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## Peer Support Crucial for “The Young and the Restless”

BY CRAIG TAYLOR

In a small room in West Hollywood, California, 18 young men have gathered, brought together by the recent discovery that life as they know it has irrevocably changed. Several have known for months, but one in particular has walked in for the first time directly from a testing center, tears in his eyes. All have been recently diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. During the course of the next two hours, all of the fears, hope and raw emotion that accompanies an HIV+ diagnosis will be shared by the group in this small room.

By the end of the group session, the new member smiles and laughs for the first time, with some semblance of hope and possibly a new family of friends who offer the care and support critically needed by an individual receiving an HIV+ diagnosis. This kind of interaction is definitive of the mission of Being Alive which states, “...a peer-driven agency for people living with HIV/AIDS specializing in supportive services, education, wellness, and self-empowerment.” For over 23 years, Being Alive has been committed to maintaining the integrity of that mission. After attending this recently developed support group, “The Young and the Restless,” it becomes apparent just how important those two words “peer-driven” are to our mission statement and to daily interaction at Being Alive. The name refers to the ages of the members (ages 18–34), and to the struggle of coping with a new diagnosis. The surge in the population of younger people infected with HIV/AIDS and requesting services at Being Alive has been a call to action for the agency.

In general, concept and interventions of peer support have been defined by the relationship between people who have like experiences, and therefore can better relate and offer authentic empathy and validation. Consequentially, people with similar life experiences may offer practical advice and support that “clinical professionals” may have limited awareness to offer. This unique vantage point is critical in helping the individual or group regain a sense of community when they have otherwise felt disconnected or totally isolated by the experience of receiving a positive diagnosis. The power that comes from this “peer-driven” component is strengthened among those receiving the services of any one of our support groups.

While our support groups have always been diverse and open to HIV+ men and women of all ages, the dramatic increase in the number of younger people, in particular men who have sex with men (MSM) newly diagnosed with HIV/AIDS has forced us to look at a different dynamic, and recognize that a true “peer” relationship might be better served by a cohort of people aged 18–34, who share this unique experience unexplored at this stage of the epidemic.

Recent statistics from the Centers for Disease Control (August 2009) indicate that MSM account for nearly half of more than one million people living with HIV in the US, and more than half of all new HIV infections in the US each year. Of these new infections, statistics also reveal those infected as younger, particularly young black and Hispanic MSM, ages 13–29. In a study of MSM in

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

An invitation to  
**Straight From  
The Heart**

A Very Special Evening for  
HIV+ Heterosexual Men and Women  
Saturday February 13, 2010

**Time: 5:30pm to 11:00pm**  
**Place: Doubletree Guest Suites Santa Monica**  
1707 Fourth Street  
Santa Monica, CA 90401-3310  
**Ballroom Level**

This unique event is designed specifically for the heterosexual HIV+ community from all over southern California and beyond. The evening begins with dinner and great educational presentations, followed by entertainment including a hot lingerie fashion show and dancing into the night.

This event is about affirming ourselves and uplifting our HIV+ heterosexual community.

**This event is FREE! And is part of an entire weekend of special activities. For more information visit:**

[www.threepozgals.net](http://www.threepozgals.net)

**PLEASE RSVP!!!!**  
By email to [threepozgals@yahoo.com](mailto:threepozgals@yahoo.com)  
or call Shelley (818) 231-0834 or Cathy (323) 646-4575  
or Precious (310) 279-9288

Seating is limited



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#### NEWSLETTER

*In memory of Fred Clark, Gilbert Cornilliet,  
Eric Estrada, Mark Allen-Smith, Brian Stott,  
and Cary Alexander*

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**Being  
Alive**

Ceramics • Yoga  
Restorative Yoga

#### Wellness Center

Chiropractic • Acupuncture  
Healing Touch • Hypnotherapy  
Psychotherapy

BY DAVID CRAIG

On the eve of the millennium, while others prepared for a global meltdown as a result of Y2K, I had my own personal catastrophe. I got HIV. In truth, it may have been Halloween night or Christmas Eve. Happy New Year, Trick or Treat or a gift from Santa. Who cares? It's all twisted.

The path that led to my conversion started arguably from the minute I had sex with a man. But since this is a short story, let's just start with my last boyfriend.

He was what I call my "opposite boyfriend", the one you date because he's not like you at all. He was a model, tall, masculine, and athletic. That's not me. In fact, I can best be described as a neurotic, over-achieving intellectual with a barbed wit and a nice smile. What I had to offer him remains a mystery. Nonetheless, he nurtured and indulged me and desperately tried to get me to open up to his New Age views on the world but my spirit was unwilling and my brain too evolved. It was not meant to be. Looking back, I realize that our relationship was a potent mix of love and self-hate...in equal measure.

A year into our relationship, I landed the dream job. When I should have ended the relationship, I chose to move in with him instead and we made it another year. This was motivated less by true love than our mutual addiction to the circuit party lifestyle. Ending the relationship would also involve a kind of excommunication from the circuit party scene, that group of upscale, middle class, post-AIDS cocktail gaggle of gay men in the 1990s that spent their free time living out their missed adolescence on dance floors across the nation. These events, former fund-raisers turned hedonistic galas, were excuses to party and pretend the years of the AIDS crisis had never happened. They had themes like the White Party, the Morning Party, the Black and Blue Ball, and on and on. But, after awhile, there was no party or purpose to it all except finding the next high.

By the end of our second year, I realized I had had enough of circuit queens and what I called their "ex-piphanies", wonderful thoughts while high on ecstasy extolling their newfound purpose in life that would fade away by Monday just like their buzz. But the BF was not ready to end the party. After a weekend that lasted three

days and no nights, I barely made the morning ferry to work that Monday. By suicide Tuesday, when the serotonin levels dipped to subhuman levels, I snapped like a dog chained to a fence. "What the fuck do you do all day," I asked. He just looked at me with a mix of puppy dog confusion and guilt. That night I moved to the couch. Within two weeks, I was gone.

I had lucked into a small single in the basement of a brownstone on one of the most beautiful streets in the Village. Next door, there was a renowned yoga studio, though I was the least likely person to ever walk in there. Across the street was the new Gay and Lesbian Center under renovation. And upstairs was the happy gay couple I thought I would have become. But that was a thought I had back in my 20s and before AIDS had taken the love of my life.

However, the start of my new life came with ominous warnings. The first week, I dreamt I was water skiing in the small creek in my backyard where I grew up. Coming to the surface, I slowly began to realize that my apartment had flooded. My dog and I stepped into two inches of water, dirt and grim, cascading down four flights from the roof of the brownstone. A few weeks later, while sitting in my bed, I looked up just at the ceiling light fell and shattered into a million pieces across my floor. The only thing missing was the haunting sound of a ghost warning me to "get out now!"

I found myself alone and bewildered how I got there. Despite a fulltime job and going to grad school in the evenings, there was simply too much time to fill and too few friends to fill it. I was introduced to something called "chat rooms" on AOL. This would lead to a new lifestyle, equally as unfulfilling and indulgent as the club scene. That is, if you consider having e-conversations with imaginary strangers for hours on end a lifestyle. For the moment, at least, I eliminated the drugs though not the depression.

Finally, I was invited to a Halloween party, which I considered my grand return to social life after two years down the circuit rabbit hole. How better than a masquerade ball? My friend brought along his ex, a sexy, confident marketing exec who, among his other qualities like be-

ing funny and smart, was interested in me. The latter usually was all that was required to get me into bed...or a backseat, hallway, lobby or alley.

When it comes to matters of sexual interest, I confess I am a bit of a rube. My patented line is I'm not even sure if they are interested...even when they're giving me head. Nevertheless, he wound up back at my apartment and in my bed. I'm fairly certain alcohol was involved. Maybe there were drugs. I can't recall.

But I can vividly recall his comment while we were fucking without a condom. "I'm surprised. I really wasn't expecting this." I also recall thinking, that's an odd thing to say. Not "you're hot" or "what a fine ass" or "will you marry me and I'll move back to New York and take care of you forever." In fact, I convinced myself that he was surprised because he had not found me attractive and yet here he was fucking me. Call it what you will, but low self-esteem can sure be a kick in the ass. Still, it took me years to realize that what he was trying to say was, he is positive and therefore I must be too.

