

# NEWSLETTER

info@svvor.org

## COMMUNITY NEEDS

### WHITESIDE COUNTY'S M.A.T. PROGRAM

Getting sober and staying sober is hard work. Those at Whiteside County Health Department understand this and are available to help. Recently, I spoke with Whitney Miller, the Behavioral Health Coordinator at Whiteside County Health Department regarding the M.A.T. Program. Per Ms. Miller, Medication Assisted Treatment (M.A.T.) is the use of medications combined with counseling and behavioral health therapies to provide a holistic approach in the treatment of opioid use and alcohol use disorders. Research has shown that this combination of treatment can successfully create a sustainable path of recovery. At the Whiteside County Community Health Clinic, we take an individual treatment approach in order to meet the needs of every patient we encounter. The M.A.T. team consists of a DEA waiver medical provider, licensed therapists, psychiatrist, psychiatric nurse practitioner, and nursing staff all of whom are leading experts in mental health care. The M.A.T. team works together with community partners in order to link individuals with all necessary resources; as we continue to provide individual therapy, family education, group therapy, medical/dental care, and compassion to each individual patient. If interested in starting M.A.T. services, please call 815-626-2230 ext. 1274. Ms. Miller and her team are professional, caring, and they understand the struggles that occur while achieving sobriety. Please do not hesitate to contact the Whiteside County Health Department's MAT Program with questions.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Does your support group have an upcoming event you'd like to see in our next newsletter? Please email us at info@svvor.org.



## RECOVERY 101

### 6 WAYS TO STAY SANE AND NOT DESPAIR DURING THE PANDEMIC

These days, it seems like the bad news is coming from all angles. Hospitals are overwhelmed, small businesses are closed, and the economy is tanking. And yet, somehow, we have to find a way to keep from falling into despair.

The good news for people in recovery is that you're experienced at overcoming challenges. You've been desperate and overwhelmed, and made the choice to do the hard work needed to survive and thrive. All of that is applicable to how you respond to the current upheaval in the world.

Even with all that preparation, dealing with this crisis can be difficult. Not only is the news scary, but the unprecedented nature of the response has everyone on edge. Plus, no one knows what the coming weeks or months will bring.

And yet, we have to try. Here are six tips to keep your head up during the coronavirus outbreak and subsequent response.

1. Draw on your recovery principals. It might sound cheesy, but before you roll your eyes, consider this: most people in recovery have done tons of personal work. All of that can strengthen the way you respond during this crisis. If you need a bit of extra help, it's available from mindfulness apps. Ten Percent Happier has a free [Coronavirus Sanity Guide](#) and other mindfulness companies are waiving fees.
2. Stay busy. Letting your mind spin too much can feed into anxiety and maybe even thoughts of relapse. That's why it's important to stay busy, even when you're at home. In addition to focusing on new tasks like a shift to working from home and trying a home exercise regimen, now is the perfect time to tackle projects around the house.
3. Look for new inspiration. Challenge yourself to find new inspiration during challenging times. That means spending time with books, movies, and art that you find awe-inspiring. Right now, it's easier than ever to find inspiration from home. Broadway shows are available for streaming; thousands of museums, aquariums, and zoos are offering free virtual tours. Many libraries have also increased access to audio books and other media.
4. Be of service. If you follow the 12 steps, being of service is a central tenet of your recovery. Even for those who aren't friends of Bill W., the feel-good endorphins that come from helping others can be just the boost you need during these trying times. So, pick up the phone. Check in on a friend or sponsee. Ask your neighbors if they need anything before you brave the store. Smile and wave (from a distance) when you're walking around. These little interactions are more important than ever at a time when most socializing has come to a screeching halt.
5. Use technology mindfully. Technology and social media are allowing people to socialize even when we're stuck at home. That's great--digital meetings, hangouts, and even telemedicine sessions will help people stay healthy during this time. However, it's important to be mindful about your social media use. Being on social media too much can increase anxiety during the best of times, and there's no doubt that the effects are amplified during the outbreak. Don't be afraid to unplug entirely or consciously limit your use. If you're looking for a mindless activity online, try a museum tour instead of 'scrolling' through panicked posts. (Cont. on Page 2).

