



Stepping Stones

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF EASY DOES IT, INC.

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A Three Time Winner - Jerry Cox

When Jerry Cox relocated from North Dakota for a job in Pennsylvania, he had no idea the journey of recovery that lay before him. It was only after drugs and alcohol led him to living in his car in a parking garage, getting arrested, going to jail, and being held in the drug and alcohol lock down unit

in Wernersville (known as Conewago) that recovery began to look very good to him. During his three-month stay at Conewago, Cox's parole officer and counselors all suggested that once he was eligible for release, he might want to try moving in to the Easy Does It (EDI) facility in Leesport, Pa. He was told he probably wouldn't be able to stay sober if he went home and staying sober was exactly what he wanted.

So, in summer 2005 Cox arrived at EDI as a new resident, "There was a part of me that didn't want to go there. But there was a bigger part of me that wanted to be clean." And, it was that part of Cox that took advantage of just about everything EDI had to offer to residents. He signed up for EDI's voluntary programs, such as anger management, cooking and nutrition, how to do laundry, and paying bills on time. Cox remembers his days as a new resident, "EDI taught us how to live - how to take care of ourselves." Part of being a resident at EDI is getting and maintaining a job. This prospect scared Cox, since his job history wasn't stellar, but his case manager, the EDI staff, and even the other residents helped him to learn how to be a responsible adult and accountable for his actions. "The group of guys that was there when I was there really looked after each other. We're all still really close friends today, and sober to boot." After two years and ten days as a resident, Cox was able to get a home of his own in West Lawn, Pa. with his wife, who was also newly sober after staying at a treatment facility in Lancaster. Together, they began their journey of recovery away from the safe havens they had known. And it was the lesson in responsibility that Cox learned while a resident at EDI that helped him immediately.



Jerry Cox

(continued inside)

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Editor's Corner

One of the gifts recovering addicts receive as a product of living the 12 Steps on a day-to-day basis is discovering their own true self. This is an on-going process and insists on a constant path of change and acceptance — acceptance of self and of others — just as they are.

Most addicts spend their lives during their active addiction trying to be what they think others want them to be; while also trying to get what they want, whenever they want it. This attitude instills in the addicted individuals character defects of manipulation, passive-aggressive behaviors, dishonesty, and distrust in others. It is no way to live, it never provides a sense of inner peace, and it certainly never enhances relationships with others.

Once addicts find 12-Step recovery and begin to walk through each moment under the guidance of a Higher Power and those in their recovering community, they begin working to treat everyone with whom their path crosses with kindness and compassion. And, while each individual would always like to be treated with that same kindness and compassion, it is important to remember that everyone on this planet has struggles and anxieties that may be completely unknown to those around them. One person's best day of the week may be the day that someone else gets fired from their job, is swamped with bills they can't afford to pay, or loses someone to separation or death. Their behavior toward their loved ones and to strangers may have nothing to do with how they feel towards that person; but instead be about the way their heart is hurting over something completely within their own personal world.

As recovering addicts begin to recognize this truth about others and their relationships with them, they begin to recognize another truth. It is often the behaviors in other people that recovering addicts don't find attractive that are behaviors within themselves that they find unattractive - whether they were behaviors from the past during active addiction, or continue to be behaviors that make them feel uncomfortable in their own skin today.

While this truth isn't something that thrills recovering addicts to know, it is their moment to moment reality, with which they can do one of two things. They can either sit in their own self-righteousness and in judgment of others, pointing out these unattractive qualities; or they can recognize how unattractive these behaviors and attitudes are and focus on changing them in themselves.

A wonderfully simple prayer for recovering addicts (and anyone else, for that matter) to recite when bothered by another person's behavior is: "Bless him, change me." In this prayer, the individual asks for grace for another and for themselves. What better way to connect with a Higher Power?

Let us remember today a quote that was said by Jewish philosopher, Phileo Judaus, a couple thousand years ago: "Be kind. Everyone is fighting a tough battle."

~Jessica L. Morris

(If you have feedback, ideas, or questions about *Stepping Stones*, please send an email to the editor at jessicamorris@comcast.net.)

You Can Help EDI Today

Did you know that:

- \$1,500-\$2,000 will provide life-skill program materials for up to 20 women for one year, allowing them to successfully start a life of recovery?
- \$500 will provide emergency shelter for 10 men and women for almost 3 months?
- \$250 will provide transportation for 5 EDI residents seeking employment?
- \$50-\$100 will provide medical/counseling for a resident for 1 month?

