

Mission

Aletheia (ah-LAY-thee-uh), which means “truth” in Greek, is a student outreach publication that strives to provide a voice for all students at Lynbrook High School. Inspired by Los Gatos High’s *Reality Check* and Monta Vista’s , *Aletheia* was created to facilitate communication and overcome stigmas concerning prevalent and taboo issues within the Lynbrook community.

About

At the beginning of the school year, the *Aletheia* staff designates a list of monthly topics pertaining to the realities of high school. Each issue comprises of firsthand experiences submitted anonymously by Lynbrook students and alumni, professional articles relating to that month’s theme, and resources compiled by the student staff. Finalized newsletters are uploaded online and emailed to Lynbrook families. Back issues can be found on our website, www.lhsaletheia.org, under Archives.

The content in *Aletheia* is composed by the students of Lynbrook High School in San Jose, California. Ideas and opinions expressed within the publication are not necessarily reflected by members of the school administration or faculty.

This is the second issue of *Aletheia* for the 2014-15 school year.

Submissions

All Lynbrook students and alumni are eligible to submit stories. We publish all submissions that adhere to our guidelines, which are posted on the website. The Aletheia staff is committed to preserving the integrity of your content and will not make any changes, with exception to certain profanity (which are asterisked-out) and basic spelling errors. We do not edit stories for grammar or syntax.

If you are interested in contributing, a submission box and a suggestion form for future topics are both available online at www.lhsaletheia.org

*Expressing what
remains unspoken.*

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The twenty minute video was graphic and disturbing, but it got the job done. I swore to never drink alcohol. As an outgoing person, I've been in situations where people around me are drinking. I don't ask for anything, and if offered, I decline. The video I watched emphasized one of the main reasons the victim was drinking alcohol was because of peer pressure. I don't succumb to peer pressure. Once I was at an event and some friend were joking about going to the bar and try to get beer. A stranger dropped by and gave me beer. I left it there and didn't think twice about ignoring it. Some people expect a crazy outgoing guy like me to drink or be okay with drinking. I'm not. I know that some time in the future, I'm going to have to drink wine or some other beverage out of formality. I know that a lot of the Chinese dishes my mother makes encompasses alcohol, like some fish dishes, but rice wine soups I won't drink. Let's see how long I can stay sober. I don't care what others think. As long as I remain resolute and dictate my own life.

"I have taken more out of alcohol than alcohol has taken out of me."

-Winston Churchill

People who try drugs for recreational purposes are pussies and dumb as hell since they can severely damage your body. Drinking on the other hand can definitely be healthy to your body as long as drunk in moderation. Drink a bottle of beer once a month Don't mistake beer for water Nope

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I have a unique experience in that I used to buy marijuana outside of school and this put me in interesting situations. The way I found this contact was a older kid told me that this person could get me however much I wanted at extremely low prices. One day we went to his house, in a bad neighborhood, and I met a drug dealer. He was a dirty, short twenty two year old man with dreadlocks, and although initially suspicious, he sold me a large quantity. After this, we became good friends, but incidents at this place were extremely dangerous. I later learned that this dealer was addicted to some other drug (I believe meth or oxycontin), and in some cases he would do things such as drive intoxicated and throw knives around with little aim). In addition, his house was periodically raided, putting those

there at risk of imprisonment. Finally, many dangerous individuals hung out there who had done prison time for activities such as home invasions. Also, one other time, a different felon indirectly said that the next time he went to prison would be for murder as a veiled threat, but in my opinion he was bluffing. All in all, I learned a lot about how poorer people live and gained insights in how a relatively intelligent person could live an extremely poor life as a drug dealer. I say this because we had conversations about the economics of his business and his insights as a former gang member. I have since quit associations with those people and using marijuana, but it helped me grow as a person. For anyone interested in selling drugs, your parents will find out, you won't make much money (minimum wage), and you risk arrest. For me personally, getting high eventually became not fun, and I have a better life without periodically smoking weed anymore.

"The sway of alcohol over mankind is unquestionably due to its power to stimulate the mystical faculties of human nature, usually crushed to earth by the cold facts and dry criticisms of the sober hour."

-William James

I strongly believe that I am who I am today because of my experiences with drugs. Some positive, some negative. I've tried everything from marijuana (my personal favorite), LSD, PCP, 25-nbome, as well as an assortment of prescription pills. Growing up, I believed all the propoganda bullshit about the "dangers of drugs", but only when I began smoking weed did I realize that it helped me more than any medication my doctor could prescribe for me. The stigma around drugs has stunted society's ability to grow and love. When used with care and moderation, cannabis is a beautiful gift that can help your mind open and bloom, allowing you to experience life in a way that would have previously been impossible.

