

Fellowship Recovery Compass: June 2026



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Join Us in Supporting the Fellowship Centre!

The Fellowship Centre plays a vital role in our community, providing essential services and support to those seeking recovery from any sort of addiction. To continue our operations, we rely heavily on fundraising initiatives. We are excited to announce that we have been awarded a casino event scheduled for July 6th and 7th, 2026. This is a fantastic opportunity for us to raise much-needed funds to keep our doors open for at least another three years.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has already signed up! Your support is invaluable. However, we still need more volunteers as well as backup personnel for evening and late-night shifts to ensure that the event runs smoothly.

We invite you to be a part of this important event by volunteering your time and skills. If you're interested in helping, please sign up for a remaining position at <https://signup.com/go/kJDASRd>. Remaining volunteer positions to be filled include chip runners (taking chips to poker tables when called on, from 6:15 PM to 3:15 AM) and money counters in the count room (counting cash with counting machines, from 11:00 PM to 3:30 AM). All remaining positions **do not** require completing a security form.

The funds raised during this casino event are crucial for maintaining the services we provide at the Fellowship Centre. By volunteering, you are directly contributing to the well-being of our recovery community. Together, we can make a significant impact!

For more information email info@fellowship-centre.org. To sign up to volunteer, visit <https://signup.com/go/kJDASRd>. Thank you for considering this opportunity to support the Fellowship Centre!

Wayne W.

South Edmonton Fellowship Centre President

Reframing Addiction: The Perspective of Dr. Daniel Sumrok

Dr. Daniel Sumrok, a prominent figure in the field of addiction recovery, challenges the conventional terminology surrounding addiction. He posits that the term "addiction" is too simplistic and fails to encapsulate the complexities of the behaviours it describes. Instead, he suggests that we should refer to it as "ritualized, compulsive, comfort-seeking." This redefinition invites a more nuanced understanding of the underlying mechanisms driving these behaviours, which can provide fresh insights into treatment and recovery.

At its core, the term "ritualized, compulsive, comfort-seeking" highlights the repetitive nature of addictive behaviours. Many individuals struggling with addiction engage in specific rituals that provide them with a sense of comfort, even if those behaviours are ultimately harmful. For instance, someone addicted to alcohol may develop a routine that involves drinking at the same times each day, often in the same locations. This ritualistic aspect can create a false sense of security and normalcy, making it more challenging for the individual to break free from the cycle of dependency.

The notion of compulsivity is crucial in understanding addiction. It underscores how certain behaviours become ingrained in an individual's life to the point where they feel compelled to engage in them, despite negative consequences. This compulsive aspect can stem from various sources, including psychological distress, trauma, or environmental triggers. By framing addiction in this way, Dr. Sumrok's approach encourages a deeper exploration of the factors that contribute to these compulsive behaviours, rather than merely labelling individuals as "addicts."

Comfort-seeking behaviours are also critical to this new perspective. Individuals often turn to substances or compulsive actions as a means of coping with emotional pain, stress, or feelings of inadequacy. This desire for comfort can manifest in various forms, whether through substance use, gambling, or other compulsive activities. By understanding addiction as a form of comfort-seeking, it becomes apparent that those struggling with these issues are often seeking relief from underlying emotional turmoil rather than simply indulging in destructive behaviours.

Moreover, this redefinition shifts the focus from a moral failing to a more compassionate understanding of human behaviour. By framing addiction as a response to discomfort, society can begin to view individuals grappling with these issues through a lens of empathy instead of judgement. This perspective fosters a more supportive environment for recovery, wherein individuals are encouraged to seek help rather than feel ashamed of their struggles.

Dr. Sumrok's terminology also has implications for treatment approaches. Traditional addiction treatment often focuses on abstinence and the elimination of the addictive substance or behaviour. The notion that addiction is comfort-seeking explains why alternate addictions quickly emerge when one addiction is seemingly controlled. By recognising the ritualistic and comfort-seeking aspects of addiction, treatment can be tailored to address the underlying emotional and psychological needs of individuals. This might include developing healthier coping mechanisms, mindfulness practices, and support systems that foster resilience and emotional regulation.

