



Celebrating Recovery, Community and Connection

On Saturday, **September 20, 2025**, Community Bridges, Inc. (CBI) is proud to host the 20th Annual Celebrate the Art of Recovery Expo (CARE) Event, a milestone celebration of community, health, and recovery. The event will take place from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM at First United Methodist Church, 15 E. 1st Ave., Mesa, AZ, bringing together families, neighbors, and advocates for a day of inspiration, resources, and fun.

CARE has grown to become Arizona's premier event for National Recovery Month, and this year marks two decades of impact. For 20 years, CARE has provided a welcoming space where individuals and families can connect with dozens of local vendors, explore resources that support wellness, and celebrate the strength of recovery. With free food, lively music from a DJ, and a festive atmosphere, the event combines celebration with purpose.

Every September, CBI proudly participates in National Recovery Month, a nationwide movement that raises awareness about the importance of mental health, substance use recovery, and holistic well-being. CBI is honored to champion this effort by hosting CARE, which highlights not only the power of recovery but also the role of wellness in achieving and sustaining a quality life.



iStock credit: Moonstocker

At the heart of CARE is CBI's belief that wellness is central to recovery. This belief is reflected in the organization's commitment to the eight dimensions of wellness—emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, occupational, physical, social, and spiritual. These dimensions recognize that recovery is more than overcoming challenges; it is about building a life of balance, purpose, and resilience. Through its partnerships and programs, CBI and its community partners help individuals and families explore these dimensions, offering tools and resources that promote health and long-term success.

Over the past 20 years, CARE has served as a vital bridge between organizations, advocates, and the community. Each year, dozens of vendors come together to provide valuable information, services, and support to attendees. Whether it's

learning about new wellness practices, connecting with recovery resources, or simply enjoying the day with friends and family, participants leave CARE with a renewed sense of hope and empowerment.

This year's anniversary celebration is not just about looking back—it's about moving forward. As CBI and its partners honor the legacy of CARE, they also reaffirm their commitment to fostering strong, healthy communities for the future. The event is a reminder that recovery is possible, wellness is achievable, and together, communities can thrive.



Mark your calendars for Saturday, **September 20, 2025**, and join Community Bridges, Inc. at the First United Methodist Church in Mesa. Whether you come to enjoy the free food and music, connect with local organizations, or celebrate recovery, CARE is a place where everyone is welcome. Together, let's honor 20 years of CARE and continue building a future rooted in wellness, support, and community. celebratetheartofrecovery.org

Via Linda Behavioral Hospital Receives Grant to Launch Nurse Preceptor Training Program

Working with Arizona State's Board of Nursing to Continue to Create a Trained and Engaged Workforce

By Jaclyn Hull, CEO

Via Linda Behavioral Hospital is proud to announce its second-year participation in its nursing preceptor training program for nurses and a first-year participation in upskilling nursing personnel and training of capstone(senior) nursing students. The programs are supported by grant funding through ARS 36-1803 and awarded and supported through the Arizona Board of Nursing.

Through funding, in July 2024 Via Linda Behavioral Hospital launched a training academy with different tracks depending on new employee professional experience to acclimate new staff nurses to our specialty field, documentation and milieu management practices.



Via Linda's dedicated Nurse Mentors Photo submitted

Through this training program, Via Linda Behavioral Hospital is not only targeted to further improve already strong patient satisfaction but improving workforce engagement and impact turnover rates.

With additional funding, in August 2025, Via Linda Behavioral Hospital will be launching its first

Via Linda Behavioral continued page 11

NATIONAL RECOVERY MONTH INSIDE

Publisher's Note

- **Spotlight on: Scottsdale Providence**
- **Hushabye Nursery** Gala Shines Light on Substance-Exposed Newborns
- **Purse Impressions** Celebrates 5 Years
- **Building Your Recovery Toolkit**
- **Knowing When to Seek Therapy**
- **WIZ-dom of the 12 Step Road**
- **I Choose RECOVERY!**
- **Yoga, Mindfulness and Recovery**
- **Resources and Helplines**



NATIONAL
RECOVERY
MONTH

Publisher's Note

By Barbara Nicholson-Brown

Plant a Seed for Recovery

Recovery Month is a testament to the power of community, support, and hope. Addiction is a complex disease, but progress continues to be made to help break down the stigma. When we share our personal stories to others, we create a more compassionate and understanding atmosphere for those who may not fully understand this disease. Open conversations help to diminish the shame, myths and misunderstanding of what being an addict or alcoholic is.

In my early days and weeks of sobriety, the words "I am an alcoholic" often got stuck in my throat, until I realized those words do not define who I am, it is a facet of me. I began to understand that speaking about my experiences might plant a seed for someone unsure on how this recovery journey works. And it does work!

While every journey is different, we all share a common thread: our old ways weren't working. Recovery is not a solitary endeavor. Shame and isolation are obstacles, but with the right support, we can overcome the challenges. By working together, we create a more welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone.

Stepping onto the path of recovery can be scary, but it's a journey that can lead to a more fulfilling and meaningful life. Let's continue to inspire others to embark on their own journey. Let's celebrate our accomplishments together!

Barbara Nicholson-Brown

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday, September 20

Celebrate your recovery with us at the 20th Anniversary of CARE

Celebrate the Art of Recovery Expo - Hosted by CBI

Public invited: 10 am - 2:00 pm

First United Methodist Church, 15 E. 1st Ave., Mesa, AZ

Join us as we inspire well-being, health, and recovery!

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DID YOU KNOW?

National Recovery Month (Recovery Month), which started in 1989, is observed every September to promote and support new evidence-based treatment and recovery practices, the nation's strong and proud recovery community, and the dedication of service providers and communities who make recovery possible.

TogetherAZ

Inspiring Success on the Road to Recovery

FOUNDER

In gratitude and memory of
William B. Brown, Jr.

Publisher/Production

Barbara Nicholson-Brown

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The views and opinions presented in articles are those of the individual authors
Content is for informational purposes only. Seek professional help for addiction related issues.

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Spotlight on Scottsdale Providence

A Conversation with Founders Dan Nichols, LCSW and Alex Porter

- ***What was the personal spark that ignited the creation of Scottsdale Providence? Tell us about your professional journeys that ultimately led you to open the doors?***

Dan: I became a social worker 20 years ago because I'm personally driven by the belief that people can heal and change in transformational ways. This belief sprung from my own recovery journey long before I earned my license or clinical skills. My sobriety was and remains the catalyst of my desire to help others. Early on, I recognized the limits of my experience, prompting me to work across diverse areas of community mental health, including with complex and stigmatized populations. These experiences opened my eyes and heart to how treating mental health, addiction and trauma concurrently can positively affect generations.

