

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

The Power of Yes: 4 Reasons to Say Yes More than No

By Renata Poleon

A few years ago, I was talking to one of my older coworkers. She committed over 40 years to the company and raised a beautiful daughter who is an executive at a major tech company. With her daughter's success came the opportunity to travel around the world. While I was there, she traveled to the Caribbean, two countries in Europe, and a trip to Japan. She was having the time of her life.

When we first talked, she was resistant to her daughter's invitation to go to Europe. I looked her square in the eyes and said, "You need to say yes to that trip. You need to take in these wonderful blessings and experiences that are being bestowed upon you." She finally agreed.

Upon her return, she could not stop talking about how amazing the trip was and how it totally wiped away her preconceived notions of what London would be like. The photos really showed her excitement and enjoyment. This all goes to show that you need to say yes more than you say no.

Here is what saying yes does for us.



1. Opens the door of opportunity and success

Saying yes can be the catalyst for change in ways you might never anticipate. Often, others can see potential in you that you haven't recognized in yourself, presenting you with opportunities to build skills and explore talents you never knew you had. Imagine saying yes to a project that seems daunting at first, only to discover that it ignites a passion for something completely new.

By choosing to say yes, you open yourself to experiences that push your boundaries, challenge your limits, and foster personal growth. It's easy to let fear or self-doubt convince you to decline, but when you step forward with an open mind, you allow yourself the chance to grow in ways you never imagined. These moments of courage can become the turning points that lead to your greatest successes.

2. Allows blessings to come through

Whether you believe in divine intervention, fate, or simply the serendipity of life, saying yes can often invite unexpected blessings into your life. Consider this: every opportunity you embrace is a seed planted, and each seed has the potential to grow into something incredible.

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If there is a topic you'd like us
to cover, please let us know!

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HEALTH & WELLNESS

Sustainability In Recovery - One Step At A Time

By Jared Race

Have you ever set a big goal in your life, but had trouble sticking to it? We often mean well and have every intention to follow our goals, unfortunately they don't always go as planned. The issue here isn't necessarily that the goal was too big, rather that the steps to achieving that goal were too large. Next time you set a goal, try to imagine what small steps you can take that will be supplemental in your progress. For example, let's say you want to lose weight. To start with a plan of dropping 50 pounds might sound good in theory, but this goal lacks some components and may be difficult to follow through. Instead, try starting much smaller, like losing 5 pounds in one month. The SMART goal template can be useful in creating an outline. A simplistic and short-term goal can be encouraging and prevent you from feeling overwhelmed. Also, when the month is over and you have accomplished your goal, this will likely foster a sense of accomplishment. In turn, that achievement will provide a sense of security in your own ability and supplement motivation. Once the first short term goal is completed, you will be hungry for more. Then you could continue with your goal to lose weight, and potentially add another goal, such as exercise.

It is crucial to consider if your goal is realistic and achievable given your specific life circumstances. When setting a goal, you may find it necessary to make adjustments as you go. If after the first week or two of working towards your goal it still feels manageable, continue. But if you start with your goal and after a short while you start to feel overburdened, you may have to make some modifications so it may better fit into your schedule. Let's look at the example from earlier. You achieved your goal of losing 5 pounds and decided to continue for another month. You also set a new goal to exercise 4 times a week. After some time, you realize that exercising so often is taking more of a toll than expected, leaving you with no time to focus on other important aspects of your life. This exact point is what makes the difference between those who stick to their goals, and those who do not. Try lowering your exercise goal to only twice a week. If after a few weeks you find yourself able to work this into your schedule without causing too much difficulty or stress, you have found the sweet spot. If twice a week is still too much, lower your goal again until you find sustainability. Eventually, once you reach a point of consistency in your goal, then you can attempt to raise the stakes.

These concepts extend far beyond weight loss or exercise and can be applied to almost any life goal. Big goals take time and are much easier to achieve when you break them down into smaller steps. "Always remember, the perfect first step is the one you take".

References:

Steel, Mark. "Achieving Big Goals with Small Steps." Ted.com, TED Talks, 2019, www.ted.com/talks/mark_steel_achieving_big_goals_with_small_steps. Accessed 26 Aug. 2025.

INSPIRATION & MOTIVATION

Dirty Washing

(Your Judgements Say More About You Than the Person You Judge)



A young couple moved into a new house. The next morning while they were eating breakfast, the young woman saw her neighbor hanging the washing outside.

"That laundry is not very clean; she doesn't know how to wash correctly. Perhaps she needs better detergent."

Her husband looked on, remaining silent. Every time her neighbor hung her washing out to dry, the young woman made the same comments.

A month later, the young woman was surprised to see a nice clean wash on the line and said to her husband,

"Look, she's finally learned how to wash correctly. I wonder who taught her this?"

The husband replied, "I got up early this morning and cleaned our windows."

And so it is with life ... What we see when watching others depends on the clarity of the window through which we look. So don't be too quick to judge others, especially if your perspective of life is clouded by anger, jealousy, negativity or unfulfilled desires.

"Judging a person does not define who they are. It defines who you are."



MENTAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT

Tips For Better Concentration



TIPS &
TOOLS

BY GINGER MILLER

Concentration is important because it enables effective learning, enhances memory and problem-solving, improves productivity, and strengthens relationships. By focusing attention on relevant information while filtering out distractions, concentration allows for deeper understanding, higher quality work, and goal achievement. It is a fundamental skill that is a part of many aspects of daily life, from academic success to making critical decisions.

