

Change Your Attitude and Change Your Destiny...



It sounds so simple. It sounds so obvious. But for millions of people in recovery from alcohol and substance abuse, those words are a lifeline of hope. They were for Christopher Kennedy Lawford, who spoke about his life and his recovery recently at our Women's Council Summer Luncheon Program. More than 350 guests were there to hear his story of experience, strength and hope in recovery. The audience applauded as Chris announced he has been clean and sober for almost 19 years.

"My mother and father used to hang out at this bar called the Beachcomber. Right after I was born they went right from St. John's, with me, to that bar to meet some friends. They put me on the bar and ordered their favorite cocktails. I suppose they thought of it as a Malibu neonatal unit," he said. "From the moment my bassinette found its way onto that bar at the Beachcomber, I was toast."

Chris Lawford was given wealth, power and fame from the day he drew his first breath. A television camera, a flash bulb or a movie camera often highlighted the ordinary events of his life. Chris' father is the late actor Peter Lawford, one of the Rat Pack in the hey day of Hollywood. His mother is Patricia Kennedy, JFK's sister.

"I was 13 years old at the time," he said. "It was 1968 and I'd always said no, and then one day I said yes." That day was the beginning of Chris' addiction. He had taken LSD with some friends. For the next 18 years, Chris found himself addicted to alcohol, opiates, cocaine, then, heroin. Eventually, when doctors stopped writing prescriptions for him, he tried impersonating them and writing prescriptions himself. Chris moved all around the country landing in jails and hospitals.

"At some point I looked around from my drug-induced cloud and saw that my parents had divorced, then came the death of my uncles; believe me there was very little time for validating a kid who needed love and attention. Drugs made me feel fortified. Better living through better chemistry became my credo.

"In addition to inheriting all the specialness and privilege, we were also given a good dose of alcoholism. I was born into a family where alcoholism doesn't just run, it gallops," he said. "I've heard addiction described as similar to dancing with an 800-pound gorilla. You keep dancing until the gorilla stops. For all those 18 years, the gorilla never stopped. I was powerless not to take those drugs. They say alcoholics and addicts stay active in their disease because of those who enable them. I'm like most alcoholics," he said, "I don't like advice unless I agree

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Mission Statement

As women of today we want to improve the lives of women of tomorrow by increasing awareness and knowledge of mental health issues. We wish to remove the stigma of mental illness by educating the public. It is also our goal to empower women through increased awareness of mental health issues and encourage a holistic approach to mental health care which acknowledges everyone's physical, mental, and spiritual needs.

To Become A Member

For information and to receive a membership brochure, please call Linda Jones at 858-514-5153, or visit our website at www.vistahill.org.

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The Vista Hill Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit system dedicated to providing excellence in behavioral health care for the people of San Diego County.



Membership BENEFITS

All memberships are renewable on a yearly basis. Enjoy WC programs at a reduced rate and support Vista Hill. Join today!

\$50 Ruby Level

- 20% discount on tickets to Women's Council on Mental health programs and Q&A forums featuring nationally-recognized experts, authors and celebrities
- Subscription to bi-annual newsletter
- A distinctive and elegant goldtone membership pin

\$250 Sapphire Level

- Preferred seating at all programs
- Invitation to sponsor receptions with guest speakers
- All Ruby Level benefits

\$500 Emerald Level

- Emerald Member listing in Women's Council event programs
- Invitation to sponsor receptions with guest speakers
- 2 complimentary VIP tickets to programs
- Prominent VIP seating at all programs
- All Ruby Level benefits

\$1,000 Diamond Level

- Diamond Member listing in Women's Council event programs
- Invitation to you and your guests to sponsor receptions with guest speakers
- 4 complimentary VIP tickets to programs, with complimentary valet parking
- Prominent VIP seating at all programs
- All Ruby Level benefits

WOMEN'S COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH

Fear in the Workplace: The Bullying Boss

By Benedict Carey

Every working adult has known one—a boss who loves making subordinates squirm, whose moods radiate through the office, sending workers scurrying for cover, whose very voice causes stomach muscles to clench and pulses to quicken.

