

## WHAT IS SUCCESS?

*What is Success?  
To laugh often and much;  
To win the respect of intelligent  
people and the affection of children;  
To earn the appreciation of honest  
critics and endure the betrayal of  
false friends;  
To appreciate beauty;  
to find the best in others;  
To leave the world a bit better,  
whether by a healthy child, a  
garden patch or a redeemed social condition;  
To know even one life has breathed  
easier because you have lived;  
This is to have succeeded.*

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

## Warning Signs of Substance Abuse, Addiction And/Or Emotional Disorders Among Dental Professionals

- Increased difficulty at home: marital conflicts, absences, problems with children
- Wide mood swings: anger, depression, nervousness
- Unexplained absenteeism at work: isolation and withdrawal from community and colleagues
- Frequent illness: need for medication
- Decreased career satisfaction; avoidance of continuing education courses
- Legal and financial problems: driving while impaired citations, lawsuits, debts
- Problems at the office with staff and patient complaints
- Problems with licensure and/or Drug Enforcement Agency

Source: Talbott Recovery

**Reminder!**

Representatives of the NCCDP are always available to share the history and mission of the NCCDP with various groups, including hygiene schools, dental schools and any other professional dental organization.

Please call us to schedule a presentation: 1-800-230-3934

**VISIT THE UPDATED NCCDP WEBSITE**  
[www.nccaringdental.com](http://www.nccaringdental.com)

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North Carolina Caring Dental Professionals  
PO Box 1258 Southern Pines, NC 28388

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## When You Need Someone to Care



**North Carolina  
Caring Dental Professionals**

Published three times yearly in Southern Pines, North Carolina by the North Carolina Caring Dental Professionals, a nonprofit organization. Our goals are to disseminate information about the Caring Dental Professionals, and to provide helpful and informative materials about chemical dependence and mental health issues.

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### HELPING DENTISTS, DENTAL HYGIENISTS, AND THEIR FAMILIES

For More Information Call...

(910) 944-1150

# CARING Connections

JUST REACH OUT

Volume 19 , Issue 2

NORTH CAROLINA CARING DENTAL PROFESSIONALS

## FRIENDS OF BILL W.

By Nancy Davis, Executive Director

**NC Caring Dental Professionals** is a nonprofit, independent agency with a Board of Directors, representing the NC State Board of Dental Examiners, the NC Dental Society, the UNC School of Dentistry, and the Dental Hygienists of the State of North Carolina.

**The Mission** of our program is to identify, intervene, and assist members of the dental profession and their families who suffer the consequences of alcohol or other drug abuse or addiction, stress and professional burnout or other impairments.

**The Purpose** of NC Caring Dental Professionals is prevention of a career being destroyed or a professional reputation being damaged. The CDP provides confidential peer support and professional assistance with advocacy through complete assessment, treatment, recovery and monitoring activities which, if followed, may assist the dental professional in license retention.

On every ocean cruise I have had the privilege to sail, there are always meeting announcements in the daily schedule for various events and group meetings. I have sat with acquaintances at breakfast as they are looking over the schedule and deciding what to do. Recently, on a Christmas cruise I was asked by a stranger, who is this "Bill W.?" The person went on to discuss how every cruise he has sailed they have a meeting announcement of "Friends of Bill W." The discussion went on with the question, how can one person sail on every ship and have all these friends?

Knowing the history of these meetings afforded me the pleasure of explaining what Friends of Bill W. meant. William "Bill W." Wilson is the co-founder of Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) along with Dr. Bob Smith. One of the core tenets of AA is the anonymity of its members as a way of keeping principles ahead of personalities. AA members usually introduce themselves with just their first name. When AA members started approaching cruise directors about holding meetings during the sailing and publicizing it in the ship's announcement, the cruise lines were hesitant. There was a fear that announcing an AA meeting might upset some of the guests. Consequently, the euphemism "Friends of Bill W." began to be used since many non-members would not know the meaning of the phrase. Occasionally the term may be shortened to "FOB."

Many people in recovery people say that a huge part of their recovery process has been learning to live life to the fullest. Cruising can be a wonderful vacation experience for those recovering from addiction as long as they are able to stick with their recovery program. Depending on the stage of their recovery, a cruise ship might be a difficult environment for those who are trying to work their way through the process. For some, they may be just a few months into their recovery, and others could be celebrating 20, 30 or even more years. For those who attend regular meetings, having them available on a cruise ship, allows them to keep up with their program of recovery as well as give and receive encouragement from others. The meetings are not run by

the cruise line, however, the cruise line schedules and provides a place for the passengers to hold their own regular meetings.

