

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

Welcome, McKenzie!

By Ginger Miller

The Dual Recovery Department hired McKenzie Secor in November as our Dual Recovery Peer Specialist. She will be running the community Dual Recovery meetings, providing one to one support, as well as helping with the Roads to Recovery Newsletter. We are very excited to have McKenzie join us. McKenzie brings with her a lot of personal experience, knowledge, and compassion, just to name a few things. I asked McKenzie to write a paragraph introducing herself to you.

"I am a mom of three children, which brings out my favorite trait...creativity and ability to think outside the box. I love to be expressive, and I like to think I bring a touch of humor and spunk to everything I do. My personal experience with mental health and substance use has shaped me into someone who is deeply compassionate, understanding, and resourceful. I'm passionate about giving back what was given to me throughout my own journey. I love learning and helping others discover new things about what's out there and themselves. In my free time, I enjoy finding new crafts and recipes on Pinterest and TikTok. My motto in recovery is "failure is not an option," and a song that inspires my recovery is "The Climb" by Miley Cyrus. I love music and ongoing concerts, Halloween, family time, food, writing and reading."

Please feel free to introduce yourself to McKenzie as she gets more involved in the different aspects of ASCEND, she is a pleasure to talk with and a wealth of knowledge and resources.

INSPIRATION & MOTIVATION



A thankful heart
is not only the
greatest virtue,
but the parent of
all the other
virtues."

— Cicero



Winter, a lingering season, a time to
gather golden moments, embark
upon a sentimental journey, and
enjoy every idle hour.

~ John Boswell

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HEALTH & WELLNESS

Progress, Not Perfection

By McKenzie Secor

In recovery, we've had to learn that we don't need to have everything figured out to keep moving forward. Progression, not perfection, must become something we remind ourselves of daily. There were times when we thought one slip meant we failed, or that if we couldn't do everything perfectly, we wouldn't do enough. But recovery has taught us that real change happens in the small, steady choices we make, not in pretending to be flawless.

Some days our progress looks big and noticeable. Other days it's just getting out of bed, picking up the phone to talk to someone, staying honest, showing up at a meeting, or reaching out instead of isolating. And sometimes it's simply choosing not to give up on oneself. Those moments count. Those moments are recovery.

Perfection used to make us feel like nothing was ever measuring up, like we had to hide the messy parts of our journey. But the truth is, the messy parts are where we've learned the most. Setbacks don't erase our growth, they show us where we are still healing, and where we need support. They've taught us resilience. They've taught us to get back up and keep going.

Being grateful for the strength we didn't know we had, for the chances we've given ourselves, and for the person we're becoming. The big accomplishments feel good, but it's the small, consistent steps that made them possible. And we're learning to honor that. Tell yourself "I'm learning to honor me."

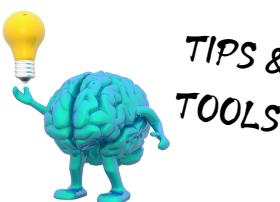
Recovery isn't about being perfect; it's about becoming a healthier, more honest version of ourselves. It's about celebrating the progress we've made, even when it's slow and stagnant. It's about giving ourselves grace, staying committed, and trusting that every step forward, no matter how small, is still a step in the right direction.

And on the days when we doubt ourselves, we come back to this: We're not aiming for perfection. We're aiming for a life we can be proud of; one built on progress, courage, and growth.

MENTAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT

One Day At A Time

BY GINGER MILLER



I heard this phrase so often in early recovery, everyone in the recovery community seemed to use it. Little did I understand how powerful it truly could be. It can be for you too! What HUGE obstacle are you facing? Getting Sober? A terminal illness? Suicidal thoughts? I'll share with you how these five words are the beginning of a possible miracle and adventure of a lifetime.

This phrase is a marvelous tool that can be a game, an adventure if you will. Mind you though, this adventure will be challenging, like no other; daunting, thrilling and so daring it will make up for all the missed adventures and provide redemption for all the unappreciated moments of the past. In this game you make the rules, you set the goals, you find ways to discipline yourself, to force your mind to think a different way, to persevere. You are in charge; you are in control. During this adventure you will have to overcome everything you've learned in life. You need to preset your mind, this adventure must mean everything to you; after all you're looking for a miracle, right?

There are three paradoxes you must face on this adventure. These will require pondering and self-reflection. 1. Before you can be sober, before your body might heal its self, before you are happy with life, you have to first accept that you can be sober, you can heal, you can have joy; your HUGE obstacle can be changed, and that you deserve this. 2. When you believe (or pretend to believe) or have faith in something for long enough, it takes over and you start to really believe it in your



One Day At A Time (Con't)

heart. 3. You can use something that is hurting you to motivate you like nothing else can. The pain of the obstacle that is hurting you is something you can love because it pushes you to do what you probably wouldn't otherwise.

First, let's prepare some tools to help you. The first tool is faith and I'm not referring to religion. Faith is when you truly believe something that doesn't make logical sense. You know the absolute truth of it. Believe you can get sober, you can live despite the diagnosis, you can have a reason to live and be happy and fulfilled. You can overcome your **HUGE** obstacle. Perhaps this obstacle leaves you feeling stuck, like you are living a non-existence. You are at war with it; you've had enough of it right?! You can fight if you want to, if you choose to because this is your game and your rules. Don't shut yourself off to this because you think it is impossible. This adventure will require courage and strength, more than you probably believe you have, but I assure you that you have more courage and strength than you realize. Faith will aid you when you need courage and strength, and it will surface as you need it.