How could this have happened to me? After all, I had managed to be safe for 17 years, drunk or sober. I had been with a lover for five years who died of AIDS without getting infected. Another boyfriend and I indulged in unsafe sex, but only after we both had tested negative for six consecutive months. That was the pact you made back then, a vow that said we trusted one another. This is what passed for romance and intimacy: The desire not to infect your partner. Guess you won't see that on a Hallmark card.

And yet, here was a stranger fucking me with his toxic sperm. One might assume "there's no way someone who knows they are positive is having unsafe sex. In a game of Russian roulette, no one hands you a loaded gun, do they?" Turns out they would and he did.

In fairness, my lapse in judgment stemmed from ignorance. While I was in my circuit hole with my lover, the phenomenon of barebacking—meaning unsafe sex—had become a fetish in the gay community. Once the lifesaving AIDS cocktail came out in 1996, people who were positive fucked others without protection or even a declaration, because they assumed you were positive as well. But even if their assumption

five major US cities, one in four MSM participating in the study was infected, and of those infected, about half were unaware of their HIV status. Even more critical, nearly 80% of infected young MSM (ages 18–24) were unaware that they were infected. This same study showed that most of the new infections among white MSM occur among those aged 30–39, followed by those aged 40–49. This provides further evidence of the surging population of younger people who will need peer support.

The LA County Department of Public Health HIV/AIDS surveillance summary (July 2008), estimated the total population living with AIDS as 56,500. Of these cumulative AIDS numbers, 43% were between the ages of 30–39, 27% were ages 40–49, 16% were ages 20–29, 9% were 50–59, 3% were 60 and older and 1% were between the ages of 13–19. This trend made it critical for Being Alive to focus more attention on the growing number of younger people coming through the doors in need of these supportive services not being provided elsewhere.

For some MSM, social and economic factors, including homophobia, stigma, and lack of access to health care may increase risk behaviors or create a barrier to receiving HIV prevention services.

Substance abuse can increase risk for HIV transmission through risky behaviors while under the influence. Among young MSM in particular, complacency about HIV may play a major role in HIV risk, since these men did not personally experience the severity of the early AIDS epidemic. The young guy with a meth problem and an HIV+ diagnosis is not thinking about the same issues as a 50-year-old who feels like his life has “passed him by.” This is where the support group becomes ever more critical. Additional challenges for many MSM include maintaining consistently safe behaviors over time, underestimating personal risk, and the false belief that due to treatment advances, HIV is no longer a serious health threat. It is important to reach each generation of MSM and develop programs and an infrastructure of support that may help them remain uninfected throughout the course of their lives. At the same time, the fast-growing and underserved population demands that AIDS service organizations provide a safe haven for those who are living with HIV/AIDS to cope with this diagnosis. At Being Alive,

we have taken great strides to address this gap in services and support.

“The Young and the Restless” support group, which began in February 2007 with six people, continues to grow each week with over 100 people in attendance since its inception, and approximately 50 active members. It is co-facilitated by two trained peer support facilitators who are also HIV+, and bring an effective combination of knowledge, life-experience, and youthful exuberance to keep it interesting and relevant to a younger demographic. Being Alive along with the facilitators, formed a model to respond to the need for additional skills and resources required to address this group ages 18–34, and living with HIV/AIDS.

The critical ingredients of a successful peer support model require both structural and process standards. Structural standards define the basic rules of the group and include principles like voluntary participation, non-hierarchical, and an informal setting with flexibility, while process standards are the beliefs and values of the group. Two additional ingredients are the peer principle and the helper principle. These reinforce the idea that involvement with someone as an equal is also self-healing. Advocacy; personal choice and decision-making opportunities; skill development; positive risk-taking; reciprocity; community building; self-help and empowerment are outcomes of this model that Being Alive has developed. (Campbell 2004, Clay 2004)

To achieve this with “the Young and the Restless”, facilitators were forced to ask several questions: “What is it that we need to offer in order to help these people see things in a new way?”, “What kinds of relationships build community?” and finally, “what are the skills in a peer support relationship that are uniquely beneficial to an HIV+ individual and ultimately lead to a different recovery outcome?” It was necessary as peers living with HIV to look at treatments, relationships, disclosure, self-confidence, friendships, sexuality and a host of other issues directly related to living with HIV/AIDS. Safety was a primary concern, and from the beginning the support group committed to some ground rules that they established together. The idea that this was an emotionally safe place to share and that all members were committed to being assertive, yet respectful of other’s ideas was important to them.

Some of the objectives that facilitators incorporate are HIV education, including a once

a month “dinner with a doc” where they have a Q&A with an HIV/AIDS specialist; communication tools and skill-building exercises such as role play on many topics (e.g., “assertiveness vs. aggressiveness”), art therapy, life-coaching, career counseling, and other empowerment building exercises. The goal is to keep it fun and interesting for this young and newly emerging population. Facilitators are there to deal with the suffering and devastation that comes from an HIV+ diagnosis, however, emphasis is placed on “the positive” and participants are encouraged to look forward, focused on solutions. Rather than allow the diagnosis to create obstacles to their growth, their approach is “you have your whole life ahead of you, and here are your big brothers who have been through it to make it easier for you to move forward in your life.” This support and information is rarely gleaned from a medical provider or test counselor upon initial diagnosis. The unique psychological care and support that HIV+ peers can offer is invaluable, particularly in communities where stigma and discrimination are still the primary barriers to care, and contributors to self-destructive behavior.

The recent cuts to the California state budget in the areas of prevention and peer education make the sustainability of peer education programs unpredictable. The priority for the use of HIV funds has shifted to primary care and direct medical services. Peer education is considered by some as a cost-effective program strategy because it often utilizes trained and unpaid staff as facilitators who are dedicated to its results. The costs of implementing quality peer education and support may be high due to the ongoing need for funds to adequately train, support, supervise, and compensate peer educators and provide them with resource materials, venue, and marketing for the programs. As agencies that offer peer support services dwindle in a challenging economy, an emphasis must be placed on the impact, benefit, and cost-effectiveness of these programs on the emerging generation of the “young and restless.” This will require advocacy by those who understand the positive outcomes of a peer support model. This model has great potential to be replicated in resource limited areas around the world, and will remain an integral facet of our mission at Being Alive. 🌟

*Craig Taylor is the Contributing Editor and the Director of the Board of Directors at Being Alive Los Angeles.*

# Yoga for What Ails You

BY SAM PAGE

was wrong, it was a risk they were willing to take since AIDS no longer equaled death. Right or wrong, culpable or not, my acquiescence meant I had made the decision to fuck without protection. He may have handed me the gun, but I pulled the trigger.

After we had sex, he left to go to another party while I fell asleep. But, the next morning, he called and said he'd be coming back for round two. I leapt up to walk the dog and, when I came back in, he had somehow managed to get inside and was in my bed waiting. It was like a scene in a romance novel, only I would have ripped off my bodice, not my Abercrombie sweat pants.

More kissing, body contact, fucking and another "I'm really surprised." And yet still no light went off in my head. A few months later, while visiting my family in North Carolina, we arranged to meet again on Christmas Eve. Dinner turned into drinks turned into another round of sex. Once again, "I'm just so surprised. This is so unexpected." Only this time, I turned to him and said, "We ought to be safe from now on, especially since I'm negative." As I recall, he didn't say a word. This time, it was my turn to be surprised.

Like clockwork, three months later I checked into a New York teaching hospital after a week of throwing up, dehydration, a fever of 103 degrees and covered in a rash. My doctor took one look and called it the "conversion" flu, which sounds like I had become "born again". Only this felt more like death to me.

