

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 LGBTQIA+ Understanding the Terms



BY GINGER MILLER

Sometimes when people are uncomfortable, judgmental, biased, have a stigma toward, or are just plain fearful of someone, it can come from not having a correct understanding of or having inadequate knowledge of something about that person. Perhaps the person is wearing clothing we recognize to be from another culture, speak another language, behave in a way unfamiliar to us, or are open about their sexuality or gender identification. I must admit, I have been uncomfortable at times in the past when I was around someone brave enough to share that they are part of the LGBTQIA+ community because I didn't want to say anything offensive. I was curious about a lot of things regarding their lifestyle, thoughts, and feelings, and I wondered if things I had been told by other people (probably just as unknowledgeable as I was) were true. I was afraid to ask questions because the questions I had were so personal. I feel that our society has historically made sexuality, gender identity, or anything 'not normal' in their view point, a taboo subject. Honestly, I still had what is considered "gender binary" thinking, which means a system of thinking in which there are only two genders (man and woman). The gender binary poses these two genders as opposites and mutually exclusive, which forces all people in one of these two categories. I have since worked up the courage to respectfully ask some of my friends that are part of the LGBTQIA+ community questions so I could understand more; they were very gracious with me (to my relief!) and happy to answer my questions. The more I learned, the more comfortable I became meeting new people from our communities of LGBTQIA+. I continued to look for understanding of more terms I would hear to prevent speaking out of ignorance and offending anyone. I found the terms can be confusing sometimes and since June is LGBTQIA+ Pride Month, I thought it would be a good opportunity to help others understand more as well.

This list of terms I've listed here are a very basic introduction to the LGBTQIA+ acronym, no list of terms could ever be all inclusive or capture the full nuance that may be present in each term. If you encounter someone who identifies with a term listed here in a way different than it is described - or if you identify with a term listed here in a different way - please remember that each person is the only expert in their own identity; this is just a basic guideline.

 **GENDER IDENTIFICATION:** one's innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither, it's how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.

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LGBTQ+ (Cont'd)

-  **GENDER NON-CONFORMING** (adj): Used to describe people whose gender expression does not align with societal expectations based on their perceived gender. Gender non-conforming is not the same as trans.
-  **GENDERQUEER** (adj): Describes a gender identity that is queer (see below) or that deliberately rejects societal gender norms. Someone whose gender identity is neither man nor woman, is between or beyond gender, rejects binary gender, is some combination of genders. Can sometimes be used interchangeably with nonbinary. Queer however, is not the same as trans.
-  **NONBINARY** (adj): A gender identity that specifically rejects the notion of binary gender. Can sometimes be used interchangeably with genderqueer. Nonbinary is not the same as trans.
-  **GENDER TRANSITION** (n/v): The process through which a trans person changes aspects of themselves to be more aligned with their gender. There is not one way to transition. Transition includes some or all of the following: cultural, legal, and medical adjustments; telling one's family, friends, and/or co-workers; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; electrolysis or laser hair removal; hormone therapy; different forms of surgery-including but not limited to chest and genital surgery. Gender transition is not a linear process, and is often influenced by one's access to information, community, and financial resources.
-  **TRANSGENDER** (adj): describes people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth. People who are transgender may also use other terms, in addition to transgender, to describe their gender more specifically. It is important to note that being transgender is not dependent upon physical appearance or medical procedures. A person can call themselves transgender the moment they realize that their gender identity is different than the sex they were assigned at birth.
-  **PRONOUNS** (n): The part of speech used to refer to someone in the third person. Examples include she/her/hers, they/them/theirs, he/him/his. Pronouns are chosen by each individual and can only be known when shared. Sharing pronouns during introductions, in email signatures, and on nametags is now common practice in order to ensure all people are referred to respectfully.
-  **FLUID(ITY)** (adj/n): Describes an identity that changes over time within or between available options. Often combined another identity, such as "genderfluid" or "sexually fluid."
-  **SEXUAL ORIENTATION** is an inherent or immutable enduring emotional, romantic or sexual attraction to other people. A sense of one's personal and social identity based on attractions. Describes whether and to whom one is attracted sexually, physically, romantically, etc.
-  **LESBIAN** (n/adj): Often describes a woman who is emotionally, spiritually, physically, and/or sexually attracted primarily to women. Some nonbinary people also identify as lesbians.
-  **GAY** (adj): Describes a person who is emotionally, spiritually, physically, and/or sexually attracted primarily to members of the same gender.
-  **BISEXUAL** (adj): Describes an individual who is emotionally, spiritually, physically, and/or sexually attracted to more than one gender. Can sometimes be used interchangeably with Pansexual.
-  **QUEER** (adj/v): A term used to describe a sexual orientation that is not heterosexual or part of the dominant culture, without indicating the genders of the queer person or the people they are attracted to. Some people identify as queer because it can expansively include attraction to people of a range of genders (used similarly to pansexual" and "bisexual").





