

Fellowship Recovery Compass: March 2026



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Fellowship Centre Membership and Requests for Board Consideration

As a registered not-for-profit society, the South Edmonton Fellowship Centre is governed by a Board of Directors, registered Articles of Incorporation, registered Bylaws, and the Alberta Societies Act. The Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for the management and administration of the affairs of the Fellowship Centre. The Directors have full power to make rules and regulations for the conduct of their business as they think fit, provided that such rules and regulations are consistent with the Societies Act, the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws of the Fellowship Centre. Members of the Fellowship Centre are important to the continued growth and smooth operations of the Fellowship Centre, particularly because they appoint the Board of Directors.

The South Edmonton Fellowship Centre is currently recruiting members to:

- enhance the future and betterment of the not-for-profit Society.
- provide ideas and feedback on how the Fellowship Centre can be improved.
- nominate and appoint the Board of Directors.
- volunteer for committees that make recommendations to the Board of Directors.
- provide service that furthers the mandate of the Fellowship Centre.

To become a member of the Fellowship Centre, go to <https://fellowship-centre.org/membership/> and complete the nomination form. All Directors must vote in favour of new memberships.

Only members of the Fellowship Centre can make a request for Board consideration. If you are a member of the Fellowship Centre and have a concern about how the Centre is being managed or any ideas that might advance the objectives of the Centre, go to <https://fellowship-centre.org/request-for-board-consideration/> and complete the form.

A screenshot of the Fellowship Centre website's "Request for Board Consideration" form. The form is titled "Name and contact information of Member making the request (I)" and includes fields for Name, Request, and How does addressing this request advance the objectives of the Request Advancing Objectives. It also has sections for "What, if any, are the potential negative consequences of addressing this request?", "Cost and considerations of this request (email quote to directors@fellowship-centre.org, if appropriate)", and "Additional information relevant to Board consideration of this request." The form is set against a dark green background with white text and orange accents. A "SEND" button is at the bottom of the form. The website header includes navigation links like Home, About Us, Help Us, Readings, More Support, and Contact Us, along with a "FIND A MEETING" button. The footer contains "Quick Links" (About Us, Calendar of Meetings, More Support, Recovery Compass), "Contact Information" (9122 - 34A Avenue NW, Edmonton, Alberta, T6E 5P4, (780) 220-7811, info@fellowship-centre.org), and "Monthly Publication" (Name, Your Email, Subscribe).

Embracing Community: The Power of Specialized Meetings in Recovery

Community support plays a vital role in the journey of addiction recovery. Many specialized groups and meetings cater to the unique experiences and needs of specific types of individuals. These specialized meetings can provide a safe space where participants feel understood and empowered to share their stories.

Specialized meetings often create a more comfortable environment for attendees to express themselves freely. *Women only* and *men only* meetings allow attendees to discuss the unique societal pressures and expectations that men and women face, allowing participants to explore these issues in a supportive environment.

Key benefits of such gender-limited meetings include:

- **Tailored Discussions:** Meetings can focus on issues that are particularly relevant to the group including challenges and shared life experiences.
- **Building Trust:** Participants often find it easier to open up in a single-gender setting, fostering deeper connections and trust among attendees.
- **Supportive Atmosphere:** Specialized meetings encourage vulnerability and honesty, as individuals can relate to one another's struggles without the fear of judgment.
- **Empowerment:** Men's and women's meetings can empower individuals to discuss topics that may be sensitive or stigmatized, such as parenting, relationships, and societal expectations.



Spotlight on a New Men's Meeting

We are excited to announce the second AA men's meeting at the Fellowship Centre! *As It Is* holds its weekly meeting every Thursday at 8:00 PM. *As It Is* complements the existing men's meeting held on Mondays at 7:30 PM. The addition of this new men's meeting provides increased opportunities for men to gather, share, and support one another in their recovery journeys.

