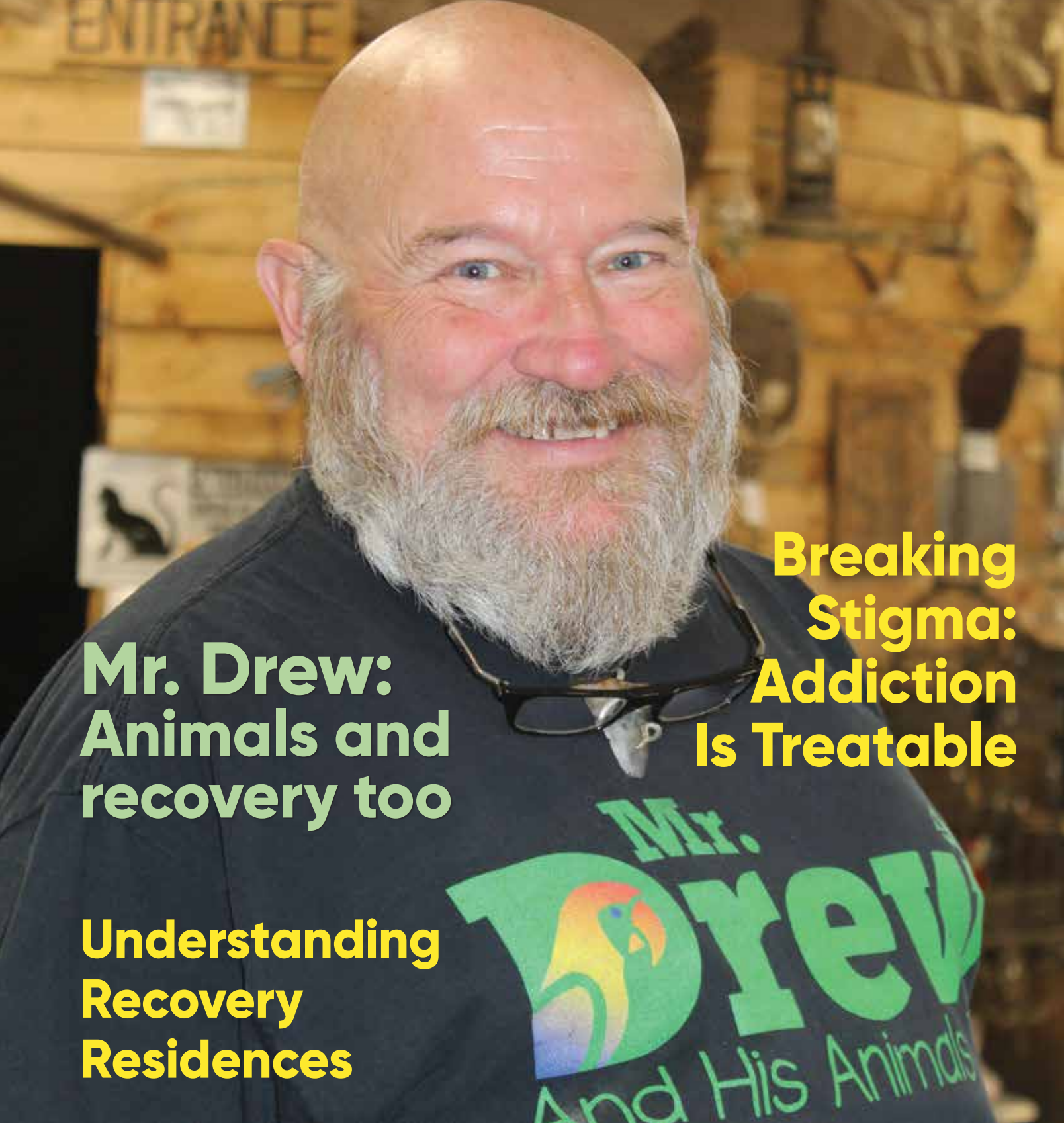


# Journey

making recovery from addiction visible

#36 WINTER 2025



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recovery too**

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## **Community Engagement & Circulation**

Brenda Briggs

## **Business Development**

Carolyn Delaney

## **Operations & Editorial**

Joanna Free

Peter Rosasco

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## **Cover**

*Mr. Drew* (Andrew Desjardins)

Photo by Amy Paradysz

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**E**motional well-being—the quiet strength behind every recovery journey.

It's the resilience we build, the self-compassion we foster, and the connections we nurture along the way. While recovery often begins with addressing physical challenges, it is the healing of our hearts and minds that helps us thrive.

In this issue of *Journey Magazine*, we explore the many facets of emotional well-being and how it weaves into the recovery process. From practical tools like EFT and self-care to deeply personal stories of overcoming life's struggles, each piece is a reminder that recovery is about more than abstaining—it's about flourishing.

I recently read a quote by Brené Brown that stayed with me: *"Owning our story and loving ourselves through that process is the bravest thing that we will ever do."* In every page of this issue, you'll find echoes of this truth. Whether it's through finding joy in small moments, building relationships, or simply allowing yourself the grace to feel your emotions, remember that each step forward is a victory.



Our contributors have shared their wisdom and experiences to inspire and uplift. You'll find stories of hope and healing, actionable tips to improve emotional health, and reflections on how emotional resilience impacts relationships, work, and personal growth.

Let this issue light a way towards support, provide a source of comfort, and a spark of hope.

You're not alone in this journey. Together, we can face life's challenges and celebrate its triumphs—one moment, one step, one magazine and one day at a time.

With immense gratitude,

*Carolyn*



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# Mr. Drew

## Animals and His Sobriety, Too

by Amy Paradysz

Ask any Maine kid, and there's a good chance they know Mr. Drew and His Animals, Too.

Mr. Drew has brought rescued exotic animals like pythons, skunks and tortoises to thousands of events at schools, libraries and home birthday parties. In just the past year, 50,000 people have visited Mr. Drew's education center at Lewiston Mall, home to 400 rescued animals. There, as soon as Mr. Drew takes an African grey parrot named Simon out of its cage and begins to talk about him, a crowd forms. Everyone loves his blend of show-and-tell science, dad jokes and folksy life lessons.

But fewer people know the story of the man behind it all—Andrew Desjardins, 57—and his recovery.

"I didn't go into sobriety thinking that my life was going to change," he says. "But it did. None of this would have happened if I had kept drinking."

The Desjardins family were seasonal at a campground when one rainy afternoon Andrew went home to fetch some of his rescued reptiles to entertain bored children. "I was talking about the animals and letting kids hold them, and one of the mothers asked if I would do a birthday party," he says. "That's where it all started. But I had to be on my best behavior, because you can't go to a kid's birthday party smelling like alcohol."

In the early Mr. Drew days, he'd pick up beer as soon as the gig was over.

"One day my wife Susan came home and I was on the bed completely blacked out," Andrew says. "One of our older kids said that I wouldn't wake up. I'd only had a couple of



Mr. Drew (Andrew Desjardins) with Scooby Blue. Photo by Amy Paradysz.

drinks. But it was explained to me later that your tolerance only goes so high and then your body says, 'No more, no more.' I didn't even have three, and I completely blacked out. And this happened a couple of times. Susan was angry, understandably, and wrote a long letter. Reading it, I realized how much my drinking was hurting her and hurting our family. That letter was the turning point. We both knew that something needed to change."

Andrew got into an outpatient treatment program in Lewiston, where he thought about all he had to lose: his wife and family, both his career as a draftsman and his Mr. Drew gig, his driver's license, his freedom, and his health. "I kept rereading the letter and thinking about it—and thinking about my grandfather, who was an alcoholic and what that did in his life," he says. "I knew that I needed to prioritize

myself, my sobriety and—by extension—my family."

Andrew got sober in 2007.

Meanwhile, the Desjardins continued to take in exotic pets that the Maine Warden Service and humane societies aren't equipped to take. By 2017, however, they didn't have the space for more animals at their home. "Here I am talking to kids about responsibility," Andrew says, "and there's a fine line between rescue and hoarding. We had to stop."

Who *would* take those animals, he didn't know.

Susan, thankfully, found a solution—a 1,700-square-foot space available at a former mill. There the Desjardins opened an education center where they could take in more animals and charge admission.

