

# PINE GROVE ALUMNI *Quarterly*

SUMMER 2011

## *In Beauty We Walk*



Dear Alumni and Friends of Pine Grove,

The latest Alumni Reunion at Gentle Path has come and gone and I'm still in awe of the heroes that took the time out of their busy lives to share with their brothers and sisters the miracles of recovery. They traveled from four countries and many family members came too, as we celebrated our new lives together. We even had a gluten-free anniversary celebration.

One of the important things to come out of the weekend was the number of family members who attended. Next year, we will host family breakout sessions, COSA meeting and more about healthy spiritual sexuality. Lauren says we'll have a golf tournament. One thing is for sure, as the group keeps growing, we keep needing bigger facilities. At my first GP reunion, we met in the group room at GP. The next year, we were at the conference rooms at Forrest General Hospital. Now, we are at the Hattiesburg Convention Center. I'm reminded of the scene from the movie "Jaws" when the sheriff, after seeing the shark for the first time says, "I think we're going to need a bigger boat."

Now, I want you to hear from the participants. They say it best. All I can add is please consider returning. We need you and you need to be a part of what we are doing. Come back to share your story. Come back to attend the reunion. Blessings await! Read on...

*"What an amazing and re-grounding experience. First and foremost the opportunity to spend roughly eight hours each way with my sponsor was an immeasurable benefit. The time literally flew by, much like the landscape. Secondly, to reunite with my GP peers, make new acquaintances and continue my recovery journey with the staff and workshops was of great benefit. I came back recharged, refocused, recentered. I look forward to future reunions and continued growth in my recovery."*

~ David R.

*"As with any meeting, sometimes getting there and back is where my recovery takes place. I drove from Atlanta with another GP alumnus. Honesty, it was the shortest six hour drive I have ever done. We talked the whole way and had a blast. My favorite part was when we stopped to look at the stars in rural Mississippi, and it turned out to be a swamp in the middle of frog mating season! The waves of frog calls were like a symphony. It was a great moment to share with a friend in recovery. The reunion itself was great as well. It's always great to be amongst people sharing a similar cause. My favorite parts were: hearing Dr. Carnes again, the meeting where we shared elements of our programs that benefitted us, the break-out sessions and seeing my GP therapist again. Unfortunately, I can get lost in big groups and hide and blend, so I appreciated the reunion as a chance to come together with a couple close friends and share my recovery journey with them."*

~ Tim H. GP 09

*"The GP Reunion for me was a great opportunity to share my successes and tribulations with other peers and hear about their own. The solidarity of the weekend through the fellowship reminded me that I am not alone on this journey of recovery. I am grateful to have attended the reunion and look forward to upcoming events."*

~ Michael H.

(continued inside)

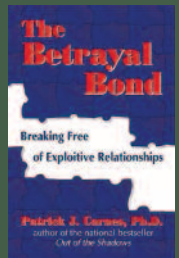
## **The Betrayal Bond: A Book Review**



In March, I attended the Breaking Free Intensive at Pine Grove. I am still surprised that I had the courage to dig deeper and gain more awareness in order to find a new level of peace – which is exactly what happened.

I told the facilitator that I felt like "an alien" on the last day. I had learned more in that week about myself, relationships and why people behave the way they do than I had in my whole life. She told me that it was good that I felt like "an alien" and that meant I had learned something – change was headed my way! My world is a different place, a safer place.

During the week, we were given a few books to add to my ever growing library of self help. One was *The Betrayal Bond* by Patrick Carnes, Ph.D. This was a completely new term for me, but somehow it "hit home" and made sense. Dr. Carnes explains that in situations of great intensity, there can sometimes be an exploitation of trust and power. Sadly, I could relate. This book will show you how to break free from the abusive cycle. It takes courage, honesty and a lot of effort, but what I learned is that if you are a victim of abuse this book can save your life and help you break free of the betrayal bond and move toward healing, freedom, peace and loving yourself.



Lauren White  
lwhite@forrestgeneral.com

## *Twenty-seven months ago...*

My hopes and dreams for my beautiful family were destroyed. No longer could I enable this disease called Sex Addiction – there was nowhere left for it to hide.

Suddenly, everything I thought WAS, WASN'T and my 25 year marriage lay shattered in a million pieces. I was full of anger, pain and confusion. How could someone I respected and loved unconditionally violate my trust so completely?

