



Courage to Change

Enhancing Lifelong Recovery and Personal Growth



in this edition

Ask the Expert:

Living Sanely, One Day at a Time - In recovery, we learn to let go of the attitudes and behaviors that weighed us down. We give up our need to control. We expose our distorted thinking.

Story of Hope:

Step Three Requires an Act: We Must Decide - This sounds like a simple enough act, but this decision we're making is a crucial one, and our sobriety and sanity depend upon it.

Spiritual Reflection:

God Uses Regular People - The miracles collected in *50 Quiet Miracles That Changed Lives* come in all shapes and forms, from unexpected phone calls to chance meetings. They are small enough to simply produce a warm glow and dramatic enough to create awe and wonder.

Ask the Expert:

Living Sanely, One Day at a Time

Shock Waves, by Cynthia Orange, is for those who love someone suffering from PTSD.

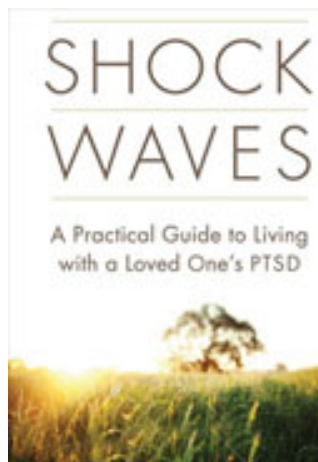
Someone said that insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, expecting different results, and that sanity is what we get when we quit hoping for a better past. We cannot change the fact that trauma affected our loved one and infected our life. But we can stop our unhealthy patterns of trying to control how our loved one deals (or doesn't deal) with the effects of the trauma and we can interrupt our own cycle of compulsive or codependent behavior. We can get sane. We can recover.

In recovery, we learn to let go of the attitudes and behaviors that weighed us down. We give up our need to control. We expose our distorted thinking. We release resentment and begin to understand how it grows from unresolved anger. We learn how toxic emotions--no matter how justified we might feel about having them--hurt us more than others. ...

When we rid ourselves of negative behaviors and thoughts, we make room for unconditional love and compassion--for others and for ourselves. Healthy relationships are hard work in the best of circumstances; tougher when the person we care about is suffering from the effects of trauma; and potentially disastrous when one or both are also engaged in an addictive or compulsive behavior.

Ultimately, recovery is about choice. Each day we can decide to blame trauma or our loved one for our actions and feelings or we can take responsibility for our own life and growth. What do you choose?

Excerpted from **Shock Waves** by Cynthia Orange



Shock Waves: A Practical Guide to Living with a Loved One's PTSD

Softcover, 204pp
Item: 2602
List Price: \$14.95
Online Price: \$13.45

Story of Hope:

Step Three Requires an Act: We Must Decide

Author Marya Hornbacher offers an enlightening examination of the Twelve Steps for those with co-occurring addiction and mental health disorders.

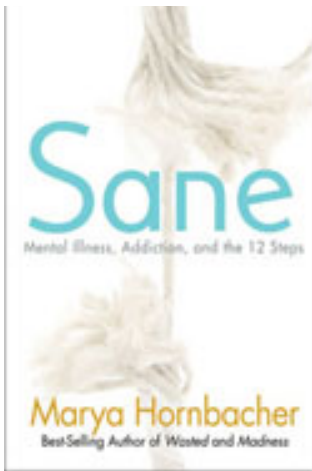
Following on the heels of two opportunities for reflection--Step One, where we finally became honest enough with ourselves to recognize that we were powerless over our drug of choice and that our lives were out of control; and Step Two, where we came to recognize that faith in a Power greater than ourselves is necessary and will bring us to a place of sanity--Step Three requires an act: we must *decide*.

This sounds like a simple enough act, but this decision we're making is a crucial one, and our sobriety and sanity depend upon it. Unless we take this Step seriously, our efforts to take the Steps that follow it will be in vain, because in this Step we discover in ourselves things we will need for the rest of our journey: willingness, acceptance, and belief.

But all we need to take this Step is one of those things: willingness. From willingness follow the gifts of acceptance and belief--it's willingness that shows us those results. We don't need to have a thorough understanding or our Higher Power to take Step Three; we don't even need to believe in one. All we need is willingness. Are you willing to learn a new way of living? Are you *willing* to turn your life over to the care of something greater than yourself?

