

# Aging and Addiction

## Supporting Seniors in Recovery

By Jaime Vinck, MC, LPC

Growing older brings many joys, but it can also bring challenges that aren’t always easy to talk about—especially when it comes to addiction. Seniors who struggle with substance use face unique circumstances that are often overlooked. Supporting them requires understanding, empathy, and a community willing to walk alongside them.

### The Unique Challenges of Aging and Addiction

Life transitions—retirement, changing family roles, the loss of loved ones, including beloved animals—can weigh heavily on older adults. These changes sometimes lead to feelings of loneliness or despair, and for some, turning to alcohol, prescription medications, or other substances can become unhealthy coping mechanisms.

Addiction in seniors can be hard to spot. Subtle signs may be mistaken for normal aging or side effects from medications, which can delay help. Stigma adds another layer, as many older adults grew up in a time when mental health and substance use weren’t openly discussed. Even healthcare providers may focus on physical health while missing underlying substance use issues.

### Comprehensive Treatment Matters

Recovery for seniors isn’t one-size-fits-all. Programs that truly work consider their physical, emotional, and social needs. At Meadows Behav-

ioral Healthcare, care integrates medical support, therapy, and community involvement to address addiction and any co-occurring mental health challenges, such as depression or anxiety.

Polypharmacy—when seniors take multiple medications—is a common concern. Treatment programs review medications carefully and coordinate with healthcare providers to prevent misuse or dependency. Holistic therapies, including mindfulness, art, gentle yoga, or tai chi, help seniors reconnect with purpose, manage emotions, and regain a sense of control.

### The Power of Community and Connection

As humans, we are hardwired for connection. Social circles often shrink with age due to retirement, relocation, or the loss of friends and family, making isolation a serious risk factor. Creating opportunities for connection—through group therapy, peer support, or community activities—helps seniors feel understood, valued, and supported.

Family and friends play an essential role as well. Regular check-ins, attending appointments, and encouraging involvement in local programs can all strengthen a senior’s sense of purpose and belonging.



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### Family Involvement in Recovery

Family dynamics matter. Strained relationships or unresolved conflict can contribute to substance use, while supportive involvement can be transformative. Family therapy can help mend relationships, foster empathy, and provide loved ones with tools to understand and support seniors in recovery.

Because addiction in older adults can be subtle, families should watch for small changes in mood, behavior, or health, and seek guidance if they notice potential concerns.

### Addressing Stigma and Raising Awareness

Stigma is a significant barrier for seniors seeking help. Addiction is often dismissed as a “phase” or

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# Answering the Call

## Why Arizona’s Adolescents Need More Mental Health and Substance Use Care

By Brayden Younghusband, Founder and CEO  
Revive Recovery Center



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When I first entered treatment as a teen, I didn’t know what to expect. I was scared, uncertain, and unsure if recovery was even possible for me. What I found was connection. People believed in me before I could believe in myself. That experience planted a seed that, over time, grew into the foundation of my own recovery and ultimately into what is a beautiful, sober, and serene life today.

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## Publisher's Note

By Barbara Nicholson-Brown

### Bringing Recovery to the Light

Growing up, my family never openly discussed topics like mental health, alcoholism, drug use, suicide, prevention, or recovery. We lived with alcoholism, but even saying the word "alcoholic" out loud came with a reminder to keep it a secret. I didn't know it then, but that was likely my first experience with shame; and it felt very uncomfortable.

My mom was often "sick," some family members were enablers, and my siblings and I were confused — because we were kept in the dark about what was really happening. Like many families we had the 'giant elephant' in the room no one talked about.

We've come a long way in working to remove the stigma and shame surrounding the disease of addiction. From my perspective, we've made quantum leaps in the world of healing, health, and self-care. From adolescents to seniors, addiction does not discriminate by age.

One key is having the right resources and professionals to guide the way. Without fear, we can now openly talk about finding solutions, offer support, and most of all, provide hope. Let's continue to shine a light on recovery together.

While I didn't initially plan for our front-page stories to cover both ends of the age spectrum, it offers the perfect perspective—that recovery truly is for everyone.

Thank you to all of our outstanding contributors for providing your expertise and being a valuable resource to our community.

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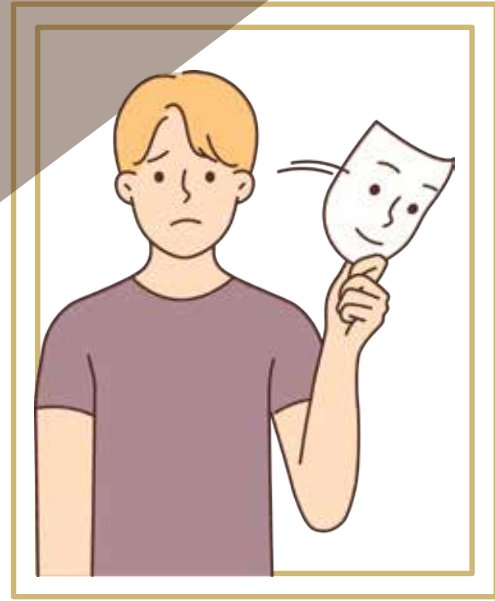
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expected with aging, which minimizes the seriousness of the problem. Public education, healthcare training, and creating safe spaces for conversation are key to breaking down these barriers.

