

# RECOVERY

# Zone

FIGHT ADDICTION  
FUEL RECOVERY

## RECOVERY PATRIOT

# BRANDON MITCHELL

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feature articles

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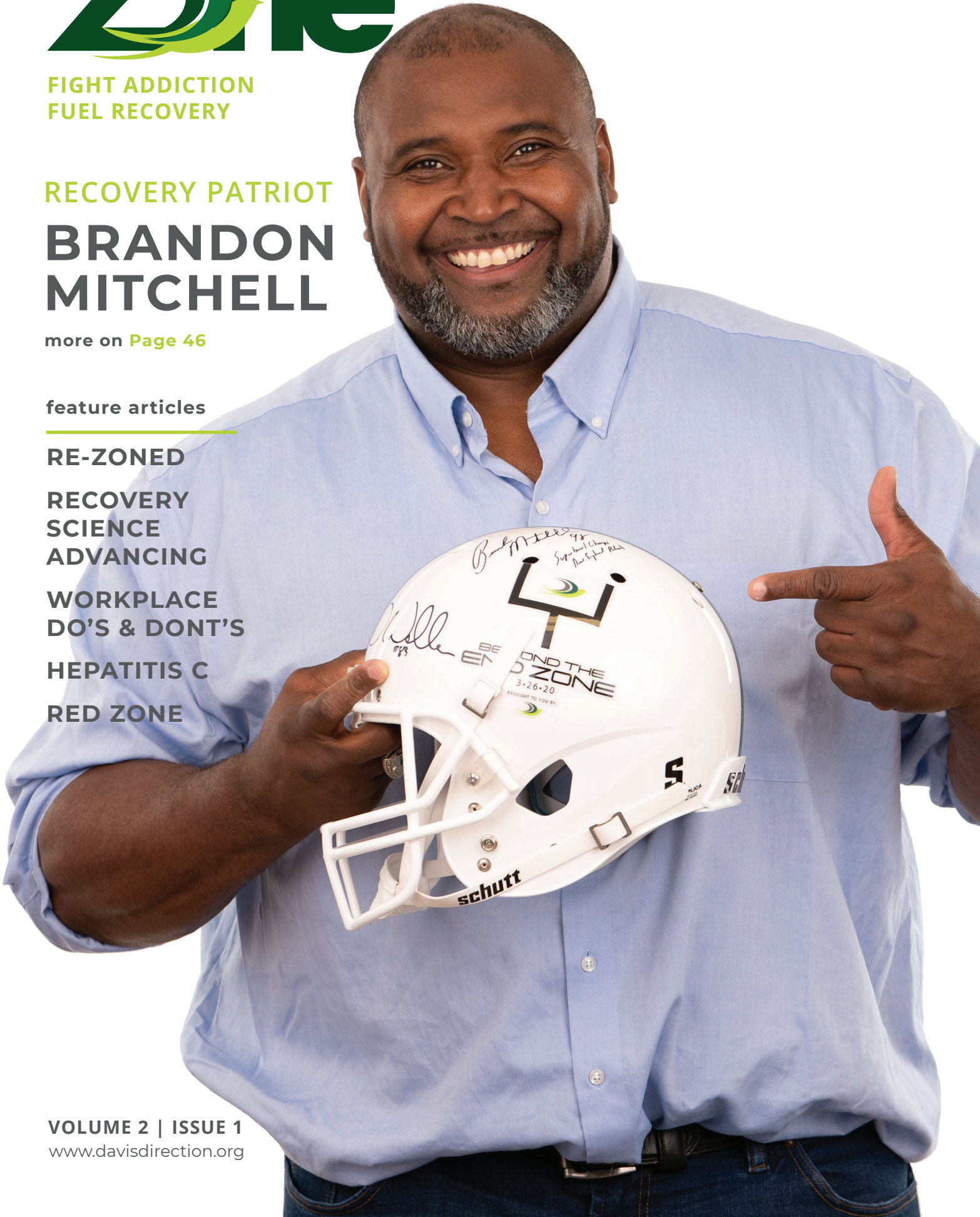
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RECOVERY  
SCIENCE  
ADVANCING

WORKPLACE  
DO'S & DONT'S

HEPATITIS C

RED ZONE



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Kevin Harry Photography

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# GREETINGS!

## LETTER *from the* PUBLISHER/ EDITOR

Change is Inevitable! However, I do believe it usually comes in smaller doses than we have witnessed over the past couple of years. Some changes cause major problems and then other changes bring about an abundance of solutions. We grow through change if we allow ourselves to do so, but too often we resist, and fail to see the greater outcomes.

Before the pandemic, the Davis Direction Foundation was hosting a National Recovery Conference called "Building Communities of Recovery." We were planning for our 3rd annual conference, when the nation was shut down and all activities were canceled. We were very successful in obtaining amazing speakers, with a national presence, and we brought information to the forefront that was truly cutting edge.

**We were able to establish relationships with people throughout the United States who had a vested interest in Recovery from Substance Use Disorder. We highlighted prevention, education, harm reduction, advocacy and of course Recovery. Since Covid-19, we have continued to provide great information, but wanted to reach more of a national audience. That is exactly how our RECOVERY ZONE magazine was born!**

Our first issue was released in March of 2021, and we were able to publish three issues in Volume 1. Our first issue in Volume 2 is now available and is equally as amazing as each prior issue, maybe even more so as we make changes to address the lessons we have learned over time. Thank you to those of you who have been along for the ride since Volume 1 Issue 1, highlighting Recovery and NFL SuperSTAR Darren Waller.



For those of you who may be reading your first issue, we're glad we found you and we hope you will remain a loyal reader.

If you have ideas, comments, or even complaints, please reach out to me at [Missy@davisdirection.com](mailto:Missy@davisdirection.com) and share your thoughts. This magazine is dedicated to the 25 million+ people in Recovery in the United States and those who are seeking to find a way to begin the Recovery Lifestyle. Remember, Recovery is a journey, NOT a destination.

Godspeed on the Journey! ❤️

#FightAddictionFuelRecovery,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Missy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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*The opinions expressed by columnists are their own and do not necessarily represent the views of Recovery Zone.*

# SHARING services

BY: MICHAEL O'BRIEN



Following Hurricane Florence in September of 2018, our founder, Mike O'Brien felt the need to provide any assistance he could in response to this disaster. He loaded up what supplies he could and drove to Eastern North Carolina. 8 days later he returned to Kennesaw with very significant life experience and a deep felt need to continue to serve.

With that, the Community Incident Response Foundation was formed. CIRF is a 501C.3 non-profit that focuses on responding to the needs of communities following various incidents or disasters.

**Our primary goal is to have the ability, equipment and resources to respond to incidents quickly with the following services: provide meals, mobile laundry, mobile bath and shower and communications.**



Being a Non-Profit, funding for these equipment and resource needs is entirely donation based. All donations are welcome and we have various ways of recognizing and advertising for these donations.

Though disaster relief is the core mission of CIRF, the Covid-19 pandemic brought a new challenge to serving those in need. Via networking with various local organizations, we were able to continue utilizing our resources and equipment for needs in our immediate community including Cobb School system, various homeless events, Cobb EMS training events and others.

Now that our collective "bubbles" are enlarging again, we know more about local needs and how we can help, than had Covid-19 not raised its ugly head. We continue to use our resources to help with daily needs of showers and laundry services utilizing our Aegis Mobile Laundry Truck and our Superior Plumbing Shower Trailer.

# Save the Date!



**The Davis Direction Foundation  
2022 Events**

**Fight Addiction & Fuel Recovery**

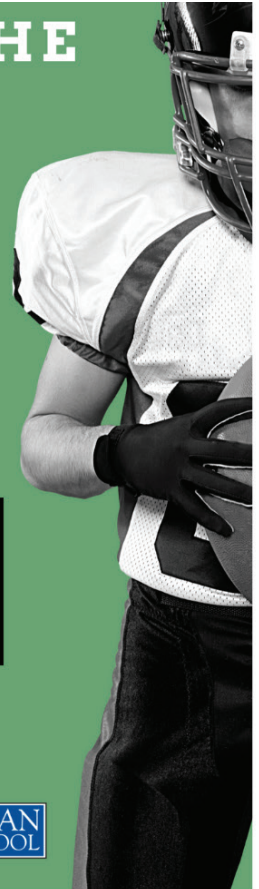
## BEYOND THE ENDZONE

**JUNE 25, 2022  
10AM - 1PM**

**Fight Addiction...  
Fuel Recovery**

**Mount Paran  
Christian School  
Marietta, Georgia**

The Largest Prevention  
Event in Georgia



THE DAVIS DIRECTION  
FOUNDATION PRESENTS

*And the Winner is...*

GALA & SILENT  
AUCTION

**14 August 2022 | 6pm - 9pm**

Mount Paran Christian School  
Fight Addiction & Fuel Recovery

# The Cardinal's Nest

12th November, 2022  
11am - 1pm

Marietta Country Club

# PAVING THE WAY re-zoned

**BY:** MISSY OWEN, CEO

Shopping for a cause has never been more rewarding than at the Re-Zoned trifecta on Fairground St. in Marietta, GA. We have three beautifully and individually designed stores that raise money to support our mission to “Fight Addiction & Fuel Recovery.” We are putting people in substance use recovery back to work and teaching them job skills that will support an independent lifestyle in any community. From running a cash register, to research and development, back of the house inventory, analytics and optimization for warehouse space... all the way up to information technology and management. People in our organization are learning skills that will take them wherever they would like to go. Our customers receive a top-notch shopping experience in a clean, organized, and well-kept environment that welcomes people from all walks of life and all socioeconomic classes. From your die hard thrifters to your country club clientele who are looking for that perfect gift to offer a friend or family member, one of our three Re-Zoned stores has that perfect treasure just waiting to go home with that special someone.

Why are we sharing about our Thrift Stores and Retail Gift Shop you might ask. The answer is very simple; These three stores are sustaining over half of our yearly operating expenses. We are giving back to our mission and supporting those in Recovery by offering the resources and skills necessary to re-enter society as a contributing citizen. At the Davis Direction Foundation, Inc., we believe in Recovery from Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and we have opened one of the premiere Recovery Support Organizations in the country. Recovery Support Organizations are relatively new throughout the United States, and as such, funding has proven to be a very interesting dilemma. Ryan Hampton, a National Recovery Advocate, and author, as well as a Davis Direction Foundation, Inc., Board Member, recently wrote an article stating that Recovery organizations cannot survive off Bake Sales. He was calling for more funding at the National level, but funding that would go directly to “boots on the ground” organizations, with no strings attached for donors, emails, rights and royalties to proprietary information, and the like, as so many of the state and federal contracts call for. In other words, he was calling for monies to go to communities to support Recovery from Substance Use Disorder to be spent in the ways that the individual communities could meet the unique needs of their people. WHAT A CONCEPT! You can read Ryan’s article here: <https://ryanhampson.org/recovery-community-organizations-need-more-than-bake-sales-to-help-people-survive-addiction/>

Here at Re-Zoned, we have turned our mission into a funding stream, a very lucrative one I might add. Have you ever thought about creating a sustainability option for your own Recovery organization? It accomplishes three VERY important tasks. First and foremost, it provides funding for the organization; secondly, it gives the program participants an avenue for re-entry; and last but certainly not least, it reduces the stigma of substance use disorder (SUD) by educating the community regarding the mission and gives them the opportunity to build relationships with our wonderful employees while they encourage them along their journey of Recovery.

Finding funding for Recovery Support Organizations, or RSO’s, is not as easy as one might think. Typically RSO’s are last on the list to receive funding federally and through the state. We are left to our own vices to find the funding and pray that it is recurring. Too often federal and state grants have multiple page contracts that are to be signed, asking for everything aside from the firstborn. While you may think that is no big deal, RSO’s who take the initiative to do their own

- ORGANIZATION OF THE MONTH -



- ORGANIZATION OF THE MONTH -



research and come up with stellar programs to address their unique communities are demanded to surrender their intellectual property while the state becomes the new owner and receives royalties on it. The contract also allows them access to donors, emails, phone records, and all marketing materials before they are distributed, slowing down the process for disseminating information. So, the obvious answer to fund an organization, was to come up with a process to generate money that would come back to the organization. We decided on a Thrift Store. At first, we were pretty "loosey-goosey" as we put out five-dollar tables and ten-dollar tables, but that even brought in around 50K the first year. The second year, our CFO took the project under his belt and decided to make it a bona-fide retail store. Every item was researched, priced and put into inventory. We installed a Point-of-Sale system that generated inventory reports, pricing reports, and disaggregated that data so that we could make necessary adjustments. We immediately saw the results as we realized a 184% increase in the first year. Creating the business model made all the difference. Each year we forecast based on the previous year and each year we have reached our goals as the community has come to expect great things from our three great stores.

Re-Entry is such an important concept to a person in Recovery. In more cases than not, the person has experienced what is termed "arrested development." This means that at the point when they began their drug use, their social and emotional development stagnated because of the obsession with the drug use. They often felt awkward in ordinary situations that they should have had experience with but did not. They needed help with job readiness skills including interview skills, looking people in the eye when they were speaking, a firm handshake and very basic knowledge that they missed along the way. Our Re-Zoned stores gave them the opportunity to meet and greet customers and learn to have adult conversations. They also learned basic job skills, money and time management. They learned how to show up daily, punch a time clock and be on time. They built a network of recovery support with other team members as they learned to work on a team. They learned loyalty and how to regain trust not only in themselves but also in others.

Opening up public businesses to serve community members is an excellent way to reduce the

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stigma of addiction. Our employees have formed so many relationships with people who just love to shop. One of the things they always tell our customers is that we are a nonprofit fighting addiction and fueling recovery. Each one of our employees is in long term recovery from Substance Use Disorder and they see them functioning as normal, responsible, productive members of society. We have also had people come in with their grown children only to find out they are struggling with addiction, and they almost hit their knees to thank God because they didn't know places like Re-Zoned and THE ZONE existed. They are forever grateful and the "HOPE" of recovery is literally standing before them as a living testament to long term recovery. People can believe in what they see and our employees are second to none! Just go on google and read our reviews and you will see the accolades they get doing their jobs in our community.

At a time when other Thrift Stores were closing and struggling to stay alive, the Re-Zoned Stores prospered. Although not substantiated, the reasons why seem to be quite clear. First we, we serve a higher purpose, serving the Davis Direction Foundation Program Services helping to "Fight Addiction and Fuel Recovery." Secondly, we have an incredible donor base, allowing us to sell goods way beyond the expectations of a traditional thrift store. Thirdly, we put a lot of care, attention to detail, and effort into every single thing we do, from serving the customer, to pricing research, item rejuvenation, work orders for delivery and pick up, furniture wrapping to mitigate any damage, to a real point of sale system. Fourthly, we make good on everything we sell. If an item does not work, we issue a refund or store credit. And last but not least, we train our employees to be ambassadors of the business, offering real life job skills in every single thing we do.

This, my friends, is how we have been able to partly support our own foundation. We have established a service to the community that allows people in Recovery to showcase their talent and abilities. We have been blessed by a wonderful community that believes in what we do. And we have come to the realization that our God is a God of abundance that is able to do immeasurably more than all we could ask or imagine.



# MY FIRST sober date

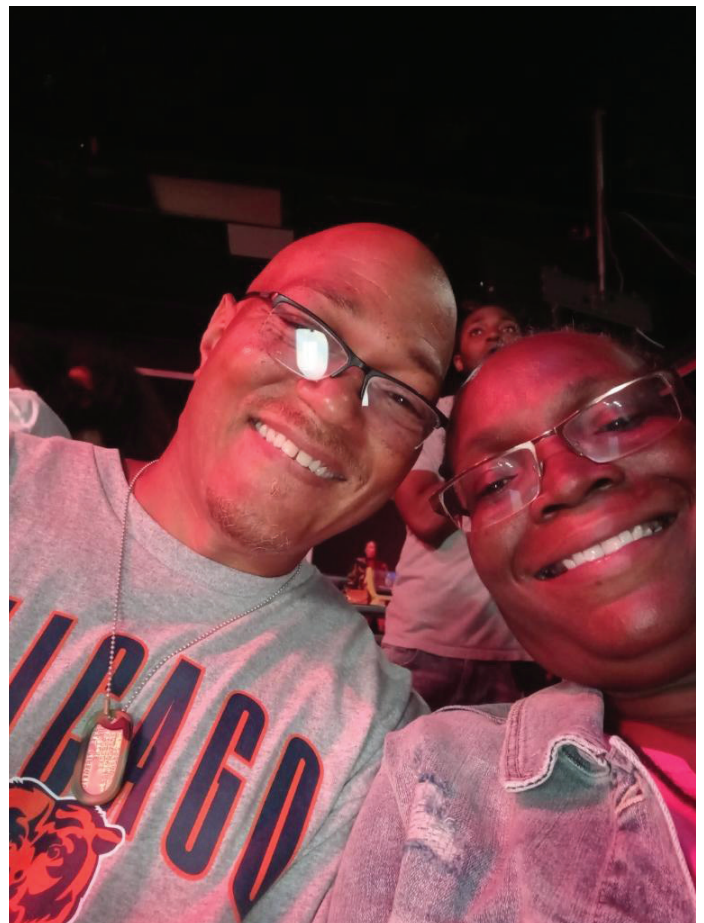
**BY:** KAHMIA AND MEUZETTE WALKER

Kahmia, a Person in Long-term Recovery: Remembering our dates in general, I had to have a drink before every one of them. I felt that I could not have fun unless I had a drink. To me at the time of my alcoholism, it was my security blanket, my "binky" I can say. Knowing the dependency on alcohol was my downfall, bad behavior, unwanted outbursts, and to believe that I was having a good time when my wife clearly was not. The dates that we have now are a completely different side of the coin. We have great communication, eye contact. We show affection in public more. The time that we spend is amazing.

**I am really grateful that this journey of recovery is showing me the person I want to hold on to.**

Going to movies and concerts, eating out in nice places is letting me know that Meuzette my wife trusts me a lot more now, and believes that my journey is a great addition to my lifestyle.

