



WWEN Connection

Wisconsin Women's Education Network

on Addiction, Recovery & Prevention



Winter 2006

Putting a Face to Recovery . . .



Shannon

Growing up in Phoenix, I had the ideal childhood . . . we had everything, and, most importantly, parents who were very much in love.

When I was ten, my mother passed away at 33 leaving my father, 62, to raise my two brothers and me. My father moved us back to Wisconsin to be with my mom's mom, my grandmother. Sadly, she passed away 13 months later.

My father told me I was the "lady of the house now" and he would need my help. I know his intention wasn't to put stress on me, but I was always fearful of losing our dad too!

At 16, I began drinking alcohol. At 18, I tried cocaine and I loved how it made me NOT feel. While others used to "party," I used to "escape" the feelings of overwhelming responsibility and fear.

From 18 to 24, I used everything from marijuana to heroin. At 24, a six-year relationship ended, and I was on my own for the first time. I left my job of six years, and shortly after that, I lost every material possession I had. At the age of 25, I moved to crack cocaine and never looked back. I pushed away my friends and family; nothing was enough to get me clean. Not even facing seven to ten years in prison!

Several times I tried to come home, stay off the drugs, find "social acceptability" but failed. It was too overwhelming. The last time in jail, I picked up a 12-step program book and began to read it. The book said we suffer from the disease of addiction, not from a moral deficiency. For the first time I felt that I wasn't alone, that I wasn't a horrible person but someone with a problem.

After getting out of jail, I realized this was something I would not be able to do alone. I needed some help and there was no shame in that. My half-sister took me on a tour of Casa Clare, a women's treatment facility. Until they had an opening for me, I hung on attending 12-step meetings daily. I entered Casa Clare in August, 2004, for a 90-day inpatient program. That's when I began to live again rather than merely exist. I learned about the disease of addiction and the tools I would need to live life with acceptance and peace. I have been clean for over two years, attend a minimum of three 12-step meetings a week and stay close with counselors at Casa Clare.

I had the honor of holding my father's hand as he left this world in April, 2006. My recovery allowed me to spend the last two Christmas holidays with him and my family, to give him peace in knowing that we were all going to be OK. Shortly before he passed, he told me he had forgiven me and how proud he was of me. To hold my head up always and not to be ashamed of where I was, but proud of where I am. I hold on to those words in everything I do, sharing my story whenever I am able in hopes it helps someone else.

My name is Shannon, I am a grateful recovering addict.

*"Whatever
we do to care
for true self is,
in the long run,
a gift to the world."*

From—
A Hidden Wholeness
by Parker Palmer

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Mental Illness Plays Role in Repeat DUIs

September 22, 2006 - - Roughly 60 percent of repeat drunk-driving offenders have suffered major depression, bipolar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, or post-traumatic stress disorder, according to a new study from the [Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation \(PIRE\)](#).

Researchers studied people convicted of at least two DUI offenses during the past 10 years. A majority reported mental-health problems as well as alcohol or other drug dependence; female repeat DUI offenders were more likely than men to suffer from depression or PTSD.

"People who deal with drug and alcohol abusers need to understand there are often other disorders that need to be dealt with as well," said lead researcher Sandra Lapham, M.D., M.P.H., director of PIRE's Behavioral Health Research Center. "That's why we need to screen repeat offenders for multiple disorders. The offender should be viewed as a unique person with a unique set of issues. If they include psychiatric problems, these should be treated along with drug and alcohol issues."

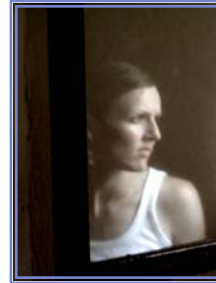
"The results of this study should encourage the courts to develop a more comprehensive approach to dealing with the hard-to-treat drinking driver," added Multnomah County Circuit Court Judge Eric J. Bloch. "Assessing the mental health of a DUI offender will help us choose the program that will reduce the chance of a re-offense."

The research was published in the September 2006 edition of the [Journal of Studies on Alcohol](#).

Reference:

Lapham, S.C., C'de Baca, J., McMillan, G.P., and Lapidus, J. (2006) Psychiatric Disorders in a Sample of Repeat Impaired-Driving Offenders. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 67(5): 707-713.

