

No Longer Alone
(A Story About Alcohol, Drugs, Depression, and Trauma)
Isabel, Maria, and Rosa Accept Help and Give Recovery a Chance

Cover image

Three smiling women are sitting next to each other at a park bench.

At the bottom of the page is the logo for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

Acknowledgment

This publication was developed as a collateral product to Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) 51, *Substance Abuse Treatment: Addressing the Specific Needs of Women*. It was prepared for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) by the Knowledge Application Program (KAP), a Joint Venture of The CDM Group, Inc., and JBS International, Inc., and with the subcontractor, TMNcorp, under contract number 270-09-0307, with SAMHSA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Christina Currier served as the Contracting Officer's Representative.

Disclaimer

The views, opinions, and content of this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views, opinions, or policies of SAMHSA or HHS.

Public Domain Notice

All materials appearing in this publication except those taken directly from copyrighted sources are in the public domain and may be reproduced or copied without permission from SAMHSA or the authors. Citation of the source is appreciated. However, this publication may not be reproduced or distributed for a fee without the specific, written authorization of the Office of Communications, SAMHSA, HHS.

Recommended Citation

Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. *No Longer Alone (A Story About Alcohol, Drugs, Depression, and Trauma)*. HHS Publication No. (SMA) 13-4781ENG. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2013.

Originating Office

Quality Improvement and Workforce Development Branch, Division of Services Improvement, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 1 Choke Cherry Road, Rockville, MD 20857.

No Longer Alone (English Transcript)

Electronic Access and Copies of Publication

This publication may be ordered or downloaded from SAMHSA's Publications Ordering Web page at <http://store.samhsa.gov>. Or, please call SAMHSA at 1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727) (English and Español).

HHS Publication No. (SMA) 13-4781ENG
No Longer Alone
Printed 2013

Inside cover image

A photo of each of the characters is shown with their name.

Main characters include Isabel, Maria, Rosa, and Gloria.

Other characters include Eduardo, Marta, Roberto, Carmen, Mrs. Smith, Jorgito, Sofia, Social Worker, and Psychiatrist.

Image 1

Top of the image reads: "Maria and Isabel meeting at a restaurant."

Maria and Isabel are sitting at a restaurant's outdoor patio. They are smiling and engaged in conversation.

Dialogue:

Maria: Isabel, it's great to see you!

Isabel: It's great to see you, too, Maria. It's been a long three months, but so far, it looks like I'm doing well.

Image 2

Image is split in half. On the left side is a close up of Isabel. On the right side is an image of Isabel's memory. Isabel and Roberto are hugging.

Dialogue:

Isabel: I'm taking control of my life. For years, I used drugs with my ex-boyfriend, Roberto. At first, it was just pot, but that led to other drugs.

Image 3A

Close up of Isabel holding a cup of coffee at the restaurant.

Dialogue:

Isabel: The drugs were helping me with my anxiety. I had to take care of my little brother and sister, and I had fallen way behind in school. I thought I wasn't going to graduate.

No Longer Alone (English Transcript)

Image 3B

The image is Isabel's memory at home with her two siblings. Isabel, looking annoyed, is cooking while Marta and Jorgito are at the kitchen table doing homework. Marta holds a piece of paper towards Isabel.

Dialogue:

Marta: Isabel! Isabel! I don't understand this homework. Help me!

Image 4

Image is split in half. On the left side Maria and Isabel are at the restaurant. Both have plates of food in front of them. On the right side of the image is a memory of Isabel's arrest. Isabel is handcuffed. A police officer is holding her arm and escorting her to the police car.

Dialogue:

Isabel: You know, Maria, I didn't think I was in trouble, not even when the police arrested me for driving under the influence. I had to go to court, pay the penalties, and agree to treatment. It was a nightmare!

Image 5

Close up of Maria at the restaurant.

Dialogue:

Maria: I went through the same thing. I denied having a problem with alcohol even after my boss gave me an ultimatum and I started treatment. That's when I realized I had a problem with depression, too.

Image 6

Top of the image reads: "At a beauty parlor..."

The image is a memory of Maria at the beauty parlor where she works. Maria is disheveled and drunk. Maria's boss, Carmen, is handing Maria a brochure.

Dialogue:

Carmen: Maria, you're drunk again. Two days ago you fought with Ana and gave Mrs. Smith a bad haircut. You're a very good hair-dresser, but you need to go home now.

I am going to give you one last chance. I know your mom is sick and you need the job. Here, I got you this information. If you want to work here, then you need to get some help!