Mr. Drew's menagerie continued to grow, until the organization became a nonprofit in 2024 and moved to a 10,000 square-foot-space in the Lewiston Mall. Today, Mr. Drew and his crew—20 paid employees and many volunteers—care for 400 rescued animals: reptiles, amphibians, invertebrates, birds and a whole lot of fish.

"I'm doing what I enjoy," Andrew says. "And for me to do this, first I had to be sober. I sleep at night knowing I did the best I could. I made some people smile. And I taught some invaluable lessons to children—and adults—anything from ecology to taking life one day at a time."

Andrew's office, which he shares with an iguana named Zigzag, is in the display window of the education center. Andrew signs "thank you" as children walk by and point at the strip mall window, their mouths making the shape for the words "Mr. Drew." For them, going to the education center and seeing Mr. Drew himself is a bit like visiting Santa's village and seeing Old St. Nick.

For Andrew, being on display is practical—if someone has a question, they know where to find him—but also connected to his sobriety.

"I'm not hiding," he says.

Talking about his recovery is something he does often.

"I tell people, just because you haven't succeeded yet doesn't mean you've failed," he says. "And there's no right way to do it. For me, it helped that I could focus on this. I see the positive reactions of the children and the parents and I can feed off their energy."



Amy Paradysz is a freelance writer and photographer based in Scarborough. She can be reached at [amyparadysz@gmail.com](mailto:amyparadysz@gmail.com).



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# The Rewards of Being There for Mainers in Crisis

A growing legion of Crisis Responders are discovering that their career choice gives back much more than it takes.

**A**s a mobile crisis worker, Marissa Exchange's role is all about giving back. She provides confidential support, connects individuals in crisis to resources they need, and collaborates with families, mental health providers, and other community partners to ensure that the person has a holistic network of support. Most importantly, she provides a safe, kind space for individuals in crisis to share what they're going through and ask for help.



Marissa, Mobile Crisis Worker

And yet when Marissa talks about her work, she gushes about how much she gets from it.

"It's super rewarding," said Marissa. "It feels really good to be able to make a difference, to know that people feel comfortable with me, and trust me to be a safe — or even just a neutral — place where they can say anything without fear of being judged or getting a negative response."

She also loves that she can make her own schedule, work remotely if she needs to, and manage her shifts while pursuing her master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling, and simultaneously training to become a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor.

Marissa is part of a growing legion of Crisis Responders who are discovering the rewards of working with Mainers experiencing a mental health crisis to assess their needs, and guide them to an appropriate level of care.

There are a wide variety of open positions statewide that offer full-time, part-time and per diem opportunities. The work is done in the community, outside a hospital or nursing home. Training opportunities are widely available and easy to complete.

Like Marissa, others who are working in this field are finding that it gives back much more than it takes.

---

**"It feels really good to be able to make a difference."**

---

"It's just been this incredible journey," said Melanie Grant, a crisis residential services worker, who provides intervention and support to ensure the safety and well-being of patients in a residential treatment facility.



Melanie, Residential Crisis Worker

"A lot of it is just working with people who are going through a hard time, whether it has to do with substances, or past trauma or loss of a loved one," she added. "It's people needing people. And we've all needed people."

To learn more about full-time, part-time and per diem opportunities in your community, go to [Mainecareerswithpurpose.org](https://mainecareerswithpurpose.org). Follow @MaineCareerswithPurpose on Facebook and Instagram.

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# Understanding Recovery Residences

## A Path to Stability and Healing

**R**ecovery from substance use disorders is a challenging journey that requires a strong foundation of support and stability. For many, recovery residences serve as a vital stepping stone, providing a safe and structured environment for individuals working to rebuild their lives. But what exactly are recovery residences, and how do they support long-term recovery?

### What Are Recovery Residences?

Recovery residences are supportive, substance-free living environments designed to foster personal growth and healing. These homes, often located in residential neighborhoods, house anywhere from a few residents to as many as 20–30 individuals. Residents share a common goal: maintaining sobriety and supporting one another on the path to recovery. People may live in these residences for months or even years, surrounded by peers who understand their journey.

### Key Benefits and Services

These homes offer more than just a place to stay. Recovery residences provide room and board, social support, and a network of peers working toward similar goals. Residents are often encouraged to seek employment and are equipped with essential life skills such as self-care, health management, and maintaining overall well-being.

Research highlights the effectiveness of recovery residences in fostering significant improvements in individuals' lives. Residents often experience higher rates of employment, reduced involvement with the criminal justice system, and increased remission from substance use disorders. Living among supportive peers helps individuals develop a sense of accountability and community, which are critical for sustaining recovery over time.

### Who Manages Recovery Residences?

Management structures vary. Many recovery residences are self-managed by residents in recovery, who volunteer to take on responsibilities such as financial decision-making and informal case management. These peers often provide valuable guidance on navigating healthcare access, employment opportunities, legal challenges, and social services. In other cases, recovery residences are professionally managed to ensure additional oversight and resources.

### Costs and Accessibility

While recovery residences do have associated costs, fees are typically designed to be affordable. Depending on the location and available amenities, costs may range from a small percentage of an individual's income to higher rates. Some residences also offer financial support options to those in need.

### How to Learn More

For those seeking more information, resources are available online. Maine Association of Recovery Residences —



[mainerecoveryresidences.com](http://mainerecoveryresidences.com). The National Alliance for Recovery Residences (NARR) offers comprehensive details at [narr.org](http://narr.org).

Additionally, the Recovery Research Institute provides in-depth resources at [recoveryanswers.org](http://recoveryanswers.org) and check out their video on [youtube.com](http://youtube.com) specifically about recovery residences.

Recovery residences are more than just homes—they are places of hope, accountability, and growth. They play a crucial role in supporting individuals as they work toward a stable and healthy future, offering the tools and community needed to thrive.

## Enhancing Recovery Through Science



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The Recovery Research Institute (RRI) is a leading nonprofit research institute of Massachusetts General Hospital, an affiliate of Harvard Medical School, dedicated to the advancement of addiction treatment and recovery.

RRI has given us permission to publish articles from their website ([recoveryanswers.org](http://recoveryanswers.org)) for this column. A special thank you to John Kelly and his team for allowing us to amplify their work!

Please visit [recoveryanswers.org](http://recoveryanswers.org) to learn more.

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# Building Emotional Wellness with Strong EQ



by Dr. Larry McCullough

Most of us have heard of “IQ,” or Intelligence Quotient, which measures how smart we are. But equally—if not more—important for emotional well-being is “EQ,” or Emotional Intelligence. EQ helps guide our emotions and relationships. This concept was popularized by Daniel Goleman in his book *Emotional Intelligence*, and research since then has shown that EQ is crucial for our health and happiness.

## The Building Blocks of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is a skill we can learn and practice. Think of it as building blocks or stepping stones. At the base is self-awareness—understanding what’s happening inside us. This leads to emotional self-management, which helps us stay steady during life’s ups and downs. From there, we can move toward emotional self-direction, using our emotions to guide positive choices. Together, these steps build emotional wellness and resilience.

### Self-Awareness

The first step to emotional well-being is recognizing our feelings. Without this, it’s hard to stay emotionally steady. Sometimes, emotions start as subtle signals in our body—a tightness in the chest, an uneasy feeling in the stomach, or a nagging thought that won’t go away.

When this happens, try slowing down and asking yourself: “What’s going on?” or “What am I feeling right

now?” It’s okay if you don’t know the answer right away. Talking it out with someone can help. This is why sharing in a twelve-step meeting or “getting current” is so valuable—it provides a safe, non-judgmental space to process your emotions.

### Self-Management

Self-management is about staying balanced, even during emotional highs and lows. Once you know how you’re feeling, you can begin managing those feelings so they don’t overwhelm you. Psychologists call this “emotional regulation,” which means keeping emotions in a range that allows you to function. It’s not about ignoring your feelings but making sure they don’t take over.

For example, if you’re feeling sad, it’s okay to cry or talk about it—but try not to let it keep you from living your life. If you’re excited, enjoy the moment without becoming so carried away that you lose focus.

Interestingly, self-management doesn’t mean doing it all on your own. Sometimes, we need the support of others to stay balanced, like a friend to listen or a meeting to ground us. Other times, we need solitude to rest or reflect. Wisdom in emotional management comes from knowing what you need in the moment.

### Self-Direction

Once we understand and manage our emotions, we can use them to make intentional choices about how we live. This is emotional self-direction. It’s not about controlling everything but

about using our emotions to guide us toward meaningful goals.

