

ISSUE 48 • JULY/AUGUST 2025

ROADS TO RECOVERY  
NEWSLETTER

Created by Dual Recovery at Ascend Mental Wellness  
to support individuals in recovery

A newsletter for you  
and about you



SPOTLIGHT TOPIC

What Does It Really Mean to Feel Fulfilled?

By Ginger Miller

In today's fast-paced world, many people associate fulfillment with achievements or bucket-list experiences. But true fulfillment goes far deeper than checking off milestones. It's not just about what you do, but how and why you do it. Real fulfillment stems from living with purpose, focus, and clarity. It's the sense of deep satisfaction that comes when your actions are aligned with your values and intentions. It means you're not just going through the motions—you're building a life that reflects who you truly are.

Fulfillment doesn't come from the outside in—it's built from the inside out. It requires: *Introspection* (asking yourself what matters most), *Reflection* (considering where you've been and where you're going), *Acceptance* (of who you are and the life you're creating), and *Clarity* (to live intentionally rather than reactively). This kind of inner work gives you the insight you need to make choices that lead to lasting satisfaction—not just fleeting success.

One way to check in on your sense of fulfillment is by looking at your overall well-being:

- Physically – Are you caring for your body and energy?
- Mentally – Are you stimulated, focused, and learning?
- Emotionally – Are your feelings acknowledged and supported?

When these areas are in balance, you're more likely to feel grounded and fulfilled in all aspects of life.

At the heart of fulfillment are the genuine connections we form with others. It's not about how many people you know—it's about the depth and quality of your relationships. Shared experiences, honest conversations, and emotional closeness all contribute to a meaningful life. Fulfillment grows through relationships that support, challenge, and enrich you.

You are the architect of your life—and your sense of fulfillment. Don't rush. Fulfillment isn't a race to the finish line; it's an ongoing journey. Move forward at your own pace. Sometimes, slowing down is exactly what's needed to truly appreciate the beauty of life and gain the insight you've been seeking. Live with intention. Stay present. Choose meaning over momentum.

Because a fulfilled life isn't just built—it's lived, one conscious step at a time.

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# UNDERSTANDING THE DIAGNOSIS

## 38 ARTICLES

Understanding the Diagnosis has been a section of this newsletter since July of 2021, with a total of 38 topics discussed. This article is a recap of those topics and what issues they can be found in. Before ending this section of the newsletter we wanted to see if there are other diagnosis topics you would like us to cover, please email [gmliller@ascendmw.org](mailto:gmliller@ascendmw.org) with your suggestion or or if you would like a copy of any of the previous issues. Previous issues can be found on our website as well, [www.ascendmw.org](http://www.ascendmw.org) in the Programs & Services section then the Dual Recovery tab.

Alzheimer's Disease	Nov/Dec 2023
Anti-Social Personality Disorder	Jul 1, 2023
Attention Deficite/Hyperactivity Disorder	Jan 1, 2023
Autism	Sep 1, 2021
Basic Understanding Of Personality	Aug 1, 2022
Binge Eating Disorder (BED)	Apr 1, 2023
Bipolar Disorder	Aug 1, 2021
Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy	Jan/Feb 2024
Climate Anxiety	July/Aug 2024
Delusional Disorder	Nov 1, 2022
Dementia	May/June 2025
Dependent Personality Disorder	Dec 1, 2022
Depression	Dec 1, 2021
Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder	May/June 2024
Dissociative Disorder	Apr 1, 2022
Eating Disorders	Oct 1, 2021
Gambling Disorder	March/April 2025
Gender Dysphoria	Jun 1, 2022
Generalize Anxiety Disorder (GAD)	Jan 1, 2022

