

COMPASS

Newsletter

Winter 2016

Future
**WORLD
LEADER**

Supported
Living
Independent
Living

East Bay Edition

www.compasscares.com



THE 20 YEAR CELEBRATION CONTINUES...



Compass Values

GENEROSITY

Being a blessing to others,
because we are thankful for
our many blessings.

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The Compass Story

By Sadie Hess | Founder & Director

[1]

Like all great adventures, the Compass story starts with uncertainty. I had landed a job right out of college as a social worker. It was a wild ride with little support and a lot of unknowns. I quickly formed a connection to the other social worker struggling alongside of me named Joanne McCarley. I think two keys to doing social work well are a sense of humor and an affection for people. Joanne had both of these, so we quickly became connected to not only the clients but each other.

In July, 1996, we were unceremoniously told that our program was going to be shut down due to budget cuts. We were devastated. In one short year, we had formed connection and a sense of family with the sixteen clients we were serving. We couldn't stand the thought of their hard work undone by a single decision. We had these amazing people get their own set of keys, fix their own meals, meet a friend for coffee and other new experiences for the first time in their lives and it was addicting. We didn't want it to stop just because an agency didn't think the program was financially viable anymore. These were people and they deserved someone fighting for them, not just looking at a budget and cutting them. It is a precious gift to watch a person find freedom and discover they have more skill and talent than they ever imagined. We realized we had been given a precious gift and would do whatever it took to keep working with these individuals.

"I found a treasure in this group of people, sold everything I had and bought the field."

So, Joanne and I went to work to rescue sixteen clients and their Supported Living Services. Within six weeks of herculean effort and a lot of help from God, we had created a life raft we named Compass. Compass started serving its first client on August 19, 1996.

I was only twenty-three years old when the organization launched! We opened the agency with dedication, hard work, and two thousand dollars leaping into the unknown. I truly had no idea what I was getting into. When we made this somewhat rash, quick decision, I had no idea of both the joy and anguish such a life-altering decision would mean. I have watched clients make both great and terrible decisions and have walked with people as their lives came to an end. I wouldn't trade a minute of it.

There is a parable in the Bible that says a wise man, when he finds a treasure in a field, should sell all he owns to buy the field. When I first read that parable, I thought the man was rash and foolish, but I now see it differently. It is wisdom to put everything you have into the treasure God shows you. God revealed the treasure in this group of people, both clients and staff alike to me at such a young age. I found a treasure in this group of people, sold everything I had (not much at 23!) and bought the field. I have had twenty years of discovering the many, many treasures of clients and staff in this field.



SLS Feature: Nicole

[2]

By Jenn Mazzotti
SLS Supervisor



Nicole has been a cherished member of the Compass family since June 2002 (over 14 years!). She is a loving, caring, intelligent, and humorous young lady. My first thought when I think of Nicole, is her love for the color purple! Nicole wears purple shirts, uses a purple pen, and loves her purple lotion from Bath and Body Works! If you're wearing purple around her, chances are you'll have a new found friend in no time!

Out of the 7 values at Compass, Nicole enjoys the value 'community' the most. Nicole has quite the busy social life. Monday through Friday, she attends Tool Works Day Program, which she

has also attended for over 10 years. Nicole loves going to her program every day and looks forward to attending. She has made many friends over the years there and loves her daily interactions and social activities the program offers. On Tuesdays, Nicole attends RADD

movies, on Thursdays, Nicole attends Peer Development. On most weekends, she attends RADD activities with peers in her county, which includes movies, dinners, bowling, and sporting events.

Nicole also enjoys going out with her staff as often as she can. She enjoys going to Starbucks to get a parfait, the movies, dinner, bowling, going on walks, and visiting her parents on Sundays. Nicole always looks forward to her Sunday dinner visits and getting to spend some quality time with her parents. Her parents are great advocates for her, and are a very important part of her life. Nicole also attends the Compass events, including the birthday celebrations, Bravo Buck events, and the holiday parties.

Nicole loves living independently in her own home in the community and loves meeting new people. She appreciates being a part of the Compass family and the support she receives from the SLS department. Chances are you will see Nicole at the next Compass event, so don't be afraid to say hi!