Routine medical visits should include screenings for substance use and depression, and communities can foster supportive environments where older adults feel comfortable asking for help.

A Call to Action for Supporting Seniors

Helping seniors reclaim their lives takes a team—comprehensive treatment, strong community connections, and engaged families all make a difference. Small actions matter: Check in on elderly loved ones, learn about local resources, and advocate for accessible services. Elderly folks often feel invisible. Be sure that you are asking your loved ones what they think about a topic, or for their support with a task or situation. If they start to tell a story that you have already heard, let them. Listen and smile. There will come a time when you long to hear that story just one more time. Feeling needed and belonging can make all the difference. Organizations like The Meadows provide specialized programs, but recovery thrives when families and communities work together.

A Hopeful Path Forward

Every senior has a story worth hearing, and every story deserves a hopeful ending. Through compassion, connection, and comprehensive care, we can help older adults navigate recovery while honoring their dignity and resilience.



Jaime Vinck, MC, LPC, is President of Meadows Behavioral Healthcare, leading programs that help individuals and families heal. Recognized as one of Arizona’s Most Influential Women, she also serves as Vice Chair of the National Association of Addiction Treatment Providers.

For help or more information, visit [MeadowsBH.com](http://MeadowsBH.com) or call 866-244-4949.



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# GOAL Setting: “But I Don’t Want to Do It” and the Mental Health Benefits

By Amy Tilley, PsyD

Normally, writing this newsletter article comes easily for me, and I have little difficulty writing it. This month, not so much. It is something I enjoy doing and it gives me a break from the day-to-day tasks I have at work. It offers me a bit of creativity and a chance to stretch my brain in a different way every month. I decided to write about goal setting several days before I sat down to write, and as I write this now, I’ve spent much of the day figuring out what to say, not focused on the goal, having little motivation...oh, the irony.

My own dilemma is a great example of the Premack Principle. What is that, you ask? It is a psychological concept that states a high probability behavior (doing something you like /want to do) can reinforce a low probability behavior (doing something you don’t necessarily want to do); therefore, increasing the probability of the low probability behavior occurring. In other words, first, I’ll do this (lesser desired behavior), then — I’ll reward myself with (insert desired behavior).

For me, writing this article is an example: first I’ll write the article, then I’ll go play in my flower garden. This can apply to any aspect of life, work or personal. Another example: I don’t want to create the yearly marketing budget, I really want to ride my bike. Set a timeframe for writing the budget, work hard for a few hours, and then reward yourself with a bike ride. Putting a fun, enjoyable reward at the end of your less fun task makes the task more manageable, and you have something to look forward to on your calendar!

For this to work, it is best to come up with the fun activity, rather than someone else choosing it for you. This can work at home, too. Children may not want to clean their room, do their homework, or pick up after their pet. If you want those things to happen, ask them what they would like to do *after the activity is done*. Maybe they want to read a book or play a video game. Set the “first, then” directive and watch the room get cleaned in record time!

The Premack Principle pairs well with general goal setting and has many mental health benefits. It is versatile and can be used in homes, schools, and in therapy rooms. Got a tough client that you seem stuck with? Try the Premack Principle and see what behavioral change they are willing to do to get their reward.

## What are some benefits of goal setting?

When done correctly, they can increase motivation, inspire you, and engage teams at work or in the community to have success.

Goals generally can: improve your performance, help you focus for longer periods of time, increase your intrinsic motivation (your own satisfaction increases the chance that you finish the task).



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***"Tasks and "to do" lists are part of our everyday lives. The next time you "don't want to do it," remember that you can break down the larger task into smaller parts, and accomplish smaller goals to reach the big goal."***

Setting goals can also help foster cooperative behavior, particularly within teamwork and with partners. If you and your partner are focused on a common goal, you can help motivate each other and provide support to reach the collective end point. Goals also function as a form of accountability. If you want to work out more frequently, set a desired number of times for healthy movement — then tell someone about it and ask them to hold you accountable. It is much easier to tell the truth about how many times you complete your workout than to lie about it.

## Goal setting has mental health benefits

Breaking down a larger (sometimes daunting) task into smaller parts helps reduce stress and anxiety. This provides momentum and increases self-esteem as you check off each part of the larger task. Improve your cognitive functioning by setting a goal to learn a new hobby: play a musical instrument, take up gardening (it works for me!), learn to ballroom dance, volunteer on a regular basis, having something to do on your calendar is proven to increase your mood and decrease symptoms of depression and anxiety. Tracking your progress also provides motivation and allows you to see your accomplishments along the way.

## Tasks— Part of our Everyday

Tasks and “to do” lists are part of our everyday lives. The next time you “don’t want to do it,” remember that you can break down the larger task into smaller parts, and accomplish smaller goals to reach the big goal.

There are many physical, mental, and emotional benefits to goal setting and to applying the Premack Principle to your life. What goal(s) do you want to accomplish in the next few months? Put them on your calendar and start working on them. Bit by bit! With a reward at the end of each small task you accomplish!

