

ROADS TO RECOVERY NEWSLETTER

Created by Dual Recovery at Warren Washington Association for Mental Health to support individuals in recovery

A NEWSLETTER FOR YOU
AND ABOUT YOU

SPOTLIGHT TOPIC

Is Dual Recovery for You?

BY GINGER MILLER

Just what is dual recovery? Is it for you or a loved one? A good educational guess could be someone with two mental health diagnosis' such as depression and anxiety or, another guess could be someone with two addictions such as alcohol and opioids. The National Alliance on Mental Illnesses (NAMI) defines recovery as "a journey of healing and transformation enabling a person with a mental health problem to live a meaningful life in a community of his or her choice while striving to achieve his or her potential."

According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA), "Recovery is a process of change through which people improve their health and wellness, live self-directed lives, and strive to reach their full potential." So, dual recovery is the process of getting better from two *different* illnesses, addiction and a mental health diagnosis. I had to take note that these definitions did not say *cured*, but getting better. I've become quite fond of the idea that my recovery path is a journey. For me the word journey can involve exploring and taking my time, it isn't the same as having a planned trip where I have to get from point A to point B to accomplish a specific task within a certain time frame. So in my recovery journey I try using different tools keeping in mind that just because one tool works for say my mental health recovery does not necessarily mean that same tool used the same way will work with my substance use recovery, or vice versa. I try to keep in mind that there is no end to my learning, growth, and potential, that there is no one perfect way of doing this. I am not on a time schedule.

As I looked into recovery from substance use disorder I learned there were four main areas in my life that would support my recovery and my life would get better. The first one is **health**- if I could overcome or manage my diseases or symptoms, I could make informed, healthy choices that would support my physical and emotional well-being. The second is **home** - I knew I needed to establish a stable place that I felt safe to live in. The third is **purpose** - I need to have daily activities that are meaningful to me and have the independence, income, and resources to participate in society. The next one is **community** - having relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love, and hope. I see it sort of like a house of cards; it takes slow, careful and deliberate moves to build. Each one supports the other and if one starts to fall, there is a good possibility they all could. That's one of the challenges in recovery... but look at the BIGGER picture! That 'house of cards' called my life is amazing, it is worth all of the work I put in and certainly is worth working at keeping.

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Is Dual Recovery for You? (Con't)

I believe that hope, believing that these challenges and conditions can be overcome, is the foundation of recovery - without hope I don't think I would have remained in recovery. The process of recovery is highly personal and each person's journey is unique to them. Recovery involves continual growth and improvement in health and wellness. Setbacks are a natural part of life and there are often setbacks in recovery as well. Because of the challenges that can come with setbacks, I find resiliency to be a necessary piece of recovery, right behind hope. The process of recovery is supported through relationships and social networks. The support of peers and friends is also crucial in engaging and supporting individuals in recovery. By gripping this three cord rope - hope, resilience, and support - I was able to get a good foothold into recovery. I believe that same three cord rope can help ANYONE struggling with a dual diagnosis if they are willing to let someone in to help start the process of getting better.



I have dealt with mental health issues since I was very young. After several years of floundering around as an adult trying to understand what was going on with me inside my head and fearing the worst, feeling that I was just plain crazy and no one would ever understand me, I started looking at things other than just talk therapy (which was very helpful). I sort of stumbled into several of the 10 fundamental components of mental health recovery principles that NAMI identifies: The first is "**self-direction**". Individuals determine their own path of recovery with autonomy, independence, and control of their resources. The second is "**individualized and person-centered**". There are multiple pathways to recovery based on an individual's unique strengths, as well as his or her needs, preferences, experiences, and cultural background. The third is "**empowerment**". People have the authority to participate in all decisions that will affect their lives, and they are educated and supported throughout the process. The fourth is "**holistic**". Recovery encompasses an individual's whole life, including mind, body, spirit, and community. Recovery embraces all aspects of life, including housing, social networks, employment, education, mental health and health care treatment, and family supports. The fifth is "**non-linear**". Recovery is not a step-by-step process but one based on continual growth, occasional setbacks, and learning from experience. The sixth is "**strengths-based**". Recovery focuses on valuing and building on the multiple capacities, resiliencies, talents, coping abilities, and inherent worth of individuals. The process of recovery moves forward through interaction with others in supportive, trust-based relationships. The seventh is "**peer support**". Mutual support plays an invaluable role in recovery. People encourage and engage others in recovery and provide each other with a sense of belonging. The eighth is "**respect**". Eliminating discrimination and stigma are crucial in achieving recovery. Self-acceptance and regaining belief in oneself are particularly vital. The ninth is "**responsibility**". Individuals have a personal responsibility for their own self-care and journeys of recovery. They identify coping strategies and healing processes to promote their own wellness. The tenth is "**hope**". Hope is the catalyst of the recovery process and provides the essential and motivating message of a positive future. Peers, families, friends, providers, and others can all help foster hope. As I continue to travel on my recovery path, I will continue to share with others what my journey has been and looks like with the hope that hearing my story just might be what gives another person the opportunity to be a little more comfortable and willing to grab ahold of the same rope of hope, resilience, and support that I did. I know today that life isn't always perfect and I will still make mistakes, but that is ok as long as I continue to hang on to my rope and keep walking my journey. Join me!