"Alcohol is the anesthesia by which we endure the operation of life."

-George Bernard Shaw

Sometimes i roll a piece of regular binder paper into a tube and stick a small rolled up tissue into one end. Then i light the other end on fire so its just smoking and smoke the binder paper... I dont know why it just makes me feels kind of badass...

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No, but I have been offered it many time before, I will probably try drinking in a controlled environment once I have the time before college, but there is no rush. I don't feel the need to try drugs or alcohol and I have told myself before that I would save drinking till after sport and never take up drugs. I guess everyone has been affected to some extent as the world cannot really be sheltered even though we go to Lynbrook. Lol I like the last question where it is assumed that the respondent is not using drugs or drinking. I would say no as it is the norm for Lynbrook to not drink and use drugs on a regular basis. So yea I think as long as there is a logical view behind all actions, most things are justifiable.

"Alcohol is barren. The words a man speaks in the night of drunkenness fade like the darkness itself at the coming of day."

-Marguerite Duras

I used to think that drugs and drinking were some of the biggest taboos in the world, and when I was younger I even vowed to myself that I would never try either one. It's not like I could help it – that's just the society that we're immersed in here at Lynbrook, and I personally have somewhat conservative parents. Over the past few years, however, it's become quite clear that drugs and drinking are not as distant as they may seem on the surface; in fact, I'm sure many people reading this have tried one or the other before. While I still have a personal aversion to drugs and alcohol, I would certainly be willing to try it once with trustable friends just to know what it smells and feels like. In fact, I have one such friend: I only recently got to know him, but he has by far had the most impact on me out of anyone I know (excluding family). When I first found out, it was in the middle of a casual conversation about people doing drugs, including one woman whose son was

a pothead. I said, "poor _____. Her son does weed. She doesn't deserve it," to which my friend replied, "What's so bad about that? I mean, I do drugs." I didn't really know what to say at the time. I was shocked. I was embarrassed. I felt bad. But from that point on, I realized that I couldn't really judge people based on such a small facet of personality – there's so much more to human nature, it's so complicated. Another friend who was part of this conversation – and who happens to be a Lynbrook alumna – said, "I know plenty of great people who do drugs, and it doesn't make them worse people, they're just as amazing." That couldn't be truer, and I'm glad that I didn't let something like that end our friendship, because he continues to be the wonderful, influential kind of person that I aspire to be.

"Avoid using cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs as alternatives to being an interesting person."

-Marilyn vos Savant

My experiences with drinking are sadly, not limited to only a few incidents. At the time of typing this, I still have a flask of vodka left over from my last party sitting in relatively plain sight in my closet. I don't want to demonize drinking; it can be good in the right setting and with the right people. However, even though I've indulged in alcohol while I was still in high school, I would advise against it. My first taste of booze was in the eighth grade. An older sibling put a glass of wine in front of me and told me to drink. I did. I hated the taste, and still do, but for me, it was a gateway. Once I realized that alcohol wouldn't kill me, I let myself become drawn by it. In high school, I always had access to booze. I had an older friend who would buy it for me and my friends as long as we played him back. We didn't drink often, but I will admit that it made me feel a bit cooler than my friends (who were quite tame and homebodies in comparison to me) to have a dealer. I think they all appreciated it even if they said they disapproved. They would still hand over money to get a piece of the action, so they can't have reply been against it. I showed up tipsy to a school dance once, and everyone could tell. My friend was well on her way to drunk, but somehow no one could tell. We even walked past Mr. Ramirez and he didn't even notice that we reeked of booze. One time I got wasted at a Christmas party at my house. The

same older sibling had given me wine again and this time, my parents thought I was drunk but I told them I was acting up because I was tired. The fact that no one could tell that I was intoxicated gave me a sort of high that boosted how good I felt when I drank. Then, I got caught. My dad picked me up from a party and knew I was wasted. The scent of vodka was probably flowing off me, but I can't really remember. The next day, my parents weren't even mad. My dad asked me if I had been drinking, so I told him that my soda had been spiked. He let me off with a warning after I apologized for being so careless. At this point, I realized that drinking does not make a person cool or special or any more fun or whatever. Some people might think its cool that I drink, but those people probably haven't tried it and don't have any experience. Other people might look at me and think, "wow, this person drinks? I wonder why they do it. Maybe they have problems." I'm not public about my drinking anymore, and I wouldn't say it's a habit, but just to be safe, I don't drink with strangers. Drinking at a young age can lead to huge health risks and I think those side effects are what scare me off from bingeing and drinking on the regular. However, it's something I'm not opposed to despite everything that has happened. I would suggest not indulging when you're young, but it's not like I'm one to talk. Now that I'm in college, I've realized something: You can lead a horse to water, but ultimately, the horse decides whether or not to drink, even though someone else gave them the water. It's all on the horse, not anybody else.