Image 7

Top of the image reads: "At the New Life Center, Maria meets with Gloria, one of the center's counselors."

The image is a memory of Maria at the New Life Center. Maria is sitting across from the counselor. She has her arms crossed, looking away and defiant.

Dialogue:

Gloria: Maria, have you ever felt the need to cut down on your drinking?

Maria: No, Gloria, I have it all under control. When I am drinking too much, I just stop myself.

No Longer Alone (English Transcript)

Image 8

The image returns to the restaurant, Maria is holding a cup of coffee. Isabel listens intently to Maria.

Dialogue:

Maria: I was not being honest with Gloria or myself. I couldn't control it. But I kept denying it.

Image 9

Top of the image reads: "In another part of town, Rosa, another woman suffering from alcohol and drug abuse, cries for her children."

Image is split. On the left side, Rosa is crying and standing in front of a door with the sign "Child Protective Services." On the right side is Rosa's memory of her children playing with the stove in their kitchen.

Dialogue:

Rosa [thinking to herself]: My kids! I can't believe it! My kids are gone! I lost them. I got drunk and stoned and then passed out. That's when Jorgito and Sofia got hurt playing with the stove and the fire started.

Image 10

Top of the image reads: "At the Child Protective Services office, Rosa meets with a social worker."

Rosa is crying and standing in front of the social worker.

Dialogue:

Social Worker: Rosa, the court decided that your children need to go into foster care for now. You need to get into a substance abuse treatment program.

Rosa: No, you can't take my kids. I'll do better this time, I promise!

Social Worker: I understand that you are upset, but, don't worry, they will be okay. You will be able to visit them, as you get better.

Image 11

It's dark. Rosa is walking down a neighborhood sidewalk. There are several lighted buildings. A large clock on a building says 3 a.m.

Dialogue:

Rosa [thinking to herself]: I can't sleep. I still have nightmares about my ex-husband hitting me. The only thing that helps me get my mind off it is cocaine.

Image 12

Top of the image reads: "At the New Life Center."

Five women are sitting down in a semi-circle facing Gloria, the counselor.

No Longer Alone (English Transcript)

Dialogue:

Gloria: Thanks for sharing your stories. Now you know that you are not alone. You can choose to stay, and we can face your circumstances together.

Image 13

Top of the image reads: "One week later at a private session."

Gloria and Rosa are sitting in an office. Gloria is holding her arm close to her chest. She is upset and tearful.

Dialogue:

Gloria: Rosa, I would like to recommend that you see a psychiatrist.

Rosa: Why? What's wrong with me?

Gloria: Don't look at it that way. A psychiatrist can help you understand how the situation you lived in with your ex-husband has affected you and can help you find ways to better deal with it.

Image 14

Top of the image reads: "At the psychiatrist's office after evaluating Rosa."

Rosa is sitting across from the psychiatrist.

Dialogue:

Psychiatrist: Rosa, you are suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD.

Rosa: What is that?

Psychiatrist: It is a state in which you can't stop remembering a traumatic event. You tend to relive it over and over again with flashbacks, bad memories, or nightmares. It can also make you feel as if you are in a constant state of high alert. You might feel irritable, and sometimes you may want to stay away from a place that reminds you of the trauma. Or maybe you want to avoid a person who reminds you of the traumatic event.

Image 15

Rosa is listening to the psychiatrist.

Dialogue:

Rosa: What? You mean that, even though he is gone, I'm still suffering because of him?

Psychiatrist: Yes, you are, but we can do different things to manage your PTSD. I recommend you receive therapy for PTSD. You will learn some skills to cope with situations that trigger your reliving the trauma. I am also prescribing medicine for you that may help reduce the frequency of your nightmares, so that you can sleep better.

Image 16

Top of the image reads: "One week later at the New Life Center, Gloria leads a group session."

There are five women attending the session including Rosa, Isabel, and Maria. Gloria is seated facing the group.

No Longer Alone (English Transcript)

Dialogue:

Gloria: Today we are here to work on your goals. Whether your goal is to get your driver's license back, keep your job, or get your children back, we want to make a change in your lives, and we need a plan. We need to think of people who can help us. Can you think of anyone? Maybe there are also places we could go for help. Can you think of any?

Image 17

Rosa, Isabel, and Maria have their hands raised.

Dialogue:

Rosa: My Aunt Clara has been a great help.

Isabel: I think this group is helping me.

Maria: My boss, Carmen, is helping me a lot.

Gloria: You see, we are not alone in this journey. We can also think of joining a spiritual group, or you may believe in someone who will help you maintain hope and regain inner strength. So, what else do we need for our plan?