In recovery, this might look like turning your will over to a Higher Power, as described in the twelve steps. You consciously choose to let something greater than yourself guide your actions. This doesn’t mean giving up control—it means using self-awareness to align your choices with what matters most.

## A Strong EQ Builds Positive Experiences

Research shows that positive relationships and experiences are the best buffers against stress and challenges. By building your EQ, you can create more of these moments. For instance:

- Strong self-awareness helps you communicate your needs in a healthy way.
- Good self-management allows you to respond thoughtfully instead of reacting impulsively.
- Clear self-direction gives you the focus to make decisions that lead to a better life.

When we work on our EQ, we can face life’s challenges with confidence and find joy in small, meaningful moments.



Dr. Larry McCullough launched Pinetree Institute in 2012 and is currently the Executive Director. His focus has been on the development of trauma-informed approaches to community services. He has specialized in those related to addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) as a way of building individual, family, and community resilience.

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# Emotional Health and Recovery

## The Role of Social Networks



### Emotional Health: A Cornerstone of Recovery

Emotional health plays a crucial role in addiction recovery, and social networks are at the heart of maintaining that well-being. Recovery is more than breaking free from substance use; it's about rebuilding connections, finding support, and creating a sense of belonging. Social networks—friends, family, and community—are often the lifeline that helps individuals navigate the complex emotional challenges of recovery.

### The Positive Impact of Supportive Social Networks

Research shows that supportive social relationships significantly impact emotional health and recovery outcomes. Social networks provide a sense of accountability, encouragement, and a shared understanding of the recovery journey. For many, relationships with peers who have “been there” offer invaluable emotional guidance. These connections foster hope, celebrate small victories, and provide a listening ear during tough times.

### Avoiding Unhealthy Relationships

Not all social relationships are positive for emotional health. Recovery often requires setting boundaries with people who may unintentionally hinder progress. For example, relationships formed during substance use may perpetuate unhealthy patterns. Rebuilding

social networks around people who respect and support recovery goals is essential for emotional stability.

### The Power of Community-Based Support

Community-based support systems, such as recovery community centers and peer support groups, play a pivotal role in enhancing emotional health. These spaces offer opportunities to share experiences, learn coping skills, and build trust in a safe, nonjudgmental environment. Programs like Alcoholics Anonymous, SMART Recovery, LifeRing and other peer-led initiatives provide structured social networks where individuals can connect with others who understand their struggles.

### Family Support: Strengthening Emotional Resilience

Family support also deeply influences emotional well-being. When family members educate themselves about recovery and offer empathy, they create a nurturing environment

for healing. On the other hand, unresolved family conflict or stigma can become emotional barriers. Open communication and mutual understanding within families can strengthen emotional resilience for everyone involved.

### The Heart of Recovery

Ultimately, recovery is about connection. As Johann Hari aptly put it, “The opposite of addiction isn’t sobriety—it’s connection.” Building and maintaining healthy social networks help individuals find purpose and emotional balance, both critical to long-term recovery. Communities that foster these connections by supporting recovery-friendly policies and reducing stigma create environments where emotional health can thrive.

In the journey to emotional wellness, no one walks alone. By surrounding themselves with understanding, supportive individuals, people in recovery can find the strength to heal and rediscover joy in life.

Find out more about Alison Jones Webb and her book *Recovery Allies*

**LinkedIn**  
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# Kennebunk Savings

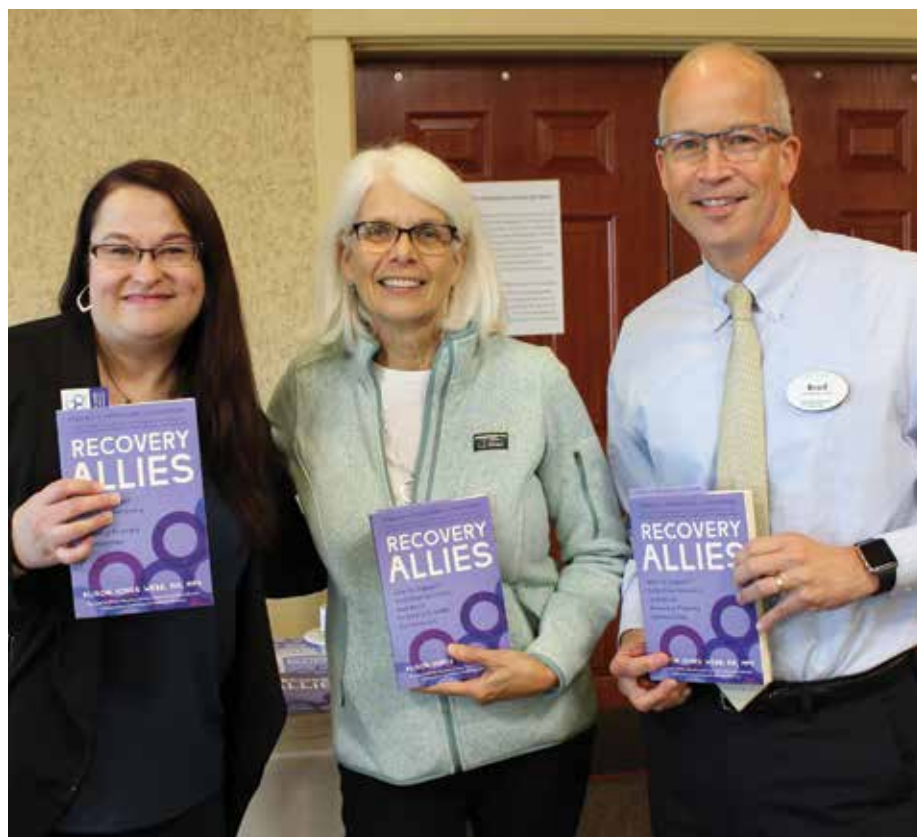
## Shifting Culture, Reducing Stigma

**K**ennebunk Savings is making a big difference for its employees and community by becoming a Recovery-Friendly Workplace (RFW). This means they help people facing challenges with substance use and recovery. Their program has three main parts: **policies, education, and resources.**

One of the most important changes they've made is how they look at substance use. Brad, CEO at Kennebunk Savings, explains that they now see it as a health issue, not a performance problem. In the past, if someone's substance use was affecting their work, the focus was on fixing the problem or facing consequences. Now, the focus is on helping the person. Managers and HR staff ask, "How can we help?" They offer resources like employee assistance programs, recovery centers, and medical benefits to support the person's recovery.

Another exciting change is how some employees have become "lighthouses" for others. Brad describes lighthouses as people who share their own recovery stories or experiences with loved ones in recovery. These employees become trusted guides for others who might be struggling. They weren't assigned these roles—it happened naturally as people saw them as safe and supportive. These lighthouses make it easier for others to ask for help, building a stronger, more compassionate workplace.

Brad also explains how helping one person in recovery can have a big



Liz Torrance, VP, Senior Social Responsibility Manager; Alison Jones Webb, Author of *Recovery Allies*; Brad Paige, CEO, Kennebunk Savings.  
Photo provided by Kennebunk Savings

ripple effect. When you support an employee, you're also likely helping their family, friends, and neighbors. If one person affects 10 others in their life, the 330 employees at Kennebunk Savings could impact over 3,300 people. This shows how a recovery-friendly workplace can benefit the entire community.

The company also makes recovery resources easy to find. Information is shared in offices and branches so employees and customers can access help whenever they need it.

Education is a key part of their program. Employees and managers are trained to understand recovery and reduce stigma, which is judging people unfairly because of substance use. These trainings help everyone see recovery as a strength.

For them, supporting recovery isn't just about policies—it's about creating a healthier, stronger community for everyone.

**In partnership with  
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# Create a Money Plan in Recovery



by **Brittany Eaton** and **Nicole Lemieux**

**T**aking care of your money is important, especially during recovery. It might feel like a big task, but don't worry—you can take it one step at a time. Managing bills, paying off debt, and saving for the future are key to building stability.

Here's a simple guide to help you get started.

## See Where You Stand

Before making a plan, take a good look at your money situation. Write down three things:

**What you own:** This is your income, savings, or anything of value, like a car or a house.

**What you owe:** List your debts, like credit cards, loans, or other payments.

**Your monthly bills:** Write down regular expenses like rent, groceries, or utilities.

Knowing where you are can help you figure out your next steps.

