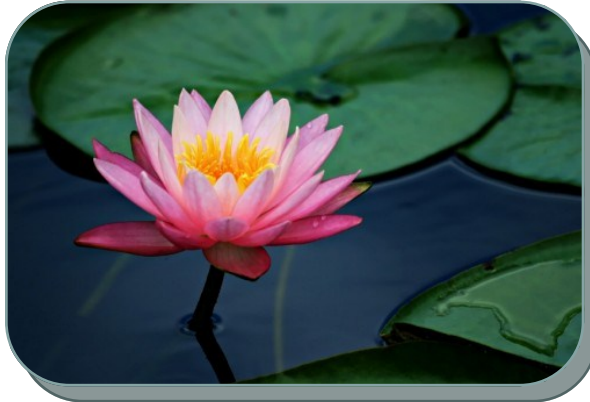


Living Proof Recovery Journal

Written for us, by us...



A Message From the Director

"We are each on our own journey. Each of us is on our very own adventure; encountering all kinds of challenges, and the choices we make on that adventure will shape us as we go; these choices will stretch us, test us and push us to our limit; and our adventure will make us stronger than we ever knew we could be."

-Aamnah Akram

As Director of Center For Family Services Living Proof Recovery Center I would like to extend a warm welcome to new staff and members. I would like to welcome you on a journey filled with strength and hope.

John Thompson, Director

As one door is closed in your life, a new one opens before you. Pause briefly at this threshold and know that what you are leaving behind is for the best. Approach this new door with great confidence in your heart, for you have so much to offer. Open each new door with trust, holding your hopes and dreams very near...knowing that the world is waiting for the goodness and the love you carry with you.

--M.E. Miro

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Spring 2013**

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A Member's Story

I grew up afraid of my own shadow. Everyone and everything scared me. As a child, I lost my mother at the young age of four. Immediately after that, my uncle started sexually abusing me, and the abuse continued for many years. I was living a life made of fear and insecurity. Naturally, when I found drugs and alcohol, I was off on a path that eventually led me to my bottom. I am not into sharing war stories, but I will briefly share what my life was like.

I found drugs and alcohol at the age of fifteen. For many years I used massive quantities of both. I went to school high every day and was in a blackout all through college. I never went to class and was barely getting by. It took me five years to graduate. After graduation, I went into my family's business and became a buyer in the women's clothing store. I loved working in retail and found that the job gave me confidence. Following this, I went to New York City to design handbags. I was working in a very social business and alcohol was around much of the time. Whether the company was hosting fancy dinners or I was traveling overseas for sales, alcohol and drugs were always available.

I left my job in NYC and got pregnant. I took pills in the beginning of my pregnancy and then stopped. After my son was born, I only drank on the weekend, but every time I drank it was to blackout. I was on a mission to get bombed each time I drank or took drugs. When my son turned four, my alcoholism and addiction started taking me down even lower. I didn't have a sober minute. I would try everyday on my own to stop. I remember waking up each morning and thinking that I can drink and drug whatever I want today, because when I wake up tomorrow I'll stop. I told myself this for five years. I look at it like I tried 1,825 times to get clean and sober on my own.

One night my husband was out of town, and I lit about fifty candles in my house. I proceeded to pass out on the couch. My nine-year-old son tried to wake me up. He kept blowing a whoopee cushion in my ear, but I wasn't waking up. Hours later and by the grace of God, I woke up. I'm so thankful that the house didn't burn down. The next day, I decided to ask for help for my alcoholism and addiction.

