

ROADS TO RECOVERY NEWSLETTER

Created by Dual Recovery at Warren Washington Association for Mental Health to support individuals in recovery

A NEWSLETTER FOR YOU
AND ABOUT YOU

SPOTLIGHT TOPIC

You Can Still Have Fun in Recovery

BY GINGER MILLER

I remember in early recovery feeling like I'd never be able to have fun again, how could I without a substance to help and without jeopardizing my newly established sobriety? Sound familiar? I've also dealt with depressive episodes that felt like they would never end and I'd never see happiness again, let alone have fun. And I had both going on at once - fighting depression in recovery... now that was a challenge! Maybe this is a struggle you've faced too. If you can relate, as much as it may feel like a lonely place to be in, you are not alone. There is hope! It took a lot of work on my part, and I needed support and encouragement from others that had faced similar struggles as me and understood. Having the support of others that had been where I was helped me feel less judged.

I remember my therapist asking me what I did for fun. All of my answers revolved around the fulfillment I felt from my job. The work I did helped me see I can make a difference and I enjoyed helping people, so I equated that to having fun. She pointed out to me, although it was fantastic that I enjoyed my work, that wasn't a recreational activity, therefore not really what most people refer to as fun. I left her office a bit perplexed, the kind of fun she was referring to felt like it would be work. Ironic, right? She told me to think about giving myself permission to have fun, that one baffled me too.

Around that same time a friend of mine from AA suggested I read a specific story from the Big Book. The point of the story was stated in what they called Rule 62. It simply stated, "Don't take yourself too damn seriously." What was my friend trying to tell me? I certainly had a lot to mull over in my head regarding fun. Apparently, I lost track of what fun really was and needed to rediscover it.

Since it sounded like work, did I really need to look for the kind of fun others were telling me about or could I settle for letting my fulfilling work be my version of fun? I was being encouraged to find out how to have fun again, I was told, for many reasons. One of the big ones was to reduce my risk of relapse. If I didn't learn how to have fun and relax again, the sick side of my mind could start thinking that my old self-medicating ways were fun, forgetting all the problems it caused or at least diminishing them. My therapist encouraged it to help fight my depression and anxiety. So, I began my search. As crazy as it may sound, I really didn't know where to start. I was given the suggestion of exploring

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You Can Still Have Fun in Recovery (Cont'd)

things I did and enjoyed when I was younger, before my diseases took over. It took some effort, but I started remembering that I used to enjoy doing art, making crafts, writing, listening to music, taking pictures, baking, camping, and walking in nature. I even remembered I used to like collecting things like coins, stamps, and key chains. I remembered a few things I had wanted to do but didn't get to, like traveling, gardening, and owning my own business. I was also told to try new things, even ones that might not sound like I would like them, just to explore because after all, I am working on redefining who I am and who I want to be. I was reminded (when I was resistant to new ideas) that everyone can find the concept of trying something new to be uncomfortable and sometimes even a little scary. I slowly became more willing. I started revisiting activities I'd done in the past that I thought were ok to see if I'd like them better now, like bowling, visiting an arcade, going to a sporting event, and walking down Broadway window shopping. Then I started testing some really uncomfortable things like karaoke, white water rafting, riding a horse, dancing in public, and spending time by myself. There were also some things I wanted to try again, but I was nervous about doing them because I associated them with using and "having fun". Some friends helped me look at some things I could do to make trying them less risky to my sobriety and less stressful to try.

Today, I can sit around a campfire without drinking. I can go to a concert and enjoy it without getting high. I was never a sports fan before but now I really enjoy watching a good hockey game. I can see the adventure in trying new things. I can live in the moment and not let the troubles of life paralyze me all the time. Sometimes I still have to work at it, it doesn't always automatically come easy to me, but now I know I can continue to find ways to have fun.

★ Check out Katelyn's experience in finding fun in recovery on page 4!