Now I am ten years positive and my life hasn't been filled with death or sickness. Four little pills a day take care of that. But there are days when I'm still filled with regret and shame and wishing that I could somehow go back and party like it was 1999. 🙌

## **My doctor recently told me that I'm at risk for high blood pressure and placed me on blood pressure medication. What's the best way to augment my workout routine in this situation?**

HIVers who participated in a regular yoga program experienced a natural drop in blood pressure, according to new research from the Washington University School of Medicine. The study, published in *HIV Medicine*, followed 60 HIV+ adults over the course of a supervised, 20-week yoga program. Resting systolic and diastolic blood pressures were reduced more in the yoga group than in the control group, despite no greater reduction in body weight, fat, or overall quality of life. The best part? T4 levels were not adversely affected.

Practicing yoga is an intelligent idea for other reasons, too. Participants in other double blind studies on yoga have documented substantial improvements in flexibility, balance, and muscular endurance. (Flexibility and strength are two key areas for HIVers, especially as we advance into our golden years). Yoga has also been shown to improve anxiety, depression—even irritable bowel syndrome! Best of all, yoga is relatively inexpensive and accessible, with many community classes free of charge or "pay what you can" from \$5 to \$20. There are yoga classes for nearly every specific interest and demo-

graphic, ranging from "11th step yoga" (for those in 12-step programs) to "hot nude yoga" for the more adventurous.

When you're ready to find your inner yogi, ask friends if they know of a good yoga studio in your neighborhood. Most gyms and studios offer beginner-level classes, but a good instructor can adjust even intermediate classes for the novice, offering helpful suggestions without making you feel awkward. If you're just starting, try "restorative" or "passive" yoga, a class in which foam blocks and other objects are used to relax the body into the yoga *asanas* (poses) without undue strain or stress. You may be confused or frustrated, but instead of getting irked, "offer up" your yoga practice to someone or something in your life that needs your support, patience, or understanding. This will align your focus and help you stay in the moment.

Remember, the benefits of yoga only become evident only if you do it regularly. Make an effort to practice the *asanas* you have learned. Above all, listen to your body and don't force yourself into any pose that causes pain. Drink water, take breaks, and breathe. *Namaste.* 🙌

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*Sam Page is a certified fitness trainer and freelance journalist. As director of Sam Page Fitness, he operates three private studios in Southern California. He contributes to several national magazines and also publishes a weekly e-newsletter from Sam Page Fitness and a daily blog called Peace Love Lunges.*

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# Working While Collecting Disability Benefits

BY JACQUES CHAMBERS, CLU

Many people who are collecting disability benefits would like to consider doing some work if it won't interfere with their benefit payments. Whether they are covered under Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), from a private disability insurance policy or a combination of programs, most will offer some incentives for work attempts. While work can provide a supplement to the disability income, more importantly, it can also improve the spirit and can help alleviate the depression that often accompanies total disability.

For people with HIV symptoms, there are days when some work is possible even though it may not be eight hours, five days a week. However, people are often hesitant to try any type of employment out of fear that it may jeopardize their disability benefits.

The first rule of working while collecting disability is to thoroughly understand the rules so your benefits don't get unexpectedly stopped. These rules vary depending on who is paying the disability benefits.

Private disability insurance contracts even vary from policy to policy; some provide for partial benefits while working; others provide assistance in reentering the work force; others stop completely if any work for pay is done. It is important that you review your own contract and understand what your policy provides, if anything. You may want to consult with a benefits counselor if the contract wording is complicated, which is often.

If your disability policy was purchased individually by you, even if there is no partial disability benefit, you can always return to work and start paying premiums again so the coverage will be ready for you if you cannot continue working at a later date.

If, however, your private disability insurance coverage comes from a prior employer, returning to work can be the end of access to that coverage. It's all the more important to understand how your plan functions before trying to return to work. The most common provision in disability insurance policies will continue benefits in proportion to how much you are earning by working. For example, if you are earning 40%

of your old income, adjusted for inflation, the carrier will pay you 60% of your regular benefit.

*Note that many of the suggestions for working given below with SSDI or SSI can also apply to private disability insurance.*

Both Social Security disability programs, Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) offer incentives to encourage you to attempt some work without necessarily losing benefits. However, it is important before starting to earn any wages that you thoroughly understand Social Security's rules about work. Mistakes and misunderstandings can result in overpayments that must be paid back to Social Security as well as the possible loss of future benefits.

*The rules for working are totally different between SSDI and SSI.* If you are receiving both SSDI and SSI, both sets of rules apply which can really complicate the process.

**Before going into the rules of the two plans, there are some important points to be aware of that apply to both plans:**

**Consider a "Dry Run."** Before attempting to do any type of regular work for wages, make sure you can physically and emotionally handle a regular schedule. A person who has not had to maintain a regular schedule in some time may find that the stress and physical demands can quickly overwhelm a fragile health status. Start with a volunteer project, doing anything as long as it involves some regular hours and no wages. It may be at a child care center, stuffing envelopes for a candidate, or whatever you may feel capable of doing for one to four hours a day. The important issue is the schedule, not the work. See how you react to having to get up every morning and go somewhere for a few hours, five days a week. Two or three weeks of this will give you a good idea of how well you might handle some employment.

**Keep careful records of income and hours worked.** Once you start working for wages, keep all paycheck stubs. Also, maintain records of your work hours. Make sure that the records show not only gross pay, but also net pay, hours worked, and time period when the wages were earned.

While you may think that Social Security will have all it needs with the records of payroll taxes being paid, keep in mind that the records that Social Security receives only show gross pay and what tax year they were paid in. Plus, Social Security is approximately two years behind in posting them to your Social Security account. You should keep your paycheck stubs, especially if your earnings vary from month to month

**Keep receipts and records of any additional expenses you incur due to working and your disability.** Social Security allows you to subtract from your earnings any expenses you incur that are necessary for you to work. This can include the cost of special transportation to and from work, prostheses and assistive devices, even medical expenses such as acupuncture, massage therapy or chiropractic treatments. Keep receipts and records for all medical expenses you pay out of your own pocket.

**Tell Social Security of your plans to work.** Unless you are going to be earning very small amounts, you should notify Social Security of your plans to attempt to do some work. To preserve a record of your notification, either mail them a certified letter, keeping a copy, or personally deliver a letter outlining your plans to your local office and get a signed receipt for it.

**Some people are afraid to tell Social Security about working because they fear that it will trigger a review of their disabled status.** While that may seem like a rational concern, it does not turn out to be the case. The time for the next Continuing Disability Review is set at the time one is completed. Social Security is much too overloaded with work to track and compare people trying to work with their Disability Review date.

**Don't follow the wage maximums too closely.** If your wages are just below the maximum limits on a consistent basis month after month, then sooner or later, Social Security will become "curious" to determine if your limited work is really due to your medical condition or if you are intentionally keeping your income low to qualify for benefits.

**Do some more research on Social Security and Work before actually starting to earn wages.** The rules regarding working while collecting disability benefits are too complicated

to give in one short article. The Social Security website at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) has a wealth of information about working while collecting benefits:

- *Working While Disabled* at [www.ssa.gov/pubs/10095.html](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10095.html)
- *2005 Red Book on Employment Support* at [www.ssa.gov/redbook/eng/main.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/redbook/eng/main.htm)

### **How your wages affect your disability benefits depends on whether you are collecting SSDI or SSI benefits. Both look at what is called "Countable Income" or "Countable Earnings."**

Countable Income is the gross amount of your earnings less any expenses necessary to keep you working and less any subsidized earnings provided by your employer. See [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) or the periodicals listed above for more on Countable Income.

**Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).** Working with SSDI is an all or nothing type of program. You can collect your full SSDI benefits and earn all you are able to earn for nine months. These nine months are called the *Trial Work Period*.

Any month that you have Countable Income of \$720 in 2010 or more will count as one month in the Trial Work Period. That means that you can earn \$5,000 per month or more for nine months and still receive your full SSDI benefits for each month. The Trial Work Months do not have to be consecutive, but are cumulative over a five year period.

It also means that if your Countable Income is less than \$730 a month, then it does not count as a Trial Work Month. If you earn \$500 per month every month, you will continue to receive your full SSDI benefits without any particular time limit.

Once you have used all nine months of the Trial Work Period, you will still receive your full SSDI benefits as long as your income does not exceed what Social Security calls *Substantial Gainful Activity*. In 2010, Substantial Gainful Activity is Countable Income that exceeds \$940 per month. It is \$1,000 in 2010.