## Set Goals

Think about what's most important for you right now. Goals might include:

**Starting an emergency fund:** Try saving a little each week to build up \$500 or more for unexpected costs.

**Paying bills on time:** Mark due dates on a calendar so you don't forget. Start by paying the minimum on each bill, and pay extra when you can.

**Reducing debt:** Focus on one debt at a time. For example, you might decide to pay \$100 per month on a \$600 credit card bill.

Small, clear goals can help you stay focused.

## Make a Plan

Turn your goals into simple steps. Set dates and amounts to stay on track. For example:

**Save \$20 every week** until you reach \$500 in savings.

**Pay off one small debt** before moving to the next.

You don't have to do everything at once. One step at a time is enough.

## Create a Budget

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**Adjust as needed:** Use your budget for a while, and make changes if something isn't working.

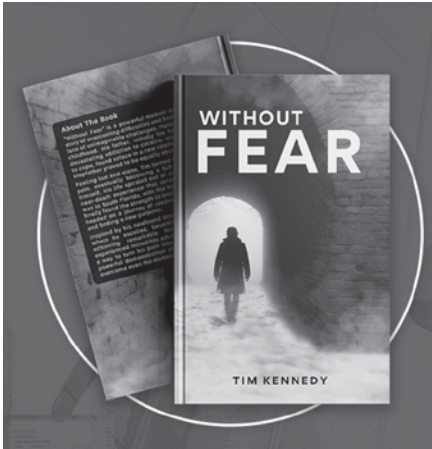
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*Brittany Eaton is the Collections Manager for Town & Country Federal Credit Union and Nicole Lemieux is Mortgage Loan Officer for the organization. They both are champions for financial wellness in our community and work with people in the recovery community.*  
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# Breaking the Stigma

## Addiction as a Treatable Health Condition

For too long, addiction has been seen as a personal failing or moral weakness. This stigma discourages people from seeking the help they need, creating barriers to recovery. Today, we know that addiction is a health condition—one that can be treated successfully with the right support.

Changing how addiction is portrayed is key to breaking this stigma. A study led by McGinty and colleagues illustrates how public attitudes shift based on the way addiction is presented. Participants in the study read fictional stories about Mary, a college-educated woman. Some read vignettes where Mary had untreated addiction, while others saw stories of Mary receiving treatment and managing her condition.

The differences in responses were significant. People who read about untreated addiction were 50% less likely to support someone with addiction marrying into their family or being a co-worker. They were also more likely to believe landlords should be able to deny housing to people with substance use disorders. In contrast, when Mary was portrayed as successfully managing her addiction, participants were 75% more likely to view her as a family member or co-worker. They also believed more strongly that treatment can control symptoms and lead to recovery.

This shift is critical because stigma often prevents people from seeking help. Many individuals fear judgment or discrimination, so they avoid the very programs that could save their lives. The good



news is that showing addiction as a treatable condition reduces fear and misunderstanding, encouraging support for recovery.

### Why Representation Matters

Media plays a powerful role in shaping how we see addiction. When addiction is depicted as hopeless or tied to negative stereotypes, it reinforces stigma. By contrast, stories of recovery remind us that people can and do overcome addiction. Sharing these stories creates hope, not just for those in recovery, but also for their families and communities.

### Taking Steps to Break Stigma

If you or someone you love is in recovery, remember that addiction is a health issue. Like other chronic illnesses, it requires treatment and support. Share recovery stories to challenge stereotypes and inspire others to seek help. Policymakers and media creators can amplify this change by portraying addiction as treatable and recovery as attainable.

Together, we can create a world where recovery is celebrated, stigma fades, and more people find the courage to heal.

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RRI has given us permission to publish articles from their website ([recoveryanswers.org](http://recoveryanswers.org)) for this column. A special thank you to John Kelly and his team for allowing us to amplify their work!

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# EFT Tapping

## Right Here, Right Now!

**W**hat if you could stop negative thinking and feel better right away?

Here's a simple story about how EFT Tapping can make a big difference.

One evening, I was at a social gathering with friends and colleagues. The room was filled with cozy loveseats, each ready for the next meaningful conversation. As I looked around, I couldn't resist the urge to try them all—they were too inviting!

As I settled into one, a gentleman approached me and asked if he could join. I almost said no—I felt like Cinderella at the ball, enjoying a magical moment. But I smiled and said yes.

He introduced himself as Connor and asked about my life. I shared my story, from owning an advertising agency to becoming an EFT Tapping Practitioner. He seemed fascinated and asked, "What is EFT Tapping?"

When I asked about his life, Connor hesitated. He kept starting with

phrases like, "I'm not very good at this" or "You'll think I'm crazy." As he talked, it became clear he believed, deep down, "I'm not good enough."

I explained how EFT Tapping works—tapping on certain points of the body helps release negative feelings and beliefs. I also told him how it helped me get rid of 16 years of sciatic pain in just one 20-minute session.

Connor was intrigued and asked to try it. We started tapping together, and he quickly uncovered a core memory: his father had always made him feel inadequate. With each round of tapping, his posture relaxed, his voice steadied, and his energy shifted.

By the time we finished, something unexpected happened. We looked up and realized the other guests had formed a semi-circle around us. They had been quietly watching, curious about what was going on.

Connor stood up from the loveseat, his shoulders back, and a confident smile on his face. "I feel like I can finally

breathe," he said. He walked away with a sense of relief and self-worth.

That night, I felt so grateful to share the gift of EFT Tapping—right here, right now. It's incredible how this simple process can unlock powerful changes in a person's life. Whether it's letting go of limiting beliefs, releasing emotional pain, or finding a sense of peace, EFT Tapping can make a real difference.

*Are you ready to feel free from negative thoughts and beliefs?*



Contact Karen St.Clair to learn EFT Tapping through private sessions, workshops, or at your next event. Karen St.Clair is an Accredited Certified EFT Practitioner, Reiki Master, Biofield Tuning Practitioner, Speaker, and Author. Visit [karenstclairEFT.com](http://karenstclairEFT.com) to start your journey today!

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# Finding Strength

## A Journey of Healing and Hope



Jenn Williams knows that recovery from brain injury is not just about overcoming a single challenge—it’s about rebuilding your life one small step at a time. As a co-founder of The Middle People Project, Jenn has witnessed countless stories of resilience and determination. Though Jenn is a stroke survivor, she recognizes that there are many types of brain injury, including anoxic and hypoxic injuries which can intersect with substance use. Addiction and brain injuries may seem like different battles, but they share common struggles that require similar tools and support to overcome.

For someone navigating recovery, the journey can feel overwhelming. Both addiction and brain injury can make it difficult to think clearly, manage emotions, and stay focused. Yet, Jenn emphasizes that even though recovery is ongoing and certainly not linear, healing is possible. “It’s about creating routines, finding emotional balance, and building a supportive community around you,” she explains. These steps take time, but they lead to lasting change inwardly and outwardly.

A common issue for people navigating addiction and brain injury is finding motivation. One of the

first steps in finding motivation is starting small. Setting achievable goals, like waking up earlier or eating a few more vegetables, can help create a sense of progress. “Celebrate every little win,” Jenn says. “Celebrating could mean enjoying a cup of coffee or taking a well-earned break. These little wins can build creativity, determination, and momentum.”

Daily tasks, which might feel daunting at first, can also become manageable with the right tools. Try using simple solutions like utensils with larger grips, planning grocery trips during quieter times, or using sticky notes for reminders. “You don’t have to do everything at once,” she reminds us. “It’s about progress, not perfection.”

Handling emotions is another challenging but important part of recovery. Leaning on supportive people, attending support groups, counseling, or even writing down things you’re grateful for can shift your emotions. “Focusing on what you can control, instead of what you can’t, is key,” Jenn says. She also shares that “writing down three things you’re grateful for every day for 90 days can drastically improve your emotional outlook.”

Developing healthy habits is also a foundation for success in recovery. Eating balanced meals, staying hydrated, and moving your body, even walking or doing yoga, are small but impactful habits. Good sleep is also important for mental and physical well-being. Never underestimate the impact of a good night’s sleep!

Recovery is a journey, not a destination. Finding a community, like the one fostered by The Middle People Project, can make all the difference. The project connects people to resources, tools, and supportive peers who understand their struggles. “We strive to be a resource hub for people with brain injuries that feel like they just need more,” says Jenn.