It is not long before dissatisfaction spreads, rivalries simmer, sycophants flourish. Normally self-confident professionals can dissolve into quivering bundles of neuroses.

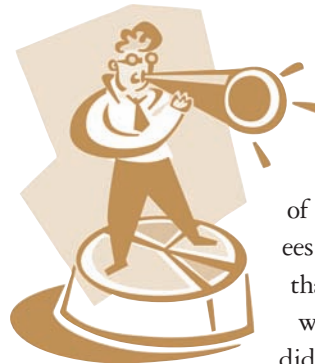
Researchers have long been interested in the bullies of the playground, exploring what drives them and what effects they have on their victims. Only recently have investigators turned their attention to the bullies of the workplace.

But adult bullies in positions of power are already dominant, and they are just as likely to pick on a strong subordinate as a weak one, said Dr. Gary Namie, director of the Workplace Bullying and Trauma Institute, an advocacy group based in Bellingham, Wash. Women, Dr. Namie said, are at least as likely as men to be the aggressors, and they are more likely to be targets.

In leadership positions that require the exercise of sheer violent will—on the football field or the battlefield—this approach can be successful: Consider Vince Lombardi and George Patton. But in an office or on a factory floor, different rules apply, and bullying usually has more to do with the boss's desires than with the employees' needs.

But most often, Dr. Hornstein found, managers bullied subordinates for the sheer pleasure of exercising power.

"It was a kind of low-grade sadism, that was the most common reason," he said. "They'd start on one person and then move on to someone else."



The mystifying thing is that workers may loathe a bullying boss and hate going to work each morning, but they still perform.

In April, results from a study of 173 randomly chosen employees in a wide range of work found that in situations where bosses were abusive, some employees did little or nothing extra, while others did a lot, partly covering for less

helpful peers.

"This is not what we expected," Dr. Tepper said. "And we speculate that one reason people keep doing extra in these abusive situations is to advance themselves at the expense of others. It makes them look good and the others look that much worse."

So tyrants spread misery, and from the outside it looks as if they are doing a fine job. It does not help matters, psychologists say, that people who enjoy abusing power frequently also revere it and are quick to offer that reverence to the even-more-powerful. Bullying bosses are often experts at "managing up."

One reason management researchers do not know how effective it is to take on a cruel boss directly is because so few employees do it.

Ambition, experts say, is the bully's most insidious deputy. Dr. Leigh Thompson, an organizational psychologist at Northwestern University, and Cameron P. Anderson, of the New York University business school, are studying the effects of varying management styles on the behavior of small groups.

"If the person in charge is high energy, aggressive, mean, the classic bully type," Dr. Thompson said, "then over time, that's the way the No. 2 person begins to act."

The Bullying Boss *Continued from page 2*

She added that this holds true no matter how low-key and compassionate the No. 2 person looks on personality tests outside the simulation. Working to please and impress a more powerful figure, the second-tier managers are temporarily transformed into carbon copies of the alpha dogs, and in the simulation, they tend to corner the money and cut out the lowest-level players.

It works the other way, as well. A top manager with a gentler nature softens the edges of more aggressive midlevel managers, Dr. Thompson said. The third player is entirely at the mercy of this dynamic.

"It looks like if there's a strong leader in the group, then that person's behavior is contagious," she said. And if that leader is nasty, "this moral disengagement spreads like a germ."

The most common form of resistance to a cruel manager remains the old-fashioned grouching session. Sharing the misery over lunch or a drink can make everyone feel a little better and signal the first step in jointly responding to the abuse. Sociologists who study dissent within large organizations like factories and hospitals find that informal kvetching sessions may evolve into effective resistance when workers are united, well connected with others in the organization and trust the company's high-ups to hear their case.

