



Recovery Compass August 2026

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From everyone at the Fellowship Centre...

Thank You, Casino Volunteers!

Thirty-two amazing volunteers made a lasting difference! Together with the continued generosity of our supporters, the funds raised are expected to help keep the Fellowship Centre's doors open for another two to three years, supporting those on their recovery journey.

Adrien H	Jennifer J	Reese P
Allyson G	Julia J	Robert A
April C	Kerry H	Robert H
Colleen M	Kevin KC	Robert M
Dale P	Mason H	Ron P
David L	Mattix R	Sam K
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Genevieve J	Paul W	Wayne W
Hope R	Rani F	

Nurturing Ourselves While Confronting Ourselves

Recovery demands rigorous honesty. To be truly honest with ourselves, we must stop running from the truth. Admitting that our lives have been filled with poor choices and regrettable behaviors can be painfully confronting, often stirring feelings of guilt, shame, and even fear of judgment. However, once we confront this uncomfortable reality, our perspective begins to shift dramatically. Instead of blaming external factors—people, places, or situations—we come to recognize that “our problems were of our own making.” This shift is not merely a change in thought; it’s a profound transformation in how we engage with our lives and our choices. It empowers us to take ownership of our actions and fosters a deeper understanding of the consequences of our decisions.

Three essential practices can help us maintain a positive outlook during this challenging process **supporting ourselves, soothing ourselves, and practicing self-compassion.**

Self-support is the ability to encourage ourselves to confront our reality without judgment. It is deeply rooted in self-acceptance, which fosters personal growth and significantly boosts self-esteem. To support ourselves effectively, we must break the cycle of self-criticism, which only perpetuates feelings of inadequacy and despair. Instead, we can focus on uncovering the valuable lessons hidden within our difficulties, transforming them into opportunities for meaningful change. This process includes recognizing our strengths, celebrating small victories and understanding that every step forward is a testament to our resilience. By actively affirming our worth and capabilities, we create a nurturing internal dialogue that fosters a sense of empowerment and hope.



Self-soothing involves comforting ourselves when self-discovery brings discomfort or regret. Reconciliation begins with perspective: recognizing that while we may have made mistakes, we are not mistakes. This means letting go of the unrealistic pursuit of perfection and accepting our authentic selves, flaws included. As the *Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text* reminds us, “no one among us can maintain perfect adherence to these principles.” Accepting our imperfections creates space for healing, allowing us to learn from our mistakes without being overwhelmed by shame. Mindfulness, meditation, and simple self-care practices can help restore calm and clarity during difficult moments.

Self-compassion grows from recognizing our shared human imperfection. Our past self-destructive behaviours often reflected limited understanding, emotional pain, or unhealthy beliefs rather than our true character. We did the best we could with the knowledge and resources we had at the time. Instead of criticizing ourselves, we can examine our mistakes for the lessons they offer and use them as opportunities for growth and greater self-awareness.

As we develop self-support, self-soothing, and self-compassion, our capacity for honesty grows. Many people in recovery say, “The better I feel about myself, the more I can confront my shortcomings.” Although it seems paradoxical, this reflects an important truth: it is easier to acknowledge and correct our flaws when we believe in our inherent worth.

(Based on the work of Allen Berger, *Smart Things to Do When the Booze and Drugs Are Gone*, pp. 67–76.)

Trauma and Addiction: Understanding the Connection

The relationship between trauma and addiction is complex and multifaceted. Research shows that individuals who experience traumatic events, especially in childhood, are at a significantly higher risk of developing substance use disorders. This connection can be understood through various psychological and physiological lenses, emphasizing the importance of addressing trauma in addiction recovery.

The Impact of Trauma on Addiction

Trauma can take many forms, including physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, neglect, and exposure to violence. The American Psychological Association highlights that traumatic experiences can lead to chronic stress, which affects brain development and function. This can result in emotional dysregulation, making individuals more susceptible to using drugs or alcohol as a coping mechanism.

Studies indicate that approximately 75% of individuals in substance abuse treatment report a history of trauma. This suggests a strong correlation between the two, as individuals may turn to substances to numb the pain of their experiences or to manage symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).



The 12 Steps: A Path to Healing

The 12-step recovery model, developed by Alcoholics Anonymous, has been widely adopted for various addiction treatments. Research indicates that the 12 steps can be effective not just in addressing addiction but also in facilitating healing from trauma.