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. Visit [desertstarARC.com](http://desertstarARC.com) /call 520-638-6000





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# You Don't Have to be in Crisis to Seek Help

By Erika Rudder, Community Liaison  
Aurora Behavioral Health

Most of us don't wait for our car to break down on the side of the road before taking it to the mechanic. We go in for oil changes, tire rotations, and tune-ups to keep it running smoothly. Mental health works the same way, you don't need to be in crisis before reaching out for support.

## Life will always bring the unexpected

While we can't prevent adversity, we can prepare for it. Our emotional, physical, and spiritual health are connected, working together every day. When we focus on one and neglect the others, imbalance eventually shows. But when we see them as a whole, we give ourselves a stronger foundation to face challenges.

We all know that health matters, but turning that knowledge into action isn't always easy. Where do I start? What option is right for me? How long will it take? These are all valid questions that many people ask when considering support. *Knowledge is power, but action is powerful.*

The truth is, like most things, it starts with a single step. Reaching out is not a sign of weakness, it's a sign of strength. You don't have to wait until you're in crisis to begin treatment. Just as we go to the gym to stay strong or to the doctor for preventative care, therapy and mental health support help us stay balanced before life feels overwhelming. And just as important, we must remember: caring for only one area of health, whether mental, physical, or spiritual, while neglecting the others makes it hard to truly thrive.

## The Importance of Emotional Well Being

Emotional well-being influences every part of our lives: our relationships, friendships, work, and more. Thankfully, there are many ways to nurture it. Therapy can take many forms: individual, group, couples, family, and beyond. The key is to ask yourself, What are my goals? Do I want to build healthier coping skills? Strengthen relationships? Manage stress? Or simply have a safe space to process life? Whatever your answer, there is a type of support designed for you.

**Physical health** is often recognized as essential, yet it can be one of the first areas we neglect. Some people thrive in workout classes, others prefer solo gym sessions, outdoor walks, or recreational sports. The important part is finding what fits you. Again, starting with the first step. Asking yourself, Do I prefer the gym or the outdoors? Do I enjoy team activities or exercising on my own?, can help guide you toward the kind of movement that best supports your overall well-being.



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***"The truth is, like most things, it starts with a single step. Reaching out is not a sign of weakness, it's a sign of strength. You don't have to wait until you're in crisis to begin treatment. "***

**Spiritual health** is just as essential as mental and physical health, yet it is often overlooked. Spirituality doesn't always mean religion, though for some, faith provides deep connection and renewal. At its core, spiritual health is about feeding the soul and discovering what restores you versus what drains you. As humans, we are wired for connection, even if our social needs look different. For some, that connection comes through church or faith communities. For others, it might be clubs, volunteer opportunities, or nonprofit organizations that bring people together around a shared purpose. A true sense of community isn't just about where you live, it's about where you belong.

I was reminded of this truth recently while attending high school events for **Suicide Awareness and Prevention Month**. I had the honor of sharing coping skills and mental health facts with students, and their reaction was eye-opening. They were surprised to learn that mental health care can be simple.

Things like doing a puzzle, eating sour candy, or stretching can all be tools to cope. I was able to share with them that "adults are not the only ones who struggle with mental health" and that "treatment is not only for big problems." Their excitement reminded me that, as humans, we tend to overcomplicate things when sometimes the simplest steps can make a real difference.

From a young age, I was taught to be proactive rather than reactive. Over time, I've realized how true this is in nearly every part of life. The same applies to our health; mental, physical, and spiritual. Seeking support, building healthy habits, and nurturing connections are all ways to strengthen ourselves for the road ahead. Let's strive to be proactive in caring for ourselves, not waiting until challenges force us to react. Don't wait until the car breaks down. Don't wait to seek support.

If you or someone you love is in need of mental health support, Aurora Behavioral Health is here to help. Our Patient Services team is available 24/7 at **480-345-5420**, or you can learn more at **www.auroraarizona.com**.

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# Roadmap to Change:

## Welcoming Patients in Full Color

*“You didn’t get here in spite of your past  
– you got here because of it” – Dr. Wayne W. Dyer*

By Abby Rallo, BSN, RN, Program Fidelity Specialist

Life is a journey. At Via Linda Behavioral Hospital, we know that every patient’s healing journey begins when they step through our doors. Change can feel overwhelming and new environments can feel strange, bringing simultaneous feelings of uncertainty and hope. To support our new patients during this transition, our admissions department now features a hand-painted mural, Roadmap to Change, to provide a warm welcome, because healing starts with hello.

Safety is a cornerstone to recovery, which is why the mural integrates a checklist of contraband items that cannot enter the facility. While these guidelines are practical, they also serve to represent Via Linda’s commitment to protect, support and provide every individual a safe space to heal. By setting our expectations clearly and compassionately, we lay the foundation to build rapport and foster trust.

When our new patients are invited to the waiting room during their onboarding experience, they are also greeted with an informative video to better understand what to expect during the evaluation and admissions process. This colorful and engaging admissions video helps bring clarity to a sometimes confusing new experience by explaining procedures and the rationale behind them. We strive to build trust through transparency and keep our patients informed and included in their treatment plan from the very beginning of their care.