Whether you are new to recovery or have been on this path for some time, these gender-limited meetings offer a unique chance to engage with others who understand the trials and triumphs of alcoholism. By connecting with fellow men in recovery, you can share experiences, gain insights, and build lasting relationships that foster accountability and growth.

Whether you are seeking support, understanding, or simply a space to share your journey, these gender-specific meetings are open to you.

- **AA Men's Meetings:**
 - Mondays at 7:30 PM
 - Thursdays at 8:00 PM (New!)
- **AA Women's Meeting:**
 - Sundays at 10:30 AM



Participating in these meetings can significantly enhance your recovery experience, allowing you to connect with others who share similar challenges and triumphs. Together, we can cultivate a stronger, more supportive community. For more information about these meetings or to find additional resources, please visit the Centre's website at <https://fellowship-centre.org>

Things that Mess Up Your Recovery: Selective Honesty

Addiction feeds on deceit, distrust, and dishonesty. We are driven to go to any lengths to get high or act out. We often violate personal values – no matter how strong or good they are – but not without consequences. For most of us, intense remorse, guilt and shame are common underlying emotions. These feelings exacerbate the problem and make us drink, act out, or use more. At a deep level, we feel shame for who we are, and what we have become.

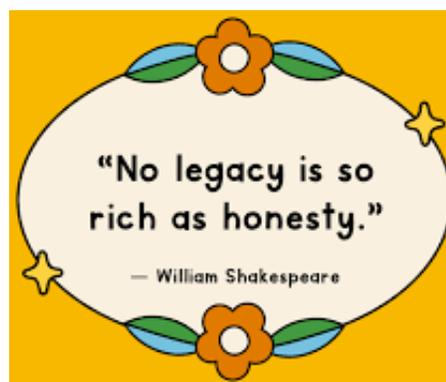
Most of us have been highly selective about what we are willing to share with others. False-pride filters our self-disclosures. What typically happens before we disclose something personal, painful, or important is that it must pass through our censoring committee. The members of this group include self-hatred, false-pride, and the false-self. The committee won't let anything be disclosed that could jeopardize our false-image that must be maintained at all costs. We won't share much about our weaknesses when shame and self-doubt are telling us that we are less than other people because of our shortcomings. We are a prisoner of the false-self, and most of the time, we don't even realize it.

We can think of the process of recovery as a salvage operation. We are recovering our lost-selves and sometimes discovering our true-self. What we recover is our ability to be human. We have tried to be perfect and hold ourselves to an inhuman set of expectations. Recovery is about salvaging our humanity. We replace unreasonable expectations of perfectionism with an understanding of what it means to be human. We are not perfect; we are human beings.

Self-deception in all its various forms and manifestations is deadly because it undermines our ability to be honest with ourselves and attain humility. The capacity to be honest with ourselves is a necessary condition for recovery. We must get honest with ourselves, if we are going to recover from our fatal disease.

As children many of us had been subjected to injuries to our self-esteem from often well-intentioned parents, teachers, relatives, and other caregivers. In fact, some behavioural scientists have argued that addictions are *self-disorders*: using or acting out fills the hole in our soul, covering up an emptiness caused by wounds to our self-esteem, which gnaw at us. If our parents didn't celebrate our existence, if they didn't authentically enjoy our spirit and energy, if they didn't see worth in us, then we suffered a self-worth injury. Our self-worth became fragile, unstable and shaky. We have trouble telling others what we really think or how we really feel because we don't feel worthy. We have placed the needs of others in front of our own. Deep inside the person who has a self-worth wound is the belief that no one really cares and that he/she must manipulate others to get what he/she needs.

In recovery, we must be rigorously honest with ourselves if we are to recover. We can't be partially honest or selectively honest; we must be entirely honest. It is not easy to change a lifetime of deception which may be the product of lack of self-worth and low self-esteem. Until we can honestly look at ourselves, we cannot begin to change. The psychic change necessary requires total honesty. This is me; the real me. I am human. I have made mistakes. But I am trying to be better one day at a time.