LGBTQ+ (Cont'd)

🌈 **Intersex (adj):** Intersex people are born with a variety of differences in their sex traits and reproductive anatomy. There is a wide variety of difference among intersex variations, including differences in genitalia, chromosomes, gonads, internal sex organs, hormone production, hormone response, and/or secondary sex traits.

🌈 **ASEXUAL (adj):** An umbrella category describing those who experiences little or no sexual attraction. Identifying as asexual does not preclude any behavior, including dating and sex. Often abbreviated as Ace, asexual can also refer to the Asexuality Spectrum, which describes the range of experiences related to attraction. Demisexual (describing a person who feels sexual attraction only to someone with whom they have an emotional bond) and aromantic, (someone who experiences little or no romantic attraction to others) fall under the umbrella category of asexual.

🌈 **PANSEXUAL (adj):** Describes a person who is emotionally, spiritually, physically, and/or sexually attracted toward persons of all gender identities. Can sometimes be used interchangeably with Bisexual.

There are many more terms than the ones listed above, and more are identified every day. It is always best to ask individuals and communities what terms they use and what those terms mean to them. And when in doubt, just remember we are all human and kindness goes a long way.

UNDERSTANDING THE DIAGNOSIS

Gender Dysphoria

BY GINGER MILLER

According to the Mayo Clinic, gender dysphoria is the feeling of discomfort or distress that might occur in people whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth or sex-related physical characteristics.

Transgender and gender-diverse people might experience gender dysphoria at some point in their lives. However, some transgender and gender-diverse people feel at ease with their bodies, with or without medical intervention.

A diagnosis for gender dysphoria is included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), a manual published by the American Psychiatric Association. The diagnosis was created to help people with gender dysphoria get access to necessary health care and effective treatment. The term focuses on discomfort as the problem, rather than identity. Gender dysphoria might cause adolescents and adults to experience a marked difference between inner gender identity and assigned gender that lasts for at least six months. The difference is shown by at least two of the following:

- A difference between gender identity and genitals or secondary sex characteristics, such as breast size, voice and facial hair. In young adolescents, a difference between gender identity and anticipated secondary sex characteristics.
- A strong desire to be rid of these genitals or secondary sex characteristics, or a desire to prevent the development of secondary sex characteristics.
- A strong desire to have the genitals and secondary sex characteristics of another gender.
- A strong desire to be or to be treated as another gender.
- A strong belief of having the typical feelings and reactions of another gender.



Gender dysphoria may also cause significant distress that affects how you function in social situations, at work or school, and in other areas of life. Gender dysphoria might start in childhood and continue into adolescence and adulthood. Or you might have periods in which you no longer experience gender dysphoria. You might also experience gender dysphoria around the time of puberty or much later in life.



Gender Dysphoria (Cont'd)

Gender dysphoria can affect many aspects of life, including daily activities. People experiencing gender dysphoria might have difficulty in school due to pressure to dress in a way that's associated with their sex assigned at birth or out of fear of being harassed or teased. If gender dysphoria impairs the ability to function at school or at work, the result may be school dropout or unemployment. Relationship difficulties are common. Anxiety, depression, self-harm, eating disorders, substance misuse and other problems can occur.