Only those in recovery can judge if they are ready for the cruise experience. Cruising can be a wonderful vacation experience and a great way to explore the world especially knowing there is a safety net with "Friends Of Bill W."

**Friends of Bill W.**  
**Sat. 9:30 PM**



**North Carolina Caring  
Dental Professionals**

**WE CARE!**  
**1 - 800-230-3934**  
Visit our website [www.nccaringdental.com](http://www.nccaringdental.com)



## Am I an Enabler? A Self-Inventor

It has been our experience that at least 90% of professionals we have interacted with have worked with or known a colleague who was chemically dependent. For many, though the enabling wasn't identified. While thinking about those you have know, answer the following statement about possible enabling on your part.

- |   | YES                      | NO                       | SOME-TIMES               |   | YES                      | NO                       | SOME-TIMES               |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. I believe that the professionals I personally come in contact with are above having chemical dependence problems   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11. I tend to avoid colleagues who might have a chemicals dependence problem.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I fear for my own position if I were to take action on a colleague's chemical dependence problem   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12. I'm fearful of what a superior might do if I express my concerns about a colleague's alcohol or other drug use.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I'm hesitant to confront a colleague about his or her alcohol or other drug use for fear of anger or rejection.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13. I hesitate to tell a colleague directly how I feel about his or her behavior, especially when I suspect the behavior is alcohol or other drug related.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I've covered up a colleague's alcohol or other drug use.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14. I've defended and made excuses for a chemically dependent colleague.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I excuse colleagues' alcohol or drug related behavior as atypical or attributable to other problems.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 15. I fear that if I identify colleagues' chemical dependence they may lose their licenses..  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. I accept responsibility for my colleagues duties, assignments, or caseload, even when I suspect that the reasons given for their failure to perform well aren't valid.       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 16. I've failed to act on complaints about a colleagues's suspected alcohol or other drug use of have passed them along only to those who are unlikely to do anything about them. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. I become increasingly angry at my colleagues for not carrying their share of the workload  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 17. I've ignored or denied suspicions about a potential chemical dependence problem in a colleague.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. I believe that chemical dependence is a sign of moral weakness.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 18. I've written prescription for a colleague who isn't my patient, or for myself, or for my own family.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9. I believe that any professional could stop drinking or using if he or she really wanted to.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 19. I postpone action when I suspect that a colleague is chemically dependent; I trust time, other people, or changes in circumstances to solve the problem.                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10. I sometimes worry about my own patterns of alcohol or other drug use, but I mention this only to others who drink or use other drugs such as I do and who will reassure me. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |                          |                          |                          |

If you answered yes to five or more of these statements, you have probably been involved in enabling a colleague with an alcohol or other drug problem. You are not alone. Enabling in any professional setting is a common occurrence.

## "From Hiccups to Potholes"

by J. William "Bill" Claytor, Jr., DDS



We all love to pursue happiness in our lives. We love to do things that bring us joy and pleasure. We as Americans often refer to this fundamental right mentioned in the Declaration of Independence as an expression of freely pursuing joy and happiness in things, as long as we don't do anything that is illegal or violate the rights of our fellow citizens. The same can be expressed in many different arenas, whether it is a career, a place to build a house, entertainment, a vacation, or where to dine. Even in our personal lives, we can pursue many different pleasures from shopping, food, internet, alcohol, exercise, gambling and so forth.

Most of the pleasures previously mentioned can bring us relief and happiness when done in moderation. However, occasionally these activities can get out of control and become obsessive to the point that we suffer consequences with detrimental effects. If we shop, stay on the internet or exercise too much so that it is getting out of control and affecting our personal life and relationships, this should be a "red flag" to indicate that something needs to change. Drinking too much alcohol, chronic use of anxiety medications, eating too much and excessive gambling can have dire consequences.

Sometimes we can ask for help from others and get counseling to reverse the detrimental effects of these "hiccups". However we as people are slow to ask for assistance and remain in denial. One common denominator is that we know something is wrong. We feel uneasy, miserable and start feeling a sense of hopelessness and bondage. Our once enjoyable "pursuit of happiness" has now ended up in a "pothole". We are stuck. We are in a rut. We can't seem to change, even when we use our willpower. We shop too much in stores or on the internet. We eat too much and too often even when we aren't hungry. We spend hours on the internet when we were ordering/checking on just "one thing". We drink too much to the point of leaving our car at a bar or restaurant and calling an Uber to get home, or worse, we blackout. We exercise to excess to where our bodies are needing it to feel normal, or we are unable to pay our bills or even go to work due to gambling too much to make ends meet. Sound familiar? Maybe not to some but to others you may be in the throes of one of these situations.

