learning to love ourselves. Being treated with love, respect, and affection create the ideal atmosphere for self-love and self-esteem to grow. The message a child internalizes is "I must be worthy of love, since everyone loves me, so I will love myself, too."

A healthy sense of self-esteem is priceless. Those who have it are less likely to fall into drug use or addiction and other dangerous behaviors; those who do fall into bad choices will be better equipped to recover. The sense of shame that so often accompanies addiction is much easier to overcome if there is a base of self-love buried beneath it.

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It seems kind of ironic that when we speak of feeling love for someone or something, we often say "I *fell* in love with her" or "I'm *falling* in love with my new car" with the implication that it is a good thing, even though *falling* itself is generally not a great experience. Fortunately, for many of us, we find that love is a really soft place to land . . .

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Native American Prayer

Oh, Great Spirit whose voice I hear in the winds,

Whose breath gives life to the world, hear me . . .

I come to you as one of your many children,

I am small and weak.

I need your strength and your wisdom.

May I walk in beauty.

Make my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.

Make my hands respect the things you have made,

And my ears sharp to your voice.

Make me wise so that I may

Know the things that you have taught your children,

The lessons you have written in every leaf and rock.

Make me strong

Not to be superior to my brothers,

But to fight my greatest enemy . . .

Myself . . .

Make me ever ready to come to you with straight eyes so that when life fades as the fading sunset, my spirit may come to you without shame.