

Journey

making recovery from addiction visible

ISSUE 14

MELODY ROSE PAUL
Bangor, Maine

**Accessing
Recovery Supports
Everyone's Welcome +
Peer Support**

**Letting Go
No Longer
Carrying the
Weight of My Past**





ADDRESSING MAINE'S OPIOID EPIDEMIC TOGETHER.

As we continue to battle the COVID-19 pandemic, the opioid crisis persists in communities across our state. That's why we're bringing organizations together and sharing best practices to help ensure individuals and families have the resources they need.

Learn more about the Rx Abuse Leadership Initiative of Maine and our partners at rali-me.org.



Journey

ISSUE 14

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From the publisher

As we go to print with this *Journey* issue #14, I'm reflecting on this past year.

Last year at this time, it seemed like my life was a 1,000 piece puzzle that someone had taken out of the box but there was no cover to show the picture the pieces were supposed to make.

We had just gone into lockdown, everything seemed scary, and there was no clear visual of what life would look like.

This morning I realized it was similar to the early days of recovery. All I knew was that I didn't want to keep living the way I was living, doing what I was doing, and yet I didn't know things could be any different.

Thankfully, I landed in a half-way house, Evodia, and the staff there gave me a framework by which to start living a new way of life. The women there (12 of us) and those who showed up for support provided a picture of what life "could" look like.

I "could" feel comfortable in my own skin, I "could" find stacked moments of peace and serenity on a daily basis—this type of living seemed more accessible to me by virtue of others' sharing their personal experiences.

But first things first.

For me that meant a focus on my physical and emotional well-being—a stable and safe place to live and making informed decisions on healthy choices that were now available to me.

It meant surrounding myself with people who had been where I had been but weren't living in that world anymore, and taking the suggestions they offered on my new path.

My initial thought was that I was so different. That I had led a very different life and didn't feel like I belonged anywhere. But the reality is that many of us feel that way. We call it "terminal uniqueness" and it's common in the recovery community.

But eventually, I found my people, my peers. Eventually, I found others I could connect with on a deeper, spiritual level and today I am still a seeker and grateful for my own path.

For some of us, finding and building community with our peers takes a few extra steps, and in this issue we look at various accessibility challenges and successes.

Amy Paradyz explores several of these groups in *Accessing Recovery Supports*. In *Coming to Faith*, Niki Curtis writes about letting go of past personal experiences to access a faith that works.



Recovery is a process of change and change is constant. When we participate in community, we're not alone at any time. Our excerpt article from the book *Stealth Camping with Me and Hundreds of My Closest Friends*, is from an anonymous traveler who has attended AA meetings in 48 different states.

In our next issue, we'll debut a new column, "The Anonymous Path," personal recovery stories with first name/last initial only—for those who want to share their lived experiences recovering in a 12-step community while respecting the longstanding tradition of anonymity.

And finally, a big welcome to Bruce Campbell, our new Northern Maine Accounts Coordinator with decades of personal recovery in addition to program and community building experience.

Our goal is to be available statewide by the end of 2021 and with this issue, we start expanding into the Bangor area!

With immense gratitude,

Carolyn

visible recove

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ry saves lives

Accessing Recovery Supports



Everyone's Welcome + Peer Support

by Amy Paradysz

We talk about the “recovery community” as if there is one—when, in fact, there are many. The recovery community is as diverse as humankind. Substance use disorder doesn’t discriminate based on age, race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation and neither does the recovery community, which tries to offer help and hope for everyone. But, within the larger recovery community and “everyone’s welcome” groups, many people in recovery find it helpful to also find a small group of peers with whom they share more in common than just substance use.

For this story, writer Amy Paradysz gathered insights from professionals who work with some of the branches of the recovery community family tree—people who have experienced incarceration, elders, adolescents, mothers, and the LGBTQA+ community. These professionals talked about challenges and successes, and provided tips for empathizing with others in the

recovery community to better support their needs.

Re-Entry

When Bruce Noddin volunteered with Catholic Charities prison ministry and saw the same people appearing back in the system repeatedly, he stirred up some good trouble—asking what more could be done to reduce recidivism.

From that conversation with five people in June 2017 has evolved a Maine Prisoner Re-entry Network (MPRN) connecting a statewide web of people interested in helping make the transition to life after prison more successful.

“The excitement is contagious,” says Noddin, founder and executive director of MPRN. “We’ve had 60 or more people show up some weeks.”

Zoom calls connect Maine Department of Corrections

staff and residents, faith-based organizations, mental health and substance use professionals, and nonprofits that can help with everything from housing to job training to financial literacy.

“The really cool thing that’s going on is the level of cooperation and collaboration that we’re able to do with the Department of Corrections and with Sheriffs’ Departments,” Noddin says. “We had this idea of going into prisons prior to release and introducing the residents to community resources. And everyone involved has embraced and included us in everything that they can.”

While COVID-19 protocols have meant that meetings with residents are on Zoom, being remote has made it possible for MPRN to help even more residents.

“We’ve had 350 meetings with residents since April 1 of last year,” Noddin says. “Imagine being a person in prison who has been out

a couple of times and been back and never had any support, really, and then having seven people in a Zoom meeting with all these people interested in you and your success. That's pretty cool!"

Noddin, who is in long-term recovery himself, says that the vast majority of people in Maine prisons have struggled with substance use. As a result, the goals of re-entry and recovery are tightly linked.

"A peer support or a recovery coach can be huge," Noddin says. "It amazes me how receptive these folks are to a stranger who wants to be their recovery coach. Recovery coaches are critical. It's that human contact, that one-on-one—and typically that lived experience. If it's somebody like me who has the lived experience of recovery, and you add to that the lived experience of incarceration, and the connections that are made are just amazing."

Idea to build on: Noddin says, "One of the biggest things that we fight all the time is stigma. Try to get to know the folks around you have been in prison or jail. It just takes one conversation at a time to knock down these walls. You find out over time that these are people who have experienced immense, sometimes devastating, trauma and they're engaging and intelligent and funny. Give them a chance."

Elders

Mary Menard, 76, is a substance abuse counselor with a private practice based in Scarborough and focused on the elderly. When she meets with a new client, she asks about wedding photos or recipes or hobbies—dipping into comfortable conversations about family and spousal relationships, activity

level, and even whether they're eating well.

"Aging is a condition of losses," Menard says. "We have to look at what's going on and why they want to numb their feelings and memories."

Consider the experiences of aging—leaving behind a professional life, downsizing and giving up decades of collected possessions, making do in a body that doesn't work as well as it once did, or, after decades of marriage, managing without their spouse. Imagine being in this stage of life and having your own children telling you what to do—and what not to do.

"One of the challenges is navigating what recovery actually looks like and what it means to them."

—Molly Ramirez

"Children of alcoholics do the wrong things for the right reason," Menard says. "Shaming them doesn't work. Taking control of their life doesn't work. I don't tell people to stop drinking; I talk about the consequences and what they have to lose."

Elderly people may need help accessing websites such as MyChart or organizing their prescription caddy and keeping track of what to take when. But when family members try pouring alcohol down the sink and think they've solved the problem, Menard has seen some quite determined and creative behavior from older folks.

Or they try to hide the problem.

Menard says that people in their seventies and up are not from a

generation that grew up talking about "trauma" or "substance use disorder," and may not want to think of themselves as an "addict" or "alcoholic."

But, often, they do want to talk.

And if they're losing control to substances, in the midst of losing control in so many other ways, regaining control can be a motivator for recovery.

"Some come in for a session once a month for an atta-girl or an attaboy," Menard says. "Others come to a point in recovery where they can take a break and contact me again when there's a triggering event in their life, like the death of a spouse, or one of their children going through a divorce."

Idea to build on: Menard says that she'd love to see recovery meetings in elderly housing facilities—with coffee and time to socialize, sweetening the prospect for people who may have never before considered attending a recovery support group.

Adolescents

At the other end of the age spectrum, teens also face challenges with independence, free will and internal motivation.

"One of the hardest things that I see my kids struggle with is a sense of personal autonomy," says Molly Ramirez, a recovery coach employed by Portland Recovery Community Center. "When you're under 18, you already have a lot less opportunity to make decisions for yourself, let alone when you're in treatment."

Ramirez, 23, went through the six-month Day One program when she was 16 and is now celebrating seven years in recovery. Since January 2020, she has been

meeting virtually with teens in the Day One residential programs in New Gloucester and Hinckley.

“One of the challenges is navigating what recovery actually looks like and what it means to them,” she says. “So many of them are sent there because they don’t want to go to jail or because their parents said they had to go.”

Digging deeper than the substance abuse, girls often acknowledge past sexual trauma or have patterns of physical relationships dominating their lives. Some girls admit they’ve never had a stable, supportive friendship. But this often changes as the girls build their recovery skills and connect with one another.

Four young women who recently went through the Day One program stay in touch through a group chat, and one of those girls told Ramirez that she’d never had friends before.

“To see them come together in friendship,” Ramirez says, “is the sweetest thing I’ve seen.”