1. **Acknowledge the Problem:** The first step encourages individuals to admit their powerlessness over their addiction, creating a foundation for healing. This admission can also extend to acknowledging the trauma they have experienced.
2. **Seeking Support:** The steps involving seeking help from a higher power and community support can foster connection and reduce feelings of isolation often associated with trauma.

3. **Self-Reflection and Amends:** The steps focusing on self-reflection and making amends can help individuals process their past, confront their trauma, and work toward forgiveness—both for themselves and others.

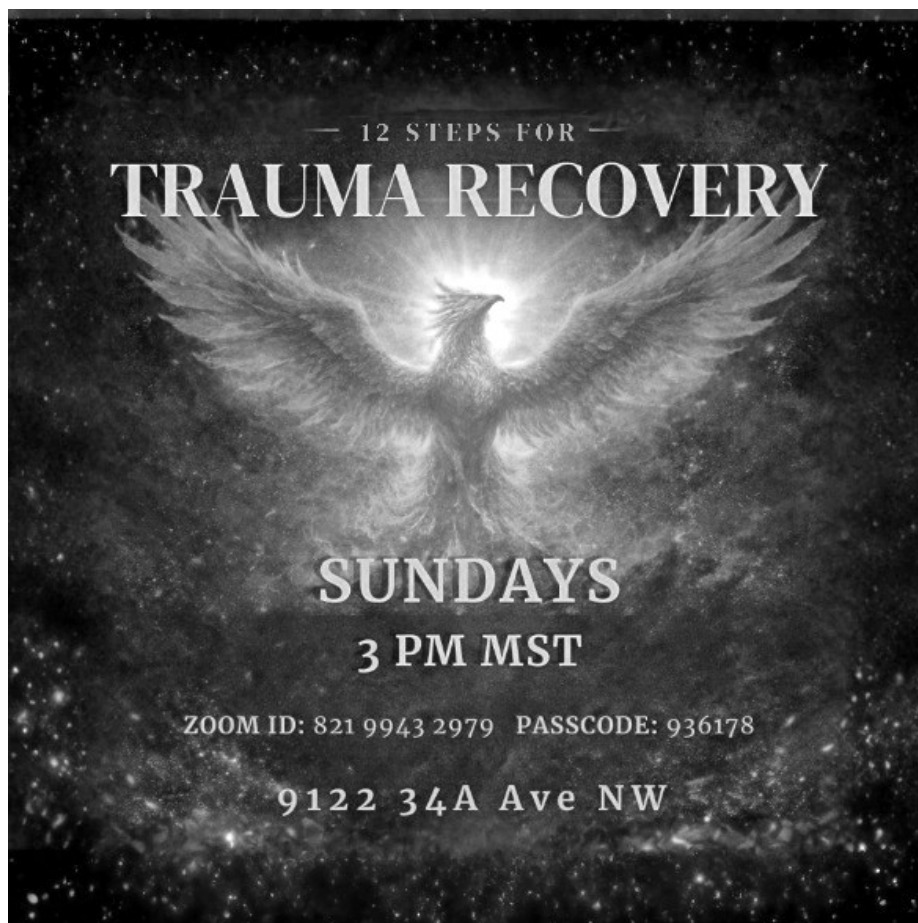
Research published in the *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment* indicates that participants in 12-step programs report significant reductions in trauma symptoms alongside improvements in their addiction recovery. The supportive environment fosters a sense of belonging, which is crucial for individuals who have experienced trauma.

The Role of Fellowship in Recovery

While the 12-step model has proven beneficial, it's important to recognize that recovery is a personal journey. Different strategies work for different individuals. Many find solace in community meetings where they can share their experiences without judgment.

Understanding the relationship between trauma and addiction is vital for effective recovery. The 12-Steps offer valuable tools for healing, particularly for those whose addiction stems from unresolved trauma.

If you or someone you know is struggling, consider attending the **12 Steps for Trauma Recovery** meeting held every Sunday at 3:00 PM at the Fellowship Centre. Together, we can foster a supportive community that promotes healing and recovery.



The Power of Kindness in Recovery

In our journey of recovery, we often discover that the steps we take are not just a means to achieve sobriety but a way of life that imbues our existence with new meaning and purpose. Each day presents us with opportunities to connect with others, and these connections can be transformative—not just for them, but for us as well.

Imagine walking down the street and making eye contact with a stranger. In that fleeting moment, we might not know what battles they are facing. Perhaps they are struggling with despair, questioning the very worth of their existence. A simple smile or a kind word from us could spark a glimmer of hope in their heart. While we are not responsible for the feelings and actions of others, our recovery journey brings heightened awareness to the world around us. We can choose to be a source of positivity and encouragement.