"We hypothesize, based on a preliminary read of our data, that employees in tight-knit informal groups may ironically be less likely to think about confronting their bosses," Dr. Morrill wrote in an e-mail message. "Instead, they may retreat to their informal groups to let off steam."

It is those who are not part of a tight group, who feel truly desperate and in danger of losing their jobs, who appear most likely to speak up, he said. Most others learn to perform an elaborate dance, trying to pre-

serve their status while being careful not to forfeit their sense of decency, all the while looking for an escape hatch.

One of the best strategies to manage a bully, Dr. Hornstein of Columbia has found in his research, is to watch for patterns in the tyrant's behavior.

Maybe he is bad on Mondays, maybe a little better on Fridays. Maybe she is kinder before lunch than after. If the Mets lost the day before, it is not a good day to ask for anything. If some types of assignments spook the person more than others, avoid them, if possible.

"Stick with the substance, not the process," he said, "and often it won't escalate."

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50th Anniversary Endowment Campaign

The Friends of Vista Hill 50th Anniversary Endowment campaign has been initiated to secure programs serving families struggling with developmental disabilities, substance abuse, and mental illness. The Lipinsky Family Foundation and the Parker Foundation have provided matching funds to help in the beginning stages and to encourage the community to get involved. Vista Hill is deeply grateful for this support and requests you call Ann Mound for further information (858) 514-5151.



RECOMMENDED READING

Fear and Other Uninvited Guests

Tackling the Anxiety, Fear, and Shame That Keep Us from Optimal Living and Loving
by Harriet Lerner, Ph.D.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time

(a novel from the viewpoint of an autistic young man)
by Mark Haddon

Mom, Can I Move Back In With You?

A Survival Guide for Parents of Twenty-Somethings
by Linda Perlman Gordon and Susan Morris Shaffer

Darkness Visible: A Memoir of Madness
by William Styron

with it. My family had finally realized the inevitable outcome of my chosen lifestyle and were just waiting for me to die.”

And then came that fateful day in Chris’ life. He had been trying to get sober for nine years. That day everything in his life changed. “February 17, 1986 was the coldest day ever recorded in the City of Boston. I awoke that morning with a dread like nothing I had ever felt before and it had nothing to do with winter. That state which I have to recognize as the greatest in all of human conditions . . . surrender.”

Chris asked his Aunt Joan to take him to an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting and the tide began to turn. He said, “a moment of grace which humbled me allowing me to surrender and find the key of willingness.” He works the AA program every day and talks about the courage it takes to change. “After a lifetime of trying to be what everyone want-

ed me to be I have found myself in all that I have come from,” he told the group.

Today, he says he wonders what he would have accomplished in the world if he’d made a different decision that day when he was 13. The audience sat silently as Chris spoke emotionally about his children and the precious relationship he has with them. He spoke about smoking marijuana with his dad and how “the best they could do” was to drink and do drugs together.

“Research has shown, if a child of an alcoholic doesn’t drink until at least 25 years old, they cut down their chances of getting the disease by 30%. If you drink less than five drinks per sitting, you reduce your chances of getting alcoholism by 25%.”* As the father of three, he now speaks freely about this disease and its genetic component. Today he has a daily and honest relationship with his kids and ex-wife and prides himself in

being a present, appropriate father who shows up and who does what he says he is going to do. He has learned how to be a loving and committed father.

“One of the greatest gifts of recovery is breaking the chain of alcoholism,” he said with a smile. “Anybody who has stayed sober for any length of time understands that recovery and sobriety is about learning to live life on life’s terms—and much of life is painful.”

At the end of his program you could have heard a pin drop. Then, the audience rose to their feet and applauded his recovery. Chris has just completed a book about his life, which will be published in 2005. Upon its availability, he has offered to autograph copies for us to sell at an upcoming Women’s Council on Mental Health luncheon.

*Ting-Kai Li, M.D., Fairbanks Hospital, Indianapolis, IN., 2004



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