



KOLMAC

ALUMNI

NEWSLETTER

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From the Desk of
Dr. George Kolodner, M.D.

*Clinical Director and
Co-Founder*

One of Kolmac's innovations was the demonstration that outpatient rehabilitation was an effective form of treatment for people with addiction. Part of Kolmac's success with outpatient treatment is the effective but sometimes controversial use of medication.

One reason for the success of residential rehabilitation programs is that Residential rehabilitation programs are successful in part because they geographically separate the addict from addictive substances. Medication provides a similar separation by virtue of its "blocking" attributes.

Medication, like a surgical scalpel, can be an effective therapeutic tool, but if used improperly, it can also do damage. We use medication with caution and careful consideration.

Continued on page 3

40 years of Dedication



AJ Mitchell, alumni coordinator, presents Dr. George Kolodner, MD., co-founder of The Kolmac Clinic with a 40-year "chip" in recognition of his years of dedication to helping those with addiction. The presentation was made at the Annual Alumni picnic which was held at Bohrer Park in Gaithersburg on May 19, 2013.



Quote of the Day

Live and Love Each Day
Daily Meditations for Living Fully

RESPONDING

How you respond to what happens in your life is more important than what actually happens. Many things will happen to you that are beyond your control. Some of them will be good, but many of them will be very difficult. Try and remember that no one is exempt from the blows of life. We all have to anticipate that difficulties are definitely going to come, because they happen to everybody. It is how we handle them that will determine how they will be used for good in our lives.

You can learn and grow from your experiences, or you can become bitter. If you choose to be a victim, you will attract more negativity and more bad experiences. If you choose to step up the challenges, walk through the fire, take the teaching, and grow, you will come out stronger and better on the other side. The choice is yours. It is not what happens that is important; it is how you handle what happens that is important.

Dr. Anita Gadhia-Smith

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We encourage you to participate in the Kolmac Alumni Association

The Kolmac Alumni Association is a membership organization formed to provide continued support for patients who have either completed Kolmac Clinic's Intensive Outpatient program, or Continuing Care Program or for current continuing care patients. Membership is granted regardless of length of recovery, substance used or level of recovery support. The Association does not judge any members' approach to recovery. The primary goals of the alumni are to enhance fellowship opportunities, broaden member support and increase community involvement. In the spirit of "giving it back," members are encouraged to speak wherever their experience demonstrates that treatment works and recovery is possible. Alumni members may also serve as mentors to those beginning on the road of recovery and work with the Kolmac Foundation by making treatment available to those in need of financial help. In undertaking our mission, each member remains mindful of one's anonymity in all communications and contact outside of the membership meetings.

For more than 35 years, the Kolmac Clinic has treated individuals with addiction and associated mental health issues. We know that in isolation, recovery is not possible. The nature of the disease of addiction requires ongoing support to guard against relapse. As Kolmac Alumni, you can help individuals recover by providing a platform for families of recovering people to interact with each other and by serving as a recovery ambassador in our community. We would like to hear from you and hear your ideas about the following possible alumni outreach activities:

- Workshops and retreats
- Participating in social events
- Fundraising
- Participating in a speakers bureau
- Mentoring the newly recovering
- Contributing to the Kolmac Foundation*
- Participating in community recovery projects
- Contributing to an e-newsletter

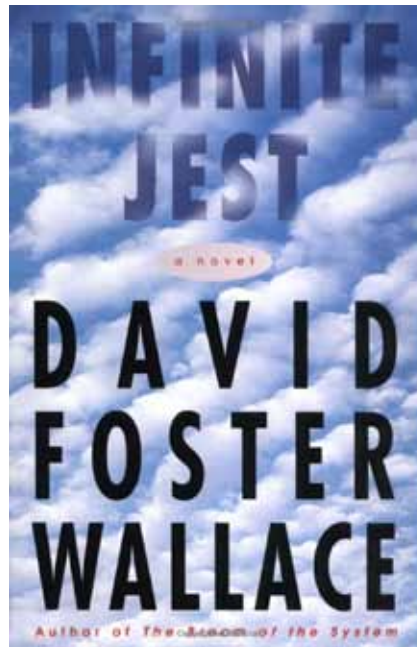
If our mission interests you, please contact me at: (301) 589-0255 or alumni@kolmac.com

My Summer Reading List

BY MIKE W.

