

Dr. Pursch, continued...

night. When I mentioned treating alcoholic Navy pilots, he quickly began to view the problem of addiction not just personally, in the narrow scope of his brother's problems, but nationally: "Engineers must have the same problem", the President said. He was thinking in terms of the railroads and Labor. Curiously, that evening just one phone call was put through directly to the President. The caller was George Meany, President of the AFL-CIO. And the call wasn't for the President. It was for me!"

The irony of that moment lies in its contrast to Joe Pursch's difficult early years in Yugoslavia, where he grew up. His father owned a meat processing plant near Belgrade. In 1944, when Pursch was 14 years old, the Russian army was advancing toward Yugoslavia. So, young Joe Pursch and 600 other children were transported by freight car to Czechoslovakia for safe keeping. The "safe keeping" turned out to be a form of forced labor. In a labor camp there, he was told that his family home and business had been confiscated and his parents executed by the Russians.

In this difficult situation, however, Joe Pursch had an ace in the hole: an American birth certificate, which would prove to be his passport to freedom. (He had actually been born in Chicago, where his parents had emigrated, but then returned to Yugoslavia in 1931.) "I folded the birth certificate into a square about this size", Dr. Pursch said, indicating a 2" square, "and kept it hidden in the heel of my shoe".

In 1947, after the American Consulate contacted an uncle in Detroit who would pay for his passage to America, Pursch arrived in New York on a troop ship - unable to speak English and with \$2.73 in his pocket.

But things were looking up in general for young Joseph Pursch: He learned from the Red Cross that his parents were alive, for one thing. For another, his uncle got him a job as a high-rise window washer. "So I started at the top of American industry, you might say... at 80 cents an hour".

Joe Pursch learned the new language easily, having studied Latin, French, Serbian and German in Yugoslavia. He also quickly picked up the street idiom, which would later enhance his effectiveness as a therapist treating people of diverse backgrounds.

Within a year, he owned his own window washing company. He worked his way through Pre-Med in Detroit, then through Indiana University School of Medicine.

During this period he married, started a family, learned to fly and, for \$1100, bought an airplane which he later had to sell in order to buy a trailer to house his family while he went to school.

In 1960, after his internship, he became a U.S. Navy flight surgeon. Serving at sea on an aircraft carrier, he discovered that "the No. 1 health problem aboard our ship and probably in the world was alcohol abuse". He also developed a strong interest in psychiatry, "because most of the patients I was seeing also had emotional and mental problems".

Later, at the Navy hospital in Bethesda, Md., he began to combine psychiatry and substance abuse treatment, a pioneering, controversial approach.

In 1975, as Director of the Long Beach Naval Hospital Rehabilitation Program, Dr. Pursch became famous because some of his VIP patients went public with their recoveries.

But, for all his distinguished credentials, Dr. Pursch still displays an engaging sense of humor and is a font of one liners: "Doctors in America

treat alcoholics on the notion that alcoholism is a valium deficiency ...which means that alcoholics smell better but still bump into things." And, "The most abused drug in California is Bourzac... which is Prozac washed down with Bourbon."

At the present time, in addition to seeing patients and speaking at **Sober Living By The Sea**, Dr. Pursch is in private practice in Laguna Beach, California and lectures world wide. ■

New Horizons in Research, continued...

What is truly revealing is the fact that no one ever got high from alcohol or drugs. Such substances, Dr. Hawkins points out, are incapable of causing anyone to feel anything. As he explains:

"Addiction has proven an obstinate social and clinical problem, thus far not understood beyond the most basic description. By the term *addiction*, we mean clinical addiction in the classical sense of continued dependence on alcohol or drugs despite serious consequences, a condition exceeding the capacity of the user to discontinue use of the substance unaided, because the will itself has been rendered ineffective. But what is the essential nature of addiction, and what is the addict really hooked on?"

The common belief is that it's the substance itself to which the victim has become addicted, due to that substance's power to create a "high" state of euphoria. But if we reexamine the nature of addiction through the methodology outlined herein (in the book) a different formulation of the process emerges. Alcohol or drugs do not have the power to create a "high" at all; they calibrate at only 100 (the level of vegetables). The so-called high that the drug or alcohol user experiences, however, can calibrate from 350 to 600. The actual effect of drugs is merely to suppress the lower energy fields, thereby allowing the user to exclusively experience the higher ones. It's as though a filter screened out all the lower tones coming from an orchestra so that all that could be heard were the high notes. The suppression of the low notes doesn't create the high ones; it merely reveals them.

Within the levels of consciousness, the higher frequencies are extremely powerful, and few people routinely experience these as pure states because they're masked by lower energy fields of anxiety, fear, anger, resentment, and so on. Rarely does the average person get to experience, for instance, love without fear, or pure joy, much less ecstasy. But these higher states are so powerful that once they have been experienced, they are never forgotten, and therefore, are sought ever after.

It is to this experience of higher states that people become addicted. The high state that people seek, by whatever means, is in fact the experience field of their own consciousness (Self). If they're spiritually unsophisticated and lack a context with which to comprehend the experience, they believe it's created by something "out there" (such as a guru, music, drugs, lovers, and so forth) - but all that has actually happened is that, under special circumstances, they have experienced what is, in reality, "in here". The majority of people are so divorced from their own states of pure consciousness that they don't recognize them when they experience them, because they identify with their own lower ego states, or their own lowest common denominator. A negative self-image blots out the joyous brilliance that is the true essence of their identities, which therefore goes unrecognized. That this joyous, peaceful, fulfilling state is really one's own essence has been a basic tenet of every great spiritual leader (for example, "the kingdom of God is within you"). ■

Dr. Hawkins' insight, *Power vs. Force. Eye of The Eye and I* are all available from Veritas Publishing Co., Sodona, AZ, (928) 282-8722

Alumni News

Birthdays:



Maureen S. October 10 years
Jennifer F. October 3 years
Maggie S. October 2 years
Sheri Y. October 2 years
Donna Antonelli. October 1 year
Mary M., October 1 year
Michael B., October 1 year
Howard "Howie", November 4 years
Gary A., November 3 years
Lili G., November 3 years
Keith M., November 2 years
Mindy M., November 2 years
Caroline B., November 2 years
Sabrina H., November 1 year
Chris W., December 5 years
Jeremy W., December 5 years
Lauren W., December 2 years

Congratulations Graduates!
Keep going back...It works if you work it!