Our admissions process is more than procedures and paperwork, it’s about human connection. The mural is more than paint on a wall, it’s a conversation, an invitation, and a gentle reminder that healing is only possible when safety



Photo submitted

is a priority. The admissions video is more than information, it’s a reminder that patients are active participants in the care they receive and they deserve to make informed decisions every step of the way.

As our patients travel through their healing journey, we hope that they recognize that they are here now, not in spite of their past, but because of it... and we’re here to support them from start to finish. *Welcome to the Roadmap to Change.*

### About the Author

As a purpose-driven optimist, Abby Rallo pairs her experience as an educator with her duty to serve as a registered nurse to provide hope to humans. She is a firm believer that ‘giving makes you richer’ and even on her worst day, she aims to spread joy and kindness to others. Learn more about how Abby combines her values with innovative, evidence-based therapeutic programming at <https://vialindabehavioral.com/>



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Today, I see too many teens just like me standing in that same place of uncertainty. Their pain is real, their risks are growing, and the support available is often not enough.

The Numbers Are Unmistakable

We are in the middle of a youth mental health crisis. In 2023, nearly 4 in 10 high school students reported persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness. About 20 percent seriously considered attempting suicide, and nearly 9 percent made an actual attempt.

On the substance use front, the data is equally sobering. Nationally, about 7.8 percent of adolescents aged 12–17 met criteria for a drug use disorder in the past year. In Arizona, 7.3 percent of teens reported trying alcohol for the first time within the last year. While the Arizona Youth Survey shows some declines in alcohol, marijuana, and e-cigarette use between 2022 and 2024, the underlying need for early intervention and wraparound mental health care remains urgent.

Suicide among youth ages 10–24 has increased roughly 62 percent over the last decade. These aren’t just numbers on a chart. They represent lives, families, and futures.

Why Adolescents Need a Different Approach

Adolescents are not miniature adults. Their brains are still developing, especially in areas that control impulse, judgment, and long-term decision making. What may be effective treatment for someone in their thirties does not necessarily meet the needs of a 15-year-old.

Young people live in a web of influences: family, school, peers, and social media. Ignoring any of these pieces means missing critical context. Programs must be designed to engage the whole picture of an adolescent’s life. They must be flexible, engaging, and built on relationships.

A New Step: Virtual Adolescent IOP

In response to this need, Revive Recovery Center is introducing a Virtual Adolescent Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) designed for youth ages 12 to 17.

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Why This Matters to Me

My own journey in treatment as a teen showed me the power of someone planting a seed of hope. Even when I doubted myself, others believed in me and refused to give up. That experience became the foundation of my life in recovery and is the reason I fight for young people today.

At Revive, we want every adolescent who walks through our doors, or logs into our groups, to feel seen and heard. We want them to know there is a way forward, even if they cannot yet see it for themselves.

Community Call to Action

**We cannot stand by while the crisis among youth grows. Every adolescent who falls through the cracks represents a story cut short. But every adolescent who finds support represents a life reclaimed.**

Here are some steps we must take together as a community:

- Expand funding and capacity so families don’t face long waitlists.
- Integrate mental health into schools and primary care settings.
- Talk openly about mental health and substance use, free from stigma.
- Involve young people in program design and leadership.
- Support parents and families with education and peer support.

At Revive, our new adolescent IOP is one piece of the puzzle. But the solution will take all of us: schools, faith communities, policy makers, and families working together. Today, I want to extend that same hope to the next generation.

*Every adolescent deserves a chance to be heard, to heal, and to discover that recovery is not just possible...it's real.*



Brayden Younghusband is the Founder and CEO of **Revive Recovery Centers**. Brayden is in recovery and has made it his career and passion to be an advocate to people struggling from substance use and mental health disorders. He has nearly a decade of experience in the behavioral health field in operations, executive leadership, and marketing. He saw a need for authentic and quality care in our community and decided to open Revive Recovery Center to provide innovative, accessible and exceptional clinical care to individuals struggling with addiction and mental health. [reviverecoverycenters.com/](http://reviverecoverycenters.com/)

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# From the Mat

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## Spiritually Fit

### *Finding Steadiness through Seasonal Change in Arizona*

By Alexandra Daffner

October in Arizona is its own kind of season. While much of the country leans into crisp air and falling leaves, here we finally step out of the long, exhausting heat of summer. The mornings are cooler, the evenings more inviting, and there’s a collective sigh of relief as the desert becomes livable again. For those of us in recovery, this shift in weather can be more than physical—it’s a reminder that change is possible, and that relief always follows endurance. It’s also the perfect moment to check in with how spiritually fit we are feeling.



Photo submitted

At Spiritually Fit Co-Op, we see ‘spiritual fitness’ as the foundation of well-being. Just like physical exercise strengthens the body, spiritual practices strengthen our inner world. In recovery, this means building resilience, connection, and clarity so we can meet life’s challenges without losing our center. Arizona’s October gives us the gift of renewed energy, and with it, an opportunity to recommit to these practices in ways that feel grounding and sustainable.