Meuzette, a Recovery Ally: One of our first dates was at Applebee's and although you ordered food, you ordered a double jack with a bud chaser, my least favorite combination. Because of alcohol, an evening that started lovely with great conversation, ended with me upset with you because of your behavior. We went back to Applebee's after sobriety and we laughed, ate good food and drank water. There's been so many great times lately, that it's hard to just name one, for that... I'm thankful to you.



# COUNTDOWN to yum



## NOT YOUR BASIC BURGER

### Ingredients

- 2lb ground beef
- 2/3 cup Heinz 57 sauce
- 1 pkg Dinner Tonight! Burger Seasoning Mix
- 8 hamburger buns
- 8 slices cheddar cheese

### Preparation

1. Mix Together ground beef, 57 sauce and Burger Seasoning Mix. Shape into 8 burger patties.
2. Preheat grill or skillet to medium heat. Place burgers in pan or on the grill. Cook about 8 minutes each side or until internal temperature reaches 160 degrees F.
3. Top burgers with cheese and allow to melt. Add any additional favorite toppers and enjoy!

*Burger Seasoning Mix can be found at ReZoned Gifts & Apparel along with many other Dinner Tonight! Seasoning spices.*

**Enjoy!**

## LEFTOVER BISCUIT BREAD PUDDING

### Ingredients

- 2 cups crumbled leftover biscuits
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 4 cups milk
- 2 eggs
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

### Preparation

1. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees and grease a 13x9 glass baking dish.
2. Layer 1/3 crumbled biscuits and 1/2 raisins in baking dish. Top with 1/3 biscuits, remaining raisins, and remaining biscuits.
3. Mix all other ingredients together, saving 2 tablespoons of the sugar.
4. Pour the liquid over the layered biscuits and sprinkle the remaining sugar over the top.
5. Bake for 1 hour, or until golden brown on top. Serve warm.

# SELF CARE hiking

BY: SARAH MANGOLD

## 10 Reasons Why You Should Take a Hike

- 1 You are IMPORTANT! Taking time for yourself is Self-Care.
- 2 Hiking releases cortisol and lowers your blood pressure which reduces stress.
- 3 You can reduce anxiety because being in nature helps quiet your mind.
- 4 You can improve your balance by challenging yourself on the trail.
- 5 Hiking is a great work out because it strengthens your core and lower body muscles.
- 6 Going on a hike gives you an opportunity for reflection and use of problem solving skills.
- 7 Hiking reduces your risk of heart disease, cholesterol, and helps prevent type 2 diabetes.
- 8 You can improve social connections by meeting new people or hiking with friends.
- 9 Hiking helps you to learn to be present in the moment by being free of distractions.
- 10 Hiking increases the serotonin levels in your brain which makes you feel good.

Participating in outdoor activities such as Hiking can naturally improve your mood, change your outlook, and increase mindfulness. "Everyday environmental conditions impact human health. One mechanism underlying this relationship is the experience of stress." "Heart rate, blood pressure, and self-report measures provide the most convincing evidence that spending time in outdoor environments, particularly those with green space, may reduce the experience of stress, and ultimately improve health." Kondo, Michelle C.; Jacoby, Sara F.; South Eugina C. Does spending time outdoors reduce stress? A review of real-time stress response to outdoors. Health & Place (2018)

Take time to disconnect from the hustle and bustle of everyday life and get reconnected with nature, in other words... Take a Hike!

"Studies using large samples consistently find that more frequent users of digital media are lower in psychological well-being than less frequent users; even data sets used as evidence for weak effects show that twice as many heavy users (vs. light users) are low in well-being." Twenge, Jean M. (2019) Hiking is fun, free, and can be done at any time! Beautiful views and fresh air can be found locally. There are National Parks located all over the nation, visit the link below to find a National Park near you!

<https://www.nationalparks.org>



# RECOVERY SCIENCE advancing

BY: DR. ERICA HOLIDAY



The premise that addiction is more than a character flaw, or a moralistic failing was challenged with brain imaging of substance users and non-users. The field of addiction neuroscience demonstrated time and time again repeated drug use hijacks the brain systems for reward and motivation and learning and memory. This results in altered brain activity, especially when viewing environmental cues associated with drug taking. Preclinical models that use rodents as model organisms allow for investigations at the molecular and cellular level. We now know there is a complex interplay with cell structure and signaling pathways. Deleting specific receptors for chemical messengers in the brain or preventing the phosphorylation (i.e. activation) of certain molecules results in less drug taking and drug seeking behavior in rodents. Translating these findings into application in the clinic has fallen short in reducing drug overdoses, repairing damaged relationships, improving quality of life, and improving recovery services. Why does this disconnect exist?

**After decades now of receiving the message “addiction is a brain disease” why hasn’t the same message been applied to the next phase of the continuum of care when resolving a substance use disorder as “how do we heal the brain?”.**

In my shift from the lab bench and rodents to study active addiction processes to working with individuals and communities to understand the recovery from addiction I have had to shift my own understanding of recovery as a distinct and separate process from the pathways to dependence and addiction. While the field of addiction sciences continues to explore novel druggable targets they fail to hear the message from those they are attempting to serve. When folks discuss their recovery journey with me a common joke I hear is “If a pill could cure addiction, I would take two.” Admittedly this went over my head the first time. As an ally to the recovery community, I now understand it as the fundamental miscommunication between addiction researchers’ binary outcomes, use vs. non-use, and the recovery process of healing the whole person, brain, mind, and social connections.

Another common rebuke I hear from individuals in recovery is that mouse models cannot account for psychological constructs such as stigma, shame, and spirituality. I agree that a mouse cannot articulate shame or sit down with me over a cup of tea to discuss their spiritual journey. However, I do argue that mouse models can provide us with valuable information on brain systems rewired following withdrawal or what we term “forced abstinence”. Measuring recovery as a function of brain changes during these periods can be daunting as we cannot account for all the interpersonal and intrapersonal growth. However, it does provide us with a starting point on how best to heal the brain. For example, we know specific pathways that govern inhibitory control are impaired after compulsive drug use. Exploring ways to improve inhibitory control can reduce risk of relapse and shorten duration to stable recovery. But current emphasis on reducing drug reward through new pharmaceuticals will only take us so far in understanding how to heal the disrupted brain and psyche. It will take the voices of those in recovery, allies, researchers, and service providers to focus the spotlight on healing the brain in advancing recovery science.

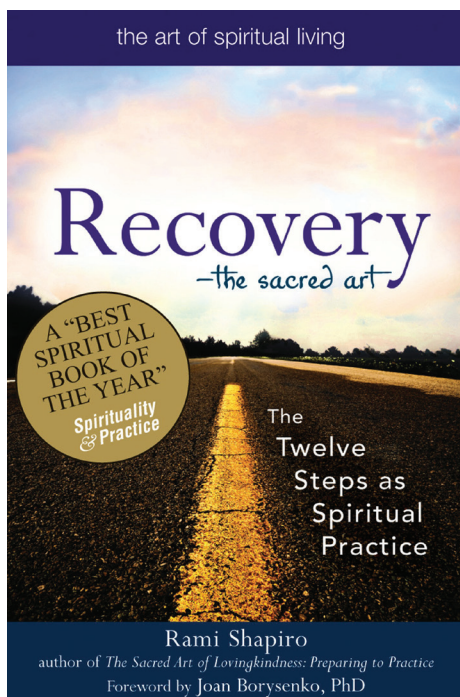
# RENEWING COMMITMENT coping skills

BY: SARAH MANGOLD

The steps I took and the skills I learned got me here, but what will keep me here? Most know that the road to recovery from substance use disorder is not always the easiest, but by learning new life and coping skills it CAN be done.

In my active addiction the only coping and life skills I had were using, lying, and manipulation. It is said "in order to change ONE thing, you must change EVERYTHING" and for me, that statement could not be more true! I had been living in a fantasy world for over half my life, I had no concept of how to take care of myself, yes I worked, but it was for my drug money. I did not know how to be an adult and I was constantly high to avoid my depressing reality. During my early recovery I was focused mainly on not using and learning how to live in the real world. I actually learned how to budget in jail because you could only spend a certain amount on commissary and you could only purchase a certain amount of items on commissary weekly. I discovered that I had a lot to learn about being an adult because I was literally high most of my life, I did not care about anything but the next fix. Because of this I learned a lot of hard lessons coming in to recovery: accountability court does not play games, bills can be expensive and if you don't pay them then your service is shut off, finding affordable, nice housing can be difficult, having a routine is critical, time management can seem impossible, the world does not revolve around me, it is important to take care of myself, service work is rewarding, everyone is NOT my friend, and being in the moment is required for happiness.

Overtime I built a new life, a meaningful life with a purpose surrounded by people I trust. I had the same routine every week and I absolutely loved it... for a time. As great as my routine and program were, I began to rest on my laurels. I remember that I had the thought "I got this", and in the rooms of recovery that is considered by many to be the kiss of death. Thinking I have beaten a cunning, baffling, powerful, and chronic disease is delusional in my opinion, well at that point I was in fact delusional and I had become complacent. The Oxford dictionary defines complacency as a feeling of smug or uncritical satisfaction with oneself or one's achievements. When I got out of jail I was desperate to change my life, a piece of clay ready to be molded into a person in recovery. My piece of clay had become rigid and no longer moldable because I thought I had beaten addiction somehow just because I had some clean time under my belt and learned how to be an adult. It was almost like after a time, I forgot all about all I went through.



I started to notice that I was being complacent and I remembered all the people that came back into the rooms after a relapse, many said "I stopped doing things that kept me sober" or "I put other things before my recovery". I realized what the end result of complacency would be - relapse or death so I took action. I started trying new things, something my sponsor always suggested, like hiking, thrift shopping, just getting out of the house and doing things. It was uncomfortable because I was set in my routine of going home where I felt safe and did not have to worry about the outside world. I even brought back things that I always enjoyed when I was younger like video games. I realized one of the foundation stones of my recovery was developing a routine and I continue with my routine to this day. I simply added new and old things I enjoy to make life more fun. I had already been through the 12 steps so I asked for a suggestion from my sponsor. After all, taking suggestions helped me get sober so continuing to take suggestions would likely produce the same result. She said she was going through the 12 steps a different way, a spiritual way.

I ordered the same book, Recovery-The Sacred Art by Rami Shapiro, and began reading. The book helped me understand myself better and feel more connected to my higher power. A new perspective combined with sober leisure activities made recovery exciting again! I successfully renewed my commitment to recovery in a time of complacency and if I feel complacency coming on again, I know what to do: seek suggestions and try new things.

# PRODIGAL parent

BY: ANONYMOUS

**“Our hope is certain. It is something for the soul to hold on to.” Hebrews 6:19a**

Many years ago, I was standing in an 800-year-old church in Vienna, Austria, and I looked up near the ceiling and noticed a Latin phrase inscribed in stone. I wondered aloud about what the phrase meant and a young man nearby who had knowledge of Latin looked up and said, “those who find me find life.” At the time, it didn’t occur to me that it was part of a Bible verse - Proverbs 8:35a. I thought about the person who was responsible for the inscription, and what their life may have been like.



No doubt, their life experience was much different than mine but after thinking about it there are similarities. That person’s soul needed hope to hold onto just like mine does., Most of us want “life” to be more than just being born, struggling to get by and then one day dying. We want meaning and direction in our steps along the way, and many have a sensation that they are under-living their lives. Everybody’s pretty sure that other people are doing life better.

John Wesley, one of the originators of the Methodist church asked small groups, “how is it with your soul?” So, beyond the social media comparisons and considering the anxiety caused by all the stress in your life, “how is it with your soul?” We have stories in our heads about ourselves that we usually keep quiet.

I believe our faith is developed from our individual stories. Part of telling our story in a spiritual sense is to affirm that there’s a plot to our life. There are aspects that we can look back upon and learn from. It’s not just incident following incident without a particular direction or purpose but things are happening to take you somewhere - on purpose. In short, finding “life” means yes, there is a point to it all. And, thinking through what can be learned from the past and having a future vision based upon core beliefs can bring a sense of peace. Understanding our own stories can provide an eternal perspective and help us see our lives as God does. Our past does not have to define us. God has plans for our good to give us a future and a hope. (Jeremiah 29: 11-13)

Viktor Frankl, who survived the concentration camps during World War II, said the most fundamental aspect of our humanity is our ability to make choices and stand by those choices. He said the last of human freedoms is to “choose one’s own way.” Choose means to decide. Decide literally means to cut off the other alternatives, and this may require courage. Thoughtfully choosing one’s own way and owning it is a game changer. It means transforming ourselves from who we were to who we will become. Most successful people base their identity and internal self-talk on their future, not their past.

I think about my thinking a lot, and to overcome the negative noise in my head, I talk to myself. For example, my internal voice says, you’ll never be able to do that, and I verbalize that Mark 4:39 says God controls the wind and the waves, so if it’s his will for me, he can and will make it happen. Walking along a mountain trail or a seashore, or watching a burning fire are some of my favorite places to think. Beauty comforts, heals, and restores the soul. God does not like to shout - his invitations are more gentle, and we have a choice. It’s helpful to focus on the fact that there is a creator of it all. All of it did not just emerge from an explosion or some evolutionary beginning - because something had to be there in the beginning to get it started. And the Bible says in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. That’s me and you as well, with a design and a purpose.

One of my favorite songs, “Oh My Soul” by Casting Crowns, includes these words: “O my soul, you are not alone. There’s a place where fear has to face the God you know.” I want to know God and have him at the core of my soul.

Love and Blessings, *Dad*

# Re-Zoned Gifts & Apparel



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# BUILDING value

**BY:** MICHAEL OWEN, CFO



The conference call in 1999 started off with me giving a presentation on an analysis of the Cellular Customer Retention Department of a major corporation. Balmy, nervous, and early into my post graduate career, I proceeded with my presentation trying not to get too hung up on the potential questions or outcomes. The analysis I had put together would lead us where it needed to, because in all honesty, I did not even know how it was going to be used.

At the end of my presentation, the Senior Vice President of Finance asked one simple question, "Can you in your own words, confirm the Cellular Customer Retention Program adds additional months to the break even point of cellular customers?" Still nervous about where this was going, "Yes," I calmly stated. The Senior Vice President thanked me and turned attention to the Vice President of Operations and said, "Shut it down." WOW, I thought. All those people I know in that department were effectively going to be told their department was being shut down and I am somewhat responsible.

A nurse can be with a dying patient and know one injection can save the patient's life. Before the injection, the nurse seeks approval from the doctor. In this situation, the nurse carries out the life saving injection, but the doctor, not performing the work, holds the risk. This is how I viewed my work; the Senior Vice President relied upon my work, but in essence carried the risk of shutting down the department, even though I very well could have missed some important pieces of my analysis.

This was a major career milestone, unintentionally, moving me from what I viewed as a Finance Manager with "tasks" to perform, to being an advisor of very complex issues to be solved, thereby ensuring the company was doing everything possible to survive. This mindset helped accelerate my thinking and confidence moving forward. It was not easy because who was I to say things needed to change? Was my work trustworthy? Was I old and seasoned enough to make this kind of huge decision, not only impacting the business, but many lives as well?

I am going to challenge you heading into the new year. How do you view your role as an employee or business owner? Do you work each day to help your manager, owner, and or business survive? Do you work to drive value? Perhaps your manager or employer does not know everything and needs to rely upon your knowledge and skills to make effective decisions for the business to be more successful.

Think about that. When possible, start bringing solutions to your work and meetings instead of problems. You will get noticed quickly as a strategic value add person, more valuable than you were as the person who thought about the job as a mundane checklist of things to get done before the end of the day.

Wishing you all the best in 2022!



➔ Take on a difficult project

➔ Learn something new

➔ Share your insights

➔ Invest in your strengths

➔ Challenge yourself

➔ Network

➔ Demonstrate gratitude

➔ Learn from a mentor

➔ Find someone who is successful in your industry or the industry you hope to work in and learn from them

# WORKPLACE do's & don't

**BY:** MICHELE L. HARRY, VICE PRESIDENT, THE MACALLAN GROUP

As a follow-up from the article in the last issue "Don't Be Intimidated - Interviews", let's do a deeper dive into some reminders about do's and don'ts once you have landed that awesome job!

In the first 60-90 days or so, your employer is evaluating your work performance **AND** your workplace etiquette. Having a strong work ethic goes a long way, but also being kind, polite, collaborative, a team player, and courteous to your coworkers is expected. As a manager myself, I am always looking at how our teams treat each other, this goes beyond just a good morning as you pass in the hallway.

## BELOW ARE SOME TIPS:

- **Do be kind.** If your team member is over-whelmed by their workload or a personal situation, take a moment and ask how you can help. Don't expect a payback or even credit, this is part of showing empathy and acting out of kindness. Acts of kindness become the norm, the spillover effects can multiply fast. When people receive an act of kindness, they pay it forward.



KINDNESS  
begins  
WITH THE  
UNDERSTANDING  
That We All  
struggle

- **Don't get attention for the wrong reason.** Be aware of your surroundings, don't be the noisy neighbor. Whether you are in your office, shared space or breakroom, loud conversations can be distracting to everyone in the area. I was this person at one time! I once had a job where there were a lot of amazing extroverted folks on our team and we were very passionate and very loud. When I changed jobs it was obvious I was the loud one. I literally put a post it note on my phone to remind me to speak softly...
- **Do read the room.** When you are engaging in conversations with your coworkers, you need to remember where you are. At work, you need to choose your words thoughtfully. Although occasional swearing sometimes happens, you have to be careful not to cross the line. Shouting profanities and hurling expletives at people not only makes you look out of control, but it can be a very unsettling experience for those around you. Remember, if you are going to drop that F-bomb, make sure that it won't make you look unprofessional and hold you back in your career.
- **Don't be the office gossip.** The office gossip is the person who seems to know everything about everyone. They have all the juicy details (whether true or not) about all the drama that goes on in the workplace. But engaging in this unprofessional behavior can have a negative impact and could give the impression that you are not trustworthy.
- **Do take initiative.** Taking initiative means looking for ways to contribute to your team, department or organization. Don't be that person who only does what they're told and nothing else. Take action. Figure things out on your own - I love this as a manager, just attempt a task to show that you are willing to give it try, even if it's outside your knowledge base. Managers don't always have time to sit down and make a step by step guide for what you should do next. So take some initiative and show your coworkers and boss that you can be a valuable member of the team.

