

National Recovery Month toolkit

The Art of Recovery

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Introduction

Each September, National Recovery Month works to promote and support new evidence-based treatment and recovery practices, the emergence of a strong and proud recovery community, and the dedication of service providers and community members across the nation who make recovery in all its forms possible.

The 2024 National Recovery Month theme the art of recovery, encourages everyone to recognize the art of recovery. Recovery is not linear and although the recovery process looks different for everyone, everyone can recover. This toolkit offers practical resources to support state agencies with sharing recovery materials with their clients, partners, stakeholder, and communities.

This year's toolkit includes:

[Recovery success stories](#)

[Recovery month calendar of events](#)

[Recovery resources](#)

[Social media postings](#)

[Draft press release](#)

Recovery success stories

Stories showcasing the art of recovery

Tracy's story

"It's ok to ask for help. And it's ok to seek help in every part of your journey. Just know that it's ok and it takes a village. You don't have to have things figured out and it's ok to be vulnerable."

In 2001 Tracey was sick and tired of using drugs. She had lost her children and felt like she was dying on the inside, but she didn't know where to go for help or where or how to start the process.

Tracey ended up in the hospital for 16 days. The hospital staff who helped her were not judgmental and believed that she could get better. The staff in the hospital helped Tracey to start the long process of getting into inpatient treatment. To get admitted into treatment, a person needs an ID and insurance card which require among many things a permanent address.

Thankfully Tracey received a cash steepened which helped to pay the expenses of getting into treatment. And, she had a sister who she stayed with while waiting the 20 + days for an inpatient bed. A respite facility for people who are waiting for treatment would help those individuals who do not have anywhere safe to stay while they wait to go into treatment.

After completing inpatient treatment, Tracey went into a transitional housing program. The program gave excellent wraparound services including peer support and parenting classes. She felt busy and focused on her recovery.

Tracy feels that having a solid home and peer support was one of the main factors of her recovery. She had people to advocate and go to court with her. During her recovery Tracy became involved in the 12-step community and that involvement has never ended. Today Tracey is the one of the Clark County Directors for Recovery Café.

While Tracey admits that "It's been a journey. Blood sweat and tears. A beautiful struggle." Tracey knows that recovery is a lifestyle. By helping others, Tracey stays out of her own head and shares hope to others in similar positions.

Tracey wants you to know that "it's ok to ask for help. And it's ok to seek help in every part of your journey. Just knowing that it's ok and it takes a village. You don't have to have things figured out and it's ok to be vulnerable."

Cassandra's story

"It's not going to be an overnight process. Focus on one day at a time. You don't have to fix the whole picture all at once. Your life can get really good. You are worthy and you are capable."

Cass knew that she needed help when her life started falling apart. She was unemployable, her relationship was failing, and she had lost her housing for the first time in her life. Cass wanted to get help, but she didn't know how to access services or navigate the system. By the time Cass was able to get into inpatient treatment she was exhausted. Despite the hardship of finding recovery resources Cassandra got sober.

The isolation of COVID-19 caused another relapse, but this time Cass was ready. Cass utilized resources from the Department of Social and Health Services, Housing and Recovery Through Peer Services, Recovery Café's, and Alcoholic Anonymous. COVID-19 has shined a light on our state's need for resources. After the pandemic, people wanted to help and there were more resources available. The first time Cass got sober she lived in Portland and didn't know anyone. The last time she knew where to go. Cass says, "if one person gets connected to someone in recovery it helps."

Recovery is not linear. Every time Cass was in a recovery program she learned more about how to stay sober and how to help other people. For Cass, connection was the first step to maintaining recovery. She needed to find

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safe people to connect with who could help her grow. Cass says “It’s not going to be an overnight process. Focus on one day at a time. You don’t have to fix the whole picture all at once. Your life can get really good. You are worthy and you are capable.”

Stephanie’s story

“It takes little steps. Little tiny things that I did in the beginning set the path for bigger changes and successes that helped later. There is an army of people who will do this with you. You are not alone, and you won’t regret it.”

Stephanie’s recovery story started when she was 15. She was in Juvenile Hall and had challenges directly related to alcohol and drug use. Eventually Stephanie got a degree in Human Services and had children. But, as Stephanie has generational trauma with mental health and substance use disorder, she continued to struggle as an adult. In 2020 Stephanie decided that it was time to focus on her recovery again and reached out to the recovery community.

Stephanie was ready for treatment, but she didn’t know who to call. Although she was grateful for the peer support that she received and the rapport of the recovery community, the limited access to services was a challenge.

Stephanie joined alcoholic anonymous which she feels helped her not just experience abstinence from substances but actual recovery. By building community and surrounding herself with people in recovery Stephanie can grow and remain teachable.