Whether you’re healing from addiction, a brain injury, or both, the message is clear: you are not alone.

Start small, take steady steps, and lean on those around you.

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# LEARN to COPE

A peer-led support network for families  
dealing with addiction and recovery

**L**earn to Cope (LTC) is a group that helps families who have loved ones struggling with addiction. It started in 2004 in Massachusetts and has grown to help families all over the country. Learn to Cope is a safe place where families can get support, learn important information, and find hope during difficult times. It helps people understand addiction, stay strong, and take care of themselves while helping their loved ones.

## A Safe Place to Share and Learn

Learn to Cope provides weekly meetings where families can come together. These meetings are held both in person and online, so people can join from wherever they are. The meetings are a safe space where families can share their feelings and struggles without being judged. People attending often include parents, siblings, partners, and other loved ones.

The meetings are led by **peer leaders**—people who have also supported a loved one through addiction. These leaders understand what families are going through and can share their experiences and advice. Families often feel less alone when they hear others talk about their struggles. Being able to connect with people who “get it” brings comfort and hope.

## Learning Tools and Resources

At Learn to Cope meetings, families can learn about addiction, recovery, and the tools they need to help their loved ones. Many meetings include guest speakers who are experts in addiction or recovery. Speakers might be doctors, counselors, or people who are in recovery themselves. Some topics discussed include:

- How addiction affects the brain and body.
- How to care for yourself while supporting someone with addiction.
- How to find treatment programs and support.

Learn to Cope also provides families with **free Narcan kits** and teaches them how to use them. Narcan is a medicine that can reverse an overdose and save lives. By providing these tools, Learn to Cope helps families feel prepared in case of an emergency. Families often say that learning about Narcan gives them confidence and peace of mind.

## Support Anytime, Anywhere

In addition to meetings, Learn to Cope offers an online forum where families can connect anytime, day or night. This online space is private and safe, and it is available 24/7. Families can share their struggles, ask questions, or simply read about others’ experiences. The forum is moderated to make sure it is a kind

and helpful space. Families often say that reading stories and advice from others helps them feel less alone and more hopeful.

## Creating Change in Communities

Learn to Cope also works to raise awareness about addiction. The group helps people understand that addiction is a medical condition, not a moral failure. Learn to Cope partners with schools, healthcare providers, and public health leaders to provide education and advocate for better addiction care. They have been recognized by important organizations like the **National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)** for their work.

## Making a Difference

Learn to Cope gives families the tools, information, and support they need to face addiction. Whether through weekly meetings, Narcan training, or online connections, the group helps families stay strong while supporting their loved ones. Most importantly, Learn to Cope gives hope to families during their hardest times.

To learn more, join a meeting, or connect with support, visit [Learn2Cope.org](http://Learn2Cope.org).

# Hope Through Love & Resilience

## A Family's Recovery Journey

Hope grows in unexpected places. For Linda Rosenberg and her daughter Melissa LaPorte, Learn to Cope became a lifeline. Through shared resilience, love, and community support, their journey highlights the transformative power of connection, proving that recovery is possible.

### A Mother's Journey: Linda Rosenberg

When Linda Rosenberg first discovered Learn to Cope, she was a mother overwhelmed by the struggles of supporting a loved one with addiction. Her discovery happened unexpectedly—a mention of the organization in a Boston Globe obituary caught her attention. What started as a Google search turned into a life-changing journey.

Learn to Cope, a nonprofit offering support and resources for families dealing with addiction, became Linda's lifeline. Initially hesitant, she attended meetings far from home to stay anonymous. Walking into her first meeting, she was amazed by the number of attendees. "There must have been 100 people in the room," she recalls. For the first time, she realized she wasn't alone.

The meetings provided more than a space to share; they created a community of people who understood her struggles. "It felt cathartic to talk about it," Linda shares. "When you think you're alone and then find others with the same story, it's a relief." Over time, she found her "home meeting" in Cambridge, where she connected with others weekly.

Now a facilitator for Learn to Cope, Linda helps others on their journeys. "We don't give advice; we offer resources and hope," she explains. Whether guiding new attendees or offering emotional support, her focus is on creating a welcoming, understanding space.

Reflecting on her experiences, Linda highlights the importance of recovery education and community connection. She imagines a future where recovery training is as common as other workplace education, reducing stigma and fostering understanding.

Learn to Cope's impact shows the strength of shared experiences and the power of hope. As Linda says, "Knowing you're not alone can be life-changing. This community reminds us we can face challenges together—and come out stronger."



*Melissa LaPorte and Linda Rosenberg*

### A Daughter's Journey: Melissa LaPorte

Melissa LaPorte's story reminds us that recovery is not about a single moment but a series of small, consistent changes. After years of struggling with addiction and enduring challenges like arrests and failed treatments, her turning point came through a gradual shift supported by love and determination.

Her mother, inspired by resources like Learn to Cope, set healthy boundaries while continuing to offer unwavering love. This approach helped Melissa face the consequences of her actions and find the courage to change. Through professional help,

community resources, and sheer resilience, Melissa embraced recovery and began rebuilding her life step by step.

Melissa's recovery was not linear, and she faced setbacks along the way. Yet, with each challenge, she stayed committed to the process. She credits the recovery community and those who shared their experiences for showing her that she wasn't alone. Programs like recovery coaching and mutual aid groups helped Melissa find purpose, connection, and tools for long-term healing.

Today, she thrives as a lead clinician, guiding others on their path to healing. Her journey exemplifies how recovery is possible with the right support system and an unrelenting belief in hope. Melissa's message is clear: no matter how dark things seem, recovery is within reach for everyone.

Melissa's transformation highlights the power of community, compassion, and persistence in creating a brighter, addiction-free future.

Recovery is not just possible—it's probable with the right steps. "Every person deserves hope, no matter where they are," she says.

# How to Survive a Panic Attack When it Strikes

by Stan Popovich

A person can experience a panic attack when they least expect it. This can cause a great deal of fear and anxiety for the person.

Many people do not know what they should do when dealing with a panic attack.

As a result, here are eight easy steps a person can follow when a panic attack strikes unexpectedly.

## 1 Take a Break

A panic attack can be very uncomfortable and can affect a person's thinking. The best thing to do when this happens is to take a break in order to calm down. You don't want to do anything when you're not thinking clearly.

## 2 Take Deep Breaths

A person should take some deep breaths to help feel better and to get rid of some of the excessive fear and anxiety. There are many kinds of breathing exercises a person can learn to follow with the help of a mental health counselor. Taking some deep breaths can help a person relax right away.

## 3 Distract Yourself

A person should try to distract themselves from the panic they are experiencing. A person could get some fresh air, listen to some music, take a brisk walk, read the newspaper, or do something relaxing that will give them a fresh perspective on things.

## 4 Visualize a Red Stop Sign

A person should visualize a red stop sign in their mind when they encounter a fearful thought. When the negative thought comes, a person should think of a red stop sign that serves as a reminder to stop focusing on that thought and to think of something else. A person can then try to think of something positive to replace the negative thought.

## 5 Get the Facts of Your Situation

Many people feel helpless when they experience a panic attack for the first time. The fact is that you will be ok and that it takes a few minutes for the anxiety to go away. Talk to a counselor and get the



facts of what a panic attack is and what you can do when a panic attack occurs.

## 6 Don't Dwell on Your Thoughts

A person must not dwell or focus on their thoughts during a panic attack. The more a person tries to reason out their thoughts the longer a panic attack will last. Read some positive statements from your favorite self-help book to help overcome your negative thoughts during a panic attack.

## 7 Read Some Positive Affirmations

Another technique that is very helpful is to have a small notebook of positive statements that makes you feel good. Whenever you come across an affirmation that makes you feel good, write it down in a small

notebook that you can carry around with you in your pocket. Whenever you feel depressed, open up your small notebook and read those statements.

## 8 Get Help

It is important to talk to a qualified professional in order to learn how to survive a panic attack. By talking to a professional, a person will be helping themselves in the long run because they will become better able to deal with any panic attacks that may occur in the future.



Stan is the author of *A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear*, which covers a variety of techniques that can drastically improve your mental health.

For more information, please visit Stan's website at [www.managingfear.com](http://www.managingfear.com).