Idea to build on: Ramirez, whose own life was changed by a rehabilitation program for teens, wants to see more of those programs, less youth detention.

Mothers

The Crossroads Children and Mother’s Program in Windham can be a godsend for a woman who needs residential rehab and has one or two children under the age of five. But that’s not to say that the 60-day program is easy.

“They’re getting sober—maybe for the first time or for the first time in years, so their emotions are right on the surface,” says Beth Caron, a licensed clinical social worker and Crossroad’s director of

residential programs. “Some of the women who come to this program haven’t been with their children for some time.”

The focus is rehab from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on weekdays, while the kids are in licensed daycare. The rest of the time, the women are on mom duty and practicing parenting skills.

The program also welcomes women in any stage of pregnancy. “We had a woman who was in our program when she went into labor, and she came back with her little pumpkin with her,” Caron says. “It’s awesome, because she’s sober, and she has her child with her.”

And that’s a happy beginning.

“The intimacy of this small-group format helps in developing safety and trust.”

—Dani Fazio

Idea to build on: Caron, who is a mother in a long-term recovery, encourages people to share the word with young mothers who are struggling with substance use disorder that there are options for recovering WITH their children. In addition to Crossroads, where Caron works, another option in Southern Maine is The McAuley Residence.

Queer Folx in Recovery

Dani Fazio, an alcohol and drug counselor in private practice, facilitates a virtual twice-monthly drop-in group called Queer Folx in Recovery that she founded in May 2020.

Because the path to healing relies on feeling safe, Fazio says, Queer Folx is intentionally respectful and

inclusive of not only all gender identities but also all paths of recovery—12 steps, abstinence, harm reduction, spirituality—whatever works.

“The intimacy of this small-group format helps in developing safety and trust,” Fazio says of her group, which is typically attended by three to six Mainers via Zoom. “Building community and connection is really important. You start to develop sober friendships with other queer people in recovery. And personal accountability goes up when we know that other people care about our recovery and how we’re doing.”

Idea to build on: To learn more about creating an LGBTQ+ safe zone, she recommends The Safe Zone Project (thesafezoneproject.com).

Everyone’s Welcome + Peer Support = Best of Both Worlds

Professionals in all five branches of the recovery family tree explored in this article—people who have experienced incarceration, elders, adolescents, mothers, and the LBGTQA+ community—say that peer support and shared lived experiences are crucial. Facilitators of “everyone’s welcome” supports, like 12-step meetings, work hard to understand the diverse needs of people in the recovery community, and an “everyone’s welcome” mindset is fundamental to the recovery family.

Many find that a specialized, small and closely connected group of peers makes all the difference.



Amy Paradysz is a freelance writer from Scarborough and part of the Journey team; she can be reached at amyparadysz@gmail.com.

Meet Journey's Newest Team Member

Bruce Campbell joins *Journey* as the Northern Maine Accounts Coordinator.

I was raised in Houlton, Maine, and while a fairly good student, I began drinking in high school, just one of the crowd. Drinking and getting stoned was, and still is, one of the primary recreational pursuits in rural Maine, because, don't you know, "there's nothing to do."

Getting an OUI was almost as much a right of passage as shooting a deer.

I was 21 when I got my OUI; I never shot a deer.

I went to college, got a job, got married, and tried my best to settle down. By this time, I had a growing sense that despite all outward appearances, my life was smoke and mirrors. I needed to do something before I became a public embarrassment and brought shame to my family, my employer, and to whatever was left of my dwindling sense of self. I left town.

I found myself in California when I finally sought help. I found a thriving and diverse recovering community with hundreds of peers I could relate to and rely upon for support.

I learned that my personal recovery depended upon the unity of the recovering community, and I was taught to invest my time and energy in helping to ensure its health.

My life since has been a remarkable adventure. From living in a school bus, I returned to graduate school, married a beautiful woman and we raised a family in a home we call our own. We returned to Maine in 2004, and I have had an exciting and rewarding career over the past 36 years.

Recovery has changed my life in so many ways.

Before, no matter how good things may have been, I had a sense of impending doom.



Today, no matter how challenging life may be, I have a sense of hope and purpose.

.....
Bruce Campbell, LCSW, LADC has been a professional social worker for over 30 years and in long-term recovery since 1984. Currently, he is serving as the Northern Maine Accounts Coordinator for Journey Magazine. Contact him at bruce@recovery-journey.com.

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Melody Rose Paul

Melody Rose Paul's habit of blackout drinking resulted in many nights in jail cells, but her long, winding struggle with addiction reached a turning point when she found herself alone in prison.

"I started to realize... [that] my life path was going in the wrong direction," Melody, 40, says.

Her substance abuse began with prescription medicine after having her son. For years, Melody would swap pills with her then partner or others she met in town. In 2012, Melody was forced to attend rehab or lose her son. She went, but it didn't quite work.

"I lied that I had a sponsor [so they'd graduate me]," she says. "I was still having trouble but I didn't know what to do."

Melody remained sober for a while, but suffered from depression and anxiety during that time. She eventually left her relationship with her son's father to be with her current partner, Charlie.

"I thought he was in recovery but he wasn't," she says about Charlie. "I didn't know that he was secretly using."

Soon, Melody was also using substances daily, including heroin for the first time. Even after witnessing Charlie overdose, she somehow became more involved in heroin use. She pawned everything

that she could in order to fuel her addiction. She was living in what she calls "the Zombie Zone."

"I would do illegal things to get my drink or drug," she says. "I just wouldn't care who I hurt. It's like I was soulless."

In her mind, Melody was "helping" Charlie's sister when she got her some substances she had asked for. Charlie's sister died from an overdose that day. Her and Charlie's grief didn't stop them from buying some of the very same drugs that had killed her.

"You get so desperate and just so sick that the reality is not there," Melody says.

She and Charlie were both arrested for trafficking drugs. The arrest actually helped her "clear her mind," and in prison she began the process of healing from her "self-sabotage."

"Every day when you're incarcerated, it's like a solid reminder of the mistakes."

During her year-long sentence, Melody attended Bible study and a 12-step program, worked toward her GED, and found a love for writing. She penned a book about her life in eight months.

When she was released, Melody developed new healthy habits. Although she says she has always been introverted, she started to



really enjoy going to recovery meetings. Today, she surrounds herself with friends who are more like family and who keep her accountable.

Now, Melody is a published author, works full-time and facilitates a weekly Wellbriety meeting for others on the road to recovery.

"[If] you're tired of being tired, you're tired of lying, you're tired of pawning all your stuff, you're tired of people looking at you weird—all this. You can stop doing what you're doing and take care of yourself and reach out to people," she says.

For those interested in learning more about the meetings Melody runs, visit the Bangor Area Recovery Network's website, bangorrecovery.org.

Also, check out her book—*Savaged to Wellness* available on Amazon.

.....
As told to a Journey Team member.



northeastern
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

A community-wide challenge needs a community-wide solution

The Northeastern Workforce Development Board (NWDB) is creating a list of recovery friendly employers!

If you're an employer in Penobscot, Piscataquis, Hancock, Washington or Aroostook County, join a growing list of recovery friendly employers by:

- Notifying us at NWDB
- Attend a brief workshop about the program
- Notify your employees that you are striving to be recovery friendly and detailing what that means for your workplace

Raise your hand and proudly state that you are recovery friendly, opening a door to many, many possibilities.

We will provide:

- advice
- policy guidance
- customizable workshops

This centralized list will help job seekers find employers that care about their employees!

Are you an employer ready to step up to help solve this community challenge?

Contact

Ben Hawkins at

bhawkins@northeasternwdb.org
<https://www.northeasternwdb.org>

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We Have Superpowers!

Harnessed superpowers aid in community transformations

by Alison Jones Webb

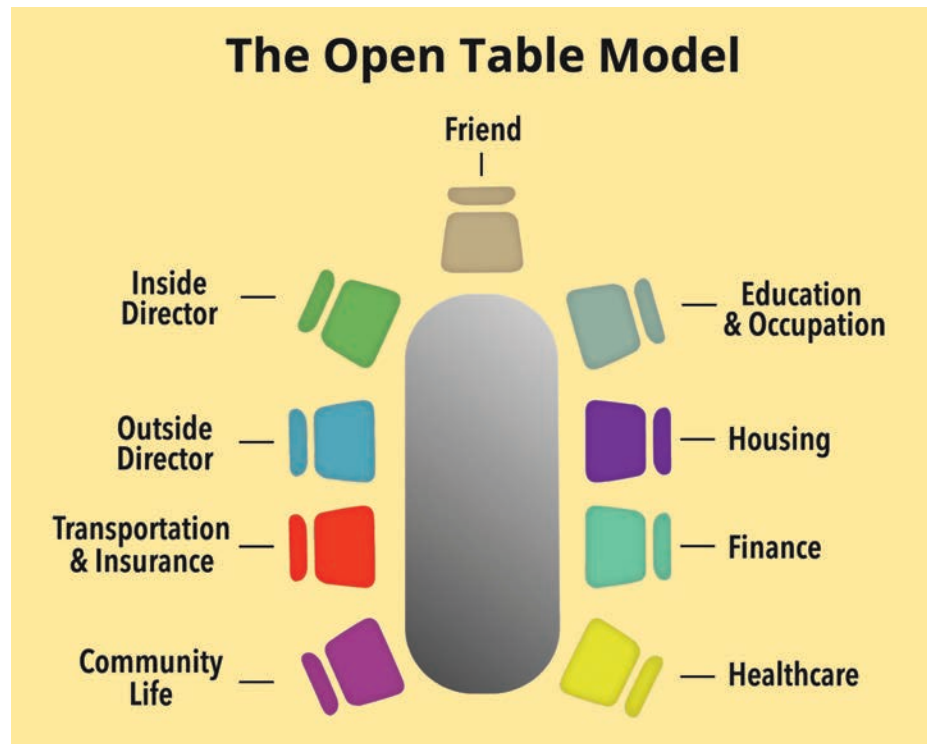
Did you know that we all have superpowers? It's true! But sometimes we don't know how to turn them on. Our powers don't come with a set of instructions.