Yoga is one of the most powerful tools we use at the Co-Op to support spiritual fitness. Through intentional movement, breath, and mindfulness, yoga teaches us how to reconnect to the present moment and to our bodies—something that can feel difficult in recovery. When we practice together, whether on the mat or in community, we’re reminded that we don’t have to navigate change alone. The shared energy in a class can help carry us through when motivation runs low.

Spiritual fitness also means honoring the cycles of letting go and renewal. In the desert, we might not see leaves falling from trees, but we witness the slowing of the heat and the emergence of life in a softer, more balanced form. This season invites us to ask: What do I need to release so I can move forward lighter? Whether it’s an old belief, a harmful habit, or simply a layer of self-criticism, letting go creates space for growth. Our yoga practice mirrors this—every exhale is a release, every pose an opportunity to reset.

### Consistency is key

Just as you wouldn’t expect to be physically strong without regular practice, staying spiritually fit requires showing up daily, even in small ways. At Spiritually Fit Co-Op, we encourage our community to build rituals that align with their lives—maybe it’s a morning yoga flow, an evening sound healing meditation after sunset, or joining a Y12SR class to feel supported and seen. Each small choice adds up, building a stronger, steadier foundation.

This October, let Arizona’s shift in season remind you of your own capacity for change. Lean into the practices that keep you spiritually fit—on the mat, in community, and within yourself. As we step into cooler days, may you find steadiness, connection, and renewed strength in your recovery journey.


For class schedules and info visit <https://spirituallyfitco-op.com>  
See you on the mat!




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# Teen Challenge of Arizona Celebrating 60 Years of Life Transformation and sharing God’s love

Teen Challenge of Arizona is celebrating a historic milestone—60 years of ministry dedicated to helping youth, adults, and families break free from drug, alcohol, and other life-controlling addictions. Since opening its doors in 1965, Teen Challenge of Arizona has faithfully served communities statewide, offering hope where many thought there was none.

With five residential centers across Arizona, our mission is clear: to provide an effective and comprehensive Christian faith-based solution to the devastating impact of addiction.

For six decades, we have stood on the front lines, bringing restoration to individuals and families through the transforming power of Jesus Christ. We are humbled to report a documented 80% success rate—one of the highest in the nation—which reflects the lasting impact of our programs and the faithfulness of God at work in people’s lives.

The heart of our program goes beyond sobriety. Teen Challenge of Arizona is committed to helping people become mentally sound, emotionally balanced, socially adjusted, physically well, and spiritually alive. By applying biblical principles in everyday living, students not only find freedom from addiction but also discover their God-given purpose and the ability to thrive as productive members of society.

Over the years, countless men and women have been restored to their families, reunited with children, and empowered to pursue new careers and ministries. These stories of transformation ripple out into the community, bringing healing, hope, and a stronger future for Arizona. What began as a small ministry has now grown into a statewide movement impacting thousands of lives and multiple generations.



As we celebrate 60 years of saving lives and restoring families, we are filled with gratitude—for God’s grace, for the students who bravely say “yes” to change, and for the faithful support of donors, churches, volunteers, and community partners who make this mission possible.

For more information on how you can get involved or to find help for yourself or a loved one, please visit [tcaz.org](http://tcaz.org) or call our toll-free number at 1-888-352-4940. Together, we will continue to bring hope and freedom for the next 60 years and beyond.



## Teen Challenge of Arizona

Helping Youth, Adults, and Families

<b>HOME OF HOPE</b> Women & Children 520-252-3523	<b>PHOENIX MEN'S CENTER</b> For Men 18 and up 602-708-9475	<b>SPRINGBOARD</b> Home for Girls (12-17) 520-730-4269
		

**"My addiction had grown into something I could no longer control. Then I found Teen Challenge. Now I have a new life, free from drugs!"**

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# Erase the Stigma!

## The issue is real — so is the solution!

Millions of people struggle with mental illness and addiction everyday in this nation. The stigma surrounding these illnesses keeps many living in the dark, suffering alone. Solutions are available, however; first we need to give people the strength and encouragement to reach out for resources.

**Steps to Recovery Homes** witnesses the battle every single day and is hosting an *Erase the Stigma* event in collaboration with many other organizations who are committed to helping those who suffer with mental health problems and addiction.

The event is free to the public. Food, drinks and lots of great energy are available at the Nature Inspired Connection Room. Join us at **Erase the Stigma**, Saturday, **November 8**, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. 637 N. Main St. Suite 2B, Cottonwood AZ.

Four featured speakers will cover topics such as grief support, medications and long term effects, family issues and navigation with a loved one struggling, building resilience and community awareness. We are inviting organizations in behavioral health and addiction recovery to set up an information booth. We want to talk openly about these issues and provide solutions. The more we understand the unique challenges of mental health and addiction the more we can help. Contact Damien Browning at **928-649-0077 Option #2** or visit [stepstorecoveryhomes.org](http://stepstorecoveryhomes.org) to reserve your space.