# DRESS for success

**BY:** KEVIN HARRY, OWNER, KEVIN HARRY PHOTOGRAPHY

Having worked with a few globally recognized companies I have picked up on a thing or two when it comes to dressing the part for your interview.

My general rule of thumb is to dress for the job you want. No company is the same, so having a general idea of the company culture can help tremendously. One tip that could aid you in gaining a better understanding of the company dress code is to view their website. Most companies have an "About Us" page. You should be able to view headshots of their staff to get a better gauge of how they present themselves. Another option would be to scour the company LinkedIn page.

I would recommend when interviewing to dress just a tad bit better than the employees for the role you are going after but try not to go overboard. Company culture may vary drastically between a posh law firm, a digital marketing agency, tech company, or an outdoors focused organization.

Some large companies have many different styles depending on the company.

I previously worked for Turner Broadcasting/Warner Media.

*Recent corporate photo shoot.*



Under their company umbrella they held several different production brands. Each brand held their culture and identity under one roof. In fact these organization would often share the same building!

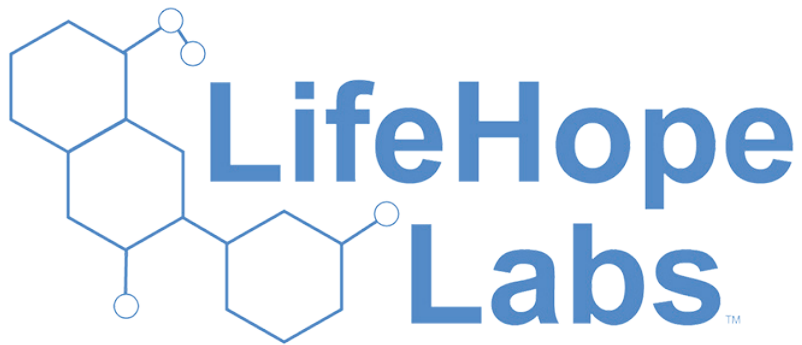
## **BELOW IS A BRIEF EXAMPLE OF WHAT I OBSERVED:**

- CNN - Professional business wear, suit and tie. Very polished and buttoned up
- Adult Swim - Sneakers, vintage tees, dyed hair, and piercings. They love free spirited folks
- Turner Sports - Business casual, khakis, and polos

The workforce culture is steadily changing, so the following suggestions are more gentle guidelines versus rules.

## **MEN AND WOMEN**

- For industries where you are not in a corporate setting, suits may not be the best option as these may not speak to their brand. However, a solid blazer is still a great option to bring as an outfit option. Choose fitted attire as it is most flattering, be sure it's not too big or too small.
- Belts, bracelets, earrings, necklaces, watches, scarfs, pins, watches, and shape-wear. Be sure accessories are simple and not distracting.
- Wear solid colors, avoid busy prints. Loud prints can often be distracting. Keep things simple, aim for solid colors — but don't be afraid to wear layers or integrate different textures that suit your personal style. If your potential employees are focused on your clothing or your jewelry instead of your overall presence they won't be connecting with who you are..
- Bright colors can be great, but go neutral when in doubt. Neutral is always a good idea especially if you are not sure what to wear. A pop of color here and there can accent your style.
- Keep jewelry minimal, unless you're making a statement.
- Keep Hair and Makeup Simple.



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# WHAT'S NEW IN THE LAB

## drug testing

**BY:** DAVID EAGERTON

**ABC's of Drug Screening** - Over the past years, drug screening has become more complex in that there are more drugs that are screened, more sources from the body to screen, and more compounds that can interfere with the screening results. As a result, knowing what to screen and how to interpret the results can be confusing. Understanding the basics of drug screening can help navigate this complex issue.

Samples can be taken from almost any part of the body for the purpose of drug screening. However, the most common samples come from blood, urine, saliva, and hair. Each of these matrices has advantages and disadvantages that will be briefly discussed. Blood is commonly used in both clinical and forensic settings to determine not only the drugs that are present, but also to quantify the amount of drug present. The levels of drugs present in the blood help to determine whether an individual is impaired or if they are taking enough medication to have a clinical effect. Blood is the "Gold Standard" for this; however, it is limited in that it can only help you determine what and how much drugs are present around the time that the blood was collected. Since most drugs actually are cleared from the blood relatively quickly, they can usually only be detected in the blood for a few hours up to approximately 24 hours. It is also rather invasive to collect blood and therefore other sources are often used for the purpose of drug screening.

Urine is less invasive than blood and can be collected in a non-medical facility. Urine also has the advantage in that drugs can typically be detected for up to three days following exposure (there are some exceptions to this). However, drugs that are detected in urine do not necessarily correlate with those that are in the blood at the time of collection and cannot be used, in and of themselves, to determine impairment at a given time. For example, if a person uses cocaine, it can be detected in the blood for up to 12 hours and there is impairment associated with it. However, since the metabolite of cocaine can be detected in urine for up to 3 days, its presence in the urine is not associated with impairment.

More recently saliva assays have been developed to detect drugs. They have the advantage in that saliva collection is less invasive than blood (or arguably urine)

collection and the interpretation is similar to that for blood. However, like blood, it has a relatively short window of detection and is not useful for determining past use.

Hair may be the least invasive and affords the longest window of detection. For a point of clarification, it is often called a "hair follicle" test, but the hair follicle test is generally reserved for DNA analysis and not drug screening. For a drug screen hair test, the hair is cut close to the scalp, not pulled to obtain the follicle. Once in the laboratory, the hair is washed to remove any external contaminants and the region closest to the root (or scalp) is analyzed. The typical window of detection is 1 to 3 months, but can actually go back further if the hair is long enough. Like urine, the drugs identified in the hair do not indicate impairment at the time of collection, but show usage during the detection time frame. Since it takes hair a few days to grow enough to reach the outside of the scalp, the detection time is actually a few days after use to about 3 months after use. There are studies that correlate the level of some drugs in the hair to levels that are typically seen in therapeutic use and those that are seen in abuse, therefore, information about use and abuse can be obtained.

There are kits that are available to screen urine and saliva at the point of care, but screens in the blood or hair usually require analysis within the laboratory. Regardless of the source, all positive screens should be confirmed.



# HEPATITIS C education

BY: SHANNON TILLET CADCII NARCAN TRAINER, CPT



As the Coordinator of HIV and Hep C Education & Prevention for Highland Rivers Behavioral Health, formerly (CobbCSB) Marietta location, our agency provides on-site and community rapid HIV and Hep C testing, pre/post counseling and a warm hand off for linkage to care. Once a rapid finger stick test is administered 1:1 education session and results are ready in 20 min. If linkage is needed it happens during that session.

I see a lot of consumers on site and in the community for services. I always say "I didn't find this career; this career found me." My passion in this area of public health stems from personal life experiences, exposure to addiction in my family/community which also includes HIV and Hep C.

**Let's Talk About Hepatitis C** - Hep C is a disease caused by a virus that infects the liver. A Hep C infection can lead to inflammation of the liver and

cause the immune system to attack healthy liver cells. It can be spread through blood-to-blood contact or when the blood from a person with Hep C comes into contact with another person's blood.

Most people with Hep C don't have noticeable symptoms at first or ever. This means you may not know you have it.

The most common symptoms of chronic Hep C, are tiredness and depression.

#### Hep C is commonly spread by:

- Sharing drug needles or accidental needle stick injuries
- Being born to a mother who has Hep C
- Less commonly, Hep C is spread by:
- Contact with someone's blood in razors or toothbrushes
- Sex with an infected person
- Getting a tattoo or body piercing in an unregulated setting

#### Hep C CANNOT be spread by:

- Food, water, or sharing eating utensils
- Hugging, kissing, holding hands, coughing, or sneezing
- There are ways to lessen the risk of getting the Hep C virus that you may want to discuss with your family and friends.

#### Some of these include:

- Avoid sharing or reusing needles, syringes, or any other equipment to prepare and inject drugs or other substances
- Don't share razors, toothbrushes, nail clippers, or other personal care items that may have come into contact with infected blood

There are several blood tests that healthcare professionals will perform to find out if you have Hep C, including: The Hep C antibody test, which can tell if you've ever been infected with the virus. The Hep C virus RNA test, which can tell if you have a current infection.

## - MEDICAL PREVENTION -

It is important to follow up with your healthcare professional about these tests after they are performed.

### Did You Know?

But did you know that more Americans are living with hepatitis C? In fact, more than twice as many Americans are infected with hepatitis C compared to HIV. And among people who have HIV from using intravenous drugs, 50-90% also have hepatitis C.

When you get hepatitis C, it causes a short-term infection. For the minority symptoms are flu-like and tend to be mild (and overlooked). But about 80% of people never have symptoms. As a result, you can catch hepatitis C and not know it. And you can pass it to other people without realizing it. That's why regular testing is important if you're at risk. The main risk factor today is using IV drugs, but there are others.

About 15-25% of people with acute hepatitis C will clear the infection without treatment.

Up to 85% of people who have acute hepatitis C progress to chronic hepatitis C. But you can have chronic hepatitis C for 15 years or longer before you realize you're sick. During this time, you can spread the virus to others even though you don't have symptoms. For many people, they learn they have hepatitis C when symptoms of liver problems develop. This can include fatigue, nausea, vomiting, appetite loss, and jaundice—yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes.

Chronic hepatitis C eventually leads to liver damage. Without treatment, it can cause permanent injury. Some people go on to develop end-stage liver failure where the liver stops working.

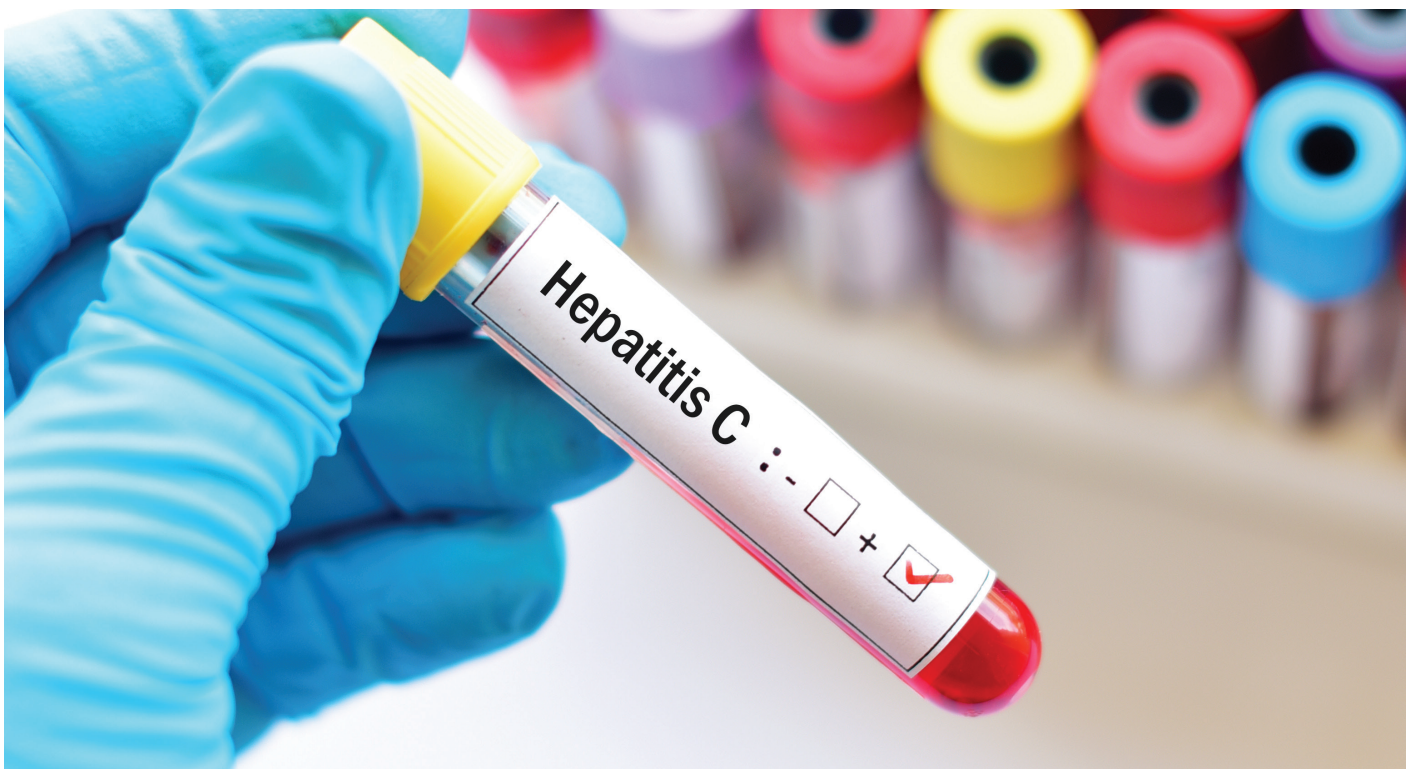
In the past, there were very few options for treating hepatitis C. The drugs were hard to tolerate and required months of therapy. Those drugs may still be the best choice for some people. But newer drugs are easier to take and more effective. In fact, more than 90% of people who take these new drug combinations achieve a sustained viral response (SVR). SVR is a virologic cure because it means tests can no longer detect hepatitis C virus six months after treatment ends.

Getting tested for Hep C at least once is a recommended part of health care.

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) | [www.healthgrades.com](http://www.healthgrades.com)

Contact Shannon Tillett at (Marietta Campus) Highland Rivers Behavioral Health, for Education/Prevention sessions, rapid testing and or linkage to care.

Shannon Tillett | 1650 County Services Parkway | Marietta GA 30008 | [shannontillett@highlandrivers.org](mailto:shannontillett@highlandrivers.org) (best) | 678-793-9505 (cell)





# REPLICATION TOOLKIT

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---

Inside you will find everything you need to create your own Recovery Support Organization and Build a Recovery Community.

**INCLUDED:**

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*for more information and to order yours:*

<https://buildingcommunitiesofrecovery.org/replication-toolkit-pre-order/>

# *GROWTH & SERENITY* **tree of life**

**BY:** KAHMIA WALKER

I decided to get this tattoo of the Tree of Life as a reminder of my consistent growth and serenity that I've developed during my journey of sobriety. When I look at it I feel a peace within me to continue on the right path. I love that I am experiencing Love and compassion in my life.

I am soaring high above the clouds to be able to see clearly what my life has in store for me. Having my first sober tattoo was a wonderfully PAINFUL experience but well worth it.

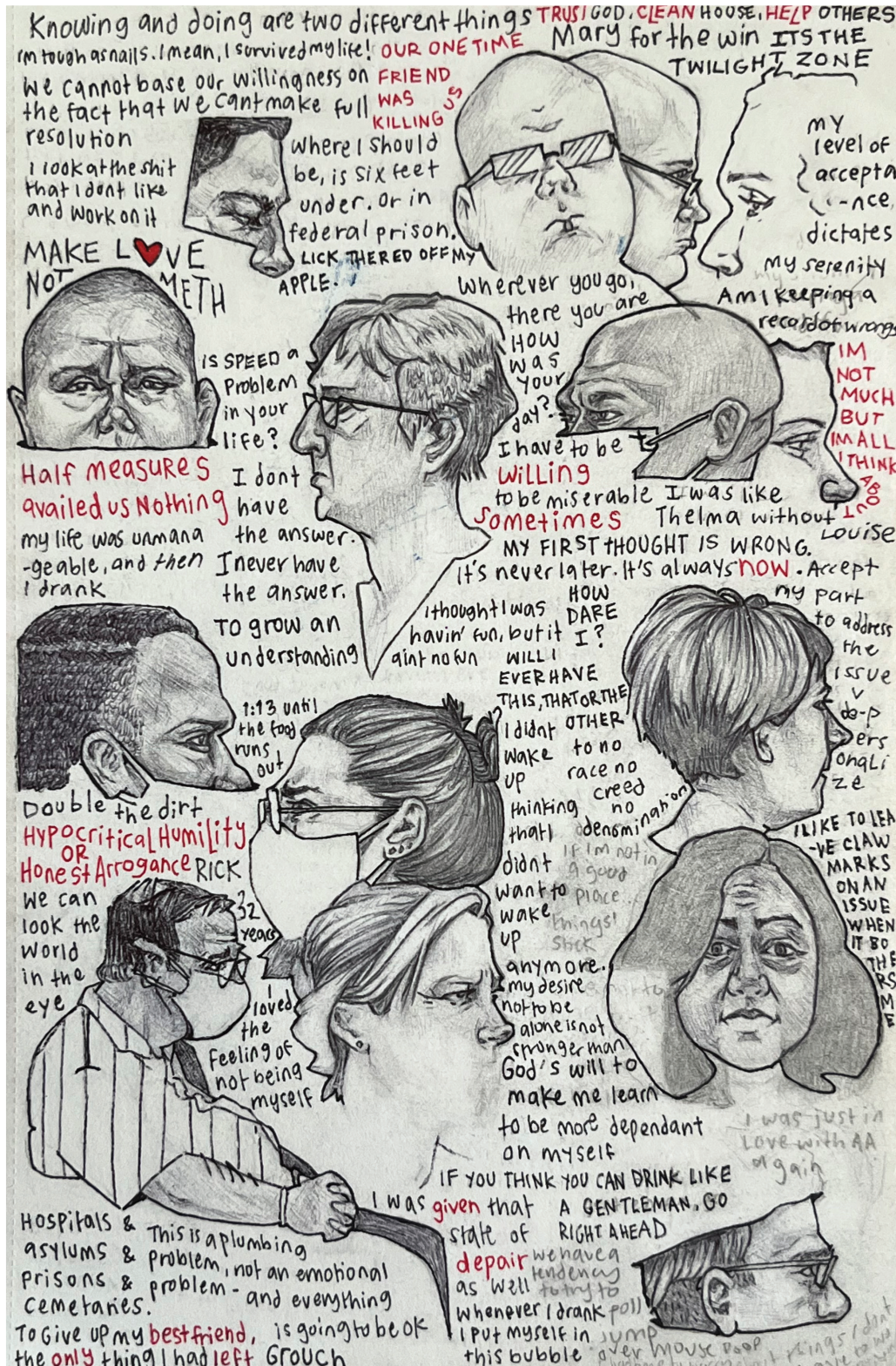
As long as I continue to use the tools and resources and stay involved in my sober network the pain that is sure to come will pass as long as I'm strong enough to see it through.