That's where Open Table can help.

Open Table is a national model that communities can use to address any local need, one person at a time.

The idea is that six-to-eight community members come together to form a "table" to help a "friend" in need meet self-identified goals. Usually, a community member is trained as an Open Table facilitator, who recruits members of the community and works within the community to identify the friend, who is also at the table. The people at the table commit to meet weekly for at least one year or until the friend has reached their goals, whichever comes first.

Here in Maine, the Restorative Justice Project (RJP) has decided to pilot Open Table in Knox County to help people who are re-entering the community after being in jail. Open Table is part of RJP's work to build Community Justice Centers in the midcoast area. For Knox County Community Justice Coordinator for RJP Erica Buswell, it's a way to respond to a call she felt to "show up in the world in a way that could promote restoration." Erica is working with Knox County Jail to identify



two friends, and she's actively recruiting table members now to convene two tables.

Erica gives an example of how the table might help a friend. If the friend has a goal of getting a job and has a car that doesn't work, the people at the table can work together on getting the car fixed. Somebody at the table might know an auto mechanic and can introduce the friend to her.

Another example is a community that creates a table for youth who are transitioning from the foster care system to the adult world of social services. Open Table helps create a bridge to their new life.

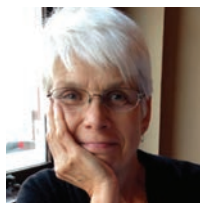
Everybody who is part of Open Table benefits from the process, Erica explains. It's not a one-way street where the friend receives help from others and gives nothing in return. It's a model based on reciprocity; we are all enriched when we are in relationship with one another. When it comes to recovery, it's not a model that says, "because you're in recovery, you need all of these people to help you.' It's a model that says, 'as a person in recovery, you have something to offer,' and we can all be enriched by that."

Erica is motivated by belief that everybody has something to contribute to their community. "We all come into this world with

gifts to share,” she says. “When we can’t do that because of systemic or personal reasons, the world has been denied what we have to offer. We all have a responsibility to create conditions where people can show up and offer what we have to share. We’re all enriched by that. Our communities need us to show up that way.”

“Connection is what holds our social fabric together,” Erica says. “Open Table is one way to promote connection.”

Imagine if we could set an Open Table in every community in Maine to promote connection with people in recovery!



Alison Jones Webb is a public health professional who has worked in the field of substance use prevention, treatment and recovery in Maine for over 15 years.

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Bringing Love Into the Room

Harm reduction creates opportunities for positive change

by **Zoe Brokos**

Having worked in public health for the last ten years, I have spent a lot of time talking with people—in meetings, work groups, task forces, steering committees, and workshops—about the negative effects of substance use. In addition to discussing paths to recovery, we also talk about how to reduce the harms associated with substance use for the individuals in active use, for their friends and family, for the people in recovery, and for our broader community.

Sitting in meetings is important for connection, education and strategy. But after years of meetings, I believe the most important reason for all those meetings is community. Community is at the heart of harm reduction. When we're in community, we learn together. We promote healing. We connect.

We grow together, and we build foundations of trust. We create opportunities for positive change.

I think the most precious wisdom I received from my harm-reduction community is an understanding that change is possible when we create safe, accepting spaces and when we honor and support all paths to wellness.

There are many ways to support individual and community wellness through harm reduction. For those who work with people who are actively using substances, we might think of syringe service programs, naloxone (Narcan) distribution, overdose prevention and education about safer use practices.

For people engaged in recovery, harm reduction can also be practiced by referring a friend

or loved one for HIV or Hepatitis C testing at a local health center, like Greater Portland Health or Frannie Peabody Center. Harm reduction is also safer sex supplies and birth control; reaching out to Maine Family Planning offices statewide can be a great way to get connected.

For some, harm reduction is taking medication—like suboxone or methadone—to reduce opioid cravings and overdose fatality risk. There are providers in Maine to assist with this.

Harm reduction can be encouraging smoking 19 cigarettes a day instead of a pack.

Harm reduction is meeting and accepting people where they are. No expectations, just acceptance and appreciation.

Sometimes it's a seemingly tiny movement—the interest in talking about resources, for example. Sometimes it's bigger—connecting with safe supplies and resources through an organization like Maine Access Points or Amistad. Sometimes it feels huge, treatment for Hepatitis C or a detox program. Steps are individual. What seems like a huge step to one person might be a tiny step for another.

We don't need to judge. We are here to support each other on the road to wellness. We say today, right now: I am here to support you and your goals for this moment. This day. This week.

...change is possible when we create safe, accepting spaces and when we honor and support all paths to wellness.

And above all, we are here to love. Harm reduction is Love. Acceptance. Understanding. Being present, with compassion. Showing up, without judgement. And yes, it really is hard sometimes.

It does take practice.

But know this: Love, together in community, is always a good place to start.

For more information about Harm Reduction services in Maine, please email me at zoebrokos@gmail.com.



Zoe Brokos is a harm reductionist who lives in Portland with her family. She is currently working with the Maine Recovery Advocacy Project, the Church of Safe Injection, Maine People's Housing Coalition and the ACLU.

People's Housing Coalition and the ACLU.

Naloxone/Narcan

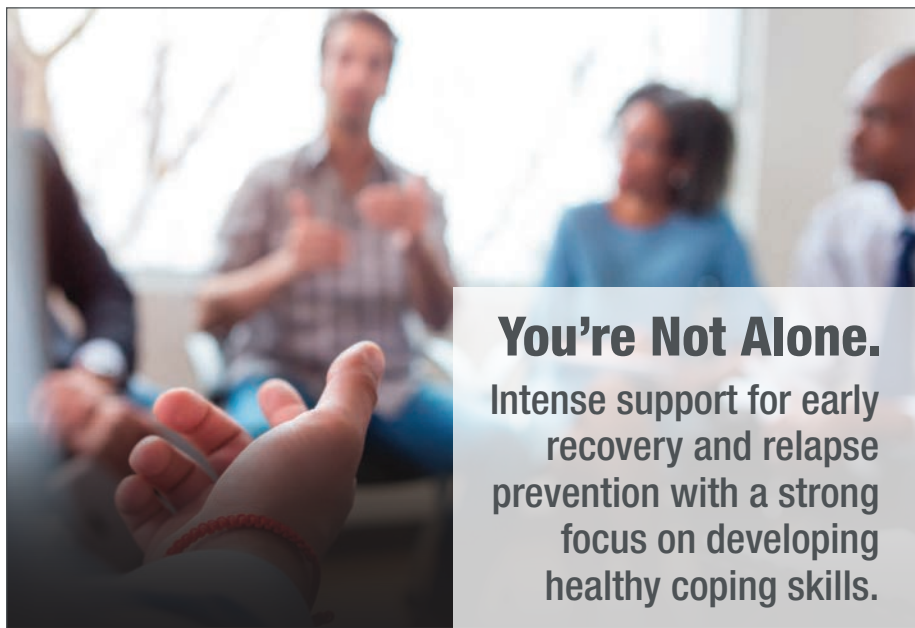
Naloxone, commonly known as Narcan, is a medication used to reverse the effects of an opioid overdose and allows the person to start breathing again.

Naloxone works on all opioids, regardless of the strength—morphine, Percocet, heroin, fentanyl. Naloxone cannot be abused and is not toxic. It is safe and works quickly, which is important when responding to a respiratory emergency like an opioid overdose.

It's easy to use. There are two preparations of naloxone—nasal spray and an injection. Carrying naloxone in a bag or a purse ensures that it can

be given quickly if necessary and everyone should have it, especially people who are at risk for an opioid overdose, family members, employers, recovery coaches, clergy.

In Maine, anyone can carry naloxone and it is available at pharmacies without needing a prescription. Health insurance coverage varies, MaineCare covers it 100%, with no out of pocket fee. For people who want Naloxone without navigating the pharmacy system or want training and educational information, the state of Maine offers free access across the state. Check out www.knowyouroptions.me for details.