"Young people can get very discouraged and get hooked on drugs or on alcohol because of problems they perceive as insurmountable. It is important that they realize a mistake need not ruin their future, but they must also know that not everything in life is a bed of roses."

-Maureen Forrester

I've never try drugs and drinking before, because I think these are not the things that teenagers supposed to do. Plus drugs and drinking can damage people's brains and bodies harshly, so why do we take them? None of my friends do drugs or drink , so I

don't need to worry about getting influenced by my friends (thank god). But hopefully they are not hiding secretly. I want to be a healthy person whether for now or in the future, so I believe i will never choose to take drugs and drink. Due to my strong attitude which against drugs and drinking, i feel i will definitely be judged if i choose to take drugs and drink.

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I've never done drugs or smoked weed before. I don't particularly want to try, because it just seems like a waste of time and money. A few of my friends smoke, and everything seems to be working out for them so far. To each their own, I guess.

I have mixed feelings, but for the most part I'm against drinking and doing drugs. I haven't tried drinking, nor have I tried any type of drugs, but I do have friends that claim to have gotten high multiple times. I don't know if what they're saying is true or not, but based off of their character I wouldn't put it past them. I want to maintain a clean record throughout high school at least, but sometimes I admit, I have felt pressure to fit in with those friends when I hang out with them. Like the drug, Molly, my friends also often refer to Carol. I don't know what it's a nickname for, but it sounds highly addictive. Sometimes I feel judged for not following the Carol trend, but for the most part, I'm proud of my choice to abstain from drinking and drugs. As for drinking, I have seen the negative effects firsthand, and wish to avoid it. I have a friend who just started college and was already drinking Jameson whiskey on his first night. I don't know what choices I'll be making a couple years into the future, but as of now, I hope to remain clean.

"Every form of addiction is bad, no matter whether the narcotic be alcohol or morphine or idealism."

-Carl Jung

Have I tried a drug in high school? Yes, I have. My intention of taking drug was a bit different from the common reasons for drug though. I didn't take drugs to get escape stressful environment of Lynbrook or to seem grown up as the movies and the TV sometimes portrait drugs. I took drug to improve my

academic performance. It was my junior year and I was taking AP Biology, APUSH, and AP Calculus BC. I was suffering from crazy work load and was failing my AP classes. Then, I had this crazy idea of taking clonidine- medicine used for ADHD-to improve my ability to focus. I lied to my mom saying "ADHD is coming back and it's killing me. I can't focus and at this rate I'm going to fail all of my classes." My mom saw how serious my ADHD was when I was in elementary school and agreed to go see a doctor without questioning. After that I was able to get prescription for clonidine pretty easily. Yes, I knew it was not right but at that time I didn't have enough mental capacity to consider what was wrong or right. After I started to take drug, my academic performances to the point that I had solid grades in AP classes. Then I felt really guilty about what I have done. My decision to take drug was not only unfair to others who were working equally or harder than me but it was also betrayal to myself. Coming from highly religious catholic family, I was taught important moral values and I thought I had high moral values. However, what I have done was unacceptable and I started to hate myself. I stopped taking clonidine after my junior year but I still feel guilty for my action.

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I did a weed once and i was baked for 3 days

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I don't do drugs, but some people think I do or have. A couple summers ago, I wanted to see people smoking marijuana so I tagged along with some of my friends. I was too afraid to actually smoke but I stayed along the whole process. Unfortunately, they couldn't get their hands on any weed that night so we ended up playing with tobacco. I learned how to roll joint, techniques on how to smoke in public, and a lot more. We were in some sort of an alley way that could only be accessed by a staircase. Halfway through this activity, some other friend dropped by. As he left up the stairs, we heard him yell "Cops!" The three other people with me instantly froze as some officers bounded down the stairs. We lined up and they checked our IDs and I finally realized how you can get so scared as to "shit your pants." I didn't, but my stomach felt ter-

rible. Lucky for us, these officers were not looking to arrest some teenagers smoking tobacco and let us off with a warning and made us go home. I ran and started crying, thankful that one of my friend's contact had a midterm the following day. That summer, I hung out with friends who were always high, smoking all the time, and I even handled marijuana! Woah! Nonetheless, I might be a pussy but I think that that first scare did its job to steer me the opposite direction of drugs.