Alcohol, Other Drug Use Raise Risk of Suicide



September 19, 2006 - - Depressed individuals who also use alcohol or other drugs are more likely to attempt suicide than those who are depressed but don't drink or use illicit drugs, according to new research from the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#).

The report, "[Suicidal Thoughts, Suicide Attempts, Major Depressive Episode, and Substance Use Among Adults](#)," found that 10.4 percent of adults who suffered a major depressive event (MDE) attempted suicide, 14.5 percent made a suicide plan, 40.3 percent thought about killing themselves, and 56.3 percent thought that it would be better if they were dead.

But these rates went even higher when depression was compounded with alcohol or other drug abuse: the rate of suicide attempts, for example, rose 14 percent higher among binge drinkers, and 20 percent among those who used illicit drugs.



Research News

<http://www.jointogether.org/news/research/>





Casa Clare

by Jim Webb

Focus on Treatment

Casa Clare is located in Appleton, Wisconsin, serving the needs of women for more than 25 years. It is a home-like, residential facility that provides a safe, supportive environment for adult women with chemical dependency issues. Our mission is to provide services to women who demonstrate signs of substance abuse disorders and mental health issues helping them develop a long-term recovery plan. Committed to a gender-specific treatment approach, all treatment groups are attended only by women, allowing them to focus on their recovery. In a women-only facility and women-only treatment groups, the relationships among the women in residence can be utilized to foster recovery. Also the role of relationship issues in triggering relapse for women can be addressed.

Our staff is a multi-disciplinary treatment team consisting of a psychologist, psychiatric RN, mental health therapist, and AODA counselors. Casa Clare offers individual, group, and family counseling; aftercare services; educational groups dealing with parenting skills, empowerment techniques, self-esteem enhancement, coping skills, communication skills; recreational therapy; relapse prevention techniques; vocational, employment and financial planning; mental health testing, medication monitoring, voluntary attendance at self-help meetings.

Casa Clare recognized that women with children often avoided treatment because they would be separated from their children. To address this issue, a 20-bed facility was built in 2006. Our new facility was designed to provide women with this opportunity for treatment. Our clients have named this wing the “mommy pod” in the new facility. This affords moms the opportunity to access treatment services and not have to worry about the well-being of their children.



Casa Clare offers different levels of care for women, depending on their needs. An intensive residential in-patient program and a more lengthy structured program for those with complex issues are offered. Women who successfully complete either of these programs are given the opportunity to move into our transitional living program. This program consists of six apartments located within two blocks of our main facility. In this program, the women are encouraged to seek employment and attend group therapy sessions in the evening. Those who are not employed participate in group therapy sessions during the day. Each participant works with their own individual therapist during the course of their treatment to address issues on an individual basis.

Women who enter residential treatment often have co-occurring disorders. These problems include anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia, as well as personality disorders. Therefore, Casa Clare includes in its programming a mental health group lead by the staff psychologist and treatment planning that addresses the relationship between mental health problems and addiction.

Casa Clare invites the family of each client to participate in both individual family sessions with the client and a group family program. This involves both education and a time for families to meet and learn from each other. Our family program gives the clients’ families the opportunity to realize they are not alone, creating an environment of support, learning from each other. Reports to staff is that this program has the most powerful impact on them during the course of their loved one’s treatment. Casa Clare believes that clients have the best chance for a long, successful recovery when their families receive education about addiction and its effect on the family, and are able to identify and practice healthy ways of interacting with each other.



Upcoming Events



June 27-29, 2007
Red Rock Resort
Las Vegas, NV

*The National Conference
on Mean Girls
& Relational Aggression*

A 3-day intensive conference centered on mean girls and relational aggression (RA), the emotional violence in which relationships are used to harm others.

MEAN GIRLS WORKSHOPS IN YOUR AREA

<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>
Bloomington, MN	January 08, 2007
Milwaukee, WI	January 09, 2007
Chicago, IL	January 10, 2007
Detroit, MI	January 11, 2007
Cincinnati, OH	January 25, 2007
Columbus, OH	January 26, 2007



For more information on the National Conference or Workshops and to register visit <http://www.meangirlsconf.com/> or call toll free 1-800-251-6805 or Email dr@sc.rr.com

"Remember always that you not only have the right to be an individual, you also have an obligation to be one."
— Eleanor Roosevelt

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