Alex: In 2016, the core founding team of Scottsdale Providence were all working in the field in various capacities and importantly, we are all personal friends in long-term recovery circles. We set out to build a treatment center where all people felt safe, cared for, supported yet challenged to grow, with a strong therapeutic community. I brought direct experience working with severely mentally ill clients which had taught me that rapport is as crucial to a client's success as any other factor. Providence's success comes from our ability to take evidence-based approaches and infuse them with authenticity, enthusiasm, and compassion, which appeals to clients who might fall through the cracks elsewhere.

- ***What are some of the key therapeutic approaches used at Scottsdale Providence, and how do they contribute to the success of the clients?***

Dan: Patient safety, physical and psychological, is paramount. Our team orientation promotes interprofessional collaboration and trust, ensuring patient-centered care aligned with individual needs.

From assessment through discharge, we address four domains in every treatment plan:

1. Physical and Psychiatric Wellbeing: Stabilization through an integrated health model managed by Dr. Steven Locnikar and Sabrina Norgood, PMNP includes medication management, exercise, nutrition, sleep, neuro-feedback, and holistic interventions (acupuncture, breathwork, yoga).

2. Mind and Behaviors: CBT, DBT (skill building), Mindfulness and ACT (motivations/values) to develop insight and psychological flexibility, change maladaptive patterns, and strengthen emotional regulation in group and individual sessions.

3. Inner Self: Trauma therapies like EMDR, Somatic Experiencing, IFS, Deep Brain Reorienting, and Narrative therapies exploring identity, values, belief systems and aspirations. Art therapy, music, spirituality and psychodrama are also applicable.

4. Loss of Connection: 90-day extended care model with 12-step facilitation and immersion, family therapy and focus on prosocial behavior to build community.

We believe in our clients' right to self-determination, working with clients to create treatment plans they understand, fostering genuine buy-in. This helps clients find and live their truth.

- ***How has your personal recovery journey influenced your professional ability to provide tools and skills for clients to build meaningful healthy lives?***

Alex: We know the courage and grit it takes to walk a recovery path one day at a time. We understand the fatal nature of untreated addiction and mental health issues and take our role as providers seriously. The combination of clinical knowledge paired with lived experiences provides our clients a sense of security and confidence that we have "walked the walk" and can offer a real solution to the challenges they face.



From left: Dan Nichols and Alex Porter

Submitted photo

"We set out to build a treatment center where all people felt safe, cared for, supported yet challenged to grow, with a strong therapeutic community."

- ***Recovery can be an isolating experience, but a strong community can be a cornerstone of success. How does the team at Scottsdale Providence cultivate a sense of community and support for clients?***

Alex: Cultivating community is one of our biggest strengths. I don't think recovery really sticks unless you know you have got people in your corner after treatment ends. We have an alumni chat with over 250 people including staff and graduates who check in and offer support regularly. I've seen people plan meetups out of state, and some have gone on to start their own recovery or mental health groups where they live. We have a long list of alumni who can sponsor or act as mentors for clients once they graduate.

Dan: We also offer free lifelong aftercare to everyone who completes the program which includes weekly alumni meetings, monthly in-person alumni events and our annual camping trips. Our weekly alumni meetings are integrated with our current clients' daily schedule to show that the connection doesn't end when you walk out the door.

- ***In the complex landscape of addiction and mental health, are there specific demographics or communities that you feel are currently being underserved? What do you see for the future for Scottsdale Providence?***

Dan: In 2019, we identified a need to create a distinctive primary mental health program to run concurrently alongside our co-occurring substance use disorder program. We wanted to solve the puzzle on how to mimic the culture of 12-step communities for people with mental health concerns as there currently isn't a "Mental Health Anonymous" organization. Some components, like trauma therapy and DBT, are applicable to all, but we knew it was necessary to design mental health specific curriculum, culture and support groups for aftercare. We discovered that leading with principles of authenticity, curiosity, accountability, perseverance and joy allowed our mental health clients to experience a treatment culture of their own that could guide and sustain recovery long after graduation. Our Mental Health PHP is now one of our most popular programs, but due to our intimate environment, we are limited in the number of clients we can serve.

Alex: Building off Dan's thoughts, we are proud to be the first neuro-informed addiction treatment program in Arizona. I see our future growth focusing even further on spectrum-related disorders and how neurodiversity impacts a client's experience of addiction, mental health, attachment, recovery and our environment of care. Our ongoing aspiration is just to ensure clients continue graduating treatment empowered to live a life aligned with their values and newfound purpose and hope, which is enough of an achievement for us.

***To learn more about Scottsdale Providence visit
www.scottsdaleprovidence.com.
For immediate assistance call 866-311-5778.***

Purse- Impressions Celebrates 5th Anniversary — Open House Event

Over 7,300 Donations Made



Purse- Impressions is a local non-profit dedicated to honoring the memory of founder Patricia Brusha’s daughter, Courtney. The charity provides purses and backpacks filled with essential items to women, men and children residing in alcohol and drug rehab centers.

We are proud to announce our five-year anniversary and invite the community to attend an Open House Celebration on Saturday, October 4th, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 7171 E. Cave Creek Road.

Guests will enjoy refreshments, live entertainment and exciting raffles while learning more about the charity’s mission and impact. In its first five years, Purse- Impressions has provided over 7,300 donations to women, men and children in need, offering dignity, hope and encouragement during a critical time in their recovery journey.

“This milestone is not just about numbers—it’s about the lives touched and the hope restored,” said Patricia, President at Purse- Impressions. “We couldn’t have done it without our amazing volunteers, donors and community partners.”

Donations of new or gently used purses, totes, jewelry, as well as new or unused toiletries and personal care items are welcome.

Event Details:

What: Purse- Impressions 5th Anniversary Open House
When: **Friday, October 4, 10 am–2 pm**
Where: 7171 E Cave Creek Road, Carefree, AZ 85331
Cost: Free
Website: www.purse-impressions.com

About Purse- Impressions

Founded in 2019, Purse- Impressions honors the memory of Courtney Michaels who passed away at age 28 due to alcohol addiction. The charity’s mission is to promote self-worth and dignity, reminding women, men and children they are valued and loved. In five years, the organization has made over 7,300 donations to rehab centers across Maricopa County, AZ.
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Hushabye Nursery Announces Annual “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” Gala to Shine Light on Substance-Exposed Newborns and Their Families



Submitted photo Hushabye Nursery

Hushabye Nursery is thrilled to announce its annual fundraising gala, **Twinkle Twinkle Little Star**, to be held on Friday, November 1, 2025, from 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM at the elegant Westin Kierland Resort & Spa.

