

Recovery = Change

Recovery is about choosing to make changes and reach goals.

It means having hope and knowing that life is not stagnant and tomorrow can be better than today.

You can live the life you want if you break it into small steps:

One day at a time.

Don't let yourself be taken advantage of, and don't take advantage of others.

Keep your spirit on your goals and you will recover.

Applicability of Recovery

The principles of recovery are useful tools for all us whether we have a substance use disorder, mental illness, medical or physical problem, or are just coping with every day problems of life. Recovery from diabetes, heart disease, muscular dystrophy, cancer, addiction, or mental illness doesn't mean that we are cured. Sometimes there are bumps in the road that set us back temporarily. Recovery is about accepting our condition and learning to manage it, but not being limited by it or letting our condition define all of who we are.

In recovery, we have hope because we can see possibilities. Each of us is on our own journey toward improved health. We can make choices that lead to wellness. To make these choices, we need to recognize that certain personal decisions and behaviors contribute to the level of distress that we experience. It is this recognition, along with support from family, friends, and others that gives us the power to make changes in our lives.

Recognition – the knowledge of state

Recognition is the universal impetus essential to process. An awareness that everyone engages in the process of recovery and that it is at the core of our human experience. Recognition allows people to step out of the shadows and move toward the goals of building resiliency and promoting recovery for everyone. Recovery unites provider and patient, addiction and mental illness, young and old. Recovery empowers and initiates self-discovery, renewal and transformation. Recognition of the principle that recovery is universal and all people have the potential for recovery.

Power and Powerlessness

There are many things in our lives that we have no power to control. The weather, the tides, the action of others, our physical characteristics and genetic makeup are just a few. We cannot choose the cards we are dealt, but we do have choices about how we play them. Acceptance of powerlessness over an illness is often identified as a first step in beginning a recovery, but this should not be taken to mean that we are powerless over how we manage that illness or the choices that we make. Recovery involves taking control of our lives by making wise choices which will minimize the negative impact of our disabilities.

Belief and Hope

Somewhere early in life we were led to believe that just being ourselves wasn't good enough. If we wanted love, happiness and success we needed to become what others wanted us to be, there are many "others." We

sought to recreate ourselves, looking for something or someone to fix us. That became our hope and belief, but it was a false one.

Recovery begins in the despair of that false hope and belief. Out of that despair ("hitting bottom") we can come to believe that the person we are and were created to be can be recovered and is very much worthy of recovery. This new hope comes from beyond us - from others who are in recovery and from the source of our being who wants us to accept who we really are. Belief in yourself and in the one who created us is essential to recovery, a journey of a lifetime.

Challenge and Courage

When people hear the words challenge and courage they often think of heroic acts of bravery. People in the military, fire fighters, and medical personnel all come to mind. Individuals who have overcome severe injuries or trauma are often spoken of as courageous.

It is important to remember that many events and issues in an individual's life can be a challenge to them personally. Having the courage to face them, recognizing them; believing in ourselves, and meeting the challenge of working and living with them on a daily basis are important elements in each person's unique recovery journey.

Choice and Responsibility

One of the most often misunderstood concepts of recovery is the topic of personal choice and responsibility. First and foremost this does not imply that someone chooses to have a mental illness or a substance use disorder. Choice and responsibility relate to someone's option for person driven care and the role they take in their recovery. Each person deserves the right to a recovery option that meets their needs and is driven by their input. Likewise each individual is responsible for monitoring and managing key areas and aspects of their wellness management.

Effort and Potential

It's exciting. It's scary. Recovery is worth your effort. It is about exerting yourself to make the changes needed to reach your goals; your potential. Walk the talk, be resilient and blossom into that person you want to be.

At times your energy maybe low and the journey looks long. Don't despair. Take one day at a time or one moment and remember you are not alone. As you strive to grow and discover your hidden gifts, you will live life to it's fullest and reach your greatest potential.

Spiritual Quest or a Search for Meaning and Connection

The quality of our lives is determined largely by the degree to which we find meaning and purpose in them. Even the most difficult circumstances may be endured if we have faith that our suffering is not in vain. In most cases, a large element of what gives our lives relevance is our relationships with others. For many, this extends beyond those with whom they are most intimately involved, and even beyond the immediate community in which they live and struggle. It is a recognition or belief that we are all connected to one another in ways that we may not always be aware of, and that there are values and obligations that are part of

that connection. Our membership in this larger community of mankind is what allows us to engage in acts of kindness and to a humble understanding that we are all the same despite our differences.

Transcending Distinctions

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Transcending distinctions can incorporate many areas of recovery. The First distinction to be discussed is the difference between cure and recovery. Historically we have used the term “recovery” synonymously with cure, especially in the medical community. Then years later the term became identified with the addictions field, in relation to someone not using substances and “working a program” towards recovery free from chemicals. It is no wonder that when we talk about recovery, in a universal application, sometimes the true meaning becomes lost in these historical distinctions related to the term recovery.

The second distinction is the concept that there is one recovery model or approach to adopt. Since recovery, is determined by the individual, the “approach” or model may be different from person to person.

A difficult distinction to transcend relates to ownership. Ownership in this context tries to answer who is responsible for recovery, the professional or the consumer?

Community of Recovery

Recovery is a celebration of hope and potential. It brings together different concerns, needs, goals and lives; and provides the connections between all individuals that are essential for community. It includes all individuals, not a select few. These connections with others develop understanding, compassion, respect, and encouragement. A community can be a place of acceptance, one that celebrates difference, that encourages hope, and offers support for increased responsibility, allows individuals to heal, grow and reach their greatest potential