



# The PAPPC Journal

Volume 74

No. 1

Winter 2019

*A publication of The Pennsylvania Association on Probation, Parole and Corrections*

## Registration Now Open for the 99<sup>th</sup> Annual PAPPC Training Institute and Conference (pappc.org)



**“Achieving a New  
High: Drug Trends and  
Concealment Methods  
within our Institutions  
and Communities”**

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Wetzel.**



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# The PAPPC Board and Executive Committee would like to say **“THANK YOU”** to all current and past members for **99 years of support!**

Without you, we would not be able to succeed as an association. In order to show our appreciation, we would like to invite you on a private, all expense paid, “Happy Hour Cruise” on the Victorian Princess 5/21/19 from 6PM – 9PM. All you have to do is register for the upcoming conference!! ***Don’t miss out on this exciting opportunity!!***

**Seats are limited, so register ASAP ([pappc.org](http://pappc.org))!!**

A short walk from the Sheraton • All Inclusive Event • 2-hour cruise of Presque Isle Bay  
*Rain or shine*



## Contribute to *The PAPPC Journal*!

**THE PAPPC JOURNAL** is published by members of the Pennsylvania Association on Probation, Parole and Corrections. Articles, announcements and other newsworthy material of relevance to our membership may be submitted for consideration to:

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# The Pennsylvania Association on Probation, Parole and Corrections

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## PAPPC

### MISSION STATEMENT

THE MISSION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION ON PROBATION, PAROLE AND CORRECTIONS (PAPPC) SUPPORTS AND PROMOTES BEST PRACTICE METHODS AND PROFESSIONALISM IN THE FIELD OF JUVENILE AND ADULT PROBATION, PAROLE, CORRECTIONS, INSTITUTIONAL CARE AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION.



## A Message from the President TONUIA SMITH, 2018–2019

Greetings,

As we enter our ninety-ninth year, it is a distinct honor and humbling opportunity to serve as the 2018-2019 President of the Pennsylvania Association on Probation, Parole and Corrections (PAPPC). I am excited and committed to leading our association in **"Achieving a New High: Drug Trends and Concealment Methods within our Institutions and Communities"**. Our 2019 annual conference theme is a reminder that we are in the midst of a drug epidemic where no one is excluded from the disease of addiction. In some manner, we have all been affected, or know someone who has been affected, by issues related to substance abuse.

As we come together as an organization, we must ready ourselves by expanding our knowledge, strengthening our understanding of the challenges, identifying best practices and implementing solutions. As an active member of the PAPPC for over sixteen years, I continue to stand committed and passionate to our mission. It is our goal to promote a vision that is rooted in effectively improving lives and communities. I challenge each of us to seek progressive models, methods and systems that are inclusive, synergistic and effective so that those in need can fully participate and thrive.

My passion to this work and the association continues to deepen and I look forward to working with you towards the

actualization of our goals and partnering to create the change we want to achieve.

With the reminder of our mission below, I task each of you to accept and fulfill the commitment and remember that we are one committed team, serving our communities in hopes of building a better tomorrow. I thank you and the members of the board for your commitment to ensuring that our mission is fulfilled.

***The mission of Pennsylvania Association on Probation, Parole, and Corrections (PAPPC) is to support and promote best practice methods and professionalism in the field of juvenile and adult probation, parole, corrections institutional care and community supervision.***

Regards,

Tonuia Smith, PAPPC President



### In Memory Of James M. Robinson

1/29/49 – 12/13/18



**PAPPC President 2001 - 2002**



# Governor Wolf: Title IX Proposals Hurt Crime Victims and Weaken Sexual Assault Protections



## EDUCATION, NATIONAL ISSUES, PRESS RELEASE

**Harrisburg, PA** – Governor Tom Wolf sent a letter to U.S. Department of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos expressing his deep concern for the department's proposed regulations addressing K-12 and postsecondary institutions' obligations to respond to allegations of sexual harassment and sexual assault under Title IX.

"I'm appalled at the proposed Title IX changes that could make it more difficult for students who have experienced sexual violence to find the support they need on campus," Governor Wolf said. "Today marks three years since my administration launched It's On Us. Pennsylvania's program was the first statewide effort to combat sexual violence on college campuses and we are making progress. While Pennsylvania is doing more for victims, the federal government is turning its back. Secretary DeVos must reverse course."