I was devastated and deeply disappointed. I never imagined emotional pain could hurt more than physical pain. It took all my strength and courage plus working that first step and attending many SAAnon meetings to finally surrender and admit that my life had become unmanageable. It took a long time to finally accept that I did NOT cause this addiction but more importantly I did not have the power to change or banish the IMPACT it was having on my life and my marriage.

Freeing myself from blame has been the first critical step on my road to recovery. I am focusing on being mindful, living in the present and practicing being still, kind and loving to myself first and then to my husband and children. I never let myself forget how easy it is to fall back into the ditch that is always two feet away. I now realize that after falling back in, crawling out of the ditch gets easier and easier as my recovery moves forward.

My marriage was a trusting relationship full of dishonesty and betrayal and now I have honesty in a marriage with NO TRUST. Not knowing who my husband would be when he returned from Gentle Path in December 2010 was terrifying for me.

We currently have seven months of sobriety! I see wonderful changes in my husband including humility, vulnerability and the ability to grow. Our communication skills and willingness to listen to each other improves steadily but slowly – we are taking baby steps towards re-building a partnership based on self care, honesty, trust, awareness and mutual respect. Our ultimate goal is to find the love and true intimacy we both crave and deserve.

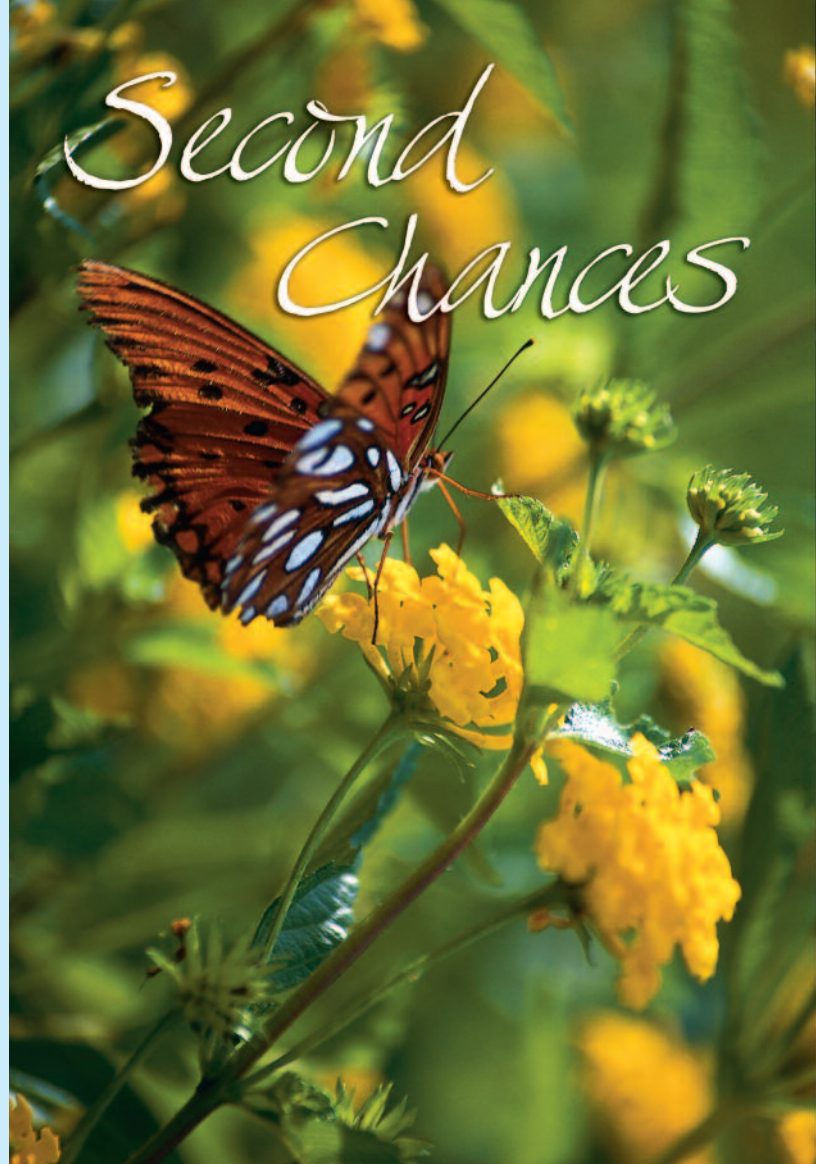
Currently, we're involved in weekly individual therapy, SA, SAAnon, RCA and Couples Imago Therapy. It's definitely exhausting but we knew this journey would not be easy. It works if you work it and so far it's working.