### About Steps to Recovery Homes

The long-term goal of the Steps to Recovery Homes is to create a healthy, safe and structured environment for our clients, to help our community by giving people an opportunity to become productive members of society and lower the recidivism rates in our community. Steps to Recovery Homes is a viable placement for those who are serious about changing their lives.



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# It Takes Passion

At the Serenity House (Goodyear, AZ), helping women in recovery and reentry isn't just our mission — it's Dr. Khadijia's passion!

As an AZHRA-certified and DHS-approved community, we offer a safe, supportive, and structured environment where women can rebuild their lives. Our HERJourney© programming is designed to empower women to thrive — offering life skills training, trauma-informed care, recovery coaching, financial literacy, workforce readiness, healthy relationship building, and community connection.

Every part of HERJourney © is focused on healing, growth, and long-term success. If you or someone you know is ready for a fresh start, contact the Serenity House today to learn more or apply.

Visit <https://decreeconsult.com/serenity-house>



Dr. Khadijia stands as a beacon of inspiration and her passion lies in uplifting others and fostering positive disruption and change.

At Decree It! Sober Living, we focus on behavior transformation and strategic resolutions. Through our evidence-based curriculum, we collaborate with organizations and individual clients to create new opportunities, regardless of past circumstances.



**Serenity House,  
Goodyear, AZ**  
**HERJourney: Empowered Women,  
Empowered Lives Program**



**Prioritize Your Wellness & Recovery, Starting Today**  
call 623-748-7633 or email [serenityhouse828@gmail.com](mailto:serenityhouse828@gmail.com)



### Community Living Environment

A safe, sober home where women can focus on reentry and their healing journey.



### Designed for Women

Women must be 25+ years of age or older, referred from a treatment program or justice-impacted status and sober for 60 days.



### Empowered Women: Wellness & Success

Women are encouraged to engage with 12-step and wellness/recovery programs to build community and accountability.



### Be Invested - Stay Engaged

Designed to support women in their journey, helping them take the critical steps toward a healthy and self-sufficient life.

Commit to work a personalized recovery wellness plan through the HERJourney: Empowered Women Program.

### Program Fees:

The HERJourney program at the Serenity House offers a private room (when available) at \$225 per week and shared rooms at \$200 per week. These fees cover housing, Wi-Fi, utilities, and access to on-site laundry amenities.

- We are recovery centered.
- We live victoriously.
- We live according to the visions of the future and are not stuck in the past.
- We Decree It!

Website: [www.decreeconsult.com/serenity-house](http://www.decreeconsult.com/serenity-house)  
Email: [serenityhouse828@gmail.com](mailto:serenityhouse828@gmail.com)



## 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



**MORE INFORMATION:** [palforward.palgroup.org](http://palforward.palgroup.org)  
**TICKETS:** Scan QR code above, or visit [bit.ly/PAL-Forward-Ticket](http://bit.ly/PAL-Forward-Ticket)

**SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:** [palforward.palgroup.org/sponsors](http://palforward.palgroup.org/sponsors)



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# Beyond the First Steps:

## *Staying on the Recovery Path When It Gets Rocky*

By Sharon Youngblood, Trauma Coach & Somatic Practitioner

Recovery isn't a straight line. Anyone who has walked this path knows there are smooth stretches, steep climbs, and sometimes, rocky detours. The question, "What do you do when you feel irritable, restless, or discontent—even after doing the work?" doesn't have one neat answer.

It depends on where someone is in their recovery, what support they have, and how they address what recovery circles often call "outside issues."

### Early Recovery: Building a Foundation

Many people step into their first recovery meeting and walk right back out. Old-timers often say, "They're just not ready," and warmly invite them to return. Some do, some don't. But for those who stay, 12-step programs and treatment centers provide simple but powerful tools.

Meetings offer belonging, encouragement, and stories of hope that help the newcomer feel less alone. Phrases like "Meeting Makers Make It" remind people to show up, get involved, and find a sense of home. For many, this is the first place they've ever felt they truly belong.

Getting a sponsor and working through the steps often helps newcomers confront shame, grief, and isolation. A renewed faith—whether in themselves, a higher power, or both—begins to take shape. Over time, many discover they "no longer regret the past" and start to live with purpose.

Surrounded by supportive peers, isolation lifts, and life genuinely improves. But this stage can also be a vulnerable one.

### When Your Recovery Gets Rocky

Even as life improves, deeper pain often surfaces. Trauma and long-standing psychological wounds don't disappear just because someone gets sober. Many recovering people eventually face the question: What do I do when life is better, but it's still too painful?

The 12 steps provide timeless tools, but even AA's founders acknowledged their limits. In the original Big Book, Bill Wilson wrote:

*"We know but a little. More will be revealed. Outside help may be needed."*

Books like *Second Stage Recovery* highlight what many experience: after sobriety takes root, old feelings and memories bubble up. Some distract themselves by switching addictions. Others keep attending meetings but feel trapped by despair. Too many, heartbreakingly, relapse or even take their own lives.



iStock Credit: djedzura

The truth is, untreated trauma and ingrained patterns don't vanish with willpower or step work alone. The nervous system continues to react automatically, replaying old pain. Dismissing this with "I'm just an alcoholic" isn't enough—it leaves people stuck in suffering and increases the risk of relapse.