Working with advocates, educators, administrators, law enforcement and campus safety officials, Title IX coordinators, and experts, Pennsylvania sought to identify prevention and response efforts that help break down the formal and informal barriers that so many survivors face.

From that work, Pennsylvania launched the first state-level "It's On Us" campaign in the nation and has invested nearly \$3 million in evidence-based programs on college and university campuses that create better systems and standards for sexual assault reporting and response.

Gov. Wolf's letter to Sec. DeVos outlines the reasons why the proposed Title IX changes will set back the work being done in Pennsylvania.

### *From the letter:*

"These proposed changes send a dangerous message that sexual harassment and sexual assault do not warrant action from our schools and campuses. If adopted, they would also undermine decades of progress built on the foundational understanding that schools have an obligation to effectively prevent and address gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence to ensure that all students have equal access to a full education."

"These protections did not come easy – they were the result of hard-fought battles, personal sacrifice, and tireless advocacy on the part of victims of crime and their families who demanded more from elected officials and from those leading education institutions to move from a place of "that is not our role" to an understanding that we cannot separate the impacts of violence on the ability of students to access the opportunities that education provides."

"In recent years, survivors of sexual harassment and sexual assault have bravely stepped forward to share their stories and demand change. However, for every survivor that makes that choice, there are many more who keep quiet, concerned they will not be believed, or that speaking up could lead to more harm than good."

"By proposing to eliminate many of the tools and approaches that have chipped away at longstanding challenges of underreporting and unsafe climates that permit sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination to take place, the U.S. Department of Education will effectively take us back to a time where these issues were hidden away, unacknowledged and unaddressed."

"We cannot go back. We cannot tell survivors that they cannot be helped unless their victimization fits narrowly-defined criteria, or if they are willing to undertake the significant burden of a prescribed disciplinary process that prioritizes unfounded fears over evidence-based concerns for individual and collective safety and well-being."

"I strongly urge the Department to reconsider its proposed rulemaking and encourage members of Congress to explore ways to strengthen our laws to ensure all education environments are ones where students can come forward and access the rights, resources, and supports they deserve, and that Title IX should guarantee."

Pennsylvanians are encouraged to submit a comment to the U.S. Department of Education.

### *Full text of the letter:*

*Dear Secretary DeVos:*

As governor of Pennsylvania – and as a parent and grandparent – I write to express my deep concern regarding the U.S. Department of Education's proposed regulations addressing K-12 and postsecondary institutions' obligations to respond to allegations of sexual harassment and sexual assault under Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972.

These proposed changes send a dangerous message that sexual harassment and sexual assault do not warrant action from our schools and campuses. If adopted, they would also undermine decades of progress built on the foundational understanding that schools have an obligation to effectively prevent and address

*(continued on pg 6)*

gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence to ensure that all students have equal access to a full education.

Since launching the first statewide It's On Us program in the nation to address campus sexual violence in 2016, my administration has listened to and partnered with students and professionals who are on the front lines of this work – advocates, educators, administrators, law enforcement and campus safety officials, Title IX coordinators, and experts – to identify prevention and response efforts that help break down the formal and informal barriers that so many survivors face. I'm proud that Pennsylvania has invested nearly \$3 million in evidence-based programs on college and university campuses that create better systems and standards for sexual assault reporting and response.

These efforts were born from a simple premise: Sexual harassment, violence, and discrimination should not be part of any student's education. Unfortunately, data suggest that these experiences are far too common, and often go unreported and unaddressed:

- Nearly 20 percent of girls between the ages of 14 and 17 experience sexual assault. [1]
- More than one in five women and one in 20 men experience sexual violence during their college years. [2]
- One in three adolescents will experience dating violence. [3]
- One in four students who are sexually assaulted drop out of school. [4]

These statistics are deeply troubling and a call to action for educators, community members, and leaders entrusted with ensuring the safety and well-being of all students.

In recent years, survivors of sexual harassment and sexual assault have bravely stepped forward to share their stories and demand change. However, for every survivor that makes that choice, there are many more who keep quiet, concerned they will not be believed, or that speaking up could lead to more harm than good. The Department's proposed rules would make an already impossible choice more impossible. They would further disincentivize, and in many ways prohibit, decisions and actions taken by our education systems – both K-12 and postsecondary – to do right by students and communities. And they would restrict our educational institutions' ability to meaningfully address violence, harassment, and discrimination that force too many of our young people to ask the question: do I want to feel safe, or do I want to stay on track with my education? By creating a system where sexual violence is more narrowly defined and even more difficult to report, the Department would help to continue a dangerous cycle of silence and violence that endangers the health and well-being of millions of students.