This heartwarming evening will bring together community leaders, healthcare professionals, and generous supporters to celebrate hope, healing, and the mission of Hushabye Nursery: embracing substance-exposed babies and their caregivers with compassionate, evidence-based care that changes lives.

The gala promises an unforgettable evening featuring a fabulous dinner under the stars, live music, silent and live auctions, inspiring stories of resilience, and opportunities to directly support life-changing programs for pregnant and parenting families affected by the opioid crisis.

“This year is especially meaningful as we celebrate the milestone of caring for our 1,000th baby,” says Tara Sundem, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Hushabye Nursery.

“Each baby represents a story of courage and every family we serve is a reminder that love, support, and non judgmental care can transform lives.”

Funds raised through **Twinkle Twinkle Little Star** support Hushabye’s unique model of care, including inpatient medical services for newborns experiencing withdrawal, as well as outpatient behavioral health and peer support services for families working toward recovery and stability.

Sponsorship opportunities, table reservations, and in-kind auction donations are currently being accepted. To get involved or learn more, please visit www.hushabyenursery.org/gala. Join us for a night filled with purpose, connection, and a sky full of hope for Arizona’s most vulnerable little stars.



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September –National Recovery Month

Building Your Recovery Toolkit

By Amy Tilley, PsyD

September is upon us again — school is in full swing, football is back, and your family life probably got a lot busier with the calendar filling up. If you have children, do you suddenly find yourself having to navigate school pick-up lines, take kids to and from sports practices, band rehearsals, and still make time for family dinners and homework every night? This can be taxing, after a summer filled with less structure, vacations, and late nights in the backyard with friends. This hectic pace comes around every year, yet somehow it seems to creep up each time!

National Recovery Month occurs every year in September. SAMHSA (<https://www.samhsa.gov/>) and NAMI (<https://www.nami.org/>) make time to educate Americans that recovery from substance use and mental illness is possible. They use this month to highlight issues affecting individuals, families, and communities across the nation. These organizations emphasize the importance of recognizing progress made in treatment and recovery and encourage anyone who is struggling to seek help. This year's theme is *"Join the Voices for Recovery: Together We Are Stronger,"* highlighting the importance of community and support that is involved everyone's recovery journey.

Each website has valuable resources; many are free and easy to download. One concept that I enjoy teaching about is a Recovery Toolkit.

What is a Recovery Toolkit?

It is a resource you can access when you feel triggered, have urges or cravings, are in a mental health slump, or just need to take some time for self-care. It can be a box you create and have easily accessible, or a figurative "toolbelt" of resources you can access from anywhere, at any time. SAMHSA highlights four key pieces to recovery, which fits with your toolkit:

- **Health:** *mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Wholeness in health.*
- **Home:** *having a safe and stable place to lay your head down each night.*
- **Purpose:** *discovering your purpose in life, how can you make a difference today?*
- **Community:** *what does your social support look like?*



iStock credit: sabelskaya

As you build your toolkit or toolbelt, make sure you have aspects of each four pieces included:

Health: include your favorite workout routine, time for devotions/meditations, taking walks in nature to help ground you, your favorite snack to munch on, and access where you are in your spiritual journey.

Home: create a space in your house dedicated to your recovery. Maybe a cozy corner of your den or home office where you can curl up with a good book or your favorite meditation app and spend some relaxation time there.

Purpose: part of your recovery journey can include giving back. There is always someone who is in need, and the act of altruism is powerful, for both the giver and receiver.

Community: who can you call on in your time of need? Do you have phone numbers stored somewhere safe, people you can count on when you need help? What 12 Step meetings are your favorite and most helpful? Social support is a critical part of the toolkit, because we are not expected to do everything on our own. Remember, it takes a village.

What will your toolkit look like?

Will you create an actual box, filled with all the good things to help you on your recovery journey to wholeness? Will you have more of a digital toolkit, where you can access things from your favorite social media apps? Will you have a figurative toolbelt, and keep those things close to you, around your waist, so that you can pull them out when necessary? Whatever your toolkit looks like, make sure it helps to ground you, fulfill your needs, supports your whole well-being, and helps you on every step of your recovery journey.

Amy Tilley, PsyD. has 20 years in the mental health and addiction recovery field. Her clinical interests include working with young adults and adults diagnosed with co-occurring conditions. Desert Star Addiction Recovery Center.

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Presenter

Alex Danvers, PhD - Sierra Tucson

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Knowing When to Seek Therapy:

A Guide to Taking Care of Your Mental Health

By Rachel Rubenstein, LCSW

Life in Arizona’s vibrant communities can be full of joy, challenges, and unexpected turns. Sometimes, navigating these ups and downs on your own feels overwhelming. Therapy isn’t just for crisis moments — it’s a valuable resource for anyone seeking balance, growth, and healing. But how do you know when it’s time to reach out for professional support? Here’s a guide to help you recognize the signs and take the first step toward mental health wellness.

Why Therapy Matters

Therapy offers a safe, confidential space to explore your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors with a trained professional. It can help with a wide range of experiences and challenges — from anxiety, depression, and stress to relationship challenges, grief, life transitions or addictions. Rather than waiting for a “breaking point,” therapy empowers you to understand yourself better and develop coping tools to thrive. I tell my clients, “It is a sign of wellness to take the step and start therapy.” Knowing when to start therapy shows you have personal insight and motivation for change.



iStock Credit: StockRocket

Signs You Might Benefit from Therapy

- **Persistent Feelings of Sadness or Anxiety**

Feeling down or worried from time to time is normal. But when these feelings persist for weeks or interfere with daily activities, therapy can offer relief and clarity.

- **Struggling with Life Changes or Loss**

Divorce, job loss, moving, or the death of a loved one can shake your sense of stability. Therapy provides support to process grief and build resilience.

- **Moving through Addiction**

Addiction, your own or a loved ones, can be confusing and exhausting. Therapy can provide clarity, coping tools and a space to process feelings.

- **Relationship Difficulties**

Conflict with family, friends, or coworkers can cause stress and isolation. Therapy can help improve communication and set healthy boundaries.