It's easy to get lost in our own thoughts as we navigate daily life. Often, we find ourselves avoiding eye contact with those we encounter, wrapped up in our worries and concerns. However, taking a moment to acknowledge someone—a smile, a nod, or a few kind words—can create a ripple effect of goodwill. Even on our less-than-stellar days, reaching out to others can lift our spirits as well.

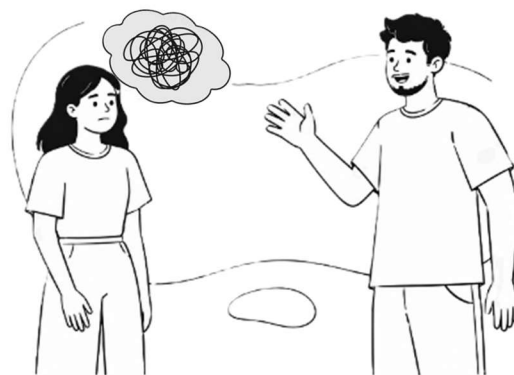
Consider the small acts of kindness we can incorporate into our daily routines. Letting someone go ahead of us in line when they have only one item while we're burdened with a cartful can be a simple yet profound gesture. Taking an extra moment to engage with a cashier—wishing them a good day—can brighten their spirits and ours. These seemingly insignificant actions not only help others feel valued but also foster a sense of connection and community.

Scientific research supports the notion that acts of kindness can improve our own well-being. When we extend kindness to others, our brains release chemicals like oxytocin and endorphins, which can enhance our mood and reduce stress. This bi-directional relationship highlights that while we aim to lift others, we simultaneously elevate our state of mind.

We may never fully grasp the impact we have on the people we encounter, but even the smallest act of kindness can carry significant weight. If our actions spread a moment of joy or comfort, they are undoubtedly worth the effort. Each day, let us strive to carry the message of hope—not just for ourselves, but for everyone we meet.

In conclusion, the path of recovery is enriched by our interactions with others. By embracing kindness, we not only contribute to our healing but also help cultivate a more compassionate world. Let us remember that our recovery journey is not solely about personal growth; it is also about the positive influence we can have in the lives of others. As we move forward, let us take a moment each day to consider how we can spread kindness and joy, transforming the ordinary into something extraordinary.

Together, we can create a community filled with hope and connection, one small act at a time.



Embracing Simplicity: Lessons from Shawna Niequist's *Present Over Perfect*

In her enlightening book *Present Over Perfect: Leaving Behind Frantic for Simpler, More Self-Aware Living*, Shawna Niequist offers profound insights into the struggles of overworking and the toll it takes on our lives and relationships. Many of us can identify with her experiences of burnout and the relentless pursuit of perfection, often at the expense of our well-being and the quality of our interactions with others.

Niequist reflects on her past, describing a life spent as a “workhorse,” wherein she directed her best energy towards commitments and responsibilities that were often external and, at times, superficial. This relentless drive to perform and please not only drained her but also left a significant impact on those around her. She candidly expresses her regret for how her “fragmented, anxious presence” bruised the people she cared about. This sentiment resonates deeply with those on the path to recovery, where the journey often involves unlearning ingrained habits of self-neglect and overcommitment.

In a society that often glorifies busyness, it is easy to fall into the trap of equating productivity with worth. Niequist’s narrative serves as a poignant reminder of the hidden costs associated with this mindset. The constant hustle can lead to physical and emotional exhaustion, leaving little room for genuine connection and self-care. As individuals in recovery, understanding the detrimental effects of overworking is crucial in reshaping our lives into ones that prioritise well-being over relentless productivity.

One of Niequist’s central themes is the importance of being present. She encourages readers to shift their focus from external validation to self-awareness and authenticity. By embracing a simpler way of living, individuals can cultivate a deeper connection with themselves and others. This shift is particularly relevant for those recovering from addiction, as the journey often requires building a new identity that is grounded in self-acceptance rather than external achievements.