Pennsylvania has long been a place where we demand more from our institutions of learning to ensure the safety of students. In 1988, the commonwealth became the first state in the nation to require that higher education institutions develop policies and procedures to prevent and address violent crime – including sexual assault – and other safety concerns on campus. Two years later, the federal Jeanne Clery Act – named in memory of a Pennsylvania student who was raped and murdered in her dorm room – was signed into law by President George H.W. Bush, extending those requirements to all postsecondary institutions across the country. The law would later expand to include explicit rights for campus sexual assault victims, as well as survivors of dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking.

These protections did not come easily – they were the result of hard-fought battles, personal sacrifice, and tireless advocacy on the part of victims of crime and their families who demanded more from elected officials and from those leading education institutions to move from a place of “that is not our role” to an understanding that we cannot separate the impacts of violence on the ability of students to access the opportunities that education provides.

By proposing to eliminate many of the tools and approaches that have chipped away at longstanding challenges of underreporting and unsafe climates that permit sexual violence, harassment, and discrimination to take place, the U.S. Department of Education will effectively take us back to a time where these issues were hidden away, unacknowledged and unaddressed.

We cannot go back. We cannot tell survivors that they cannot be helped unless their victimization fits narrowly-defined criteria, or unless they are willing to undertake the significant burden of a prescribed disciplinary process that prioritizes unfounded fears over evidence-based concerns for individual and collective safety and well-being.

I strongly urge the Department to reconsider its proposed rulemaking and encourage members of Congress to explore ways to strengthen our laws to ensure all educational environments are places where students can come forward and access the rights, resources, and supports they deserve, and that Title IX should guarantee.

Sincerely,  
TOM WOLF  
Governor

[1] David Finkelhor et al., *Children's Exposure to Violence: A Comprehensive National Survey*, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Office of Justice Programs, October 2009.

[2] *Campus Sexual Violence: Statistics*, RAINN.

[3] Dorothy L. Espelage, et al., “Bullying, Sexual, and Dating Violence Trajectories From Early to Late Adolescence,” U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice, April 2014.

[4] Michelle V. Porche et al., “Childhood Trauma and Psychiatric Disorders as Correlates of School Dropout in a National Sample of Young Adults,” *Child Development*, May 2011.

**Are you the PAPPC Member  
of the Month?**

**Watch for an email from the PAPPC and  
receive a \$25.00 gift card.**





## "The Sound of Silence"

By Michael Carrington

Silence. This is the sound that you are more likely to hear today than ever before when you are waiting in the doctor's office, the DMV, the line in the grocery store, or your living room at home. I sit here as a mid-30-year-old trying to remember what life was like before the iPhone was invented, before Facebook made face-to-face communication an inconvenience, before the internet replaced the library, before Siri could provide an answer to any question without the user having to do any research or critical thinking of their own. At times, it can be difficult to remember how we solved problems, accessed information, or relayed messages before we could accomplish any or all of these tasks with the press of a button and/or a voice command. Don't get me wrong, there have immeasurable amounts of positive advances that directly result from advent of new technology and the era of unprecedented innovation that we currently find ourselves in. As much as I miss various aspects of the "old days", or at least as old as I can remember, I wouldn't return to them when weighing all of the pros and cons of lifestyle today vs. the lifestyle of a few decades ago.

The enigma that we are all faced with is trying to separate the "necessary" from the oft-used phrase "necessary evil". It is a great privilege to be able to utilize modern technology in our day-to-day activities. Among other things, we can manage time more efficiently, make decisions supported by research, relay information in real-time, and assist individuals in emergency situations. On the flip-side, we can also become so reliant on technology that we forget how to have a meaningful

conversation, write in complete sentences, or formulate a unique, original opinion of our own. Essentially, an individual's reliance on technology can lead to physical and/or mental stagnation.