# FACES & VOICES

Poe Bertholon

You could say something like "the faces I see and voices I hear inspire me to remain vigilant in my recovery journey."



## AWAKENING

*Tanya Lapham*

When I look in the mirror today I see how far I've come and tell the woman in the mirror how proud I am of her! I no longer walk in fear which is a miracle in and of itself. I have so much fun in recovery. I have found many passions that were hidden for most of my life like painting and poetry. I found my tribe in recovery and we capture our adventures as much as we can together. I have had a true spiritual awakening which I captured in my first painting in rehab, rightfully named "Awakening", there I found life in death and what once was covered only in darkness were colors bursting through expressing how I was beginning to live again. I found purpose in my pain.



## UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

*Summer Conley*

This is what unconditional love feels like to me in the form of art.

# LESSONS FOR LIFE

# recovery

**To lead others, it is best to learn to lead ourselves first. And, to lead ourselves, we must know ourselves.**



Recovering Recovery in the year of 2022

By the time you read this article, we will have “experienced” the COVID pandemic for two, yes two full years.

What did we learn? We learned a ton!

We learned the Recovery Community continues to be important to those in Recovery and those who want to be in Recovery.

Why this proclamation? COVID was a major focus in all our lives the past two years, and for those seeking, and in Recovery the need for a Recovery Community has not gone away.



# Leadership Lessons for Life

by Kathy Gingrich Lubbers, SOAL Coach and Consultant

It's a bit like the Creator, really. God, Yahweh, the Holy Spirit, whatever or however you choose to think of or call upon the Higher Power. It never goes away. God is always with us. It is up to us to lift our heads up and our hands out and ask for help.

The same is true of our Recovery Community. We are here for each other. We simply must reach out and ask for help, provide help, and acknowledge that no matter what is going on around us in the world, we are here for each other.

Recovery has taken a back seat to COVID. And, because of this many took their eyes off the proverbial "ball," and there has been an increase in addiction and relapse. Recovery is an everyday engagement. The process never stops. Every day is a new opportunity to claim the possibility, the reality of Recovery, for an individual and on a community wide basis.

Funding and energy have focused on solving the COVID pandemic. That said, now is the time for funding and energy to pivot and return to the very real pandemic of the disease of addiction and the needs and support of those in Recovery.

**For our part, we owe it to ourselves and our community to reach up and out, to provide and ask for help. It is in giving that we receive; and it is in asking that we provide others the opportunity to give.**

Leadership sometimes means asking others to help. This way, others may better understand what it is like to provide and give support. Now more than ever, it's critical for everyone to lead by example, by asking for help, by receiving assistance and by engaging in community.

# RED ZONE choices

BY: BRANDON MITCHELL



**Welcome to The Red Zone! A new column featuring Brandon Mitchell, former New England Super Bowl Champion. Each issue will feature insights, observations, and thoughts from his experiences to help others in their sobriety journey. In Brandon's own words below, here's why we called it Red Zone and what you can expect.**

Hello Recovery Readers! This is my first time as a guest writer for a magazine and I am honored to be part of the Recovery magazine team. When we talked about what to name this column the Red Zone felt like a good fit. Yes, the Red Zone is a football term. But when you think about what happens in the Red Zone, it's a lot like the journey of sobriety too. Let's break it down...

A football field is a 100 yards long. When you're at the opposite end of the field and nowhere near the goal line, you've got a little time to run your plays and move the ball. And maybe a few missteps along the way - you might drop a ball, miss a catch. But you've got the room to adjust your plans, adapt and try again.

Moving down the field, you hit the next zone - between the two 40 yard lines, or as we called it in the NFL we called it the "gadget zone". You take a lot of risks here. Time is a little more critical to make the right plays to keep moving the ball forward.

Go a little further down the field and you enter the "fringe zone" - between the 40 and 20 yard lines heading towards the opponent's end zone. Pressure is kicking up here. More intense. Less room for error. The game is getting real. Then, you're there. The Red Zone. Your back is against the wall and every move you make is important. Life is on the line. Crunch time. And you can't go backwards - only forward. You need to score. You need to win.

And it's a lot like the journey of sobriety. When you get into the Red Zone every decision you make matters.

Everyone is watching and it's up to you to execute. You might have a team around you -- and you need a strong team around you. But, it's ultimately up to you. The choices you wake up and make every day. Now isn't the time to drop the ball – to drop the ball of life.

Think about how some games have come down to a matter of inches in the Red Zone. In the world of sobriety, like football, every inch matters. Every decision, no matter how small you think it might be, matters.

It's game time in the Red Zone and in each issue, I'm gonna tackle those make or break moments we face in our sobriety using my own 13-year journey to draw from.

Because when you're in the Red Zone, it's time to excel. Push hard, make hard choices, face things head on. This is the moment it all comes together with all the effort you put in for those 80 yards down the field.



# RE-ZONED GIFTS & APPAREL after!

**BY:** MISSY OWEN, CEO

How do you turn an old Thrift Store into a Beautiful New Gift Shop? Step inside and see for yourself. Re-Zoned Gifts and Apparel is a hybrid concept combining two stores with a cased-opening entryway showcasing a beautiful pass through connecting the two concepts. One side is a BRAND-NEW Gift Shop with the Latest and Greatest products from the Atlanta Gift Market, and the other side is an Apparel Shop with gently used, name-brand clothing and shoes.

So far the community is loving it and embracing the concept. It's actually a one stop shop now for clothing, furniture home décor and brand new gifts for those you love <3. We've had so many people come in and just almost drool over the changes. We wanted to brighten up the space and make it appear as large as possible. We painted the entire building with a Sherwin Williams paint – Drift of Mist – which is a hint of gray and takes on the hue of the furniture or objects inside the walls. It's really beautiful and brightened up the space dramatically.

On the Apparel side, we went for the industrial look and took out the acoustical ceiling and sprayed the fixtures a flat black and came down from the top of the walls about 2 feet with a Kelly Green color, which is one of the Foundation's signature colors. We are planning to spray stencil the Logo in white all the way around that half of the building. We went with the industrial look as we used dark metal fixtures and chains on poles for our hanging clothes displays.

We had brand new carpet squares donated and installed on the apparel side and purchased Shag area rugs with white gray and navy for the Gift side. We hung beautiful chandeliers, track lighting and string lighting in the front windows and placed lamps throughout the space. We chose bright LED lighting as opposed to the soft and warm bulbs because it gave the clothing and the gifts more lighting for better viewing. It was also more energy efficient.

On the gift side of the house, we are going for a very eclectic space with antiques, wrought iron outdoor furniture, and custom designed display cases. We have old trunks and lighted curios and plenty of tables and cubicles to display our merchandise. We also have a seating arrangement for the men because our research taught us that men will be happier with a longer shopping experience as long as they have somewhere to sit and relax.

Our new gifts are arriving daily from candles to warmies, to jewelry, to scarves, to gardening accessories, spices and so much more. Our customers can pull right up to the door in our parking lot and walk out with a beautiful giftbag complete with a bow. No more circling three times for a parking spot or walking half a mile from the parking lot, we offer a shopping experience you won't soon forget.

Our Grand Opening was March 24th - come on out and **SHOP FOR A CAUSE** at the AMAZING "RE-ZONED Gifts & Apparel."

Hope to see you soon!



# *SUPER* savings

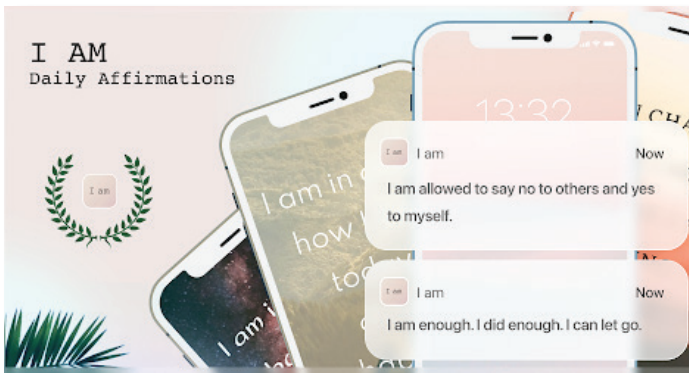
**BY:** CHELSEA CRONIN

Saving can be hard... But it doesn't have to be. First things first, spend less than what you are making. This is called living below your means. Distinguish between wants and needs. Basic food, shelter, and clothing represent your needs; everything else is a want. You can save tons of money by not spending on things like expensive coffee, clothes you don't need, and not dining out as often. Pre Owned items such as clothing, electronics, etc. are a great save. Start couponing to save money at the grocery store and buy in bulk to get items cheaper. Speaking of food, here are a few quick tips that can help on your next trip to the grocery store.

- Switch over to store-brand products for small savings. One product may only save you a dollar or two, but it can add up when you're filling an entire cart.
- It's a good idea to try and shop less, every 2-4 weeks if you can.
- Cook some of the dry stuff that's been sitting in your pantry, too. We recommend dried beans, rice, pasta and popcorn (it's a great snack!)
- Canned items are great to have around. Fresh vegetables and fruit will be good for the next week or two, but canned and frozen veggies are a longer lasting choice.
- Milk is normally fine a couple days after their "fresh by or expiration" date, but oat and almond milk have a longer shelf life.
- Make a small purchase on a water purifier. You don't need to buy a bunch of bottled water. It's just a lot of wasted plastic.
- Don't buy prepared food. As tempting as it is, it goes bad faster and costs much more than if you made it yourself.
- Leave the kids at home: One positive of this situation is most adults are keeping their kids at home when shopping to prevent the spread of germs. This saves money on all their "Can I have this?" items.
- When you are out, bring your own mug. Starbucks is great and all, but that afternoon 'pick me up' starts to add up!
- One of the easiest ways to save money on groceries is to utilize your leftovers. Repurposing dinner from the night before into lunch or another dinner idea can stretch out your food longer.
- Lastly, don't limit yourself. Shopping at one store is convenient, yes, however different items are cheaper at different stores. Shopping at different stores is one of the simplest ways to save money on groceries. Spend the time, save the money.

# APPS FOR THE asking

BY: DANIEL SPINNEY, RCP, CCAR TRAINER



## I AM DAILY AFFIRMATIONS

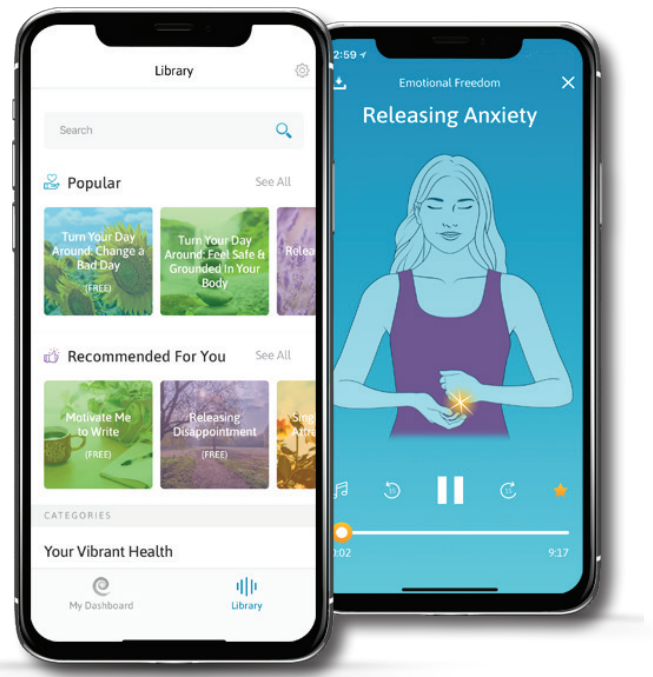
Who doesn't love positive affirmations? Turn negative thoughts to positive thoughts. You can set it up to do as many times a day as you like. You can set up times for them to start and when to stop. You can choose from 8 different areas of life. Very easy to use and to navigate. There is a free version and a paid version of this app.



## CALM

This app is great for sleep and meditation. Meditations range from ones for people new to meditation to people that are experts. Helps with mental breaks, soothing sounds to help relax or get a good night sleep. The guided meditations last from 3 minutes to 23 minutes. Choose from a variety of different topics and levels. You can receive a daily Calm message to get your day started. Free version and paid version.

[GO TO YOUR APP STORE AND DOWNLOAD TODAY!](#)



## TAPPING SOLUTION APP

Learn how to use Tapping as a coping skill. You have access to hundreds of meditations. They are from 5 minutes to 20 minutes long. Help in many different categories. Step by step instructions for the beginners and plenty for the advanced. You can record your tapping sessions to build your own library. There is a paid and free version of this app. Great new meditation!!

# 365 DAYS A YEAR the zone

Recovery Zone magazine is a publication that comes out of THE ZONE in Marietta, Georgia. The Zone is a Recovery Support Organization that Fights Addiction and Fuels Recovery daily, 365 days a year. THE ZONE is an extension of The Davis Direction Foundation, a 501c3 nonprofit born out of the need for Recovery Aftercare services, resources, and support. It is a local, state and National Model of Recovery hosting over 5,000 visits per month. At The Zone, a person seeking to find recovery or seeking to maintain recovery from Substance Use Disorder can build a network of peer support and connect socially with people who are forging their own pathways to wellness. It is a judgement FREE zone and a place where you can drop in a stay for a few minutes, or all day long depending on your circumstances.

The Zone is educating the community to understand the disease of addiction while at the same time, building a community of Recovery to offer a safe haven of love and support for those seeking help or connection for their disease. Walking into The Zone, you are welcomed by the smell of freshly brewed coffee and a smile from one of our many trained and certified Peer Recovery Support Specialists. You can catch a support meeting, share a meal, shoot a game of pool, relax and watch the tv, work on resumes in the computer lab and resource library, receive recovery coaching, work out in our professional gym, jam out in the music room or create your own masterpiece in the art room. There is something for everyone at THE ZONE.

To schedule a tour to visit our beautiful facility, please call 770-693-5982. We will welcome you in person or virtually – your choice. We are here to serve and help other communities learn to support their recovery populations. It is time to publicly address the disease of addiction without judgement or stigma and educate others to become recovery allies, teaching them to love and support people striving for wellness and Recovery.



Pictured left to right: Chelsea Cronin, King Nguyen, Sarah Mangold, Kenny Williams, Daniel Spinney, Missy Owen, Michael Owen, Erica Hurley, Brenda Evans, John Lowry, Brooke Nowicki, Holly Reynolds, Not pictured: Mark Lafond, Josh Brummitt, Patrick Johnson





# ADVENTURES WITH OLI

## the zone service dog

BY: CAROL VANCIL

**Oli was a gift to THE ZONE from Southeastern Guide Dogs in the summer of 2016 soon after we opened the Recovery Support Organization.**

### My Connection to Oli, the Love Lab

Recovery has given me the gift of a new life, a new me. Before I found recovery my life was dark and hopeless. Recovery helped me close the doors to that dark place and now I am able to open new doors to a new light and path of purpose with clarity as a result of God's guidance.

The Zone was the first place I came to when I started my new life. I felt a connection to the Zone's Service dog Oli the first time I saw her: she ran up and gave me a hug with BOTH paws! She has been my friend and shadow at The Zone since I came into recovery on November 14, 2020. She has been a huge support for me and I feel like she understands me. I know if I am having a rough day, she is always there. Oli has been a large part of my recovery, she is so therapeutic for me and I am incredibly grateful for her! She truly is a "Love Lab".

Many heartfelt thanks to The Zone, the incredible staff, my sponsor, and of course Oli.





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*Improve the lives we touch*

Our treatment facilities are specialized in helping adults, adolescents, and families suffering from addiction and mental health challenges while offering a solution to the stressors that drive these issues, providing a path to change, and ensuring ongoing support for a restored life.

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Recovery Center

 PALMS  
Behavioral Health

 Willingway

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Pavilion

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RECOVERY CENTER

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Willingway

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Center

 Anabranch  
Recovery Center



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Behavioral Health

 BEL AIRE  
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 EAGLE VIEW  
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DOVE TREE

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RECOVERY CENTER

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### HONESTY

We work with integrity and fairness.

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We strive to be the best and hold ourselves accountable.

### PERSEVERANCE

We meet challenges with the resolve to succeed.

### PASSION

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### RESPECT

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# BRANDON MITCHELL

# recovery patriot

**BY:** BRANDON MITCHELL & MISSY OWEN

**M:** Welcome Brandon Mitchell number 98 of the New England Patriots, Super Bowl XXXVI Championship team! It's so awesome to see you again! How have you been?

**B:** First of all Missy, thank you for having me here, thank you for offering for me to be in the magazine, thank you for that, thank you for choosing me, just thank you for the work that you are doing with people also. I've been good, I've been good ma'am. Life's been sending me some curve balls, ya know? I call it life. You know, you get a little muddy sometimes, but overall I've been pretty good. Wonderful kids that have been there for me, just doing things, taking care of things right. Life's been pretty good.

**M:** Awesome. Well, for those of you who don't know, The Davis Direction Foundation hosted a fabulous fundraiser last year called Beyond The EndZONE. We were fortunate enough to have Brandon come into town to be part of this event. It was the greatest Substance Use Prevention event of the year in Georgia and we welcomed not only former superstar Brandon Mitchell, but also current Superstar Darren Waller. So, tell us about your Superstar run in the NFL during your time with The Patriots and The Seattle Seahawks.

**B:** My Superstar run with The Patriots, ya know, and Seattle was wonderful. I got a chance to be a part of one of the best teams in Patriots history, which was the Superbowl Championship with guys like; Willie McGinest, Tom Brady, Tedy Bruschi, Mike Vrabel. I was around a bunch of great guys; Ty Law, Milloy and, I was blessed to be a part of that team and those guys. You know, because people would always ask me how those guys were, and I can just say, there were a bunch of good humans around me. Going to The Seahawks, there were a bunch of good coaches that I was around that really helped me through my life, when it came to being on the field.

**M:** So, winning the Super Bowl with the Patriots you must have been on top of the world! Everything you

could dream of. What was it really like?