In essence, reframing addiction as "ritualized, compulsive, comfort-seeking" opens up new avenues for understanding and addressing the complexities of this phenomenon. It encourages a shift in societal attitudes, promoting empathy and support rather than stigma. By acknowledging the multifaceted nature of addiction, healthcare providers, families, and communities can work together more effectively to support individuals on their journey to recovery.

Positive Attitudes in Recovery: The Power of Choice and Gratitude

“There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.” William Shakespeare

In the journey of addiction recovery, we often find ourselves confronted with a fundamental question: Is the glass half full or half empty? This metaphor extends far beyond a simple observation about liquid levels; it encapsulates our approach to life itself. We can choose to see our responsibilities as either privileges or burdens. Are we offering help out of obligation, or do we see it as an opportunity for growth? The lens through which we view our circumstances can dramatically shape our experiences and outcomes.

Attitude is everything, and the good news is that our attitudes are a matter of choice. Each day presents us with a myriad of choices, much like selecting our clothes for the day. Just as we can pick out clothes that reflect our personality and mood, we can also choose the attitudes we adopt. No person or event, whether from our past or present, holds the power to dictate how we perceive our reality. The way we process life's challenges is uniquely ours; it is a reflection of our inner world.

This empowerment is vital, especially in recovery. We all share the same world and face similar challenges, yet our responses can differ drastically based on our attitudes. The truth is, what we practice, we become. If we choose to approach each day as a new adventure filled with possibilities, then that is precisely what it will be. This mindset can transform our experiences, allowing us to view setbacks not as failures but as opportunities for learning and growth.

Incorporating gratitude into our daily practice can serve as a powerful catalyst for this positive shift in attitude. Gratitude allows us to focus on what we have, rather than what we lack. It encourages us to appreciate the small blessings in our lives, which can be particularly significant in recovery. By acknowledging our progress and the support we receive from others, we foster a sense of connection and purpose.

Meditation can be a helpful tool in cultivating an attitude of gratitude. Each morning, we can set aside a few moments to reflect on the many blessings we possess. This could include the simple joys of life - like a warm cup of coffee, the beauty of nature, or the love of friends and family. Most importantly, we can express gratitude for our recovery journey itself. Every step we take toward healing is a testament to our resilience and strength.

As we move through each day, let us remind ourselves of the power of choice. We can choose to see the world through a lens of positivity and gratitude, or we can let negativity cloud our perceptions. The decision is ours to make. By consciously adopting a grateful outlook, we create a more fulfilling and meaningful life, one that enhances our recovery and strengthens our resolve.

As we navigate the complexities of addiction recovery, let's embrace the notion that our attitudes are within our control. We possess the ability to shape our experiences and responses. By practising gratitude daily, we can cultivate a mindset that not only supports our recovery but also enriches our lives. Remember, with each new day comes a new opportunity to redefine our attitude and embrace the journey ahead with open hearts and minds. Let's seize that opportunity together, celebrating every step of our recovery with gratitude and grace.

Patience and Persistence in Recovery

Recovery asks something that doesn't come naturally to many of us: patience. In a world that rewards speed, results, and instant gratification, the slow, steady nature of healing can feel frustrating. We want to arrive at the finish line quickly, to feel “better” now, to skip over the uncomfortable parts and land in peace. But recovery doesn't work that way. It unfolds gradually, often quietly, and always in its own time.

Many of us know the voice that says we should be doing more, doing better, or moving faster. It tells us we're behind, that we're not good enough, or that we'll never make it through the steps. That voice can sound convincing, but it often reflects the very patterns we are trying to recover from. When we listen to it, we may swing to extremes—overexerting ourselves in an attempt to “catch up,” or, just as easily, feeling overwhelmed and wanting to give up altogether.

This kind of thinking pulls us away from balance. Instead of a steady, grounded approach to recovery, we become driven by pressure, comparison, and fear. We forget that recovery is not a race, and there is no universal timeline we must meet. Each person's path is different, shaped by their experiences, challenges, and growth.