UNDERSTANDING THE DIAGNOSIS

Eating Disorders

BY GINGER MILLER



We all need to eat, and most of us look forward to eating. More than nourishing our bodies, food is often a big part of getting together with the people we love. Indeed, it's hard to imagine what life would be like without the many social events we have built around sharing food. But for people with eating disorders, unhealthy relationships with food and body image can lead to dangerous eating behaviors. According to the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA), having an eating disorder can cause major social, emotional, and physical problems. Left untreated, eating disorders can harm the heart, digestive system, bones, teeth, mouth and can lead to other diseases, organ failure—or even death. Most eating disorders involve focusing too much on your weight, body shape, and food, and behaviors that stem from this can significantly impact your body's ability to get appropriate nutrition. The three most common eating disorders are:

- Anorexia nervosa: A condition in which people deliberately starve themselves or severely restrict food intake. This disorder is usually characterized by an abnormally low body weight, intense fear of gaining weight, and a distorted perception of weight or shape, excessively limiting calories or using other methods to lose weight such as excessive exercise, using laxatives, diet aids, or vomiting after eating. Efforts to reduce your weight, even when underweight, can cause severe health problems, sometimes to the point of deadly self-starvation.



Eating Disorders (Cont'd)

- **Bulimia nervosa:** A condition in which someone eats large quantities of food and then purges it, often through vomiting, taking laxatives, or exercising excessively. With bulimia, there are episodes of bingeing and purging that involve feeling a lack of control over your eating. During these episodes, a large amount of food is consumed in a short period of time and then removed by force vomiting, over-exercising, or other methods such as laxatives, to get rid of the calories. Many people with bulimia also restrict their eating during the day, which often leads to more binge eating and purging. The individual is usually preoccupied with weight and body shape, and judges themselves severely and harshly for their self-perceived flaws, even though they may be at a normal weight or slightly overweight.
- **Binge-eating:** A condition in which someone regularly eats too much food (binge) and feels a lack of control over their eating. They may eat quickly or eat more food than intended, even when they're not hungry, and may continue eating even long after they're uncomfortably full. After a binge, they often feel guilty, disgusted, or ashamed by their behavior and the amount of food eaten. However, they don't try to compensate for this behavior with excessive exercise or purging, as someone with bulimia or anorexia might. Instead, these feelings of shame can often lead to eating alone to hide your bingeing. A new round of bingeing usually occurs at least once a week. A person with this disorder may be at a normal weight, overweight, or obese.

There are many reasons someone might develop an eating disorder—but none of them are purely about vanity. In fact, people with eating disorders often have low self-esteem. Some people with eating disorders struggle with past trauma, lack of control over their lives, and feelings of inadequacy, anxiety, or depression. Controlling what they eat is one way to exert control over their lives—even when the challenges they're struggling with have little or nothing to do with food or eating.

An eating disorder can be difficult to manage or overcome by yourself, especially because they can essentially take over your life. If you notice a family member or friend who seems to show signs of an eating disorder, consider talking to that person about your concern for his or her well-being. Although you may not be able to prevent an eating disorder from developing, reaching out with compassion may encourage the person to seek treatment.

Eating disorders tend to get worse over time, and if left untreated, they can cause serious long-term health issues. So if you think that someone you know might have an eating disorder, the sooner you express your concerns, the better their chances are at recovery. If you think you may be struggling with your relationship with food, it's never too early or too late to reach out for help.

If you feel you or someone you know needs help with an eating disorder, visit the NEDA website: www.nationaleatingdisorders.org, or call/text the NEDA hotline: 800-931-2237. You can also seek confidential support through Strong 365: nywell.strong365.org, where you can take a mental health check-in quiz, chat with a mentor, and connect with a therapist, all free of charge.





LIFESTYLES

A Journey to Find Fun in Recovery

"You get shown the light in the strangest of places if you look at it right."

Scarlet Begonias- The Grateful Dead (Hunter, Garcia)

BY KATELYN BRADWELL

Today, I strongly prioritize recreation in my recovery because I have seen firsthand the benefits I reap when I do. This can be playing my ukulele, guitar, or banjo, spending time with family, gardening, or even just spending time at peace in a freshly organized environment, but the best way to really enjoy myself is to get out and hear some live music. That is when my soul truly comes alive, my body relaxes, and my spirit soars.