(Based on the writing of Allen Berger, 12 Stupid Things that Mess Up Recovery, pp. 39-46)

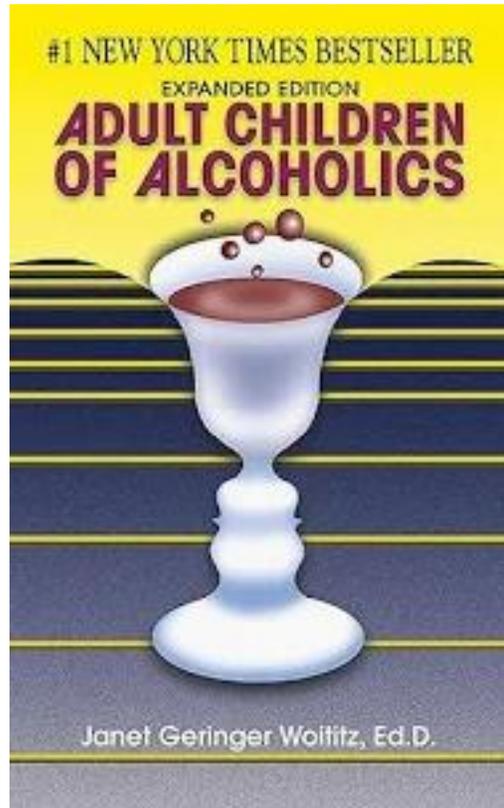
Fellowship Library New Books

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous individual, the Library has new books to help you continue to grow along spiritual lines. Please borrow any Library material and return it when you are finished. To ensure anonymity, there is no sign out system. More books are always appreciated.

Adult Children of Alcoholics: Expanded Edition, written by Janet G. Woititz, delves into the profound impact that growing up in an alcoholic household has on individuals. The book outlines the characteristics and behavioural patterns often seen in adult children of alcoholics (ACAs) and offers understanding and healing strategies to those affected. A key focus of Woititz's work is the identification of common traits among ACAs, such as difficulties in establishing healthy relationships, a heightened sense of responsibility, and issues with trust and self-esteem. These behaviours stem from the chaotic environments they grew up in, where emotional needs often went unmet due to the parent's addiction.

The author emphasizes that alcoholism is not just an issue of substance abuse; it creates a dysfunctional family dynamic that significantly impacts the lives of children. ACAs learn to adapt to their surroundings by developing coping mechanisms that often hinder their emotional growth and ability to build healthy relationships in adulthood. To address these challenges, Woititz presents various strategies for healing, including the importance of therapy and support groups. She encourages readers to confront their past, understand their behaviours, and begin to break the cycle of dysfunction. The Expanded Edition introduces a structured program designed to help ACAs work through their experiences and develop healthier coping strategies. This program includes exercises for self-reflection, group discussions, and practical steps towards rebuilding one's life and relationships.

A central message of the book is empowerment. Woititz stresses that ACAs can reclaim their lives by acknowledging their past, learning about their patterns, and making conscious choices for their future. The program encourages personal responsibility and growth, leading to healthier interactions and self-acceptance. Overall, Adult Children of Alcoholics: Expanded Edition serves as both a guide and a source of comfort for those who have lived through the turmoil of an alcoholic household. By recognizing shared experiences and offering actionable steps for healing, Woititz provides readers with the tools to understand their past and forge a path toward a healthier, more fulfilling life. This book is a vital resource for ACAs seeking to break free from the patterns of their upbringing and build a better future for themselves.



To find ACA meetings: <https://adultchildren.org/meeting-search/>

Spirituality: A Journey of Transformation

Many of us embark on a spiritual journey not from a place of enlightenment, but often after experiencing a significant crisis or hitting rock bottom. It is during these challenging times that we become aware of a deeper, more fulfilling way of life. We consciously choose to pursue a spiritual path, and in doing so, we start to identify as spiritual beings.