"Anyway, no drug, not even alcohol, causes the fundamental ills of society. If we're looking for the source of our troubles, we shouldn't test people for drugs, we should test them for stupidity, ignorance, greed and love of power."

-P. J. O'Rourke

At the begining on this year as a new years resoulution I said that I would quit doing drugs, and I did for a while till about 3 weeks ago. And that entire time I was just so bored and none of my friends didn't want to hang out with me (some friends they are) and all I did was it at home and do nothing but surf the net and play video games. And the promblem is that Ive been friends with the same people since I was in third grade and I don't make new friends easily in fact Ive been doing drugs for so long that I no longer have anything in common with normal kids my age (I'm 16) trust me I tried. I don't like any sports and church is not an option. I know the friends I have are douchebags but without them then all I do is go to school and then go straight home and it's depressing and at least when I'm with my friends and get high and time flys by. But I know that doing drugs is gonna lead me nowhere but without drugs my social life goes to zero.

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Drinking and drugs aren't really too much different from eating unhealthy if done in moderation. If a person works out 6 days a week and eats very healthy food that week, it doesn't hurt too much to have some Taco Bell and PMT one day of the week. Likewise, as long as you're not getting drunk or high every single day of the week, and you limit it to just one day of the

week (or less), it doesn't hurt your body and it's just fun. I drink and get high about every three weeks when I'm at a party or mixer. It's fun. I meet girls, hook up, hit bases, and do all that while I'm intoxicated. Back in the 70s and 80s, this was a perfectly normal thing for Lynbrook kids to do, but kids today are just too paranoid. I get straight As, I got better than 2200 on the SAT and I got at least a 750 on the SAT IIs. I say that not to brag but to prove how my academic life hasn't been affected by any of the times I drank or got high. (By the way, I've only done marijuana, so I won't speak for any of the other drugs.) Sure, it may be slightly bad for health, but it's a lot worse to have an unhealthy diet which a myriad of drug-free kids do. I get physicals done every 6 months, and doctors find nothing wrong with my body. Everything is running smoothly. I even have six pack abs proving that I'm in better condition than at least 95% of Lynbrook. Moreover, I'm not hurting anyone. It's not as if I punch people every time I get drunk or high, and I certainly don't drive while I'm intoxicated. I'm not even really hurting myself in any way. I have never been in trouble with the law, and my future is in no way affected. Doing it once every three weeks doesn't make me addicted, and if I ever saw it having a negative impact on my life, I'd stop. When I'm at parties or mixers, most people are getting high or drunk, so no one would judge, and when I'm not at parties or mixers, no one knows that I do get high or drunk, so no one would judge. I'll end with this, marijuana and alcohol are just things that I use once in a while, but the only effect they have on my life is that they let me relax in ways that no drug-free kid would ever understand.

"Being smarter gives you a tailwind throughout life. People who are more intelligent earn more, live longer, get divorced less, are less likely to get addicted to alcohol and tobacco, and their children live longer."

-Steven Pinker

I'm definitely feeling pretty "affected" by drugs right now, considering I smoked a bowl about a half an hour ago. I smoke about once every 2 or 3 months. When I do, I feel nothing but love, compassion, and I am able to put my emotions out better than I can so-

ber (Thank God for the Bay Area for growing the good stuff). I guess it just gets me away from the loneliness, and puts me in a more spiritual place to view my life from a new, more optimistic point of view. What's wrong with feeling happy once in a while?

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I have never tried drugs or drinking in high school because I know it is wrong (morally) and it is bad for your health and has many negative consequences. They can impair your brain health and other parts of your body and you do not get anything good from them except for short term pleasure. After that, you just feel terrible and there are toxins in your body that are extremely hard to get rid of. I was never pressured and will never drink or do drugs in the future because that is my personal choice. I don't care if anyone else does it but when it comes to me, I won't because I don't want that for myself. My family and friends and teachers have all said throughout my life that these things are wrong and I have made a firm decision of not trying these things.

"Alcohol doesn't console, it doesn't fill up anyone's psychological gaps, all it replaces is the lack of God. It doesn't comfort man. On the contrary, it encourages him in his folly, it transports him to the supreme regions where he is master of his own destiny."