People who have gender dysphoria also often experience discrimination, resulting in stress. Accessing health services and mental health services can be difficult due to fear of stigma and a lack of experienced care providers. Adolescents and adults with gender dysphoria without gender-affirming treatment might be at risk of thinking about or attempting suicide.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Playtime

BY GINGER MILLER



According to Psychology Today, play—or fun, imaginative, relaxed, and self-directed activities—is a key part of life for children. Play tends to be self-chosen, removed in some way from “real” life, and governed by a set of rules determined by the players, rather than an outside source. Play has numerous payoffs; helps support social, intellectual, and emotional growth, can foster creative thinking, can help increase focus and ability to concentrate, provides some stress relief, teaches us how to work in a group, share, and take turns, just to name a few.

I really enjoy watching children play, they look so carefree and "in the moment". Sometimes I'm even a little envious of their ability to not feel so self-conscious - I think that comes more as we get closer to adulthood. I still like to have a little 'playtime' occasionally! How about you? Do you ever play basketball, swing on a swing, color in a coloring book, enjoy hugging a stuffed animal, or play with sparklers or glowsticks? What do you do to have fun, for your playtime?

The benefits of playing doesn't have to stop when childhood ends. Playing frisbee in the park, gathering friends for an old-fashioned board game, playing video games, and doing crossword and sudoku puzzles all protect the adult brain by improving cognitive flexibility and memory. Getting away from familiar locations can help adults let their imaginations loose.(Remember having an imagination as a child? Maybe you used a stick to 'sword fight' or played in the mud and made pies? Did you ever make a blanket fort in the house? Or maybe play a role playing game?)

What are the benefits of play for adults? Playing, in almost any form, as an adult can reduce stress, improves feelings of optimism, builds cognitive flexibility, and strengthen one's ability to take on other perspectives; it has even been theorized to help attract and keep mates. It's sad that there has been a decrease in the importance of play in our results-driven culture. Adults seem to be continuously pressed for time in general.

Why do many adults stop playing? Adults tend to stop playing for one of two reasons. One may be because they consider it “childish”. A primary adult habit that thwarts play is self-control, “acting mature.” Sometimes people at a young age were told to not act like children, to 'grow up'. So a host of inhibitions can accumulate and burden the psyche of the adult. The other common reason is because they become consumed with adult responsibilities like careers, childcare, and relationships. But despite these conflicts, most adults never lose their playfulness.

If playtime is something that is still uncomfortable for you, having a child with you is a great way to let that playfulness out while you learn how to be more comfortable with it. And if you are someone who enjoys some playtime, why not make plans for your next play day?! Have fun and reap benefits at the same time! Bring on those big smiles and maybe even some good belly laughs!



YOUR VOICE

My dad has been a big part of my recovery. He helped me find ways to manage my cravings. Sometimes he would like to have a drink but he won't do it in front of me so that I'm not triggered. Thank you, dad.

~ David M

This is Charlie! She's special to me because she was a rescue who suffered trauma before coming to me. Charlie gets anxiety around everyone else except for me.

In the middle of the night when I'm sleeping she comes over to my pillow and gently taps on my face until I wake up and lift the blankets for her to climb inside with me. Charlie will cuddle under the blankets with me for hours in the nighttime. ~Hollie Q



Meet Hailey (grey and white) and Charlie (black). My fur babies are a true light in my life! They each have such distinct personalities that make me laugh. Hailey's face gets so expressive it's almost like you can read her mind! Charley loves to eat and is very good at letting me know when it is time to eat; he comes up with funny (sometimes annoying!) ways of reminding me when I'm not promptly on time.

~ Ginger M



My father has been a very important person in my recovery. While I was in early recovery, he and my step-mother took my youngest son so that I could get better. Recently, he has spent a good amount of money on my car to ensure that its safe and reliable. He wouldn't have done these things if I was still in active addiction and I'm grateful to have him as one of my biggest supporters.

~ Hallie Q

'Free Lessons' response

I could really relate to most of the lessons but number three speaks most to me. My low self-esteem was definitely a big part of both my mental health and addiction issues. I believe if I'd had healthier self-esteem a lot of things would have better. I've worked hard and grown tremendously in both of my recoveries. Today I have much better self-esteem and I'm grateful for the experiences I've had and the people that have helped me become who I am. With all that I've learned and the hard work I put in I will not let myself be robbed of the joy and confidence I can now experience.