There are so many ways that you can support EDI! Through a single donation of \$5, \$50, \$500 or more, or by becoming a member of the 12/20 Club, you can help that next new resident to start a journey of recovery beyond his or her wildest dreams!*

For more information or to make a gift to EDI today, call 610-373-2463 or visit the EDI website: www.easydoesitinc.org

**The 12/20 Club was established in 2009 in honor of EDI's 20th Anniversary. 12/20 Club members give \$20 (or more) per month for one year (12 months) to help EDI continue providing vital services to the recovery community and individuals in early sobriety.*

(Members receive a commemorative pin, recognition in an EDI event program, a 20% discount for hall rentals and for all EDI events - except the Award Dinner, and inclusion in a drawing for two tickets to EDI's Award Dinner.)



“I knew I had to stay connected to the place - not just for myself, but as a responsibility to the residents that were there after me. I signed up to be a member of the volunteer committee right away. I was up there a couple times a week for 12-Step meetings, or to help with event planning, set-up, whatever was needed.” Soon, Cox’s volunteer service at EDI brought about an offer for part-time work. “They asked me to be the Third Shift Monitor on weekends. My wife said to me, ‘You’re already up there all the time; you might as well get paid for it.’ So, I accepted the offer and have been doing that since 2008, still working my full-time job during the week.” Cox thoroughly enjoys the weekend work, as it gives him time with the current residents and a chance to give back what the staff had given so freely to him when he was living there. So, when the offer to become a full-time employee came about, Cox didn’t hesitate. “They needed a new facilities manager during the week, so I applied right away. I waited and waited, praying it would work out for me, and when it did (in mid-January 2010), I broke down and cried. I was so happy.”

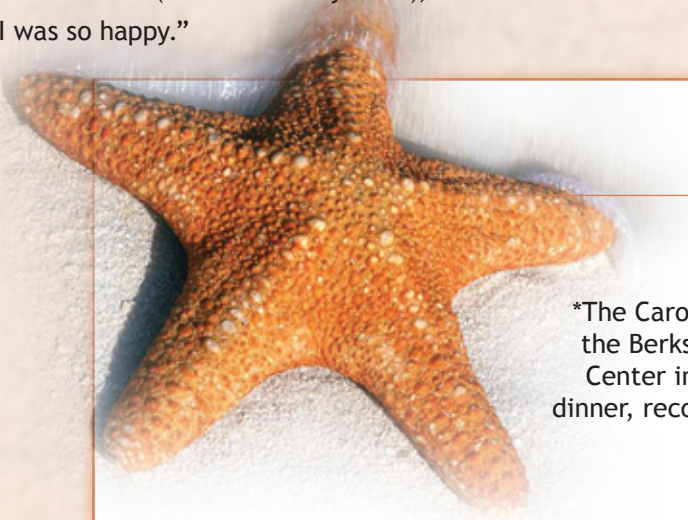
As facilities manager, Cox is responsible for taking care of minor repairs, setting up and tearing down special events, overseeing the transportation of residents and anything else EDI needs. He still works the third shift position on weekends because it helps him to stay connected to the residents, “During the week, I look after the facility. On the weekends, I look after the residents. I love it!”

“EDI taught us how to live -
how to take care
of ourselves.”

Never having felt a part of anything in his life, Cox is the first to admit that the road of recovery has been rocky at times, uncertain and even frightening. But, the EDI staff, volunteers and residents have

always helped him to find his way, and still do now. “This is one of the only times I have ever felt I belonged anywhere.”

First a resident, then a volunteer, and now an employee, Jerry Cox is a three time EDI winner.



Save The Date

Spring Fling Dinner Dance - March 27, 2010

Host: Caron Foundation

*The Caron Foundation has hosted this annual event for their alumni and the Berks County recovering community at the EDI Recovery Community Center in Leesport, PA since 2001. Enjoy a sober night out that includes dinner, recovery speakers, and dancing to live music by The Uptown Band.

Easy Does It Annual Golf Open - June 23, 2010

Willow Hollow Golf Course

*All proceeds benefit the EDI Resident Scholarship Fund.

Soberstock - July 10, 2010

*A day-long celebration of substance-free living filled with music, fun, food, and friendship that was started in 1998, Soberstock continues to be EDI’s largest and most successful community-building event. Soberstock is visited by thousands of recovering individuals every year. The event features great live music, fun activities, and an enjoyable day in the outdoors. Soberstock - Recovery Rocks!

If you would like to attend one of these events or receive more information, contact Carrie Schwartz at (610) 898-7906.