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Letting Go

No longer carrying the weight of my past

by Tyler Hall

When I started my recovery journey in 2019, I had no idea the freedoms I would be able to enjoy today. While at times the process has been extremely difficult, it always proves to be extremely rewarding. Through the recovery process of the 12 Steps, I've been able to enjoy freedom from the one thing that seemed to always haunt me, and that is my past.

My journey began much like many others, I became abstinent from the chemicals that plagued my existence for so many years, I was going to meetings regularly, and gathering as many names and phone numbers as I could. I remember telling myself I had to

leave everything behind in order to move forward.

Two men I met and became very close with early on kept asking me the same thing every time I'd see them at meetings, "Did you get a sponsor yet?" It seemed like just another one of the many slogans and sayings that came with recovery, but until I made the decision to do so, I felt like I was treading water.

I found a sponsor that I could relate to and identify with, and he started giving me reading and writing assignments out of one of the books the program had to offer.

All of a sudden, I started to feel differently. All of the writing I was doing was not only helping me lead a drug-free life, but it was also helping me understand myself.

It was like a golden key to unlocking those thoughts and feelings inside my head I could never comprehend, let alone know what to do with.

I started to take a look at the problems in my life, all those messy times, traumas, and memories, things from my childhood to the present, things that had kept me sick for so many years, and I started to see them differently.

As each memory presented itself, and I wrote out the answers to the questions on the page in front of me, I was starting to get rid of those burdens and feelings I had carried around for so long, and began to gain a lot of perspective and knowledge surrounding my behaviors.

I had no idea the freedoms I would be able to enjoy today.

I took an inventory of my past, the people in it, the things that they had done to hurt me, and the things that I had done to hurt them. It sounds like such a simple thing to do, but much more difficult to carry out.

Some nights I would blissfully write ten pages, while on others I could barely finish a sentence, but I never stopped.

I was never going back, I was never giving in, or giving up. After each assignment was finished, I'd call my sponsor, or we'd meet up for coffee, and go over what I had written, because he was my guide, my seasoned-veteran of the program that was meant to help me through this process, much like he had and continued to go through his own.

While working through the steps and gaining freedom from my past, I was also understanding and developing a relationship with something for my present and my future, not only with my brothers and sisters in the program, and my sponsor, but with a power greater than myself.

Merriam-Webster defines a higher-power as: *a spirit or being that has great power, strength and knowledge that can affect nature and the lives of people.*

For me that power was God. It showed me that there was a greater purpose to everything, that life was a pre-written script, and all I had to do was play my part.

As I persisted on in my step work and the scars from my past began to heal I started to take a look at the present—the things I could do in my everyday life—to keep me from slipping back into old patterns and acting out on old behavior.

I had to take a daily inventory to make sure those things weren't rearing their ugly head, as I continued to live this new life I built for myself.

I started to be able to catch things, and to see behaviors and change their course, which in turn showed me how to deal with everyday struggles.

I can't tell you the day, the week, or the month, but one day life just wasn't so hard.

The unmanageable highs and lows, pressures and struggles, things that I seemed irrationally incapable of in the beginning, were now happening so freely, and nearly effortlessly.

I know that the ability to live my life, on its own terms, with a clear mind, and to enjoy it, is based purely on all those nights putting pen to paper in my step work.

My journey through the 12 Steps has taught me countless lessons, about life, about relationships, and about what it really means to be clean, but I think by far the most rewarding have been about surrender and self.

I've navigated the difficulties of divorce, family and medical struggles, while enjoying the blessings of birth, children, marriage, and my faith.

Each and every day I can experience it, and be present, because of not only freedom from addiction, but no longer having to carry the unimaginable weight of my past.

Recovery through the 12 Steps saved my life; it didn't just save me from drugs and alcohol, it saved me from myself.



.....
Tyler Hall, from Augusta, is a freelance writer in recovery and a new contributor to the Journey editorial team.



Couples in Recovery



by Elaine Shamos, MPH & Glenn J. Simpson, LCSW-cc, CADC

Welcome back to Couples in Recovery! For this issue we're going to define the difference between co-dependency and interdependency because ultimately, we all want our relationships to evolve into a healthy, interdependent relationship. The terms can be confusing so let's start by defining them, and then learn why this concept is so important for a relationship that involves recovery.

What is a co-dependent relationship?

A person is co-dependent when they seek their self-worth by caretaking their partner to the point where they are consumed with pleasing, while not understanding or tending to their own needs and feelings. Usually this dyad involves the other partner feeling dependent on, and glad to receive, these

sacrifices from the other. This can look like poor boundaries, the desire to control, or the need to fix their partner's behavior and struggles. The co-dependent is essentially addicted to their partner. In the relationship, both people become trapped in a cycle of over-reliance, blame, drama, power imbalance, and poor self-worth. This relationship is deemed "unhealthy" because both people are overly dependent on each other.

What is an interdependent relationship?

When both partners maintain their individuality and support each other when needed, while not taking responsibility for the other's happiness, they are interdependent. These relationships allow room for each to grow and change without the other feeling threatened. In interdependence, we move

away from "needing" the other to "choosing" the other. There is still a reliance on each other, but the couple allows for space to be honest about desires, boundaries and needs. Interdependent relationships are deemed "healthy" because they empower each person to have their own sense of "self," and to be honest and supportive without the fear of losing the relationship.

Why is this concept so important for couples in recovery?

When a person has a substance use disorder or any kind of addiction, often the natural response of the partner (or child or parent) is to "support" them unequivocally, usually at the expense of their own needs. Not surprisingly, people who are co-dependent are more often attracted to those with an addiction, having learned to be the giver or rescuer early in life.

This “enabling” behavior initially looks like support, a way to ease tension, or fix a problem. However, in the long term, it becomes an unhealthy way to connect. Our research has found that a couple in recovery might find it more difficult to change their relationship. In recovery, it is so common for partners to easily fall into a victim and rescuer duet.

What are ways to build an interdependent relationship?

The first step towards a healthier relationship may be to get help evaluating if your relationship is stuck in a co-dependent cycle. Education, couples’ counseling, 12-step programs, support groups, and individual therapy can help. The movement towards repairing an unhealthy relationship in recovery is always changing, as each partner grows. This requires adaptation and ideally learning new skills.

Here are some of the features of a healthy, more interdependent relationship, which we’ll be discussing in future issues:

- Understanding each other’s story
- Active Listening
- Taking personal responsibility for behaviors
- Creating safety to be vulnerable with each other
- Being honest, open, and approachable
- Creating healthy boundaries
- Taking time for personal interests
- Clear communication
- Sharing common goals and values

In reality, working on a healthy relationship is a constant, vigilant process, which changes as each individual’s insights and needs evolve. However, this can be a playful, deeply satisfying and intimate process. We hope to

offer some leads for getting to a more trusting interdependent relationship in columns to come.

We invite you to ask questions on our FB page: [CouplesinRecovery](#). Here’s one from a Joanna B.:

How do we create more space for understanding each other’s stories?

We are great believers in regularly scheduled date nights! We often recommend that a couple take these opportunities to give each partner a turn at asking the other something they never knew about the other while the other practices active listening.



Elaine Shamos, MPH & Glenn J. Simpson, LCSW-cc, CADC, from Portland, are new contributors to the Journey editorial team, and they can be reached at [facebook.com/CouplesinRecovery](#).

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Coming to Faith

Accessing a faith that works

by **Niki Curtis**

Learning that I would be persecuted for my faith, I laughed. Having suffered the horrors of active addiction, nobody could persecute me more than myself. Yet I fear your persecution or worse, the idea you might not like me because I believe in Jesus.

Since childhood, the fear of not being loved/lovable has been the foundation of my drug use.

I had been to church and believed in God and also believed that if I wasn't perfect, God wasn't going to love me either. My perception of love was warped from a young age. I experienced things that children aren't supposed to experience. I couldn't understand that the God my family and people in the community loved so much could possibly be the same God that was allowing my soul to be misshapen into, "Not good enough."

I still believed there was a God, I just wasn't worthy of His love.

Hearing about the Good News of Jesus from two well-dressed

and well-meaning Mormons when I was pregnant with my son still wasn't enough to get me to believe. How could Jesus love me? I was an unwed single mom. I didn't "deserve" forgiveness.

What I could do was believe that drugs would make it better. I had proof right? When I used them, I could reduce the volume of my internal persecution soundtrack. Belief turned into faith because drugs were working.

Until they stopped working. The consequences of my bad decisions piled up faster and kept me trying to fix things myself. I continued to fail.

It took a long time before I could no longer ignore God's voice. Over and over I heard the whisper, "I have more for you to do." In anger, I kicked the wall with both feet, breaking through the drywall. I cried out at the hole, in the shape of a heart, that my feet had made. I had broken a heart into the wall but it was my heart that was broken.

I realized I was dying and I no longer wanted to die. Through a series of events: the DEA showing up in my kitchen, a life-threatening blood infection, and finally, a look from my son, I had a moment of clarity that sparked the first good decision I had made in a long time.

I reached out for help.

The next few months were touch-and-go with my life but I managed to walk into rehab with a sense of hope and the inner knowledge that God was looking down on me with a sense of approval.