UNDERSTANDING THE DIAGNOSIS

Autism Spectrum Disorder

BY GINGER MILLER

According to National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), Autism is known as a “spectrum” disorder because there is wide variation in the type and severity of symptoms people experience. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) occurs in all ethnic, racial, and economic groups and it is a developmental disorder that affects communication and behavior. Although autism can be diagnosed at any age, it is said to be a “developmental disorder” because symptoms generally appear in the first two years of life.

According to the American Psychiatric Association, to diagnose ASD the individual will have difficulty with communication and interaction with other people, restricted interests and repetitive behaviors, and symptoms that hurt the person’s ability to function properly in school, work, and other areas of life. The lists below give some examples of the types of behaviors that are seen in people diagnosed with ASD. According to the APA, not all people with ASD will show all behaviors, but most will show several.

Social communication / interaction behaviors may include:

- Making little or inconsistent eye contact
- Tending not to look at or listen to people
- Rarely sharing enjoyment of objects or activities by pointing or showing things to others
- Failing to, or being slow to, respond to someone calling their name or to other verbal attempts to gain attention
- Having difficulties with the back and forth of conversation
- Often talking at length about a favorite subject without noticing that others are not interested or without giving others a chance to respond
- Having facial expressions, movements, and gestures that do not match what is being said
- Having an unusual tone of voice that may sound sing-song or flat and robot-like
- Having trouble understanding another person’s point of view or being unable to predict or understand other people’s actions

Restrictive / repetitive behaviors may include:

- Repeating certain behaviors or having unusual behaviors. For example, repeating words or phrases, a behavior called echolalia
- Having a lasting intense interest in certain topics, such as numbers, details, or facts
- Having overly focused interests, such as with moving objects or parts of objects
- Getting upset by slight changes in a routine
- Being more or less sensitive than other people to sensory input, such as light, noise, clothing, or temperature
- People with ASD may also experience sleep problems and irritability.

If you are interested in understanding more of what it is like in the mind of a person diagnosed with Autism, you may find this book to be very moving: *The Reason I Jump: The Inner Voice of a Thirteen-Year-Old Boy with Autism* by Naoki Higashida. Naoki is non-verbal and used his writing to answer the questions that the neurotypical world might have about the autistic experience.

Although people with ASD experience many challenges, they may also have many strengths. Some of these strengths include being able to learn things in detail and remember information for long periods of time, being strong visual and auditory learners, and excelling in math, science, music, or art. ASD can be a lifelong disorder, however, there are treatments and services that can improve a person’s symptoms and ability to function. Early treatment is important, as proper care can reduce individuals’ difficulties while helping them learn new skills and make the most of their strengths.

The wide range of issues facing people with ASD means that there is no single best treatment for ASD. Working closely with a doctor or health care professional is an important part of finding the right treatment program. With medication, a person with ASD may have fewer problems with irritability, aggression, repetitive behavior, hyperactivity, attention problems, and anxiety and depression. People with ASD may be referred to doctors who specialize in providing behavioral, psychological, educational, or skill-building interventions. These programs are typically highly structured and intensive and may involve parents, siblings, and other family members. Programs may help people with ASD learn life-skills necessary to live independently, reduce challenging behaviors, increase or build upon strengths, learn social, communication, and language skills. Contact your doctor, local health department, school, or autism advocacy group to learn about special programs or local resources.



HEALTH & WELLNESS

Sleep Hygiene



BY GINGER MILLER

Sleep Hygiene? Hygiene, isn't that like washing your hands? So, what does it have to do with sleep? Well, the dictionary definition of hygiene is: "a series of practices performed to preserve health; conditions and practices that help to maintain health and prevent the spread of diseases." Personal hygiene refers to maintaining the body's cleanliness while sleep hygiene refers to, "conditions and practices that help maintain health" regarding sleep, or healthy sleep habits. Good sleep hygiene is important because of how crucial getting good sleep is for your mental and physical health, improving productivity as well as your overall quality of life. Paying attention to sleep hygiene is one of the most straightforward ways that you can set yourself up for better sleep. Your behaviors, both during the day and around bedtime, can affect the quality of your sleep. According to Healthline, here are some healthy sleep hygiene habits:

- Keep a stable sleep schedule. Try to go to sleep and wake up at about the same times every day, even on the weekends. This reinforces your body's sleep cycle (your internal clock), which can make it easier for you to fall asleep and wake up every day. Sticking to a consistent schedule may also help reduce daytime sleepiness. Make sure that the bedtime you pick allows you to get 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night.
- Have a relaxing bedtime routine. This helps you unwind so you're ready to sleep, as long as it doesn't involve a device that emits blue light. Keeping a consistent routine also helps your body recognize that it's bedtime when you start the routine. This may help you fall asleep more quickly. The best time to start your routine is about 30 to 60 minutes before you go to bed. Here are some ideas: take a warm bath or shower, do gentle stretches to help your muscles relax and release tension, meditate to help calm your body and mind, listen to soothing music while you focus on your breathing, read a book, avoid anything stressful or overly stimulating (like emotional conversations or working). Every sleeper can tailor their sleep hygiene practices to suit their needs. In the process, you can harness positive habits to make it easier to sleep soundly throughout the night and wake up well-rested.
- Exercise regularly – As little as 30 minutes of aerobic exercise per day can improve your sleep quality, as well as your overall health. And if you can exercise outside, this might increase the benefits even more, since exposure to natural light helps regulate your sleep cycle. But even if you can't get outside, regular indoor exercise may help you sleep better. *Avoid exercising within an hour or two of your bedtime. Exercise can increase your energy levels and body temperature, which may make it harder to fall asleep. If you want to do some type of activity later in the day, try doing stretches or yoga.
- Keep your bedroom dark and at a comfortable temperature and free of disruptions. For most people, a bedroom temperature of 60°F - 67°F is the optimal temperature for sleeping. Only use your bed for sleep and sex and go to bed only when you are tired.
- Turn off electronics such as your phone or tv. Most of these devices emit blue light, which can reduce the melatonin levels in your body. Melatonin is a chemical that controls your sleep/wake cycle - when your melatonin levels dip, it can be more difficult to fall asleep. Devices that emit blue light can also distract you, keeping your brain alert and making it harder to fall asleep.
- Watch what you eat and drink – limit caffeine intake, the effects of caffeine can last 3 to 7 hours after you consume it.
- Avoid napping during the day -it can make it harder to fall asleep later and may make you more prone to waking up during the night. If you do need to nap: Keep it to 30 minutes or less.

INSPIRATION & MOTIVATION



**"Even if you are on the right track, you will get run over if you just sit there."
-Will Rogers**

**"Although it's true you have little control over most of what happens in the world, you have tremendous influence over your experience of the events and circumstances of your life."
-Unknown**



Get A Transfer
Poet: Unknown



If you are on the Gloomy Line, get a transfer.
If you're inclined to fret and pine, get a transfer.
Get off the track of doubt and gloom,
Get on the Sunshine Track -there's room- Get a transfer.

If you're on the Worry Train, get a transfer.
You must not stay there and complain, get a transfer.
The Cheerful Cars are passing through, and there's lots of room for you-
Get a transfer.

If you're on the Grouchy Track, get a transfer.
Just take a Happy Special back, get a transfer.
Jump on the train and pull the rope,
That lands you at the station of Hope -
Get a transfer.

THE SEPTEMBER CHALLENGE

Every month we will challenge you to challenge yourself using information or ideas in the current month's articles. The 'Grand Opening' of this new section of our newsletter is here! Starting this month, September, each month there will be a prize or a drawing for all those who take the challenge and let us know about what you did.

September's challenge is about using our Health & Wellness article, "Sleep Hygiene". Take a close look at your own bedtime routines and sleep habits. Are there any areas that you could improve in so that you can get a better night's sleep or better quality sleep? After reading the article "Sleep Hygiene" try adding, changing or taking away something from your current habits based on the information in the article. Try it for a couple of weeks and watch to see if you notice any differences. Then, write to us and tell us about your experience with the challenge. Was there something in the article that was new to you or that caught your attention? What did you change? What did you notice?

Everyone who chooses to participate in September's challenge and writes to us about their experience before September 25th will win a gift card for a free ice cream cone from Stewart's! You will also see your response in the October Newsletter "Your Voice" section! If you want it to be printed anonymously, just let us know when you send the email that you don't want your name on it. Email us at: gmler@wwamh.org to participate.