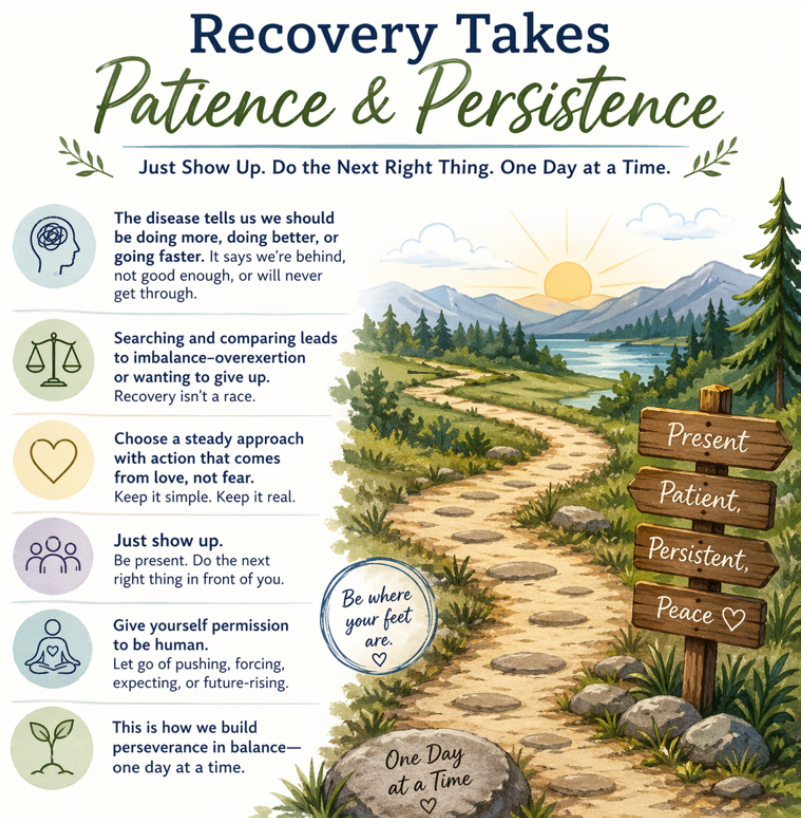
A healthier approach asks us to slow down and reconnect with the present moment. In many 12-step programs, there's a simple but powerful slogan: just show up. At first glance, it may seem too basic, even insignificant. But in practice, it carries deep meaning. To “just show up” is to be present for our lives as they are today, not as we wish they were or fear they might become.

It means attending the meeting, making the call, or sitting quietly with ourselves, even when we don't feel like it. It means doing the next right thing in front of us, rather than trying to solve everything all at once. It means allowing our actions to come from a place of care rather than pressure—from love instead of fear.

When we adopt this mindset, something begins to shift. We stop forcing, pushing, and expecting immediate results. We let go of “future tripping” and the constant need to measure our progress. In its place, we find a sense of peace with our efforts, however small they may seem.

Recovery, at its core, is about becoming human again. It gives us permission to be imperfect, to rest when needed, and to grow at a sustainable pace. There is strength in consistency, in showing up day after day, even in small ways.

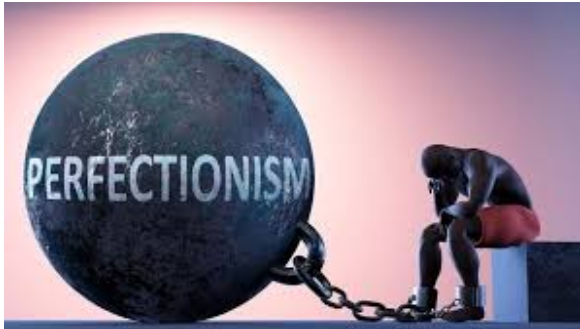
Patience and persistence are not passive qualities; they are active choices we make repeatedly. By staying present, taking balanced action, and trusting the process, we build true perseverance. One day at a time, we move forward—not perfectly, but faithfully. And that is more than enough.



THINGS THAT MESS UP RECOVERY

Using the Program to Try to Become Perfect

Perfectionism underlies many of our problems. It manifests through the unrealistic standards we impose on our behaviour, thoughts, feelings, values, and actions. However, striving for these unattainable ideals often leads to disappointment and distress, as we frequently fail to meet these impossible demands. This struggle is where many of our problems begin.