The lyrics from the famous Disturbed song say, "Fools, you do not know: Silence, like a cancer, grows." This is what I will focus on for the remainder of the article. As technology has expanded, the ability to effectively communicate has suffered tremendously. Simply put, the world is quieter now and we are doing little to slow the silence from spreading. Think about the aforementioned waiting rooms 20 years ago... believe it or not, people were talking to each other. Perfect strangers were talking about current events, the weather, or issues they were facing. It was those little conversations that allowed the feeling of "community" to become embedded within us. Showing a little care, concern, comradery, or compassion to others within your neighborhood was a regular occurrence. Those "strangers" were often dealing with the same struggles you were and it never took long to make a connection between your family and theirs. At times, it was those seemingly pointless conversations that helped you, or those around you, make it through the day with a better attitude, a heightened sense of awareness to issues affecting your community, and a reinforced knowledge that you/they are not alone. If nothing else, we were reminded to be thankful for what we were, what we had, and where we had come. Children were supervised, people were looking at each other as they spoke, doors were opened/held for those needing assistance, and a smile was generally met with a smile. That is what waiting rooms used to be. This is what waiting rooms are now:



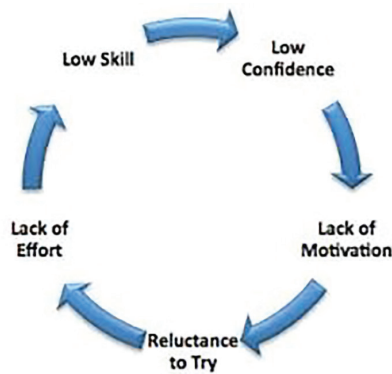
Our communication issues are certainly not limited to public places or events. In the fast-paced, career-oriented world that we live in, it was inevitable that families were going to spread out, children were going to branch out, and the "Little House on the Prairie" dynamic of yester-year was going to become atypical. However, it is incumbent upon us to remember the value of that close-knit family structure. It taught children how to express their thoughts, feelings, and emotions with those who they shared the strongest connections with. At the dinner table, the entire family sat and talked about the highs and lows of their day. Communication was clear and direct, with little to no distractions. Fast forward a half-century and the typical family evening has changed completely. The dinner table is less of a conversation facilitator and more of a convenient place to chow down before moving on to bigger and better things...like the computer, TV, phone, or gaming system. There is little meaningful conversation and everyone seems to operate on an individual schedule rather than as a cohesive unit. The divorce rate continues to increase in addition to the fact that many families have two working parents, leaving the children free to find ways to entertain themselves. Similarly to offenders in the world of criminal justice, free time for adolescents rarely leads to productive, healthy activities.

As parents and professionals, we have to model good communication skills for the younger generation if we expect them to be able to function when they enter the world on their own. Children need to learn how to verbalize their emotions, teenagers need to be able to work through conflict, and young adults need to be confident/competent enough to make new personal connections, network in their careers, and be the models for future generations. Unfortunately, none of those skills can be learned through osmosis via a smartphone. We learn to communicate by communicating. Decades of communication blunders and successes have shaped the way that we speak to each other, our significant others, and our children. We expect the new generation to be like we were without taking into

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account how the world has changed, and continues to change day by day. It still surprises us when we realize that the gap that separates who we are and who they are continues to grow larger every year. It is no different now than it was 30 to 40 years ago when we were the new generation and our parents were “old school”. Our way of life was just as foreign to them as our children’s is to us. We all strive to give our children more than we were given but it is just as important to give our children healthy life skills as material possessions or financial security.

Lacking confidence in your ability to communicate effectively can have a detrimental impact in your career aspirations and personal relationships. No one makes a conscious choice to be a poor communicator. From the kids who sit by themselves at the lunch table, to the teens who hang out in the corner of the dance floor, to the adult that struggles with a morning greeting when walking through the office; It is often a learned helplessness due to the lack of regular,



meaningful communication during their formative years. Of course there are outliers; some individuals are nervous by nature, some suffer from mental health issues that impact their ability to interact comfortably in social settings, while others lack the confidence to engage with others due to speech or physical imperfections.