- **Feeling Overwhelmed or Stuck**

When daily tasks feel daunting or motivation is low, therapy can help identify underlying issues and create actionable plans.

- **Changes in Sleep or Appetite**

Significant shifts in sleep patterns or appetite may signal emotional distress that therapy can address.

- **Physical Symptoms Without Clear Medical Cause**

Sometimes emotional pain shows up as headaches, stomachaches, or fatigue. A therapist can work alongside your healthcare providers for holistic care.

Overcoming Barriers to Seeking Help

Many people hesitate to seek therapy due to stigma, cost, or uncertainty about the process. Remember these tips:

- Therapy is a sign of strength, not weakness. Prioritizing your mental health is courageous.

- Options are available for different budgets and schedules, including sliding-scale fees and teletherapy.
- Finding the right therapist is a personal journey. Don’t be afraid to ask questions or try different professionals until you find a good fit.

Taking the First Step

If you’re considering therapy, start by:

- Reflecting on your needs and goals. What do you hope to achieve?
- Seeking recommendations from trusted sources or professional directories.
- Contacting a therapist for a consultation—many offer free initial calls to answer your questions.
- Remembering it’s okay to ask for support from friends or family during this process.

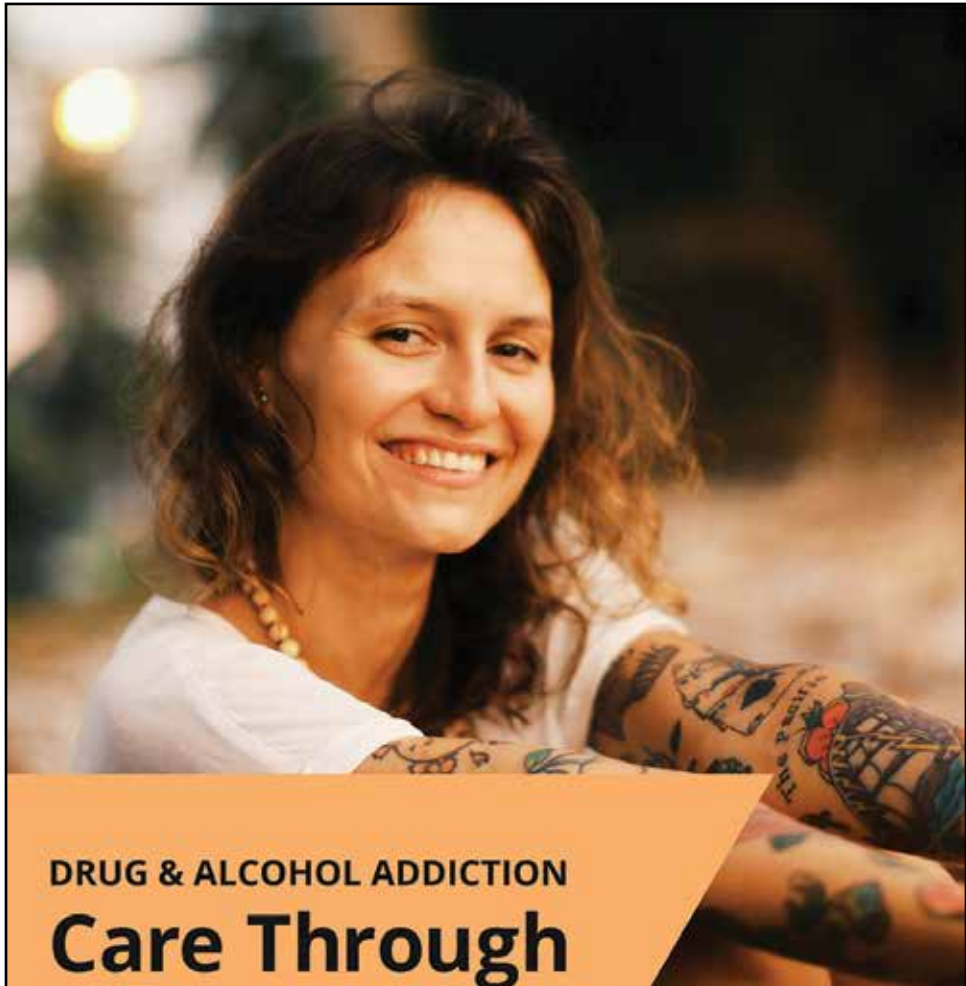
Your Mental Health Matters

Therapy is not just for moments of crisis but for everyday growth, self-awareness, and healing. In Arizona’s diverse and dynamic communities, prioritizing mental health can help you thrive personally and strengthen connections with those around you.

If you’re ready to explore therapy, know that support is available, and you don’t have to do it alone. **Together AZ** is here to help you find resources and take that brave first step toward well-being. For emergency help - call 911 or go to your nearest hospital emergency room. For suicidal thoughts and behavior — dial or text 988 for the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

Rachel Rubenstein LCSW is a counselor located in Scottsdale Arizona, providing both in person and telehealth services throughout Arizona. Please visit her website for more information about her and her practice at www.RubensteinCounseling.Services or she can be reached at 480-994-9773.







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The WIZ-dom of the 12-Step Road

By Dr. Marlo Archer



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You may have heard a story about a gal so dismayed with her situation that she wished it away and got carried off by a tornado, accidentally killing someone in the process. In the story, she then embarks on a wisdom-seeking journey, encountering other malcontents along the way. Facing challenges together, they realize they already had all they ever needed and carry a new sense of satisfaction back to their old lives.

On one hand, this could be the plot of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, written by L. Frank Baum 125 years ago. On the other hand, this could be the story of the speaker at a 12-Step meeting yesterday.

Like Dorothy, addicts are often dissatisfied with lives that are perfectly adequate, but not spectacular. That desire for more excitement, more flash, more adventure can build up resentment, envy, and a desire to escape the situations into which we've been placed - either by our own actions, by the decisions of others, by random chance, or by some cosmic will. When we spend our time wishing things were different rather than accepting life on life's terms, we look for ways to escape.

Serving the same function as Dorothy's tornado, the whirlwind of an exciting substance or addictive activities can carry us away from our hum-drum lives. Gambling fuels visions of a luxurious lifestyle. Cocaine devises preposterous schemes about which to daydream. Alcohol provides temporary relief from inhibitions, creating a new personality for a few hours and even amassing Disney or NFL collectables can engage us in epic scenarios so much more enticing than our own.