Psychological theories suggest that the roots of perfectionism can often be traced back to early childhood. In formative years, we may make a subconscious decision that perfection is a requirement for love and acceptance. This decision is generally fueled by a basic anxiety that we will not be loved unless we meet these high standards. We erroneously conclude that if we can achieve perfection—however we uniquely define it—we will be eternally loved and thus feel secure.

As we navigate life, many of us may turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as alcohol, drugs, and compulsive behaviours, to help bolster our ability to meet these unrealistic expectations. These substances and behaviours become crutches, providing temporary relief from feelings of inadequacy, defectiveness, and shame. Yet, when we enter recovery and remove these substances from our lives, we are confronted with the persistent demons of perfectionism that accompany us into our new state of sobriety.

In recovery, the urge to achieve a “perfect program” can be overwhelming. We might find ourselves in a position where we believe that if we can perfect our recovery journey, we can also guide others to achieve the same. This grandiosity often coexists with deep feelings of inadequacy and shame. Through my own recovery process, I came to realize that my desire for perfection stemmed from a distorted belief that being human, with all its flaws, was not good enough. This realization was a profound turning point; I had trapped myself in a corner where my humanity felt inadequate, and my imperfections were unacceptable.

In recovery, we delve deep into our self-rejection and recognize the multilayered nature of our issues. This journey often involves confronting not only the dysfunctional dynamics of our family of origin but also the unrealistic ideals perpetuated by societal norms regarding gender and identity. As I progressed in my recovery, I began to make significant strides in achieving emotional sobriety. I started to uncover and confront the reasons behind my self-rejection. Through the steps of recovery, I learned to embrace and honour my humanity, flaws and all.

Today, I strive to be what I am: a human being, perfectly imperfect. This acceptance has transformed my perspective on life and relationships. I no longer view my imperfections as failures but as essential components of my identity. By acknowledging and accepting my flaws, I have liberated myself from the burdens of perfectionism. I have learned that true self-love and acceptance come not from meeting impossible standards but from embracing the beautiful complexity of being human. In doing so, I find peace, connection, and a deeper understanding of myself and others.

(Based on the writing of Allen Berger, 12 Stupid Things That Mess Up Recovery, pp. 57 - 60)

Sex Addicts Anonymous: A Path to Recovery

Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA) is a dedicated support organization created for individuals grappling with compulsive sexual behaviours. Founded on the principles of mutual support and shared experiences, SAA emphasizes the importance of community in the recovery process. Like other 12-step programs, SAA helps members identify their addictive behaviours and fosters meaningful connections with others facing similar challenges. The organization provides a safe, confidential environment where individuals can openly share their stories and seek support as they navigate their recovery journey.

At the heart of SAA is the 12-step program, a powerful framework designed to help individuals overcome their compulsive sexual behaviours. These steps encourage self-reflection, accountability, and personal growth. Members work through the steps at their own pace, often sharing their progress and challenges with the group. This collective journey not only promotes healing but also instills a sense of responsibility among participants as they hold each other accountable.

The strength of SAA lies in its community. Members often form deep connections and support networks that extend beyond the meetings. This camaraderie can help alleviate feelings of loneliness and shame that often accompany addiction. The program encourages sharing personal experiences, which allows individuals to feel seen and understood in their struggles. This sense of belonging can be incredibly empowering, providing a solid foundation for recovery.

Research into the effectiveness of Sex Addicts Anonymous has shown promising results. Studies indicate that participation in SAA can lead to significant improvements in recovery outcomes. For instance, a study published in the *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment* found that regular attendees reported decreased acting out and improved overall mental health. Participants noted enhanced coping skills and a deeper understanding of their compulsive behaviours, which are essential for sustainable recovery.

Another study in the *American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse* revealed that individuals engaged in SAA experienced higher rates of reduced compulsive sexual behaviour compared to those who did not attend meetings. This highlights the crucial role that community support and accountability play in fostering long-term recovery. The shared experiences and encouragement found in SAA meetings help individuals feel less isolated and more empowered to make positive changes in their lives.