**B:** Well, winning the Super Bowl was good, but it was me being in my addiction that I didn't get the full experience of it. Being in my addiction and drinking and not knowing that I was an addict at the time, with me drinking and partying, I didn't get the full experience of the feeling of being in the Super Bowl. My mind was focused on the after party. My mind was on that stuff that you do after the game. Being present for the game, the actual feelings and emotions of the game, I wasn't connected enough to really feel the game. Tom, Willie and those guys actually felt the game, I didn't.

**M:** Brandon, after your football career you had to come face to face with your addiction. It forced you to make some changes in your life and make some choices that you may or may not regret. Can you tell us more about that period?

**B:** After football, you know, that period was very dark for me. Because, now the stuff that I had been covering up for all of my years, would have to be exposed. The fact is that I wasn't happy with myself. I was loner; I had a lot of secrets inside of my mind and inside of my soul. Those things really were exposed and started coming out because football had been hiding it for so long. I had football as a coverup and now the true identity of who I am and who I was really came out. Once you take the identity of Brandon, the football player, out, now you're just left with Brandon. That person of Brandon never developed. Yes, the football player developed, but not Brandon as a human. So, whenever football was taken away from me, Brandon, the human that had to be attached to society, had to work in society, had to wake up and be connected to society. That part of me was never developed so I failed tremendously when I was exposed to the world. People can look back, I look back at my life and as an athlete, we were coached and we have itineraries every single day, every single day of our lives. From high school to college to NFL, we have an itinerary, every day is

- FEATURE ARTICLE -

planned. Once the ball was taken away, I didn't have a plan. I didn't have a plan in life, I didn't have a plan to succeed. Like I said, if you don't have a plan and you don't know how to do it, you will fail. And I failed tremendously, with addiction and me.

**M:** Well now you go all over the place sharing your story and offering advice for our youth, in hopes that they will make good choices and avoid the pain that you endured with your addiction. Did you ever have anyone talk to you like you talk to these kids, in an effort to prevent Substance Use Disorder or addiction?

**B:** In my time in the NFL it wasn't big to have people talk about Substance Abuse issues. It was more or

because sports become an addiction. Then you have a second addiction when you start drinking and a third when women start getting involved, so now you have a life full of addictions. You're not connected to life period, because you are stuck with all of these pleasures of life, just to satisfy this one human, which is you. When you take these things away, what's left? Just that person inside that you had just emptied, because any time you need an outside source to come in and make you feel good, you're empty. You want to feel you, it's an inside job, you want to feel you from the inside out. For me, I use football, alcohol and women, all these things make me feel good. Now, with my passion about the kids, I say "Inside out, inside job," effort, those things. I preach that, I talk about that.



less, "Hey man, watch out for the girls because it's the girls that take advantage of you, hey man, don't do steroids, but hey man opiates, or pain pills were given out", but in my time a lot of people drank. You have coaches that drank, you have players that drank, so me seeing drinking, it wasn't big then for athletes to be like, " Hey, talk to me about that. Talk to me about drinking." I remember times that my coach would walk past me and I'd be in a huddle and they would be like "Wooh Brandon, WOW! You smell like a Saloon!" We would laugh it off, you know, because the vodka was coming out of my mouth, he could smell it. He would say, "What did you do last night?!" I would say, Coach, I'm okay right now, but man, it was tough." But, we didn't talk about those things that much back then, about substance use and addiction, when it came to alcohol. So, with me now talking to kids, I am very passionate about that

**M:** Do you ever remember in elementary, middle or high school any programs that were in the school to talk to kids about...?

**B:** I absolutely understand. At ten years old, I have never seen a kid that says, "You know, I want to grow up and be an addict." I have never seen that. When I was young everyone would say, "I want to be a police officer." No one wanted to become an addict, and what happened? What happened to me? Why did drugs and alcohol become my solution? Why did women become my solution? Why did I learn to like it? That's what I got caught up with. Liking something that made me feel different. Yes, they had programs, they do have programs to tell you, and once you get caught up in it, you don't see a problem with it because you see other people doing it, and that's part of the problem with me. Like, I've

seen it and I've seen other guys doing it too and they're successful, but it was like I got stuck in it. So I had heard it (addiction) but it didn't register. Looking back I didn't understand that I had an addiction problem. I didn't know I was an addict until I was actually with my therapist. There were times that I would try and stop drinking. I remember being in Seattle and I was drinking, I would say "I'm not going to drink tonight" and I remember being at a table and I stopped drinking after a game and I started shaking. My hand started shaking and I'm like "Why are my hands shaking?" My hand was so used to being in this particular bar, this particular restaurant, after a game and with something, a drink in my hand. At that particular time, I didn't have one in my hand. These shakes were because I was such a creature

**M:** Right. Well, I have heard your story twice now, and each time I learn something new. A lot new. You talked a lot about your family and growing up today, and your background. The first time I heard you talk it was basically talking to kids about how they can be respectful and listen to their parents, listen to their coaches and that kind of stuff. So, I guess that I have heard two different audience versions and it's a different message. Which is good. Which it should be. You should always talk to your audience. What are the most important things in your recovery story that you never leave out?

**B:** I never leave out the fact that if you have insecurities, being insecure with yourself. I never leave out that part about being insecure because



of habit, I had to have it. I didn't understand that at the time, I didn't understand that was my addiction talking. By learning about it, by being educated more and more about it- it was my addiction.

**M:** Do you think that there was something someone could have said or done to encourage you to take a different path, other than that of addiction?

**B:** I didn't give people the opportunity to tell me something different because I didn't put myself around a lot of people to help me change my course because I considered myself a loner and I didn't let people know secrets about me. I kept my secret a secret. They say if you keep your secrets then your secrets keep you safe. So the more and more you talk about it, you can help yourself, but if I didn't talk about it, how could someone help me?

when it came to me, with reading and writing, that played a big part in my addiction. Not being happy with myself. Having a stuttering problem played a big part in it because it made me not like myself. It made me not like who I was because I wanted to be different. Whenever I drank, I liked that person. He talked, he became the life of the party and people liked him. I never leave that out. And I never leave out the fact that it's very difficult trusting your brain because you have to give up a lot in order to stay sober. You have to give up the fact that you cannot trust yourself. That's a hard piece because I believe in myself as an athlete, I believe that I can do anything. I have ultimate confidence, but I know that I can't trust myself. I know that being an addict, made me to where I could let myself down mentally because of my past decisions, so I have to run it by somebody.



I have to. Because I can't trust this thing right here (brain), because my best thinking got me sitting in the seat talking to my therapist.

**M:** Last year, you participated in an event with The Davis Direction Foundation, called Beyond The EndZone. You even competed in the pledge, pass and punt competition as a celebrity. Tell us about that day, why it was so important to be there and what your favorite part of the event was.

**B:** I can't even say that it was the event that was my favorite part. My favorite part of the whole thing was getting the phone call from you, to invite me to be a part of it. Doing something that is helping kids and people and changing the community. You

allowing me to be a part of it was huge because you didn't have to ask me, you can ask anyone to be a part of something. Something that I have changed. You chose me and God put it in your heart to ask me. Whatever you want me to do Missy, I am there. That part right there was really big for me. Also just being there. Being a part of all the stuff that you were doing and seeing the stuff that you are doing with the community and the people that you had there supporting you was huge.

**M:** Thank you. It was a fun day, wasn't it?

**B:** Yes, it was. It was a fun day out there seeing all of the teenagers out there, the people out there, the police out there. Just everyone out there coming

together, Darrin out there, everyone coming together for one cause and the support that they gave you.

**M:** How long do you have in Recovery Brandon, and what are the highlights of your life in Recovery?

**B:** I have been sober now thirteen years. The highlights are, I never thought that the friends that I knew before, friends whom I had that knew me in college, who knew me in NFL, I didn't know if they would ever accept me again. For those people to come back into my life and accept me, and say "Brandon, we don't care about what you have done in your life. We just care about the fact that you are well, that you're doing good and you are working on changes." Those were my highlights. The highlight of being present with my kids, being a present dad. A dad that can be there for his daughters and his son, the best way I can be. That is my highlight.

**M:** Those are great highlights. This year on June 25th, we are once again hosting Beyond The EndZone and you have been invited back to tell your story. I certainly hope that you will be there to encourage the youth of our community and help them understand the benefits of a drug-free life. Why should people attend this event, Brandon, and what do you think that they get out of it the most?

**B:** There is nothing like being around a bunch of selfless people, who just want to love on other people and help those other people get love that they would never receive. In this building here (The Zone) everyone who walks through the door gets love from you guys. Whenever you go to that kind of event, it is people putting their selfishness aside and just want to love on someone else or give someone the opportunity. Them being a part of that is huge if you care about others more than you care about yourself. That's all you guys care about, that's why I want to be a part of it and love being a part of it.

**M:** And, who should attend?

**B:** Anyone who is willing to, just wants to give, just wants to help and just wants change. I don't know his name, but that one guy says "Be the change that you wish to see in the world." If you want change in the world just be there, be there to help because the more people we have being a part of the change, the more change can happen.

**M:** Last year it was such a pleasure to watch you and Darrin interact with one another. I know that it was the first time that you had met each other, but I had got the feeling that you were forever friends after you had left that event. Why do you think you guys

clicked so well?

**B:** There's nothing like being a part of the NFL. It is a natural brotherhood because you guys understood what it takes to make it there. All of us, no matter where we are, no matter how many years we have played, one year, ten years, or twelve, or twenty years. We all know what it took for us to make it to the NFL. We can look at each other answer don't even have to speak sometimes to understand mentally, and words will be said without us even talking. We naturally have a bond just by playing in the NFL. There is no ego, no nothing- it is a respect thing. So, like I said, we can relate to each other without even speaking. Then when we start laughing and giggling, it takes it to a whole other level. One of my friends, Pat Williams, whenever he and I get together, my kids are like, "Dad, we did not understand one word of what you were talking about." I laugh and say, "I know, but we do."

**M:** That is funny! Okay, is there something about Darrin that inspired you?

**B:** Like I told Darrin, he's a young guy and I have so much respect for him as a man, as a human and as a guy that's in recovery. He is doing something that I never could ever do, and that's being sober on this platform. People are coming at him, all kinds of people are coming at him, want his attention, want his money, want his life, want everything from him. Him staying grounded and him staying sober and dealing with life, with all that being an NFL player has to offer, and dealing with that. Facing it, not numbing it, not wanting to run from it, not worried about being stereotyped for it, but hitting it head on. He is doing something that I know is very difficult to do, as anyone, and he is doing it. I applaud that young man for stepping up and being something that the NFL needs. Not just the NFL, something that any sports arena needs. I love that dude, I love that kid.

**M:** What has surprised you about being in recovery Brandon? Is there something that you didn't expect when you started this journey?

**B:** What surprised me is how many people in this world are sober. That surprised me. How many people in this world have a loved one who is experiencing some type of addiction? Honestly, we don't know. We always see everyone's Instagram page and their life is so wonderful and great. But, when they hear your story, something about you, then they tell you the truth. That surprised me about sobriety and surprised me about addiction because everyone has something or someone in their family



that has an issue. Or something going on in their life and just not talking about it.

**M:** Is there something that you didn't expect when you started the journey?

**B:** What I did expect was life to be great all the time. I can't say that I did or didn't expect too much because they say that if you have expectations, it is a recipe for failure. I had to live life on life's terms and life 'as is'. Expecting stuff and assuming stuff, I couldn't assume any more in my life. So I didn't really live with too many expectations, because that was a formula for me to go back into my addictions. So I just did my best every single day and then lived with that. Whatever result came from it, and I had to deal with it. Whether good or bad, I just had to embrace it all.

**M:** What is one thing that you would share with someone that is just starting on their recovery journey?

**B:** Believing in the process and not trusting yourself. Believing in the process because you don't know the outcome, but you can't trust your thinking. You can't trust it, you have to run it by someone else. You have to, it is imperative.

**M:** That analogy that you made today, "If I go out and I steal something, I'm going to do this, and this, and this if I get caught. And I'll end up here, do this much time and so on. Or, I'll get away because no one will catch me." Then you say, "But now I am going to do recovery." and you have no idea what the outcome is going to be.

**B:** As a criminal, a person that is in their addiction, you have figured out all of those things because as an addict, we like control. We are out of control, but we like to know. We like to know "If I mix this drug with this drug, and I'm a criminal, I'm going to do this, this and so on... I will get this outcome and this outcome." But, in sobriety, you don't know what you are going to get. That is one of the fears of people who want to become sober because they don't know. You don't know what you are going to experience, you don't know what sobriety looks like. You don't know where your life is going, you know you are going to jail and here you are not going to jail. You don't know, and when you don't know it's scary. That is the biggest fear of changing your life. I don't know how my kids are going to turn out if I am sober. I didn't know how to hug my son. I was afraid to hug my son because I thought that if I hugged my son that it would make him soft. Am I supposed to hug him? Am I supposed to kiss him? I want to but I don't know. All of those things, all of those unknowns.



**M:** I remember a guy once saying that the hardest thing, the thing he didn't expect in sobriety was that he would have a hard time living a life without chaos, because he didn't know what to expect. He couldn't predict the future, I guess. That was very eye-opening to me.

**B:** You can't. You have to do your very best every day and that is it.

**M:** Life is full of curveballs, and when you are in recovery that can be really hard. When life comes your way, what advice would you give to people to stay on their recovery course?

**B:** Whenever a Coke machine says 'Out of order' I don't care how many quarters you have. You can put it into that machine, a bucket of them, put them in the machine and put them in the machine, but it just won't work. Because it says, 'Out of order'. You can work as hard as you want to, to make that thing work, and it won't work. As long as your life is out of order, it won't work. I don't care how hard you work at it, it won't work. If you are not putting your sobriety and spirituality guide first, everything else; your family, your life, your job, all your things, it will not work. It won't work if that is not first. If you put fun, your job and all of this stuff first, you will lose it. Having your life in order is the first thing. Period. Because as long as it is out of order, it will never work. Don't expect things to change in your life, if your life is out of order. Get it in order first before you do anything.

**M:** I remember you had said it took 3-4 years to get to that point, to really feel your emotions. Can you expand on that?

**B:** It is when the small things that become really important to you, they become the big things. It took that long because the first two years you are used to numbing your feelings, where you don't have any feelings, you are not connected to anything. It took me a year, maybe sixteen months before I started crying in front of a movie. Before, I wasn't emotional. I was detached from stuff. It took time to be like, wow. Look at the trees, look at the butterflies. It takes time and it took time to be able to become attached to something. You weren't attached to anything, you didn't know how to become attached to anything because you protect yourself by not becoming attached.

**M:** It is often said "Recovery is not a destination, but rather a journey." How do you feel about that, Brandon?

**B:** How I feel about that journey is that I didn't want to

be the salmon. I didn't want to be the salmon of going against the grain my whole life. Going up stream, going against the grain, going up against people and going up there just to die. I want to be the tree. Be connected to the leaf that gets the sun, provides chlorophyll, be strong enough when a storm comes, be productive and then after a while I wilt, I go into the ground and I provide. I want to live. I don't want to fight going upstream. I want to be a part of stuff.

**M:** Is there anything that I haven't asked you that you want to share? I know you were asked some great questions today when you shared at the speaker meeting. I loved your answer about meditation and learning to keep that internal barometer stable.

**B:** What I want to share is my toolbox. This has been my toolbox, my therapist gave to me thirteen years ago. We came up with one because everyone said have your toolbox, always keep your toolbox with you. You want your toolbox because a crescent wrench works on some things, but sometimes you need a torque wrench, something that's going to make it tight. In my toolbox there are six things that I live by and keep in here and pull out when I need it. The first one is 'Play the tape all the way through'. Nowadays they don't have tapes, but it means play it all the way to the end. The next one is, '...it is just a feeling, it too shall pass'. Number three is, 'use my intelligence and instincts when making a decision.' The fourth one is, 'Is there something that I am doing that is going to hold me back?' God gave me a gift and his gift is unique. Don't waste my gift. Also, 'The secret is not to be the best of the best, rather be the only one that can do what you do.' Those are the things that I keep with me.

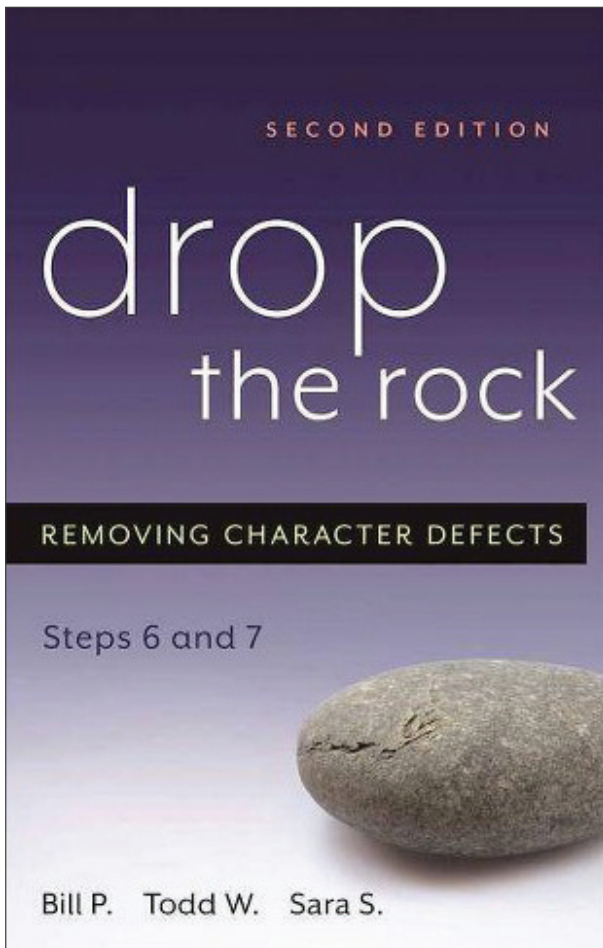
Whenever I have to reset, or am just going through stuff I pull it out and just remind myself of my therapist, Jenna. She used to tell me, "It's just a little mud. Put it in your box and when you get here you and I will talk about it." I have those things that I would like to share and that I use on this journey.

