LOVING LIVING

One bright morning I found myself gazing at the rising sun over the East Maui sea. I wasn’t fully awake, likely still in a dream state. It was both real and unreal, observing the lighting of a new day... knowing that every day, this vibrant star, would do it again and again and again. I was truly loving living.

Everyone deserves a bright new day

Think about how easy it is to judge others, how quickly we make assumptions, how carelessly we dismiss those who are seemingly “no good.” While we are taught to love and care for others, we are also taught to judge wisely, to choose our friends carefully, and to create distance between ourselves and those who can cause us harm; “kapu.” While we “aloha” everyone, we are also cautious to protect ourselves. These are not contradictory but essential to survival.

An interesting term that’s been going around is “compassion fatigue.” It is used to describe the endless parade of terrible situations one repeatedly encounters, every day, sometimes just by watching the news. There are so many unfortunate and destitute souls living under conditions that are unimaginable. The pain of seeing people in pain is fatiguing. Often we see folks arrested, young and old, for destructive behaviors such as thievery, fraud, kidnapping, and worse ...ruining their lives and the lives of others. There is no shortage of people who fall short in this world... including even ourselves. The question is,

Can we indeed be both compassionate and fatigued of being compassionate at the same time?

Yes, we can.

“I’ve made a personal decision to demonstrate giving love in my everyday affairs in five basic areas that every human needs - to be valued, to be respected, to be affirmed, to be touched and to be given attention. There is a genuine NEED TO FEEL (NTF) accepted, NTF important, NTF appreciated, NTF recognized, NTF connected, NTF included and NTF secure.”

Ben Nu - Board member, musician, friend, hero, survivor, transforming human...
“It surprises many of us to think that a hero is not a self-contained individual. That he or she was not born whole and fully formed, above the influence of those around them. Above the need for outside influences. The thought that a hero might be like us - - - [simply human] may be troubling to us.”  Psychology Today

Let’s give thought to our own “compassion heroes” and their potential for “compassion fatigue” …

There is a point when even a strong leader needs to rely on others to help carry the load. The best leaders will seek that help, take that time out, or simply break. It’s important to know how strong and how weak we are, to understand where we are limitless and where we are limited, and to know when we need to reach out for help and where to get that help. When it comes to heroes, (Leaders, Teachers, First Responders, Counselors…etc.) we need to see them as fallible, and to take up that cape once in a while, and be that hero to our heroes.

The same way we experience compassion fatigue our heroes can also become compassion fatigued… this is also known as “burn out.” We need to hold each other up during those not-so-heroic times… to recognize the need to be compassionate, and still to judge them wisely.

Right living provides us with the ability to judge wisely, to seek truth without complacency, and to help others while not forgetting about our own wellness.

“If you love them, tell them.” Never leave home or end the call without saying those three words, “I love you”. You will feel good for saying it, and the person receiving the message will feel even better.”  Steven Curran, Current Board President, Veteran, husband, grandfather, friend, hero, transforming human…
A hero is nothing but a person doing the right thing; we ought to all be heroes.

Girls are heroes too, and sometimes even tougher.

WHAT’S HAPPENING ?!

We are happy to introduce our new Clinical Supervisor, Rob Cantrell, MS, MBA, CSAC. Rob has a Masters in Addiction Studies and many years working as a Counselor for the Hazelden/Betty Ford Foundation. He is focused on implementing the Matrix Model into our Treatment programs, an evidence-based curriculum; designed specifically to address the needs of individuals with Stimulant Abuse Disorders (which includes addiction to ice). We are fortunate to have him here, as a highly skilled Clinician, and inspiring role model.

One of the beautiful things about sobriety is there are valuable lessons to be learned at every stage, whether you are in a treatment program or celebrating your 20th anniversary of being sober. The process begins with recognizing we have value, and we are not the sum total of our mistakes. I believe the source of every addiction without exception is pain. Maybe it’s a pain of unresolved childhood sexual abuse, or abandonment or an underlying mental health issue. Every person's pain is different, so we reach for drugs, alcohol, food, sex, etc., for relief. Sadly, it is the remedy that kills us as we attempt to make life livable.

Removing a substance of abuse from a person's life will end dependency. It will not address the emotional, spiritual, or mental anguish created by the initial problem. The pain remains. As a result, a person is trapped in a cycle of relapse and recovery.

Currently, I’m working with individuals who after enduring years of abuse, addiction, rejection, shame, and self-loathing are discovering emotional sobriety. Each is developing skills to confront and cope with the negative emotions that were ignored during active addiction. They are learning, one day at a time, they have value. That is the greatest success of all.

Robert Cantrell, Addictions Counselor, survivor, hero, transforming human...

We are thrilled to have Ramona Oliveira, “Mona” working with ‘Ohana Makamae again. Having retired from the National Parks, she is now providing resources to our clients as Case Manager, and assisting with our treatment programs, as she has in the past.

Mona has been part of ‘Ohana client, and then as a Counselor mission. We can always count on Mona, she is true to her truths.

We welcome Deborah Carr (Lola), Our newest Board Member. We’re pleased that she chosen to volunteer for the benefit of the East Maui community.
Some of the services ‘Ohana Makamae provides

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To read full testimonials, or to donate to our non-profit, please visit us at www.ohanamakamae.org

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WE COULD NOT HAVE DONE IT WITHOUT YOU!

Some of the services ‘Ohana Makamae provides