Imposter Syndrome	Sept/Oct 2024
Kleptomania	Nov/Dec 2024
Mental Health & Mental Illness	May 1, 2023
Narcissistic Personality Disorder	Feb 1, 2023
Neurocognitive Disorders	Aug 1, 2023
Non-Suicidal Self-Injury Disorder	Mar 1, 2022
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)	Nov 1, 2021
Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD)	Jan/Feb 2025
Phobias	Jun 1, 2023
Psychosis	Oct 1, 2023
Psychotic Disorders	Jul 1, 2022
Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	Jul 1, 2021
Schizophrenia	May 1, 2022
Seasonal Affect Disorder (SAD)	Feb 1, 2022
Social Anxiety Disorder	March/April 2024
Substance Use Disorder	Sep 1, 2022
Suicidal Behavior	Oct 1, 2022
Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)	Mar 1, 2023
Understanding Addiction	Sep 1, 2023





# HEALTH & WELLNESS

## Pain vs. Suffering: Learning to Work the Solution

By Ginger Miller

Pain is an unavoidable part of being human. We all experience pain at times; whether it be loss, heartbreak, disappointment, loneliness, or a number of other emotions we may be experiencing. A common phrase in recovery is “Pain is inevitable, suffering is optional”. In early recovery I would have wholeheartedly disagreed with that. In retrospect, as much as I didn’t like suffering, there was a familiarity with it and thus some comfort in it as well - I knew what to expect from it. But this also kept me stuck. I’ve learned that early resistance to this idea is normal – especially when pain feels overwhelming or unjust.

As I grew to have a more in-depth understanding of that phrase, I recognized that pain holds important clues about what is not working in my life. In that way, pain can be a teacher that motivates us – nudging us to make change in our life. Suffering arises when we resist reality or ruminate endlessly on pain. This is where another empowering recovery mantra became useful for me, “work the solution, not the problem”. Instead of defaulting to unhealthy ways of coping with pain—like pushing it away, pretending everything is fine, lashing out, or turning it inward and beating ourselves up—we can learn to examine pain and use it to motivate growth. That’s working the solution.

On the other hand, when we sit and ruminate—mulling over what happened again and again—we begin working the problem. That’s where suffering starts to take root. Suffering often feeds false narratives we carry like: *I’m not lovable. I should have done more. This always happens to me.* These stories may not be true, but pain can bring them up. And when we believe them without examining them, the suffering grows. Suffering often comes from wanting things to be different, not from the pain itself.

Easier said than done you may be thinking, and you’re right. No one enjoys pain, much less sitting in it, but when we take the time to examine it while we’re sitting in it – this is where our **power** comes in. We CAN change it with time and effort. One definition of suffering that really resonated with me is: “Suffering is wanting things to be different than they are.” That definition helped me finally understand why pain is inevitable, but suffering is optional. We can’t always change pain—but we often have more control over our suffering than we realize. When we start to notice ourselves resisting the present moment or wishing things were different, we can gently remind ourselves: wanting things to be different doesn’t change them.

What can help is learning to notice when pain arises, evaluate our options, and choose a healthy response. It’s easy to get pulled into thoughts like: *This is so unfair. It’s just going to get worse. or Why does this always happen to me?* But that’s the moment where we begin working the problem, not the solution.

So what do we do instead?



Mindfulness can be very helpful. Personally, I use breathing as an anchor. When I notice my mind spiraling into unhealthy thoughts, I consciously shift my focus to my breath. I acknowledge that I’m starting to want things to be different than they are. I remind myself that those thoughts won’t help—and may make me feel worse. Then I breathe... and reroute. It takes practice. A lot of it. But over time, it gets easier—and eventually becomes almost second nature (most of the time).

Being aware of the difference between pain and suffering has helped me get caught up in fewer unhealthy thought patterns. That said, grief and trauma can be much more complicated, and healing from them takes time and support.

Whatever the cause of your pain—be patient with yourself. Be kind to yourself. Remind yourself that you’re doing your best. The next time you’re hurting, ask yourself: Is this pain... or is this suffering? And then choose—gently, and with compassion—to work the solution.

### Riddles of the Month:

1. What did little corn say to mother corn?
2. How do two snails fight?



### Riddle Answers

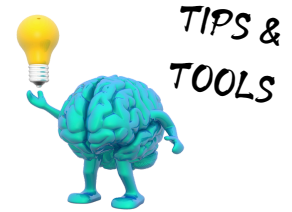
1. Where is 'pop' corn?
2. They slug it out!



# MENTAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT

## Core Values

BY GINGER MILLER



What are core values and why is it important to know what they are? Core values are fundamental beliefs that guide our decisions and behavior. They represent what is most important to an individual. Our core values shape our character and determine our actions which then form our beliefs. Core values can also give us purpose and direction in our life.

Have you ever felt miserable and weren't sure why? Then maybe you remember you told a little white lie and realize you feel bad about that. Perhaps you are working a job that helps you pay your bills, but you feel like you're not spending your time meaningfully. Maybe you're stuck in a relationship with someone who isn't quite right for you. Or on the surface it may look like you're living a fulfilling life, but something feels off. This is not unusual, and you are not alone.

When we go against our core values, we don't feel so good about ourselves. So, when you identify what your core values are you can often use them to navigate the choices you make, to build relationships, and achieve goals. Strong core values foster integrity, consistency, and a deeper understanding of oneself.

Being aware of what your core values are can help you identify when you're spending too much time on things or doing things that conflict with your values and then you can set boundaries or goals to be able to align with them. This allows you to prioritize time for things you do value and set personal goals to help you change behaviors that don't align with your values.

For example, if you value kindness, spend less time with friends who gossip and more time with those that enrich your life. If you value growth, spend time with mentors or friends that encourage you or model the growth you want to pursue.

Here is a list of common core values; see which ones resonate with you. There may be many of them, but it can be helpful to identify which ones are most important to you - the ones that you identify as being important to you that you practice them. Choose the top 10 or so. Maybe you think of some that apply to you that aren't on this list.

Accountability	Compassion	Growth	Meaningful Work	Respect
Achievement	Competency	Honesty	Openness	Responsibility
Adaptability	Courage	Humor	Optimism	Security
Assertiveness	Creativity	Integrity	Peace	Self-Respect
Authenticity	Dependability	Justice	Pleasure	Service
Balance	Determination	Kindness	Recognition	Spirituality
Collaboration	Empathy	Knowledge	Peace	Stability
Commitment	Fairness	Leadership	Religion	Success
Communication	Faith	Learning	Reputation	Trustworthiness
Community	Generosity	Loyalty		

After selecting the top 10 that are important to you take some time to reflect on them, ask yourself these questions:  
What are some specific examples of how you have honored these values in your life?  
Reflect on your current actions and behaviors, how well do they align with your core values?  
When have you felt most fulfilled or proud? Which of your values were you fulfilling?  
Name three actions or behaviors that align with each of your core values.  
Name three situations or behaviors you have that don't align with your core values.  
What steps can I take to grow in alignment with my values?  
How do these values influence my daily decisions?





# IS THIS MEETING FOR YOU?

## Undrunk Club

**Undrunk Club** is not your typical recovery 'meeting'. Undrunk Club is a welcoming, feel-good space **for women** (not just moms – they love alliteration) who are sober, sober-curious, or just want to enjoy a night out without the next-day regret. Undrunk Club creates space for real women to connect, sip, and celebrate without the booze. This is an exclusive, all-inclusive women-only crew shaking up what socializing looks like – one killer mocktail and hangover-free night at a time. Their events serve up booze-free drinks, fun conversations and your new B.B.F.s (Booze Free Friends). This club believes fun doesn't need alcohol, just good company and maybe a salted rim. These events are held monthly around the upstate New York area. To see where their next event is or get more information go to: [undrunkclub.com](http://undrunkclub.com)

## INSPIRATION & MOTIVATION



Open Access at Caleo Counseling Services (ASCEND's Clinical outpatient mental health clinic) is available Monday through Thursday from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM and 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM at 3043 State Route 4 in Hudson Falls, NY. Mental health clinicians' availability may vary for mental health assessments, and treatment recommendations or referrals will be made as appropriate. Please note that Open Access services are for adults only.

## CREATIVE WRITING CORNER



Do you have any fond memories that took place around a camp fire?

Back in my younger years we went camping a lot. We had so much fun. I remember them because I went with so many special friends. The memories are great. We used to play tricks on each other a lot. But then we'd settle down for the night. Some fun times were had.



