Recovery Compass

September 2026

fellowship centre south edmonton

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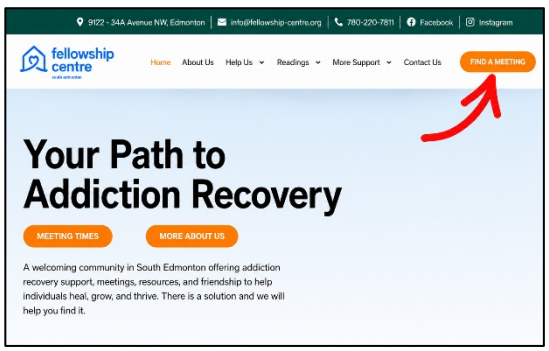
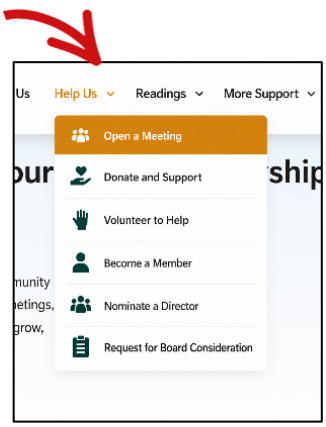
The Fellowship Centre Website: Information, Resources & Support

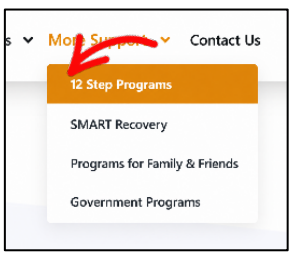


Often, the first step in seeking recovery information is visiting the **Fellowship Centre website**. Chances are you've clicked the **Find a Meeting** button. It's our most popular feature, and for good reason. Every day, people use it to find support, connect with others, and take an important step in their recovery journey.

While **Find a Meeting** is often the first stop, **Don't Stop There!** It's only one part of what the website has to offer.

The **Help Us** menu provides information for those who would like to volunteer, become a member, support the Centre, contribute to its future, or share ideas with the Board.





You'll also find recovery resources under the **More Support** link, including information on 12-Step programs and SMART Recovery, as well as links to additional recovery resources.