When I first got clean and began learning to manage my mental health challenges, I met a woman who would become one of my best friends. She gave me some of the best advice I ever got in recovery, which was if I didn't learn to lighten up and have some fun and stop taking myself so seriously, I probably wasn't going to make it. She then invited me to a Carole King concert, and later that summer we went to see The Grateful Dead. She pointed out to me, "We do like to have fun in recovery, ya know?". I was nervous as I safety planned how to go to these events with my sponsor, settling on having a list of 3 people on standby ready to take my phone call if needed, driving my own car so I could leave at any time, and being with someone with more clean time than I myself had who could show me how to enjoy myself as I learned to manage my mental health and my substance use disorder in a social environment, where I had at one point found it difficult to be clean/sober. At The Dead show I found out about The Wharf Rats, a group of concert-goers who have chosen to live drug and alcohol free. They have a table at Grateful Dead related shows, like Dead and Co, and have a meeting in between sets. They are not affiliated with NA or AA, but offer support, strength, fellowship, and hope—and traction in an otherwise slippery environment. I was so grateful for their presence at that first Dead show I went to clean, and all of the support I found at that meeting. Their website is www.wharfrats.org and most bands in the jam-band scene have a similar organization which can be found at shows by looking for the yellow balloons. The Wharf Rats newsletter, available on their website, has a listing of similar fellow sober groups for other bands as well.



My friend that took me to the Carole King and Dead show knew from the numerous hippie music bumper stickers on my car that, at that time in my life, live music was a huge part of my life. I am so grateful to her for beginning the process of showing me how to incorporate this into my recovery life in a meaningful way. When I began achieving continuous recovery this last time in 2017, I prioritized live music, finding a new friend from Dual Recovery Anonymous to attend shows with every 4-6 weeks in my hometown of Dallas, TX. We had a great time and I truly learned the value of letting go and having some fun in recovery. It provides the opportunity to develop important principles of recovery like fidelity, loyalty, dependability, honesty, and openness. But aside from its value to a recovery program, it has its own intrinsic value of the musical beat moving energy through the body, healing what was once broken and lost to me.

Attending shows like The Church, Todd Rundgren, Rebirth Brass Band, and Adrien Belew with a good friend allowed me to blow off steam and release the stress that inevitably builds up as a result of all of the hard work and efforts that go into building a strong recovery from both mental health challenges and substance use disorder. Investing in friendship this way builds the strong ties that would sustain me through trying times and challenges that would arise, such as lockdown due to COVID and the death of a close family member due to COVID. When these events struck, I had already built the strong, deep network that would support me by investing in deep, sustaining friendships. And just as friends taught me how to kick back and relax a little bit to have a good time, I invest in others by inviting those new to recovery to come with me to enjoy an evening out at a concert or other community





A Journey to Find Fun in Recovery (Cont'd)

event I think they might enjoy. I serve as a safe person they can rely on, in what might otherwise be a questionable environment, to gain some stability and comfort and have a good time out on the town! And you don't need to invest large sums of money to see good live music, as the local scene often has free shows at local community events such as the food truck event at the T-Shirt Factory on Thursday evenings here in Glens Falls.

I hope you will consider finding your own passion, be it music or something else - whatever moves your spirit brightly, by getting out there and following it to a more fulfilling and stable recovery. The rewards of recreation and social bonding are well worth our time and efforts—the dividends they can pay back are worth their weight in gold.



*"Wildflower, seed, in the sand and stone — May the four winds blow you safely home."
Franklin's Tower- The Grateful Dead (Hunter, Garcia, Kreutzman)*



HEALTH & WELLNESS

It's that time of year again... Cooler weather brings out sweaters and soup!!!