Recovery In....Overeaters Anonymous

Editor's note: Throughout this article, the writer has used "she" in referring to individuals. This does not, in any way, suggest that men are not afflicted by compulsive overeating or compulsive behaviors regarding food, dieting and body image. It was written in this way to simply flow effortlessly for the reader.

Why don't you just go on a diet? Why do you keep eating when you're full? Don't you have any will-power? What normal person weighs herself ten times in one day? Don't you care what other people think of you? These are just a few of the questions that compulsive overeaters are asked regularly.

A compulsive overeater is a person who is addicted to food and anything that has to do with food such as dieting, weight gain/loss, exercise, body image, etc. Whether it is a sugary candy bar or a head of lettuce, the compulsive overeater will eat too much of it. And, whether it is exercise, weighing herself, or feeling guilty about how much she does or doesn't eat, the compulsive overeater overdoes it.

A compulsive overeater harms her own body by bingeing, eating too much throughout the day (i.e. grazing), or not eating at all. The compulsive overeater cannot stop after one cookie or one piece of pizza, even if she eats to the point of being uncomfortably full. It may seem unbelievable to someone who eats a normal diet and occasionally overdoes it during a holiday meal or birthday party, but it is the stark reality for those who live in the disease of compulsive overeating. Just like an alcoholic doesn't know when to stop drinking, a compulsive overeater doesn't know when to stop eating.

Overeaters Anonymous (OA) is the solution for many with this affliction. A 12-Step Program designed after that of Alcoholics Anonymous, OA is not a diet club, but a group of people who meet regularly and strive to live by the principles of the 12 Steps on a daily basis. "In OA we come to recognize that we have a threefold illness - physical, emotional and spiritual. We learn that we must strive for recovery on all three levels if we hope to maintain our weight loss and achieve a more satisfying way of life. The spiritual principles within the twelve steps of Overeaters



Anonymous promote inner change and effect physical, emotional and spiritual recovery." (To the Newcomer, pamphlet distributed by Overeaters Anonymous, Inc.)

Furthermore, anyone who has the desire to stop eating compulsively is welcome in OA: "In Overeaters Anonymous, you'll find members who are extremely overweight, even morbidly obese; moderately overweight; average weight; underweight; still maintaining periodic control over their eating behavior; or totally unable to control their compulsive eating." (www.oa.org)

Like Alcoholics Anonymous, in OA there are no specific rules for membership, only the guidelines of the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions. As newcomers attend meetings, those who have been around for a few years, a few months or even a few weeks, share their experience and strength with them, giving hope for a new outlook on a life that doesn't revolve around eating and compulsive behaviors relating to food, dieting and body image. Having been trapped in the denial of believing that she was the only person in the world who ate compulsively and that there was no help for her, it is through this person to person sharing, and true understanding, that the compulsive overeater finds fellowship for the first time in her life. And, it is through that fellowship and understanding that recovery begins.

(A weekly OA meeting is held at EDI's Leesport facility every Tuesday at 4:00 p.m. For more information on finding a meeting in your area, call the OA Hotline at 610-370-9090 or visit the OA website at www.oa.org/meetings/.)

20th Anniversary Celebration and Community Service Award Benefit Auction



Pictured Left to Right:

Ned E. Diefenderfer, George Seidel (EDI President, Board of Directors), Paul Roedel.

On December 8, 2009, EDI held the 2nd Annual “Making a Difference” Community Service Award Dinner and Benefit Auction. Local auctioneer, Dick Henry, kept the crowd bidding until the event raised a total of over \$18,000! Those funds will be used to support the programs and services that EDI provides to current residents, as well as members of 12-Step recovery programs throughout Berks and the surrounding counties.

Ned Diefenderfer and Paul Roedel, both retired Carpenter Technology executives, were honored with EDI’s “Making a Difference” Community Service Award for their years of dedication and service to the Reading-Berks community. Through unselfishness and compassion, these two men have given their time, talents, and financial resources to improve the Reading-Berks community. As volunteers for numerous non-profit organizations and community boards, Diefenderfer and Roedel have created a legacy of generosity that will motivate others for years to come.

20th Anniversary

EDI staff and residents thank all those who gave of their time and creativity to plan and host such a successful event. In addition, we send a great big THANK YOU to all who attended the event and gave so generously to the silent and live auctions.



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Vision

EDI Inc. is the leading community resource for, and gateway to, a lifetime of recovery from addiction

Mission

EDI Inc. is a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to improving the quality of life of individuals and families recovering from the effects of addiction, thus contributing to the betterment of our community and society as a whole.

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