Another tool you'll need is the ability to pretend with no constraints on your imagination; much like you probably did as a child traveling in your rocket ship, winning battles, flying, and so forth. This game is one of distraction, the belief will come as you play it. Don't be afraid to play it. The adventure is far better than sitting in self-pity or self-loathing. You only need to play the game 'One Day At A Time,' if that is too difficult, challenge yourself to play it one hour at a time or even just one minute at a time. Look at each day as a separate war. The minutes will stretch into hours, the hours into days, the days into weeks, and eventually into a new way of thinking, a new way of life – without that obstacle. Do you feel a bit of hope, even just a twinge? Seize it!

The results will come slowly at first. After the first day you may be able to see a trace of optimism in your thoughts, such as maybe you can beat this obstacle. Or perhaps you are able to appreciate something you've taken for granted such as a sunset or the stars. It is only natural that there will be times when you feel like you're fighting 'reality' and that is ok. Recognize it for what it is, a defense. Keep playing the game through those times. You will likely begin to notice little things relating to your situation starting to establish themselves. Remember you are only playing the game One Day At A Time, you have nothing to lose. Remember too, we have very little control over our initial thoughts, but we DO have control over how much we let those thoughts sit around and control us. It does take practice to control them but keep practicing, after all we are working on creating a miracle. Stay busy, keep your mind occupied when necessary.



Build your new reality by thinking about what your sober life will bring, what remission or a cured body brings, what a happy fulfilling life is like, or what your life without the **HUGE** obstacle will be like. Daydream about it. Tell others about it. Become more determined. Keep taking small steps One Day At A Time. Don't be a victim of your obstacle. Keep playing the game, don't betray your resolve to do so. And don't forget at day 30, 60, 90, or periodically to glance back to the first day you decided to play the game, go on the adventure, one day at a time so you can see just how far you've gotten. See how much your thinking and life has changed. To recognize the miracle, you made happen.

Exerts taken from [Our Only Limits Are In Our Minds – The Game](#) by A H Fitzsimons.

Riddles of the Month:

1. I build bridge of silver and crowns or gold. Who am I?
2. What has been around since the beginning of time but is never more than a month old?



Riddle Answers

1. A Dentist
2. The moon

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.



IS THIS MEETING FOR YOU?

Pay What You Can Peer Support (PWYCPs)

Pay What You Can Peer Support is a non-profit organization born out of a desire to have low barrier mental support available to whomever needs it (even if you can't pay!). PWYCPs offers online, peer support groups that span a broad variety of topics, from specific diagnoses to more general issues that people often struggle with. Humans crave connection and that is getting harder to find. Pay What You Can Peer Support connects you with others who can relate to you, from the comfort of your home. When it comes to accessibility, affordability, creating a sense of community, and knowing that you are not alone, nothing compares to Peer Support. They run over 25 different groups where others just like you are waiting for you to join them in what they hope feels like a kind of virtual campfire. Choose the topic from their list that meets your needs and sign up - it's that easy. Currently they have the following groups: ADHD Peer Support Group, Anxiety & Stress, Autism – Finding Your Fit, Autism and Neurodivergent Parent Support Group, Bipolar Group – Managing & Living Your Best Life, Breaking The Silence – A Childhood Sexual Abuse Support Group, Changing Your Thoughts And Mindset, Dealing with Depression, Boredom, & Loneliness, Eating Disorders, Emotions Unpacked, Find Your Next Step – Life Design And Direction, Grief Support Group, Healing And Recovery From Trauma & PTSD, LGBTQ+ Group, Living With Chronic Pain, Illness & Disability, Narcissistic/Abuse Survivor Support Group, Navigating Life With A Learning Disability – Together, In Adulthood, OCD – Obsessive & Intrusive Thoughts, Relationships, Love, Heartbreak, Couples or Marriage Trouble, And Disappointment With Family And Friends, The Solidarity Circle, The Writing Group, Women's Entrepreneurship Group, Thriving In Business And In Life Support Group, Transgender Self-Love Group, and Women's Group For Self-Love/Self-Esteem. To learn more about or join any of these groups visit:

<https://www.paywhatyoucanpeersupport.com/>



CREATIVE WRITING CORNER

My anxiety has been brutal all day long. I had a feeling it would be with so little sleep this weekend and the holidays rolling in. Grief can suck the air out of a room so fast. Tonight I made myself slow down and focus on something other than what's going on in my head. It's the only thing that helps sometimes.

I'm in such an interesting season, and I question almost every day, 'Is all of this really happening?' But it is. So much is changing and shifting and things that I have hoped and prayed for my whole life happen. It's incredible.

Tonight, even in the heaviness and anxiety, there's a sense of belonging. That I'm in a season with the people I have needed for years, and finally have. I'm figuring out a faith that has always felt foreign. I'm learning how to accept help and love and how to love even harder than I ever have.

I don't know how anxiety and gratitude can live so close together, but for tonight they do. One is teaching me how to slow down and one is teaching me how to look further.

~ CND



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.

November/December Prompts

1. If the president heads on Mount Rushmore had a conversation, what would they be saying?
2. If the butterfly could warn the caterpillar of its destined change, what would the butterfly tell the caterpillar?

To submit your writing please email it to gmiller@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

PLEASE VISIT 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 OR CALL 518-401-5991



THANK YOU FOR
YOUR SUPPORT



BUSINESS
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AND CPAs