ILS Feature: Alex

By Alicia Woodworth, **ILS Manager**

[3]

One of the favorite parts of my job is meeting clients at the start of services, and then getting to see them grow in their independence. Our clients work hard during each of their appointments, pursuing their goals by working on everyday life skills and identifying the productive, positive choices that will lead them toward their dreams. In the four years I have been with Compass, I have had the opportunity to see one of our clients grow tremendously.

Alex is one of our Compass veterans, having started with Compass in mid-2012. At the time, Alex was living in a residential care home and dreaming about moving into his own place. Although he appreciated the care and support he received in his home, he believed he was capable of living independently and of course, Compass agreed! Alex worked with several different Independent Life Coaches over his tenure with Compass, improving his independent living skills and making great strides. And any time he encountered a setback, Alex took it as a challenge to work even harder.

Within 9 months of working with Compass Alex achieved one of his goals by moving back to the town where he spent his high school years. He also started an amazing day program that focused his life passions: creating film and media projects. And after another 6 months, Alex transitioned out of his residential care home and moved into his first independent living situation. He was ecstatic about living in his own house with a few other roommates and eager to utilize the skills he had been practicing.

Since then, Alex has continued to grow in his place at his program and within his household. He is seen as a leader at his program and has been invited several times to work on professional film projects. At home he works hard on being a respectful and responsible roommate by

contributing to household chores and ensuring he budgets his own finances to pay his share of the household. Just as we all experience bumps in the road, Alex has had some moments that weren't always easy to overcome. However, his persistence and commitment to living successfully on his own has prevailed each

time, and Alex has always come out on the other side having learned valuable lessons and having continued improvement in his independent living skills.

Since the beginning - and to this day - Alex is the bright comedian of Compass and enjoys sharing the stories he has written or come up with in his head. He tosses around the idea of starting an internet vlog as a platform to share his writing. He also continues to enjoy attending his film program as an outlet for his creativity. Alex loves attending Compass community activities and recently went on the Compass Cruise, where he had a great time exploring the California coast. If you get a chance to meet him at the next East Bay community event, make sure to ask this funny guy to tell you a joke!

Everyone at Compass is so proud of how far Alex has come in his journey to independent living. We congratulate him on all he has accomplished and feel honored to have been able to walk alongside him on his incredible journey for this long. I can't wait to see where Alex takes his dreams next!



Team Member OF THE MONTH

[4]

JWB

September

COMPASS VALUE: FAITH because it is the foundation for all of the other values.

STAFF ADVICE: Read the Employee Manual.

QUOTE: "Be Here Now"- Bhagavandas

RANDOM FACT:

I'm a cigar aficionado

NICKNAME: Diva

Our Team Members of the Month represent the **BEST OF THE BEST.** We are always looking to add to our TEAM. If you are interested in joining the Compass Staff Team, **apply on our website at www.compasscares.com**

Danny

August

COMPASS VALUE: Community. I really like how clients and staff create a sense of community within their homes as well as with other clients that live near them.

STAFF ADVICE: Always have open communication with your team and supervisors so that we can support each other when things arise.

QUOTE: Happiness does not depend on outward things, but only the way you see them. - Leo Tolstoy

RANDOM FACT:

I love Pokémon Go





Financial Basics

PART ONE

By Aaron Zint
Payroll Coordinator

[5]

You've likely heard some well-known phrases about planning. "If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail" and "Plans are useless, but planning is indispensable." While we all conceptually understand the importance of planning, we tend to ignore it in practical application, especially around the area of finances. One Gallup poll reveals that only 32% of Americans utilize a budget month-to-month. It's understandable. Just saying the word "finances" will evoke fear and anxiety in a lot of people. 80% of Americans are in debt, which in and of itself is not a bad thing. Debt is what allows us to purchase homes, vehicles and other necessities. But there is a dark side to debt that most of us are all too familiar with. Typically it's credit card, medical or legal debt that keeps us from feeling at peace financially. Whether you are fearful or chill-axed, in the red or in the black, in good standing with the IRS or forever watching your back, making a plan is essential.