THE FUN SPOT

Fun Activities Word Search

- AMUSEMENT PARK
- BBQ
- BICYCLE RIDE
- CAMPING
- COLORING
- DANCE
- DRAW
- FISHING
- FLEA MARKET
- GAMES
- GARDENING
- GOLF
- HIKING
- JOURNAL
- MASSAGE
- MOVIES
- MUSEUM
- PAINT
- PARTY
- PICNIC
- PUZZLES
- READING
- RESTAURANT
- SHOPPING
- SING
- SPA
- SWIMMING
- TRAVEL
- WATCH TV

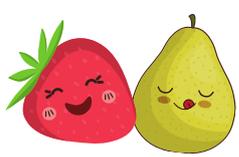
K	V	T	H	C	T	A	W	P	T	A	S	G	O
R	T	D	G	N	I	H	S	I	F	G	P	A	I
A	E	G	A	S	S	A	M	C	N	L	A	M	L
P	B	P	Y	N	L	Y	I	N	A	E	M	E	P
T	I	N	C	C	C	A	R	I	F	V	N	S	U
N	C	G	Q	O	G	E	N	C	N	A	G	R	Z
E	Y	C	B	L	S	T	P	R	S	R	S	M	Z
M	C	A	B	O	Z	W	A	A	U	T	M	U	L
E	L	M	Y	R	G	N	I	P	P	O	H	S	E
S	E	P	T	I	C	T	N	M	V	O	J	E	S
U	R	I	R	N	E	I	T	I	M	G	R	U	C
M	I	N	A	G	B	F	E	C	Z	I	N	M	I
A	D	G	P	T	E	S	D	R	A	W	N	I	N
S	E	F	L	E	A	M	A	R	K	E	T	G	S

Can you find the word that isn't in the list but should be?

YOUR VOICE

Responses from August's "Healthier Habits" Challenge

"I want to loose weight. I set some goals with a Peer Specialist's help. I started buying more fruit and leaving it where it's easy to grab so I don't go looking for unhealthy snacks like chips or cupcakes."
-Anonymous



"I've been wanting to try meditation to help with my anxiety. I saw the MindShift App listed on your Recovery Resources page and decided to check it out, I'm glad I did. Some of the meditations are pretty easy, some of the tips have been helpful and I found a few really interesting articles. I'll keep using the App, thanks!"
-Deb

"The 19th was soft ice cream day so I took my family to Marth's across from The Great Escape. It was some nice family time."
-Mark



RECOVERY

Resources

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
- Celebrate Recovery (CR)** – Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered, 12-Step recovery program for anyone struggling with hurt, pain or addiction of any kind: celebraterecovery.com
- Debtors Anonymous** - 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: grasp-help.org
- In the rooms** - A global online recovery community who share their strength and experience with one another daily through live meetings, discussion groups, and other tools in the rooms: intherooms.com
- My Recovery** – Online 12-step meetings: myrecovery.com
- 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
- The Phoenix** – Recovery community organization offering daily live stream cross-fit, yoga and meditation every two hours through the COVID Crisis: thephoenix.org

PHONE NUMBERS

- The Trevor Project** - Support for youth in crisis: thetrevorproject.org/hotline: 866-488-7386
- International Bipolar Association Crisis Line**: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders Helpline**: 630-577-1330
- 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. You can also text NAMI to 741741 for free support. (800) 950-NAMI (6264)
- 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.
- MentalHealth.gov**: Available 8am to 8pm EST to provide mental health information and treatment referrals: (877) 726-4727
- 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

PODCASTS

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

APPS

- Addiction Apps**: Twenty-Four Hours A Day (Free), Quit That! Habit Tracker (Free), NoMo (Free)
- Counseling Apps**: TalkSpace (\$\$) BetterHelp (\$\$) Larkr (\$\$) ReGain (\$\$) TeenCounseling (\$\$)
- Suicide Prevention Apps**: MY3 (Free) notOK (Free)
- General Mental Health Apps**: What's Up (CBT; Free) Mood Kit (CBT; \$)
- Anxiety Apps**: MindShift (Free), Self-Help Anxiety Management – SAM (Free), CBT Thought Record Diary (Free)
- Bipolar Disorder Apps**: IMoodJournal (\$), EMoods (Free)
- Depression Apps**: Talk Space Online Therapy (\$\$), Happify (Free), MoodTools (CBT; Free)
- Eating Disorder Apps**: Recovery Record (Free), Rise Up & Recovery (Free), LifeSum (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)
- Mindfulness & Meditation Apps**: Headspace (\$), Calm (\$), Ten Percent Happier (\$)

THANKS FOR READING! :)

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTERS, PLEASE EMAIL US AT RRYAN@WWAMH.ORG



WWAMH DUAL RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUPS

EVERY TUESDAY FROM 4:00-5:00 PM AT THE HOPE & HEALING RECOVERY CENTER 2 MAPLE STREET, HUDSON FALLS ATTEND IN PERSON OR VIRTUALLY - ZOOM MEETING ID: 844-2214-0148

PLEASE VISIT WWW.WWAMH.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION & COPIES OF OUR NEWSLETTERS