

How To Build a Life:

Wisdom Point #1: "We don't get here on our own."

- Dr. Erny Ramirez of Villanova University (Course: "Life Skills Planning", 2004)



Hi Phlare Readers!

Welcome to the 12th Issue of PHLARE MAGAZINE, a peer-empowerment publication for the region's modern professional woman. Today, we celebrate yet another launch of new beginnings—marked with BIG CHANGES!

This summer, we kicked-off our networking events, established alliances with like-minded organizations, appeared on 95.7 BEN-FM's "Woman of the Week" show with host, Marilyn Russell and began planning the first annual "Philadelphia Woman's Week" (for 2010). Thanks to the support of our family members and friends, investors, advertisers, contributors and readers, you are now holding an evolved, 8.5 x 11 version of Phlare Magazine...and it is with great pleasure that I deliver it to you as both its Editor and new owner!

Phlare Magazine LLC (founded in August of 2009) is a grassroots organization, offering local women, across the generations, peer-empowered print and web-based publications and social platforms to empower, connect and advance their lives. Phlare's life is gracefully evolving into a peer-empowerment "Toolbox For Life"—supplying local women with the developmental tools they need to succeed. Our objective is to empower local female readers to advance. Thus, from our purpose to our cover, our niche audience lends for both a purposeful venture and very powerful local network of women empowering women.

Phlare originally launched in September 2007, as a bimonthly, 5 ½ by 8 ½, digest-sized publication for Philadelphia's local business-woman. Two years and ten issues later, it went into hibernation while SMG searched for a new editor. I arrived in October of 2008 to revive the magazine and reshape its mission and appearance for our February 2009 re-launch. This August, (2009) Phlare Magazine, LLC acquired the magazine from Silver Marketing Group—and we're fired up and ready to bring our "sisterly love" to Philadelphia and the Main Line with a magazine and events!

Inside every issue of Phlare Magazine, we celebrate your brilliant "Phlare" for life and making the world a better place. Further, we aim to catalyze your positive impact by choosing empowering content from our reader audience to assist your total life-development. For instance, in this issue, industry experts

Sheri Cole and Pamela Superville of Career Wardrobe come to our rescue with "Interview Myths Dispelled for Job Seekers", PR super maven Leslie Padilla offers advice on "Facing the World In Transition" and International Productivity Expert, Neen James saves the day with "35 Ways to Promote Yourself: Without Spending a Dollar". Issue 12's features include: a "Movers & Shakers" profile and interview with local industry leader (and peer-elected cover-winner!), Lynette DuFon; Beauty Editor, Daneen Baird's interview with reality television star and fashionista, Kim Kardashian; and our signature PHLAREANTHROPY REPORT, where we turn the spotlight on local "Phlareanthropists" and their cause-efforts and related organizations. This issue features the work of Lynn Doyle's to de-stigmatize mental illness in America and spotlight Joe Pantoliano's celebrity-fueled NPO, "No Kidding, Me Too!" I'm sure you will find Phlare Magazine to embody the vision and spirit of our area's remarkable local women.

The other day, while my mom (Linnie Cook) and I were brainstorming for "Date With A Plate", (a charity event on May 2nd and 3rd, 2010 benefiting Melanoma Research) she revealed to me an aspect of Phlare that I hadn't yet realized. She said, "Part of what makes Phlare so attractive to women my age is that it gives us a way to support and give back to our daughter-generation. It's our duty to prepare you for life and provide you with the resources you need to continue the work of your mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers—its good to know this magazine will help us do that for you girls."

Thankfully, I've met many local women who share parallel values and are willing, ready and able to support our efforts.

On the same token, but from the perspective of Philadelphia's "daughter generation," my good friend (Lindsey S.) recently told me this: "When I need motivation or feel lost, I grab a copy of PHLARE off my nightstand. It gives me strength. If you can bring a magazine to life with no experience, I know I can do anything!"

These are just two of many excellent examples for why I believe our magazine has a place for every local woman, at every stage of her professional and personal development.

Ultimately, our lives are a direct result of the decisions we make and the actions we take.

However, in the words of one of my greatest mentors at Villanova University, Dr. Erny Ramirez, "We don't get here on our own." Our internal GPS will guide us to make the decisions that lead us to the people who will help us get to the places we are meant to go. Thankfully, Phlare Magazine exists to serve women "across the generations" as a bridge to connect and empower one another, so we can go the distance.