Baked Potato Soup



Here's what you'll need:

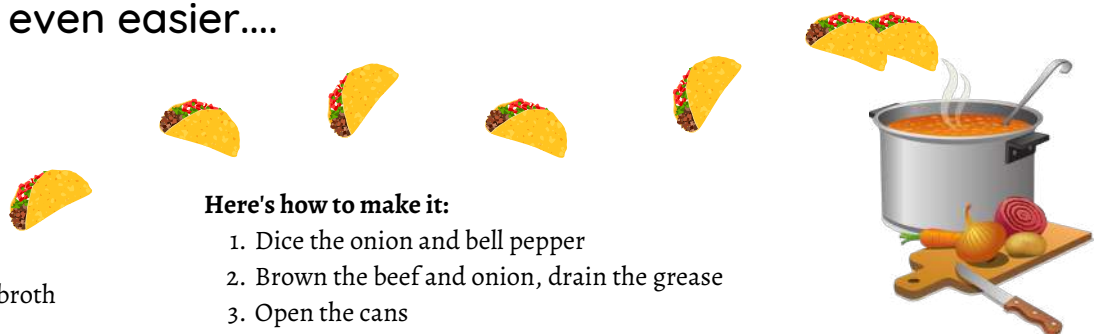
- 4 slices of bacon, halved
- 5 scallions, thinly sliced (separate white & green parts)
- 2lbs frozen hash browns OR russet potatoes (cut & peeled)
- 3 cups half & half OR whole milk
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- salt & pepper to taste

Here's how to make it:

1. Place the bacon in a large soup pot and cook on medium heat until browned and crisp, about 8 minutes. Transfer the bacon to paper towels to drain.
2. Add the white parts of the scallions to the pot. Sauté until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add the potatoes and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes. Add the half-and-half or milk and salt and bring to a simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the potatoes are soft, about 10 minutes. Meanwhile, chop or crumble the bacon.
3. Mash potatoes into your desired consistency. Taste and season with salt and pepper as needed. Serve sprinkled with cheese, scallion greens, and bacon.

Make Taco Tuesday even easier....

Taco Soup



Here's what you'll need:

- 1 small onion, diced
- 1lb ground beef
- 1 32oz carton of beef or vegetable broth
- 1 can black beans
- 1 can diced tomatoes with green chilis
- 1 cup of frozen corn
- 1 packet of taco seasoning mix
- 1 small bell pepper, diced
- garnish of your choice: tortilla strips, sour cream, shredded cheese, avocado, shredded lettuce

Here's how to make it:

1. Dice the onion and bell pepper
2. Brown the beef and onion, drain the grease
3. Open the cans
4. Rinse the black beans to wash off the pasty starch
5. Dump the broth, beans and tomatoes (with juice) into a pot, along with the corn, seasoning packet, browned beef, and bell pepper
6. Stir until well mixed
7. Simmer for about 40 minutes, stirring occasionally
8. Serve hot, garnished with your favorite toppings, and enjoy!

CHALLENGE

THE OCTOBER CHALLENGE

October's has two challenges, which means: **two chances to win a prize!** The first challenge is about gratitude. A mural has been painted in the Peer Pod at East Side Center of a bare tree to represent gratitude and hope. In the spirit of September being Recovery Awareness Month, we asked people to fill in paper leaves with what they are grateful for in their recovery. With November and Thanksgiving coming, we would like to add more gratitude leaves to the tree. Email us what you are grateful for and we will put it on a leaf and add it to the tree for you - and you'll get a free ice cream cone!

The second challenge is to send us a list of 5 things you found you love to do since getting into recovery. Share what works for you and read next month's 'Your Voice' section in the newsletter to see what works for others...maybe you'll find a new idea to try!

Everyone who chooses to participate in either of October's challenges and writes to us before October 25th will win a gift card for a free ice cream cone from Stewart's! Do both challenges and get TWO ice cream gift cards!!! You will also see your response in the November Newsletter "Your Voice" section! If you want it to be printed anonymously, just let us know when you send it in that you don't want your name on it. Email us at: gmler@wwamh.org to participate.



YOUR VOICE

Responses from September's "Healthier Habits - Sleep Hygiene" Challenge



"I did the challenge of limiting screen time when going to bed and it did seem to improve my sleeping quality. I put my phone down at least 40 minutes or so before I even tried to fall asleep and to fill that time I lay there and meditated. I also have been trying to keep a stable time for bedtime."