~ Anonymous

'Free Lessons' response

I can most relate to lesson 10. While in active addiction, I often felt like I had lost hope. Now, I feel like there is ALWAYS hope and even on the hardest days during the most stressful; times, I am certain that there is hope, always. I have learned that it is better to deal with life on life's terms, rather than to ignore it and pretend it isn't happening, as this always makes things worse for me.

~ Hollie Q

Boggle Challenge
Coleen Q - 32 points
Jean L - 50 points



THE FUN SPOT

In a word ladder puzzle, you must make the change occur gradually by changing one letter at a time. At each step you must transform one word into another word, you are not allowed to transform a word into a non-word. The word ladder puzzle was invented in 1878 by Lewis Carroll, the author of Alice in Wonderland.



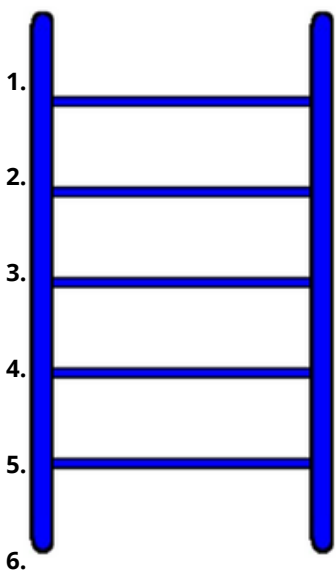
Word Ladders

Example:
 Cat (change t to b)
 Cab (change b to l)
 Lab



Puzzle A is 5 letters

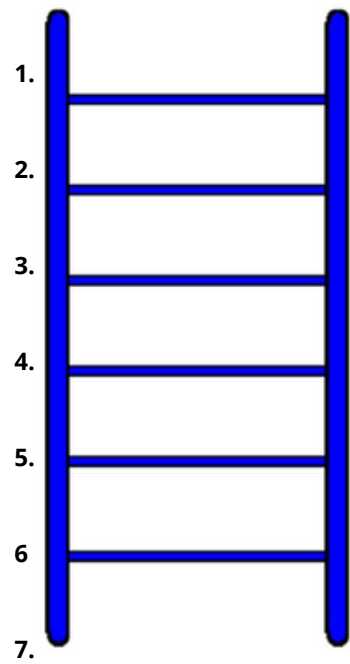
CLUES



1. A creature that looks like a very small human being, has magic powers, and sometimes has wings.
2. An exhibition; a carnival. (plural)
3. A piece of lumber two yards long and one foot wide. (plural)
4. To stay in a place until an expected event happens, until someone arrives, until it is your turn to do something, etc.
5. To desire or wish for something.
6. A long, thin stick or rod. (plural)

Puzzle B is 5 letters

CLUES

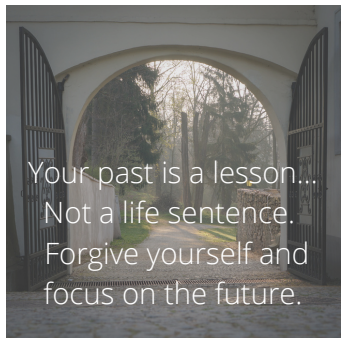


1. A transparent, odorless, tasteless liquid
2. A person who meets another person, usually a romantic attachment, socially at an agreed time.
3. An occasion for two people to meet and decide if they want to have a romantic relationship (plural)
4. Challenged to have enough courage or confidence to do something
5. To fix a piece of clothing, a hole, etc. by sewing
6. Dialectical variant of darn
7. A type of plant that has large delicate leaves and no flowers

INSPIRATION & MOTIVATION

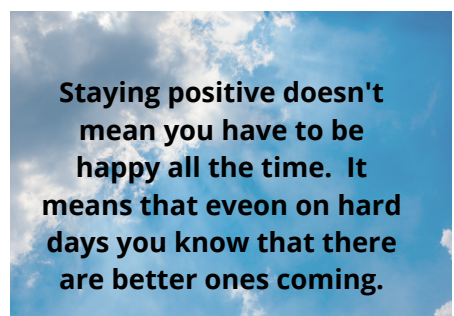
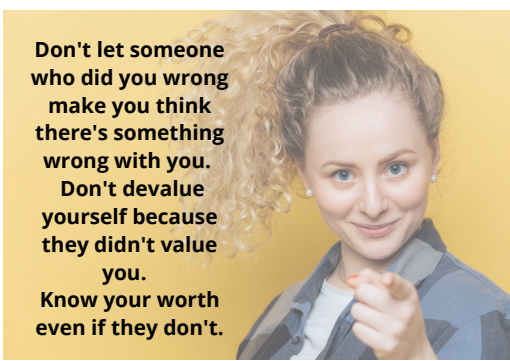
Don't change yourself so that other people will like you. Be yourself so that the right people will love you.