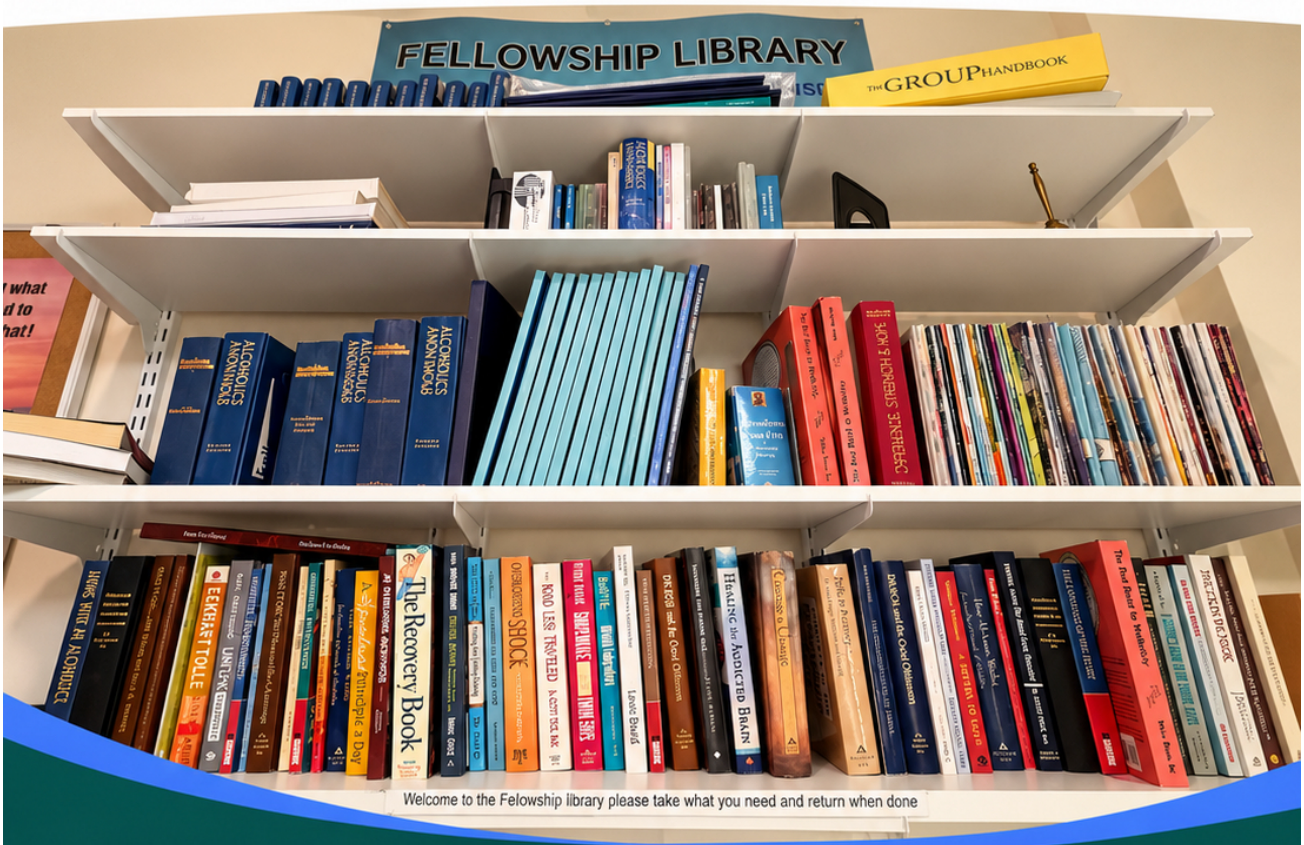
Under the **Readings** link you'll find a digital copy of the Fellowship Recovery Compass and our Recovery Blog.

We also have links to our **Facebook & Instagram** right at the top of the website so we can easily connect!

fellowship centre
south edmonton

Hope grows here.

A community of connection, support and recovery.



Thanks to the Government of Alberta's **Community Initiatives Program Operating Grant,** the Fellowship Centre continues to thrive and serve our addiction recovery community.

fellowship-centre.org

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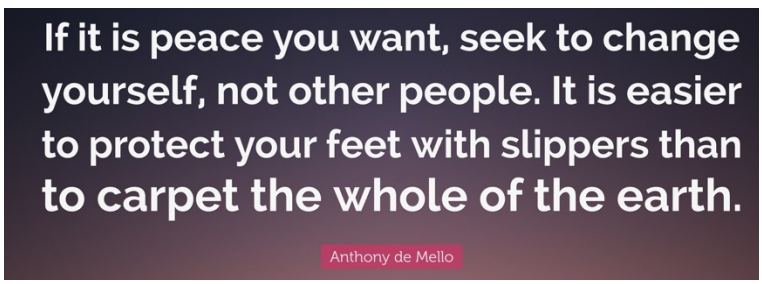
Stop Pressuring Others to Change: Start Pressuring Yourself to Change

Emotional sobriety is about learning how to keep our emotional balance regardless of what is going on around us. One way to facilitate the development of this ability is through self-confrontation. Self-confrontation helps us identify our personal issues, our shortcomings, our stuck points, and our weak points. We stop dodging ourselves and instead focus on identifying the patterns and themes in our lives, extracting from them our unresolved personal issues so that we can focus our efforts on growing up.

One way we have avoided looking at ourselves is by externalizing the responsibility for our unhappiness, for our failures, and even for our addiction. We blame others for our troubles, for our low self-esteem, for our frustration, for how we feel or don't feel, or for how we react. This mentality led us to believe that if the conditions were different, we would be different. We became obsessed with "if only." For example, "If only my parents had been more loving, or less abusive, I would have a better life. If only my boss recognized my talents and efforts, I would have a better job and make more money. If only I were taller and more attractive, I would have more self-esteem." If only _____, I would be _____. The list could go on ad nauseam.