*Note to Self-Employed people: For a self-employed person, Social Security considers any month that you work over 80 hours in the month as exceeding Substantial Gainful Activity, regardless of your Countable Income. Also, regular business expenses are subtracted from earnings to arrive at Countable Income.*

**Supplemental Security Income (SSI).** SSI treats wages from work more as an ongoing possibility where SSDI considers it to be part of a progression back to full-time employment. It is not unusual for someone to work regularly at a low paying job and still qualify for some SSI benefits.

SSI looks at your wages each month and computes your SSI benefit for the month based on how much you earned (your Countable Income) in that month. This is one reason for the importance of keeping your own records.

SSI ignores the first \$20 each month you receive whether from earnings or SSDI or anywhere else. SSI will let you keep the next \$65 of your Countable Income.

Any earnings above \$65 will be used to reduce your SSI payment for that month, reducing the SSI benefit \$1 for every \$2 that you earn above \$65. To compute this, half of the remainder is subtracted from your SSI payment.

For example, assume SSI is paying you \$579 (the federal amount for a single person in 2005). If you have no income other than SSI and work

earnings, use \$85 instead of \$65 in the calculation below. Assume you had Countable Earnings of \$365.

$$\$365 - \$65 = \$300$$

$$\$300 \times 0.5 = \$150$$

$$\$579 \text{ (normal SSI)} - \$150 = \$429$$

which will be the SSI payment for that month

$$\$429 \text{ (SSI)} + \$365 \text{ (wages)} = \$794$$

will be your total income for that month

Obviously, Social Security does not have the ability to do this calculation before they send out each month's payment. These calculations are all done some time later, so it is very important that you maintain your own records and set aside any money that was an overpayment, because eventually Social Security will be asking for it back. At least it can earn interest while you have it.

As you can see, the rules for working while collecting disability are fairly complicated and the repercussions for not following them can be expensive. If you feel well enough to attempt some type of employment, it can help you financially and, more importantly, emotionally. However, it is important that you understand the process well before attempting it. 

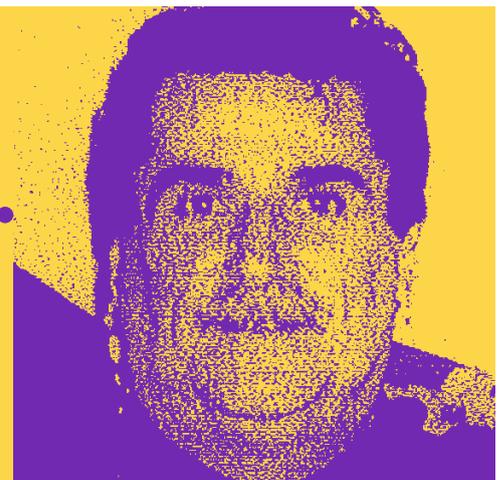
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*Jacques Chambers, CLU, is a Benefits Counselor in private practice with over 35 years experience in health, life and disability insurance and Social Security disability benefits. He can be reached by phone at 323.665.2595, by e-mail at [jacques@helpwithbenefits.com](mailto:jacques@helpwithbenefits.com), or through his Web site at [www.helpwithbenefits.com](http://www.helpwithbenefits.com).*

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## **FEDERICO (MILAN) AGUILAR, JR.**

May 31, 1943–January 8, 2010



# HIV/AIDS SPECIALISTS

We invite all HIV/AIDS specialists to mail or e-mail your information to us. Please indicate what insurances you do and do not accept, as well as your address, phone numbers and e-mail.

## MEDICAL DOCTORS

Marcia Alcouloumre, MD  
Dr. Devente, MD  
Dr. Montoya, MD  
St. Mary Medical Center  
1043 Elm Ave, Ste 300  
Long Beach, CA 90813  
562.624.4999

Accepts most insurance plans: Indemnity and PPO, Medicare and Medi-CAL, and uninsured HIV+ individuals.

Daniel H. Bowers, MD  
James Gaede, MD  
Anthony J. Scarsella, MD  
Charles Skiba, DO  
Pacific Oaks Medical Group  
150 N Robertson Blvd, Ste 300  
Beverly Hills, CA 90211  
310.652.2562

Accepts most PPO Plans, Medicare, Medi/Medi.

Paul J. Cimoch, MD, FACP  
Center for Special Immunology  
11190 Warner Ave, Ste 411  
Fountain Valley, CA 92708  
714.751.5800  
www.CSIHealth.com  
Accepts most insurance plans: Medicare, Medi/Medi, and Medical.

Lee Dodge, OD  
14429½ Ventura Blvd  
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423  
818.783.8750; fax 818.783.8779  
lee@durdodgeod.com  
www.DrDodgeOD.com  
Accepts most PPO insurance plans and Medicare.

Charles Gonzales, MD  
Hollywood Presbyterian Medical Center  
The Doctors Tower  
1300 N Vermont, #310  
Los Angeles, CA 90027  
323.644.4415  
fax 323.663.6897  
Board-certified family medicine / HIV specialist.  
New office in Silver Lake. Most major insurances accepted, including PPO and HMO, as well as Medicare and Medi/Medi.

Michael S. Gottlieb, MD  
Synergy Hematology/Oncology  
5901 W Olympic Blvd, Ste 407  
Los Angeles, CA 90036  
323.525.1101, press 0

Mark H. Katz, MD  
Kaiser West Los Angeles  
6041 Cadillac Ave  
Los Angeles, CA 90035  
323.857.2064  
HIV/AIDS specialist. Not accepting new patients currently, but will help new patients navigate the Kaiser system.

Matt Pekerol, MD  
9201 W Sunset Blvd, Ste 616  
West Hollywood, CA 90069  
310.858.0880  
pekerolm@hotmail.com  
Openly gay board-certified internal medicine.  
HIV/AIDS specialist. Accepts most PPO plans and Medicare.

Ilya Rachman, MD  
948 N Fairfax, Ste 201  
West Hollywood, CA 90046  
323.654.2020  
fax 323.654.2828

Jorge E. Rodriguez, MD  
Orange Coast Medical Group  
496 Old Newport Blvd, Ste 4  
Newport Beach, CA 90263  
949.646.1111  
Accepts most indemnity and PPO health insurance plans, as well as Medical.

Peter Ruane, MD  
5901 W Olympic Blvd, Ste 401  
Los Angeles, CA 90036  
323.954.1072  
Openly straight ☺ IM/ID board certified HIV specialist. Most insurance including Medicare.  
Free-to-patient Clinical Treatment protocols in the privacy of a small practice available to both insured and non-insured.

Myles Spar, MD, MPH  
Venice Family Clinic / West Side Partners  
604 Rose Ave  
Venice, CA 90291  
310.664.7607  
fax 310.664.7676  
Free comprehensive medical facility servicing the poor and uninsured populations of West Los Angeles.

## MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALISTS

Barry Cardiner, MA, MBA, MFT  
8430 Santa Monica Blvd, Ste 100  
West Hollywood, CA 90069  
Lic # MFT34301  
323.874.1967  
HIV+ physiotherapist. Accepts most PPO, POS insurance. Specialty areas: HIV issues, depression, abuse, addiction and recovery, relationships, grief.

Erin T. Childs, MA, LMFT  
11650 Riverside Dr, Ste 7  
Studio City, CA 91602  
818.985.4200  
etchilds@sbcglobal.net  
Accepts most insurance plans, indemnity and PPO. Individuals and couples therapy. Issues of illness/wellness, addiction and mood disorders. Solution-focused.

Terence Ford, MA, Registered Intern  
Located near Melrose and La Cienga  
213.400.3474  
Low-fee, individual psychotherapy. A calm, intelligent environment to work through your issues, whether HIV-related or not. Free initial consultation. Special low fee of \$40 if you mention Being Alive. Supervised by Dr. Steven Isaacman.

Payam Ghassemloo, MFT, PhD  
9056 Santa Monica Blvd, #205  
West Hollywood, CA 90069  
310.801.2927  
Gay male therapist, works with people with HIV and their significant others. Bilingual, accepts most insurance plans, no Medi/Medi.