Image 18

Top of the image reads: "Three months later, Isabel runs into her ex-boyfriend, Roberto."

Isabel and Roberto are at a park. Isabel is carrying books. Annoyed at Roberto, Isabel waves him away. Roberto is standing behind her. He has his hands up reaching out to Isabel.

Dialogue:

Isabel: No thanks, I am OK. I don't need anything.

Roberto: But I miss you, sweetie. You look great. Why don't we go have some fun? I have some pot, too.

Isabel: Roberto, get away from me, both you and your weed. I am done with that stuff and with you, too!

Image 19A

Top of the image reads: "Isabel is trying to study at the library."

At the library, Isabel is at a desk looking down at a notebook. Her right hand is touching her forehead while her left hand is rubbing her neck.

Dialogue:

Isabel [thinking to herself]: Staying clean isn't easy. I keep bumping into Roberto. I'm always so angry. Gloria's right, I need to make more changes in my life.

Image 19B

Still sitting at the library, Isabel holds a yoga DVD. She reads the back of the DVD.

Dialogue:

Isabel [thinking to herself]: Hmm... This might help.

No Longer Alone (English Transcript)

Image 20

Top of the image reads: “Meanwhile, at the beauty parlor...”

Maria is sitting in a salon chair at the beauty parlor and looking up towards Carmen. Carmen is smiling.

Dialogue:

Carmen: Hey Maria, you’ve been looking very good lately. Do you want me to give you a free haircut?

Maria: Sure, Carmen. Why not? I do feel good. At the New Life Center, they helped me get sober and sent me to a doctor for my depression. She prescribed medicine that helps.

Image 21

Carmen is holding a hair brush and smiling at Maria.

Dialogue:

Maria: It was hard to stop drinking. Then I felt so sad and hopeless. I go to therapy now, too. Between that and the medicine, I’m feeling so much better.

Carmen: Just look at you now! You took charge of your life!

Image 22

Close up of Maria and Carmen as they continue speaking at the beauty parlor.

Dialogue:

Maria: Well, I still take antidepressants.

Carmen: And that’s okay. Lots of people need medicine, and you probably won’t be taking them forever.

Image 23

Top of the image reads: “Rosa meets with Gloria in private at the New Life Center.”

Rosa is crying. Her hands are covering her face. Gloria, the counselor, is consoling her. Gloria’s hands are on Rosa’s shoulder and knee.

Dialogue:

Gloria: What is happening, Rosa? What’s troubling you?

Rosa: I feel awful. I did drugs again.

Image 24

The image is split in half. On the left side there is a close up of Rosa at the counselor’s office. She is upset. On the right side is a memory of Rosa looking for a job. She is holding the job section of the paper. She looks worried.

Dialogue:

Rosa: I was following my treatment, and it’s been so hard. I have so many things to take care of. I have been looking for a job for weeks, and no one has called me back.

No Longer Alone (English Transcript)

Image 25

Rosa is sitting across from Gloria.

Dialogue:

Rosa: I moved out of the apartment to help me forget about how horrible it was to live there with my ex-husband. I've been living with my Aunt Clara, and she has been great. But I need my own place, and I need my children now. It was just too much for me... and I did coke again.

Gloria: I see, Rosa. But do you think cocaine is going to help you get your kids back?

Rosa: No, of course not.

Gloria: OK, let's work on a plan to make sure you don't have another relapse.

Image 26

Top of the image reads: "At the next group meeting."

Gloria is standing next to a white board. She is facing the group participants who are sitting in chairs.

Dialogue:

Gloria: It is incredible what you all have accomplished, both as a group and as individuals. Each of you understands your own value and merit, as well as that of this group. Now, the work continues, and we need to prepare for the possibility of relapse.

Image 27

Gloria is standing in front of the group participants. Everyone is looking at Maria.

Dialogue:

Gloria: So, Maria, tell me one situation that might make you want to have a drink?

Maria: Well, taking care of my mom, who is sick, and working full time is tough. Sometimes I feel helpless, and I start getting anxious, and then I feel like having a drink.

Gloria: So what are you doing to keep yourself from drinking?

Image 28

Close up of Maria speaking. To the right of her are three different memories of herself. She is jogging, meditating, and on the phone.

Dialogue:

Maria: Well, when I feel like grabbing a bottle, I go for a walk or a run in the park instead. I also like to meditate or call a sober friend. It was hard at first to clear my mind, relax, and have positive thoughts, especially when all I was thinking about was a bottle of booze to help me forget about my problems. But I am getting better at meditating, exercising, and staying sober.