If you are fearless and thorough in your self-confrontation, you can extract and identify your unresolved personal issues, the ones embedded in your conflicts or in your emotional dependency. For example:

- If you are in a partnership, stop working on your relationship and instead focus on yourself. Stop trying to make your partner listen to you or validate you or accept you. Instead, start listening to yourself. Focus on learning how to validate yourself and accept yourself. Focus on learning to be self-supportive.
- If you are dissatisfied in your job, stop focussing on what is wrong with it or with your fellow employees and instead focus on yourself. Stop hoping that they will function better and instead focus on how you can start functioning better. Focus on being your best self regardless of what is happening at work.
- If you are attending a 12-Step meeting that isn't living up to your expectations, stop focussing on what is wrong with the meeting. Instead, shift your focus to what you can do to sweeten the pot. Focus on bringing to the meeting what you feel is missing.



- If you are working with a newcomer and they aren't working the program according to your wishes, stop focussing on what they are doing and instead focus on doing something different with them.

No one among us is perfect. We are all works in progress. Here are more ways to put effective self-confrontation into practice:

- Accept yourself instead of demanding that other people accept you the way you are.
- Extract from your emotional reactions the unresolved issues in your life and get to work on resolving them.
- Remind yourself that you are doing these things for the sake of your integrity. Your improved self-esteem is your reward.
- Strive to be your best self and let your best self run the show.

(Based on the work of Allen Berger, *Smart Things to Do When the Booze and Drugs are Gone*, pp. 81 – 87)

Compulsive Gambling Recovery

Gambling addiction is a serious issue that affects millions of individuals and their families across Canada. For those seeking recovery, support groups like Gamblers Anonymous (GA) provide an essential community and framework for healing. Founded in 1957, GA follows a 12-step program similar to that of Alcoholics Anonymous, focusing on personal accountability and mutual support among participants.

Compulsive gambling, or gambling disorder, is characterized by an uncontrollable urge to gamble despite negative consequences. Individuals may experience financial ruin, strained relationships, and mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. Traditional treatment options include therapy, medication, and self-help strategies; however, peer support groups have emerged as a vital component of recovery.

Numerous studies have examined the effectiveness of Gamblers Anonymous in helping individuals manage their gambling behaviours. Research indicates that participation in GA can lead to significant improvements in recovery outcomes. A study published in the *Journal of Gambling Studies* found that individuals who attended GA meetings regularly reported lower levels of gambling frequency and severity compared to those who did not participate in such groups.

Another study highlighted that individuals engaged in GA exhibited higher rates of abstinence from gambling over a multi-year period. This longitudinal research suggests that the community support and accountability fostered in GA meetings play a crucial role in maintaining long-term recovery. Participants often cite the shared experiences and understanding found within the group as integral to their healing journey.

The sense of community in Gamblers Anonymous is vital. Members often share personal stories, offering insights into challenges and successes. This shared vulnerability creates a safe space for individuals to discuss their struggles without judgement. The supportive environment encourages open dialogue about gambling behaviours, helping members identify triggers and develop healthier coping strategies.

Moreover, GA's structured format, including regular meetings and step-based recovery, provides individuals with a roadmap to navigate their recovery. The 12-step approach encourages self-reflection and personal growth, empowering members to take responsibility for their actions and make amends where necessary. This process not only fosters individual growth but also cultivates a strong network of support that extends beyond the meetings.

Gamblers Anonymous serves as a beacon of hope for many struggling with compulsive gambling. Research consistently demonstrates that participation in GA can lead to improved recovery outcomes, increased abstinence rates, and enhanced emotional well-being. By leveraging the power of community support, individuals can find the strength to confront their addiction and regain control of their lives.

Gamblers Anonymous at the Fellowship Centre

For those seeking support in their recovery journey, Gamblers Anonymous meetings are held every Saturday at 2:00 p.m. at the Fellowship Centre. This welcoming environment is an excellent opportunity to connect with others facing similar challenges and to gain valuable insights into the recovery process. Remember, you are not alone—help is available, and change is possible.