But don't panic . . . there's only one item on it, and if you're lucky, you've already read it, and can take the summer off. The book in question is the novel "Infinite Jest," by David Foster Wallace, first published in 1996 and available in libraries everywhere, as well as in any surviving bookstores. It's about addiction, depression, rehab, half-way houses, AA, and a whole bunch of other stuff (including, but not limited to, French-Canadian separatists!). David Foster Wallace speaks the language of recovery. At 981 pages long, with an additional 96 pages of mostly must-read footnotes, it covers all the bases, plus bases I'd never even considered needed covering.

Interested? Before you dive in, here are a few caveats. Except for flashbacks, it's set in the first decade of this century, which hadn't yet actually occurred at the time the book was written, so the terrain is in some ways unfamiliar and only becomes clear gradually (but getting there is half the fun!). The chronology is scrambled—for instance, it begins after it ends. There are occasional horrific episodes of violence and abuse, sometimes without much foreshadowing, if any. There is a very long and excruciatingly detailed description of a tennis match from a player's point of view.



And—oh, yeah—it's a comedy. There are a few drunkalogues so outrageously over-the-top, yet so pitch-perfect, that you sense at once that the author must have sat in on plenty of meetings (whether Open or Closed). AA keeps its secrets, and so does he.

Good luck finishing it during whatever remains of the summer, though. It took me over six months to work my way through it two years ago (it's a really Big Book!). I bottomed out with addiction about two months into it, so it wound up being a handy and reliable guide-book for what lay ahead during the Intensive Outpatient Program, AA, and the rest of the recovery process. Also, I seem to have met at least half the characters during my journey, and they're just as entertaining in real life as they are in the book.

If you decide to give it a try, you might want to swing by your neighborhood library and sample pages 17 through 27 (Year of the Depend Adult Undergarment), in which a recurring character, awaiting delivery of 200 grams of marijuana, ascends to increasingly higher states of anxiety. If this passage sits well with you, read on!

Medications

(from Dr. Kolodner's column on page 1)

One way to think about Kolmac's use of blocking medications is an analogy of surgical anesthesia. One would prefer to have anesthesia when having surgery, but if one only got the anesthesia and not the surgery, one's condition would not improve. At Kolmac, the "surgery" is group therapy, and the anesthesia is blocking medication. By suppressing cravings and withdrawal so patients can focus on the recovery journey

ahead of them, The medication suppresses cravings and withdrawal symptoms so that our patients can pay attention to what is going on in the therapy sessions and also to resist inclinations to relapse.

Even medications without psychoactive properties, such as Antabuse, have their opponents. Still, research consistently shows that outpatient rehabilitation programs that properly

use blocking medications are more successful than those that do not.

The field of addiction medicine has far fewer medications than other areas of medicine. As new medications become available, the Kolmac staff reviews those most likely to be useful for patients in their efforts to become sober.



JOURNEY
TO FIND MY
PURPOSE
BY DIONNE H

“Life should be touched, not strangled. You’ve got to relax, let it happen at times, and at others, move forward with it.”

Ray Bradbury

July 1st marked my fifth year of sobriety. When I should have been celebrating and marveling at my progress, I was more focused on what I had not done with my life. Lately, I have been focused on what I “should and could” be doing with my life. I “should” be making more money. I “should” be at a different place in my career. I “could” be so much more successful. I “could” be a better mother and wife. I know this mind set can be detrimental, not only to my day-to-day life, but to my sobriety. I have always struggled with pleasing others and making sure I met their expectations. I realize that these “coulds and shoulds” are often times not my own desires.