It is important to model effective, prosocial communication skills to our children, our subordinates, and our community in general. Professional leaders should role-play scenarios that are likely to

occur within a workplace in order to build confidence in the response of their employees. Similarly, parents should role-play scenarios with their children to build “muscle memory” that they can utilize in order to succeed when faced with difficult, pressure-filled situations. There are times when an addict takes his first hit simply because s/he never knew how to say “No”. It sounds simple enough, but the struggle is real. That struggle, that inability to think for ourselves and communicate thoughts effectively is more apparent in 2019 than ever before. We need to respect the thoughts and opinions of others as well as feel that our thoughts and opinions are respected by others. In order to do this, we need to communicate clearly and listen more effectively. Put down your phones, get off the computer, shut off the TV, and talk to each other. At least make more of an attempt to have some meaningful conversation in your lives, whether at home, in the office, or in a waiting room. We can all salvage some of the good things in our past while welcoming the great things in our future.

## WELLNESS

### Essential Oils for Treating Colds and Flu

By Amanda Eisenman

It’s that season once again. We all know how it starts... scratchy throat and a few more aches and pains than normal. Or, it could be a runny nose and the feeling of utter exhaustion. Whatever the case, a cold could be on its way. Or, worse yet... the flu. Before reaching for that old standby of NyQuil™, Sudafed®, or Tylenol Cold and Sinus®, why not try an effective natural remedy instead?

Essential oils have been used for centuries for their many medicinal and cleansing properties. Some essential oils work fantastic at fighting the common cold or flu. There are many ways to incorporate these oils into your daily life such as adding them to your bathwater, diffusing them into the air you breathe, or even applying them directly to your skin.



According to Wikipedia, influenza (or the flu), is an infectious disease with symptoms ranging from mild to severe. The most common symptoms include high fever, runny nose, sore throat, muscle pains, headache, coughing, sneezing, and feeling tired. These symptoms typically begin two days after exposure and most last less than a week. The cough, however, may last for more than two weeks. Additionally, in children, there may be

diarrhea and vomiting, but these are not common in adults.

Wikipedia also defines the common cold as a viral infectious disease of the upper respiratory tract that affects the nose, throat, sinuses, and larynx. Signs and symptoms may appear less than two days after exposure and may include coughing, sore throat, runny nose, sneezing, headache, and fever. People usually recover in seven to ten days.

I don’t know about you, but none of these symptoms sound very fun to me! Below are 6 of the top essential oils for cold and flu season.

1.) Tea Tree Oil – This oil has antibacterial, antimicrobial, antiseptic, and antiviral properties. Diffuse this oil into the air or put it in your bathwater to help fight the congestion and discomfort caused by the cold or flu.

2.) Lavender Oil – As an essential oil for colds and flu, lavender has antiseptic

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and anti-inflammatory properties. Use it as a neck and shoulder rub to relax tense muscles and ease headaches. You could also add a carrier oil (coconut, grapeseed, sweet almond, etc.) and create a decongestant rub. This oil promotes sleep and boosts the immune system. It is also gentle enough to use with children.

3.) Peppermint Oil – This oil has antiseptic and antiviral properties and can be used as an expectorant. It is effective at soothing headaches, chest congestion, and reducing fevers. Apply a small amount to your temples to fight head pain. To reduce a fever, apply to the bottoms of your feet. You can also rub this oil on your chest for soothing relieve of chest congestion. Tip – make sure to dilute peppermint oil with a carrier oil (coconut, grapeseed, sweet almond, etc.) because it is very strong.

4.) Lemon Oil – An amazing decongestant and known for its antiviral properties, lemon oil has a fresh and uplifting scent that will lift your spirits when you are feeling down! It also purifies the air to help you breath better. It helps stimulate the production of white blood cells which increases your ability to fight off sickness.

5.) Eucalyptus Oil – As both an antiviral and decongestant, eucalyptus oil helps treat colds and congestion. It is used to help open blocked nasal passages, soothe inflammation, and fight bacteria. Combine this oil with a carrier oil (coconut, grapeseed, sweet almond, etc.) and rub on your chest and shoulders. It also works as a fever reducer.

6.) Thieves – Thieves is a Young Living brand of essential oil. It is a combination of clove, lemon, cinnamon bark, eucalyptus, and rosemary that was created by 15th century

thieves during the plague. This blend has anti-infectious, antiviral, antiseptic, and antibacterial properties. Use it in your diffuser to purify the air. You can also use it as a throat spray to sooth a sore throat. This oil is known to help eliminate symptoms from colds and flu quickly! It works to combat chest congestion, stuffy noses, and sore throats. It is also great at reducing fevers. The smell is pretty amazing, as well!