Richard Gollance, LCSW, MSG  
12402 Ventura Blvd, 2nd Fl  
Studio City, CA 91604  
818.503.7300  
Psychotherapy. Primary focus: gay men in mid-life and beyond.

Ken Howard, LCSW  
8430 Santa Monica Blvd, Ste 100  
West Hollywood, CA 90069  
310.726.HELP (4357)  
www.gaypsychotherapy.com  
Openly gay and HIV+ counselor. Psychotherapist. Life Coach. Helping gay men achieve their goals in career and relationships. Sixteen years experience working in HIV. Free, brief initial phone consultation. Fees negotiated individually. Insurance forms provided.

Luis O. Jarquin, Jr., MA, LMFT, Lic#41743  
3350 E Birch St, Ste 100  
Brea, CA 92821  
714.528.9335  
Individual, couple and family therapy; relationship difficulties; disclosure; coping with diagnosis; depression and anxiety.

Christopher Lawver, MA, MFT, Lic#40090  
323.481.2090  
www.ChrisLawver.com  
Long-time advocate for affirming counseling for HIV and AIDS. I offer a sliding scale and accept most insurance plans.

Ronald Carey Rambo, LCSW, BCD  
711 E Walnut St, #309  
Pasadena, CA 91101  
626.821.4063  
225 S Civic Dr, #212  
Palm SUMMERS, CA 92262  
760.832.6701  
Solution-focused individual, couple, and family therapy. Specialties include HIV issues, gay identity, addiction/recovery, mood disorders, relationships. Accepts most insurance plans.

Matthew Silverstein, PhD, MFT  
8235 Santa Monica Blvd, Ste 309  
West Hollywood, CA 90046  
310.842.6124  
e-mail: MSilversteinMFT@aol.com  
Specialty areas include gay identity, HIV/AIDS issues, addiction recovery, dream work, spirituality. Sliding fee scale and able to accept most insurance (not Medi/Medi).

Fred Wilkey, EdD  
Clinical Psychology  
PSY8380  
9056 Santa Monica Blvd, Ste 306A  
West Hollywood, CA 90069  
310.659.4455  
Successful short-term therapy. Accepts Medicare and most insurance.

Tony Zimbardi, PsyD, MFT  
Gay Male HIV+ Psychotherapist  
323.851.1304  
Enhance your quality of life. Dating, drugs, depression, anxiety are all common issues we have as poz men. I can help.

## BENEFITS COUNSELOR

Jacques Chambers, CLU  
Benefits Consultant and Counselor  
Chambers Benefits Consulting  
2658 Griffith Park Blvd, #290  
Los Angeles, CA 90039-2520  
323.665.2595 or 888.739.2595  
www.HelpWithBenefits.com

# UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AT BEING ALIVE

Call Being Alive at 323.874.4322. We're located at 7531 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 100, West Hollywood.

## Being Alive Board Meetings

The Being Alive Board of Directors meetings for 2009 will be held at 6:30pm at Being Alive on the last Tuesdays of each month. Call for more information.

## New Support Group Forming

**Tuesdays • 7:00–9:00pm**

Open to all who are HIV+. Facilitated by life coach Michael Blomsterberg. Call for more information.

## The Young and the Restless

**Thursdays • 7:00–9:00pm**

A new support group for the young and newly poz. All are welcome, but the focus are on the newly diagnosed and under 30. Topics include emotional and physical well-being, risk reduction and disclosure, HIV 101 and basic information, treat adherence, communication skills, and fellowship. Call Being Alive for more information.

## Psychotherapy

**by appointment**

**Evenings • 10:00am–9:00pm**

Licensed psychotherapy intern provides one-on-one and couples therapy. Call Being Alive for appointment.

## Positively New

**Wednesdays • 7:30–10:00pm**

For newly diagnosed or newly identified HIV+ within the past three years. Get emotional support, discuss medical issues, and topics relevant to a new diagnosis. Facilitated by Brian Risley, lead treatment educator for APLA. Call 213.201.1547.

## Silver Lake Meet-and-Greet

**Support Group**

**Fridays • 7:00–9:00pm**

All those interested in attending a Being Alive peer support group in Silver Lake please contact Bart, Peer Support Manager, at Being Alive.

## Positive Reactions West

**Wednesdays • 7:00–9:00pm**

At Being Alive. A small drop-in group in a safe, honest place to discuss issues and meet others dealing with HIV. Call Bart for more info.

## Daytime Group

Temporarily on hiatus.

## Ceramics and Pottery

**Call Being Alive for location**

**Sundays, Mondays • 12:00 noon**

Learn ceramics and wheel-throwing. Beginners to advanced are welcome.

## Yoga

**Beginning Yoga**

**Mondays • 10:30am**

**Tuesdays • 3:00pm**

**Thursdays • 3:00pm**

At Being Alive in the Meditation Room. Call to make an appointment.

## Healing Touch

**by appointment**

**Thursdays • noon–5:00pm**

Alternative healing by hands-on and energy-based techniques. Call Being Alive for appointment.

## Hypnotherapy

**Thursday**

By Dean L. Williams, CHT. Call 877.667.5844.

## Speaker's Bureau

Spread the word about prevention, treatment, living with HIV/AIDS. For more information, call Colin at 310.739.6504.

## Acupuncture Services

**by appointment**

**Mondays • 1:30–4:30pm**

**Wednesdays • 10:30am–5:00pm**

**Fridays • 1:00–4:00pm**

Treatment for a range of conditions including pain management, neuropathy and other side effects, addictions, stress, headaches, and allergies. Call Being Alive for appointment.

## Chiropractic Services

**Fridays • 1:00am–4:00pm**

Back and body adjustments.

# BEING ALIVE SUPPORT GROUPS

Our goal is to provide a safe and confidential space where everyone can express themselves in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

## TUESDAYS

**New Support Group Forming** 7:00–9:00pm. Open to all who are HIV+. Facilitated by life coach Michael Blomsterberg. Call for more information.

## WEDNESDAY

**Daytime Support Group** On hiatus. Being Alive West Hollywood. A place to meet others with HIV. Exchange information about treatments and community resources, share life experiences and emotions, discuss ideas, develop friendships, and fine-tune your strategy for living well with HIV. One hundred percent non-judgemental and supportive. For more information, contact Bart at Being Alive at 310.289.2551.

**Positive Reactions WEST** 7:00–9:00pm. Being Alive West Hollywood (Being Alive Green Room or outside picnic table). Co-facilitated. A small drop-in group in a safe, honest place to discuss issues and meet others dealing with HIV. Call Bart for more information.

**Positively New** 7:30–10:00pm. 1300 N Vermont Ave. (Doctor's Building 2nd floor Conference Room). Facilitated by Brian Risley, Lead Treatment Educator for APLA at 213.201.1547. A fairly large support group for those who are newly diagnosed or newly identify HIV+ within the past three years. Get emotional support, discuss medical issues and topics relevant to a new diagnosis. Please contact Brian for more information or Bart at Being Alive at 310.289.2551.

## THURSDAY

**The Young and the Restless** 7:00–9:00pm. A new support group for the young and newly poz. All are welcome, but the focus are on the newly diagnosed and under 30. Topics include emotional and physical well-being, risk reduction and disclosure, HIV 101 and basic information, treat adherence, communication skills, and fellowship. Call Being Alive for more information.

## FRIDAY

**Silver Lake Meet-and-Greet Support Group** 7:00–9:00pm. An emotional and social support group in Silverlake area for HIV+ men to discuss current issues and solutions to life with HIV. Contact Bart at Being Alive at 310.289.2551.