If you or someone you know is dealing with compulsive sexual behaviour, consider attending a Sex Addicts Anonymous meeting. The SAA group at the Fellowship Centre meets every Friday at 7:00 PM. This welcoming and supportive environment may be the perfect place to begin your recovery journey. Whether you seek to better understand your compulsive sexual behaviour or find a community that resonates with your experiences, SAA offers a compassionate space for healing and growth.

A Transformative Journey

By attending SAA meetings, you are not just joining a group; you are becoming part of a transformative movement toward recovery. Remember, you are not alone in this journey. Together, we can support one another in overcoming our challenges and achieving a balanced, fulfilling life. Embrace the opportunity to connect with others who understand your struggles and are committed to helping each other thrive.

Digital Detox



In today's hyper-connected world, the omnipresence of digital devices can often feel overwhelming. As technology continues to permeate every aspect of our lives, the concept of a digital detox has gained significant attention, particularly in the realm of addiction and recovery. Tanya Goodin's insightful work, *Off: Your Digital Detox for a Better Life*, provides a roadmap for individuals seeking to reclaim their time, mental clarity, and overall well-being through intentional disconnection from digital distractions.

A digital detox involves taking a purposeful break from digital devices and social media to reduce stress, improve focus, and foster genuine connections with oneself and others. Goodin emphasizes that our constant engagement with screens can lead to increased anxiety, reduced productivity, and feelings of isolation. By stepping away from these distractions, individuals can rediscover the joys of real-life interactions and self-reflection. Here are some strategies for a successful digital detox:

1. **Set Clear Boundaries**

Establish specific times during the day to unplug from digital devices. Goodin suggests creating a "tech-free zone" in your home, such as the dining room or bedroom, where devices are not allowed. This encourages mindful eating and promotes better sleep hygiene.

2. **Create a Device-Free Schedule**

Dedicate one day a week or a specific time each day to a complete digital detox. Inform friends and family about your plans so they can support your efforts. Use this time to engage in offline activities, such as reading, exercising, or pursuing hobbies that you may have neglected.

3. **Limit Social Media Use**

Goodin advises tracking your social media usage and setting limits. Consider using apps that monitor your screen time or block access to certain platforms during designated hours. This can help reduce the impulse to check notifications and allow for more meaningful interactions in the real world.

4. **Practice Mindfulness Techniques**

Incorporating mindfulness practices, such as meditation or deep-breathing exercises, can enhance your digital detox experience. Goodin highlights that being present in the moment can reduce the urge to reach for your phone. Start with just five minutes a day and gradually increase the duration as you become more comfortable.

5. **Engage in Outdoor Activities**

Nature has a unique ability to rejuvenate the mind and body. Plan regular outdoor activities, such as hiking, biking, or simply walking in a park. Goodin notes that these experiences not only provide a break from screens but also foster a sense of connection to the environment and oneself.

6. **Reflect on Your Digital Habits**

Take time to assess how digital devices impact your mood and productivity. Keeping a journal can help identify patterns in your usage and the feelings associated with them. Goodin encourages individuals to ask themselves if their digital habits align with their values and goals.

7. **Reconnect with Loved Ones**

Make a conscious effort to reconnect with family and friends through face-to-face conversations. Host a game night or potluck dinner where devices are set aside. Goodin stresses that these interactions are crucial for building strong relationships and combating feelings of loneliness.

Finding Joy in Recovery

In the journey of addiction recovery, many individuals seek happiness and freedom yet often find that joy eludes them. This elusive state of being is not something one can grasp directly; rather, joy is a secondary effect of primary actions rooted in connection and support. As we navigate our recovery, it becomes clear that joy arises when we create an environment that uplifts and encourages others.

At its core, the act of lightening someone else's load or guiding a lost individual back to a safe path can be one of the most valuable human enterprises. Each day presents us with opportunities to help others, and these moments are not just acts of kindness; they are pathways to our own joy. When we extend a hand to someone who has stumbled, we not only contribute to their recovery but also enrich our own experience. This reciprocal relationship offers a profound sense of fulfillment that cannot be underestimated.