Stephanie encourages everyone who is curious about recovery to come to Recovery Café. She works hard to model her behavior for other people and to be inclusive so that nobody feels disconnected. “It takes little steps. Little tiny things that I did in the beginning set the path for bigger changes and successes that helped later. There is an army of people who will do this with you. You are not alone, and you won’t regret it.”

Rashel’s story

“Buckle up. It must get worse before it gets better. It’s the hardest thing that I have ever enjoyed. But look where I am at. If I can do it, there is positively nobody that can’t.”

The first time that Rashel had 4 consecutive days sober, she realized that she wouldn’t die without drugs and tried to get into a treatment program. She started reaching out to treatment programs and quickly learned how difficult the process can be. Many inpatient treatment facilities do not take Apple Health insurance. Eventually Rashel was able to get into treatment and she has been clean and sober since February of 2023.

After treatment she started attending small 12 step meetings and a Recovery Café pop up. With a clear head, she was able to make recovery her full time job. The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) resources along with the Recovery Navigator Program she was able to receive housing, food, and hope.

Rashel had support during her early recovery. The person who is now her manager had filled her gas tank, which meant that she could be active with her family and continue to go to recovery meetings. But things did not always go smoothly. The day before Rashel and her son were to move into permanent housing, they were told that they no longer qualified. Despite the disappointment and stress, Rashel went to a meeting. At the meeting she received so much encouragement and support that she was able to stay sober. One month later Rashel and her son moved into a beautiful three-bedroom house.

Rashel has achieved more in her eighteen months of recovery than she has in her entire life.

To stay sober Rashel has a schedule which helps her work a fulltime job as well as care for her family and attends 3 to 5 recovery meetings per week. She surrounds herself with healthy people and healthy activities. She has her kids over for dinner every week. Rashel is now 150 percent present with her family and can enjoy her new grandson.

Recovery month calendar of events

- **Tuesday, September 3**
Webinar: Eight Dimensions of Wellness
10 to 11:30 a.m.
[Register](#)
- **Wednesday, September 4**
Webinar: Uplifting Cultural Healing Practices for Recovery and Wellness in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities
10 to 11 a.m.
[Register](#)
- **Friday, September 6**
Webinar: Exploring Health, What's Your Perspective?
10 to 11 a.m.
[Register](#)
- **Thursday, September 12**
Webinar: Celebrating Recovery Residences in Recovery Month
10 to 11 a.m.
[Register](#)
- **Monday, September 16**
Webinar: Nothing About Us Without Us: Families Supporting Recovery
10 to 11 a.m.
[Register](#)
- **Tuesday, September 17**
Recovery on Purpose
10 to 11 a.m.
[Register](#)
- **Thursday, September 19**
Webinar: The Interface of Peer Support and Person-Centered Planning
10 to 11 a.m.
[Register](#)
- **Friday, September 20**
One day, 26 events: Facing Fentanyl Together
1 to 5 p.m.
[Learn more](#)
- **Monday, September 23**
Webinar: Generational Trauma and Generational Healing in Native Communities
10 to 11 a.m.
[Register](#)
- **Wednesday, September 25**
Webinar: Improving Access to Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Support
10 to 11 a.m.
[Register](#)
- **Friday, September 27**
Webinar: Art of Recovery
10 to 11 a.m.
[Register](#)

Recovery resources

For crisis services

- [Visit](#) or call or text 988 for free or confidential support for people in crisis 24/7.
- [The National Helpline](#) can assist with referrals and information 24/7 at 1-800-662-HELP (4357).
- If you are facing a disaster [the national disaster helpline](#) can provide immediate crisis counseling related to disasters at 1-800-985-5990.

For treatment resources

- The Washington Recovery Help Line is an anonymous and confidential help line that provides crisis intervention and referral services for Washington State residents. Professionally trained volunteers and staff are available to provide emotional support 24 hours a day, and offer local treatment resources for substance abuse, problem gambling and mental health as well as to other community services.
- FindTreatment.gov is a confidential and anonymous resource for persons seeking treatment for mental and substance use disorders in the United States and its territories.
 - Learn about how to [find quality treatment](#), the different types of treatment, and what to expect when starting treatment.
 - Learn [how to pay for treatment](#) whether you have insurance or not.
 - Understanding [Substance Use Disorder](#).
 - Understanding [mental health disorders](#).

For Medication for Opioid Use disorder resources

- Find [practitioners and treatment programs](#) providing buprenorphine for opioid use disorder.
- Find [programs that provide methadone](#) for the treatment of opioid use disorder.

For housing or emergency services

- 211 provides information including but not limited to housing, transportation, and food resources. [Visit the website](#) or call 211 24/7.

To learn more

- To learn about recovery resources for Tribes and to order customizable materials visit [For Our Lives](#).
- To learn more about talking to young people about fentanyl visit [the Friends for Life page](#).
- To learn more about how to recognize and prevent an overdose visit [the Stop Overdose site](#).
- To find out where to get naloxone visit [the naloxone finder page](#).