## LOCAL RESOURCES

ACLU Lesbian & Gay Rights: 213.977.9500 x237

Aid for AIDS: 323.656.1107

AIDS Healthcare Foundation: 888.AIDSCARE

AIDS/HIV Discrimination Unit, LA City Attorney's Office:  
213.978.7758

APLA: 213.201.1600

AIDS Research Alliance: 310.358.2423

AIDS Service Center: 626.441.8495

AIDS Services Foundation/Orange County: 949.809.5700

Asian/Pacific AIDS Intervention Team: 213.553.1830

Being Alive San Diego: 619.291.1400

Beth Chayim Chadashim: 323.931.7023

Bienestar Hollywood: 323.660.9680

Caring for Children and Families with AIDS: 323.931.9828

Clean Needles Now: 213.483.5366

Common Ground, the West Side HIV Community Center:  
310.314.5480

Congregation Kol Ami: 310.248.6320

CVS Pharmacy: 310.659.9810

Deaf Women Outreach: 323.478.8000 (TTY or voice)

Department on Disability, AIDS Coordinator's Office:  
213.485.6320

East Valley Community Health Center:

West Covina: 626.919.5724;

Pomona: 909.620.8088

Foothill AIDS Project: 909.482.2066

HALSA: 213.637.1690

Jeffrey Goodman Special Care Clinic (GLCSC):  
323.993.7500

Jewish Family Services HIV/AIDS Program: 323.761.8800

LA Gay and Lesbian Center: 323.993.7400

The Life Group LA: 888.208.8081

Los Angeles Free Clinic: 323.653.1990

Los Angeles Patients & Caregivers Group: 323.882.6033

Minority AIDS Project: 323.936.4949

Narcotics Anonymous Hotline: 800-todayna

National AIDS Hotline: 800.227.8922;

800.344.7432 (en Español);

800.243.7889 (TTY)

The New Hope Learning Center: 213.251.8474

North East Valley Clinic: 818.988.6335

PAWS (Pets): 323.464.7297

Peer Education Program: 323.651.9888

Project Angel Food: 323.845.1800

Project Inform: 800.822.7422

Project New Hope: 213.251.8474

Rue's House: 323.295.4030

Serra Project 213.413.0306

South Bay Family Health Care Center: 310.318.2521 x236

Spanish Language AIDS Hotline: 800.400.7432

(SIDA) toll-free Southern California only

Tarzana Treatment Center HIV-Mental Health Project:

818.342.5897

THE Clinic: 323.295.6571

USC AIDS Clinical Trials Unit: 323.343.8288

Valley Community Clinic: 818.763.8836

Van Ness Recovery House: 323.463.4266

Voices with a Message Hotline: 800.554.4876

WeHoLife.org: 323.860.7323

Wellness Works Community Health Center: 818.247.2062

West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation:

323.650.8771 x2

Whittier Rio Hondo AIDS Project: 562.698.3850

Woman's Link: 310.419.8087

Women Alive Coalition: 323.965.1564

Women At Risk: 310.204.1046

Zahn Emergency Shelter: 213.438.1619

# COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

Notices for this Bulletin Board and the preceding Support Group sections should be submitted to Kevin Kurth via Community Bulletin Board, *Yo Being Alive* Newsletter, 7531 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, California 90046; or send e-mail to [Kevin@BeingAliveLA.org](mailto:Kevin@BeingAliveLA.org); or send fax to 310.289.9866. Please be concise and indicate if there is a fee. Please also renew notices every six months.

## MORE SUPPORT GROUPS

### WHITTIER HIV+ GROUP

Whittier Rio Hondo AIDS Project (WRHAP) offers this group for all people with HIV. An open support group. Every other Saturday 10am–noon. For info, call Elizabeth Mendia at 562.698.3850. 6/2008

### SPECTRUM / PASSPORT TO CARE

Various support groups. Yoga: Mondays 10:30am–noon, Building L. Relapse prevention workshop: Tuesdays 10:30am–noon, Building L. Heterosexual support group: Wednesdays 10:30am–noon, Building K. Food pantry: Thursdays 10am–5pm, Building L. Women's support group: Thursdays 11:30am–1pm, Building M. Soul food men's support group: Thursdays 4–5:30pm, Building N. Movie night: first and third Thursdays 6–8:30pm, Building L. Cocaine anonymous: Fridays 10:30am–noon, Building M. Grupo universal: Fridays 5–6:30pm, Building L. For more information call front desk at 323.563.4939. 11/2007

### SOUTH BAY FAMILY HEALTHCARE CENTER

Comprehensive HIV/AIDS social service support—case management, mental health, prevention education, HOPWA, short-term rental assistance. Call Joanne Silva at 310.318.2521 x1422. 11/2007

### TARZANA TREATMENT CENTER—HIV MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

Support groups: HIV support, yoga, relapse prevention group, self-help, vocational counseling, and mental health counseling. For info, call Carol Bishop at 818.342.5897 x2195. 11/2007

### SHABBAT LUNCH AND JEWISH HIV SUPPORT GROUP AT CONGREGATION KOL AMI

Come and schmooze and eat with fellow Jewish HIVers at Congregation Kol Ami in West Hollywood. We provide a safe, nurturing Jewish environment to talk about life with HIV, Jewish life, and life in general. 1200 North La Brea Avenue, West Hollywood. Call for time and date of next meeting. Reply in confidence to Rabbi Denise Eger at [rabbi@kolami.org](mailto:rabbi@kolami.org), or 323.606.0996, x100. 12/2006

### APLA SUPPORT GROUPS

The following groups are ongoing and offered through APLA's Mental Health Services: HIV/AIDS Gay Male, HIV/AIDS Heterosexual, Substance Use and HIV, and Mono-lingual Spanish-speaking HIV/AIDS. For information in English and Spanish, call Walter Campos at 213.201.1621. 4/2006

### METH AND GAY MEN

Feeling out-of-control? Having trouble finding intimacy? Promising to quit but using anyway? Worried that you need meth to have hot sex? On-going psychotherapy group meeting weekly for men concerned about crystal meth, sex, and intimacy. Conveniently located in Hollywood, this closed therapy group explores issues and feelings in a safe, confidential setting, Monday, 7–8:30pm. For more information, contact Glen at 323.993.7655, or Andre at 323.860.5804. Sponsored by the LA Gay & Lesbian Center. 2/2006

### SPIRITUAL SUPPORT DROP-IN GROUP

For people living with HIV/AIDS or cancer, or dealing with grief or imprisonment. One-on-one spiritual support, primarily Catholic. Can make inter-faith referrals. For info, call 323.225.4461. 5/2004

### BIENESTAR

Bienestar Human Services offers a variety of services and support groups for the Latino community, HIV+ client services, and HIV– prevention programs. Call Miguel Gonzalez at 323.727.7897. 5/2004

### CHURCH OF THE VALLEY HIV+ SUPPORT GROUP

Thursdays, 6:30–8:30pm, Disciples of Christ Church, 6565 Vesper, Van Nuys. 818.786.4070. 5/2004

### COMMON GROUND

HIV/AIDS drop-in support group for women and men, Mondays, 12:30–2pm; free; lunch is served. Gestalt Therapy Group, Thursday nights, 5:30–7pm, actively recruiting mem-

bers. Women's drop-in group, second and fourth Thursdays of the month, 12:30–1:30pm. Spanish-speaking drop-in group, Wednesdays, 10–11:30am. Call 310.314.5480. 5/2004

### ALTAMED SUPPORT GROUP

For men and women living with HIV/AIDS. Meets Tuesdays from 2–3pm at AltaMed in Pico Rivera. For more information, call 562.949.8717. 12/2003

### POSITIVES IN SOBRIETY

Open AA meeting for people affected by HIV. Meets every Sunday, 6pm. Great Hall in Plummer Park, Vista St., between Fountain and Lexington in West Hollywood. 323.656.0829. 12/2003

### HIV BY THE BOOKS

Open AA meeting. Intimate book study for people dealing with HIV/AIDS issues. Meets every Friday, 7:15pm at Being Alive. 323.656.0829. 12/2003

### LONG BEACH POZ PEERS

Social support group for HIV+ guys who want to meet other HIV+ guys. Contact David at 562.272.8810. 7/2003

### FOUND SOBRIETY CRYSTAL METH ANONYMOUS

7pm. 11321 Camarillo St. (upstairs), North Hollywood, CA 91602. Go to [www.crystalmeth.org](http://www.crystalmeth.org) for more information. 1/2003