Just as Dorothy's tornado uprooted her home and dropped it on top of the Wicked Witch of the East, addictions often disrupt households and cause a great deal of destruction, including death of both the wicked and the innocent. Financial difficulties caused by addictions contribute to divorce, home foreclosure, and bankruptcy. Inattention during substance use has certainly resulted in accidental fires, car crashes, and physical injury or contracting diseases. Poor judgement and unfortunate words uttered under the influence may damage the self-esteem of children or lovers or incite life-ending violence.

When an addict finds him or herself in Dorothy's position, at the rock-bottom place of homelessness, confusion, or even having committed murder; if they make the courageous decision to follow the Yellow Brick Road of the 12-Steps, they, too, will encounter others with similar stories. They will make life-saving friendships and find those fellow addicts in recovery who can accompany them on their journey.

Ultimately, through connection to the wizardry of a Higher Power, every recovering addict eventually reaps the benefits of the 9th and 10th step promises and re-engages their life with the courage to take effective action to change what they can, the composure to tolerate the immutable, and the wisdom to know the difference.

To walk the Yellow Brick road of the 12 steps, or for professional help, see the Together AZ Resources Page at: <https://togetheraz.com/resources-for-recovery/>

Dr. Marlo Archer is a fellow of the American Society of Group Psychotherapy & Psychodrama and a Certified Supervisor with the International Deliberate Practice Society, actively engaged in training the next generation of experiential healers.



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Yoga, Mindfulness, and Recovery



Why September Brings Them Together

By Alexandra & Jacob Daffner

Every September, we celebrate both National Yoga Month and National Recovery Month—and we can’t help but feel like that’s no coincidence! These two worlds, yoga and recovery, share a heartbeat: the belief that transformation is possible, healing is ongoing, and every day is a chance to start again.

At Spiritually Fit, we have seen it firsthand—both in our personal journeys in recovery and in the hundreds of people we have had the honor of teaching over the years. In recovery, we learn to take life one day at a time. In yoga, we take it one breath at a time. Both invite us to slow down, turn inward, and meet ourselves exactly where we are.

For many of us, early recovery can feel raw and sensitive. We often feel unsure of how to handle the constant waves of emotion. Yoga offers a safe space to reconnect with the body, which may have felt like an enemy for years. Movement becomes a way to release stored tension, rebuild trust with ourselves, and create a sense of grounding that doesn’t come from anything outside of us.

Mindfulness, whether through meditation, breathwork, or simply noticing sensations in the body, teaches us that feelings are temporary. The discomfort, the cravings, the self-doubt, they all pass. That awareness is powerful medicine in recovery.

It’s not just a “feel-good” practice—research backs this up. Yoga and mindfulness have been shown to lower cortisol (the stress hormone), improve emotional regulation, and support neuroplasticity—the brain’s ability to rewire itself. In recovery, that’s essential. We’re not just breaking old patterns; we’re creating entirely new pathways for joy, connection, and self-worth.

One of the most beautiful parts of yoga at Spiritually Fit Co-Op is witnessing community form. When we practice together, we’re reminded that we’re not alone in our struggles or our victories.

The mat becomes a place where people from all walks of life—different ages, backgrounds, and stories—can breathe in unison. That shared presence builds trust, connection, and hope. So each year when September rolls around, see it as a powerful reminder: whether you’re rolling out a yoga mat for the first time or taking your first steps into your recovery journey, you’re saying yes to yourself in a profound way. You’re choosing to believe that change is possible. You’re committing to practices that nourish not just your body, but your mind and spirit.

Recovery and yoga both teach us that progress is not linear. Some days will feel light and expansive; others might feel heavy and constricted. But every day is part of the journey. And in both, the most important thing is to keep showing up—breath after breath, step after step.

This September let’s honor both. Let’s celebrate the resilience it takes to recover and the courage it takes to open your heart on the mat. Because really, they’re just two ways of saying the same thing: you are worth the work.

You can find us every Thursday at 7pm practicing Y12SR (yoga for 12-step recovery) and every Saturday at 5pm for our donation-based Hot Yoga for Addiction Recovery (HYAR) at the Spiritually Fit Co-Op studio. (8989 E. Via Linda unit 212 in Scottsdale). Make these classes a part of your Recovery program and feel first-hand the difference our community has to offer.

Learn more at spirituallyfitco-op.com





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20th Year

Presented by:



My Choice:

RECOVERY



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By Amanda Ostrow

When I entered treatment in December 2022, recovery was the last thing on my mind. I was there because I had nowhere else to go, I wanted to get my family off my back, and deep down, I feared that if I kept living the way I was, I might not survive. I wasn't even sure I wanted sobriety at all.

I was 40 years old and had spent half of my life addicted to opioids. I wholeheartedly believed that any attempt at sobriety would be futile and kept asking myself how I could possibly start my life over after so much of it had been wasted. My inner voice was my biggest and loudest enemy, but I became willing to give myself a chance.

Quieting the Inner Critic

That questioning critic in my head got quieter, and I slowly began to realize the difference between sobriety and recovery. Sobriety was finding ways to manage not using drugs to escape the pain I had inside, while recovery was allowing that pain to heal. Being able to get through a difficult day without getting high was staying sober, but getting through that same day without wanting to get high was recovery. I found myself wanting to rebuild my life rather than just live it without drugs. I wanted to be in recovery.

Within days of completing residential treatment, I was involved in a hit-and-run while riding a scooter. I didn't realize it at the time, but my first true "recovery moment" was being given to me by the universe. At the hospital, they told me I had broken five ribs and my sternum. My hand was also so badly fractured that it was going to require surgery. The emergency room doctor also told me he wanted to admit me to manage my pain, which meant pain medication. The opiate addict in me silently screamed, "Yes, please!" while at the same moment, I heard myself ask the doctor to be discharged, as long as nothing else was medically wrong.

"I found myself wanting to rebuild my life rather than just live it without drugs. I wanted to be in recovery."

Even I was dumbfounded in the minutes that followed. I was in total disbelief that I had just turned down pain medication, especially in a scenario where it was being legitimately offered. In the days that followed, I was extremely uncomfortable and in physical pain. The pain was accompanied by uncertainty, fear, and frustration.

At the time, I couldn't have explained it, but some part of me knew that this was a make it or break it moment. And it wasn't about staying sober or not; I was determined not to turn back down the road I had just traveled. Would it have been easier to feel sorry for myself? Or ruminate over how, of course, something like this happens now that I am sober? Yes, it would have been easier. But everything I had just been taught told me that recovery wasn't about taking the easy path.