**M:** That's a great toolbox, thanks for sharing that with us. Thank you for being here with us today and sharing your experience, strength and hope. Also for agreeing to be a permanent part of our magazine now. I think that our readers will really enjoy the fact that you are going to blog for us and look forward to hearing what you have to say.

**B:** Thank you for the opportunity.

# DROP THE ROCK

REVIEW BY: JERRY HOLLIFIELD



**Overview:** This book helps anyone understand and perform Steps 6 and 7 of AA's 12 steps.

**Step 6:** We're entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

**Step 7:** Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

The title "Drop the Rock" is an analogy between ridding oneself of a heavy object (the rock) and getting rid of character defects by performing steps 6 and 7.

A young woman is swimming toward a boat with the intent of climbing aboard but she is carrying a heavy rock by a rope and is not going to make it to the boat. Everyone on the boat is yelling "drop the rock and you can make it". She replies "but I like this rock and do not want to drop it". Finally she drops it and successfully swims to the boat and gets on board.

Performing steps 6 and 7 relieves one of the burden of carrying character defects around.

The book helps the reader understand that their character defects are holding them back and, with God's help, the defects may be eliminated. Some people in recovery (myself included) have/had trouble with steps 6 and 7. Everything (including one's concept of God) about steps 6 and 7 is explained in plain English and details how the 2 steps may be accomplished. Nowhere in the book does it state that the only way to do the steps is exactly as described in the book, it is merely one more tool to have in our recovery toolbox. One chapter is devoted to step 6, explaining in easy to read detail how the step can be completed. Step 7 is

likewise explained in the same easy to understand language.

Real life experiences are inserted liberally throughout the book. Several prayers are also listed, along with a checklist to help in the process.

An AA sponsor gave me an earlier edition of the book to help me through the steps. It helped and when I was finished I passed it on to one of my sponsees with the admonition to pass it on to another when finished. That is what recovery is all about – helping ourselves and others.

Click Here  
to Purchase  
Book on  
Amazon

- MOVIE OF THE MONTH -

# HOLLER

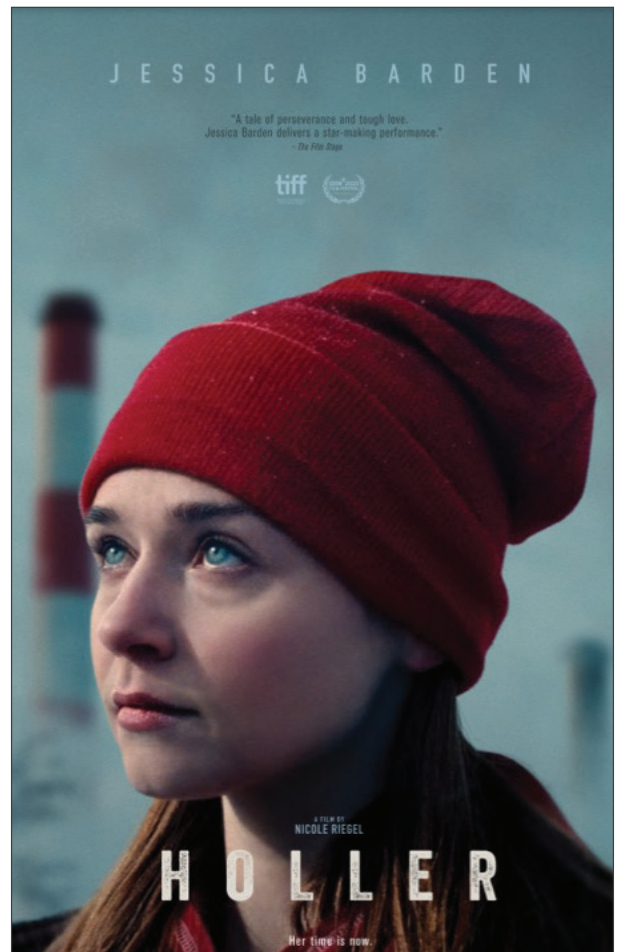
REVIEW BY: MISSY OWEN, CEO

Often on Saturday mornings, my husband and I will pick a random movie and watch it not really knowing anything about it. This particular Saturday morning, we picked "Holler." During the movie, the theme that actually screamed loud and clear to me was how drugs destroy lives and families. When I researched the movie online, the theme stated... "Hoping to pay for college, a determined young woman lands a dangerous job working in a scrap metal yard during a brutal winter. With her goal in sight, she soon finds herself torn between a promising future and the family she would leave behind."

I have decided that films often speak to us in different ways based on our life's experiences. Yes, this young lady was in the process of making life changing decisions and searching for something more. I get that; but one of the main things prohibiting her from doing that was an incarcerated mother. Having grown up in a small industrial town in Ohio, she began scrapping with her brother, also serving as her guardian, to make money to make ends meet. The mother was serving time on drug charges and refusing to go to Rehab. Ruth would reluctantly visit her mom in jail, but the disappointment and embarrassment of the situation was an obstacle for her. She was so angry with her Mom, and clearly did not understand the disease of addiction.

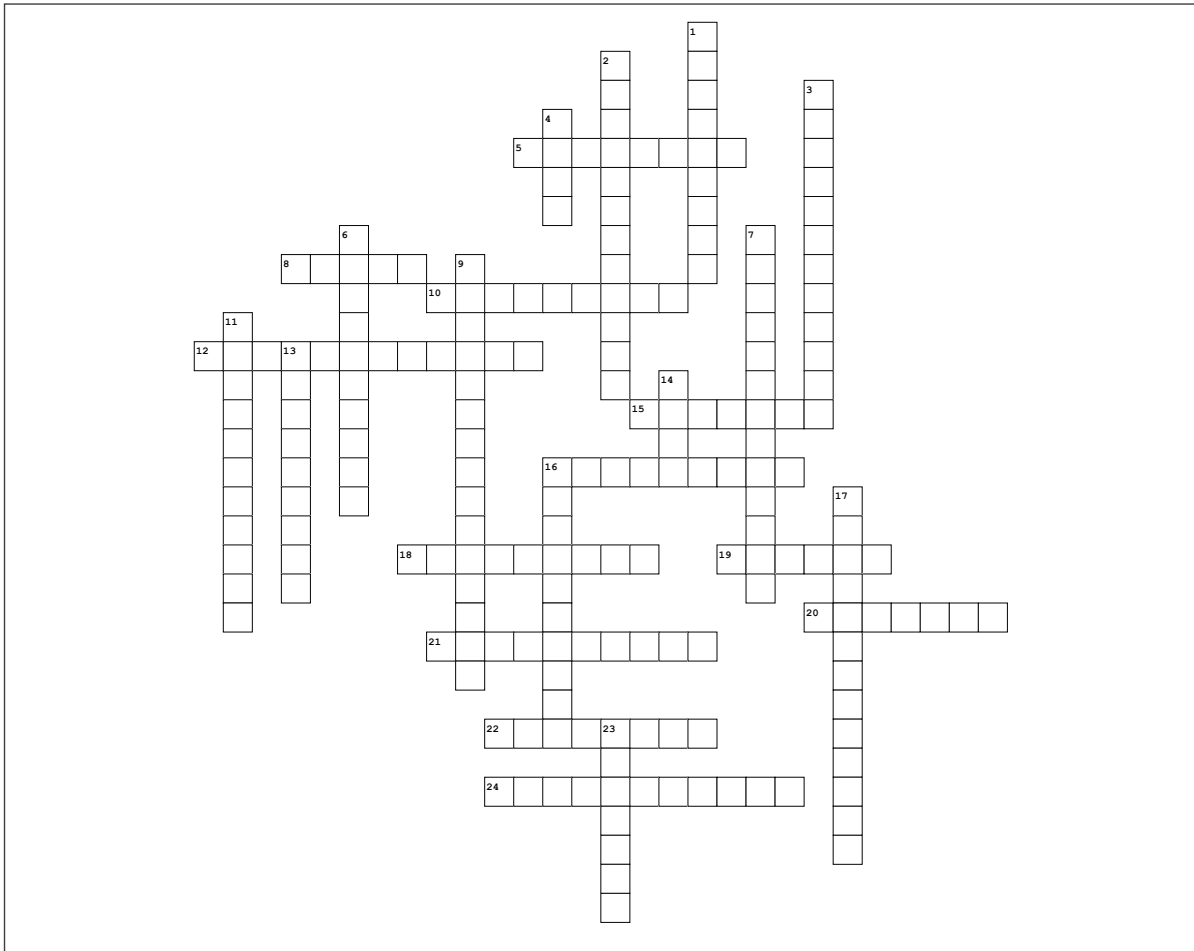
Having lost a son to addiction and working full-time in a Recovery Support Organization, I am surrounded by this scenario on a daily basis. I see the hurt, the despair, and the hopelessness that surrounds addiction. I remember the scene that played with the mom in jail as a result of drugs, and the son begging her to go to Rehab. I remember saying to myself... "That explains a lot." The scene that made my heart swell though, was Ruth going into the jail to tell her mom goodbye. She had just heard the story from the mom's friend describing how her mom had been hurt on the job, and the Dr.'s kept prescribing the pain pills over and over to her. She explained addiction to her in a way that helped her understand the disease as well as the stigma of the disease. At the jail, Ruth looked at her mom with forgiveness in her eyes and said "Mom, I get it." It was only then that she could look forward with HOPE and go after a life that promised a future.

GREAT MOVIE! I guess it just means different things to different people.



Click Here  
to Purchase  
Movie on  
Amazon

## CROSSWORD



### ACROSS

6. "Those who find me, find\_\_\_".
8. "You are in recovery when..."
10. Form of adventure therapy AKA global hide-and-seek.
11. International hand gesture used by individuals to signal they are in need of this.
13. Step 4, when advocating for policy change.
14. Feeling of smug or uncritical satisfaction with oneself or one's achievements.
15. When the process of recovery ends.
16. Activities that can improve overall health.
19. Paying attention to these can ease the stress of a panic attack.
23. SAMHSA tool used to help find local resources.
24. "Recovery is not for people who need it, it is for people that \_\_\_"

### DOWN

1. Organization dedicated to advancing addiction recovery focused policies and programs, with The
2. "2022 is the year we \_\_\_ recovery."
3. Repeated drug use does this to the brain systems.
4. Item which individuals pick up when first surrendering or coming back to the program.
5. Lapham painting created in rehab setting.
7. This type of meeting can help influence policy change and decisions.
9. The 'C' in ACE's.
10. Spiritual term that means connecting with the earth.
12. In order to change one thing, you must change...
17. Donald's "Dys-Story"
18. Healthy knacks learned to help with stress.
20. Common term for "forced abstinence".
21. "All things are possible to him that\_\_\_"
22. Brain chemical which makes you feel good.

## ADDICTION RECOVERY WORD SCRAMBLE

1. TASCNUESB UASBE \_\_\_\_\_

2. IASNEETCNB \_\_\_\_\_

3. ITOILVVR \_\_\_\_\_

4. ETNMIADTOI \_\_\_\_\_

5. OAHCLLO \_\_\_\_\_

6. IEGTRGR \_\_\_\_\_

7. ENMSTASESS \_\_\_\_\_

8. ATSIGM \_\_\_\_\_

9. SNXBUOEO \_\_\_\_\_

10. RCOREYEV HCOCA \_\_\_\_\_

11. TORNSEION \_\_\_\_\_

12. ENNUDIMSFSL \_\_\_\_\_

13. AGNBNEIL \_\_\_\_\_

14. DOIAIDNCT \_\_\_\_\_

15. CDOTIFTIXONAIE \_\_\_\_\_

16. MONEAPDI \_\_\_\_\_

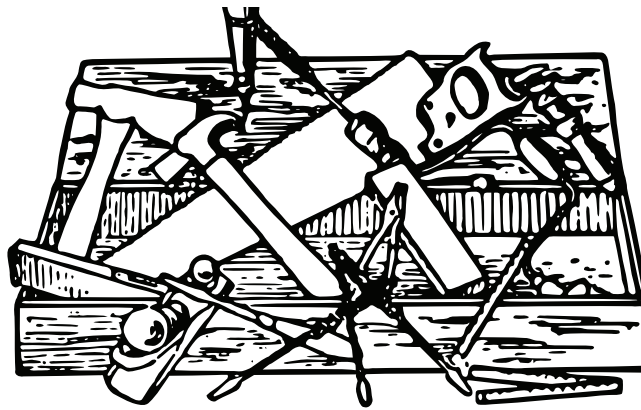
17. XOLNENOA \_\_\_\_\_

18. RSELPAE \_\_\_\_\_

19. EENEDCNDCEPO \_\_\_\_\_

20. WTHRDWILAA MOSTPMSY \_\_\_\_\_

WHICH ITEMS?



**Circle the items you would put in your recovery toolbox.  
Be careful to avoid items that don't belong!**

Exercise

Service Work

Self Care

Coping Skills

Old Behaviors

Positive Affirmations

Healthy Relationships

Meditation

Mindfulness

Journaling

Isolation

Honesty

Breathing Techniques

Support Network

Negative thinking

Gratitude

Support Meetings

Healthy Boundaries

Passive Aggressive Behavior

## SUDOKU

4	2			8				
			6					7
	3		9	5		8		
			1	6			5	4
8			3		4			9
6	4			7	9			
		2		9	5		1	
3					7			
				3			8	5

The object of Sudoku is to complete a 9x9 grid so that every column and every row and every one of the nine 3x3 boxes contain the digits from 1-9.



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& ASSOCIATES, INC.



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- Adolescent / Young Adult Services · Adult / Older Adult services
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  - Mental Health Interventions · Addiction Interventions
  - Case Management · Adolescent Transport
- Therapeutic Transports · Crisis Management · Concierge Services
  - Treatment Consultation · Recovery Companions
- Therapeutic Coaching · Drug & Alcohol Testing & Monitoring
  - Eating Disorders

# WELCOME dr. tracie doe



The Zone is PROUD to welcome Dr. Tracie Doe to the team!!!

Tracie served as the Cobb County School District's Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning Support and Specialized Services. Tracie has extensive knowledge with over 30 years of experience as an educator and 11 years of experience in the mental health field. Tracie has volunteered much of her time at The Zone because she loves to help those in need and serve her community. She has served on The Davis Direction Foundation's Board of Directors helping to make decisions that better the lives of thousands of individuals suffering from the deadly disease of substance use disorder.

She is officially coming to The Zone in mid June 2022 and she will be bringing a much needed mental health component to our program, as the majority of participants are dual diagnosis. We are looking forward to working with such a skilled and compassionate leader of the community. WELCOME TRACIE!!!

## An **Accidental** Opioid Overdose...



**CAN HAPPEN  
TO ANYONE  
TAKING OPIOIDS**

Help Protect Yourself  
and Your Loved Ones.  
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At-Home Emergency Treatment.



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Learn more at: [opioidsafetyplan.com](https://opioidsafetyplan.com)

- FAVORITE QUOTES -

Courage isn't having the strength to go on – it is going on when you don't have strength.

- Napoleon Bonaparte

All things are possible to him that believes.

- Vincent Parks

*If we are facing in the right direction, all we have to do is keep walking.*

- Buddhist Proverb

Recovery is scary, but so is remaining the same.

- Anonymous

- FAVORITE QUOTES -

Recovery is not for people who need it, it is for people that want it.

- Anonymous

NO MATTER HOW DARK THE NIGHT MAY GET, YOUR LIGHT WILL NEVER BURN OUT.

- Jeanette LeBlanc

In order to change ONE thing, you must change EVERYTHING.

- Anonymous

Hardships often prepare ordinary people for an extraordinary destiny.

- C.S. Lewis

# Together We are Stronger

## DisposeRx Celebrates Its Community Partners' Commitment to Prevention, Education and Safety



DisposeRx manufactures the leading at-home medication disposal solution—packets that are dispensed at more than 33,000 pharmacy counters around the country.

And we also partner with 350 outstanding non-profit organizations representing all 50 states that are committed to preventing drug misuse, as well as educating and helping to keep their communities safe. These Community Outreach Partners range from coalitions to law enforcement to hospices to faith-based groups, and we are amazed at their energy and enthusiasm for sharing our product—especially during this unprecedented pandemic.

We pledged in 2018 to help remove 10 million opioids from our nation's medicine cabinets, and our commitment has not wavered. Achieving this objective is possible with the help of our partners!

For more information, visit [www.disposerx.com](http://www.disposerx.com).

**Our Pledge: DisposeRx is committed to stopping opioid abuse by contributing DisposeRx packets that can remove over 10 million opioids from our nation's medicine cabinets.**

**DisposeRx**<sup>®</sup>  
Solving the problem of drug disposal



GLOBAL AID ORGANIZATION



GLOBAL AID ORGANIZATION



- FUN PLAYS -

What is Geocaching???? Geocaching is a modern day treasure hunt. According to National Geographic, Geocaching is a type of global treasure hunt including people hiding and seeking “caches”, or hidden stashes of objects. Geocaching literally is a global game of hide-and-seek, “hiders” place “caches” and provide clues online for “seekers”. Global positioning system (GPS) devices are used to find hidden “caches”. Geocaching can help you get out of your head and be present in the moment. It has many other wonderful benefits for adventurers of all ages. “Many analyses and reviews have concluded that, at least for some individuals in some circumstances, exposure to nature can lead to improvements in multiple mental and physical health parameters and that this applies for both contemplative and adventurous activities” Buckley, Raff C., Brough, P. Nature, Eco, and Adventure Therapies for Mental Health and Chronic Disease (2017)

Geocaching can be done at any time, all you have to do is visit the link below and get ready to start your very own adventure!

<https://www.geocaching.com/play>



- **CHEAP STAYS** -

When you think of vacation, you think of something away from home, but what about a STAYCATION? Everyone is always so busy with the hustle and bustle of everyday life. All work and no play makes for a stressful existence.... maybe take time to relax at home or you could even set up a tent in your yard for a new adventure! A staycation allows you to have time to have fun locally and enjoy things you can't normally experience because of a demanding day to day schedule.

Think about it, how much time do you actually spend seeing local sites, museums, national parks, theaters, golf, laser tag, paintball, amusement parks... the list goes on. Plan your staycation just like you would a vacation, research your city and you could be amazed at all there is to do!



S

What is your Specific Goal?