I checked into a detox center and stayed there for five days, but the day that I was released I started taking pills again. I was back in detox six weeks later. This time after detox, I went straight to rehab and did a twenty-eight day program. When I came home from rehab, I still wasn't convinced that I wanted to stay sober. Regardless of my uncertainty, I kept going to meetings and didn't pick up alcohol or drugs. I went to the meetings until I actually enjoyed going! I was in the rooms of AA for fifteen months, and then I relapsed. I didn't tell anyone for four days and it was the worst four days of my life. I knew what would happen if I kept using, and I knew I had the option to go back to AA, so I finally decided to tell my sponsor and get honest about my sobriety and my life. In retrospect, I know where I went wrong. I had no relationship with a higher power, and I never told anyone how I actually felt about anything. I appeared to be doing good on the outside, but I was really hurting on the inside.

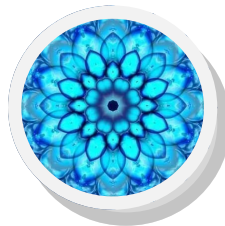
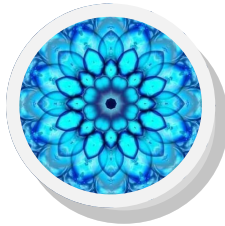
When I came back to the rooms of AA on July 11, 2003, I was desperate. I worked the steps to the best of my ability. Slowly but surely a higher power entered my life. I currently have a sponsor with whom I am honest, and I do a lot of service at my home group. I sponsor people today who help me more than I help them. I have a god in my life who watches over me.

Everyday I wake up feeling calm and that is one of the biggest gifts of all. I never laughed in my later years of addiction, but today I laugh all the time. I have repaired my relationship with my husband and son. They both continue to support me in all that I do. I have to thank AA for giving me a second chance at a beautiful life.

Questions to Ask Ourselves About the Traditions

TRADITION 3

1. Do I keep in mind that the only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking?
2. Do I judge people who are new to the program as being less than myself?
3. Am I open to learning new things?
4. Do I embrace diversity, or do I let it interfere with carrying the message of recovery?
5. Do I practice the principles of recovery in all my endeavors?
6. Do I help others when I have the opportunity?



DON'T QUIT

When things go wrong as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems uphill,
When the funds are low, and the debts are high,
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit----
Rest if you must, but don't you quit.



WHAT'S GOING ON AT THE RECOVERY CENTER

- ◆ Narcotics Anonymous Meetings
- ◆ Gamblers Anonymous Meetings
- ◆ Eating Disorders Meetings
- ◆ Anger Management Workshops
- ◆ Employment Workshops
- ◆ Resume Building
- ◆ Recovery Movies
- ◆ Wrap Sessions
- ◆ Social Events
- ◆ Peer Mentoring
- ◆ Fellowship

Check out our calendar for more information!



Signs and Symptoms of a Compulsive Gambler

- Preoccupation with thoughts about gambling
- Asking for larger amounts of money or gambling more frequently
- Personality changes, such as irritability, restlessness and withdrawal
- Alienation from family and friends
- Inability to cut back or stop gambling
- Lying to friends and family about how much you gamble
- Borrowing to relieve a desperate financial situation caused by your gambling
- Thinking about or committing an illegal act to finance your gambling
- Suicidal thoughts

800-GAMBLER HELP-LINE OR WWW.800GAMBLER.ORG

CHECK POINTS FOR DAILY INVENTORY

- Did I start my day by connecting with a higher power of my understanding?
- Did I express my gratitude and ask for guidance and compassion?
- Did I ask for another day clean and sober?
- Did I try to be pleasant to everyone? (Without being a people-pleaser)
- Did I go out of my way to be kind or do a good deed for someone? (Without being an enabler)
- Did I work out any feelings of resentment?
- Did I resist self-pity?
- Was I genuine?
- Did I resist the temptation to gossip or criticize?
- Did I have some form of contact with other people in recovery today?
- Did I renew my conscious contact with my higher power during the day?
- Did I have some quiet time or a meditation break?
- Will I close the day in gratitude?