- Brandi



"My sleeping habit for this last month has changed. I don't like to sleep. I feel like I'm wasting my day away. I have this thing at Housing First. I like to be the first person up and out in the TV room watching the news with my first cup of coffee for the day. They give us coffee. So the first pot is ready at 5:00 am. So this last month I've been taking my sleep med like I am supposed to so I've been sleeping until 7:00, which is good for me. I went from 2-3 hours of sleep to almost 8 hours a night on my days off from work. I do feel better. The question is, will I stick with it?" - Anonymous



"I tried creating a routine to follow before I get in bed. I take a shower, put some lavender lotion on and a comfy nighty. Then I have a hot cup of tea while I read a book. When I'm done with my tea I brush my teeth and put some nature sounds on to fall asleep to. I think it might be helping, I'm more relaxed when I get in bed and I'm not waking up as many times during the night. I'm going to keep trying it for a little longer."

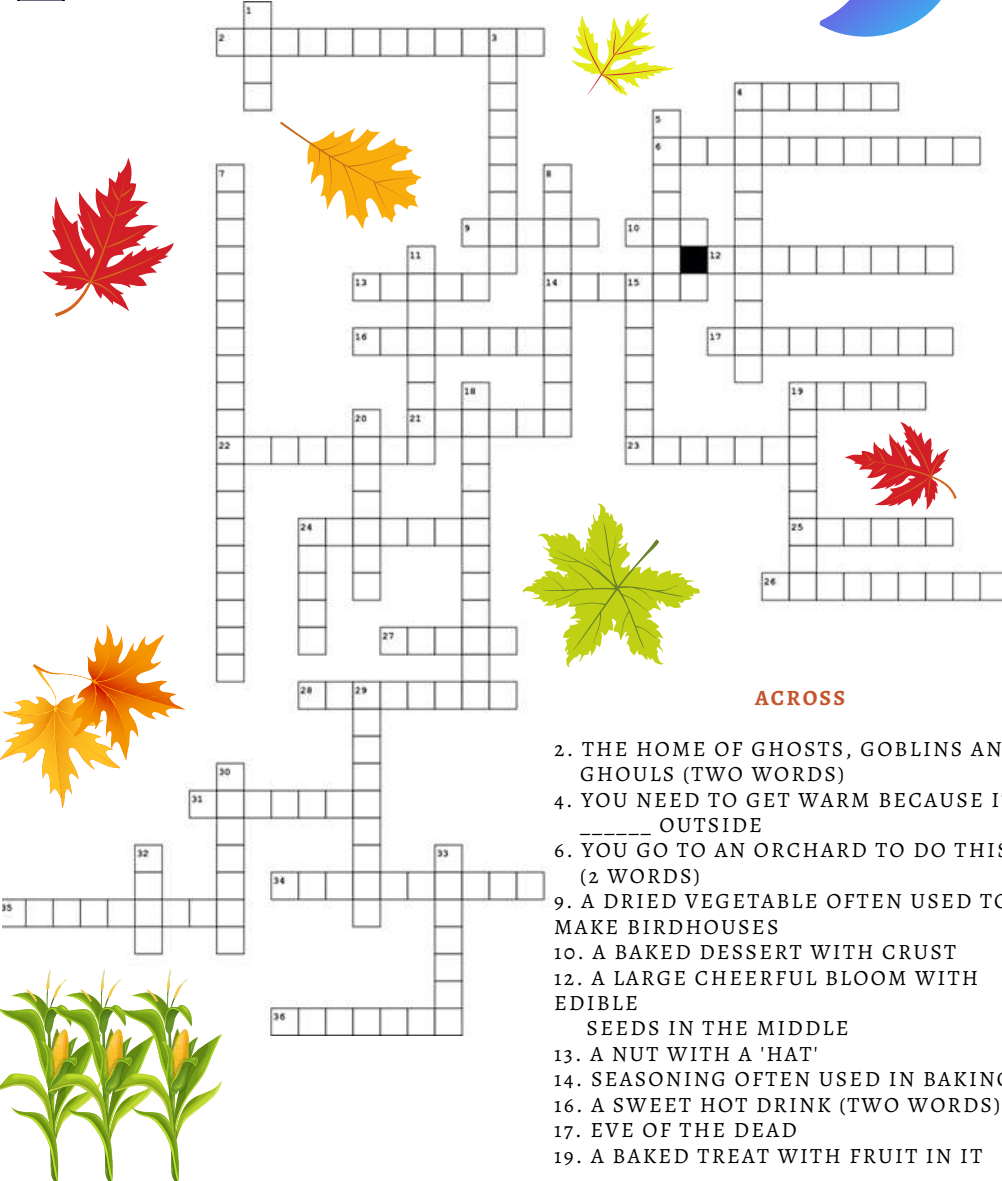
-Sarah





THE FUN SPOT

October Crossword Puzzle



DOWN

1. TOOL USED TO GATHER LEAVES
3. FIGURE STUFFED WITH HAY OR STRAW AND PUT IN THE GARDEN
4. THE FIRST HOLIDAY IN OCTOBER (2 WORDS)
5. A HORSE OR TRACTOR DRAWN ACTIVITY (2 WORDS)
7. SWEET TREAT COOKED OVER AN OPEN FIRE ON A STICK