---

M

How is your Goal Measurable?

---

A

How is your Goal Attainable?

---

R

How is your Goal Relevant?

---

T

How is your Goal Timebound?

---



**O  
B  
J  
E  
C  
T  
I  
V  
E  
S**

What are some things you can do now to help you achieve your SMART Goal?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**S** What is your Specific Goal?  
*Stop Drinking*

**M** How is your Goal Measurable?  
*30 days sober*

**A** How is your Goal Attainable?  
*Work a recovery program*

**R** How is your Goal Relevant?  
*Improve my quality of Life*

**T** How is your Goal Timebound?  
*Stop Today*



A SMART Goal is a simple way to help you map out goals. How would you know if a SMART Goal is right for you? Simply ask yourself "is this goal measurable: how will I know I have completed it?", "is this goal attainable or possible to achieve?", "is this goal relevant or appropriate for my current circumstances?", "is this goal time bound: what kind of deadline can I give myself?". Objectives are incredibly helpful too; writing down and completing the little things can help you achieve the big things.

I encourage you to cut out the SMART Goal Worksheet and use it to help plan out a goal for yourself.

**"A goal without a plan is just a dream"**  
**- Dave Ramsey.**

**O** What are some things you can do now to help you achieve your SMART Goal?

**B** 1. *Throw out the alcohol in my house and any alcohol related glassware*

**J** 2. *Go to 30 recovery meetings in 30 days*

**E** 3. *Get a sponsor and build a network of sober support*

**C** 4. *Get a Recovery Coach or Counselor*


**T** 5. *Determine why I drink and learn new Coping Skills*

**I**

**V**

**E**

**S**



# BEYOND THE ENDZONE

*The* **Zone**

DAVIS DIRECTION

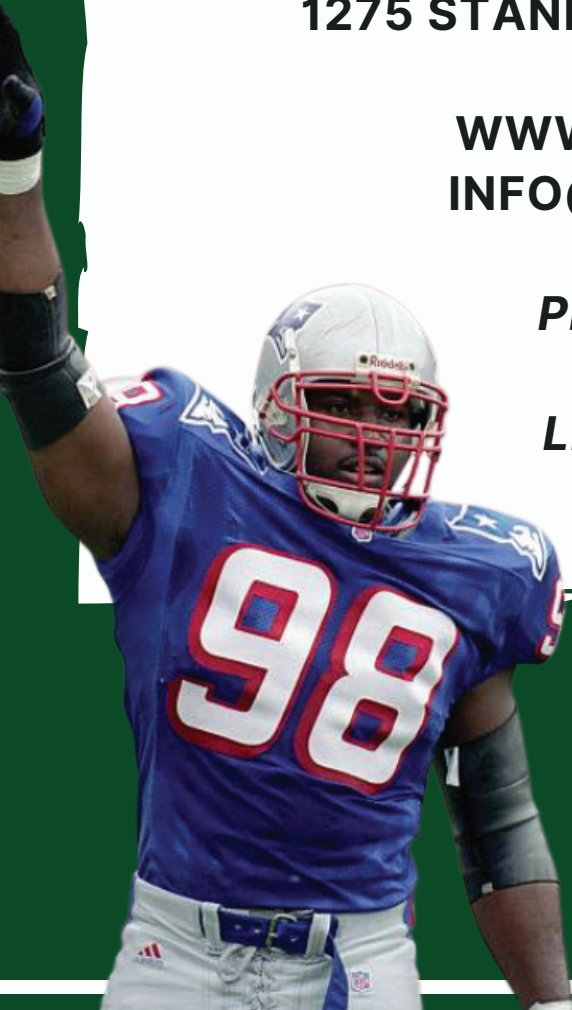
FOUNDATION

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10:00AM-1:00PM

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# ADVOCACY in action

**BY:** PATRICK J. KENNEDY AND RYAN HAMPTON



*THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY CONTRIBUTORS ARE THEIR OWN AND NOT THE VIEW OF THE HILL.*

In 1999, there were just under 20,000 fatal overdoses. Now, overdose deaths are five times higher—over 100,000 in the 12 months ending May 2021, according to the CDC’s most recent, tragically delayed, data.

As a member of the 2017 President’s Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis and a national addiction recovery advocate who worked hard to elect the Biden/Harris ticket, respectively, we had front-row seats to the Trump administration’s failure to properly address this crisis. When Joe Biden took office, our hopes were high. But nearly a year after the administration change, things have not improved. Not by a long shot.

What we’re lacking is a strategic coordinated response across the federal government that doesn’t just tout small incremental changes as “progress.” Biden must urgently set ambitious goals to reverse the trend of fatal overdoses, invoke every power of the executive branch, and use a powerful bully pulpit to drive change. A new strategy should focus on four key areas.

The first is emergency actions and declarations. Our streets are being flooded with a poisoned drug supply. Consequently, President Biden and

his administration should also be flooding streets with needed overdose response resources and taking aggressive action to shut down illicit fentanyl mills here at home and abroad.

While the Trump administration declared a Public Health Emergency for opioids (which has since been renewed multiple times), prior to COVID-19, the Public Health Emergency Fund had almost no resources the federal government could use to fund a response. Now, however, the fund has significant resources the Biden administration could swiftly utilize. Leaders should also broaden this declaration to apply to, at minimum, all substance use disorders, given that the overdose crisis extends well beyond opioids. We would recommend expanding the emergency to all mental health and substance use disorders, due to very high comorbidity rates and the devastating mental health crisis currently facing our youth.

The most powerful tool would be triggering emergency declarations for states under the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, an action that was recommended to President Trump by the Opioid

Commission in 2017. Though the Act has historically been summoned for natural disasters, its authority has also been used to great effect during the pandemic. In fact, FEMA has already provided tens of billions of dollars of emergency COVID aid to states. These same mechanisms could be used to immediately get money to state and local governments to respond to the overdose crisis with fentanyl test strips, sterile syringe programs, mobile crisis response teams, recovery community and harm reduction organizations, and more.

President Biden should also facilitate naloxone in all public places—just like first aid kits and AEDs—and press the FDA to make the drug available over the counter. After all, the agency expressed support for doing this nearly three years ago.

The second focus area must be insurance parity for mental health and substance use disorders. It is essential that we decrease our reliance on short-term, band-aid “solutions” and think big picture. Case in point: the recently announced “unprecedented” harm reduction grant program to “address the nation’s substance use and overdose epidemic.” The program only offers \$30 million to be distributed over three years—nowhere near what it would take to truly address a public health crisis of this magnitude.

We don’t rely on cumbersome grant programs to treat cancer or COVID-19. Instead, we make sure our health care financing systems reimburse for providing needed treatment services. For mental health and addiction, this means fully enforcing the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 to eliminate wrongful denials of coverage that too often stop people from getting help. Labor Secretary Marty Walsh has been taking aggressive action to do just that in employer-sponsored plans. We look forward to the administration following suit for Medicaid and marketplace plans, which disproportionately cover individuals at higher risk of overdose.

The third focus area must be increasing access to medication-assisted treatment (MAT). While the administration has taken steps to loosen a requirement that limits the prescribing of buprenorphine, a lifesaving medication to treat opioid addiction, the president has not forcefully declared his support for bills in Congress to eliminate the requirement entirely—despite campaign promises.

The fourth and final focus area must be strong leadership at the federal level. The president should take decisive action to cut across agency siloes, pressure Congress to make necessary statutory changes, and guide state and local governments.

We desperately need a primetime address on mental health and addiction—and a firm personal commitment to take charge. When the overdose death rate crossed 100,000 for the first time in November, Biden missed a critical opportunity by only issuing a written statement.

Overnight Health Care — Presented by Alexion — Battle lines drawn...

Purdue Pharma, states agree to new opioid settlement

The administration must also walk the talk when it comes to public health updates and the dissemination of information. Dr. Anthony Fauci should be discussing the mental health and addiction fallout from COVID-19 on a regular basis, and mental health experts such as Dr. Raul Gupta, director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, should be known to the American public. Visibility matters.

Every day that passes, we sacrifice more and more Americans to the highly treatable brain disease of addiction. Too many families are burying their loved ones due to a lack of a coordinated response from our elected leaders. The roadmap to confront this crisis is clear. President Biden, we implore you to use it.

*RYAN HAMPTON is a national addiction recovery advocate, community organizer, and person in long-term recovery. He is the author of “Unsettled: How the Purdue Pharma Bankruptcy Failed the Victims of the American Overdose Crisis.”*

*This article is a reprint with permission of the author.*

# ADVOCACY policy change

**BY:** ANN WOODBURY

When Americans think of their First Amendment right to assemble and petition the government, what typically comes to mind are activists on Capitol Hill with picket signs protesting hot topic issues. While large demonstrations have their place and can increase public awareness and instigate legislative change, the reality is that constituent meetings remain a powerful tool in shaping policy. These private constituent meetings are even more powerful when a person with lived experience is sharing their story. Many organizations and activist groups rely on people with lived experiences to influence Congress to act. As we enter another year of the pandemic, we must work together to direct lawmaker's attention to the recovery community, its needs and how COVID has impacted the addiction recovery journey.

Below you will find five, easy steps you can take to become an active participant in our nation's legislative process and help your elected officials better understand how to incorporate addiction recovery health initiatives into their policy decisions:

## **STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM AND THE SOLUTION, THEN ALIGN WITH THOSE WHO SHARE YOUR PASSIONS AND CONCERNS.**

Successful advocates identify issues that are relevant, timely, achievable and that will have a positive social impact. The good news is, there are many well-known organizations actively working to pass legislation to help fight addiction and fuel recovery. Recovery Advocacy Project, The Voices Project and Faces and Voices of Recovery are just a few organizations dedicated to advancing addiction recovery-focused policies and programs.

## **STEP 2: PREPARE FOR YOUR MEETING BY FAMILIARIZING YOURSELF WITH YOUR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND THE POLICY ISSUES.**

Do your policymakers have a history of supporting mental health and addiction recovery policies? Have they publicly shared any personal stories about these issues? Does their state/district have a higher prevalence of



drug addiction? A quick and thorough Google search will help you gather information about your federal lawmakers, so that you can position your argument in a way that will encourage their support.

Before the meeting, you should have your key messages, facts to support your arguments, as well as a specific legislative ask that the lawmaker can act upon. Be sure to practice your answers to following questions:

- What is the problem and how is it impacting your lawmakers' constituents?
- What is the solution (e.g. additional funding to support recovery centers, stricter regulations to deter drug misuse/diversion, etc.)?
- How can your lawmaker be part of the solution (e.g. cosponsor a bill, sign a support letter, etc.)?

### **STEP 3: SCHEDULE THE MEETING AND EXECUTE.**

Identify the appropriate contact for scheduling a meeting with your lawmaker. It's important to note that you may not be able to meet with your federal elected official; however, meeting with a congressional staffer is just as impactful. Often, Members of Congress are extremely busy and rely on their staff to keep them briefed on issues impacting their constituents. Staffers hold a powerful position in the grand scheme of lawmaking – advising members on legislation, how to vote, and how it will impact their constituents.

When executing the meeting, be sure to keep your messages short and simplify the complex. If you are comfortable, incorporate a personal or anecdotal story to personalize your ask. A moving story is often far more impactful and memorable than facts and logic. And remember, you don't have to be an expert on the policy!

### **STEP 4: FOLLOW-UP.**

It's critical that you follow-up after a meeting with a thank you email, reiterating the key points that were discussed and your legislative "ask". You may have been one of 15 people to meet with the lawmaker and/or congressional staffer that day and it's easy for your message to be lost among a sea of competing voices.

### **STEP 5: CONTINUE THE RELATIONSHIP**

Fostering relationships with Members of Congress pays invaluable dividends. By maintaining contact with your congressional office, you can establish yourself as a trusted voice in the addiction recovery community and continue to influence your policymakers' decisions. You can build relationships by sending legislative update emails, checking in with your congressional offices quarterly, and even sending holiday cards and thank you emails.

Meeting with your lawmakers may seem intimidating, but thousands of citizen advocates across the country do it every day! There are a wealth of resources available online to help become an effective advocate. And by following these five simple steps, you are already beginning your advocacy journey on the right foot!

*ANNE WOODBURY is the Founder and CEO of CURA Strategies, a health care integrated public affairs firm that specializes in advocacy communications, including for mental health clients like The Kennedy Forum and Mental Health for US.*



# DYS-STORY testimonials

BY: DONALD GUNTHER, RCP, NAMI-IOOV

I have a Public Announcement that consists of psychological abuse, passive aggressive behaviors that permanently altered me to Process and Assess my once distorted thought patterns. After managing my moments, I feel that I've been Purposefully Appointed to give back. A half of a century later, I have a Dys-Story to tell that is well overdue. Now with Covid 19 creating a new pandemic, I want to address the original pandemic that began with mental health and substance use disorders many years ago. By the way, I am Donald Gunther, a husband (24 years), a proud father (22 years) of a young man who graduated from Auburn University on May 1, 2021 with Magna Cum Laude distinctions. Last but not least it would not be appropriate if I didn't mention being a son of a great dad and husband. Acknowledging my father will represent three (3) generations of men Underserved, Stigmatized and Abused. My father, a US veteran who suffered from SUD, represents being underserved. I have been stigmatized as an (ACOA) adult child of alcoholism and my son and I have been abused growing up in Abject Poverty and having to deal with psychological abuse, depression, and anxiety. My humble beginnings was the birthplace of my dysfunctional story.

This is a unique tale all about an African American boy from 56 Washington Street Tuckahoe, NY being comfortable enough to be uncomfortable to be an advocate for NAMI-Georgia. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI-IOOV). NAMI In Our Own Voice is an auditory way for me to communicate my story however most men are visual learners. Ironically, in 2020 my vision was to bring clarity to a picture that many don't seem to acknowledge and it continues to be out of focus. So, metaphorically speaking, addressing men's wellness is like not seeing an elephant in the room, we know it's too big of an object to miss, eventually it must be addressed and removed. Otherwise the elephant in the room will continue to cause a catastrophe and be a burden in our lives. In many evidence based cases, America's environmental issues taught us all our learned behaviors. The fatherless generation was and still is a crisis in America. In my opinion the catalyst of the learned behaviors that affected us all is Inequality. Inequality continues to empower some races and oppress many other races and cultures. Someone else's perception is my reality and vice versa this was the original pandemic that wasn't addressed effectively. So our families' living conditions were presented to us as dysfunctional on arrival (DOA). Ironically, the acronym for dead on arrival would be our humble beginnings as the underserved stigmatized abused in the U.S.A.

Throughout my Public Announcement I will make reference to my testimonials (T) that would commence my dysfunctional story (Dys-story). These stories could help men, women and families with their own Mental Health Issues/Substance Use Disorders. These events have infiltrated me and led me to my recovery process.

**Tuckahoe**<sup>1</sup>-A small village in Westchester County (suburbs) outside of NYC surrounded by neighboring cities that produced NFL commissioner Roger Goddell (Bronxville), the two time Golden Globe, two Academy Awards and one Tony Award winner Denzel Hayes Washington Jr. (Mount Vernon), Mary J Blige singer, songwriter, actress and philanthropist (Yonkers) and last but not least the founder of MHFV Lucy Hall (Tuckahoe) CEO of a gender specific substance abuse treatment center in Georgia (who I will speak about later). Geographically, Tuckahoe is located in one of the wealthiest counties in New York. I can honestly say that it's a great place to raise your family (blessing) and it's the worst place to stay as a young adult (curse). How can that be? I am glad you asked, first and foremost let me start with the letter "C" Codependency.

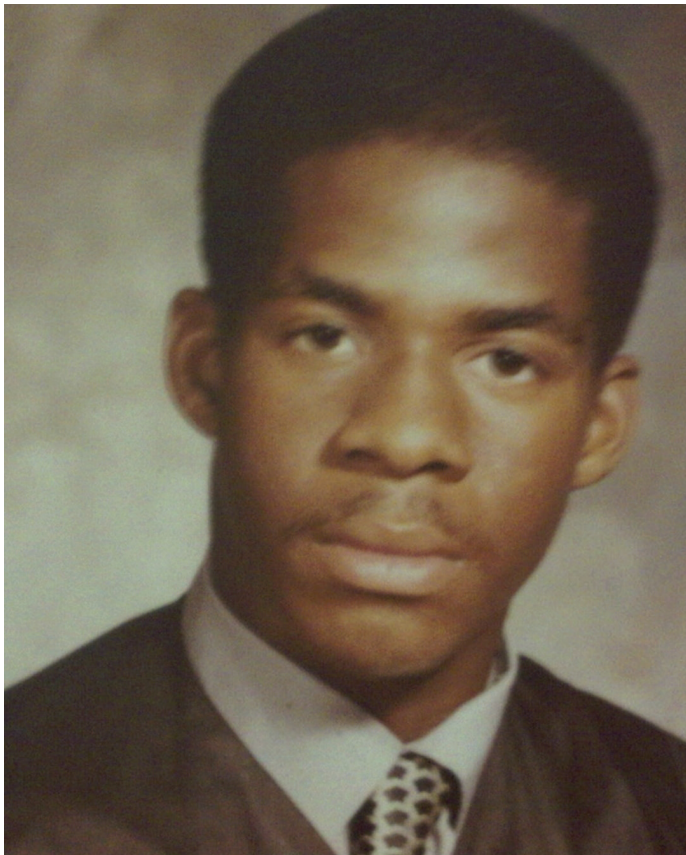


- SHARE YOUR STORY -

Tuckahoe is a place where all parents can see the benefits of community and everyone working toward a common goal as a family during the early years as children. The picture painted is not accurate after we are no longer in youth sports, elementary schools and little children. We should have recognized the alphabets starting with "A" "Accountability, next "B" Boundaries/Behaviors. So, the behavior we learned didn't provide us with any self focus, self worth, self-confidence and made many families on the block complacent and Codependent.