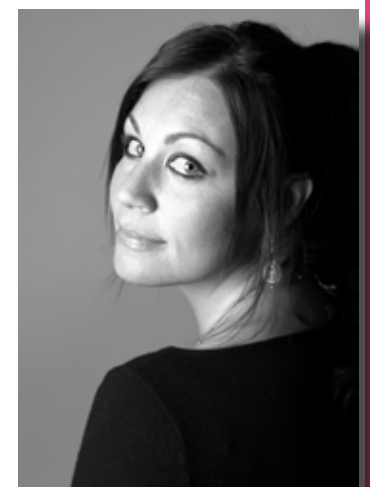
So ladies, when it comes to building our lives, we may not always have a sound construction plan and we may have no idea where we're headed to, but at least now we will never be without direction from life-experts or local social support. I urge every reader to take advantage of our priceless support system and limitless opportunities for personal and professional advancement. It's here just for you.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved in Phlare Magazine's evolution, so far. I greatly appreciate your time and efforts and look forward to our continued work together as we embrace the growth and impact of Phlare Magazine.

I hope you enjoy this issue and that I see you soon at our events! (Be sure to sign up for our eNewsletter at www.phlaremagazine.com so I can keep you in the loop!)



Ashley Blaire Cook, M.Ed.
Editor-in-Chief, President
Phlare Magazine, LLC



"Obstacles Are Nothing New To Renowned Character": Destigmatizing Mental Illness

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SHIRA YUDKOFF

It's Lynn Doyle's call to eliminate social stigma surrounding mental illness.

Featuring Lynn Doyle, multi Emmy-award winning journalist and host/executive producer of The Comcast Network's, "It's Your Call with Lynn Doyle", and TV/film star, Joe Pantoliano's ("Joey Pants" of HBO's Sopranos) non-profit organization, "No Kidding, Me Too!"



'It's time that the brain has the same constitutional rights as the heart, or the lungs, or the pancreas. If you have a disease in one of those organs, people feel sorry for you and want to help. If your brain has a disease, they walk away from you.'

- JOE PANTOLIANO

THE STIGMATIZATION OF mental illness (MI) in the United States has created severe social problems, resulting in an American crisis.

Currently, millions of people struggle to overcome mental health issues. In addition to the hardships engendered by their specific illnesses, they also must cope with the damaging effects of social stigma.

Unlike patients suffering from illnesses of the body, people afflicted with MI are often discriminated against, rejected by their own communities and deprived of basic

needs (like adequate housing, employment, health insurance and loans). Low self-esteem ensues constant rejection, making it even more difficult for them to make friends and develop functional support systems. The most dangerous effect of social stigma is unequivocally treatment refusal.

Despite availability of treatment, the effects of social stigma inhibit help-seeking behaviors in people who need it the most. Stigma also hinders social responses to victimization, enables discrimination in healthcare, overcrowds our prisons, raises our taxes— and the effects are destroying the lives of

our young—suicide is the third leading cause of death in adolescents and young adults ages 15 to 24, and the sixth leading cause of death for younger children ages 5 to14. (www.nimh.nih.gov). For some teens, suicide may appear to be the only solution to his or her problems. It's clear that the consequences of this social stigma are far too damaging

for Americans to ignore. It's time we change the way we think.

In the end, only informed Americans can save the American mind. To that end, cause-related efforts are in-progress and currently need your support.

This PHLAREANTHROPY REPORT spotlights those of Lynn Doyle, multi Emmy-award winning journalist and host/executive producer of The Comcast Network's, "It's Your Call with Lynn Doyle", and TV/ film star, Joe Pantoliano's ("Joey Pants" of HBO's Sopranos) non-profit organization, "No Kidding, Me Too!"

Herein you will find a "Reader/ Expert Q+A", a heartfelt personal letter from Lynn Doyle, (written exclusively for PHLARE MAGAZINE readers!) regarding her own experience with mental illness) and a transcribed version of her televised June 4, 2009 "It's Your Call" interview with Joe Pantoliano, on his life and personal struggle with depression, prior to his June 4, 2009 premiere of a documentary associated with NKM2.

We send our thanks and support to Lynn Doyle for providing us with the material and inspiration to realize this PHLAREANTHROPY REPORT. We are grateful for this opportunity to help fuel this righteous cause.

- Ashley Blaire Cook, M.Ed. 🔥

Reader-Expert Q+A

About Mental illness (MI):

MI can result from genetic factors, traumatic experiences and/or substance abuse. "Brain Disease" is not contagious. Life can be extremely difficult for people who have MI due to the disorder-specific hardships, constant rejection from their communities and deprivation of basic human needs (like employment, housing, loans and health insurance). Family members and friends are critical to the treatment and recovery processes, but oftentimes, low self-esteem makes it hard for them to develop healthy relationships. Mental health treatment works. However, despite the availability of treatment services, people who could benefit from treatment often refuse to utilize them, due to the effects of stigma (shame, fear).

Why is stigma attached to mental illness and who's to blame?