Spirituality in Everyday Recovery

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, “Every natural fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact.” Those words remind us that spirituality is not confined to churches, mosques, temples, meditation cushions, or recovery meetings. Spirituality reaches much further into our lives than we sometimes realize. It quietly shapes our attitudes, our behaviours, our relationships, and even the smallest choices we make every day.

In recovery, spirituality is often misunderstood as something mystical or overly complicated. Yet true spirituality is usually revealed in simple, ordinary moments. It appears in how we speak to people, how we treat ourselves, how we respond to disappointment, and whether we live from fear or from trust. A spiritual life is not measured by how often we quote wisdom literature or talk about enlightenment. It is measured by how we conduct ourselves when nobody is watching.

One of the deepest spiritual questions we can ask ourselves is, “How much is enough?” Addiction thrives in the belief that nothing is ever enough. Not enough attention, not enough love, not enough success, not enough comfort. The substance or behaviour may change, but the emptiness underneath often remains the same. If we believe deep down that we ourselves are not enough, then no amount of food, drugs, alcohol, money, possessions, or approval will ever truly satisfy us. We will always chase more, hoping the next thing will finally quiet the ache inside.

Recovery invites us to challenge that belief. Over time, many people begin to discover that worthiness is not something earned through perfection or performance. It is something inherent. A growing sense of self-worth and self-acceptance is often a sign that the spirit is healing. When we no longer need to constantly prove ourselves, compete with others, or seek validation from every direction, we begin to experience a deeper kind of peace.

Another important spiritual question is, “Where is my security based?” Many of us once built our security on fragile foundations — status, appearance, money, relationships, or the approval of others. But external things can disappear quickly. Crowds change their opinions. Circumstances shift. If our sense of safety depends entirely on outside validation, life can feel terrifying and unstable.

Spiritual growth teaches us to build our lives on something more lasting: honesty, integrity, compassion, humility, and connection. These qualities cannot be taken away by a bad day or another person’s judgement. They become anchors during difficult times.

Our spirituality also reveals itself in how we treat others. It can be seen in a smile offered to a stranger, a word of encouragement to someone struggling, or a gentle hand on a friend’s shoulder. It is equally visible when we gossip, belittle others, spread resentment, or tell cruel jokes. Every interaction reflects something about the condition of our inner world.

In the end, we do not need to convince others that we are spiritual people. Our actions speak loudly enough. The people around us will recognize our spirituality not through our words, but through the kindness, patience, honesty, and compassion we consistently bring into everyday life.

Consistency in Recovery

The secret of success is consistency of purpose. (Disraeli)

One of the greatest secrets to success in recovery is consistency of purpose. Few obstacles block our path more effectively than inconsistency. Many of us know exactly what it feels like to begin recovery filled with determination, gratitude, and enthusiasm. Once we become truly willing to throw off the bondage of self, we are prepared to do whatever it takes to change our lives. If that means attending meetings regularly, then we gladly show up. If it means reading recovery literature every day, we read until our eyes grow tired. If it means listening to our sponsor and completing a thorough set of steps, we dive into the work with energy and hope.

In early recovery, motivation often comes naturally. The pain of addiction is still fresh in our minds, and the possibility of freedom feels exciting and life-changing. Many of us experience relief for the first time in years. We begin to see glimpses of a better life and become eager to hold onto it. During this stage, it can feel as though our commitment will never fade.

Over time, however, the emotional intensity of early recovery often begins to settle. Meetings may no longer feel new or inspiring. Reading can start to feel repetitive. Step work may seem difficult, uncomfortable, or time-consuming. Eventually, many of us begin asking ourselves whether we have already done enough. We may decide to skip a meeting here and there, delay our step work, or stop reaching out to others as often. Recovery slowly slips lower on the priority list while other responsibilities and distractions take their place.