<https://www.essentialoilhaven.com/essential-oils-for-colds-flu-season/>

<https://www.offthegridnews.com/alternative-health/the-9-very-best-essential-oils-for-treating-colds-and-flu/>

<https://www.up-nature.com/blogs/news/20-of-the-best-essential-oils-for-colds-and-relieving-the-flu>

<https://www.wikipedia.org/>

## RECIPE

# Polish Mistakes

Prep: 10m Cook: 10m Ready: 20m

**A great appetizer that is loved by all! Serve these meaty, cheesy delights on game day! For later use, place the topped bread on a cookie sheet in the freezer for 1 hour. Once frozen, the slices may be stored in freezer bags.**

## INGREDIENTS:

Original recipe yields 15 servings

- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 1 pound sausage
- 1 teaspoon minced onion
- 1 pound processed cheese, cubed
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 ½ tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 (1 pound) loaf cocktail rye bread

## INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat the broiler.
2. Place ground beef, sausage, and onion in a large, deep skillet. Cook over medium high heat until meat is evenly brown and onions are soft. Drain liquid.
3. Mix in the processed cheese food, oregano, and Worcestershire sauce. Stir continuously until the cheese is melted.
4. If the bread is not sliced, cut into thin slices. Spoon approximately 1 tablespoon of the mixture onto each slice. Place the slices in a single layer on a baking pan.
5. Broil the slices 10 minutes, or until the cheese is slightly browned and the bread is toasted.

## Nutrition Facts:

Per Serving: 308 calories; 25.9 g fat; 3.3 g carbohydrates; 14.9 g protein; 63 mg cholesterol; 532 mg sodium.



## My Husband's Suicide: Recognizing Predictors of LE Suicide

**In order to survive and thrive in the law enforcement culture, my husband felt he could not afford to be vulnerable.**

By Kim Colegrove, contributor to *In Public Safety* (Reprinted with permission from the author)

Last year, more law enforcement officers died from suicide than in the line-of-duty. Sadly, suicide rates are thought to be much higher than reported – it's widely accepted that police suicide is woefully under-reported, especially when counting those – like my husband – who commit suicide after retiring.

My husband, David Colegrove, was a law enforcement officer for 30 years. He killed himself in 2014, less than three months after he retired. Since his suicide, I've learned a lot about trauma, post-traumatic stress, secondary trauma, hypervigilance and the common predictors of suicide among law enforcement professionals and other first responders.

First and foremost, I've realized that my husband and I were sitting smack dab in the middle of all of that, and we didn't even know it. David carried a tremendous amount of trauma that had roots in his early years, grew exponentially throughout his police career and affected all areas of his life.

### THE IMPACTS OF TRAUMA

Trauma happens when someone experiences or witnesses abuse, victimization, neglect, loss, violence and disasters. Unfortunately, the majority of first responders experience some kind of trauma during their career and it can be toxic to them mentally and emotionally.

In my husband's first year of policing, when he was only 21 years old, he was involved in a shooting and someone died. He was called into the police station, where his badge and gun were taken away and he was sent home. For days he



(Photo/Pixabay)

*David Colegrove was a law enforcement officer for 30 years. He killed himself in 2014, less than three months after he retired.*

did not know what was going to happen. Then he got a call telling him he had been cleared and should report to roll call the next day. And that was that. Back to work. No counseling, no conversation and no support of any kind.

In the years that followed, the untreated and unprocessed trauma caused David to experience reoccurring stress symptoms, which he was intermittently able to numb – typically with alcohol. Over time, accumulated stress and trauma grew so overwhelming and so powerful that it infiltrated his personality, turning an otherwise great guy into an angry, paranoid, cynical character, or an emotional wreck who could not stop crying.

These stress-induced symptoms ultimately left my husband unable to cope with change, uncertainty, or the most basic daily challenges.

### THE DARK SIDE OF THE LIGHT OF MY LIFE

It has taken me a long time to summon the courage to speak honestly about my husband, his issues and our struggles. David was a very proud and private man, so telling his secrets feels like a betrayal of sorts.

I don't want to let strangers into the dark corners of our life together. I'd much rather talk about the good times, and there were plenty of those. Anyone who knew us knew that we loved each other deeply and shared an intimate friendship that I may never know again. But when I think about keeping the truth to myself and ignoring all the bad things, I think about those officers who are living with such pain today, right now, and I know I have to tell the truth in hopes that they may avoid the same fate as my husband.