I have experienced the lowest of lows as a co-addict, but I have learned that feelings are NOT permanent, they're just feelings and they too will pass. I have accepted that I am powerless over all these feelings and triggers. I can't control their existence. I can't change that they are all around me, I can't make them go away, and I can't change the facts of my life or my husband's illness.

If I leave my feelings and triggers unattended, I then give them the power to take away my peace, and ultimately my sanity.

Believing in my Higher Power has helped me cope with my pain. He/She exists and can help me accept the things I cannot change and inspire the courage to change the things I can. My Higher Power doesn't want to see me suffer. He/She suffers watching me allowing myself to suffer.

So, I'm learning to take the time to stop and smell the roses, share with my friends and just SLOW DOWN and listen because



when I'm moving too fast, I can't hear the words or the message.

When my husband suggested we go to Gentle Path for the March 18, 2011 Alumni Weekend, my first reaction was oh God, really? For a brief moment the mention of Gentle Path represented only the pain and anguish I felt while he was a patient there and of course the unpleasant memories of disclosure during Family Week. But hearing the excitement in his voice, seeing the smile on his face as he spoke of having the opportunity to see the friends he says he's so grateful for, I was able to see the weekend in a positive light and became supportive of his suggestion.

Attending the Alumni Weekend was a wonderful learning experience and listening to the stories from the Alumni and patients was very insightful. Thank you for having the courage to stand up, share your experiences and take accountability. I have met many new, incredibly loving and supportive people on this journey and I look forward to the next Annual Alumni Weekend.

I recall these wise words: Courage Can't See Around Corners But Goes Around Them Anyway! My husband and I are a work in progress and our relationship is worth fighting for. Yes, he deserves a second chance, but so do I!

Thanks for being there and for listening.

Debbie

There are some really fantastic perks of working in the Alumni Department of Pine Grove but none is better than the occasional opportunity to take a 5th Step from one of the guys at Next Step. Lauren gets to do this too at the Woman's Center and while we don't share any details about the things we hear, we do share a wink and a nod when the spirit moves in that special way.

One such moving experience happened recently at Next Step at the end of our 5th Step sharing time and it touched me profoundly. The patient recounted how addiction had driven him into a hospital with acute alcohol poisoning. There he lay on a gurney as sick as he had ever been in his life. He was achy and feverish and lapsing in and out of consciousness. The world was spinning as hope faded away.

"Someone leaned over the bed," he said, "...and I was barely able to make out that it was

## Angels Among Us

a male nurse. I'll never forget the words he whispered. He said he was just like me and he was going to stay with me until I got better. He said he was going to become my friend and be there for me when I got out of the hospital."

Sure enough he did just that and from that moment on everything changed.

As it turned out the "angel" was a male nurse and a graduate of Next Step. He helped my new friend get admitted into Pine Grove and was checking on him periodically. Now, at discharge, he was waiting for him at their home group to help him stay sober and take him through the 12 steps as his sponsor.

I like to say "you can't make this stuff up," and it's true. An angel appears, hope is restored and another lost soul is brought back to life.

It doesn't get any better than this!

God Bless,  
Carver

# MILESTONES

## JULY

David M. 5 years  
Howie C. 3 years  
Katie S. 2 years

## AUGUST

Ben H. 5 years  
Dave B. 1 year  
David O. 2 years  
Frank C. 1 year  
John M. 3 years  
Wes K. 5 years

## SEPTEMBER

Ray P. 2 years

*We would like to celebrate your sobriety date! Please email your sobriety birthday and your name to Lauren at: [lwhite@forrestgeneral.com](mailto:lwhite@forrestgeneral.com).*

## In Beauty We Walk... *continued*

*"Wow, the GP Alumni weekend in a word: invigorating! The connection I have with GP Alumni is almost instant and profound and grounds me in a place of gratitude, love and joy. Highlights for me were: hearing other Alumni's triumphant stories of coming from shame to grace, seeing Deborah Schiller, hearing Dr. Patrick Carnes share his wisdom, Tammy's yoga class on Sunday and touring the GP grounds. I'll be at the next reunion for sure!"*

~ JP R., GP/PEP Summer 2009

*"This was my second reunion and it rocked just like the first one. A big thank you to Carver and Lauren for a great reunion. I really enjoyed: the Memorial Service at the Spiritual Grounds; seeing more fellow alumni than last year (like twice as many); and the yoga option with Tammy – her studio is just awesome. Any of you out there considering next year's reunion should definitely get your ducks lined up. I hear there are going to be recreational options the first day, including golf (excellent!). So, as I said at the reunion, here's to all of my GP brothers and sisters – may the Force be with you, always!"*