Three weeks into rehab I was invited to church. The church was held in what used to be a bar. God in a bar? I HAD to see this!

Walking down the street toward the church, I could hear music. It was a song about forgiveness and being redeemed. Big Daddy Weave's lyrics spoke directly to that hole in my heart

"All my life I have been called unworthy. Named by the voice of

my shame and regret. But when I hear You WHISPER, “Child lift up your head” I remember, oh God, You’re not done with me yet.”

I had made an uncountable number of bad decisions in my life, lived with shame and regret, called myself unworthy and the one thing I was being offered was to have faith in Jesus, and it was being made accessible to me through a woman in rehab who had been through what I had been through, at a bar that had been turned into a church, during a street party that was actually a baptism. God had reached into that filthy bedroom during my tantrum and put me on a path where I could meet him at a redeemed bar.

The easiest and best decision of my life happened when I accepted Jesus into my heart. Faith, love and forgiveness were made accessible to me and the only thing I had to do was receive them and to believe that I was worthy of them.

Throughout recovery, my faith has grown but it’s not through the hard work of inner reflection. It’s in the quiet moments of prayer that happens before a next right decision. My faith is accessible because I walk through fears that used to control me. I put my faith in what God believes about me and what I believe about God.

Persecution for my faith may come in many forms, but it’s my faith in a loving God that filled the hole in my heart, that drugs never could, that will carry me forward, head held high and redeemed.



Niki Curtis of Portland is a woman in long-term recovery whose passion is to help others and spread positivity. She loves to find creative ways to do that, including writing for Journey.



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When in Doubt, Choose Challenge

by David Lee

I started writing this on March 16 after taking a brief dip in the ocean.

While the outdoor temperature was mild—in the mid-40s—the water was 38 degrees.

I wasn't really in the mood for jumping into the frigid water, which is exactly why I did it.

I'm glad I did it, even though the icy water stung my skin and my feet hurt almost immediately.

I'm glad I did it because “choosing challenge” is one of the best ways to become more resilient.

Choosing challenge—i.e. intentionally stepping outside our comfort zone rather than doing what's easy or anxiety-free—is like strength and conditioning training for the mind and spirit.

It makes us psychologically stronger and more durable, which enables us to handle life's challenges more easily.

It's like the training that elite athletes and Navy SEALs engage in. They push themselves hard in training, knowing that this increases their ability to rise to the challenge their sport or battle brings to them.

So, if you want to become braver and more resilient, practice “choosing challenge.”

This could mean doing something that is physically uncomfortable, having a conversation you've been avoiding, or putting yourself in new situations where you feel out of your element and insecure.

Here's another example you might relate to, especially if you're an introvert or have social anxiety.

I was doing a keynote at a conference in Maine several years ago and had decided to have a quiet dinner by myself the evening before I was to give my presentation.

I wanted to review one more time what I wanted to say and enjoy the quietude of a solo dinner.

A few hours prior to my heading out for dinner, a friend who owned a publication found me in the conference expo hall and invited me to go to this great restaurant with some other people she was taking out to dinner.

She said the restaurant was one of a kind. It didn't have a phone, they didn't take reservations, and they didn't have a menu. The chef, a master from New York City, would whip up something amazing and you got to experience it.

While the food sounded enticing, the idea of sitting at a large table of strangers did not.

I told her I would think about it.

I went back and forth in my mind between the thought of just wanting to have my quiet dinner and not putting myself in the awkward situation of having to make small talk with strangers (something I despise) and reminding myself that the only way I would become more comfortable in these situations is

to step outside my comfort zone and get more experience doing it.

A couple of hours of this back and forth went by and I still hadn't made up my mind.

I bumped into my friend again and she let me know that we would all be leaving from the hotel in a courtesy van.

You know those scenes in movies where the person does that slow motion "Nooooooooo!!!!" with their hands out in front of them?

That was my Inside Voice after she told me about the van.

So, if you want to become braver and more resilient, practice "choosing challenge."

If you're an introvert or have social anxiety or just don't like small talk and chit chat, you know what I was thinking: If I go in the courtesy van, I'll be trapped.

I won't be able to bail out early if I've had enough.

Because I found the whole idea so challenging, so not what I would normally choose to do, that's what I decided to do.

And...it was one of the most fun evenings I've ever had at a conference.

Not only was the food great, but I had a great time with the people I met.

Now, if it had NOT been a fun time, I would have rewarded myself later for having stepped outside my comfort zone, so I would associate doing so with positive emotions.

How You Can Apply This

- Make sure you're onboard with the important truth that stepping outside your comfort zone is a MUST for personal growth and developing resilience.
- Use slogans like "discomfort is my friend" to remind yourself that by definition you will not feel comfortable stepping outside your comfort zone, and stepping outside your comfort zone is the only way to grow. So...if you feel anxious or scared doing something new (that's healthy), it means you are growing.
- Notice choice points where you can do the easy thing or the hard thing and remind yourself "I can do hard."
- Start small. Just as William James admonished over a hundred years ago, practice with the little, seemingly inconsequential things first.
- Celebrate your "small wins" when you choose challenge. If it doesn't go well, reward yourself for taking the leap, so your brain associates positive emotions with choosing challenge.
- If jumping into a cold ocean seems a bit much, try a few seconds of a cold shower. Not only does it get you out of your comfort zone, it's one of the best ways to strengthen your nervous system...aka build resilience (google "hacks vagus nerve" and read about this).



David Lee is a career coach with Heart at Work Associates and a workplace relationship consultant. He is the author of Dealing with a Difficult Co-Worker: The Courageous

Conversations at Work Series.

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Aroostook County residents:

Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP):

Meghan O'Berry,
207-554-4154,
moberry@acap-me.org

Androscoggin, Franklin, Hancock, Kennebec, Oxford, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset and Washington County residents:

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Doug Dunbar, 207-299-5626,
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Tania Margate

My name is Tania. I am 47 years old and I live in Harpswell, Maine. My recovery spans through different inpatient and long-term recovery houses, recovery programs, halfway houses, and a lot of women along the way willing to support me and my family.”

Tania struggled with addiction until the very last moment of getting into recovery; starting the recovery journey and relapsing. She always thought of using drugs for just “one last time.” Tania describes her journey:

“I identify myself as an addict. It’s not necessarily from a specific thing. It didn’t matter what it was, I had to have more of it or something better. I was always looking for that next way to get myself out of my head. And away from my feelings.

I spent most of my life as a functioning addict and did not really have anything that was throwing me off the rails. Then I had a woman commit suicide in front of my car. As a result, I started making some really bad choices.

One of my biggest shames throughout my life has been that I’ve been an emotional basket case and using helped me stop doing that.

I eventually burned through a lot of relationships, including family

support. A lot of friends started avoiding me. My world got really small. It got to the point where my disease was ruling my life.

The only people I wanted in my life were the people that were going to use like me; so that I could use the way I wanted to. But I would rather use drugs by myself.

There’s that greed, that hunger, that running out feeling that just would make my skin crawl.

I decided that I was going to start being a middleman and start helping people get what they needed when they wanted it. so that I could have what I needed when I wanted.

That led me to some legal issues.

“I remember sitting at one point, shortly after a drug raid. I had some stuff that I had managed to hide from them. Everybody’s gone and I’m there all by myself and I’m using.

Then all of a sudden it didn’t work anymore. I could feel this desperation coming up. And I’m looking around at this cold empty shell of a house. It wasn’t a home. All of a sudden, I had this moment of emotional clarity where I realized I was alone.

Eventually, I had an ex-boyfriend who had gotten clean the year before. He ended up looking me up.



When he did, I was couch surfing and using as much as I possibly could. He didn’t give up. He just kept touching base with me.

One night, I ended up leaving the house I was staying at. I was heading out the door for him to pick me up. That’s when I started talking about serious recovery. He started making phone calls for me.

The universe really blessed me with this person—coming back and reaching down into the darkness and pulling me out.

He eventually found a spot where I could get into; Crossroads for Women and a 30-day program. I could go in on Monday and it was Friday. I snuck out of his house and had my one last time.

I don’t know how many last times I had.

“I ended up getting in and learned a lot from Crossroads. It was a great start. I ended up having 30 days clean. When I came out, I went to an anonymous meeting.

Unfortunately, I went with the person who allowed me to use the way I like because I thought he was my friend. I didn’t understand that people, places, and things have to change.

He was somebody that I could manipulate to give me what I wanted. I was like: I’m pretty good. I’ve got it under control. I can try just a little bit. That was the last time I used.

That was May 26, 2013.

After that, all of my real family and friends started coming out of the woodwork. I have my best friend. He let me stay at his place while I was going to Mercy Recovery. I was doing the dual diagnosis intensive outpatient program. That was great because it gave me the structure for my day.

I feel like that’s where my recovery started taking off. Having that day after day of other women in the house that were just like me. People that were teaching me skills that had helped them in recovery. They wanted people like me to know that there was a way out.

That was the beginning of falling in love with myself. I never had that in my whole life and then I went into the Mcauley Residence.