8. THERE ARE TASSELS ON THESE WHEN THEY ARE READY TO HARVEST (2 WORDS)
11. A SPORT MANY PEOPLE ENJOY
15. YOU MIGHT SEE THESE IN CORNERS
18. A FUN THING TO MAKE WITH PUMPKINS (HYPHENATED WORD)
19. A FUN ACTIVITY YOU MIGHT GET LOST DOING (2 WORDS)
20. PLACE YOU GO TO PICK FRUIT OFF TREES
24. FARMERS NEED TO HARVEST MANY OF THEIR CROPS BEFORE THE FIRST _____
29. THE SOURCE SYRUP COMES FROM
30. TO GATHER FRUITS AND/OR VEGETABLES (2 WORDS)
32. NATURE'S NIGHT LIGHT
33. SOME PEOPLE ENJOY TAKING A RIDE TO VIEW THE CHANGING COLORS



ACROSS

2. THE HOME OF GHOSTS, GOBLINS AND GHOULS (TWO WORDS)
4. YOU NEED TO GET WARM BECAUSE IT IS _____ OUTSIDE
6. YOU GO TO AN ORCHARD TO DO THIS (2 WORDS)
9. A DRIED VEGETABLE OFTEN USED TO MAKE BIRDHOUSES
10. A BAKED DESSERT WITH CRUST
12. A LARGE CHEERFUL BLOOM WITH EDIBLE SEEDS IN THE MIDDLE
13. A NUT WITH A 'HAT'
14. SEASONING OFTEN USED IN BAKING
16. A SWEET HOT DRINK (TWO WORDS)
17. EVE OF THE DEAD
19. A BAKED TREAT WITH FRUIT IN IT

21. WHEN MOST OF THESE HAVE DROPPED WINTER IS NEAR
22. FURRY CRITTER THAT LIKES NUTS
23. ARTICLE OF CLOTHING TO KEEP YOU WARM
24. A WARM FABRIC USED FOR MAKING CLOTHING
25. THE SEASON OCTOBER IS IN
26. GATHERINGS WITH LOTS OF ACTIVITIES
27. A SWEET DRINK MADE FROM APPLES
28. LARGE ORANGE PRODUCE
31. ACORNS DROP FROM THESE (2 WORDS)
34. FRIED TREAT MADE FROM THE JUICE OF APPLES (2 WORDS)
35. THESE COME FROM A FRAGRANT TREE
36. A FUN WAY TO WARM UP OUTSIDE