Our perceptions shape our realities. The stigma attached to MI is a result of social beliefs instilled by the media, television, movies and common discriminatory vernacular. No single person or group is to blame for the related societal problems—especially not the people who have a MI. While social communication channels like the media often reinforce misconceptions and fuel the stigma that causes social problems, it is the general public—you and I—who carry these perceptions and demonstrate rejecting behaviors (like avoidance and non-helping behavior). And so, the blame falls on us.

How Can We Eliminate Social Stigma?

- The media will need to provide the same sensitive coverage on MI as they do other health issues;
- TV shows will need to stop fortifying the public's irrational and negative perceptions;
- everyone must educate themselves. Know the facts;
- Know the role you play in either enabling or disabling the greater problem (stigma).
- Stop exercising discriminatory language. Every single time someone employs words like: "psycho", "psychopath", "schizo", "f*ck-&-up", "idiot", "psychopath" "nut", "monster", "head-case", "retard", "moron", etc.; they have successfully perpetuated the stigma—intentional or not.
- Talk about it. In his 2009 documentary, Joe Pantoliano explains how, "emotional intimacy" (talking openly and honestly about the subject matter) is therapeutic for both the speaker and the listener.



Pre-interview, Lynn Doyle, Host/Executive Producer of The Comcast Network's, "It's Your Call with Lynn Doyle" (right) and Joe Pantoliano, actor (left) smile and say, "Hi, Phlare Magazine Readers!"

Dear Readers,

As a child, one of my favorite aunts was my father's sister, Aneta. To me, she was young and vivacious and always willing to do wild and crazy things with us, like waking us up in the middle of the night to have an impromptu pajama party or bypassing church to go play in a dangerous and forbidden creek. But other times, she was sad and mean and would have nothing to do with us.

By the time I was a teen, though, her behavior was so extreme it became frightening. She could never keep a job, was always having confrontations with people, (even strangers) and calls of distress to my dad became frequent middle of the night occurrences. Privately, we kids nicknamed her "Nutty Neta," because we never knew what she might do.

Others made fun of her. I reacted by avoiding her and eventually shunned her altogether. Everyone thought her to be weird, kooky, or strange. But what she was really, was mentally ill. At that time, no one recognized that her behavior signaled that she was manic-depressive, now known as bi-polar. Her husband couldn't tolerate her; he left her. My cousins distanced themselves from her. My grandparents were helpless—they didn't know what to do.

Only my father worked patiently with her to help her get the treatment she so desperately needed. Once she was placed on the right medication, her life normalized again. For a while.

When my father died unexpectedly, her treatment stopped too. It took many, many years before she was able to get back on track. But the stigma of her illness and the title of "Nutty Neta", stayed with her. I continued to avoid her because I was uncomfortable with her diagnosis, perhaps afraid that if I got close to her, I would end up like her. Even today, decades later, folks in my family sometimes refer to her by that dreadful nickname.

As an adult, I am now ashamed of my reaction in knowing someone close to me was mentally ill. That's why, when I met actor Joey Pantoliano and learned about courageous confrontation of his own mental health issues, I was inspired to join him in eliminating the stigma and shame that are so often associated with brain disease.

As a talk show host, I am able to highlight this issue on my show to educate and inform the public about it. It's my way of trying to change the way people think. Perhaps it's also my way of saying, "I'm sorry" to my Aunt Aneta.

~ Lynn Doyle



Obstacles Are Nothing New To Renowned Character, Actor, Joe Pantoliano BY LYNN DOYLE

Joey Pantoliano's childhood, spent in Hoboken in the fifties, was fraught with emotional turmoil and dysfunctional relationships. His father, Dominic, a hearse driver with connections to the Mafia, and his mother Mary a seamstress and part time bookie (interesting combination) were often on welfare, and were frequently on the run from bill collectors. He very rarely ever felt safe or secure.

Before he was a teen, he lived through his parents' scandalous divorce, which raised eyebrows when Mary left Dominic for her cousin. And if that weren't enough for a young man to deal with, he suffered from dyslexia, which at the time was still a relatively foreign condition, so school was no treat for him. Unsympathetic and uneducated teachers thought him to be lazy or stupid, or both, which manhandled his self-esteem.

Then there was his mother. His mother... whew. Mary fit the stereotype of every Italian mother—loving, passionate, smothering and domineering. But there was also a dark side to her, a very dark side. She could turn ugly and mean without warning and used words as weapons against her son. Just as quickly, she would return to the caring mother willing to make every sacrifice for her child.