# Thriving in Recovery

## No Matter the Weather

**T**he winter season can be a time of joy and connection, but it can also bring unique challenges, especially for those in recovery. Navigating these ups and downs is a key to emotional wellness – having the ability to understand, manage, and embrace feelings in a way that supports your overall well-being. Whether you are new to recovery or years into your journey, here are some practical tips and resources to help cultivate emotional wellness during the wintertime:

### Stay Connected

Connection is foundational to both recovery and emotional wellness. As the saying goes, *“The opposite of addiction is connection.”* Building meaningful relationships and accessing supportive communities can help you feel grounded, even during stressful times. Here are some accessible ways to stay connected, no matter where you are:

**Attend Support Groups:** Recovery community centers (RCCs) across Maine offer mutual aid meetings, wellness activities, and multiple pathways to recovery, with virtual group options available, too.

**Telephone Recovery Support (TRS):** This free, confidential service involves trained volunteers checking in with you by phone to offer encouragement and support. Call (207) 553-2575 to learn more.

**Recovery Coaches:** Peer recovery coaches provide personalized guidance, helping you set goals, discover resources, and navigate your unique recovery pathway.

**Visit Your Local RCC:** Whether for a meeting or simply a cup of coffee, RCCs provide a welcoming, non-judgmental space for connection and support.

### Nurture Your Emotional Wellness

The unpredictable weather and lessened daylight can mean a change in routine, making it essential to prioritize practices that support your emotional health. Here are some simple ways to stay emotionally balanced:

**Take Time to Relax:** Find moments to recharge through activities like meditation, yoga, or enjoying a warm bath.

**Get Outside:** No matter the weather, time spent in nature can clear your mind and help you feel refreshed.

**Do What You Love:** Activities that bring you joy—like painting, baking, dancing, or watching a favorite show—can uplift your spirits.

**Gratitude as a Tool:** Research highlights the power of gratitude in fostering emotional wellness. A simple exercise like reflecting on three good things that happen each day can reduce stress and increase feelings of calm.

### Practice Self-Compassion

Post-holidays can sometimes amplify feelings of inadequacy, stress, or self-judgment. Practicing self-compassion builds emotional resilience, helping you cope with the challenges of winter:

**Let Go of Judgment:** Speak to yourself as you would to a loved one.

When facing challenges, remind yourself, “This is hard, and I’m doing my best.”

**Accept Imperfection:** Recognize that being human means making mistakes. Sharing these moments with others can build connections and reduce isolation.

**Pause and Reflect:** Create space between a stimulus and your response. This practice can help you choose thoughtful, intentional actions that align with your recovery goals.

**Practice Affirmations:** Offer yourself kind words such as, “I love myself for who I am,” “I am enough,” or “I allow myself to learn from experiences.”

The winter season is an opportunity to practice emotional resilience, self-compassion, and connection. By staying proactive and leaning on available resources, you can not only maintain your recovery but strengthen your emotional wellness. We know that even when surrounded by loving friends and family, moments of struggle can arise, so reach out for help when you need it – there is an entire recovery community in Maine that supports you. At Portland Recovery Community Center and RCCs across Maine, you are never alone in your journey. Let’s embrace the power of connection, self-care, and gratitude to thrive together.

– SPONSORED CONTENT –



# Pepper Pong

## How Shark Tank's Biggest Product is Changing Lives On and Off the Table

**T**om Filippini has always loved paddle sports. Growing up in Chicago, he spent hours playing ping pong with family and friends. During college, his love for the game turned into long beer pong matches. But eventually, drinking became a bigger part of his life, leading to struggles with alcohol as an adult.

By 2016, Tom's addiction had reached a breaking point. Living in Denver with his wife and kids, he realized he needed help. That year, he made the life-changing decision to get sober. "Getting sober wasn't just about quitting alcohol," Tom says. "It was about reclaiming my ability to dream, create, and truly live."

Tom, an entrepreneur at heart, found that sobriety opened new doors. He began to focus on an idea that had been in his mind for years: creating a game anyone could play anywhere. That idea became **Pepper Pong**—a fun, portable paddle sport



that mixes the best parts of ping pong and pickleball.

Pepper Pong is different from regular ping pong. It uses a foldable net, larger paddles called "mullets," and three unique pepper-shaped balls designed for different skill levels. It can be played on any flat surface, like a kitchen counter or a picnic table, making it perfect for tailgating, camping, or even playing on the hood of a car. Tom says, "I wanted a game that everyone could enjoy, no matter where they are."

For Tom, Pepper Pong is more than just a game—it's a way to share his recovery story and inspire others. He has committed to donating Pepper Pong sets to recovery facilities and treatment centers across the country. "During my recovery, ping pong helped me fill the hours I would've spent drinking," Tom explains. "I hope Pepper Pong can do the same for someone else."

In late 2024, Pepper Pong debuted on **Shark Tank**, making one of the biggest launches in the show's history. Within four days, Tom's team sold over 10,000 sets. The rush of orders was so overwhelming that family and friends had to pitch in at



the warehouse to help pack boxes. "It was a team effort," Tom says, "and it reminded me of the power of community."

But for Tom, the biggest win isn't about sales. It's about the connections his story has sparked. "I've received emails from people saying Pepper Pong has inspired them. It's not just about the game—it's about creating joy and connection."

Since his Shark Tank debut, Tom has received over 1,500 emails from viewers moved by his journey. Many of them aren't even interested in games but bought Pepper Pong to support his mission. "The response has been incredible," he says. "It reminds me why I started this."

As Tom looks ahead, he hopes Pepper Pong will continue to grow—not just as a popular game, but as a way to help people reconnect, create lasting memories, and lead healthier lives. For him, every paddle swung is a small step toward healing, reminding others that recovery is possible and joy is within reach.

Please visit <https://pepperpong.com/> for more information.



# Five Tips to a Better Relationship with Food

In partnership with  
Hannaford Supermarkets

by Allison Stowell

Life can be stressful and overwhelming. During these moments, we may lose sight of how to nourish ourselves. Yet, when we're in tough times, we need a balanced, nutritious diet to sustain us. I recommend focusing on these five tips for maintaining a safe and healthy relationship with food despite life's challenges.

## Assess Your Readiness

You may have BIG diet and nutrition goals, but what are you truly ready to focus on? This is an essential question to ask yourself when life feels overwhelming. Maybe you can focus on drinking enough water throughout the day, adding a vegetable or fruit to every meal, or possibly having only one snack between meals instead of grazing. I strongly recommend setting specific, attainable goals that match who you are today. These steps may not represent your larger, long-term objectives. But they help you focus on your intake and build your confidence for meeting larger goals.

## Keep a Food Log

Improving our relationship with food begins with being truly aware of what we're eating. Keeping a daily food log is the best way to reflect on our day-to-day intake and assess whether we're eating well for our bodies. Record what you ate and the timing. It's also helpful to log how hungry you were before eating

and how full you felt after. Using a scale of 1-10 (1= completely starving, 10= way to full), you can measure if you're waiting too long to eat, as well as if you're overeating by going beyond just "satisfied". Done with focus and attention, logging helps you learn a lot about your eating habits and helps you stay on track with balanced eating.

## Stick to a Routine

When life is very busy or challenging, it's easy to overlook the importance of a regular eating pattern. However, if we skip meals or go for long periods of time without food or hydration we will not have enough energy to get through a long day or manage stress. It may also negatively impact other aspects of our health and wellness. Eating throughout the day doesn't have to be hard, aim for nourishing snacks like apple and peanut butter, cheese and crackers, or sliced veggies and salad dressing. If you tend to forget to drink water, set reminders in your phone. For easy meal planning advice, check out the videos and recipes at [Hannaford.com/dietitians](http://Hannaford.com/dietitians).

## Label Your Barriers

A safer relationship with food begins with identifying and honestly labeling your barriers to success. Do you need more access to food or support? Education? Shopping or cooking skills? When you're honest about the factors that prevent you from maintaining a healthier relationship with food, you will be

able to overcome these challenges and meet your health and wellness goals. (And if it's education you need, the Hannaford Dietitian team has you covered! Check out our FREE classes. Visit [Hannaford.com/dietitians](http://Hannaford.com/dietitians).)