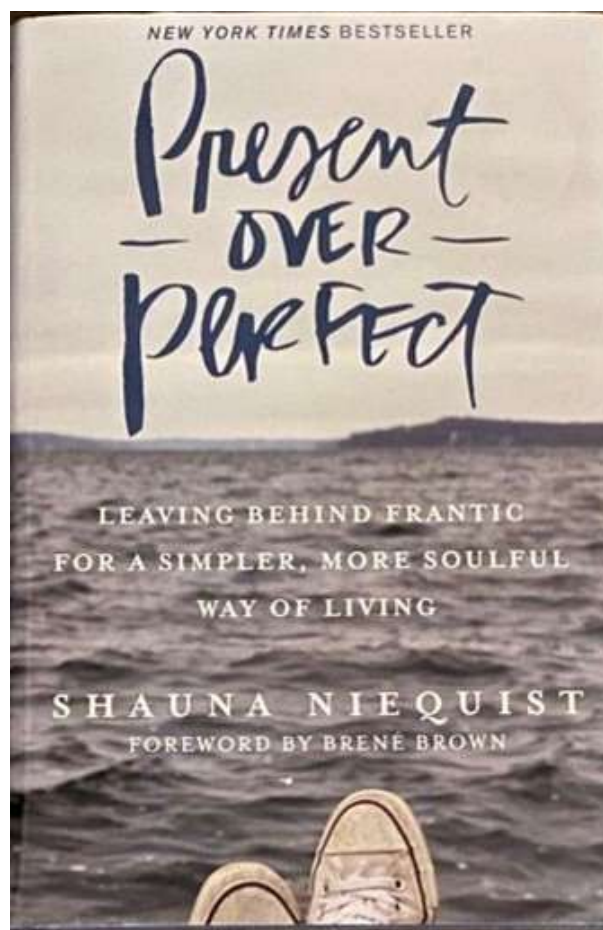


Niequist's reflections challenge us to examine how we allocate our energy. Are we pouring our best selves into relationships, self-care, and meaningful pursuits? Or are we, like Niequist once was, giving away our energy to things that ultimately do not serve our growth? In recovery, learning to prioritise our needs and establish healthier boundaries is essential in fostering lasting change.

Niequist's acknowledgment of her past mistakes—specifically, the harm caused to others—opens the door to a broader conversation about forgiveness. In recovery, it is vital to confront our past actions and their impacts on those we love. By recognising our shortcomings, we can begin to heal and seek forgiveness, not only from others but also from ourselves. This process is fundamental in cultivating a life filled with compassion and understanding, both for ourselves and those around us.

Shawna Niequist's *Present Over Perfect* is more than just a memoir; it is a call to action for anyone seeking to reclaim their life from the grips of overwork and anxiety. By embracing simplicity and prioritising presence, we can create a more fulfilling existence that nurtures our relationships and supports our journey to recovery. Her insights remind us that it is never too late to change our course and live a life that is authentic, self-aware, and genuinely connected to those we cherish.

As we reflect on these lessons, let us strive to cultivate a life that celebrates presence over perfection, finding beauty in simplicity and connection.



Continuous Self-Discovery in Addiction Recovery

There are two uncomfortable truths about self-discovery in addiction recovery. The first is that it is hard work. The second is that it never ends.

Many people enter recovery believing that once they stop drinking or using, the difficult part is over. While achieving sobriety is a tremendous accomplishment, it is often only the beginning of a deeper journey. Recovery invites us to ask questions that can be both challenging and transformative. One of the most important questions is: **Who am I?**