Image 29

Gloria is standing next to a white board. The copy on the board says: Identify high-risk situations, recognize your weaknesses, learn to refuse drugs and alcohol, avoid a relapse, prepare for the possibility of a relapse.

No Longer Alone (English Transcript)

Dialogue:

Gloria: Great! So Maria has identified some things she can do to take her mind off the idea of drinking when she has a problem.

Image 30

Gloria is speaking to the group. Isabel has her hand raised.

Dialogue:

Gloria: What if someone offers one of you drugs or alcohol? How do you say “no”?

Image 31

Close up of Isabel as she recounts her experience.

Dialogue:

Isabel: Well, I kept bumping into Roberto, my ex-boyfriend, and have tried to ignore him. It’s hard, you know, because sometimes I miss him and the drugs. But a few weeks ago, I confronted him and told him to get lost and that I was done with him and that stuff. To tell you the truth, I thought it would be harder to say “no” than it really was. It’s hard to stay clean, but it’s worth it.

Image 32

Gloria is standing next to the white board smiling. She is facing the seated group.

Dialogue:

Gloria: Great job! So you will always encounter situations in your lives that may lead you to have a relapse. These situations may be external or may be inside of you. The important thing is to prepare yourself and have an idea of what you need to do to avoid a relapse.

Image 33

Top of the image reads: “A few years later... Isabel just graduated from the community college. She will soon begin classes at the university and has become a speaker for a drug abuse resistance program. She visits students in youth programs at high schools to talk about abstaining from drugs.”

Isabel is smiling and wearing a graduation cap and gown. She is holding up her diploma.

Image 34

Top of the image reads: “Isabel speaks to a group of high school students.”

A group of teens are sitting facing Isabel. Isabel is standing and speaking to the group.

Dialogue:

Isabel: ...and you may think drugs are cool and that you are under control. But all I can say is drugs can take control of your life. It happened to me for a few years, and it wasn’t easy to get out of it. I still need to work hard on it. Stay clean and sober; you’re worth it. It’s OK if your friends don’t get it. Look for real friends who can help you when you need them the most. You are in charge of yourself.

No Longer Alone (English Transcript)

Image 35

Top of the image reads: “Meanwhile at the beauty parlor...”

Ms. Smith is sitting in the salon chair. Maria is behind Mrs. Smith holding a hair brush while looking at Carmen. Carmen is smiling and looking at Maria who is also smiling.

Dialogue:

Carmen: Wow, Maria, what a nice haircut you gave Mrs. Smith!

Maria: Yes, she was nice enough to give me a second chance.

Carmen: We all deserve a second chance.

Image 36

Top of the image reads: “Maria became a peer counselor. She helps other women in substance abuse treatment avoid relapse. Being there for other women helps Maria remember her own commitment to stay sober.”

Maria is holding a cell phone.

Dialogue:

Maria: Hi Patricia, how’s it going? Is everything OK?

Image 37

Top of the image reads: “At Rosa’s house.”

Jorgito and Sofia are at the kitchen table doing their homework. Rosa is thinking as she chops vegetables.

Dialogue:

Rosa [thinking to herself]: I take one day at a time. I still follow my PTSD treatment, and I go to an aftercare program.

Image 38

Isabel, Rosa, and Maria are walking at a park. All three are smiling and holding hands.

Dialogue:

Isabel: We discovered that we are not alone.

Rosa: We made a different choice. We are changing our lives.

Maria: We are stronger now, and when we are not, we look for help.

Image 38

Gloria is looking straight ahead addressing the reader. She has a warm smile.

Dialogue:

Gloria: If you, a friend, or a family member is suffering from a substance abuse problem, don’t be afraid. You are not alone. There is help. Give it a chance. Give yourself a chance.

No Longer Alone (English Transcript)

Resources

To find substance abuse and mental health treatment go to <http://www.samhsa.gov/treatment/index.aspx>

Other helpful publications

- *Faces of Change: Do I Have a Problem With Alcohol or Drugs?*
- *Helping Yourself Heal: A Recovering Woman's Guide to Coping With Childhood Abuse Issues*
- *Should You Talk to Someone About a Drug, Alcohol, or Mental Health Problem?*
- *No Longer Alone* is also available in Spanish

How to get free copies

- Order these and other publications from SAMHSA's Publications Ordering Web page at <http://store.samhsa.gov>
- Call SAMHSA at 1-877-SAMHSA-7 (1-877-726-4727) (English and Español)

At the bottom of the page is the logo for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

HHS Publication Number (SMA) 13-4781ENG
Printed 2013