At its core, spirituality represents a profound shift in consciousness that opens us up to the possibility of change. This transformation is not instantaneous; it requires us to engage in new ways of thinking, communicating, and loving. As we embrace these changes, we evolve into more authentic versions of ourselves.

The journey of change is often gradual, and one of our greatest allies along the way is spiritual intuition. This inner voice gently guides us, offering insights and feelings that encourage us to act, even when we may hesitate to do so. By listening to this intuition, we find the courage and strength necessary to embrace change.

Here are some essential steps to take and obstacles to overcome on your spiritual journey:



1. **Embrace Willingness:** All meaningful change begins with a willingness to grow. This willingness is one of the greatest gifts spirituality offers.
2. **Focus on Yourself:** Remember, the primary focus of your spiritual journey should be your own growth. Concentrate on what you need to change, rather than trying to change others.
3. **Identify Inhibitors:** Be mindful of the barriers to your spiritual transformation -- denial, defense mechanisms, perfectionism, rigidity, fear, attachment to old habits, love of familiarity, stubbornness, and depression. Recognizing these obstacles is crucial for progress.
4. **Be Prepared for Discomfort:** Understand that some changes can be painful. Growth often requires us to confront uncomfortable truths and feelings.
5. **Shift Your Mindset:** Changing your mindset can lead to significant shifts in your life. Strive to transform negative thoughts into positive ones. This can be challenging, but it is entirely achievable. Embrace the idea that there is a silver lining to every cloud and actively seek the positive aspects of every situation.
6. **Cultivate Gratitude:** Gratitude is not merely a feeling; it is a perspective that fosters appreciation. To facilitate change, you must cultivate gratitude, as it serves as an antidote to resentment and self-pity. When faced with adversity, create a gratitude list, noting everything you appreciate, no matter how small.
7. **Set Change Goals:** Compile a list of the most important changes you wish to make in your life. Keep this list visible, perhaps on your refrigerator, and periodically review it to remind yourself of your intentions.
8. **Acknowledge Your Shortcomings:** Be honest with yourself about your weaknesses and share these realizations with someone you trust. Confession can be a powerful catalyst for change, as it fosters accountability and support.
9. **Nurture Self-Love:** Open your heart to self-love. Imagine yourself as a beautiful plant that needs nurturing to thrive. Let spirituality illuminate your path and allow yourself to grow toward that light.

By following these steps, you can navigate the intricate journey of spirituality, embracing the changes that lead to a more fulfilling life and stronger recovery. Remember, the journey may be long, but each step taken is a step closer to your true self.

Embrace Self-Love and Forgiveness

Loving yourself, forgiving yourself, and accepting yourself are all essential components of a fulfilling life, yet they stand in stark contrast to the harsh practice of self-judgment. Many of us have spent years living under the weight of self-criticism, often taking these feelings for granted. We come to believe that this is simply how we are destined to feel. However, until we genuinely forgive ourselves, we may not recognize how deeply we need that forgiveness -- and how liberating it can truly be.

You might feel apprehensive about the concept of forgiveness. It's common to associate forgiveness with negative judgment, leading to the belief that we are inherently bad. This can create resistance to the idea of forgiving ourselves, making it seem as if we need to confirm our badness. Yet, the reality is that this very lack of self-confrontation can become a source of isolation, separating us from the world in a way that is not beneficial. What we truly need is to reconnect with ourselves and others through forgiveness.

Forgiveness allows us to acknowledge our past mistakes -- what we've done wrong, what we could have done better, and the moments we wish we could change. By embracing self-forgiveness, we can transcend our self-judgments and release the burdens we carry. This process not only helps us heal but also fosters a sense of belonging and acceptance, both within ourselves and in the larger world.

In essence, forgiving ourselves is not just an act of kindness; it's a pathway to reconnecting with our true-selves and embracing life more fully. It's time to let go of self-judgment and welcome the transformative power of self-forgiveness.