~ Cookie

If I could, I would build a house for the homeless. I would make sure that they would be able to take a shower and put on clean clothes. I would ask them what made them homeless. I would help them find a job that they love to do.

~ Richard M.



We would love to hear from you! If you'd like to share a poem you've written, some creative writing you've done or a piece of your recovery story we would love to add it to our newsletter to help support or inspire our readers. Not sure what to write about? We'll provide prompts each month as an option.

### July/August Prompts

1. Write a story in a setting at a campground filled with the most obnoxious tourists you've ever seen.
2. Write a story about a character that goes for a hike and gets lost.

To submit your writing please email it to [gmler@ascendmw.org](mailto:gmler@ascendmw.org) or mail it to ASCEND Dual Recovery Department, 230 Maple St., Glens Falls, NY 12801.

# RECOVERY

## Resources

### PHONE NUMBERS

**Life Line Mental Health Crisis & Suicide Prevention:** 24/7 support for people in emotional distress or suicidal crisis. **Call or Text 988** When calling Press **1** for Veterans, Press **2** for Spanish, Press **3** for LGBTQIA+, or visit [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org)

**Mobile Crisis:** Meet a clinician in an agreed-upon location. 518-741-6099

**Crisis Text Line:** 24/7 for any crisis. A live, trained Crisis Counselor receives the text and responds, all from our secure online platform. Text 'HOME' to 741741

**United Way:** 24/7 Connects you to a community resource specialist who can put you in touch with local organizations that provide critical services. English and **Spanish** Dial 211

**Never Use Alone Crisis Prevention Center:** A toll-free nationwide overdose prevention, detection, crisis response and reversal lifeline services for people who use drugs while alone. The all volunteer peer-run call center operators are available 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. No stigma. No judgment. Just love! 800-484-3731

**Rose House Warm Line:** 24/7 A safe place to stay or someone to talk to. 518-502-1172

**National Domestic Violence Hotline:** confidential support 24/7/365 **English, Spanish and 200+ languages through interpretation service** 800-799-7233 or Text 'START' to 88788

**National Sexual Assault Hotline RAINN** (Rape, Abuse, Incest National Network: 24/7 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or visit [online.rainn.org](https://online.rainn.org).

**The Trevor Project:** 24/7 crisis support services for LGBTQ young people. Text, chat, or call anytime to reach a trained counselor: [thetrevorproject.org/hotline](https://thetrevorproject.org/hotline): 866-488-7386 or Text 'START' to 678678

**National Center for PTSD Helpline:** 1-800-273-8255

**National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI):** Hotline staff are prepared to answer any mental health questions you may have. (800) 950-NAMI (6264)

**Problem Gambling Northeast Resource Center:** (518) 801-1491

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):** Available 24/7, 365 days a year: (800) 662-HELP (4357). The professionals on the phone can provide treatment information and referrals in English and **Spanish**.

**National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH):** Available 8:30am to 5pm EST: (866) 615-6464 or (866) 415-8051 (TTY). Professionals can answer any mental health related questions in English or **Spanish**.

**Boys Town:** Specially trained counselors are available 24/7, 365 days a year to provide crisis support specifically for children and their families: (800) 448-3000

**National Eating Disorders Association:** 24/7 crisis support Text 'NEDA' to 741741

**National Human Trafficking Hotline:** Serving victims and survivors. Toll-free hotline is available from anywhere in the country, 24/7, 365 days a year at 1-888-373-7888

### WEBSITES

**Al-Anon and Ala-teen Groups:** Hope and help for families and friends of alcoholics: [al-anon.org](https://al-anon.org)

**Alcoholics Anonymous (AA):** Local group schedule and information: [district13.aahmbny.org](https://district13.aahmbny.org) To speak to someone local call 518-463-0906

**Debtors Anonymous:** Offers hope for people whose use of unsecured debt causes problems and suffering in their lives and the lives of others: [debtorsanonymous.org](https://debtorsanonymous.org)