Needless to say, Joey spent much of his life confused and hurt by his mother's abusive behaviors. He tells me now that he believes Mary had an undiagnosed case of manic-depressive disorder, or more commonly known today as bipolar disorder. "I didn't know it then, but I think now, that was my first experience with someone who had a mental illness," Joey said, while preparing to tape an interview for my show, It's Your Call with Lynn Doyle.

"What I also didn't know was 75% of Americans either have a brain disease themselves or someone in their family suffers from it." It took Joey another 30 years to find out definitively that he was part of that statistic. He escaped the poverty of his youth by taking up acting, and despite his learning disability, was able to secure role after memorable role, mostly by memorizing all his lines.

His name will forever be connected to some of the most profitable and highly acclaimed movies and television programming, most recently in the HBO series The Sopranos.

Yet, despite having fame, fortune and a host of Hollywood A-list friends, Joey was never truly happy, never content. "Yeah, it would seem like I had it all, but for some reason, it was never enough. I never felt good about anything. I was always searching, trying to escape the pain I was feeling."

This longing affected him at work, but never affected his ability to get work. Year after year, Hollywood came calling, and as his star seemingly grew brighter, his personal world grew dark.

The Pantoliano family tells us that he was difficult to live with -- mood swings, angry outbursts, a penchant for buying pets when he was searching for happiness, and drinking, lots of drinking. "I was trying to self-medicate, to make myself feel better. For me, two things that did that were running and drinking. But it got to the point where I couldn't run from the drinking anymore."

Ironically, it was just after completing the movie Canvas, which deals with a schizophrenic woman and the husband who loves her, when Joey finally began to find the answers he had been searching for his entire life. Following the suicide of a good friend, he admits to experiencing suicidal ideations himself. "I was ashamed of the thoughts going through my head, thought I should have been able to fix myself. I thought I might be better off dead."

Thankfully, instead, Joe sought help, and with a diagnosis of clinical depression, he began a new chapter in his life. "The day my doctor diagnosed me with clinical depression was the best day of my life," says Pantoliano. "It made me realize I wasn't crazy and that I have a disease. A disease that's as real as heart disease or liver cancer." And so, Joey Pants began working to overcome yet another obstacle in his life.

Today, as he continues on with his treatment



process, he is devoted to helping others who have been diagnosed with mental illness, by eliminating the stigma that continues to be associated with it. "I've been traveling the country talking about the all-American brain, and I'm now bringing the brain to the big screen to let people know that there is no shame in having a brain disease," explains Joey.

To that end, he recently created a non-profit organization called, "No Kidding? Me, Too" (www.NKM2.com) - named after the most frequent response he gets when he asks crowds, "Does anyone in here have or know of someone with brain disease?" "Four out of five people raise their hands whenever I ask that question, so that tells me that there are more people than we realize who are living with this. It's time that the brain has the same constitutional rights as the heart, or the lungs, or the pancreas. If you have a disease in one of those organs, people feel sorry for you and want to help. If your brain has a disease, they walk away from you," he laments.

There's no walking away from clinical depression for this Emmy Award-winning actor. He deals with it every day and now, does it publicly, as he's directed a new documentary titled after his foundation, "No Kidding, Me Too," which chronicles his battle and the experiences of other Americans diagnosed with various types of brain disease...including Jordan Burnham of Philadelphia.

Jordan is an 18-year old male who struggled with severe depression for nearly ten years before he tried to kill himself by jumping out his ninth-story bedroom window. He survived, miraculously, and now lectures young people on getting help if they are feeling lost, sad, depressed or anything unusual.

"Joey gave me an outlet to try to help others and I'm really happy I can do that. It helps to know that there are other people out there who are dealing with the same things I was dealing with," says Jordan. "We have to be able to talk about these feelings and for young people, you have to be able to get emotionally close."

Having lived through many of the same experiences as the subjects in the documentary, Joey's empathy allowed him to become emotionally close to them. His goal is to have all Americans empathetic to victims of brain disease. "If this face and my name can help accomplish that, I'm willing to do that. I have to do it," he says emphatically.

So far, Joey has addressed Congress, is taking on Hollywood insurance companies who don't want to insure him in case he has a breakdown on set, (yet willingly insure actors with other health issues) and elicited support from his famous and not so famous friends.

One thing is clear, when it comes to fighting for the rights of people with mental illness, Joey Pantoliano is not afraid to put himself on the front line. After all, overcoming obstacles is now second nature to him. ♡



• Watch Lynn's interview with Joey: Lynndoyle.net

• Learn more on "No Kidding, Me Too!" and see Joe's Documentary: NKM2.ORG

• Get more info on this topic: [National Institute of Mental Health: nimh.nih.gov](http://NationalInstituteofMentalHealth.nimh.nih.gov)

• Special thanks to Leslie Padilla of LPPR, LLC lesliepadilla.com

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