I reached out for help and accountability from the people who truly loved me. I focused on taking suggestions and trying to stay open-minded. Instead of snapping back with defensiveness when my family questioned my version of the car accident (and my sobriety), I listened. And when the physical pain and discomfort from my injuries hit, I reminded myself—I could be just as uncomfortable sitting in a meeting as I was lying in bed doing nothing. So I went to meetings, got a sponsor, and stayed connected to the community that had started to surround me.



I discovered that I could face whatever life threw at me—not just without drugs, but with humility and acceptance. Looking back, I'm grateful that such a difficult experience came so early in my journey. It gave me the chance to prove to myself that even in the hardest moments, no matter how tempting the easier path looks, I can always choose recovery.


I completed programming at Scottsdale Recovery Center in April of 2023, and in November began to work at SRC as a peer support specialist. Recently, I became a case manager. I am currently pursuing my BS in Counseling from GCU. My purpose and passion in life is to help people on their recovery journeys! Amanda's sobriety date is December 22, 2022.

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Via Linda Behavioral from page 1

capstone academic training course with the collaboration of academic clinical faculty and utilizing the Married State preceptor model to educate new student nurses as they transition into the behavioral health nursing profession.

This program will allow Via Linda Behavioral Hospital to assist in preparing our community’s future nursing professionals with the tools to perform quality, evidence-based, structured nursing patient care with the collaboration of student faculty.

The funding has provided avenues in which Via Linda Behavioral Hospital can upskill the nursing profession for mental health patient care awareness both within the mental health realm and the community. Through funding Via Linda Behavioral Hospital will provide innovative upskilling education to the community during a symposium scheduled for quarter one of 2026.

As a secondary benefit, Via Linda Behavioral Hospital was able to internally promote 49 preceptors allowing for further career growth and development within the organization. Taylor Dawson, one of Via Linda Behavioral Hospital’s preceptors, notes, “I’ve seen tremendous growth in our nursing staff thanks to the preceptorship program. New nurses come in with more confidence and skill, and they integrate into the team much more smoothly. It’s been rewarding to watch them develop not just clinically, but also in their communication and critical thinking. The program has really strengthened our team as a whole.”

Since the program’s inception in the Summer of 2024, the preceptor team trained just shy of 2,400 precepted hours and a total of 43 new RN hires. “Since the launch of the preceptor program in 2024, we have seen retention increase by 57.56% from June 2024 to June 2025”, stated Claire Romero, Chief Nursing Officer.

Via Linda Behavioral Hospital is honored to contribute to the delivery of quality behavioral health care and to support ongoing workforce recruitment and retention efforts in Arizona through its participation with the Board of Nursing under HB 2691/ARS 36-1803.

For more information about Via Linda Behavioral Hospital and its participation in HB 2691/ARS 36-1803, visit <https://vialindabehavioral.com/>

About Via Linda Behavioral Hospital

Via Linda Behavioral Hospital has 120 beds and provides specialized mental health treatment for patients who need acute inpatient psychiatric hospitalization or intensive outpatient programming in Scottsdale and the greater Phoenix region.

Research reported in this publication/press release was supported by the Arizona Board of Nursing under HB 2691/ARS 36-1803: Student Nurse Clinical Rotation and Licensed or Certified Nurse Training Pilot Program. The content of this publication is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the Arizona Board of Nursing.



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11

The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up

A Reflection Inspired by the Work of Marie Kondo

By Sharon Youngblood, Trauma-Informed Coach and Somatic Practitioner

I first encountered Marie Kondo's writings as the pandemic was entering the quarantine phase. I appreciated her warm tone and the practical simplicity of her ideas about tidying up your space. Like many others, I found myself stuck at home with an unknown stretch of time ahead, so I gave her method a try.

Initially, she focused on tidying clothing—getting rid of items you no longer needed, creating order from chaos. I followed her suggestions and found them surprisingly useful. At the time, I didn't imagine her ideas would have any real relevance to my work as a trauma-informed coach. But as it turns out, they did.

Five years later, I picked up *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*, the book that inspired this reflection. I already knew she was enthusiastic about decluttering—but this book takes it to the next level. Kondo promises that if you follow her guidance, you'll become more decisive, everything will have its place, and your life will “jump-start” in ways you can't yet imagine. More joy! A completely changed life!

I was skeptical—but also intrigued. And before I knew it, three days later, I had every piece of clothing I owned in a pile in the middle of my living room.

Following her instructions, I picked up each item and asked myself, “Does this spark joy?” If it didn't, it went into the donation pile. About three-quarters of my clothes didn't make the cut. I began to grow tired of the process and hadn't encountered much “magic” yet. But then, when I looked at my closet—organized, spacious, and peaceful—I felt a subtle but powerful shift. Each time I glanced at it, I felt calm.

Then came the shoes. Some dated back to 1980. I was already growing weary, but I kept going. Books were next—and that nearly broke me. Books have always been sacred to me. But Marie's question, “Do you plan to read this again?” really hit home. I realized I didn't need to keep them all. The ones that had meaning still lived in my memory. I had 725 books when I stopped counting. I now have around 45.

Next came the stored paper. I gleefully dumped it all on the floor—knowing it would be tedious but hoping the payoff would come. And it did.



iStock Credit: AndreyPopov

Somewhere between paper and cosmetics, I had a series of realizations:

- 1. Living among unused, forgotten, or unloved items is extremely stressful—even oppressive.**
- 2. When you have too much of everything, it's hard to find anything.**
- 3. I didn't miss a single thing I got rid of—I hadn't even remembered most of it.**
- 4. Constantly searching for lost items adds unnecessary anxiety to an already burdened nervous system.**

These insights aren't just helpful—they're crucial for trauma survivors.

Many survivors of complex trauma lacked security during their formative years. It's understandable, then, that survivors might cling to objects as a way to create a sense of safety. But paradoxically, clutter often increases anxiety rather than reduces it. The body knows. It responds.

As someone who coaches individuals navigating extreme and often heart-breaking trauma, I'm continually in awe of how resilient trauma survivors are. Despite everything, many function at an astonishingly high level. When they begin healing—and more people are seeking help every day—they begin to soar.

Thanks to Marie Kondo, I now have a new tool in my trauma-healing toolkit: tidying up as a gentle, body-informed practice of nervous system care.