Mcauley Residence is a two-year program. It’s an amazing place where you’re not allowed to work when you first get there so you can focus directly on your recovery, which was so important for me at that time.

I always associate my self-worth with work. I had no idea how

to just be; how to just exist and accept that balance that comes with a happy, healthy, full life.

Mcauley Residence taught me how to listen without thinking of what I’m going to say next. It taught me that I don’t have to be right and that my feelings aren’t facts.”

“I put myself in the middle of a 12-step program. I started becoming active and being of service. I had a job, I was riding my bicycle to work until I could get a car. I started getting those material things.

However, it’s not about the ‘stuff’, it’s about the fact that I’m organized enough in my spirit, heart, mind, and body to be able to be a functional adult.

The newest accomplishment in my life is that I am back to my career in nursing and have been for over a year. I recently met with the Maine State Board of Nursing to request an early release from my 5-year probation with them. It was a unanimous vote accepting my request.


This milestone has me reflecting on where I am now compared to then. It just blows my mind. My friendships and family relationships are thriving. My life is so big and beautiful. Not to say that there are no ups and downs. The difference is that now I can have my feelings instead of them having me.

For those struggling or new in recovery

“First, I was shown the switch between guilt and shame. Second, just because we feel something doesn’t necessarily mean that it’s true. Lastly, the biggest thing is to let yourself be loved.”

.....
As told to a Journey Team member.

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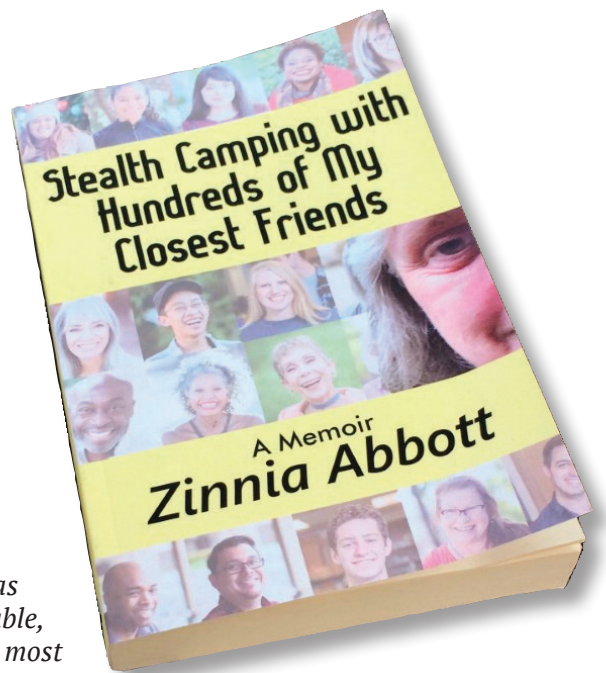
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An Excerpt from...



An excerpt from a recently published book by a Mainer who is a friend of Bill W's.

Zinnia, a lonely, retired nurse, is on a solo adventure. Road trip! Curiosity leads her to national parks, the world's largest golf tee, colorful characters, and friendly AA meetings in all 48 contiguous US states. With humor and insight, she describes stealth camping in her minivan and learning about her country and herself. Ride along with her!

Excerpt:

"I think you should do it." That's what my AA sponsor says. We are having breakfast at Bernie's Diner, as usual. "You're energized just talking about it."

I'm telling her about my daydream to take a road trip across the country. She asks, "What is stealth camping?"

"That means nobody knows you're camping out in your vehicle, so you don't have to pay anything for lodging, or a campsite. Just park somewhere legal overnight."

My sponsor, Faith, knows me very well. She's been my sponsor for

a couple of decades. She has seen me at my most miserable, and she has seen me at my most enthusiastic. Enthusiastic is what she's seeing now. I revere her. She's a great listener and usually doesn't give me advice unless I ask, or unless she thinks it's important. I feel safe enough to tell her anything and she doesn't even flinch. She's practical and level-headed. I value her opinion. She's my touchstone.

I had done stuff like this before. Camping and traveling cross-country with my family as a kid, bicycle tripping, hitchhiking in the seventies and roughing it (don't tell my parents), traveling, and traveling alone. Though this time I won't be alone, I will find AA meetings.

This kind of a trip is easy to imagine. Having a van to sleep in seems to me like luxurious accommodations.

And the timing. After I quit work, I'll have no job, no kids at home, no commitments. I'll have money from my Social Security check and income from my rental apartments. I have health and energy, and I just love the idea. I think, "Now is my chance."

So, when I hear Faith's reaction, that's when I decide to go ahead and do it. That is the moment the daydream becomes a plan.

Fast Forward: a Scene from a New Day on the Road Trip

Noisy night in the parking lot. I'm up early. Tearful. Feeling lonely, unloved, unlovable. Shamed by being a victim of yesterday's road rage and frustrated by lack of sleep. Time to move on.

In Zanesville, Ohio, I hit the AA meeting guide app and find that a meeting starts in three minutes, a half mile away at the Indiana Street Recovery Center, which is on Moxahala Avenue. They're just saying the opening Serenity Prayer as I slide in and locate a seat in the packed room. These are some of the things I hear:

"If you believe you can, or if you believe you can't, you're right."

"If you're willing to drink yourself to death, that means your life is unmanageable."

"Recovery is progressive."

Often, I hear that alcoholism, or addiction, is progressive, in that it gets worse and worse if not put into

remission. I know that recovery is also progressive, in that it gets better and better.

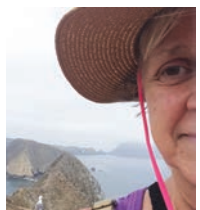
Rita, a woman my age with real short hair, invites me out to breakfast with her and two men who were at the meeting. I order a cup of decaf. We have a lively discussion about what it was like before AA and how much better it is now. Rita says, "I'm having some medical problems. Sobriety doesn't guarantee that you'll never have problems.

Though this time I won't be alone, I will find AA meetings.

But it's way better if I don't drink over it, and I have you people to support me."

I say, "My first AA sponsor used to say, 'If you have a problem and you drink over it, then you have two problems.'"

Clearly, after hanging out with people who get me, I feel much better. That's one of the gifts of AA for me. I say to Rita, "I'm so glad you invited me. I feel fortified."



Zinnia Abbott (a pseudonym) is a retired nurse, mom, and grandmother living in southern Maine. Since 1985, she has been in recovery from alcoholism. To this grown-up Girl Scout and flower child out of season, every day is a new adventure, and she was born ready.

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Managing Finances

Dropping the judgmental and prescriptive — shifting to personal goals and small actions

by **Chris Linder**

I've been in financial services for 20+ years, some in banking but mostly helping folks who are often left out have better access. Some old terms we used were “financial literacy or education.” I'm usually not a semantics person, but these terms rub me wrong for being judgmental and paternalistic.

The poor, the disadvantaged are not any more financially illiterate or uneducated than other Americans.

Much evidence shows that targeted people for these programs are quite savvy at managing money—they just don't have a lot of income nor cushions to withstand life events like a disability or incarceration.

Why tell someone to save for retirement when they can't buy enough food?

The evidence has shown we can help each other instead by:

1. *NOT wagging fingers but helping each of us set 1-2 self-chosen goals at a time.* Preaching on what one should do by overwhelming them with budgeting spreadsheets and financial management apps is NOT the way. We can help each other focus on 1-2 financial goals at a time instead. A client of ours decided to save \$500 for a family camping trip and had a wonderful experience. Many experts would say that was frivolous. I say the process helped her do something important to her and regain

confidence in taking other financial steps.

2. *Creating a “no judgment zone.”* We all slip or splurge. I'm not saying go borrow \$45,000 for that brand new truck, but also don't kick yourself for buying a nice gift for your son's birthday. You're not a failure if you've gotten behind on student loans or medical debt. We are all one car accident away from financial hardship—it can happen to anyone.

3. *Making it action oriented.* The best way to learn about something new is in the moment of need and take action. So if you want to buy a house this year, take a home-buyer's class from one of the many

providers here in Maine like us. If you want to help your kids learn to save, go to your local bank/credit union and open a savings account with \$10-20.

There are organizations like us who can serve as financial coaches.

But like going to the gym with your 'gym buddy'—maybe find a 'financial buddy' and set a few goals with each other. And don't be too judgy with your buddy if they break down and buy a 101-shot latte at Starbucks (the most expensive Starbucks drink at \$83.75).



Chris Linder is the CEO of the nonprofit MaineStreamFinance.org, part of Penquis Community Action in Bangor—helping ALL Mainers become homeowners, start a business, or improve financial health.