### The Role of Trauma-Informed Care

This is where integrating outside support becomes crucial. In the last two decades, neuroscience has advanced our understanding of trauma and recovery. Today, mind-body approaches can work alongside traditional recovery programs to address the roots of pain.

Tools such as:

- EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing)
- CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy)
- Somatic Experiencing
- Trauma-informed coaching
- Vagus nerve regulation
- Fascia bodywork

...have emerged as powerful allies. These aren't replacements for meetings, sponsors, or step work—they're complementary supports that help heal the nervous system and reduce the body's automatic trauma responses.

When someone begins to understand that their body is reliving stored trauma—and learns how to interrupt those patterns—they gain real freedom. Instead of white-knuckling through pain or bouncing into another addiction, they find healthier ways forward.

### Putting It All Together

So what does it mean to stay on the recovery path when it gets rocky?

It means honoring the basics:

- Don't pick up mind-altering substances
  - Keep going to meetings
  - Work the steps
  - Lean on your sponsor
  - Connect with your community

*But it also means being open to adding new tools.*

Recovery is more than abstinence—it's about becoming "happy, joyous, and free." By combining the wisdom of traditional programs with modern mind-body practices, people give themselves the best chance to not only stay sober but to truly heal.

Because the journey doesn't end with putting down the drink or drug.

The real gift of recovery is learning to live fully—steady, resilient, and whole—even when the path gets rocky.

Sharon Youngblood — Trauma-Informed Coach & Somatic Practitioner. Email [sharonyoungblood7@gmail.com](mailto:sharonyoungblood7@gmail.com) | 520-331-1483

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## Red Ribbon inspires our kids to Be Drug Free

*Red Ribbon Week takes place each year from  
October 23 through 31st.*

National Family Partnership, formerly the National Federation of Parents for Drug Free Youth, was established as a grassroots, nonprofit organization in 1980 by a handful of concerned and determined parents who were convinced they should begin to play a leadership role in drug prevention. Since its founding thirty years ago, NFP has devoted its efforts to the well-being of youth. Today, NFP is a national leader in drug prevention education & advocacy. Our mission is to lead and support our nation's families and communities in nurturing the full potential of healthy, drug free youth.

### What We Do

**AWARENESS** – NFP provides drug awareness by sponsoring the annual National Red Ribbon Campaign™. Since its beginning in 1985, the Red Ribbon has touched the lives of millions of people around the world. In response to the murder of DEA Agent Enrique Camarena, angered parents and youth in communities across the country began wearing Red Ribbons as a symbol of their commitment to raise awareness of the killing and destruction caused by drugs in America. In 1988, NFP sponsored the first National Red Ribbon Celebration. Today, the Red Ribbon serves as a catalyst to mobilize communities to educate youth and encourage participation in drug prevention activities.

**ADVOCACY** – NFP is active in bringing the concerns and agenda of America's parents and families to policy makers on a local, state, and national level. Joining NFP enables parents and coalitions to have direct access to our nation's leaders and decision makers.

**RESOURCES** – Our organization acts as a national clearinghouse of prevention literature. NFP has developed a series of prevention brochures to help educate our Partners with all the latest information on our Universal Campaigns such as: Red Ribbon Campaign, Red Ribbon Certified Schools, Lock Your Meds, and Safe Homes / Safe Parties.

### The Red Ribbon Campaign® and Enrique Kiki Camarena

Since its beginning in 1985, the Red Ribbon has touched the lives of millions of people around the world. In response to the murder of DEA Agent Enrique Camarena, angered parents and youth in communities across



# ERASE THE STIGMA

**ATTENTION**  
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Community Members

**A Community Awareness and Educational Day  
on Behavioral Health and Addictions**

**Saturday November 8th, 2025**  
**9:00am - 2:00pm**  
Connection Room  
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**Speakers - Food & Drinks - Information Booths**

**Speakers**  
Dr. Joanne Cacciatore Professor SSW - Good Grief, Support Done Right  
Dr. Steven Karp - Medications and Long Term effects  
Shawna Bowen MA- Finding hope with the addict in your life  
James Tobin MPA - Building Resiliency / the 5 Keys

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the country began wearing Red Ribbons as a symbol of their commitment to raise awareness of the killing and destruction cause by drugs in America.

Enrique (Kiki) Camarena was a Drug Enforcement Administration Agent who was tortured and killed in Mexico in 1985. When he decided to join the US Drug Enforcement Administration, his mother tried to talk him out of it. "I'm only one person", he told her, "but I want to make a difference."

On Feb. 7, 1985, the 37-year-old Camarena left his office to meet his wife for lunch. Five men appeared at the agent's side and shoved him in a car. One month later, Camarena's body was found. He had been tortured to death.

In honor of Camarena's memory and his battle against illegal drugs, friends and neighbors began to wear red badges of satin. Parents, sick of the destruction of alcohol and other drugs, had begun forming coalitions. Some of these new coalitions took Camarena as their model and embraced his belief that one person can make a difference. These coalitions also adopted the symbol of Camarena's memory, the red ribbon.