Here are just a few benefits I've observed:

A tidy space makes it easier to regulate the vagus nerve, which plays a critical role in calming the nervous system.

Clutter—even if it's neatly arranged—creates sensory overload that makes it harder to relax.

When your space is clear, there's more room for peace, clarity, and dreaming—and time to actualize those dreams.

Kondo's guiding question is simple: “Does it spark joy?” If not—why keep it? We don't need to hold onto everything that reminds us of past joys. We can gently let go and make space to embrace the present moment with clarity, calm, and joy.

For an Introductory session, Free Periodic Writings, Notification of Speaking Engagements, Contact Sharon Youngblood: sharonyoungblood7@gmail.com; 520-331-1483.

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September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month—a time to raise awareness, promote hope, and normalize help-seeking. Suicide affects millions of people every year, yet too many struggle in silence. Whether you’re facing challenges, supporting a friend or loved one, or are looking to help, your voice matters. This month is dedicated to recognizing the warning signs for suicide, encouraging open conversations about mental health, and connecting people to proven treatment and resources. When we stand together in strength, dignity, hope, and purpose, we can make a difference—we can help save lives.

Warning Signs of Suicide

Suicide is complex and determined by multiple combinations of factors, such as mental illness, substance misuse, chronic illness, trauma, painful losses, exposure to violence, and social isolation.

Below are the warning signs of suicide for youth and adults. Act if you notice these signs among a family members, friend, neighbor, coworker, or others. Suicide risk is greater if a behavior is new or has increased, and if it seems related to a painful event, loss, or change.

Adult Suicide Warning Signs

- Talking about or making plans for suicide.
- Acting anxious, agitated, or behaving recklessly.
- Talking about being a burden to others.
- Talking about feeling trapped or in unbearable pain.
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs.
- Talking about feeling hopeless or having no reason to live.
- Sleeping too little or too much.
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated.
- Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge.
- Displaying extreme mood swings.
- Chronic illness or serious physical health conditions.

Youth Suicide Warning Signs

- Expressing hopelessness about the future.
- Displaying severe or overwhelming emotional pain or distress.
- Increased physical symptoms—such as fatigue, headaches, and stomachaches—commonly associated with emotional distress.
- Changing or withdrawing from social connections or situations.
- Changes in sleep (increased or decreased).
- Anger or hostility that seems out of character or out of context.
- Recent increased agitation or irritability.

Resources:

<https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/suicidal-behavior>
<https://www.samhsa.gov/about/digital-toolkits/suicide-prevention-month>
<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-support>
<https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/suicidal-behavior/resources>

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available.

Call or text: 988 Chat: 988lifeline.org

You’ll be able to speak with a trained crisis counselor any time of day or night.

Brough Stewart, MC, LPC, NCC
15455 N. Greenway Hayden Loop
Suite C-9
Scottsdale, AZ 85260
602-316-3197
brough@broughstewart.com
www.broughstewart.com

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Celebrating a Decade of Family Recovery
A Journey of Resilience, Joy, and Hope

Join PAL as we commemorate 10 years of transformative family recovery. This celebration is designed to provide families and friends with an interactive experience that includes education and resources, along with food, recognitions, and sentimental moments that capture our milestones and relationships.

We will also celebrate **PAL** as a community partner and have some fun! And we need your help to sharpen and strengthen the future of family recovery as we chart the course for the future for what’s to come for PAL.

Join us in shaping the next decade of family recovery. Your participation and support are crucial in creating a brighter, more resilient future for all families. Let’s move forward together! Details below

**JOIN US FOR
PAL FORWARD**
*Celebrating a Decade
of Support, Education,
and Hope*

**Friday, November 14, 2025
5:30 pm | Phoenix Bible Church**

Parents of Addicted Loved Ones (PAL) is excited to announce that we are hosting our 10-year celebration and fundraiser, **PAL Forward**, and we want you and your family to join the festivities! ***This celebration is for PAL families, friends, and the community!***

THE EVENT WILL FEATURE:

- Interactive stations for sharing and learning
- 10 years of PAL Milestones
- Award Recognitions
- Food and Beverage
- Giveaways and Prizes
- Entertainment and Laughter
- Sentimental Moments
- Fun and Fellowship

TICKETS
\$15 Per Person
\$25 Couples/Family

PAL FORWARD
Shape the Future of Family Recovery

MORE INFORMATION: palfoward.palgroup.org
TICKETS: Scan QR code above, or visit bit.ly/PAL-Forward-Ticket

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES: palfoward.palgroup.org/sponsors

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Resources & Support:

: Suicide Crisis
988

Recovery Partners — Contributors

ACT Counseling & Education	602-569-4328	actcounseling.com
AZ Women’s Recovery Center (AWRC)	602-264-6214	azwomensrecoverycenter.org
Aurora Behavioral Health	877-870-7012	auroraarizona.com
Axiom Care	602-782-9500	axiomcareofaz.com
Birches Health	833-483-3838	bircheshealth.com
CBI, Inc.	877-931-9142	communitybridgesinc.org
Copper Springs	480-418-4367	coppersprings.com
The Crossroads	602-263-5242	thecrossroadsinc.org
DaVinci Consulting Services	480-606-8602	davinciconsultingservices.com
Denova	602-230-7373	denova.com
Desert Star Addiction Recovery Center	520-638-6000	desertstarARC.com
Dr. Marlo Archer	480-705-5007	DrMarlo.com
Gifts Anon	480-483-6006	
Hushabye Nursery	480-628-7500	hushabyenursery.org
The Meadows Behavioral Health	800-632-3697	meadowsBH.com
Mental Health Center of America	602-704-2345	mentalhealthcenter.com
Mens Teen Challenge	520-792-1790	tcaz.org
Mercy Care 800-631-1314	602-222-9444	mercycazeaz.org
NotMYKid	602-652-0163	notmykid.org
Psychological Counseling Services (PCS)	480-947-5739	pcsintensive.com
Rachel Rubenstein	480-994-9773	RubensteinCounseling.Services
Revive Recovery Center	480-405-5396	reviverecoverycenters.com
Scottsdale Providence	480-210-1734	scottsdaleprovidence.com
Scottsdale Recovery Center	888-663-7847	scottsdalerecovery.com
Sharon Youngblood	520-331-1483	
Sierra Tucson	800-842-4487	sierratucson.com
Spiritually Fit- Co-op	602-809-0854	spirituallyfitco-op.com
Brough Stewart, MC, LPC, NCC	602-316-3197	
Valley Hospital	602-952-3939	valleyhospital-phoenix.com
Via Linda Behavioral Hospital	480-476-7210	vialindabehavioral.com
Virtue Recovery Center	866-338-6977	virtuerecoverysuncitywest.com
Teen Challenge AZ	602-708-9475	tcaz.org