In recovery meetings, we encounter individuals who are in desperate need of compassion, wisdom, and the examples of those who have taken meaningful steps towards a healthier life. Each story shared and each lesson learned become a building block in our collective journey. As we listen to others, we also reflect on our own paths -- the decisions we have made, the burdens we have shed, and the new beginnings we have embraced. It is through these shared experiences that we begin to cultivate joy.

The process of recovery is often filled with challenges, and it can be easy to feel isolated in our struggles. However, when we shift our focus from our own difficulties to the needs of those around us, we unlock a deeper sense of purpose. This shift not only helps others but also fosters a sense of community and belonging. We start to recognise that we are not alone; our experiences resonate with those around us, creating bonds that are essential for healing.

Moreover, the act of supporting others reinforces our own recovery journey. It encourages us to reflect on our own progress and reminds us of the importance of resilience. By sharing our insights and experiences, we contribute to a culture of hope and empowerment. This culture is vital for recovery, as it paves the way for individuals to envision a brighter future -- one filled with possibilities rather than limitations.

To truly know joy, we must be willing to share what we have learned. This sharing is not limited to formal settings like meetings; it can occur in everyday interactions. Whether it's offering a kind word, lending an ear, or simply being present for someone in need, these small acts can have a significant impact. They create a ripple effect, spreading hope and joy throughout our communities.



Joy may be a by-product of recovery, but it is one of the most rewarding outcomes of our journey. As we commit to supporting one another, we not only fortify our own recovery but also cultivate an environment rich in joy and connection. Let us embrace the opportunities to lighten someone else's burden, guide those who are lost, and share our experiences. In doing so, we will find that joy is not a distant goal but a companion that walks alongside us on the road to recovery.

Managing Urges in Recovery: The Power of the DENTS Tool

In the journey toward recovery from addictive behaviours, individuals often encounter moments of intense urges or cravings that can jeopardize their progress. SMART Recovery, a program that supports individuals in overcoming addictive behaviours through self-empowerment and self-reliance, offers a potent tool known as "DENTS" that offers an effective way to remember strategies to manage these urges.

DENTS is an acronym that stands for Deny or Delay, Escape, Neutralize, Tasks, and Swap. This tool is designed to equip individuals with strategies to combat the immediate demands of addictive urges, providing practical steps to diminish their power and influence.

1. **Deny or Delay**
Remind yourself as many times as is necessary that this urge will pass. Refuse to give in, no matter what. This might mean delaying giving in by just one moment at a time.
2. **Escape**
If you know what is triggering your urge, leave immediately or end the trigger. Escape can mean leaving a place, a conversation, or even a particular social setting that intensifies the urge. By doing so, individuals can significantly reduce the urge's intensity and influence.
3. **Neutralize**
You can neutralize an urge in a few ways. You can attack it and prove it wrong, or you can acknowledge it and let it pass (it will!). Create emotional distance by watching the urge build, crest, and fade. You don't need to pretend it doesn't exist, just recognize it and know that it is separate from you.
4. **Tasks**
Give yourself something to do. If you put your mind to something else, the urge has less oxygen to breathe. Call a friend or family member or try the simple distraction activity of counting or reciting.
5. **Swap**
Change your internal monologue or thinking. Instead of "This urge will kill me" think "This urge will pass." If you feel sad or lonely, deliberately change it by heading to the coffee shop, taking a walk, or joining a SMART Recovery meeting!

The DENTS tool is instrumental in helping individuals navigate the often unpredictable nature of urges experienced during recovery. By offering a structured approach to understanding and responding to these intense feelings, DENTS empowers individuals to take control of their reactions and decisions. It's not about getting rid of urges completely; rather, it's about developing a healthy, sustainable way to manage them.

Learn many practical strategies for achieving and maintaining clean and sober living by attending SMART Recovery meetings at the Fellowship Centre. There are currently two SMART Recovery Meetings held at the Fellowship Centre every week:

Sunday at 1:30 PM

Friday at 7:00 PM





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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 for Trauma Recovery				2:30 PM Overeaters Anonymous		
4:30 PM Meditation for Addiction Recovery						
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 SMART Recovery	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 for 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