Financial planning does not bring short-term reward, which is why we tend to avoid it. We are a fast food nation and we want to feel good this instant. If we can't microwave it, we'll eat it frozen or not at all. Financial planning is a gift that you are giving to your future self. It's to the retiree that you aspire to become or the generous grandparent who gives an inheritance to their children and grandchildren or both.



So where do you start? You start with the most basic and most difficult word in the English language: a budget. Creating a budget can be done in 4 simple steps. Set aside at least an hour to do these.

1 **INCOME:** Add up how much you make in a typical month (look at your bank statements or just save your pay stubs to figure this out).



3 Subtract the total of step 2 from the total of step 1. If you get a negative number, then you need to either spend less or make more. Probably both. You will definitely need step 4. If you get a positive number, congratulations you have money that you can save! You still need step 4.



2 **EXPENSES:** Add up how much you spend in a typical month (create categories for things like bills and groceries that you have to pay for no matter what and things like entertainment and eating out that are not absolute necessities).



4 Make a decision about how much you will spend in each category that you created in step 2 and stick to it.





By Melanie
Anderson
Interim RM
San Jose

Gratitude: The Art of **THANKFULNESS**

[6]

Even though my parents raised my siblings and myself to be thankful for our many blessings, I did not truly understand the concept of gratitude until I traveled through the pain and experience of loss. When I was a teenager, my Mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. I knew it was serious but I was completely ill prepared for the challenging years ahead. At first I was positive, sharing hopeful energy with my Mom every day. It was not long before I found it difficult to have any hope and I became quite bitter as she suffered through surgeries, treatments, new diagnoses and literally, pain. I had been working at a residential care facility and the owner, a nurse, noticed my work was suffering. She was not someone I had perceived as nurturing and I had labeled her, in my infinite 19 year old wisdom, "old school" and difficult to please. She pulled me aside and asked about what was happening with my Mom and offered to share honest information about what I could expect to happen to my Mom as her illness progressed. The conversation was graphic, painful and frightening. After the reality of what I could expect broke me down to my lowest point, she told me I was lucky. Lucky? She pointed out that we had been given the gift of time that so many others were not. She pointed out that personally caring for my Mom, tending to her wounds, hugging her as she cried, talking to her about what she wanted at her funeral, hearing about her faith, and simply being present with her through her journey were things I should be grateful for. She was right and I have since been grateful to her for changing my paradigm that day. She attended my Mother's funeral and I thanked her for the gift she gave me. I started appreciating the smallest of blessings and have tried to make a practice of that ever since.

Gratitude defined is, "a feeling of thankfulness". When you look up "thankful", it reads "appreciation". "Appreciation" reads "to value highly". Gratitude shifts your focus from what you perceive your life to be lacking to the abundance that is already present. Because gratitude encourages us not only to appreciate gifts but to repay them (or pay them forward), the sociologist Georg Simmel calls it "the moral memory of mankind." There is behavioral and psychological research that has shown the surprising life improvements that can stem from the practice of gratitude. Giving thanks makes people happier and more resilient, it strengthens relationships, it improves health, and it reduces stress.

What does practicing gratitude look like? It could be so many things...Being present in the moment and being thankful; expressing appreciation to another; sending a card; seeing the positive in a situation; repaying a favor; random acts of kindness; noticing the simple things; finding the lesson or purpose in a tough situation; smile; not waiting to tell someone you love them or appreciate them; focus on intention; take a 30 days of gratitude challenge... A common method to develop the practice of gratitude is to keep a gratitude journal. There are journals for this purpose and lots of free printables online. I downloaded an app on my phone that I used when I was feeling down and not very grateful about much. It only took a few days to transform my mood and remind me of the good in my life. I started to reflect on little things that I was previously taking for granted. I recently discovered a website, 365grateful.com, that has inspirational stories and the creator's own gratitude project. Another site, gratefulness.org, is devoted to living gratefully.

It is said that a grateful heart is a magnet for miracles. Why don't we start attracting those moments of greatness right now? What are you grateful for? And how can you share your gratefulness with others?