The truth is, there was a dark side to David that cast a shadow on our otherwise sunny life – like a murky figure lurking in the background. When David got emotionally triggered by anger or felt threatened in any way, this dark figure would step out of the shadows and take over. This happened rarely, but when it did, it was intense.

That dark guy was never violent towards me, but he was angry and hateful and completely out of control. After each "episode" had subsided, David was embarrassed, ashamed and apologetic. And even though these episodes were awful, I felt so sorry for my husband because it was clear he was full of pain. I believe this dark alter ego developed as a result of years of unresolved trauma and suffering.

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## THE VULNERABILITY PARADOX

I observed and endured a lot of dysfunction as a result of my husband's unresolved trauma. This is extremely difficult for me to admit because I feel vulnerable exposing the underbelly of my imperfect private life. I guess I'm afraid of being judged.

As I identify this feeling of vulnerability within myself, I realize this is the very fear that gripped my husband and kept him from seeking the help he needed. I have deep compassion for this man who, in order to survive and thrive in the law enforcement culture, felt he could not afford to be vulnerable.

That's the tangled web, isn't it? Officers are hurting or are scared, but they want people to think they're okay. Everyone else seems to be doing just fine. If officers are honest about their struggles, if they say they need help, others may think they are weak or broken or crazy. Not to mention the fact that officers could face demotion or dismissal from their job. So, they stay quiet. And they suffer.

The deeper I get into my work with first responders, the more I realize how important it is for me to let my guard down and speak the truth about my husband's problems and our mostly awesome, but sometimes awful, life together. There are too many people suffering in silence and WAY too many people dying. I hope that David's story – our story – will shine a light on this reality so others won't have to endure the same pain and tragedy.

## THE UNRAVELING

In the year leading up to my husband's death, his mental health became increasingly worse. His decision to retire

after 30 years triggered a surge of anxiety, and although he had spent two years carefully crafting a new business venture with a partner, David was terrified of the uncertainty of civilian life and wallowed in thoughts about worst-case scenarios.

In hindsight, there were all kinds of warning signs during that year. David's anxiety intensified and the "episodes," which were almost always alcohol-induced, became more frequent. The dark guy surfaced more often and brought with him fear, worry, angst, paranoia and irrational behavior.

David's last day at work was Friday, September 5, 2014. On Saturday we had his retirement party. On Sunday he had a full-blown anxiety attack, and by the following week his anxiety sent him to the emergency room. This kicked off two months of intense inpatient and outpatient treatment and the slew of prescription medications did not help. In fact, they made things worse.

He barely made it through Thanksgiving dinner because the anxiety was so intense that he could not sit still, or focus, or even carry on a normal conversation. Two days later, David drove to the back of our neighborhood, sat in his truck, and shot himself.

## COMMONALITIES AMONG POLICE SUICIDE VICTIMS

If you or someone you know is experiencing the following symptoms, especially if multiple symptoms are concurrent or repetitive, please seek help immediately:

- Chronic stress
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Intense irritability

- Aggression
- Alcohol Abuse/alcoholism
- Drug Use/addiction
- Hopelessness
- Isolation/withdrawal
- Suicide Ideation
- Talk of suicide

Don't hesitate. Don't wait. Don't let your pride get in the way. Reach out to someone and tell them you need help, then accept the help, and do whatever it takes to feel better and live better. Know that what you're experiencing today is treatable, you can recover from this, you can feel better and you can go on to live your best life. I only wish that I had the knowledge I have today about the impacts of trauma and the treatment options available to have gotten the help for David that he needed and deserved.

### About the Author

Kim Colegrove has more than 40 years of experience meditating and has been teaching mindfulness in corporate settings since 2011. Her corporate clients include Garmin International, The National Court Reporters Association, The Department of Veterans Affairs, United Way and others. In 2014, Kim lost her husband, Special Agent David Colegrove, to suicide. As a result of that devastating loss, she founded The PauseFirst Project, and has turned her attention to bringing relief and resilience to first responders through mindfulness training. To contact her, email [IPSauthor@apus.edu](mailto:IPSauthor@apus.edu). For more articles featuring insight from industry experts, subscribe to In Public Safety's bi-monthly newsletter.

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