Beware of Gossip

Gossip is a seductive pastime that can be detrimental not only to others but also to ourselves. While some forms of gossip may be innocent, characterized by lighthearted chatter about the experiences of others, there is a darker side that can cause significant harm. This harmful gossip is often rooted in negative emotions such as anger, jealousy, betrayal, and sometimes even hatred. When we feel deprived or wronged, we might find ourselves wanting to inflict pain on others as a misguided way to cope with our own hurt.



Consider this: Would you stand in a crowded room and hurl darts at someone? Would you take a knife and stab that person in the back? Most people would recoil at the thought, yet when we engage in gossip, we do something equally damaging. Words, especially those laden with strong emotions, carry a powerful energy that can wound deeply -- both the targets of the gossip and the gossipers themselves.

It's essential to recognize that when we hurt others with our words, we are also hurting ourselves. The act of gossiping can lead to a cycle of negativity that impacts our mental and emotional well-being. Instead of allowing feelings of anger, betrayal, or jealousy to manifest in harmful ways, we must address these emotions constructively. By doing so, we can prevent the wounds of our feelings from inflicting harm through gossip.

Understanding Addiction in the Family

When a loved one is struggling with addiction, family members often experience a whirlwind of emotions: abandonment, anxiety, fear, anger, embarrassment, and guilt, among others. This turmoil affects the entire family as you work to manage the problem, cope with your own feelings, and take on responsibilities left unaddressed.

Family members can become unwitting enablers, inadvertently supporting the addict's harmful behaviours and perpetuating the cycle of addiction. It's crucial to remember that addiction is a disease -- not a moral failing. This understanding is empowering because, unlike a moral failing, addiction is treatable and manageable. While letting go of accumulated anger and resentment may be challenging, embracing this new perspective can aid both your loved one's recovery and your own well-being.

In healthy families, members communicate openly, express emotions freely, and build trust. Unfortunately, families affected by addiction often resort to denial, low self-esteem, and a need for control to cope emotionally, which inhibits growth.

The Challenge of Codependency

A significant issue in families of addicts is codependency -- a complex relationship that may seem loving but is ultimately damaging. Codependents often provide excessive and inappropriate help, allowing the addict to avoid facing the consequences of their actions. For instance, a codependent might give money, bail the addict out of jail, or make excuses to others. This behaviour, known as enabling, can manifest in both active forms, such as providing a new car after a wreck, and passive forms, like ignoring a parent's drunken behaviour at social events.

Impact on Children

The emotional toll of addiction on children is profound. Even if a child no longer lives with an addicted parent due to separation, divorce, or other circumstances, the effects linger. Unpredictable behaviour and unclear communication create a chaotic family environment. Children may feel loved one moment and abandoned the next, leading to confusion and insecurity. They might experience anger and hurt when their parent prioritizes substance use over their parental responsibilities.

As a result, children of addicts may develop unhealthy coping mechanisms, which can manifest as depression, withdrawal, behavioural issues, and difficulties in school.

Seeking Help

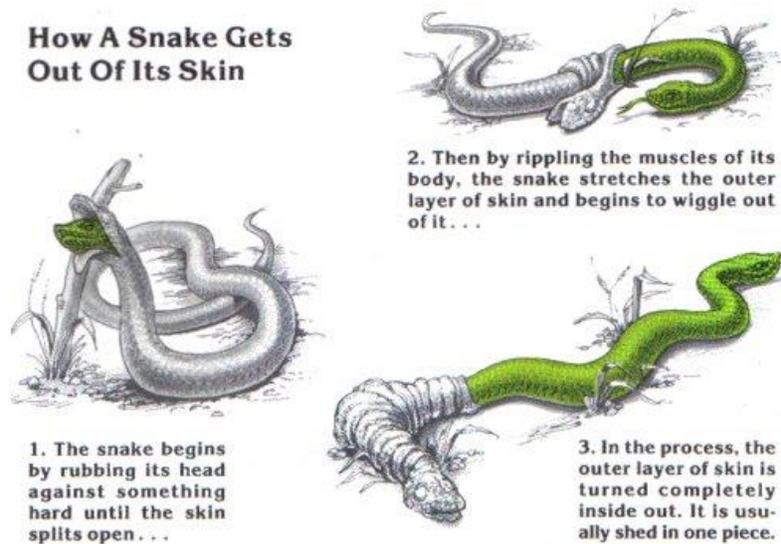
If you're feeling overwhelmed by a loved one's addiction, consider reaching out to support groups:

Nar-Anon Family Groups: For those feeling desperate about a loved one's addiction. <https://www.nar-anon.org/find-a-meeting>

Al-Anon: A mutual support group for those affected by a problem drinker. <https://al-anon.org/al-anon-meetings/>

Shed Your Old Skin

Snakes naturally shed their skin as an essential part of their growth process. As they grow, their skin becomes tight and restrictive, limiting their movement and comfort. The shedding process allows them to remove the old, worn-out layer and reveal a new, larger one underneath. This not only facilitates growth but also plays a crucial role in maintaining their health by helping to eliminate parasites and other irritants. Depending on various factors such as age, species and environmental conditions, snakes may shed their skin multiple times a year.



In a similar way, on your journey toward recovery and self-improvement, you make intentional efforts to enhance who you are and uncover your best self. The old version of you may need healing, but it's vital to understand that you don't have to carry those wounds forever. While sharing your struggles with others can foster connections, it may also become an unconscious barrier to your healing. When you allow your wounds to define you, they can overshadow your identity and hinder your growth.

The Balance of Expression and Moving On

There is undoubtedly a time and place for expressing emotional pain and seeking support. However, it's equally important to recognize when it's time to let go and move forward. Consciously choosing the words you use to describe your experiences is a powerful endeavour. Holding onto the narrative of your wounds can feel like a comfortable refuge, a familiar space where you find safety. Yet, it's crucial to remember that change is inevitable. If you transform, so too will your life. While this thought can be daunting, it also presents an opportunity for empowerment. Wouldn't it be better to take the wheel and navigate that change in a direction that aligns with your aspirations?

Write Down Your Fears: Take a moment to reflect honestly on your fears. What aspects of becoming your ideal self intimidate you? By articulating these feelings, you create space for self-discovery. This process can reveal the layers of who you truly are, showcasing your inherent wonder and beauty. Embracing the journey of personal transformation can be both frightening and challenging. Remember, being brave doesn't mean you lack fear; it means you are willing to forge ahead despite it.

Trust the Process: Authenticity is an integral part of your journey. You are here to uncover your true-self and share that wisdom with others. Instead of bonding over shared pain, challenge yourself to connect over uplifting stories. Consider embarking on a week-long challenge where you only share positive experiences. Notice how this shift in focus can lighten your spirit and reshape your interactions.

Let Go of the Old You

Eventually, there will come a time when you realize that the old version of yourself no longer serves you. Engage in your healing process, but once you've done the work, let go of the past. Embrace the new you that is emerging. There is a wealth of joy and happiness awaiting you -- more than you might dare to envision. A new chapter of your life is beginning, and it's time to shed your old skin.

(Adapted from Bronnie Ware, [Your Year of Change](#), 2014.)

Forgive Yourself



We can gather so much guilt as we go through life. We may blame ourselves for the experiences we've had and how we handled them. We may build up resentments against ourselves. We may even resist forgiving ourselves because we think that means saying we were bad and wrong. But not forgiving ourselves when we need to often leads us to return to situations that are unhealthy for us.