## Identify Emotional Eating

Any time we eat "from the neck up" it's considered emotional eating. This means that the "hunger" cue starts with a thought about food or a desire for a certain flavor or food. Unlike physical hunger, which begins in our stomach and slowly grows until we eat, emotional hunger comes on very fast. Sometimes emotional hunger is paired with a negative emotion, but it may happen if we're tired, tense, stressed, bored or simply feeling "off". When we pause to identify where our hunger cue is coming from, we can reduce the potential for emotional eating. (Note: this is another helpful observation to note in your food log).

Your Hannaford Dietitians are here to help! Our in-store dietitians offer store tours and helpful demonstrations in many of our locations throughout ME, NH, MA, VT and NY. Visit [Hannaford.com/dietitians](http://Hannaford.com/dietitians) for individual schedules.



Allison Stowell MS RD CDN is a dietitian for Hannaford Supermarket. The Hannaford Dietitian team offers free online classes, in-store tours and more for the communities it serves. Visit [Hannaford.com/dietitians](http://Hannaford.com/dietitians).

# Resilience

## The Strength to Bounce Back

by Delvina Miremadi-Baldino

**R**esilience is more than just recovering after tough times—it’s about growing through challenges. The good news? Resilience is a skill anyone can develop with practice.

One critical part of resilience is building strong relationships. When you feel valued, seen, and supported, handling stress becomes easier. Research shows that feeling like you “matter” in your community, workplace, or family is essential for emotional wellness.

### How to Start Building Resilience

- Strengthen connections with loved ones by sharing time and conversations.
- Take small actions to contribute to your community—volunteer, mentor, or join local events.
- Practice self-compassion by acknowledging your efforts and progress.

### Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs): Building Wellness Early

While much attention is given to the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), focusing on Positive Childhood Experiences can create a lasting foundation for wellness. PCEs help children feel safe, supported, and valued—qualities that protect them from stress and foster emotional wellness into adulthood.

Examples of PCEs include:

- Feeling safe and loved at home.



- Having a trusted adult to turn to outside the family.
- Belonging to a supportive school or community group.

You can nurture these experiences by encouraging open communication, participating in shared activities, and supporting programs like after-school clubs and mentoring initiatives.

### Positive Psychology: Tools for Thriving

Positive Psychology focuses on what makes life meaningful and joyful. Its tools, like practicing gratitude and mindfulness, can improve your emotional wellness and resilience.

#### Practical Tips from Positive Psychology

• **Gratitude Journaling:** Write down three things you’re thankful for every day. This simple habit can shift your focus toward positivity.

• **Mindfulness Moments:** Spend a few minutes each day paying attention to your breath or surroundings. It helps reduce stress and increase awareness.

• **Discover Your Strengths:** Reflect on what you do well and how you can use those strengths to create meaning in your life.

Finding purpose—whether in your relationships, work, or hobbies—is

a powerful way to boost emotional health. For those in recovery, purpose can be transformative, offering new motivation and hope.

### Putting It All Together

Building emotional wellness is a journey, not a destination. By cultivating resilience, nurturing positive experiences, and using tools from Positive Psychology, you can create a life filled with joy and strength.

### Ask Yourself

- How can I strengthen my support network today?
- What small action can I take to bring more gratitude or mindfulness into my life?
- How can I help others feel valued and connected?

Remember, emotional wellness isn’t something you achieve alone. It grows through connection, shared experiences, and the support of your community.

Together, we can create a world where emotional health is accessible to all.



*Delvina Miremadi-Baldino is the Executive Director of Maine Resilience Building Network. She is a Certified Positive Psychology Practitioner, a Certified Coach, and a passionate advocate for mental health. Delvina is dedicated to integrating resilience and health equity into the very fabric of Maine’s communities.*

# HELPING A LOVED ONE DEALING WITH MENTAL AND/OR SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS

You may suspect or discover your loved one is dealing with a mental illness, drinking too much, or using drugs. As a family member, you can play a central role in getting them the help they need.

## REMEMBER MENTAL AND SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS ARE TREATABLE

People can, and do, recover. Family support can make all the difference. For more information, visit [www.SAMHSA.gov/families](http://www.SAMHSA.gov/families).

## TALK TO YOUR LOVED ONE

Express your concern and tell them that you're there to help. Create a judgement-free and loving environment to foster conversation and openness.

## SEEK SUPPORT

If you or a loved one needs help, call **1-800-662-HELP (4357)** for free and confidential information and treatment referral.

## BE OPEN

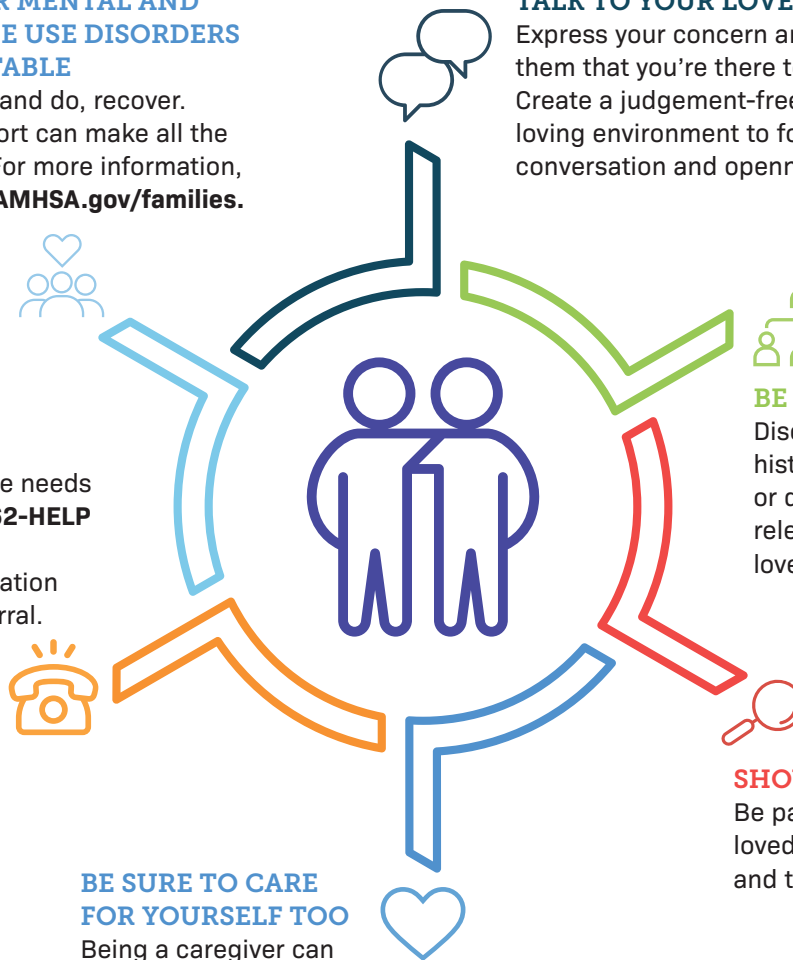
Discuss your family history of mental illness or drug and alcohol use, if relevant. It may help your loved one feel less alone.

## BE SURE TO CARE FOR YOURSELF TOO

Being a caregiver can be highly stressful and emotionally draining.

## SHOW COMPASSION

Be patient as you help your loved one locate resources and treatment services.



Resource pages  
sponsored by:



## FREE 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.*

### MUTUAL AID PROGRAMS

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**Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACA)** is a 12-step program of men and women who grew up in alcoholic or otherwise dysfunctional homes. The ACA program was founded on the belief that family dysfunction is a disease that affected us as children and affects us as adults. [adultchildren.org](http://adultchildren.org)

**Al-Anon** is a 12-step program for people whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking. By sharing common experiences and applying the Al-Anon principles, families and friends of alcoholics can bring positive changes to their individual situations, whether or not the alcoholic admits the existence of a drinking problem or seeks help. [al-anon.org](http://al-anon.org)

**Alcoholics Anonymous** is a 12-step program and fellowship of people who come together to solve their drinking problem. It doesn't cost anything to attend A.A. meetings. There are no age or education requirements to participate. Membership is open to anyone who wants to do something about their drinking problem. [aa.org](http://aa.org)

**Cocaine Anonymous** is a 12-step program of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others recover from their addiction. [ca.org](http://ca.org)

**Codependents Anonymous (CoDA)** is a 12-step program of people whose common purpose is to develop healthy and loving relationships. [CoDA.org](http://CoDA.org)

**Drug Addicts Anonymous** is a 12-step program of men and women who have recovered from addiction and are committed to helping those who still suffer. We have recovered by using the twelve steps as outlined in the book of Alcoholics Anonymous. [daausa.org](http://daausa.org)

**Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous (FA)** is a program based on the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). It is designed for individuals who have problems with food such as overeating, undereating, food addiction, purging, restricting, or anyone who is obsessed with food, weight, or dieting. [foodaddicts.org](http://foodaddicts.org)

**Gam-Anon** is a 12-step program of men and women who have been affected by the gambling problem of another. [gam-anon.org](http://gam-anon.org)

**Gamblers Anonymous** is a 12-step program of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from a gambling problem. [gamblersanonymous.org](http://gamblersanonymous.org)

**LifeRing Secular Recovery** is a secular, non-profit organization providing peer-run addiction recovery groups. The organization provides support and assistance to people seeking to recover from alcohol and drug addiction, and also assists partners, family members and friends of addicts or alcoholics.  
[lifering.org](http://lifering.org)

**Millati Islami** is a fellowship of men and women, joined together on the Path of Peace. Following Millati Islami's 12 Steps to Recovery, members look to Allah (G-D) to guide us on Millati Islami (the Path of Peace). While recovering, we strive to become rightly guided Muslims, submitting our will and services to Allah.  
[millatiislami.org](http://millatiislami.org)

**Nar-Anon Family Groups** is primarily for those who know or have known a feeling of desperation concerning someone's addiction problem.  
[nar-anon.org](http://nar-anon.org)

**Narcotics Anonymous (NA)** is a 12-step program of people for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. This is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. We suggest that you keep an open mind and give yourself a break. [na.org](http://na.org)

**Nicotine Anonymous® ("NicA")** is a 12-step program of people helping each other to live lives free of nicotine.  
[nicotine-anonymous.uk](http://nicotine-anonymous.uk)

**Overeaters Anonymous** is a community of people who through shared experience, strength and hope are recovering from unhealthy relationships with food and body image. [oa.org](http://oa.org)

**Recovery Dharma** uses Buddhist principles and practices to recover from addiction.  
[RecoveryDharma.org](http://RecoveryDharma.org)

**SMART Recovery** is an abstinence-oriented program for individuals with addictive problems. Our self-empowering, free mutual support meetings focus on ideas and techniques to help you change your life from one that is self-destructive and unhappy to one that is constructive and satisfying. [smartrecovery.org](http://smartrecovery.org)

**Wellbriety** — White Bison offers sobriety, recovery, addictions prevention, and wellness/Wellbriety learning resources to the Native American/Alaska Native community nationwide. [wellbriety.com](http://wellbriety.com)

**Women for Sobriety** is based on a new life program of positivity that encourages emotional and spiritual growth. It is run by women in small mutual aid groups held in hospitals, clinics, treatment facilities, women centers, and wherever women with alcoholism are being treated. [womenforsobriety.org](http://womenforsobriety.org)

**Workaholics Anonymous** is a 12-step program for individuals to share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problems and help others to recover from workaholism. [workaholics-anonymous.org](http://workaholics-anonymous.org)

## FIND RECOVERY ONLINE

**319 AA Group** — We are a group of alcoholics working together to get and stay sober. We are doctors, custodians, mothers, fathers, children, and everyone in between living our lives one day at a time. Everyone who has a desire to stop drinking is welcome to become a member of our family as we trudge the road of happy destiny. [319aagroup.org](http://319aagroup.org)

**IN THE ROOMS** — Through live meetings, discussion groups, and all the other tools In the Rooms has to offer, people from around the world connect with one another and help each other along their recovery journeys.  
[intherooms.com/home](http://intherooms.com/home)

**Reddit Recovery** — A place for Redditors in recovery to hang out, share experiences, and support each other. They discuss the various ways to achieve and maintain a life free from active addiction. Everyone is welcome. [reddit.com/r/REDDITORSINRECOVERY](http://reddit.com/r/REDDITORSINRECOVERY)

**SHE RECOVERS Foundation** is a global grassroots movement currently consisting of more than 325,000 women in or seeking recovery from substance use disorders, other behavioral health issues and/or life challenges. All efforts are designed to end the stigma and shame of "being in recovery" so that more women can heal and grow. [sherecovers.org](http://sherecovers.org)

# STATEWIDE FREE RESOURCES

## CRISIS HOTLINES

### Maine Coalition for Domestic Violence Support

866-834-4357

Statewide information, crisis counseling, emotional support and advocacy.

### Maine Crisis Hotline

Maine Behavioral Health  
Dial 988 (or 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

800-559-2927

Provides individualized advocacy for all survivors of domestic abuse, violence, sex trafficking, and sexual exploitation in Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford Counties.

### Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault

800-871-7741

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

## 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

### 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.

### Peer Support Line

50 Moody St Saco

866-771-9276

Confidential telephone support services for non-crisis situations.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### 211-Maine

Dial 211

With hundreds of hotlines and helplines and thousands of programs offering all types of services in Maine, you may need help figuring out where to go. 211 offers confidential information and referral services connecting people to various services in Maine. Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



### 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](http://www.maineaccesspoints.org)

### 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.

### Spiritual Care Services of Maine

207-261-5200

Stress, anxiety, and crisis management support for all people of any faith or tradition, or no faith or tradition.

[www.scsmaine.org](http://www.scsmaine.org)

# RECOVERY CENTERS

*Recovery centers are located in the communities they serve. All of the services are FREE and everyone is welcome. They provide non-clinical support, and services vary by center. Examples of services include peer recovery coaching, telephone recovery support, skill-building workshops, and wellness and other social activities. Stop in and visit your local center.*

### Aroostook Recovery Center of Hope

106 Main Street, Houlton

207-254-2213

### ARRC Augusta Recovery Reentry Center

2 Bangor Street, Suite 2, Augusta

207-226-3438

### Bangor Area Recovery Network

142 Center Street, Brewer

207-561-9444

### Bath Recovery Community Center

15 Vine Street, Bath

207-389-4937 and 207-389-4936

### Beacon House Peer and Recovery Center

3 Canal Street, Rumford

207-418-0079 / 207-369-0868

### Coastal Recovery Community Center

11 White Street, Rockland

207-691-3697

### commonsplace

103 India Street, Portland

### DownEast Recovery Support Center

311 Main Street, Calais

207-259-6238

### Down East Recovery Support Center

11 Free Street, Machias

207-259-6238

### Harvest Inn Peer Center

43 Hatch Drive, Caribou

207-492-1386

### The Hills Recovery Center

15 Tannery Street, Norway

207-744-2424

### INSPIRE Recovery Center

24 Church Street, Ellsworth

207-412-2288

### Lakes Region Recovery Center

2 Elm St, Bridgton, ME 04009

207-803-8707

### Larry Labonte Recovery Center

412 Waldo Street, Rumford

207-418-4983

### LINC Center

38 Memorial Drive, Augusta

207-530-0391 / 207-430-4001

### Lincoln County Recovery Community Center

3 Hall Street, Newcastle

207-565-6374

[commonsplacemaine.org](http://commonsplacemaine.org)

### Pir2Peer Recovery Center

2323 Medway Road, Millinocket

207-447-9500

### Portland Community Center

103 India Street, Portland

207-773-1956, [keith@amistadmaine.org](mailto:keith@amistadmaine.org)

### Portland Recovery Community Center

102 Bishop Street, Portland

207-553-2575

### Roads to Recovery Community Center

1 Water Street, Caribou

207-493-1278

### Rockland Peer Support Center

12 Union Street, Rockland

207-274-3671 or 207-701-4417

### Save a Life Recovery Resource Center

19 VFW Street, Lincoln

207-403-9100

### Together Place Peer Run Recovery Center

2 Second Street, Bangor

207-355-1894 or 207-941-2935

### Valley Peer Run Recovery Center

272 Main Street, Suite 101, Madawaska

207-728-4806 / 207-316-7375

### Wabanaki Health & Wellness Center

157 Park Street, Suite 5, Bangor

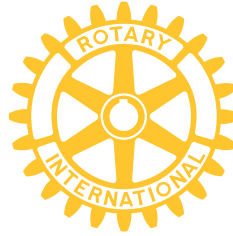
207-951-7526

Peer / Case Management: 207-951-7536

Recovery Center: 207-631-1536

# Rotary

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or reach out to **Bob MacKenzie** ([rfmdistrict7780@yahoo.com](mailto:rfmdistrict7780@yahoo.com))

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