The 3 C's in life:
 Choice, Chance, Change.
 You must make the choice, to take the chance, if you want anything in to change.



Word Ladders Answer Key

Puzzle B	1. Water	1. Fairy
	2. Dater	2. Fairst
	3. Dates	3. Wairst
	4. Dares	4. Wairst
	5. Darns	5. Wairts
	6. Derns	6. Wandts
	7. Ferns	



WWAMH Celebration of Life 2022

On May 26th we were excited to be able to have the first "Celebration of Life" ceremony since COVID started back in 2020. It was decided that, with all of the losses in that time period and the restrictions on social gatherings during COVID, we could probably all use a bit of a healing. This was an opportunity to gather and honor together, the light of the lives of some of the friends of the AMH community, even long after they themselves have gone. The ceremony was held at the beautiful gardens at 230 Maple Street in Glens Falls by the gazebo. Josh Gray opened the program by offering a warm welcome and words of encouragement to all that were able to attend, followed by a reading of names submitted of those that are no longer with us in body. Amy Wood read a beautiful poem of encouragement and Amy Lynch read a few touching poems written by a couple of our members that have passed. All in attendance were offered the opportunity to share some reflections or memories of any loved ones that have passed over the last few years. Many happy memories were shared, some laughter, a few tears, and a lot of love and support. Trudy Lapasinskas baked some delicious chocolate chip cookies to help add a touch of sweetness to the celebration. The ceremony was then moved across the parking lot to where a Japanese Maple Tree was planted in honor of all who have been a part of our programs, and friends, that passed over the decades of service AMH has provided; a beautiful place to pause and reflect on those in our hearts and memories for years to come.

Names submitted for this Ceremony were :

David Brown

David Huntley

Deborah Robinson

Diane Edwards

Jane Weir

Kelly Burke

Lorrie Rivers

Matthew Austin

Michael Averinos

Michael Wiley

Nadja Winfrey

Ricky Durrand

Rocci Starteri

Warren Carleton

Several others were mentioned during the ceremony as well



THE JUNE CHALLENGES

Challenge 1

Playtime!

On page 4 in the article 'Playtime' some of the benefits of remaining playful are discussed. Tell us about something that you have fun doing, a 'playtime' activity that helps you escape 'real' life for a while, maybe lets that inner child out or just helps you relax and be in the moment with friends or family.

Everyone who chooses to participate in June's challenges and writes to us before June 25th will win a beautiful reusable nylon bag! (Perfect to use as a beach bag, for groceries, or many other ideas!) You will also see your response next month in our "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: gmillers@wwamh.org or mail it in to WWAMH Dual Recovery Dept., 230 Maple Street, Glens Falls, NY 12801 to participate.

Challenge 2

Newsletter Feedback

June marks one year I have been helping with our newsletter. Tell us if you've had a favorite article, enjoy a certain section of the newsletter or have any topics or ideas you'd like to see or read. This newsletter is for YOU so let us know what you like!

The Garden Club

MEETING DATES:

Tuesday June 7

2:00 pm East Side Center

Tuesday June 21

2:00 pm East Side Center

Do you enjoy planting, nurturing, and harvesting vegetables, herbs, and flowers?

Or helping with them at a farmers market? Join our garden club! Come to a meeting, new members always welcome!

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 (\$), Serenity: Guided Meditation & Mindfulness (Free)
- Wellness**: Wellness Recovery Action Plan (Goal Setting; Free)

THANKS FOR READING! :)

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBSCRIBE TO
OUR NEWSLETTERS, PLEASE EMAIL US
AT GMILLER@WWAMH.ORG
OR CALL 518-401-5991



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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