Additional Resources

AZ. Dept. of Health	602-364-2086
Arizona Opioid Assistance Helpline	888-688-4222
Erics House	855-894-5658
Desert Drug Dog	602-908-2042
Hunkapi Programs	480-393-0870
Kid in the Corner	kidinthecorner.org
EMPACT/La Frontera	800-273-8255
I Am Teen Strong	480-396-2409
PAL Parents of Addicted Loved Ones	palgroup.org
Recovery Café	480-530-7090
TERROS Health	602-685-6000

TUCSON	
ACA	aca-arizona.org
AA	520-624-4183
Al-Anon Info Service	520-323-2229
Anger Management	520-887-7079
Behavioral Awareness Center	520 629 9126
Co-Anon Family Groups	520-513-5028
Cocaine Anonymous	520-326-2211
Cornerstone Behavioral Health	520-222-8268
Cottonwood Tucson	800-877-4520
Crisis Intervention	520-323-9373
Narcotics Anonymous	520-881-8381
Nicotine Anonymous	520-299-7057
Overeaters Anonymous	520-733-0880
Recovery in Motion	520-975-2141
Sex Addicts Anonymous	520-745-0775
Sierra Tucson	800-842-4487
Suicide Prevention	520-323-9372
Teen Challenge	888-352-4940
The Mark Youth and Family Care	520-326-6182
Workaholics Anonymous	520-403-3559

In Tucson

Refuge Recovery

Wednesday, 6:00-7:00 pm, Red Tree Meditation Center, 1234 E 16th St. Tucson.

Saturday, 5:00- 6:30 pm,*Palo Verde room* Saint Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church. 4440 N Campbell Ave., Tucson.Refuge recovery is a non-theistic alternative to 12 step programs.

EDA Meetings

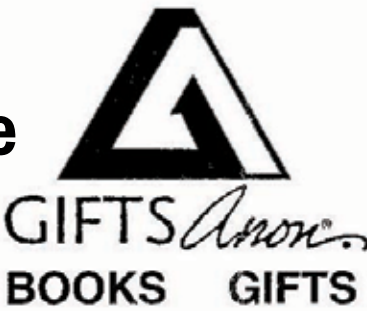
Sat. 10:30 am New Freedom Meeting —
Pigeon Coop .4415 S Rural Rd, Ste 8, Tempe
AZ. Step and big book study.

Thur. 7:00 pm, New Happiness Meeting
Crossroads 2103 E Southern, Tempe.
Rotating format - Step, Topic, Big book,
Speaker.

Helplines

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)	602-264-1341
Al-Anon	602-249-1257
Tucson Al-Anon Information	520-323-2229
Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACA)	aca-arizona.org
AZ Women’s Recovery Center	602-264-6214
Bipolar Wellness	602-274-0068
Child Abuse Hotline – Support & Information	800-422-4453
Cocaine Anonymous	602-279-3838
Co-Anon	602-697-9550
CoDA	602-277-7991
COSA	480-385-8454
Crisis Help Line – For Any Kind of Crisis	800-233-4357
Crisis Text Line	Text HOME to 741741
Crystal Meth Anonymous	602-235-0955
Debtors Anonymous	800-421-2383
Domestic Violence	800-799-SAFE
Families Anonymous	602-647-5800
Fentanyl Anonymous	520-338-9307
Food Addicts food addicts.org	435-764-1461
Gamblers Anonymous	602-266-9784
Grief Recovery	800-334-7606
Heroin Anonymous	602-870-3665
Marijuana Anonymous	800-766-6779
NDMDA Depression Hotline – Support Group	800-826-3632
Narcotics Anonymous/Phoenix	480-897-4636
Narcotics Anonymous/Casa Grande	520-426-0121
Narcotics Anonymous/Flagstaff	928-255-4655
Narcotics Anonymous/Prescott	928-458-7488
Narcotics Anonymous/Tucson	520-881-8381
Nar-Anon Family Groups	(800) 477-6291
National Youth Crisis Hotline	800-448-4663
Overeaters Anonymous	602-234-1195
PAL (Parents of Addicted Loved Ones)	480-300-4712
Parents Anonymous	602-248-0428
Phoenix Metro SAA	602-735-1681
RAINN (Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network)	RAINN.ORG
Rape Hotline (CASA)	602-241-9010
Sexaholics Anonymous	602-439-3000
Sexual Assault Hotline 24/7 English & Spanish	800-223-5001
Sex/Love Addicts	602-337-7117
Sex/Love Addicts Tucson	520-792-6450
Sex Addicts Anonymous	602-735-1681
S-ANON	480-545-0520
Teen Life Line	800-248-8336

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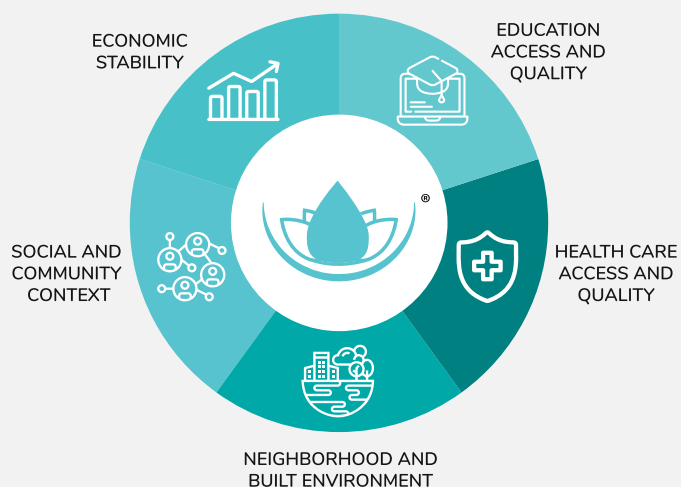
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WHAT IS WHOLE PERSON CARE?

Our patient-centered approach leverages a wide range of resources through our social determinants of health resource center to provide physical, behavioral, and social support. The goal is to achieve better care coordination, well-being, and health outcomes, all while incorporating the patient's preferences, choices and ultimately achieving health equity.



CALL 888-NO-DRUGS

SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS



PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT



HEALTH BEHAVIORS



HEALTH CARE