**Digital Recovery Support:** Online recovery support groups are available daily. They are open to anyone who is dealing with substance use, mental health conditions, and any other quality of life concerns. Meetings are led by peer recovery support specialists who have firsthand experience and understand what you're going through: [www.recoveryanswers.org](https://www.recoveryanswers.org)

**Gamblers Anonymous (GA):** Online services for anyone struggling with a gambling addiction: [gasteps.org](https://gasteps.org)

**Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing (GRASP):** For those who have lost someone to substance use or addiction: [grasphep.org](https://grasphep.org)

**In The Rooms:** A free online recovery tool that offers 130 weekly online meetings. We embrace multiple pathways including all 12 Step, Non-12 Step, Wellness and Mental Health modalities. Other resources available also such as news, blogs, guides, and more <https://www.intherooms.com/home/>

**Narcotics Anonymous (NA):** local group schedule and information: [narcotics.com](https://narcotics.com)

**Overeaters Anonymous (OA):** Online support groups for anyone who wants to stop eating compulsively: [oarecovery.com](https://oarecovery.com)

### PODCASTS

**Mental Illness Happy Hour:** Weekly interviews with comedians, artists, friends, and the occasional doctor.; exploring mental illness, trauma, addiction and negative thinking.

**This Naked Mind:** Some of the episodes discuss alcohol withdrawals, the link between drinking and binge eating, how to deal with loneliness, and more.

**Recovery Rocks:** Our varied paths show listeners that there are a myriad paths to recovery and countless songs to rock out to along the way.

**Mental Health - Hope and Recovery:** They share inspirational true stories and a host of recovery skills. You'll learn about treatment options, coping skills, goal setting, relationships, and mindfulness.

### APPS

**Addiction Apps:** Twenty-Four Hours A Day (Free), Quit That! Habit Tracker (Free), NoMo (Free)

**Anxiety Apps:** MindShift (Free), Self-Help Anxiety Management – SAM (Free)

**Bipolar Disorder Apps:** IMoodJournal (\$), EMoods (Free)

**Counseling Apps:** TalkSpace (\$\$) BetterHelp (\$\$) Larkr (\$\$) ReGain (\$\$) TeenCounseling (\$\$)

**Depression Apps:** Talk Space Online Therapy (\$\$), Happify (Free), MoodTools (CBT; Free)

**Eating Disorder Apps:** Recovery Record (Free), Rise Up & Recovery (Free), LifeSum (Free)

**General Mental Health Apps:** What's Up (CBT; Free) Mood Kit (CBT; \$)

**Mindfulness & Meditation Apps:** Calm (\$), Serenity: Guided Meditation & Mindfulness (Free)

**Obsessive Compulsive Disorder Apps:** nOCD (Free), Worry Watch (\$), GG OCD (Free)

**PTSD Apps:** PTSD Coach (Free), Breathe2Relax (Free)

**Schizophrenia Apps:** UCSF Prime (Free), Schizophrenia Health Story Lines (Free)

**Suicide Prevention Apps:** MY3 (Free) notOK (Free)

**Wellness:** Wellness Recovery Action Plan (Goal Setting; Free)

**Check Out Our Peer Perspective Podcast!**  
**On ASCENDMW.org, SPOTIFY, IHeart Radio,**  
**Apple Pod Cast, and Amazon**

#### ASCEND DUAL RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUPS

EVERY TUESDAY  
4:30-5:30 PM OPEN DISCUSSION/RECOVERY TOPICS  
HOPE & HEALING RECOVERY CENTER:  
37 CHESTER STREET, GLENS FALLS  
IN PERSON OR  
VIRTUALLY - ZOOM MEETING ID: 844-2214-0148

PLEASE VISIT [WWW.ASCENDMW.ORG](https://www.ascendmw.org) FOR MORE  
INFORMATION & COPIES OF OUR NEWSLETTERS

THANKS FOR READING! :)

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR  
NEWSLETTERS, PLEASE EMAIL US AT  
[GMILLER@ASCENDMW.ORG](mailto:GMILLER@ASCENDMW.ORG) OR CALL 518-401-5991



**THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR SUPPORT**