WSCA 106.1 FM

Portsmouth Community Radio



PODCAST



WSCA

Addiction & Recovery Podcast Series

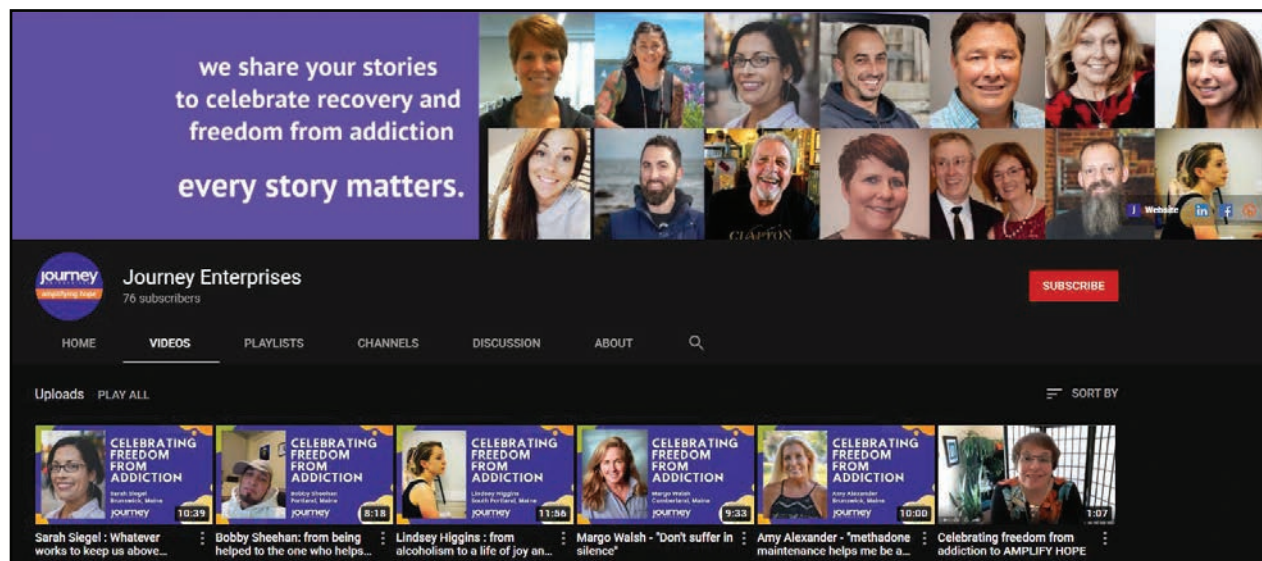
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real people. real stories. real hope.





MAINE

Funding Recovery Community Centers in Every Maine County

by Alison Jones Webb

The Maine Recovery Advocacy Project (MeRAP) is putting its advocacy efforts into several bills, including LD 488: *A Resolve to Expand Recovery Community Centers Throughout Maine*.

The bill is sponsored by Senator Chloe Maxmin (D-Lincoln) and co-sponsored by Speaker Ryan Fecteau (D-Biddeford), Rep. Evans (D-Dover-Foxcroft), Rep. Landry (D-Farmington), Rep. McDonald (D-Stonington), Rep. Meyer (D-Eliot), Rep. O'Neil (D-Saco), and Rep. Poirier (R-Skowhegan).

What does this bill do?

LD 488 provides grant funding for seven recovery community centers located in every county that does not currently have one. Right now, there are 13 recovery community centers in nine counties across Maine. This bill fills the gap for those counties that don't have one: Franklin, Hancock, Kennebec, Piscataquis, Somerset, Waldo, and York Counties.

Why is this bill important?

A recovery community center is the recovery community's home. It provides a safe space for people, supports multiple pathways, and provides three key things: peer-based recovery support services (recovery coaching, telephone recovery support, and meetings/activities), public education, and policy advocacy. People in recovery in every county deserve access to this tremendous opportunity for support.

How can recovery community centers help our communities?

Evidence shows that recovery community centers provide important peer support and links to resources like housing and jobs, especially in early recovery. Recovery community centers also support families, educate the public about recovery, and advocate for recovery support services. Recovery community

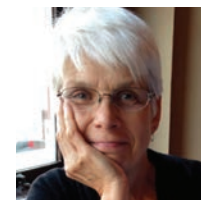
centers are one critical way to combat the social isolation of active addiction and as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. The recovery community can turn to recovery community centers to come together, heal, and re-connect.

How can I support this bill?

Tell your representatives to support this resolve by calling or emailing them. Find your representative here: https://openstates.org/find_your legislator/

Where can I get more information?

Contact Courtney Allen, MeRAP Policy Director, at courtney@recoveryvoices.com.



Alison Jones Webb is a public health professional who has worked in the field of substance use prevention, treatment and recovery in Maine for over 15 years.

Maine's Recovery COMMUNITY CENTERS

*** Aroostook Recovery Center of Hope**

59 Main St, Houlton, ME 04730
(207) 254-2213

*** Bangor Area Recovery Network**

142 Center Street, Brewer, ME 04412
(207) 561-9444

*** Bath Recovery Community Center**

97 Commercial Street, Bath 04530
(207) 389-4236

*** Boothbay Harbor Peer & Wellness Center**

35 School Street, Boothbay Harbor, ME 04538
(207) 315-6236

☆ Coastal Recovery Community Center

11 White Street, Rockland, ME 04841
(207) 691-3697

*** DownEast Recovery Support Center**

311 Main Street, Calais, ME 04619
(207) 952-9279

*** DownEast Recovery Support Center**

11 Free Street, Machias, ME 04654
(207) 259-6238

*** Lakes Region Recovery Center**

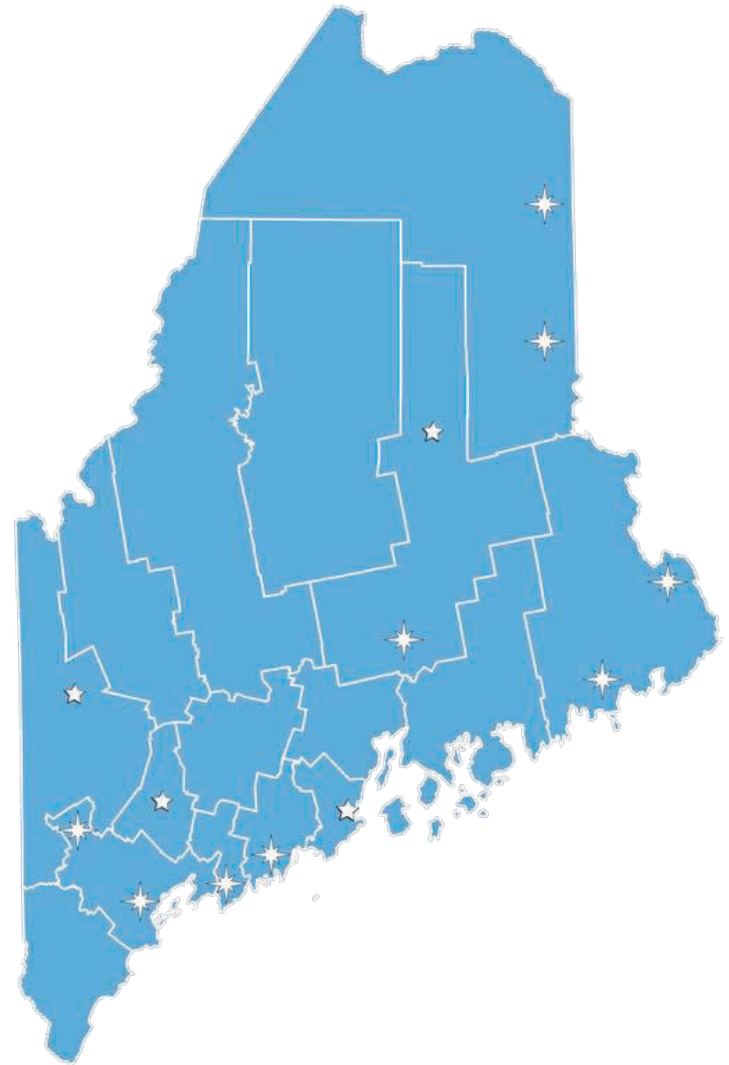
25 Hospital Drive, Suite E, Bridgton, ME 04009
(207) 803-8707

☆ Larry Labonte Recovery Center

412 Waldo Street, Rumford, ME 04276
(207) 418-4983

Pir2Peer Recovery Center

☆ 1009 Central Street Millinocket, ME 04462
(207) 447-9500



*** Portland Recovery Community Center**

468 Forest Avenue, Portland, ME 04103
(207) 553-2575

☆ REST Center

205 Main Street, Lewiston, Maine 04240
(207) 783-7378

*** Roads to Recovery Community Center**

1 Water Street, Caribou, ME 04736
(207) 493-1278

* Designates Maine Recovery Hub funded center



Spirit Illuminated

by Kimble Greene, PhD

Over the years, many have asked how I acquired my intuitive abilities. My answer is always the same: intuition is your sixth sense; it is the means by which your spirit speaks. Intuition, along with all your core sensory capacities, is the seat of your power and knowing. Additionally, it is through this nonphysical core essence that the ever-present wisdom of the universe guides, supports, and uplifts you.

From the moment I inquisitively opened the door to the world of energy and spirit, it sucked me in. As I began to explore the prospect of an inner spiritual existence, it wasn't long before a divine essence emanated from and through me like sunlight as it peaks over the horizon on a clear morning. Reconnecting to my core essence ignited my curiosity and passion for life, people, nature, and all things related to living.

