



**Sunshine Coast  
Health Centre**  
Powell River, BC

# Sunshine Coast Recovery News

Your Partner in Recovery

Winter 2006

eNewsletter

## After Drug or Alcohol Rehab: Four Relapse Warning Signs

**Awareness** is key to building a healthy, meaningful and fulfilling life after rehab. You need to be alert and aware to spot the early warning signs of relapse into addiction and take whatever action is necessary to maintain your recovery. Watch for what I like to call, "The Big Four Relapse Warning Signs."

If any one of them sneaks back into your life, take it as a warning to redouble your resolve to stay the course of your recovery.



**Dr. Neill Neill**

### The Big Four Relapse Warning Signs

- 1. Lying.** A principal warning sign of relapse is lying to yourself or to others. Remember how you lied when you were a functioning alcoholic: minimizations, distortions of truth, little white lies, boldface lies and denial. Sometimes you even believed your own hype. So, if you are aware you have told your partner a little white lie, recognize it as a slip and take action immediately to correct the situation.
- 2. Blaming.** When you blame anyone else for anything, remember that by doing so you are making yourself a victim. And if you are a victim, who can blame you for relapsing into drinking or drugging? So recognize you are on the slippery slope to victimhood and relapse if you notice yourself laying blame rather than taking responsibility.
- 3. Shame.** For men there is often shame around not being able to make your partner happy. If you find yourself slipping into these feelings of shame, remind yourself that you are to respect, love and care for your wife. Her happiness or unhappiness comes from within her.
- 4. Euphoria.** You are on top of the world and things couldn't be better. Euphoria often makes a subtle shift into feeling invulnerable. And if you are invulnerable, you could drink or drug or have an affair without consequences. The euphoria of success has been the downfall of many a politician and business leader.

So pay attention; you are a human being and therefore always vulnerable. If you find yourself at the pinnacle of success, remember what Buckminster Fuller said: **"If you do a good job the great spirit will give you a bigger job."**

It's up to you to make your life after rehab a magnificent one!

Copyright © Neill Neill. All rights reserved. Dr. Neill maintains an active psychology and life coaching practice on Vancouver Island, BC, Canada. He is a member of the treatment team at Sunshine Coast Health Centre, an alcohol and drug treatment center for men. His goal is to help you to help yourself to a better life. <http://www.neillneill.com>

### An Alumnus Passing

It is with great sadness we announce the passing of Ross M of Vancouver on the 15th of December, 2006 at age 59. Ross was on a flight to Maui when he died suddenly. Our thoughts and prayers are extended to his family and many friends.

### Drug & Alcohol Awareness Guides

Sunshine Coast Health Centre is pleased to announce the release of two public service publications:

#### Drugs of Abuse: An Identification Guide

is a free publication designed to inform families, employers, and educators not familiar with the vast array of abused drugs now commonplace in our communities.



#### You Are The Key: 10 Steps for Employers to a Drug-free Workplace

is a free publication designed to help small-to medium-sized employers develop, implement and maintain a drugfree workplace program.



We would like to acknowledge the support of **Jack Hirose and Associates** and the **BC Council on Substance Abuse** for their contribution to the cost of producing these guides.

### A New Book in the Works

Cathy Patterson-Sterling, Program Director at Sunshine Coast Health Centre, is hard at work on a new book, tentatively titled, *Fingers on the Ledge: Healing the Lives of High-Functioning Addicted People*. A release date is set for Summer 2007. This book is for high-functioning professionals who have problems with alcoholism or drug addiction when combined with workaholism. The book shows how those in recovery can avoid some of the common traps and pitfalls of being an over-achieving person healing from addiction.



**Cathy Patterson-Sterling**

Cathy is also working on a second edition of *Rebuilding Relationships in Recovery*, due in the Fall 2007.