This is where consistency becomes essential. Recovery is not sustained by moments of enthusiasm alone. Lasting recovery is built through steady and repeated action, even on the days when motivation is low. The important thing is not maintaining constant excitement about the program. The important thing is refusing to stop altogether.

None of us can live in a permanent state of spiritual enthusiasm. Just as the tide rises and falls, our feelings will naturally change over time. Some days we feel deeply connected and grateful, while other days we may feel tired, restless, or discouraged. Recovery teaches us that we do not have to base our actions on our feelings. We can still attend a meeting when we do not feel like going. We can still pray, call our sponsor, read a passage of literature, or help another addict even when our enthusiasm is nowhere to be found.

Consistency also teaches patience. Growth rarely happens all at once. Addiction developed over years, and healing takes time as well. We are not expected to become spiritually healthy overnight. Small actions, repeated day after day, slowly build a strong foundation for lasting recovery.

The goal is not perfection. The goal is persistence. Even a little bit of recovery each day keeps us moving forward. By continuing to take simple actions consistently, we begin to develop stability, humility, and trust in the process. In the end, consistency of purpose means continuing the journey one day at a time, regardless of how we feel.

Never Compromise: The Importance of Vigilance

"The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant." These words, attributed to Patrick Henry, carry a powerful message for anyone walking the path of addiction recovery. Recovery is often misunderstood as a contest of strength or willpower. While courage and determination are certainly important, long-term recovery depends less on brute strength and more on consistent vigilance.

Many people in recovery are familiar with the slogan "Never compromise." At first glance, it can sound like a demand for perfection. Some may hear it as a warning that any mistake equals failure. However, this is not what the slogan means. Recovery is not about perfection. Rather, "Never compromise" is a recognition of how relapse and setbacks actually occur.

People rarely lose their recovery all at once. No one slips a kilometre at a time. We slip by millimetres. The process is usually gradual and often begins with seemingly minor compromises. We may decide to ignore a resentment instead of addressing it. We may stop attending meetings regularly, neglect our spiritual practices, or withdraw from supportive relationships. We may tolerate unhealthy behaviour from others or allow shame-based thinking to return unchecked. Each compromise may appear insignificant on its own, but together they begin to weaken the foundation of recovery.

The danger lies in the fact that these small compromises are easy to justify. We tell ourselves that missing one meeting is not a problem, that one unhealthy relationship can be managed, or that a little dishonesty is harmless. Yet every compromise opens the door a little wider to old patterns of thinking and behaving. If we are not paying attention, what begins as a millimetre can eventually become a kilometre.

This is where vigilance becomes essential. Vigilance does not mean living in fear or constantly expecting failure. Instead, it means remaining aware of our thoughts, emotions, behaviours, and relationships. It means regularly taking inventory of our lives and honestly examining whether our actions align with our recovery goals. Vigilance allows us to recognize small warning signs before they become major problems.

Twelve-Step programs encourage this kind of awareness through ongoing self-examination, prayer, meditation, sponsorship, service, and fellowship. These practices help us stay connected to our values and to the recovery community. They strengthen our ability to notice when compromise is beginning to creep into our lives.

Recovery is maintained not through dramatic acts of heroism but through countless small decisions made every day. Each decision to be honest, attend a meeting, ask for help, set a healthy boundary, or practise self-care reinforces our commitment to recovery. These seemingly small actions keep the door firmly closed to the attitudes and behaviours that once fuelled addiction.

Patrick Henry's words remind us that victory belongs not only to the strong but to the vigilant. By paying attention to the small things and refusing to compromise our recovery principles, we protect the gift of sobriety one day at a time.

The Power of Active Listening

Recovery is often described as a journey of self-discovery and personal growth. While much attention is given to abstinence, meetings, sponsorship, and developing healthy coping strategies, one essential skill is sometimes overlooked: active listening. Learning to listen well—to others and to ourselves—is a powerful tool for building healthy relationships and maintaining long-term recovery.