Forgiving yourself means you can leave places that feel bad, you can end relationships that no longer work, you can avoid situations that cause you continual pain and grief. Forgiving yourself means you can stop punishing yourself for what you've done and what you think you've done wrong. You don't have to hold your mistakes against yourself any longer. You don't have to deprive yourself of comfort, joy, love, and acceptance. It's much easier to say, "I made a mistake. This isn't right for me. I don't like this. This is wrong." Then forgive yourself.

Forgive yourself if you've done something wrong. Forgive yourself even if you haven't done something wrong. Then see how good forgiveness feels. Forgive yourself and be free.

What You Believe ss What You Will See

We can call things into play by what we believe, what we say, what we envision, what we speak. This is one of the powers we're learning about. Much of this dance of life, this universal rhythm, is out of our control. But while we don't choreograph it, we can work within the part that is ours, with the power that is ours. We do this by what we believe. If we believe that we must fight the entire world, that we are separate and apart, and that for the most part we meet with our enemies, out to hurt us, then that will most probably be true.

Our beliefs about what we deserve will change as we journey through our recovery. But there is also much we can do now to participate in changing our beliefs and creating a more desirable world for ourselves.

What are your beliefs? Listen to yourself. Listen to what you think, what you say, how you react. Listen to yourself talk about other people, about what life is really like, and about what always happens to you. Listen to what you say about what you can and can't do. What you hear yourself say is what you believe. And that is probably what you are used to perceiving is happening. Try believing something different. Try asking the universe to help you change and correct your beliefs. Take an active part in creating your world. Say your new beliefs. Say them aloud. Write them down.

Believe that you deserved love. Believe that universal love is there for you. And you will begin to see exactly what you believe.

(Adapted from Journey to the Heart by Melody Beattie)

**You
become
what you
believe.**



South Edmonton Fellowship Centre

<https://fellowship-centre.org> 9122 34A Avenue NW, Edmonton 780-220-7811

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WEEKLY IN-PERSON MEETINGS

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	7:00 AM Alcoholics Anonymous	7:00 AM Alcoholics Anonymous	7:00 AM Alcoholics Anonymous	7:00 AM Alcoholics Anonymous	7:00 AM Alcoholics Anonymous	
10:30 AM Alcoholics Anonymous (Women Only)		10:30 AM Alcoholics Anonymous				10:00 AM Alcoholics Anonymous
12:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	12:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	12:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	12:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	12:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	12:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	12:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous
1:30 PM SMART Recovery						2:00 PM Gamblers Anonymous
3:00 PM Twelve Steps to Trauma Recovery				2:30 PM Overeaters Anonymous		
4:30 PM Meditation for Addiction Recovery						4:00 to 6:00 PM Wellbriety
6:00 PM Cocaine Anonymous		7:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	7:00 PM Cocaine Anonymous	6:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous (Punjabi, Hindi)	7:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous	7:00 PM Sex Addicts Anonymous
	7:30 PM Alcoholics Anonymous (Men Only)			8:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous (Men Only)		

WEEKLY ONLINE MEETINGS

SUNDAY 1:30 PM	Self-Management and Recovery Training (SMART Recovery) is a 60-minute online meeting based on psychological approaches for those seeking an alternative to Twelve Step addiction recovery. All are welcome. ZOOM MEETING ID 815 5962 9907 PASSCODE 357546
SUNDAY 3:00 PM	Twelve Step to Trauma Recovery is a 60-minute meeting focused on working the Twelve Steps to recover from past trauma. All are welcome. ZOOM MEETING ID 821 9943 2979 PASSCODE 936178
WEEKDAYS 7:00 AM	Sunrise Weekdays are 60-minute Alcoholics Anonymous meetings held Monday through Friday. Start your workday with the program! ZOOM MEETING ID 899 6946 5894 PASSCODE 912107
SATURDAY 4:00 PM	Wellbriety is a 60-minute meeting based on Indigenous teaching and wisdom to live a sober life that is balanced emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually. All are welcome. ZOOM MEETING ID 878 0138 8639 PASSCODE 298709