The exuberance and wholesomeness of it made me ache for all things natural and pure; the feel of the warm sand beneath my feet, the

splendor found in exploring the forest, and the depth of love, for self and others, experienced deep within and far beyond my being. More and more life made me think hard, laugh knowingly, cry openly, wonder naively, comprehend unexpectedly, live passionately and, above all, deeply explore my own sense of self, life, and spirit.

The inherent duality of your existence on this earth—as a human and spiritual being—brings challenge as well as purpose.

Your spiritual existence is about the expression of our soul through grace, creativity, joy, wonder, service, compassion, non-judgment, and love. Your physical existence is about the expression of humanity through growth, exploration, pain, grief, trauma, angst, anguish, confusion, betrayal, inhumanity, survival, and still ... love.

Life is about keeping the light on so that the darkness does not prevail.

Life is about balance, going within, having faith and loving—first oneself and then the world.

Life is about the ability of humans to embrace their struggles and sift from them the nuggets of wisdom, higher purpose, and meaning.

Life is about the shift from surviving to thriving.

This spiritual quest has shown me the measure of a human being is how well s/he lives and loves, both as an imperfect human and as all-knowing spirit. *The honor of embracing my spiritual Self and knowing the vast eminent universe has deeply and profoundly enriched and expanded my life—I wish the same for you.*



.....
Kimble Greene
PhD, Founder and
Chief Catalyst at
Catalyst Enterprises
Worldwide, LLC is a
Bestselling Author,
Master Catalyst, and
Trailblazer. You can
reach her at kimble@drkimblegreene.com.

Recovery PROGRAMS

We are fortunate to live during a time when there are many options for finding and sustaining lasting recovery from addiction. We are all individuals and while there are many aspects of our personal journeys that may be similar to those of others, we are each called to discover for ourselves what works and what doesn't work for us. Our goal is to provide options and shine a light on different approaches that people use to maintain lasting recovery without endorsing specific approaches or recovery programs.

We ultimately leave it up to you, the reader, to decide what works best for you, while presenting you with multiple pathways to recovery.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)

207-774-4335/800-737-6237
www.cso.aomaine.org

Al-Anon / Alateen

www.maineafg.org
207-284-1844 / 800-498-1844

Adult Children of Alcoholics

(ACOA or ACA)
A 12-step, 12-tradition program for men and women who grew up in dysfunctional homes
207-322-6284
www.adultchildren.org

Cocaine Anonymous (CA)

617-539-6090 / 800-347-8998
(meeting info only)
www.ca.org

Codependents Anonymous

602-277-7991 / 888-444-2359
www.coda.org

Debtors Anonymous (DA)

Debtors Anonymous offers hope for people whose use of unsecured debt causes problems and suffering. 800-421-2383 / 800-974-0062
<https://debtorsanonymous.org/>

Drug Addicts Anonymous (DAA)

A fellowship of men and women who have recovered from addiction and are committed to helping those who still suffer, based on the 12 steps
970-761-5189
www.daausa.org

Food Addicts in Recovery

Anonymous (FA) is a free 12-step recovery program for anyone suffering from food obsession, overeating, bulimia and under-eating. www.foodaddicts.org

Gambler's Anonymous (GA)

718-352-1671 / 888-830-2271
<http://newenglandga.com>

Heroin Anonymous (HA)

A fellowship of heroin addicts who help each other practice complete abstinence from drugs and alcohol
347-858-3601
www.heroinanonymous.org

H.O.P.E. Group

A safe place where people come together to find wellness by sharing their stories and listening with an open heart and mind to others
727-420-2964 (Liz)
www.hopehealing.org

Marijuana Anonymous (MA)

A fellowship of people who share their experience, strength and hope to recover from marijuana addiction
609-529-6332 / 800-766-6779
www.marijuana-anonymous.org

Narcotics Anonymous (NA)

A support program for people in recovery from drug addiction based on the 12 steps of AA
www.namaine.org
818-773-9999/800-974-0062

Overeaters Anonymous (OA)

is a community of people who support each other in order to recover from compulsive eating and food behaviors. We welcome everyone who feels they have a problem with food.
Dial 211 for meeting info.
<http://oomaine.org>

Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (SLAA)

A program of recovery for people addicted to sex and love, based on the 12 steps of AA
207-323-5143 / 800-204-2803
www.slaafws.org

SMART Recovery

Mutual-support meetings that are free and open to anyone seeking science-based, self-empowered addiction recovery
440-951-5337
www.smartrecovery.org

Wellbriety Movement

(White Bison)
A sustainable grassroots movement that provides culturally based healing for indigenous people
207-992-0411 / 877-871-1495
<https://wellbriety.com>

Statewide RESOURCES

These resources are gathered from a variety of sources. Our goal is to provide information on nonprofits that provide free or affordable services that benefit the recovery community.

CRISIS HOTLINE

Maine Crisis Hotline

Maine Behavioral Health
888 568 1112

24 hour hotline, mobile assessment & crisis intervention

National Human Trafficking Resource Center/ Polaris Project

888 373 7888

National, toll-free hotline, available to answer calls and texts from anywhere in the country, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year.

Safe Voices (domestic violence)

800 559 2927

Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault

800 871 7741

Confidential services, free of charge. Provides information, crisis counseling, and emotional support and advocacy.

Maine Access Points

207 319 8823 (call or text)
info@maineaccesspoints.org

We provide state-wide naloxone distribution, overdose prevention education, support and aftercare.

www.maineaccesspoints.org

POISON CENTER

Maine Medical Center

800 222 1222

The NNEPC poison help line is available 24/7 by phone, chat and text to provide treatment advice for poisonings or to answer poison-related questions.

HOTLINES

Intentional Warm Line

50 Moody St Saco
866 771 9276

Confidential telephone support services for non-crisis situations, including, but not limited to: Peer-to-peer support, social connection, sharing personal victories, overcoming fear, grief or sadness, developing effective strategies for the future, assistance with referrals to community resources, talking to someone when feeling sad, lonely, or discouraged.

Maine Tobacco Helpline

800 207 1230

M-Th 10a-8p, F 10a-5p,
S 10a-2p

If you call after hours please leave a message. Staff will call you back.

Domestic Violence Support

866 834 4357

Information, crisis counseling, emotional support and advocacy.

MISCELLANEOUS

211 Maine

Directory connecting people to variety of health and human services in Maine that can be accessed online or on the phone.

Medical Professional's Health Program

20 Pelton Hill Rd Manchester
8a-4p
207 623 9266 x5

Assessment/screenings for medical professionals who might have substance use disorders/mental health disorders. Referrals. Monitoring.

Wellness Mobile

207 520 1683

Outreach vehicle and materials for recovery or prevention.

HELP PEOPLE, HEAL PEOPLE

w/

LIMITLESS VENTURES

AN IMPACT CAPITAL FIRM



OUR MISSION

INVESTING \$4 BILLION IN PRIVATE & PHILANTHROPIC CAPITAL TO CREATE 500,000 RECOVERED LIVES BY 2030

INVESTING ACROSS THE CONTINUUM OF CARE



PREVENTION



LIFE-SCIENCES



HEALTH-CARE
ACCESS



TREATMENT



LONG-TERM
RECOVERY

TEAM



Alexander Holt
Managing Partner

- Drexel University
- 9+ Years in Recovery
- 5+ Years in Alt. Asset Management
- 3 Startups
- 4 Non-Profits
- Kite-surfer, golfer



Karen Sterling *PhD, CFA*
Life Science - Senior Partner

- Columbia University
- Biotechnologist & Strategic Advisor
- 11+ Years Investment Banking
- Antarctic Research Scuba Diver



Stuart Gitlow *MD, MPH, MBA*
Chief Medical Partner

- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Mount Sinai, MD
- Uni. of Pittsburgh, MPH
- Uni. Of Rhode Island, MBA
- 27+ Years Recovery-based Psychiatry
- Commercially rated pilot




Gregg Roberts
Long Term Recovery – Senior Partner

- UC – Santa Barbara
- Harvard Business School (OPM)
- 20+ Years Commercial Real Estate
- 5 Startups
- 1 Non-Profit
- Boxing and Tennis

OPPORTUNITIES EXIST FOR QUALIFIED INVESTORS

INFO@LIMITLESSVENTURES.US | WWW.LIMITLESSVENTURES.US



SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE WE CAN HELP YOU BEAT IT

You deserve a care team that understands your unique situation and needs. Having a substance use disorder has never been a personal failing; rather, one that must be met with compassion. At Maine Behavioral Healthcare, we follow evidence-based treatment methods and offer support that can help you identify the recovery pathway that best meets your needs.

You don't have to travel that path alone.

Our intensive treatment programs offer the following services:

- Medicated Assisted Treatment to control cravings and reduce withdrawal
- Group and individual counseling
- Peer support
- Patient navigation
- Education about health maintenance through each level of treatment

Begin your path to recovery today.



Maine Behavioral Healthcare
MaineHealth

Accepting new substance use treatment patients in South Portland, Biddeford, Rockland and Springvale. Call **1-844-292-0111**.

Learn more at mainehealth.org/IMAT