So I have been grappling with and pondering my purpose. What am I here for? What does Dionne want? How do I want to spend the rest of my life? I have to remember that asking these questions isn’t a chore; asking these questions is an honor. I am blessed to have a clear, drug-free mind capable of even asking these questions. I also have to remind myself that I already have purpose. I am staying strong in my sobriety. I am a loving wife, mother, daughter, sister, and friend. As I explore myself, my likes, wants, and needs, I have to stop all the “coulds and shoulds.” If I revel in the progress I have made, I will be one step closer to my destination.

Please help keep the newsletter alive.
Just a \$10 gift can make a difference.

Dear Alumni,

The Alumni Association is a volunteer-supported organization, and we depend on contributions from members to cover the cost of operation, including the production, distribution and printing of this newsletter, as well as events like our annual picnic and general meeting

To date, we have been sustained by the donations of just two alumni out of hundreds who belong to the Association, and we cannot survive without more financial support from members like you.

We need to raise **\$2,000** immediately to sustain operations, so I'm asking you to contribute what you can. It's as easy as writing a check, and even if that's just a check for **\$10, \$20, \$50** or more, you could help save the Association and in doing so help others in recovery.

Some of you may be in a position to contribute a higher amount. We invite you to become a Twelfth Step Member by sending a gift of \$100 or more. As a Twelfth Step Member, you'll receive special recognition at alumni events, and optional recognition in this newsletter.

I hope you share our belief in the potential of this Association to serve as a stable recovery enrichment tool for thousands of people in the Kolmac family. But to keep it alive, we need everyone's support, and that includes you.

Thank you!

Make checks payable to:

Kolmac Alumni Association

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Life with a Recovering Alcoholic

BY JANET W.

What's it like from a partner's point of view? My husband of almost 40 years has been in recovery for two years now. I have started to calm down, but still have a long way to go before reaching serenity. Building back the trust has actually been one of the easier parts, but then again, I always believed his lies!

A lot has changed since my husband graduated from Kolmac. For one, it's difficult to have a satisfying argument with him. I'm only kind-of kidding. I can't get him to react to my slings and arrows, but I have to respect that. The techniques Kolmac teaches for dealing with stress or verbal attacks really work. Sometimes I wish I could go to Kolmac to learn these techniques.

Attendance at AA meetings is a barometer for me to gauge my husband's dedication to recovery. I put a high premium on them and get worried when he skips meetings. I don't want to have to face a relapse. I know that it's possible to recover from a relapse from listening to stories at Kolmac's Family Group, but I really don't want him to drink again.

We've been in couples therapy together now for over a year, and we're just starting to get into the tough issues. Even though my husband is the one with the disease,



*“Getting to serenity
sure is taking some work.
But it’s worth it.
Being upset only hurts me.”*

policy. I don't know how to get around this one unless I do all the driving. At some point I'll have to internalize Live and Let Live.

Getting to serenity sure is taking some work. But it's worth it. Being upset only hurts me. I'm close to retiring from work and enjoying the golden years, but it would be good to practice first.

I had plenty of time to become warped and affected too. I've got some straightening out to do. We don't go every week, but knowing that both of us are accountable to the therapist is powerful incentive for better behavior. Our therapist has a background in addiction and I think that's important for an accurate perspective.

Here's something odd: my husband claims he's apologized to me, but I can't recall it. I've never heard it—more honestly, I don't think I've been able to hear it. He does little special things for me that I know are other ways of apologizing, and I appreciate those, but I'm still waiting for the verbal apology. Hopefully I'll be able to hear it soon.

One thing that's not getting any better is my reaction to my husband's driving. Anything reminiscent of inattentive driving puts me right back in the experience of riding with a drunk driver. I have a zero tolerance

Change your thoughts and you change your world.

NORMAN VINCENT PEALE

The Jeremy Glass Memorial Scholarship

The Kolmac Foundation has created the Jeremy Glass Memorial Scholarship to provide financial assistance for young adult patients to complete addiction treatment at the Kolmac Clinic. The Jeremy Glass Memorial Scholarship provides financial support to young adult patients aged 18-25 at the Kolmac Clinic who cannot afford to complete treatment. The scholarship is named in honor of Jeremy Glass, a former Kolmac Clinic patient who lost his battle with addiction.