### PASADENA AIDS SERVICE CENTER

Support groups including Living Positive, HIV Symptomatic, Newly Diagnosed Group, Teen Group, HIV+ Spanish Women, Journaling Group, and Gay Men Over 45 Group. 1030 S. Arroyo Parkway, Pasadena. Call 626.441.8495: Jody Casserly, LCSW, x144. 8/2002

### NA HIV+

Thursdays at 8:30pm. HIV+ and gay narcotics anonymous meeting. Members share their experience, strength, and hope that they and others may recover from the disease of addiction. HIV+ focused. Many new-comers at this meeting. 1919 N. Beachwood Dr., Los Angeles. For more information, call 323.850.1624. 6/2002

### MINORITY AIDS PROJECT

Minority AIDS Project sponsors a variety of support groups for people of color. Call 323.936.4949. 9/2000

## GRUPOS Y NOTICIAS EN ESPAÑOL

### BIENESTAR

Bienestar Human Services offers a variety of services and support groups for the Latino community. HIV+ client services and HIV-negative prevention programs. Call Miguel Gonzalez at 323.727.7897. 11/2007

### PROJECT ANGEL FOOD

Project Angel Food es una organización que provee comidas para las personas que viven con VIH/SIDA. Nuestros servicios están disponibles para personas que viven en nuestras áreas de servicio y que están oficialmente diagnosticado con el SIDA o VIH sintomáticos. Para recibir servicios, llame el 323.845.1810. 8/2001

### ALTAMED GRUPOS DE APOYO EN ESPAÑOL

Todos los miercoles de 6–8pm le ofrecemos un grupo para hombres y tambien otro grupo para mujeres. Para mayor informacion: Juan—323.869.5403. 2/2001

## WOMEN'S SERVICES

### THE SERRA PROJECT/CASA DE LA MADONA Y EL NIÑO

A home for women and children living with AIDS and HIV. RN and MSW case management, medical transportation, bilingual—English/Spanish, family preservation and reunification. Call Martha Aldreta at 323.342.0705. 4/2008

### PROTOTYPES WOMENSCARE

Complete medical treatment, follow-up, and case management, education available at WomensCare Center, Queen of

Angels/Hollywood Presbyterian. No fee, childcare available. 1300 N. Vermont, Ste. 401. Call Andrea Jackson 323.662.7420. East LA location: 5427 E. Whittier Blvd., Los Angeles 90022. Call Yolanda Salinas 323.869.5467. 11/2007

### WOMEN AT RISK

Multiple specialized support groups with childcare services and transportation, one-on-one peer counseling, prevention, education/community outreach, speakers bureau, hospital visitation, resource referrals and assistance. For information call 310.204.1046. [www.womenatrisk.org](http://www.womenatrisk.org). 4/2006

### ESCAJEDA WOMEN'S CLINIC

Comprehensive health services for women with HIV/AIDS regardless of ability to pay. General and specialized HIV health care includes GYN services. Social Worker. Psychiatric services. English/Spanish speaking staff. For info, call 626.744.6140. Pasadena location. 12/2003

### T.H.E. CLINIC FOR WOMEN, INC.

Offers specialized services for women living with HIV. Early intervention program, HIV testing. Staff speaks ten languages. Call Nola Thomas for information or appointments: 323.295.6571 x3109. 9/2000

## LEGAL SERVICES

### HALSA

A collaborative effort of AIDS Service Center, the L.A. County Bar Barristers, AIDS Project, the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center, and Public Counsel. HALSA provides legal assistance in a variety of areas including bankruptcy, benefits, employment, housing, wills, powers-of-attorney to low-income people living with HIV, as well as comprehensive pro bono referrals. For more info, call 213.2637.1022. 4/2006

### INSURANCE

Supplemental health and life insurance, serving our community. Contact Glenn at 818.774.1556 x33, or [Glenn\\_Zorn@us.afac.com](mailto:Glenn_Zorn@us.afac.com). 9/2004

### NOTARY PUBLIC

I live a few blocks from Being Alive in West Hollywood. Services are free if we can arrange a time to meet there. You can also come to my home on Palm Avenue and pay the regular \$10, or I can come to your place in West Hollywood for \$15. Call Michael at 310.659.4299. 2/2002

## MEDICAL SERVICES

### HIV OCULAR SPECIALIST

Lee Dodge, OD. 14429½ Ventura Blvd, Sherman Oaks, CA 91423. 818.783.8750. Fax 818.783.8779. [lee@drdodgeod.com](mailto:lee@drdodgeod.com). [www.drdodgeod.com](http://www.drdodgeod.com). Accepts most PPO plans and Medicare. 6/2008

### NORTHEAST VALLEY HEALTH CORP

Confidential comprehensive medical services for HIV/AIDS provided in English and Spanish at low or no cost in the SF Valley. Call Stefen Ruiz at 818.988.6335. 6/2008

### UCLA CARE CLINIC

The UCLA Care Center conducts clinical research in HIV disease management, new medications, metabolic complications, prevention and therapeutic vaccines, opportunistic infections, AIDS-related cancers and co-infections. Contact Deon Claiborne at 310.557.9062. Provides specialty HIV care to those with private insurance, Medicare, or Medicare and Medi-Cal combined. Contact Mike Marcial at 310.557.2273. 11/2007

### CHIROPRACTIC CARE

Spinal adjustments available for \$10 by appointment for HIV+ people who are uninsured and not working. Other services available. Brian Smith, DC, 8235 Santa Monica Blvd., Ste. 218, West Hollywood. 323.656.2652. 11/2007

# COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

## JEFFREY GOODMAN SPECIAL CARE CLINIC

Provides HIV and STD testing, as well as treatment, case management, complementary therapies and AIDS Drug Assistance Program for HIV+ patients. 1625 N. Schrader, Third Floor, Los Angeles 90028. [www.lagaycenter.org](http://www.lagaycenter.org). Call 323.993.7500 for info. 11/2007

## AIM HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION

Healthcare for adult-industry members. HIV/STD testing, referrals, counseling, GYN services. For clients diagnosed with HIV/AIDS at AIM Healthcare—free-for-life medication placement. Call 818.981.5681. Also in Woodland Hills: 19720 Venture Blvd., 818.961.0291. 11/2007

## COMPREHENSIVE AIDS RESOURCE EDUCATION PROGRAM (C.A.R.E.)

Offers the following services: Out-patient, non-emergency clinic (sliding scale)—562.624.4999 • Dental center (sliding scale)—562.624.4949 • Testing/outreach (no charge)—562.624.4900 • AIDS drug assistance program (no charge)—562.624.4944 • Mental health program and nutritional counseling (no charge)—562.624.4914 • Case management / social services (no charge)—562.624.4900 • Family services program—562.624.4918. Located at 411 E. 10th St., Suite 107, Long Beach, CA 90813 (inside St. Mary Medical Center campus). 11/2007

## ALTAMED HEALTH SERVICES

Comprehensive medical treatment for people with HIV/AIDS. In addition to medical treatment, we provide case management, support groups, and HIV testing. To make an appointment to see a physician, please call 323.869.5548. 11/2007

## LAGUNA BEACH COMMUNITY CLINIC

Treats qualified clients for a low fee. Two HIV specialists accept Medical and Medicare. 362 3rd St., Laguna Beach, CA 92651. 949.494.0761. 11/2007

## FREE RAPID HIV AND STD TESTING

At The SPOT, 745 N. San Vicente Blvd., West Hollywood, southwest corner of Santa Monica and San Vicente. Tuesday–Friday, 1–7pm, 323.993.7440. If you are experiencing STD symptoms, call 323.993.7575 between 11:30am–2:30pm to schedule an appointment. 11/2007

## VALLEY COMMUNITY CLINIC, NORTH HOLLYWOOD

Offering free, anonymous HIV counseling service and testing Mondays 4–7:30pm, Tuesdays 2–7:30pm, Thursdays 12–3:40pm, and Saturdays 11am–4:30pm. Contact Walter Abb 818.763.8836. HIV case management everyday. Medical outpatient services for people with HIV. ADAP enrollment. For interview call 818.301.6334. [www.valleycommunityclinic.org](http://www.valleycommunityclinic.org). 11/2007