~ Wes P., May 2009

*"Thank you and the rest of the staff for your efforts to make reunions a **joint experience** for the alumni and existing patients. I am grateful for multiple reasons.*

- 1) *It gives me a chance to revisit the place where I began my recovery.*
- 2) *I get a chance to see old peers and put faces to the voices I have been hearing on the telephone meetings. This is powerful for me because it deepens my contact with an existing network of people and permits me*

*to add to my pool of peers. I no longer view this as seeing my peers from in-patient treatment, but an opportunity to see the peers whom I have gotten to know on my telephone meetings and at the reunions.*

- 3) *I enjoy meeting and conversing with the patients in the process, because it reminds me of who I was and how I got to GP. I hear questions that I was asking while starting the process.*
- 4) *I appreciate the programs provided for us to help solidify our recovery and for us to look at new information.*
- 5) *It is helpful for me to see and listen to Dr. Carnes speak. He inspires me to continue digging deeper and not give up on the recovery process. I can call up what we said or what I felt during the experience when I am wavering in my recovery and I do waiver at times.*
- 6) *I appreciate seeing that a competent staff has been hired to follow-up and develop programs for those of us who have gone through the program as well as those who are going through it right now.*
- 7) *My reasons are selfish. I want to keep my recovery and the various programs and workshops are helping me to stay in recovery. I don't apologize for wanting this for me. I deserve a good healthy life as much as any other individual."*

~ George B.

God Bless,  
Carver Brown, Alumni Coordinator

*In our next issue: Coverage of June's Pine Grove Reunion*

# The Gentle Path Aura

I write this as a tribute to one of our peers who passed away suddenly in late April. Adam M. came into my life a little more than a year ago as I returned home from my time in Hattiesburg. I had challenged myself to do 90 in 90, and just walked in cold to an SAA meeting (the only one held in St. Louis). As I shared about my experiences down South, I noticed a man nodding and smiling as he listened. At the end of the meeting, Adam introduced himself to me, and said he had also been through the GP program. We chatted briefly that night, and always said hello or caught up every meeting thereafter. Each time he shared at our meetings, he brought a depth of understanding and incredible honesty about his struggles in recovery. It was inspirational for us all. Unfortunately, that was the extent of my rela-

tionship with Adam. Many other people in the recovery community in St. Louis cherished his friendship and support, as did I. Adam had incredible serenity and understanding of the steps for recovery. I know he sponsored several folks in our group, and is greatly missed by everyone. In particular, I miss seeing the aura that lit up his personality – I call it the “GP aura.” It is a special gift that we share, brothers and sisters, and we should cherish it along with everything else in our lives. Shine your GP aura on everyone you meet.

Know peace.

Wayne  
GP Alum, January – March, 2010

## Montgomery joins Gentle Path staff



James C. “Jes” Montgomery, MD has joined the staff of Gentle Path.

Montgomery is a Psychiatrist, certified in Addiction Medicine by ASAM and a Diplomate of the

American Board of Addiction Medicine. A native of South Louisiana, he completed the psychiatry residency at LSU Medical Center in New Orleans.

He received his certification in Addiction Medicine by the American Society on Addiction Medicine (ASAM) in 1987. As a psychiatrist, he is Board Certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology and has been a Certified Group Psychotherapist. He was an attending Physician with the Ross Institute Trauma Program (1995-1999) and the Unit Director for the Pride Program of Dallas, specializing in the treatment of addictive and psychiatric disorders for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered population (1999-2003). He is a past member of the Board of Directors of the National Council on Sexual Addiction (NCSAC), now called the Society for the Advancement of Sexual Health (SASH) and is currently serving as an Advisor to the Board.

He is the former Medical Director and Director of the Professionals Program at Sante Center for Healing. In 2009, he was awarded the Carnes Award by SASH for “outstanding work in the field of sexual addiction and compulsivity” and the NALGAP President’s Award.

Prior to entering psychiatry, he practiced Family Medicine and Addiction Medicine in Opelousas and Lafayette, Louisiana. He has presented and published in the areas of pharmacology in addictions, Boundaries and ethics, sexuality, sexual trauma and sexual addiction, sexuality and spirituality and LGBT/sexual minority issues.