INSPIRATION & MOTIVATION



RECOVERY

Resources

WEBSITES

- Al-Anon and Ala-teen Groups** – Hope and help for families and friends of alcoholics: al-anon.org
- Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)** - Local group schedule and information: district13.aahmbny.org
- Celebrate Recovery (CR)** – Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered, 12-Step recovery program for anyone struggling with hurt, pain or addiction of any kind: celebraterecovery.com
- Debtors Anonymous** - Debtors Anonymous offers hope for people whose use of unsecured debt causes problems and suffering in their lives and the lives of others: debtorsanonymous.org
- Digital Recovery Support** -Online recovery support groups are available daily. They are open to anyone who is dealing with substance use, mental health conditions, and any other quality of life concerns. Meetings are led by peer recovery support specialists who have firsthand experience and understand what you're going through: www.recoveryanswers.org
- Gamblers Anonymous (GA)** – Online services for anyone struggling with a gambling addiction: gasteps.org
- Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing (GRASP)** – For those who have lost someone to substance use or addiction: grasphelp.org
- In the rooms** - A global online recovery community who share their strength and experience with one another daily through live meetings, discussion groups, and other tools in the rooms: intherooms.com
- My Recovery** – Online 12-step meetings: myrecovery.com
- Narcotics Anonymous (NA)** - local group schedule and information: narcotics.com
- Overeaters Anonymous (OA)** – Online support groups for anyone who wants to stop eating compulsively: oarecovery.com
- The Phoenix** – Recovery community organization offering daily live stream cross-fit, yoga and meditation every two hours through the COVID Crisis: thephoenix.org

PHONE NUMBERS

- The Trevor Project** - Support for youth in crisis: thetrevorproject.org/hotline: 866-488-7386
- International Bipolar Association Crisis Line**: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders Helpline**: 630-577-1330
- National Center for PTSD Helpline**: 1-800-273-8255
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)**: Hotline staff are prepared to answer any mental health questions you may have. You can also text NAMI to 741741 for free support. (800) 950-NAMI (6264)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**: Available 24/7, 365 days a year: (800) 662-HELP (4357). The professionals on the phone can provide treatment information and referrals in English and Spanish.
- MentalHealth.gov**: Available 8am to 8pm EST to provide mental health information and treatment referrals: (877) 726-4727
- National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)**: Available 8:30am to 5pm EST: (866) 615-6464 or (866) 415-8051 (TTY). Professionals can answer any mental health related questions in English or Spanish.
- Boys Town**: Specially trained counselors are available 24/7, 365 days a year to provide crisis support specifically for children and their families: (800) 448-3000

PODCASTS

- This Naked Mind** - Some of the episodes discuss alcohol withdrawals, the link between drinking and binge eating, how to deal with loneliness, and more.
- Recovery Rocks** - Our varied paths show listeners that there are a myriad paths to recovery and countless songs to rock out to along the way.
- Mental Health - Hope and Recovery** - They share inspirational true stories and a host of recovery skills. You'll learn about treatment options, coping skills, goal setting, relationships, and mindfulness.
- Mental Illness Happy Hour** - Weekly interviews with comedians, artists, friends, and the occasional doctor.; exploring mental illness, trauma, addiction and negative thinking.

APPS

- Addiction Apps**: Twenty-Four Hours A Day (Free), Quit That! Habit Tracker (Free), NoMo (Free)
- Counseling Apps**: TalkSpace (\$\$) BetterHelp (\$\$) Larkr (\$\$) ReGain (\$\$) TeenCounseling (\$\$)
- Suicide Prevention Apps**: MY3 (Free) notOK (Free)
- General Mental Health Apps**: What's Up (CBT; Free) Mood Kit (CBT; \$)
- Anxiety Apps**: MindShift (Free), Self-Help Anxiety Management – SAM (Free), CBT Thought Record Diary (Free)
- Bipolar Disorder Apps**: IMoodJournal (\$), EMoods (Free)
- Depression Apps**: Talk Space Online Therapy (\$\$), Happify (Free), MoodTools (CBT; Free)
- Eating Disorder Apps**: Recovery Record (Free), Rise Up & Recovery (Free), LifeSum (Free)
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Apps**: nOCD (Free), Worry Watch (\$), GG OCD (Free)
- PTSD Apps**: PTSD Coach (Free), Breathe2Relax (Free)
- Schizophrenia Apps**: UCSF Prime (Free), Schizophrenia Health Story Lines (Free)
- Mindfulness & Meditation Apps**: Headspace (\$), Calm (\$), Ten Percent Happier (\$)

WWAMH DUAL RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUPS

EVERY TUESDAY FROM
4:00-5:00 PM AT THE
HOPE & HEALING
RECOVERY CENTER:
2 MAPLE STREET, HUDSON FALLS
ATTEND IN PERSON OR
VIRTUALLY - ZOOM MEETING ID:
844-2214-0148

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OUR NEWSLETTERS

THANKS FOR READING! :)

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