Active listening is much more than simply hearing words. It involves giving our full attention to another person, seeking to understand their message, and responding thoughtfully rather than reactively. In active addiction, many of us became accustomed to listening selectively. We often heard only what we wanted to hear, focused on defending ourselves, or were preoccupied with our own thoughts and desires. As a result, communication and relationships frequently suffered.

Recovery challenges us to develop a different way of relating to others. Active listening helps us build trust, empathy, and mutual respect. When we listen carefully to a sponsor, counsellor, family member, or fellow recovering person, we gain valuable insights that may help us avoid old patterns of thinking and behaving. We also communicate something important: "You matter, and what you have to say is important." Healthy relationships are built on this foundation of respect and understanding.

Active listening also helps reduce conflict. Many misunderstandings occur because people are preparing their response rather than truly hearing what is being said. By slowing down, asking clarifying questions, and reflecting back what we have heard, we improve communication and strengthen our connections. These healthier relationships become an important source of support during difficult times.

Equally important is learning to listen to ourselves. Many people enter recovery after years of ignoring, suppressing, or numbing their thoughts and feelings. Addiction often disconnects us from our inner experience. As recovery progresses, we begin to notice emotions, physical sensations, and thoughts that we may have avoided for a long time.

Listening to ourselves means paying attention to what is happening internally without immediately judging or reacting. It involves recognizing feelings such as sadness, anger, loneliness, fear, or joy. It means noticing signs of stress, fatigue, resentment, or overconfidence before they develop into larger problems. This kind of self-awareness allows us to respond constructively rather than impulsively.

Journalling, prayer, meditation, quiet reflection, and conversations with trusted recovery supports can all help us develop this inner listening skill. When we honestly examine our thoughts and feelings, we become better able to identify our needs and take appropriate action. We learn to recognize warning signs early and seek help before a crisis develops.

Recovery thrives on connection—connection with others and connection with ourselves. Active listening strengthens both. By listening attentively to others, we cultivate healthier and more meaningful relationships. By listening honestly to ourselves, we develop the self-awareness necessary for continued growth and sobriety.

Every day presents opportunities to practise this important skill. The more we listen, the more we learn. The more we learn, the stronger our recovery becomes.

The Difference Between Growth and Misery in Recovery

The phrase "no pain, no gain" is often used to encourage perseverance through difficult challenges. In addiction recovery, however, the slogan deserves a closer look. While some discomfort is unavoidable and even necessary for personal growth, not all pain leads to gain. In fact, many people spend years trapped in painful patterns that produce little more than frustration, resentment, and despair. Learning the difference between productive pain and destructive pain is an important part of building a healthy recovery.

Recovery begins with pain. The consequences of addiction often leave us physically, emotionally, spiritually, and financially wounded. Many of us seek help because the pain of continuing to use has become greater than the fear of change. Once we enter recovery, however, the pain does not disappear overnight. We may experience cravings, grief, guilt, loneliness, anxiety, and uncertainty. Facing these challenges can feel overwhelming.

Yet this type of pain often serves a purpose. Productive pain is the discomfort that accompanies growth. It occurs when we are learning new skills, changing old habits, making amends, setting healthy boundaries, or confronting difficult truths about ourselves. Like a muscle becoming stronger through exercise, we develop resilience when we work through these challenges. Although uncomfortable, productive pain gradually leads to greater freedom, self-respect, and emotional stability.

Destructive pain is different. It is the pain of remaining stuck. It often involves repeating the same unhealthy behaviours while expecting different results. It may show up as chronic self-pity, unresolved resentment, isolation, denial, or refusing to seek help when help is available. Unlike productive pain, destructive pain does not lead to learning or growth. It keeps us circling the same problems and reliving the same disappointments.

One way to distinguish between the two is to ask: "What is this pain teaching me?" Productive pain provides lessons and opportunities for change. It moves us forward, even if progress is slow. Destructive pain often leaves us feeling trapped, hopeless, and stagnant because no meaningful action is being taken.