Social media postings

For more information

For more information or to get the Spanish versions of social media posts visit the Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) [Recovery Month Toolkit](#).

Week 1

Wellness includes making healthy life choices that support our physical, emotional, social, spiritual, intellectual, occupational, financial, and environmental health. Get tips on taking care of yourself: [samhsa.gov/find-support/how-to-cope/how-to-ask-for-help](#) #Recovery #RecoveryMonth

No matter where you are on your recovery journey remember to care for your overall health and #wellness. Spend time with people who accept you engage in physical activity and explore nature. Learn about other ways to cope: [samhsa.gov/find-support/how-to-cope](#) #RecoveryIsPossible

National Recovery Month is a great time to focus on your health & #wellness. Prioritize your needs for recovery—create healthy boundaries ask for help take breaks express gratitude Learn more: [samhsa.gov/find-support/how-to-cope](#) #RecoveryIsPossible

It's OK to ask for help. September is #RecoveryMonth and a good time to make sure you have the support you need to recover. Explore your support options at [samhsa.gov/find-support/health-care-or-support](#). #RecoveryIsPossible

Week 2

A home is more than just a place. It's our safety zone. During #recovery, surround yourself with people who accept you and help you feel safe and thrive. Learn about recovery supports at [samhsa.gov/find-help/recovery](#)

People in recovery need a safe home environment. What does home mean to you? What else do you need to help you recover? Learn more: [samhsa.gov/find-help/recovery](#) #RecoveryMonth #Recovery

A safe and supportive home helps people recover and thrive. Learn how you can find support during your #recovery: [samhsa.gov/find-support/health-care-or-support](#) #EndtheStigma

Life in recovery can be challenging. Living in a safe environment can help. Explore ways to support your recovery at [FindSupport.gov](#). #RecoveryIsPossible #RecoveryMonth

Week 3

September is #RecoveryMonth – a great time to think about what makes life meaningful. What inspires you What sparks joy. Find out more about taking care of your mind and body: [samhsa.gov/find-support/how-to-cope](#)

Feeling connected to others can help anyone on their path to recovery. This #RecoveryMonth, check out inspiring stories of hope and recovery: [988lifeline.org/stories/](#) #Recovery #EndtheStigma

Check in with someone in #recovery and ask them to share which activities give their life meaning. Showing you value what they enjoy shows you care. Learn how you can help your friends in #recovery: [samhsa.gov/find-support/helping-someone](#) #RecoveryMonth #EndtheStigma

Recovery is possible. Volunteering, helping a friend or neighbor, and teaching someone a new skill fosters a feeling of connection and recovery. You can make a difference in someone's life. [samhsa.gov/find-support/helping-someone](#)

Week 4

Relationships and social networks lead to friendship, love, hope, and support. Recovery can be a more manageable journey with the support of others. [samhsa.gov/find-support](#) #RecoveryMonth

Together, we can make long-term recovery a reality for everyone, regardless of who they are and where they are in their journey. Learn more: samhsa.gov/find-support/helping-someone #Recovery #EndtheStigma

Friendship is a superpower! During #RecoveryMonth and beyond, reach out to a friend in #recovery and invite them to join you in activities that support their recovery journey. [Samhsa.gov/find-support/helping-someone](https://samhsa.gov/find-support/helping-someone)

Thank you to everyone who got involved in #RecoveryMonth this year and spread the word that #RecoveryIsPossible! Check out what SAMHSA is doing to support #recovery year-round. samhsa.gov/find-help/recovery

Relationships and social networks lead to friendship, love, hope, and support. Recovery can be a more manageable journey with the support of others. samhsa.gov/find-support #RecoveryMonth

Draft press release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September is National Recovery Month: Embracing "The Art of Recovery" and Celebrating the Possibility of Transformation

This September, we join millions across the nation in recognizing National Recovery Month. We celebrate the resilience and strength of individuals who are overcoming substance use disorders and mental health challenges. This year's theme, "The Art of Recovery," highlights the creative and transformative journey of recovery, underscoring that recovery is not only possible but also a vibrant and personal masterpiece.

National Recovery Month, provides an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of recovery, share success stories, and inspire those who are still on their path to healing.

"Recovery is not a one-size-fits-all solution; it is an evolving process where individuals craft their own paths to wellness," said [Name], [Title/Position] of [Organization]. "This year's theme celebrates the diverse ways people find healing and the beauty that emerges from their personal recovery stories. It's a reminder that recovery is not just achievable, but it is also a powerful and transformative experience."

We encourage everyone to participate in National Recovery Month activities and join us in celebrating the strength and creativity of those in recovery. Together we can break down barriers and inspire hope, showing that recovery is not only possible but also a transformative and enriching experience.