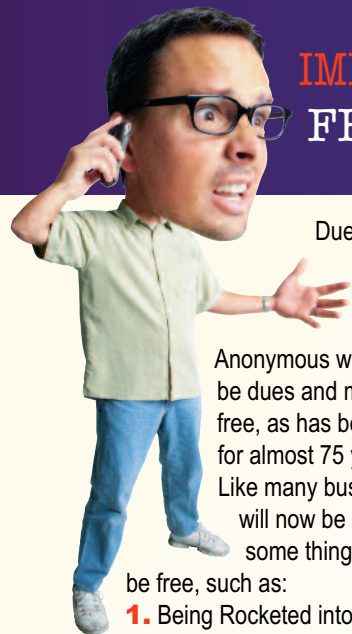
## Sellers named Spiritual Coordinator



Pine Grove is pleased to welcome David Sellers on board as Spiritual Coordinator. Sellers served as associate pastor at Parkway Heights from 2005-2011. He’s an ordained United

Methodist pastor and is a member of the Order of St. Luke. He has over 20 years of experience in ministry as a youth director, pastor and chaplain. He received his M.Div. from Emory University.

## IMPORTANT MESSAGE: FROM AA WORLD SERVICES



Due to the downturn in the economy, Alcoholics

Anonymous will NO LONGER be dues and membership free, as has been the case for almost 75 years.

Like many businesses, AA will now be charging for some things that used to be free, such as:

1. Being Rocketed into the 4th Dimension – \$49.99 per trip, fuel surcharge applies, extra baggage NOT included. 5th Dimension trips optional; additional fee applies. See your sponsor for details.
2. Sponsorship – was free, NOW \$9.99 per month, with 4 visits/20 phone calls per month free, after that, \$2.00 each. Surcharge for calls after midnight: \$1.50 per call.
3. Membership Dues – now \$29.99/month, 10% discount for a 1-year plan.
4. Seating Charges – Each seat now \$1.00 per meeting, with a 20% discount for the 90-in-90 plan.
5. Pink Cloud – was free, NOW \$14.99 per cloud, with a \$5.00 per event environmental cleanup fee. These are the NEW ozone-free Pink Clouds that do NOT add to global warming.
6. Coffee – \$1.50 per cup, with a 10% discount for 5 or more cups.
7. Hugs – will now be \$2.50 each.

8. Conscious Contact with God – now \$9.99/month, with the first 450 minutes free, then 10 cents/minute over 450. New Double your Minutes for Life plan is a low \$49.99 one time charge. Holidays and weekends extra; see rate schedule, as God is VERY busy.
9. Accidental cell phone call during meeting – charge now set at \$25.00 per incident. Intentional calls: \$75.00.
10. I’ve been “Thinking” fees to now be \$3.00 each, with a Relapse Reentry Fee of only \$99.99 (each occurrence), if you’re lucky enough to make it back into the rooms. Fees will be used to purchase additional white chips.

*Please note: Void where prohibited by law.*

AA reserves the right to change none, all or some of these rates at anytime, with no notice to you. If you need a notice of change in rates, a written request may be sent to headquarters in New York. A \$10.00 fee applies.

**NOTE:** The editor does not accept responsibility for your reaction to this article. If you have a problem with it, please consult your sponsor (normal charges apply).

*Kinda makes you think twice about how lucky we are that they decided to have the 8th tradition and not professionalize AA. Imagine having to pay for a professional sponsor. We probably have the only disease whose cure has not been commercialized. Makes us special and lucky. But, it's so easy to think that the cure isn't worth it's weight in gold because we don't have to pay big bucks for it!*



BELL TOWERS

The next phase of the Pine Grove Spiritual Grounds project is the Bell Tower. Three Bells represent the first three steps. Ringing of the bells will give patients a tangible way to express their conviction at the completion of each of these profound decisions. After the step work is completed, the patient will be able to go to the tower and chime their way to freedom allowing the community to rejoice alongside.

Perhaps you would like to contribute to this wonderful project and place your name along side other donors. Look for just such an opportunity in upcoming correspondence and let freedom ring!

For more information or to receive a Foundation brochure and application for giving, contact Susan Slaughter, Director of Business Development for Pine Grove at 601.288.4802 or [sslaughter@forrestgeneral.com](mailto:sslaughter@forrestgeneral.com).

[www.pinegrovetreatment.com](http://www.pinegrovetreatment.com)

## Pine Grove Plans Bell Tower as Phase III of Spiritual Grounds

The Forrest General Healthcare Foundation has kicked off its 2011 Campaign.