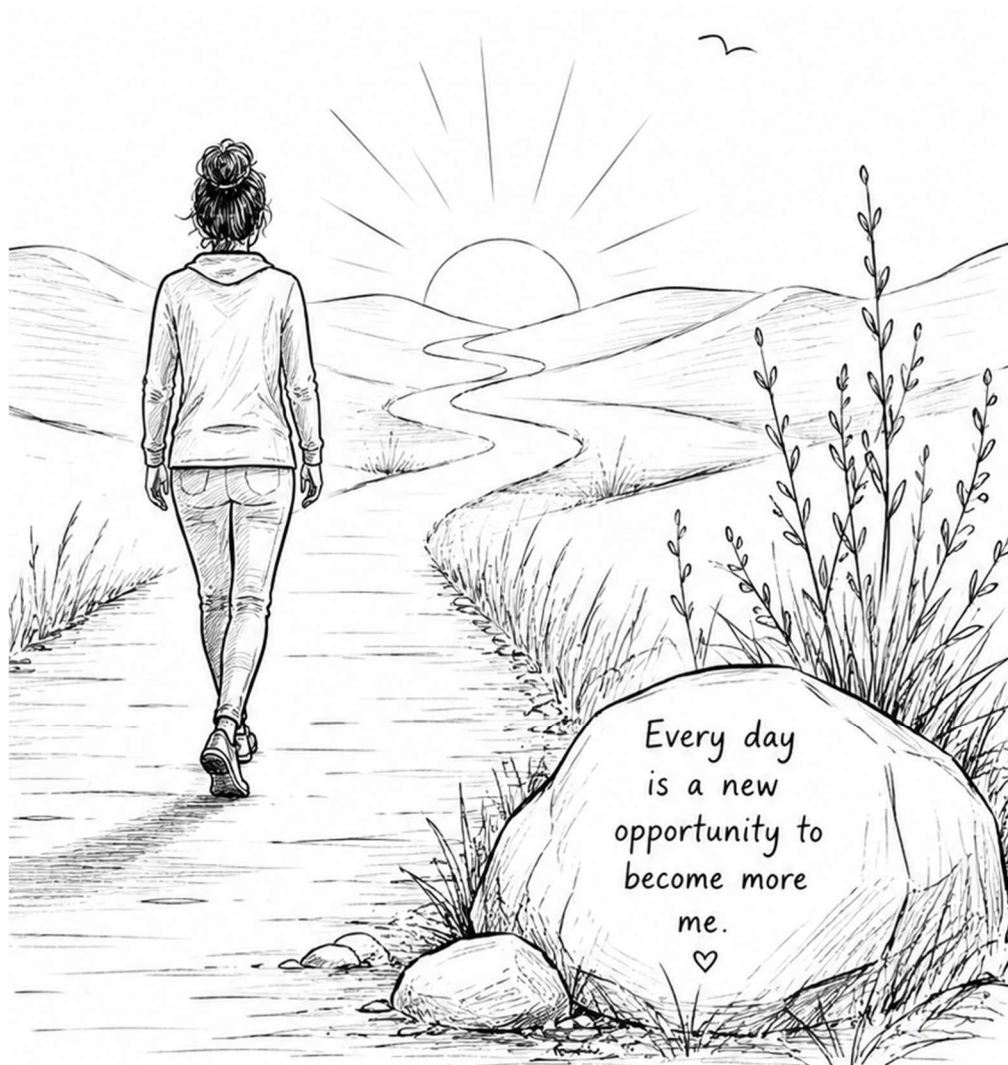


I have been asking myself that question since the day I entered recovery. In truth, I was probably asking it long before then, but the years of active addiction were often blurred by denial, confusion, and emotional pain. Recovery provided the clarity needed to begin exploring the answer.

Self-discovery is not about finding a single, final answer. Rather, it is an ongoing process of examining our lives, understanding our strengths, identifying our shortcomings, and discovering what truly brings meaning and purpose. It involves taking an honest look at what is working well and making a conscious effort to do more of those things. At the same time, it requires us to identify what may be missing from our lives and determine how we can bring those missing pieces into our recovery.

For many of us, the most uncomfortable part is not the results of the examination but the process itself. Looking inward can be intimidating. It requires honesty, vulnerability, and a willingness to confront aspects of ourselves that we would rather avoid. Recovery encourages us to move beyond old patterns of denial and self-deception and to face reality as it is. One lesson I continue to learn is that self-discovery is difficult to do alone. Left to my own thinking, I can easily miss important truths about myself. This is why sponsors, recovery groups, counsellors, trusted friends, and fellow recovering people are so valuable. They help us see blind spots, challenge unhealthy thinking, and encourage us when the work becomes difficult.

Whenever I enter a new phase of growth in recovery, I do so with some nervousness. Experience has taught me that I am likely to uncover things about myself that make me uncomfortable. I may discover fears, resentments, habits, or attitudes that need attention. These discoveries often mean there is more work ahead.



Yet this discomfort is not something to fear. In fact, it is often a sign of progress. Growth rarely occurs when we remain comfortable. The willingness to examine ourselves honestly, accept what we find, and make positive changes is one of the greatest strengths recovery can develop.

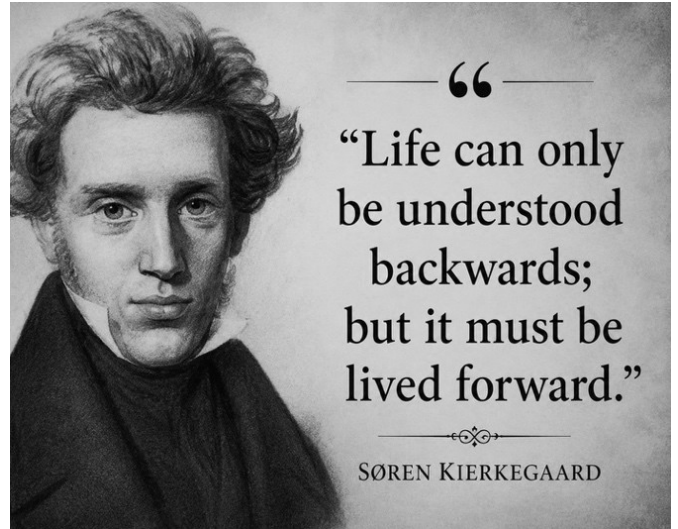
The journey of self-discovery has no finish line. As we grow, our understanding of ourselves continues to evolve. While the process can be challenging, it is also deeply rewarding. Each new insight brings an opportunity for greater freedom, healthier relationships, and a more meaningful life. Recovery is not simply about becoming sober—it is about becoming the person we were always meant to be.