Jeremy Glass passed away at the age of 20 from complications due to drug addiction. Jeremy was a very kind, intelligent, passionate and sensitive person, much loved by his family and friends. He fought what was ultimately a losing battle against a terrible disease that afflicts so many. Each Memorial Day in Olney, Maryland, Jeremy's mother, Cyndi Glass, organizes Jeremy's Run in his memory. Proceeds from the run benefit the Kolmac Foundation in addition to The Partnership at Drugfree.org, and The Family Support Center's school program "Dying to Get High."

Those who wish to make a secure online donation to the Jeremy Glass Memorial Scholarship may do so through the Kolmac Foundation's website. Checks made payable to The Kolmac Foundation may be mailed to 3919 National Drive, Suite 300, Burtonsville, Maryland 20866, with the name of the scholarship on the memo line. The Kolmac Foundation is a private, not for profit 501(c)(3) organization managed by a board of trustees and operated wholly by volunteers. All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. For more information about the Jeremy Glass Memorial Scholarship, please call (301) 589-0255.

The Nikki Perlow Memorial Scholarship

The Nikki Perlow Memorial Scholarship provides financial assistance to young adult patients aged 18 – 25 who are attending treatment at the Kolmac Clinic. After completing the rehabilitation phase of treatment at Kolmac, many patients have depleted their insurance benefits. Scholarship assistance from the Kolmac Foundation allows these patients to complete the Continuing Care phase of treatment when lack of money would otherwise have led to leaving prematurely.

Nikki Perlow was a beautiful, vibrant young woman who grew up in a loving family, adored animals, had a passion for all things fashion related and enjoyed sailing, lacrosse, basketball and softball. Experimentation with drugs as a teen led to a long battle with the disease of addiction. After 15 months of sobriety, Nikki suffered a relapse on July 9, 2007 and died of an accidental overdose. She was one month shy of her 22nd birthday. Nikki's family and friends formed the Nikki Perlow Foundation to celebrate her life and to provide financial, logistical and emotional support to young adults like Nikki who struggle with addiction.

Those who wish to make a secure online donation to the Nikki Perlow Memorial Scholarship may do so through the Kolmac Foundation's website. Checks made payable to The Kolmac Foundation may be mailed to 3919 National Drive, Suite 300, Burtonsville, Maryland 20866, with the name of the scholarship on the memo line. The Kolmac Foundation is a private, not for profit 501(c)(3) organization managed by a board of trustees and operated wholly by volunteers. All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. For more information about the Jeremy Glass Memorial Scholarship, please call (301) 589-0255.

The Lynn Scible Memorial Scholarship

The Lynn Scible Memorial Scholarship provides financial assistance to nurses attending the Crossroads Professionals Rehabilitation Outpatient Program (PROP) at the Kolmac Clinic in Baltimore. PROP specializes in working with licensed healthcare professionals struggling with the disease of addiction. Professionals who dedicate their lives to helping others often overlook their own needs. In PROP nurses can learn ways to manage stress and share with others who have experienced the very same isolation, strain, and deep feelings of hopelessness.

Lynn Scible RN, CAC-AD, ran PROP for more than 17 years until her death in 2010. Lynn's work with the nursing boards and hospital nurse administrators yielded her great acclaim and established PROP as an authority, both in the addiction treatment community and the healthcare work environment. Despite her battle with multiple sclerosis, which moved her from fully functional to walker to wheelchair over time, Lynn maintained her sunny outlook on life until the very end, providing a powerful example to those with whom she worked in treatment.

Those who wish to make a secure online donation to the Lynn Scible Memorial Scholarship may do so through the Kolmac Foundation's website. Checks made payable to The Kolmac Foundation may be mailed to 3919 National Drive, Suite 300, Burtonsville, Maryland 20866, with the name of the scholarship on the memo line. The Kolmac Foundation is a private, not for profit 501(c)(3) organization managed by a board of trustees and operated wholly by volunteers. All donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. For more information about the Jeremy Glass Memorial Scholarship, please call (301) 589-0255.