Now that I gave you some insight about where I lived most of my life, it's my obligation to paint the picture for you so that you can better understand why Men's Wellness is the precursor of mental health issues. I was one of ten children, five boys and five girls, both parents from the south. Although the oldest two siblings were out of the apartment on Washington St (Tuckahoe), one

**Trauma<sup>2</sup>** - As I begin to use the canvas to paint the picture, think of absolute poverty also known as Abject Poverty. Abject is defined as the lowest extreme imaginable and is associated with misery and humiliation. Those in abject poverty often lack access to things that many of us take for granted, such as schools, electricity, and clean water. In my case we had electricity, schools, and only cold water. By the way, our bathroom was outside of our apartment (in the hallway). So, you can see why I became emotionally disconnected. We lived in a cold-water flat, four rooms that didn't produce heat in the winter, no bath-tub or shower, always having to heat water for our wash-ups, and whether day or night going outside of our apartment to use the bathroom. Imagine a young boy having to use the bathroom while his siblings are sleeping and not wanting to wake them up so that he can feel safe. Hindsight, now it makes sense why that little boy had a bladder problem during the course of the night for years.



attending college and the other working. By the way, did I say apartment? I apologize I meant an urban renewal development that oppressed many families which in all fairness commenced my (ACE's) Adverse Childhood Experiences and (PTSD) Post Trauma Stress Disorder. However, in all fairness to my parents they really did the best they could have done because not until now did I realize that we were monetarily poor but rich in spirit/hope. Not to mention what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas (lol). In the Gunther household you better not repeat or present to be needy that was just NOT acceptable. Mom said "It doesn't mean you are weak or less than the other but it would make others place a stigma on you that would be hard to get rid of". Mom, you were right!

He would be ridiculed and ostracized for those actions by his own siblings. I am sure we all had our own traumatic experiences. In spite of that I will say that I love my family (teammates) because we endured hell on earth together. Therefore, team Gunther was my first set of teammates that I went through hell with. Tuckahoe was Toxic for me and my family living through the trauma while wearing a mask was learned behavior that has caused me to deal with the consequences of co-occurring disorders in the African American community. Although God's grace and mercy kept me from indulging in any substance use, my mental well being was attacked and dismantled for decades. It has left me Emotionally Scarred and now I must use my voice and (MHFV and NAMI-IOOV) platform to address mental health.

**Toxicity<sup>3</sup>** - Toxicity was the soil that I came from physically and emotionally while residing at 56 Washington Street Tuckahoe NY . Although my parents wanted nothing but the best for their (seeds) children. However, planting seeds in bad soil is not healthy, and our parents would teach us “one for all and all for one”. To say the least, Tuckahoe was a blessing and a curse, the blessing was the comparison to living in Mr. Rogers Neighborhood growing up. In a normal 24 hour day (AM/PM) or two sides of a coin (heads and tails) or the perception of water in a glass (half empty or half full). However, being transparent it was just “WATER” in a glass to me . So, not until it was too late did the Toxicity of Tuckahoe come into play. Tuckahoe taught me some valuable life lessons, most importantly to remain humble and grateful by keeping the faith. In being totally transparent I want to admit on many occasions I didn't care for a lot of people in Toxic Tuckahoe because I didn't know how to care for myself. My distorted thoughts would make me feel that my family was being laughed at and ridiculed. Again, please don't forget the abject poverty picture that I previously painted ! This was displaced stress syndrome also known as post trauma stress disorder(PTSD) . As a youth my psychological warfare created a lack of trust in the system, my reality as a man confirmed my perception as a child. Henceforth, now is the perfect time for me to make a Public Announcement about Psychological Abuse because it was real and would be the trigger to alter my behavior towards my family and community. This is when I realized that the truth hurts and it would create a lifetime of grief (anger, acceptance, bargaining, depression and denial) for me. Finally, five decades later, no longer embarrassed and ashamed about my public announcement that I owned it as a child. The recovery process has taught me as a man that this abuse didn't belong to me or my family. I have endured Psychological Abuse, which created a Passive Aggressive behavior that has Permanently Altered my psyche. Fortunately, my transportation enroute to my purpose is teaching me to Assess and Process my life experiences “so that my truth shall set me free “. Did I say Truth ?

**Transparency<sup>4</sup>** - Authenticity is something I had to learn the hard way and how to value being authentic. Since, we were poor and I did not want to accept it ! My parents did their best, however being totally honest Toxic Tuckahoe assisted in the poverty and co-occurring disorders of our family. Nevertheless, as adults the family could have been better with one another. However, that's another story for a different book. Therefore, let me get back to the truth. Transparency is more than a beautiful picture, In many cases it's painful. Pain is not prejudice and it is an equal opportunity experience waiting to happen. Fortunately, now as an adult it will become a profitable teaching lesson exemplifying God's grace and mercy. Also, breaking the Silence of a Man. God placed a hedge over me, making me inaccessible to my enemies in “Toxic Tuckahoe” in order for me to find my purpose and tell my dysfunctional story. A place that I will always call home and be gracious for my humble beginnings. Now as a parent, father, brother, uncle, friend, coach/ mentor to many, transparency is the start of my new beginnings, it allows me to motivationally

assess & process myself (MAP). Transparency allows me now to game plan/ treatment plan through generational curses caused by generations of inequality. The learned behavior that America projected/displayed led many of us to comorbidity, co-occurring disorders , substance use and mental illness. Ironically, I am employed at a gender specific treatment facility in Atlanta, Georgia. The CEO, Lucy Hall is from Tuckahoe, the same toxic streets/ blocks that I grew up in. Transparency is Lucy Hall's, twenty eight plus years of sobriety and now transforming thousands of lives (MHFV, RISE programs Fathers, Family members & Intimate partners). So my transformation came from the humble but painful beginnings of playing and coaching sports, school, family, friends and abject poverty (the mask that covers substance abuse and mental health disorders) in my community has taught me to be resilient and grateful.

**Transformation<sup>5</sup>** - One of my many blessings from God is my transformation from a boy to man; man to husband; and husband to a dad. As I continue to transform, I recognize how God used obstacles such as abject poverty, toxic tuckahoe and post traumatic stress disorders to equip me with perseverance, resilience and fortitude as transportation to my purpose. I am GRATEFUL as an adult I am able to value transparency. My transformation is allowing me to use the pains of my past sufferings to empower my present so my future would uplift my son and the generations to come. My humble impoverished beginnings enriched my faith. Nevertheless, I continue to plow until my purpose is fulfilled . Therefore, my pain will continue to be my motivation for my transformation so that people that look like me can use their own experiences to transform. I must also admit that there were many that didn't look like me but provided the necessary hope to keep me hopeful. Holistically I must remain mindful and stay in the moment, live my life on life's terms, remember that my thoughts are just thoughts. Most importantly, I must d.o.o (don't own opinions) what I tell my son not to do!

**Transition<sup>6</sup>** - The one experience that continues to get my undivided attention is transition. Transition as a youth and adult continues to be difficult because it brought me out of my comfort-zone, transition tells me it is time to move. Transition requires faith, as I reminisce I recognize that my transition started when my son was just a seed. On April 5th 1999, “much was given “I became a Dad through a procedure called In Vitro-Fertilization (IVF) . My heavenly father provided me an early opportunity to value the process (life) and purpose (living) of life. Therefore, “much is expected” through the transition from birth (Boy), young adult (Man), evolved into a (Husband) and the responsibility of being a (Dad) leader to many . Now, many years later the pain during the process explains my purpose of The IVF (I'm Very Fortunate) procedure continues to provide me an opportunity to be a Dedicated and Determined Dad/ Father & Family Advocate at Mary Hall Freedom Village, CCAR Recovery Coach Professional and soon CAC1 . After the birth of my son Isaiah, I started to understand the complexity of transitioning into what GOD wants me to be. Therefore, if we have too many facts, we will not need to have FAITH since I walk by faith and not by sight.

- **SHARE YOUR STORY** -

My transition is empowering my “recovery”. My recovery is a journey that I am processing through with hope as I transition into Georgia’s Grateful Recovery Coach.

**Treasure<sup>7</sup>** - My Treasure comes from my family, historical trauma, alcohol abuse and mental illness. I was not given a fair chance. However, I was able to receive my parents best or should I say God’s grace and mercy protected me because of God’s purpose for me. Although, alcohol and mental health disorders (comorbidity) were present in our house. Unfortunately, for many years black children, other races and cultures also had to deal with the system of America’s pain. Thankfully, my learned behavior was seeing my dad’s fortitude, adaptability during his substance abuse with alcohol. These experiences showed me the joy, pain, suffering and resilience. The BMHD transition from a boy-man-husband-dad has always motivated me because of my family’s dysfunctions. Since, many families suffer from comorbidity, it’s time to make my pain during that process pay.

Picture (Parable) the making of diamonds and its value. First let me say that the diamond comes from the greek word meaning unbreakable and real diamonds are unbreakable. So, my dys-story is valuable like an imperfect diamond. We have all been beautifully broken, only if we can just withstand the pressure and allow ourselves to transform into our purpose. Recovery requires resilience and many years of my life consisted of escaping, ignoring or not addressing my reality. Now as an adult I became mindful to address a lifetime of Trauma and Grief. The emotions from grieving catapulted my anxieties which continued through my learned behaviors as a child. Since growing up in abject poverty I was too traumatized to run because to me I was comfortable in my poverty stricken community. Unfortunately my unworthiness kept me grounded and feeling inadequate so where to and why should I run? My fear in running would be teachable moments for me, my pain and suffering would promote my faith. My Fear

would lead me to my Faith, at a young age I found peace in my faith and would lean into my intimacy with my higher power. My Fear was never living, it was always the fear of not being allowed to live! So, the generations of abuse and abusive learned behaviors infiltrated me psychologically. Now as I run towards my faith and lean not into my own understanding I am going through a metamorphosis. A change for the better! Some would say transitioning into .....

As I reflect on overcoming the toxicity and trauma from my past it transformed me into my transition from a boy from NY to a man in Georgia. My transformation from my painful reality equipped me to assess and process my treasures (life lessons). Since my learned behavior produced fear I could identify with neglect. As a counselor self nurturing is imperative and allows the recovery coach and or CAC1 counselor in training to effectively assist the clients, participants, recoverees and all who are overcoming their Stigmas and Addiction (SaD).

My fear didn’t seem fair, most of my life unfair was the “only” choice there was! However, now life provides me an opportunity to reflect and process in being Purposefully Appointed. The change that only my faith could overcome my generation of pain slowly became my transportation to my faith.

Now learning about the recovery process, hope and my own mental health issues, my change from fear is now perceived to be fair because my reality (mind) has changed!!! “Changed People Change People”, My Dys-Story has made me a better man, husband, father, mentor and now designated me into being a CCAR Recovery Coach Professional and Georgia’s Grateful Recovery Coach Professional.



- FUN IN RECOVERY -

# PHOTO SUBMISSIONS



RECOVERY LOOKS GOOD ON US!



NEW HAIR, WHO DIS!



BOUJEE BABES!

# QUESTIONS? ask the coach

BY: ZONE STAFF



## *How important is it to pick up a white chip if you don't want anyone to know you relapsed?*

Picking up a white chip is a gesture which allows the person who relapsed to openly surrender to the program in front of peers at a 12 step recovery meeting. Ultimately, whether or not someone picks up a white chip is a conversation for the individual to have with their sponsor. Everyone's recovery program is different; however, openly and honestly surrendering is a foundational stone for 12 step Recovery.

## *I am new to recovery and I don't know where to start. What should I do?*

There are many different pathways to recovery, you just need to find one that works for you. If you need detox or treatment, there are many options available. A great resource is SAMHSA Treatment Finder, which helps you to locate resources in your area <https://findtreatment.gov/>. If you would like to try recovery support meetings there are 12 Step, SMART Recovery, Dharma Recovery, All Recovery, Celebrate Recovery, and many others. It may be a good idea to try some different meetings and see what works for you.

## *I have not used in 6 months, but people say I am not "IN" recovery. What is true recovery?*

You are in recovery when you say you are in recovery. It is not up to others to dictate or judge your recovery program and whether or not it is effective. What that person may be referring to when they say "IN" recovery is the quality of the recovery program being worked. A true recovery program is not just about not using, it is about improving all aspects of your life: learning new coping skills, finding connection with something bigger than yourself, doing the next right thing, establishing healthy relationships, repairing salvageable relationships, finding purpose, and bettering yourself as a whole.

## The Little Green Pail

She walked through the garden of yesterday,  
The world filled with promises and forgotten dreams,  
And she wandered...  
Her little green pail clutched between her fingers,  
Filled with broken flowers—  
Not broken out of pain or out of longing,  
But by the simple pleasure of separating one from the other  
The future remained unwritten,  
Her story all but blank pages of a book,  
No tears were shed,  
and all there was in the garden  
Was a little girl with her little green pail  
Oblivious to tomorrow.

- Carson Rutledge

## Keep It Simple

Don't forget where you came from, don't forget how far you've come  
Ask for help, call on God, He will surely bring your attention back to "How It Works"  
Don't overthink don't drown in self pity, stay in your lane, keep it simple silly  
Keep your side of the street clean, have faith and believe, go to a meeting, help others  
it's a daily reprieve  
Check your spiritual fitness, your prayers, your meditation; conscious contact with God  
is the only medication  
No pressure, no worry, don't fret, don't hurry, don't drink, don't pick up no matter what  
it's never going to be easy, soft or frilly just keep it simple silly

- Tanya Lapham

# SUBMISSION rules

## **POETRY**

Poems must be in line with Recovery or with the Recovery journey

- Poems must be no more than 250 words
- Please do not submit pictures with the poem
- Include your name and your sobriety date with submission
- Poems must be original work
- Sign waiver and return with submission. Waiver found at [www.davisdirection.com](http://www.davisdirection.com)

## **ART**

- Art may be any medium
- Please use high resolution images
- Art will be blown up or shrunk down to 5 x 7 size
- Include your name and sobriety date and a brief statement about the work of art.
- Art must be original work
- Sign waiver and return with submission. Waiver found at [www.davisdirection.com](http://www.davisdirection.com)

## **QUOTES**

- Quotes must be no longer than 50 words
- Please include source and author
- Include your name and sobriety date along with a head shot of yourself
- No profanity will be permitted in the quotes

## **STORIES**

- Please keep your story to no more than 750 words.
- Include your name and sobriety date along with a picture of your journey.
- You may include a before and after picture of yourself.
- Sign waiver and return with submission. Waiver found at [www.davisdirection.com](http://www.davisdirection.com)

## **FUN PHOTOS - CONTEST**

- 1st prize \$100 | 2nd prize \$50 | 3rd prize - \$25;
- Theme – Recovery FUN - Write a caption to accompany your photo
- Sign waiver and return with submission. Waiver found at [www.davisdirection.com](http://www.davisdirection.com)
- All people in picture must sign publishing waiver.

*Please email all submissions to [info@theddfzone.com](mailto:info@theddfzone.com)*

# RECOVERY COACH ACADEMY

# CCAR

**BY:** DANIEL SPINNEY, RCP, CCAR TRAINER

With relapse rate so high a need for expanded services and more recovery coaches in the community in the community are in high demand. With the CCAR training provided at the Zone it helps fill growing need by providing professionals in the recovery field with additional skills and abilities to better serve those who suffer from the deadly disease of Substance Use Disorder.



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[daniel.spinney@davisdirection.com](mailto:daniel.spinney@davisdirection.com)  
(770) 693-5982



## RECOVERY COACH ACADEMY OFFERED AT THE ZONE

Recovery Coach Academy  
July 18th-21st  
9am until 6pm  
30 CEUs

The CCAR Recovery Coach Academy© is an intensive training academy focusing on providing individuals with the skills needed to guide, mentor and support anyone who would like to enter into or sustain long-term recovery from an addiction to alcohol or other drugs.

Classes are offered in-person at The Zone

- COMING UP -

# IN OUR NEXT issue

The **Honorable Newt Gingrich** will be our next cover model and we will get his views on what is going on at the border and how much fentanyl is getting through. Newt is a long time friend and supporter and has been an active part of the war on drugs for as long as I can remember. When Covid hit and the borders shut down, fentanyl went into mass production in the United States and the cartels were no longer as necessary as they had been. Now that the borders are open again, more and more drugs are pouring in and we need to make it stop. Newt will share his ideas on how to make this happen.

Our regular columnists will continue to share their views and ideas on **Addiction, Recovery, and Dual Diagnosis in America**. Dr. Tracie Doe, Mental Health Director of The Zone addresses Dual Diagnosis in the first of a series of articles featured in Recovery Zone Magazine. Sarah Mangold shares her personal experience in part of "How I Hurt Myself: My Hep C Journey", a two part series which will be featured in our next two issues.

The Zone shares services with **The Recovery Roundtable Leadership Council** which is composed of leaders in the community including representatives from recovery support organizations, district attorney's office, law enforcement, treatment facilities, school system, hospitals, and first responders including the fire department and EMTs. Building a community of recovery involves leaders collaborating on solutions for the disease of addiction.

**The Phoenix** encourages individuals in recovery to participate in activities such as arts and crafts, yoga, boxing, crossfit, hiking, running, etc. The Phoenix's mission is to build a sober active community that fuels resilience and harnesses the transformational power of connection so that together we rise, recover, and live. Learn more about this activity based recovery community in our next issue.

A new type of meth is sweeping the nation and killing our friends and family. **P2P Meth** is a new type of meth that is even more dangerous than the meth we saw a decade ago. Read all about this new type of meth that is sweeping the nation. "Methamphetamine damages the brain no matter how it is derived, but P2P meth seems to create a higher order of cerebral catastrophe." 2021. S. Quiones. [www.atlantic.com](http://www.atlantic.com)

# BRANDON MITCHELL #98

Former NFL defensive lineman, Super Bowl XXXVI Champion, and recovering addict.



## #9 DEBATES

- Coke or Pepsi
- Oreos or Chips Ahoy
- Android or iPhone
- Pancakes or Waffles
- Cats or Dogs
- Nike or Adidas
- Bacon or Sausage
- Summer or Winter
- Gold or Silver

## #8 TRUTHS

- How many children do you have? - 4
- One thing you can't live without? - Family
- Favorite color? - Blue
- Favorite place to visit? - Anywhere with a beach
- What superpower would you pick? - teleportation
- Favorite food? - Anything seafood
- #1 on your bucket list? - Travel to Singapore
- What vehicle do you drive? - Truck

# Leftover medications can lead to

*accidental poisonings • diversion • misuse • overdoses • suicides*



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