FREEDOM

Coming alive again with a sense of self-dignity and becoming connected with a sponsor will prepare us for the next stage. Our immaturity has forced us to spend our lives attracting outside power to feel good inside. Selling ourselves for a smile was slavery. Good feelings do not come from people, places, or things but from the inside. Reclaiming personal power comes by first admitting powerlessness over others. We all need to take responsibility for our own self-worth and dignity. Self-worth does not depend upon what others say or do, but instead on how a person reacts to what others say or do. There are choices about the way to react. Reacting with fear, anger, or resentment tends to make a person feel worthless. Accepting the fact that everyone is not going to agree with us, and perhaps not even like us, is reality.

--Hazelden



**Have you been in recovery for at least a year
and want to give back?**

Recovery coaching could be the perfect opportunity!

Recovery Coaches facilitate group sessions at the Recovery Center and link the newly recovered person to the recovering community, serving as a personal guide and mentor.

What is a Recovery Coach?

Recovery coaches are not licensed therapists or counselors or credentialed experts. Recovery coaches are personally experienced in recovery, having either gone through it themselves or been close to someone who has.

How Do Recovery Coaches Help Support Recovery?

Recovery Coaches help clients identify and remove the personal and environmental barriers to recovery and increase the quality and quantity of “recovery capital” – the internal and external resources that are shown to play a major role in successfully initiating and sustaining recovery, such as life skills, knowledge, stable housing, health insurance, family support and linkage to the community, among others. The Recovery Coach’s job is to understand the people they are helping, hold them accountable to the goals they set, and act as advocates. Coaches also link the newly recovering person to the recovering community and serve as a personal guide and mentor in the management of personal and family recovery.

How is a Recovery Coach Different from a Sponsor?

Unlike traditional 12-step sponsors, recovery coaches support a wide variety of recovery paths and focus more on the challenges, barriers and opportunities in the person’s recovery environment, rather than on inter- and intrapersonal issues.

Recovery Coach Training

- 1) Components of recovery and defining the role of the recovery coach
- 2) Identifying and understanding the various pathways to recovery
- 3) Building communication skills, active listening, telling one’s story, improving relationships, motivational interviewing
- 4) Providing knowledge of community resources and programs offering a range of life skills support
- 5) Developing an individualized recovery plan;
- 6) Understanding cultural competence and common spiritual themes

Other volunteer opportunities are also available!

What Recovery Meetings Do Not Do:

AA does not:

- ◆ Keep membership records or case histories, engage in or support research,
- ◆ Join councils or social agencies (although AA members groups and service offices frequently cooperate with them),
- ◆ Follow up or try to control its members,
- ◆ Make medical or psychiatric prognoses or dispense medicines or psychiatric advice,
- ◆ Provide drying out or nursing services,
- ◆ Provide housing, food, clothing, jobs, or other welfare or social services...
- ◆ Provide domestic or vocational counseling...
- ◆ Provide letters of reference to parole boards, lawyers, court officials,

WHAT IS ABA?

Anorexics and Bulimics Anonymous is a 12 Step Fellowship and Program of Recovery for people with eating disorders. It was founded in 1993 in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. Following the publication in 2002 of its textbook of recovery (*Anorexics and Bulimics Anonymous: The fellowship Details Its Program of Recovery for Anorexic and Bulimia*) ABA groups began meeting all over the world. At ABA we support one another to recover from eating disorders. Each member shares out of his/her personal experience, strength, and hope.



When we avoid making a decision, we make a decision: We give away our decision-making power, and others will make decisions for us. Or we let circumstances determine what will or will not happen.



How to Reach Us

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108 Somerdale Road, 2nd Fl.
Voorhees, NJ 08043
Phone: 855-967-3268
(855.yo.recover)
Fax: 856-216-7136
Email: recoverycenter@centerffs.org

Hours of Operation:
Monday: 10 AM – 5 PM
Tuesday– Thursday: 10 AM – 8:30 PM
Friday: 10 AM - 5 PM
Saturday & Sunday: 12 PM - 5 PM

www.centerffs.org



**Special thanks to our volunteers for
the content of this newsletter!**