The Foundation supports three notable Forrest General Projects: Pine Grove Spiritual Grounds, NICU and Hospice.

Pine Grove is pleased that the Foundation supports our Spiritual Grounds project. The Spiritual Grounds includes seven phases of design: Entrance/Sculpture, Meditation Area, Labyrinth, Chapel, Bell Tower, Water Feature and

Fire Pit. Phase I and II have been installed in the last three years. These include the Paul McMullan Plaza, also known as the entry, and the Meditation



CHAPEL

area, funded by our employees in 2010.

Pine Grove is currently working towards securing funds for the development of Phase III, the Bell Tower. The Bell Tower is a magnificent structure that will include three distinct German-made bells encased in a steel tower. The Tower will include steps for participants to experience the bells close up, as well as ring the bells during celebrations. Representing the first three steps in the 12-Steps, the bells symbolize recovery and celebration.

The Bell Tower area will also include a plaza that will eventually lead to the entrance of a chapel.



**Come visit Pine Grove staff at these conferences!**

**July 15-19**

ACPE  
Boston, MA  
Allison Sutton, attending

**July 24-27**

LASACT  
Baton Rouge, LA  
Allison Sutton, attending  
<http://www.lasact.org/>

**July 25-27**

ATCPC  
Santa Barbara, CA  
Debbie Sanford, RN, MS, MBA  
Ruth Ann Rigby, attending  
<http://www.newdirectionsforwomen.org>

**July 28-30**

MAAP  
Whitfield  
Kim Jarrell  
<http://msaap.net/>

**September 9-12**

Cape Cod Symposium  
Hyannis, MA  
Jes Montgomery, MD, Speaker

**September 17-21**

NCAD  
San Diego, CA  
Allison Sutton, attending

**September 26-28**

Mobile Drug Education  
Mobile, AL  
Kim Jarrell  
Phillip Hemphill, Ph.D., LCSW  
Susan Campling, RN, Psy.D.  
Pine Grove Books and Gifts

**September 27-30**

Power, Fame and Recovery  
The Breakers, Palm Beach, FL  
Patrick Carnes, Ph.D., CAS  
Debbie Sanford, RN, MS, MBA  
Ruth Ann Rigby, attending

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## MEETINGS

**Kentucky Alumni Meeting**  
**Second Monday of every month**  
6 p.m. • 426 Codell Drive, Suite 1  
Lexington, KY  
John B. • 859-229-7080

*Back to Basics* Workshop coming to a city near you. For more information, contact Carver • 601-297-6639

**September 23-24**

Back to the Basics  
The Morton Center, Louisville, KY  
Carver Brown, presenting  
<http://www.themortoncenter.org/>

If you are from the following areas, please contact your alumni leader and get involved in your local chapter. You can make a difference.

**Hattiesburg, MS**

Wes P. • 601-916-3918

**Lexington, KY**

John B. • 859-229-7080

**Jackson, MS**

Anthony C. • 601-259-0092

**Tupelo, MS**

Margaret P. • 662-377-3530 or  
662-840-7115

**Gulf Coast Area, MS**

Allen J. • 228-860-0909

## INTENSIVE WORKSHOPS

**July 18-22**

Facing the Shadow  
Call 1-888-574-HOPE

**July 25-29**

Breaking Free  
Call 1-888-574-HOPE

**August 8-12**

Mending a Shattered Heart  
Call 1-888-574-HOPE

**August 22-26**

Breaking Free: Help for Co-dependency  
Call 1-888-574-HOPE

**September 5-9**

Displaced Hunger  
Call 1-888-574-HOPE

**September 12-16**

Facing the Shadow for Men  
Call 1-888-574-HOPE

**September 26-30**

Breaking Free: Help for Co-dependency  
Call 1-888-574-HOPE

**September 30-October 3**

SASH  
San Diego, CA  
Allison Sutton, attending  
<http://www.sash.net>

**October 13-15**

NEDA  
Los Angeles, CA  
Cathy Reto, Ph.D., Speaker

**October 26-29**

EAPA  
Denver, CO  
Allison Sutton, attending

**November 6-10**

ACPE  
Scottsdale, AZ  
Allison Sutton, attending



Follow Pine Grove events and activities on our blog, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.  
*Visit [www.pinegrovetreatment.com](http://www.pinegrovetreatment.com) for links*

Follow "Into the Light"  
a GP Alumnus Spouse's Blog at:  
[www.sexaddicttherapist.com](http://www.sexaddicttherapist.com)