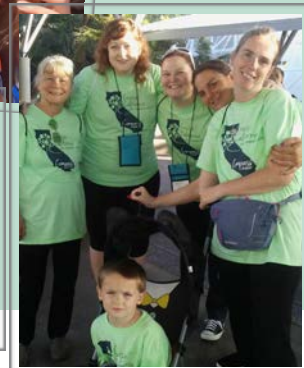
Cruise Memories!

Just sit right back
And you'll hear a tale
A tale of a favorite trip,
That started from this Cali port,
Aboard this massive ship.
The mate was a mighty sailin' boss,
The Skipper brave and sure.
120 passengers set sail that day,
For a 7 day tour,
A 7 day tour.

*Adapted from *Gilligan's Island* theme song.

BOSS

[7]



Why You Really Need SLEEP

[8]

Many people would identify themselves as sleep-deprived. The average adult needs between 7 ½ and 9 hours of sleep each night.

Sleep helps your body to make important hormones, restore and repair cells, fight infection and strengthen your immune system among many other things. So the next time you think about skipping sleep because you don't have time, think about how you don't have to be run-down and sick. Not getting enough sleep will decrease your ability to handle stress. It also negatively influences your mood and your energy levels, as well as your ability to think, learn and remember. Cutting down on your body's necessary maintenance increases the chance of your body breaking down.

The quality of your sleep is just as important as how much sleep you are getting. Just because you are in bed for 8 hours does not mean your body is getting the sleep it needs. It's important to keep a regular sleep cycle. Sleep experts often encourage getting up and going to sleep around the same time every day, even on weekends.

One recommendation to improve sleep quality is to have a set time when you stop using your electronic devices each night. Aiming for about 30 minutes before sleeping is often sufficient. One way to do this is to put your electronics in another room and turn your television off. If your phone is not within arm's reach, you are not as likely to pick it up. You also may want to purchase an alarm clock instead of using your phone to wake you up. We need to have quiet time to wind ourselves down at night without our electronics.

During the day our body naturally releases serotonin, a hormone connected with being awake and in a good mood. At night the darkness signals our bodies to create melatonin, a hormone that helps us fall asleep naturally. Most of our electronics have a blue light that our body thinks is morning light. This causes our body to want to stay awake. On the other hand, the darker your room is,

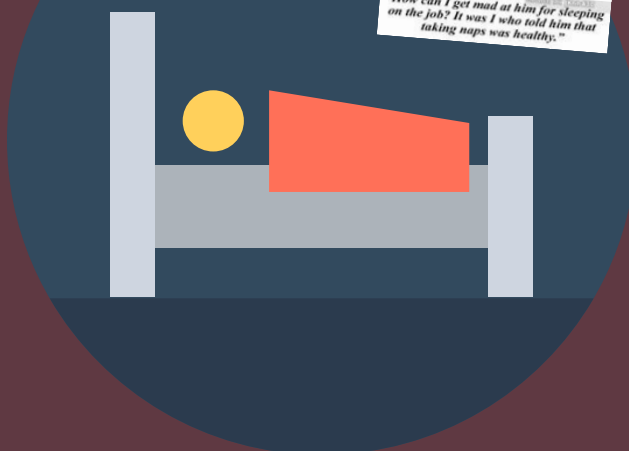
By Jamie Daniel, **Nurse Specialist**



the more melatonin your body makes. So looking at your phone and trying to drift off to sleep are opposing forces hence why I said earlier the light from the screen is like having a tiny sun in your hand, telling your body to wake up!

Also, looking at exciting things on your phone entertains your mind and body. This keeps you more alert and engaged instead of helping you to relax. Finally, any alerts or buzzing from your phone during the night can disturb you while you are trying to sleep, even if you do not wake up fully.

If you have trouble falling asleep, try this breathing exercise: Breathe in for 8 seconds, hold your breath for 3 seconds, and then breathe out for 8 seconds. Do this for 5-8 minutes. Studies have shown this type of intentional breathing can help you fall asleep. I've done this and it helps!



Throw Back
Disneyland 2010!



Bay Client Christmas Party

December 1st
6pm-8:30pm

The Vine Cinema
1722 First St
Livermore, CA

FIND US ON FACEBOOK!



Compass SLS & ILs
475 Knollcrest Dr.
Redding, CA 96002