In 1988, NFP sponsored the first National Red Ribbon Celebration. Today, the Red Ribbon serves as a catalyst to mobilize communities to educate youth and encourage participation in drug prevention activities. Since that time, the campaign has reached millions of U.S. children and families. The National Family Partnership (NFP) and its network of individuals and organizations continue to deliver his message of hope to millions of people every year, through the National Red Ribbon Campaign®.

**Learn more and get involved at <https://www.redribbon.org/>**  
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# UNHEALED TRAUMA CREATES ANXIETY AND CHAOS

**Sharon Youngblood**  
Somatic Practitioner / Trauma Informed Coach  
**(520) 331-1483**

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# Your Spiritual Escrow Account

By Alan Cohen

On August 27, a postcard sent 72 years ago was finally delivered to the recipient's address. While Alan Ball, now 88, was visiting New York City in 1953, he sent his parents, Frederic and Elizabeth Ball, a postcard, which became lost deep in the postal system. When the Ottawa, Illinois postmaster found the relic last week, he was able via genealogy to track down Mr. Ball to tell him his postcard had finally come through. Frederic and Elizabeth, currently residing in heaven, were unavailable for comment.

If you think that's a long time to wait for a postcard, consider the one that was delivered last year in Swansea, Wales, 121 years after its postmarked date of sending.

### What is a Spiritual Escrow Account?

Spiritually speaking, everything dispatched to you and that you deserve by right of your consciousness eventually arrives. While some call this dynamic "what goes around comes around," I call it "your spiritual escrow account." My friend Ken Honda, author of *Happy Money*, explains this principle to comfort people who feel they have lost money unfairly. "Imagine that your money is being held in a great escrow account," Ken suggests. "It will come back to you someday in some form, when you can most use it."

When I first began to present seminars, I gave a program at a local holistic health center. Based on the attendance, the sponsor was to pay me \$1,300. When months went by and she did not pay, she told me that the center was having a hard time financially, but she would get it to me — for sure. A month later I received a notice that the center had gone bankrupt, and I would not be receiving any payment.

Soon afterward I learned that this woman had opened up a new center under a different name, and she was reaping a good income. I grew angry, since



iStock Credit: RomoloTavani

*"Spiritually speaking, everything dispatched to you and that you deserve by right of your consciousness eventually arrives."*

through my event she had collected far more than the amount she owed me, and now she was abusing the bankruptcy laws to avoid her creditors. I wrote the woman a strong letter demanding that she pay me. Before I mailed it, however, an inner voice said, "Wait before you send it." The more I thought about the letter, the less I felt inclined to get into an upset-driven conflict with the woman. It felt a lot better to just let it go. I was doing well with my business, anyway. I deleted the letter from my computer.

A month later, I was presenting a program at Unity Village, Missouri, the world headquarters of Unity Churches. There I was to be paid according to the number of people in the audience. I counted the audience, and calculated my income at \$3,100. A few weeks later I received a check from Unity for \$4,400—\$1,300 extra, the exact amount the holistic center's owner had shorted me. When I double checked with Unity, they said that the figure was correct as far as they were concerned. The money I thought I had lost was not lost at all. It was being held in my higher escrow account. Spirit knew how to get it back to me.

You might also believe that you have lost your good through a lover, friend, or family member who has turned their back on you or somehow departed from your life. I assure you that any love or kindness you invested is not lost at all. Every packet of good that you generate belongs to you by right of your consciousness. When you stay in a sufficiency mindset, the universe is happy and able to dispense all of your payouts. If the postal service can do it, Higher Power is certainly capable.

Alan Cohen, M.A., is the author of 31 popular inspirational books, including the bestselling *A Course in Miracles Made Easy*, the award-winning *A Deep Breath of Life*, and the classic *Are You as Happy as Your Dog?* Alan offers a variety of programs to help you along your personal & spiritual path. Visit <https://www.alancohen.com/>



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## 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
Mens Teen Challenge	520-792-1790	tcaz.org
Mercy Care 800-631-1314	602-222-9444	mercycaarez.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	
Steps to Recovery/Konnect	928-649-0077 <sup>Opt. 1</sup>	konnnectwellness.org
Valley Hospital	602-952-3939	valleyhospital-phoenix.com
Via Linda Behavioral Hospital	480-476-7210	vialindabehavioral.com
Virtue Recovery Center	866-338-6977	virtuerecoverycitywest.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
Ericks 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
Mental Health Center of America	602-704-2345
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.

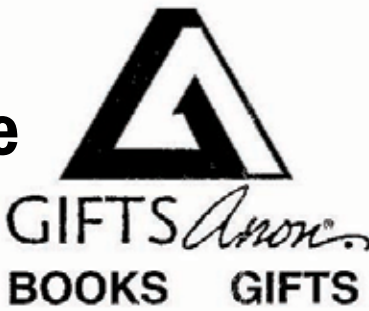
Saturday, 5:00- 6:30 pm,\*Palo Verde room\* Saint Philip's in the Hills Episcopal Church. 4440 N Campbell Ave., Tucson.

Refuge recovery is a non-theistic alternative to 12 step programs.

## 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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