Kudos

SLBTS Employees of The Month

Employee of The Year:
Tony Fusco



October: Ken Nersten and Bill Cook



November: Sandy Taylor and Lee Ann Underwood



December: Delores Coats



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"Success is never final"
WINSTON CHURCHILL

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The Leading Clinic in
Transitional Recovery

Feature Profile:



Meet Dr. Pursch

By Tom Lincoln

If a Hollywood film maker were to call Central Casting in search of someone to play the role of a quintessential, world-class psychiatrist, chances are they would come up with someone resembling Dr. Joseph Pursch. His dapper appearance, silver grey hair, European accent and distinguished bearing make him stand out in a crowd. Dr. Pursch, whom I'd never met, was readily obvious to me, among a room of health-care professionals, as the psychiatrist who was to be the subject of this interview. But Joseph Pursch, who recently joined **Sober Living By The Sea** as Psychiatric Consultant, doesn't just look the part; he's the real deal. He was formerly Chief of the Navy's Alcohol Rehabilitation Program and served on successive Presidential Commissions: President Carter's *Alcohol and Drug Commission* and Ronald Regan's *Blue Ribbon Commission on Drunk Driving*. And today, among numerous other honors and affiliations, he sits on the Board of Trustees of the *National Commission Against Drunk Driving*, which gave us:

- Seat Belt Law
- Lowered BAC (breath alcohol content) from 0.1 to 0.08 as the measure for illegal drunk driving, and
- The ability of police to revoke a drunk driver's license on the spot.

Would 0.08 be too conservative? "How well could I drive under the new regulations?", he asked himself. He arranged to take the test of a drinking driver's first offender's course. In this program, a person takes an obstacle driving test when his BAC is 0.00. Then he or she drinks to a BAC level of .10 and repeats the test. What Dr. Pursch discovered was that even at a BAC of .07, and attempting to drive carefully, he knocked over 35 traffic cones. "A startling fact is that if I had been arrested driving on a highway at that point, I actually would not have been legally drunk because my BAC was only .07."

Dr. Pursch's association with the White House took on a personal dimension when he was invited by a grateful President Jimmy Carter to stay there following his treatment of the President's brother, Billy, for alcoholism. ("I slept in the Lincoln Bedroom before it was fashionable", Dr. Pursch quipped "...and when it was free.") "President Carter was, and is, an unusual man. We talked late into the

As Director of the Alcohol Rehabilitation Service at the Naval Regional Medical Center in Long Beach, California from 1973 to 1980, Dr. Pursch treated Betty Ford, Billy Carter and astronaut Buzz Aldrin. Since 1980 he has treated numerous other public figures, celebrities and professional athletes. He supervised the drug testing program for players, linemen and other officials at Wimbledon, the U.S. Open Championships and other Grand Slam tournaments in his position as Program Manager for the Men's International Professional Tennis Council.

Dr. Pursch has served as an expert witness in legal cases, has conducted seminars and lectures worldwide and has appeared on network television programs including "60 Minutes", "The Today Show", "Good Morning America", "Prime Time Live" and "The Phil Donahue Show". He has been featured in seventeen educational films which have become standard tools in the treatment of chemical dependency, and he has written numerous articles and papers in the scientific and lay press. From 1981 to 1993 he wrote a column on alcohol and other drug addiction that was syndicated by The Los Angeles Times Syndicate and appeared in papers across the country and Central America.

Dr. Pursch is the author of the book, *Dear Doc*, and among other honors, was the recipient of The Distinguished Service Medal from the President of the United States. He has been listed in *Who's Who in America*, *Who's Who in American Medicine* and *Best Doctors in America*.

New Horizons in Research:

Dr. David R. Hawkins' leading-edge discovery on the nature of drug and alcohol addiction



"David Hawkins is a renowned lecturer and expert on mental processes whose national TV appearances include *The MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour* and the *Today* show. He is the author of numerous scientific papers and videotapes; in 1973 he co-authored the innovative work *Orthomolecular Psychiatry* with Nobel Prize winner Linus Pauling. Dr. Hawkins' extensive background as a therapist and teacher is noted in his biographical listing in *Who's Who in America*. Dr. Hawkins is currently the director of *The Institute for Advanced Spiritual Research*." - from the book jacket

Power vs. Force. (Hay House) a ground-breaking book by David R. Hawkins, M.D., Ph.D., a visionary therapist intimate with the horrors of addiction, has been praised by readers as diverse as Mother Teresa, Lee Iacocca and Sam Walton. Dr. Wayne Dyer (author of *There's a Spiritual Solution to Every Problem*) called it "Perhaps the most important and significant book I've read in the last ten years."

Dr. Dyer provided this summary: "Dr. Hawkins has quantified human actions and emotions by frequencies. The author spent twenty-nine years in an exhaustive study to measure the vibrations of human behavior and thought and to help us see how to move from the lower/slower frequencies of shame, guilt, apathy, fear, and anger into the higher vibrations of willingness, acceptance, reason, love, joy, peace, and enlightenment".

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