Excerpted from **Sane: Mental Illness, Addiction, and the 12 Steps** by Marya Hornbacher





Sane: Mental Illness, Addiction, and the 12 Steps

Softcover, 180pp.

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Online Price: \$13.45

Spiritual Reflection: God Uses Regular People

The miracles collected in *50 Quiet Miracles That Changed Lives* come in all shapes and forms, from unexpected phone calls to chance meetings. They are small enough to simply produce a warm glow and dramatic enough to create awe and wonder.

This was all Walt needed to end a particularly difficult day--to be stuck in traffic on a busy highway in Fort Collins, Colorado, just as the first flakes of an early December snowstorm began to fall. ...

Suddenly, as the traffic inched ahead, his car began to choke and sputter. ... He was able to pull off into a nearby service station before the car died completely. Trying to look on the bright side, the physician was thankful to have a warm and dry place to stay while a mechanic checked his car.

He was told there would be at least a fifteen-minute wait before someone would be available to help him. There was a convenience store attached to the service station. As Walt approached to call his wife about his predicament, he noticed a young woman exit, walk toward an old station wagon crammed with three children and a bunch of suitcases, then suddenly fall to the ground. Fearing she may have slipped on some ice or tripped over a gas hose, the physician rushed over to see if she was injured.

When he got there, the woman was sitting on the ground sobbing. ... As the physician helped her to her feet, a nickel fell from her hand. She quickly bent over to retrieve it, putting it with the rest of the coins clutched in her trembling fingers. ... He quickly diagnosed the situation. This young lady and her children were apparently in a desperate financial situation. ...

"I didn't fall," she [said]. "I got down on my knees to beg God for help. ..."

The physician smiled warmly, and said, "God heard you. That's why he sent me." Then he took out his credit card and stuck it into the card reader on the gas pump to fill up her car. ... He bought two big bags of food, some gift certificates she could use on the road, and two big cups of hot coffee, one for each of them.

... The young woman said her name was Maggie and that she lived in Kansas City. Her boyfriend left two months ago, and she wasn't able to make ends meet. After falling two months behind on the rent,

she called her parents out of desperation. They lived in California. She hadn't spoken to them in almost five years because they disapproved of her unmarried lifestyle. She was surprised and deeply grateful when her parents asked her to come home and live with them until she got back on her feet.

So she packed everything she owned, crammed it all into her old station wagon, and told her children they'd be celebrating Christmas in California. She didn't want to take any money from her parents for the trip, so she sold a few things, hoping the money would be enough to get her there. But it wasn't. Now she didn't even have enough left for gas, let alone food.

The physician reached into his pocket and gave her the \$120 he had in cash. He also gave her his gloves. Then he hugged the young woman and said a quick prayer with her that God would watch over them the rest of the way.

"Are you an angel or something?" Maggie asked, her eyes filled with tears.

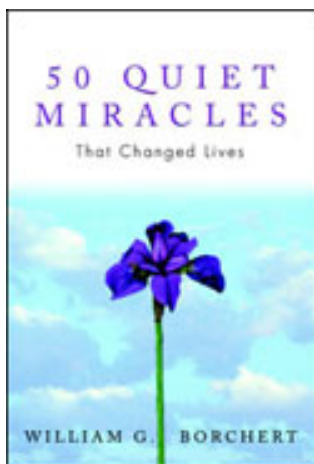
"No, sweetheart," Walt replied. "At this time of the year, angels are really busy, so sometimes God uses regular people."

As he watched the young woman and her children drive away, the caring physician thought to himself how incredible it was to be part of someone else's miracle, how God had sent him in answer to her prayers. But God didn't forget about Walt either.

The physician's car was still parked where he had left it. For some reason he walked over, got in, and turned the key in the ignition. It started right up. ... So he decided to head for home, thinking to himself, I'll put the car in the shop tomorrow for a checkup, but I suspect the mechanic won't find anything wrong.

And sure enough, the next day, the mechanic didn't find anything wrong.

Excerpted from *50 Quiet Miracles That Changed Lives* by William G. Borchert



50 Quiet Miracles That Changed Lives

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