## AIDS HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION

AHF Clinics in Hollywood, Downtown, Sherman Oaks, the Westside, Upland, Lancaster, and West Adams provide care to people with HIV/AIDS regardless of ability to pay. No one ever turned away. Free HIV testings at our Out-of-the-Closet thrift stores. Call 800.AHF.2101. 10/2002

## ANDREW ESCAJEDA CLINIC

Comprehensive health services for adults with HIV/AIDS, regardless of ability to pay. ADAP enrollment site and psychiatric services. Open to all HIV-infected, even if receiving medical care elsewhere. Pasadena location. Call 626.744.6140. 8/2002

## TARZANA TREATMENT CENTER

Provides residential rehabilitation and medical detoxification programs for people with HIV/AIDS. Call 818.996.1051 x40. HIV outpatient clinic, Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 10am–6pm. Call 818.342.5897. 9/2000

## USC AIDS CLINICAL TRIALS UNIT

Free clinical trials for people with HIV/AIDS. Located at 5P21, Rand Schrader Clinic, 1300 N. Mission Rd., Room 349, LA. For info, call 323.343.8288. 9/2000

## METHADONE TREATMENT FOR HIV+ PEOPLE

If you are HIV+ and opiate-dependent, Western Pacific Rehab offers free out-patient methadone treatment at conveniently located sites. Call 800.223.3869. 9/2000

## AIDS SERVICE CENTER, PASADENA

Free treatment education and advocacy via one-on-one counseling/assessment, monthly treatment forums, Treatment Library and more. Call 626.441.8495. 9/2000

## WELLS HOUSE HOSPICE, LONG BEACH

A home-like environment serving Long Beach and Orange County. Volunteers always welcome. Contact Ron Morgan at 562.435.9363. 9/2000

## LA COUNTY RAND SHRADER 5P21 HIV CLINIC

Provides comprehensive HIV care; services available in English and Spanish. Call 213.343.8255. 9/2000

## T.H.E. CLINIC, INC.

HIV/AIDS testing, treatment, counseling, family planning, other services. For more information call 323.295.6571. 9/2000

## PHARMACY SERVICES

### EDDIE'S PHARMACY

As your community pharmacy, we are committed to provide the best service possible. Getting to you know and your individual needs is an integral part of that commitment. Small enough to care; large enough to meet your needs. Call 310.358.2400. 1/2006

### ALL-IN-ONE PHARMACY

For all your pharmacy needs. Adherence tools and delivery provided free of charge. Treatment educators available for any questions you have. Most insurance accepted. Call toll-free: 866.255.6663. 11/2005

### MOMS PHARMACY

The original adherence pharmacy. Services include free delivery, pager notification, and optional MOMS Paks medication packets, the ultimate adherence tool. For more information, visit [www.momsparmacy.com](http://www.momsparmacy.com), or call 866.993.6337. 8/2005

## PERSONAL SERVICES

### HOME DELIVERED MEALS

Jewish Family Services provides kosher meals (fresh or frozen) to the homebound. Call 323.761.8770. St. Vincent's Meals on Wheels: 213.484.7775. 11/2007

### TRUE NORTH MASSAGE

Swedish circulatory massage. Tim Maloney, Certified Massage Technician. APSB. 818.244.3029. 818.726.9480 (cell). [shaktim2001@hotmail.com](mailto:shaktim2001@hotmail.com). 1/2006

### SPORTS MASSAGE

Deep tissue, soft touch, and Reiki therapy. Discount for HIV+. I've worked on athletes for over five years. Call Wayne at 562.235.8716 and mention this ad. 12/2005

### COUNSELING

Payam Ghassemloo, PhD, MFT, gay male counselor. 310.801.2927. Sandplay Therapy—a fun, creative, and healing process to connect to your psyche's self-healing powers. 9/2004

### RESIDENTIAL DRUG TREATMENT

Live-in drug treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS. For info, call Robyn at 818.985.8323. 2/2002

### MASSAGE BY JEFFREY

Therapeutic touch at a discount for people living with HIV/AIDS. Contact Jeffrey at [jjeffrey54@aol.com](mailto:jjeffrey54@aol.com), or call 310.770.7515. 10/2001

### PROJECT ANGEL FOOD

Project Angel Food's agency delivers nutritious meals to individuals with a formal diagnosis of AIDS or symptomatic HIV disease living in our delivery area. To start free meal delivery service, please call Client Services at 323.845.1810. 8/2001

### FREE GROCERIES

Food and personal care items are provided to PWAs. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, 10am–1pm. For more

information, call Imani Unidos Food Pantry, 323.754.2320. 5/2001

### LOW INCOME HOUSING FOR PWAs

1-, and 2-bedroom housing wait list. Contact West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation, 8285 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 3, West Hollywood, or call 323.650.8771, x2. 1/2001

### 50% MASSAGE DISCOUNT

Full hour Swedish massage. Legit. \$25. Designed for financially challenged HIV+ folk who are looking for a way to afford regular massage. Call Bruce at 323.660.5358. 9/2000

## MISCELLANEOUS

### HOLLYWOOD MENTAL HEALTH CENTER

We are accepting new HIV+ clients who are seeking individual or couples counseling. HIV+ clients may obtain services without any insurance, although Medi-CAL and Medicare are accepted. 1224 N. Vine St., Los Angeles 90038. Contact Chris Bridge, MSW, at 323.769.2125. 7/2009

### ALLEGRIA HOUSE SHELTER

Assist families, and couples (gay or straight) living with AIDS. Sober living program. Contact Julie Lewis at 323.454.4200. 11/2007

### CHOICES RECOVERY SERVICES

Has homes in Long Beach and Los Angeles, providing clean, comfortable, structured, drug- and alcohol-free living environments for men, women, straight, gay, HIV+, and dual-diagnosed individuals. Please call us for further information at 562.930.0565. [www.choicesoflongbeach.com](http://www.choicesoflongbeach.com) 11/2007

### ZAHN EMERGENCY SHELTER

Welcomes singles and families with open arms to our sober living program. Priority is given to referrals living with HIV/AIDS. Referrals only. Please call 213.438.1619. 8/2006

### MCINTYRE HOUSE

A non-profit residential substance abuse recovery and sober living program for men. Low-cost medical care and food provided. Contact Ed at 323.662.0855. 12/2004

### STRENGTH IN NUMBERS (SIN)

A non-profit social network for HIV+ gay men that organizes and promotes fun and relaxed events in LA and Orange County. All HIV+ gay men are welcome. Events include pot luck, breakfasts, and bar nights. All events are low-cost, but everyone is expected to cover their own expenses. Check out our Web site for more information and updates on events: [www.strengthinnumbers.org](http://www.strengthinnumbers.org). 5/2003

### TEENS REACH TEENS

Peer Education Program of L.A. offers educators to lead discussions on HIV/AIDS prevention in schools, group homes, and youth agencies. Call Wendy at 323.651.9888. 8/2002

### HELPLINE FOR DEAF PEOPLE WITH HIV

A unique service run by HIV+ deaf people, providing referrals to other deaf and hard-of-hearing people with HIV/AIDS. Contact Emmett Haggren at 323.550.4258 (TDD) or 323.550.4255 (fax). 9/2001

### AIDS EDUCATION/SERVICES FOR THE DEAF

Provides education to schools as well as one-on-one meetings and interpreters to Ryan White-funded HIV/AIDS services and testing with no charge to the service providers. Call 323.550.4250 (TDD/voice). Fax: 323.550.4244. 9/2001

### HIV/AIDS MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM

Common Ground offers mental health services to HIV+ residents of Los Angeles who cannot afford to pay. Call Mark Fairfield, LCSW, Director of Mental Health, at 310.314.5480. 4/2002

### CRYSTAL METH ANONYMOUS INFO LINE

12-step program offering a 24-hour information hotline at 213.488.4455. 9/2000

### AID FOR AIDS: FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Aid for AIDS provides financial assistance to people with HIV/AIDS. Help with pharmaceuticals, nutrition, monthly bus passes, rent, health insurance payments, utilities. For more info, call 323.656.1107. 9/2000