Another useful question is: "Am I moving through this pain or merely living in it?" Recovery requires us to walk through difficult emotions rather than avoid them. However, there is a difference between processing pain and dwelling in it. Processing involves honesty, support, reflection, and action. Dwelling involves repeatedly rehearsing the same hurt without taking steps toward healing.

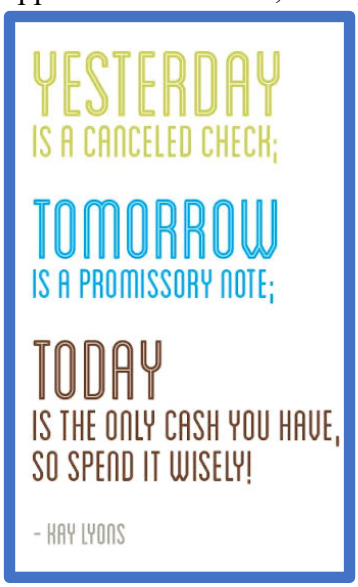
Support from sponsors, counsellors, recovery groups, and trusted friends can help us identify whether our struggles are leading to growth or keeping us stuck. Others can often see patterns that we miss ourselves.

Pain alone is not the goal of recovery. Growth is. The purpose of recovery is not to suffer indefinitely but to develop a meaningful and fulfilling life. Some pain is necessary because change is rarely comfortable. But when pain is accompanied by willingness, honesty, and action, it can become a powerful teacher. The challenge is not simply to endure pain, but to ensure that our pain is leading us somewhere better.

Today is Cash – Spend It Wisely

"Yesterday is a cancelled cheque, tomorrow is an IOU, today's cash – spend it wisely." This familiar saying contains a profound lesson for anyone in addiction recovery. It reminds us that while we cannot change the past or control the future, we do have influence over what we do today. Recovery is built not in dramatic moments, but in the ordinary choices we make one day at a time.

A cancelled cheque has already been processed. It cannot be rewritten or reclaimed. Many people entering recovery carry deep regret about the past. Relationships may have been damaged, opportunities missed, and painful memories created. Reflection on these experiences can be valuable if it leads to insight and accountability. However, dwelling endlessly on yesterday often becomes an obstacle rather than a teacher. Guilt that motivates positive change has served its purpose; guilt that keeps us trapped only robs us of today's opportunities. The past can inform us, but it cannot define us unless we allow it to.



Tomorrow, by contrast, is an IOU. It represents possibilities rather than certainties. We all make plans for the future, and having goals is an important part of recovery. We may hope to rebuild trust, regain our health, repair our finances, or achieve long-held dreams. Yet none of these outcomes is guaranteed. Worrying excessively about tomorrow can create anxiety, fear, and unrealistic expectations. Recovery teaches us that we cannot live tomorrow's life today. We can only prepare for it through the decisions we make now.

That leaves us with today's cash. Cash is valuable because it is immediately available. It can be invested wisely or wasted carelessly. Every day in recovery comes with a fresh supply of choices. Will I attend my meeting? Will I reach out when I am struggling? Will I practise honesty? Will I care for my body through proper sleep, nutrition, and exercise? Will I take time to pray, meditate, journal, or reflect? These seemingly small decisions accumulate over time and become the foundation of lasting recovery.

Living in the present does not mean ignoring our responsibilities or forgetting our history. It means accepting that today's actions are the only currency we truly possess. Every healthy decision is an investment that earns dividends in sobriety, peace of mind, and stronger relationships. Likewise, every neglected opportunity represents spending today's cash on things that offer little lasting value.

Recovery often asks us to simplify our thinking. Instead of asking, "Can I stay sober forever?" we ask, "What is the next right thing I can do today?" That question keeps us grounded and reminds us that lasting change is achieved through consistent daily action rather than heroic bursts of effort.

Yesterday has already been spent. Tomorrow has not yet arrived. Today is the only day we can truly influence. If we spend today's cash wisely—through honesty, connection, gratitude, and purposeful action—we give ourselves the greatest possible chance of a healthier tomorrow. In recovery, today's wise investments become tomorrow's blessings.

South Edmonton Fellowship Centre

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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**