-Marguerite Duras

As someone who has experienced the culture associated with drinking in two very different circumstances, I feel that sharing some experience and perspective could be beneficial to many. After my freshmen year at Lynbrook, I moved to Denmark. Denmark is a small European country with a very different perspective on drinking and the freedom associated with it. The legal age for buying alcohol is 16 (for drinks with under 15% ABV), and everything else is 18. However, there is no drinking age, so many begin before they are 16. As you can probably tell, the attitude regarding drinking is very lax, which is why they even serve beer at most school related parties, which

really surprised me. As someone who didn't drink initially, I did feel like the odd one out, not drinking at parties and such, and I eventually started. I wouldn't say it was because of peer pressure though, because many Danes are pretty accepting of people who don't drink and make sure not to influence your decisions. I simply had the chance, and since there wasn't anything I was doing wrong, went for it. While this may seem like a bad thing initially, I have found that drinking doesn't have a big effect, if any, on the academic ability of most students even though many of them drink almost weekly. It should be stated however, that even though I attend one of the higher academically ranked schools in Denmark, the workload is significantly decreased compared to what I experienced in the year I went to Lynbrook (really, I only get about 0.5-2 hours of homework per day, and I'm in the middle of my second year, the equivalent of the 3rd year of high school in USA). I can't really relate this to the drinking culture of Lynbrook and the surrounding high schools though, because I didn't ever get to experience much while I attended, but as a country with a drinking age of 21, it seems like it's a lot harder to get access to it regularly while in high school. Thanks.

"Reality is just a crutch for people who can't handle drugs."

-Robin Williams

Honestly my whole life people have told me don't do drugs, don't drink. and especially since this is a sheltered community and there isn't much opportunity to drink, i guess it hasn't affected me that much. but the problem is, once you get in a situation, it's so much harder than you think. my friend once went to a church retreat and literally everyone started smoking weed around her. even if you know it's bad it's super hard to resist, if everyone does it. i was hanging out with my friends and they asked if they could try my beer. nowhere. out of the blue. peer pressure is more real than you think, and honestly it's so freaking difficult to resist. i swear one day i am going to break and drink a little bit whether i want to or not, but i will try not to. i guess my motivation is seeing stoners in the park and saying 'i don't want to turn out like that'.

"Kids are going to try drugs and alcohol; that's part of society."

-Jamie Lee Curtis

I like to think that the only reason I don't smoke is because I'm stronger than most people. I know that cigarettes would make my life so much easier by helping me relax and relieving some stress, but I just can't get myself to do it. I have access to all this and friends who will "support" me if I were to pick up on smoking, but I just don't do it. I say it's because my physical health is more important than my mental health, or because I haven't given up yet and I'm willing to fight through all the pressure my friends and family puts on me. However, I can't help but accept the truth that everything will be so much easier if I could just let go and smoke. If I really am stronger than others for not giving in and smoking, then maybe I could put myself to the test by smoking for a bit then quitting the addiction. That would be the ultimate mentality test and is something I look forward to trying in the future.

Eric L. Borchert, CAADAC

Eric is a well recognized lecturer about Criminal Addictive Thinking & Core Beliefs, as well as Prison Reform. He has worked as a drug counselor both in and out of prisons for over 6 years. He has worked as a transitional specialist for 3 years. This past summer he helped develop and facilitate a Spiritual Youth Summer Camp where he worked with kids on healthy communication skills. He is a loving husband and proud father.

To the students:

After reading all the posts, a couple of things stood out. First I was glad to see that people were willing to be honest in their posts. However I am concerned with how many people aren't taking the time to play the tape forward if you will. When you throw a rock into a pond it will make a splash and from there ripples go out. In life when we do things we tend to just look at the splash, not how our actions will affect our lives or those around us. For example, you go out with some friends to a party and one decides they want to start drinking alcohol and offers you some. Your decision will be the splash. So let's say that you decide to accept your friend's drink. Now alcohol affects the brain in many ways. One being that it starts to block the signals from the Amygdala (your emotional center) to the Prefrontal Cortex (the logic center) by damaging the hippocampus (the bridge between the Amygdala & the Prefrontal Cortex).