Understanding the Past, Living in the Present One Day at a Time

One of the great challenges of addiction recovery is making sense of our past while continuing to move toward a healthier future. The Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard captured this paradox perfectly when he wrote, "Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forward." His words hold particular meaning for those of us recovering from addiction.

Most people entering recovery spend considerable time looking back. We examine our drinking or drug use, the consequences of our behaviour, damaged relationships, missed opportunities, and the emotional wounds that may have contributed to our addiction. This process is not about dwelling on regret or becoming trapped in guilt. Rather, it is about understanding. Recovery invites us to ask difficult but necessary questions: What happened? Why did it happen? What patterns kept repeating? What can I learn from my experiences?

Looking backwards can reveal important truths. We may discover how fear, shame, loneliness, trauma, or



**IF YOU
FELL DOWN
YESTERDAY,
STAND UP
TODAY.**

H.G. WELLS

low self-worth influenced our choices. We may recognize unhealthy coping mechanisms that once seemed necessary. We begin to see connections that were invisible while we were caught in the chaos of active addiction. In many recovery programs, this self-examination is a vital part of healing. Without understanding the past, we risk repeating it. coping mechanisms that once seemed necessary. We begin to see connections that were invisible while we were caught in the chaos of active addiction. In many recovery programs, this self-examination is a vital part of healing. Without understanding the past, we risk repeating it.

However, Kierkegaard reminds us that life is not meant to be lived in reverse. Understanding our past does not allow us to change it. No amount of reflection can erase yesterday's mistakes or undo the harm we may have caused. Recovery requires something more challenging: moving forward despite uncertainty.

Living forward means accepting that we cannot know exactly what tomorrow will bring. We cannot predict every challenge, temptation, or opportunity. Instead, we make the best decisions we can with the knowledge we have today. We attend meetings, practise honesty, seek support, make amends where possible, and continue growing. We trust that these actions will lead us in a positive direction, even when the path ahead is unclear.

This balance between reflection and action is essential. Too much focus on the past can lead to shame, self-pity, or paralysis. Too little reflection can leave us vulnerable to repeating old behaviours. Recovery teaches us to learn from yesterday without living there.

Many people discover that some of the most painful chapters of their lives eventually become sources of wisdom and strength. Looking back, they can see how adversity shaped their character, deepened their compassion, and strengthened their commitment to sobriety. The struggles that once seemed meaningless become part of a larger story of growth and transformation.

Kierkegaard's insight offers hope to everyone in recovery. We may only fully understand our lives by looking backward, but our purpose lies ahead. The past can teach us, but it does not define us. Each day of recovery is an opportunity to take what we have learned and continue moving forward—one day, one decision, and one step at a time.

Find Our Amazing Volunteers!

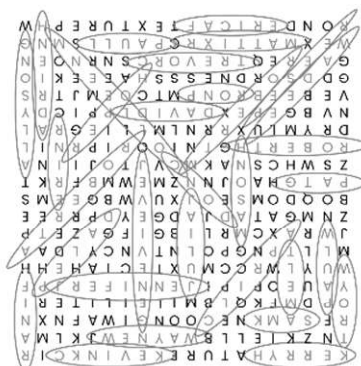
To the hands that serve, the hearts that care, and the people who quietly say "yes" when help is needed—this word search is dedicated to you.

Adrien H
Allyson G
April C
Colleen M
Dale P
David L
Don C
Erica F
Erin R
Genevieve J
Hope R

Jennifer J
Julia J
Kerry H
Kevin KC
Mason H
Mattix R
Mel T
Pat G
Paul L
Paul W
Rani F

Reese P
Robert A
Robert H
Robert M
Ron P
Sam K
Trevor C
Troy W
Wade E
Wayne W

SOLUTION



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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 Alcoholics Anonymous						
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