Key Reasons Concentration is Important

- **Learning and Memory:** Concentration is essential for absorbing new information, understanding complex topics, and committing them to memory. Without it, information is not processed effectively and cannot be stored for later recall.
- **Productivity and Efficiency:** Focusing on one task allows you to complete it more quickly and with higher quality, leading to better results and a greater sense of motivation.
- **Problem-Solving and Decision-Making:** Concentrating allows for clear thinking and the efficient use of information to solve problems and make sound decisions.
- **Cognitive Function:** Concentration improves overall brain function, supporting reasoning, perception, and critical thinking skills.
- **Goal Achievement:** By staying focused on tasks, you build good habits and make consistent progress towards your personal and professional goals.
- **Improved Relationships:** Being present and concentrating during conversations allows you to listen carefully, which helps to build better relationships with others.
- **Stress Management:** Concentration can help you manage anxiety and stress by bringing your awareness to the present moment and reducing the impact of distractions.



How Concentration Supports Other Skills

- **Focus is the gateway to all other cognitive functions.** It connects to decision-making, problem-solving, learning, memory, and perception.
- **Concentration protects against distractions.** It helps people stay immersed in a task, filtering out interruptions and background noise to maintain attention on the desired activity.

In summary, concentration is a foundational skill that affects virtually every aspect of life, from academic and professional success to personal well-being and social interactions.

Here are some tips to help you build your concentration:

1. **Create a Dedicated Workspace** – designate a specific, clutter-free area for planning to minimize distractions.
2. **Prioritize Tasks** – List tasks in order of priority to stay organized and focused on what needs immediate attention.
3. **Use Time Blocks** – Allocate specific time blocks for different tasks to maintain a structured schedule.
4. **Take Short Breaks** – Incorporate short breaks to refresh your mind and prevent mental fatigue.
5. **Eliminate Distractions** – Turn off unnecessary notifications and mute your phone to minimize interruptions.
6. **Stay Hydrated** – Drink water regularly to stay hydrated, as dehydration can impact cognitive function.
7. **Incorporate Music** – Experiment with background music or ambient sounds that enhance concentration.
8. **Practice Mindfulness** – Engage in short mindfulness exercises to center your thoughts and enhance focus.
9. **Get Adequate Sleep** – Ensure you get enough quality sleep, as sleep plays a crucial role in cognitive function.
10. **Use Visual Aids** – Incorporate visuals like charts or diagrams to make information more engaging and easier to comprehend.
11. **Practice Deep Breathing** – Take deep breaths to calm your mind and increase oxygen flow to the brain.
12. **Stay Positive** – Cultivate a positive mindset to boost motivation and maintain enthusiasm for your tasks.
13. **Review and Reflect** – Periodically review your tasks and progress to reflect on accomplishments and make adjustments as needed.



IS THIS MEETING FOR YOU?

Depression & Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)

DBSA recognizes the unique ways identity, culture, and access affect people living with mood disorders. They strive to create safe and inclusive spaces for individuals to feel empowered on their own path to wellness. DBSA seeks to create equitable access to peer support services and mental health resources and advocate for all individuals with lived experience with a mood disorder, regardless of culture and social identity or systemic barriers. DBSA offers 450 support groups across the country through in-person and online peer supports. Their website offers information about: Benefits of Peer Support, Suicide Prevention Information, Online Support Groups (including Identity & Culture Support as well as Support for Friends and Family), DBSA Mood Crew, Young Adults, For Teens, Support for Friends and Family. For more information or to find a group to support your needs go to: <https://www.dbsalliance.org/support/>

CREATIVE WRITING CORNER



Recovery Is A Mountain



Mount Recovery

Recovery is described as a mountain
And here I am on my path to the top
Holes in my shoes bumps and bruises on my body
Blood staining the clothes I'm wearing
Not from rough terrain but from the abuse and
pain I have put myself through
Callouses and scars each finding new homes on
my body
Leaving held breathes on my skin
This is my recovery-
Not just from the drugs and alcohol...and from
myself
On the path to the top of mount recovery
The path that seems to be traveled more and
more today

Each step is a struggle as I strain to keep my balance
On what seems to be a narrow path
But filled with pain and self-discovery
A sense of wonder as I struggle to keep my balance
Amazed at myself that I haven't fell yet.
As I look ahead I wonder if I will ever make it to the top
I continue to stumble forward
Sometimes to loosing direction
Step by step I rise in elevation
Growing callouses
Healing wounds
I stop to look up and admire the beauty of the life
around
As the horizon is filled with oranges, blues, pinks and
purples
As the sun sets on another day in Mount recovery.

~ Nena T.



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.

September/October Prompts

1. Write about something that a high school teacher or coach told you that you will never forget.
2. Write about the scariest Halloween you have ever experienced.

To submit your writing please email it to 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

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.

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: 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

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA): Local group schedule and information: 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

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

Gamblers Anonymous (GA): Online services for anyone struggling with a gambling addiction: gasteps.org

Grief Recovery After a Substance Passing (GRASP): For those who have lost someone to substance use or addiction: grasphelp.org

In The Rooms: A 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

Overeaters Anonymous (OA): Online support groups for anyone who wants to stop eating compulsively: 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 Podcast, and Amazon

ASCEND DUAL RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUPS

EVERY TUESDAY
4:15-5:15 PM OPEN DISCUSSION/RECOVERY TOPICS
HOPE & HEALING RECOVERY CENTER:
37 CHESTER STREET, GLENS FALLS
IN PERSON OR
VIRTUALLY - ZOOM MEETING ID: 844-2214-0148

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THANKS FOR READING! :)

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GMILLER@ASCENDMW.ORG OR CALL 518-401-5991



THANK YOU FOR
YOUR SUPPORT