During everyone's life we have hiccups that we usually can manage and move on. But sometimes the potholes become too deep and paralyzing to move forward in your life. Sometimes we need to humble ourselves and ask for help! We were made to be dependent on each other, not independent. We need each other. Together, people make change happen. Remember, change is not a matter of willpower. Real change begins with asking for help. People who drink too much often say that if they had enough willpower they could control their drinking. They see drinking too much as the problem. They should be reminded that drinking is not the problem instead it is the solution they have chosen. The problem is themselves. They need the kind of help that only comes from others.



If you can identify with concerns surrounding excessive shopping, food, alcohol or other drugs, exercise or gambling, please consider contacting us at the North Carolina Caring Dental Professionals (800-230-3934). We can be an excellent resource for help and guidance to help you navigate out of your "pothole" back to your life and passions.

## IT IS AMAZING WHAT YOU CAN DO WHEN YOU HAVE TO

External motivation does not seem to work for me. You tell me to do something, even for my own good, and I can come up with a dozen reasons that I don't have to do it. Defiance seems to be my middle name. I'm different. I don't have to follow the rules. Even though I know better, I think I can get away with it until I have to change. Only I can decide when that is.

When I got arrested for drugs, I had to quit. It was the only way to keep my license. I thought at the time, I could just wait until the coast was clear, and then, when nobody was interested in my behavior, I would start drinking to take the edge off. No, I was NEVER going to do drugs again, but a little beer every once in a while wouldn't hurt, would it? Then I went off to treatment and learned about my disease of addiction. It has many faces. They all want to destroy me. Chemical abstinence, total abstinence was the only way. All mood-altering drugs. I abstained and it worked.

Other faces of my disease are process addictions. You know, the justifiable needs that are not black and white, yes or no, but those which require moderation. Like shopping, eating, helping others, even healthy things like exercise and working for a living. Just like I don't know what "normal" is, I have never had a good working definition of "moderation". More has always been better.

I am overweight. "Morbidly Obese". I have fought diabetes with every medicine known to endocrinology, except for diet and exercise. I have been defiant. Back in 2001, the day I chose to quit smoking, due to chest pain and dizziness from a whole pack of green meanies I smoked one morning, I heard from my hospital bed as I prepared for my stress echo, a loud voice from down the hall. I never met the man, but what he said became my defiant battle cry of a diabetic in non-compliance. He hollered to his wife, "I am not letting some high-falooting doctor tell me what I can and can not eat!"

I passed that stress echo in 2001 and two other tests for the same intermittent chest pain. One cardiologist told me I was having a panic attack. All my treating physicians have advised me to lose weight and begin exercise. I lived to eat, and that didn't happen. One Thursday in January, 2014, that same pain became constant and insistent. I could not ignore it. It was time to choose. Was I going to sit at home and die of a heart attack, waiting for the pain to go away? It didn't go away.

Emergency room. Long wait. More symptoms. Enzymes elevated. Cardiac cath. Found two 100% obstructions in the posterior coronary artery. Stented. Released from hospital. Cardiac Rehab. New diet, exercise. Weight plummeted, Blood sugars controlled on ¼ of the insulin. More energy. Wow.

I can take no credit for this miracle. God must not be done with me.

I had a plan to deal with the need for medicine during this ordeal. I had two IV doses of morphine and a fair amount of versed and fentanyl during the cath. I called the NCCDP and told them what was up and that I was going to be accountable to them during this process. I did the same with my sponsor. I did have significant pain, but the meds did not make me high. I don't know why. They just made the pain go away. I went home with no need for pain meds.

I am so grateful for a new plan, the support and care of a great surgical team, nursing team and the NCCDP to help me deal with my addiction issues. I just passed through the number one relapse scenario intact and better. Who has ever been grateful for a heart attack? There's a first time for anything.

- A grateful dentist in recovery

## PLEASE CONSIDER

Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the NC Caring Dental Professional's Jake Thorpe assistance fund. This money is used to provide interest free loans to assist impaired dental professionals on their path to recovery. The NCCDP was created for the dental team and their families with the intention of promoting a healthy recovery and lifestyle. You can be a part of this health and wellness effort by making a tax-deductible donation TODAY!

Dr. Henry Duncan, DDS – Chairman, Fundraising Committee