I sometimes refer to the Amygdala as your adolescent self and the Prefrontal Cortex as your adult self. So as you drink you start to shut down the logical and rational thinking part of your brain and start making more decisions off of pure emotions. So now things that you may not do when you're sober because you can think rationally, you start to feel okay with because you're now running off emotions. So now your friend asks you to do something that normally goes against your morals and ethics but because you're drinking and running off emotions, you give in because it sounds like fun (just like an adolescent.) These actions are the ripple effect of your decision to drink and just like ripples in a pond they can keep going out farther. That's one reason to try and play out the possible scenarios in your mind of what could possibly happen if you used drugs or alcohol. Then ask yourself are you comfortable with your life playing out like that?

A lot of times a teenager will do something under the influence, that once they get sober they are ashamed of or have a lot of guilt about. So they turn back to drugs or alcohol to hide from it and numb their feelings. One of the biggest problems with this is that their issues, being guilt or shame does not go away and when they get sober again they still have to deal with their guilt or shame. In a lot of situations the level of guilt or shame rises. Unfortunately we have a lack of healthy communication in today's society so it can make it hard at times to openly discuss situations. This can lead to denial.

Denial is a set of automatic and unconscious reactions that are activated when people are asked to think or talk about overwhelming and painful problems. In other words, the reaction we call denial suddenly happens without the individual planning or thinking about it. A trigger goes off and the automatic reaction called denial turns on.

Most individuals are not fully aware of exactly what they are thinking, feeling, or doing when they are in denial. By learning and being honest about our thinking, feelings, and actions when we can start looking for the triggers. By finding triggers that activate the denial, we can usually find the problems were trying to hide from. The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous (page 60, third edition) tells us it is unwise to expect "perfect" adherence to a recovery program: "We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection." Each of us will get stuck in our recovery process periodically. This is the most important message I have for you. Getting stuck in recovery is neither good nor bad; it simply is.

Now not everyone that drinks alcohol or uses drugs becomes an addict or an alcoholic. We also don't know at what point someone crosses over. It's like a cucumber that's being pickled. It doesn't automatically turn into a pickle and you can't see exactly when it does, yet once it does it can't change back. Your body chemistry is the same way when using drugs and alcohol.

I'm not going to say that if you take a drink of alcohol or used drugs that your life will automatically come crumbling down. I'm asking you to play the mental tape out and ask if this is what you really want to do. Also if you do something

that hurt someone while under the influence (the ripples again), make amends to them as long as doing so will not do them any more harm. Making amends helps both you and them and helps alleviate any guilt. I will leave you with this thought. If you think of yourself like a rechargeable battery and your mind the charging station, then are you putting in positive energy into your life or negative. Again thoughts + feelings = actions. So if your thoughts are negative, your actions will be negative along with the ripple effects of your decisions. So don't just follow people, use your own judgment and focus on living a positive and happy life that will bring positive rewards and pay value, not negative or chaos. No matter how much our ego or pride tries to say yea I meant to do that when we are in a chaotic situation. No one can control chaos. So let's bring balance into our lives.

To the parents:

One thing I see over and over again is concerned parents overreacting due to not being able to relate to their kids. There are four main styles of communication. Aggressive, Assertive, Passive, Passive Aggressive. Too often when a parent talks to their kids about things that they don't understand and are nervous about it, they use aggressive speech. They use words like you should, you need to, I'm telling you, instead of asking questions to get more information while using "I statements".

When you use "I" statements you're focusing and talking about yourself. You're speaking on what you are seeing, hearing, thinking, and feeling. So you may use a statement like, when I see you do _____ I feel _____. I hear you say _____ but I don't understand what you mean. It makes me think _____ do you mind explaining it to me a little better? These types of statements help open up healthy dialog.

Whether you are talking to your kids or coworkers if you start making statements like you need to or you should, they will more than likely get defensive. It is hard to get your needs met when individuals are being defensive. We want to find a place where we can find compromise and get everyone's needs met in communication. Now to get everyone's needs met in communication one must be willing to listen.

When you are actively listening you must keep your mind open and not start formulating solutions, questions, or comments in your mind while someone is talking. You can't be in your own head and fully listen. Also a lot of people give you fluff in the beginning of their conversation and then finally get to the meat of their issue. So if you are in your own head after the fluff you will miss out on what the other person is really trying to say.

Additional Resources

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:

Thelma McMillen Center – www.torrancememorial.org

South Bay Treatment Centers – www.recovery.org

24 Hour phone help with treatment – 1-855-574-9039

Recommended Reading:

Alcoholics Anonymous. Alcoholics Anonymous, (The Big Book Third Edition)

Black, Claudia. It will never happen to me.

Downing, Cynthia. The evolution of treatment from chemical dependence.

Gorski, Terence T. Denial Management.

Small, Jacquelyn. Becoming