## RECOVERY 101 (CONT.)

6. Check in with yourself daily. Take a few minutes each day to monitor your feelings and emotions. Even if you're not experiencing cravings, you might notice changes to your sleeping and eating patterns, or to your temperament. Changes in these are often red flags or warning signs. If necessary, reach out to someone who can help you with whatever issues arise. The Fix.com

## LIFESTYLE OVERHAUL

SUPPORT GROUPS MEETING IRL DURING THE LOCKDOWN

### MONDAY

#### AA:

12 NOON (Closed) & 6 PM (Open), Loveland Community Building, Dixon  
12 NOON, 1503 1st Ave. Suite D, Rock Falls (Open)  
12 NOON (Closed) & 7 PM (Beginners), Bazaar Americana, Sterling  
12 NOON, St. Paul's Lutheran Church (Open)  
7 PM, 9 @ E Front St., Mt. Morris (Open, Speaker 3rd Sunday of month)

#### NA:

7 PM, Lutheran Social Services, Sterling

#### AI-ANON:

7 PM, 1503 1st Ave. Suite D, Rock Falls  
7 PM, Church of God, Mt. Carroll

### TUESDAY

#### AA:

12 NOON & 6 PM, Loveland Community Building, Dixon (Open)  
1:30 PM, St. Patrick's Church, Rochelle  
7 PM, 701 1st Ave. Suite A, Rock Falls  
7 PM (Closed, Beginners) & 8 PM (Closed), 1st Presbyterian Church, Sterling  
7:30 PM, Village of Progress, Oregon

#### NA:

7 PM, Recovery Home, Dixon

### WEDNESDAY

#### AA:

9 AM, Church of the Brethren, Dixon (Closed)  
12 NOON, St. Luke's Eell's Room, Dixon (Women's, Open)  
12 NOON & 6 PM, Loveland Community Building, Dixon (Both Open)  
12 NOON, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Oregon (Open)  
7 PM, First Presbyterian Church, Rochelle

### THURSDAY

#### AA:

12 NOON (Closed) & 6 PM (Open), Loveland Community Building, Dixon  
12 NOON & 5:30 PM (Women's, Closed), St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Oregon  
7 PM, Rolling Hills Progress Center, 201 IL RT 64, Lanark (Back Door)



### FRIDAY

#### AA:

10:30 AM, Sunlight of the Spirit Group, St. Luke's Church, Eell's room, Dixon  
12 NOON & 6 PM, Loveland Community Building, Dixon (Both Open)  
12 NOON & 3:30 PM, Bazaar Americana, Sterling (Both Closed)  
12 NOON, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Oregon (Closed)  
8 PM, Church of God, Mt. Carroll (Closed)

#### NA:

6 PM, Lutheran Social Services, Sterling

### SATURDAY

#### AA:

9 AM (Women's, Open) & 8 PM (Closed) Church of the Brethren, Dixon  
12 NOON & 6 PM, Loveland Community Building, Dixon (Both Open)  
12 NOON, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Oregon (Closed)  
12 NOON, Bazaar Americana, Sterling (Closed)  
7 PM, First Presbyterian Church, Rochelle

#### NA:

12 NOON, Lutheran Social Services, Sterling

### SUNDAY

#### AA:

8 AM, 12 NOON & 7 PM (Suite 217), Bazaar Americana, Sterling (All Closed)  
12 NOON, Village of Progress, Oregon (Open)  
7 PM, 1503 1st Ave. Suite D, Rock Falls (Veterans, Open)

**\*\*Daily:** 7 PM, Professional Building, 2308 E. Lincolnway, Suite B, Sterling (Closed)  
Please contact SVVOR for additional information, corrections, and additions.

## MY RECOVERY IN THE COMMUNITY

Believe me, I've made my fair share of mistakes. I stole. I lied. I forfeited my beloved job of almost ten years. I lost the respect of friends and family. And my husband threatened to leave and take our son. Why?--All because of addiction. My addictions, starting early with cigarettes and drinking, led me to a life of pills and drugs and then eventually needles over a twenty-year span. So, because of my addictions, I'm trying like hell to repair all those bridges I so effectively burned. I'm working hard at my sobriety, but two years of sobriety doesn't make better twenty years of use and misuse of my body and mind.

During the beginning of my recovery, I remember how sad I was. I was sad for getting caught, sad for being in trouble, sad for disappointing, sad for no more pills, sad for the sorry state of my life...the list was endless. And for someone with depression, feeling sad all the time is hard!! Part of me believed that this sadness was my forever reward for the wrongdoings in my life. It wasn't until I found a community of my own--a Saturday morning women's AA group--that my sadness began to lift. But it took me more than a year to find my group. Approximately fourteen months of sadness!!

One of my goals for sobriety is the desire to help the "recovery community"--like Sauk Valley Voices of Recovery. I enjoy sobriety. I enjoy my life. Best of all, I enjoy my mornings of clear-headed thoughts and feeling pretty decently. I'm not living a fairy tale; I yelled at my son so badly during the first week of remote learning that he cried...twice. I say the f-word more times than necessary during a day, and I forget about the wash in the machine for four days. But, I'm doing it all sober. And I'm there. All the way. And I want to do this for as long as I can.

My Saturday morning women have come to mean more to me than any pill or drink ever did. They make me see a side of myself that I am proud of, one that I wouldn't have seen on my own. I would hate for anyone to feel the way I once did about recovery. The sadness and despair is so overwhelming that the days I wanted to use seemed to be more than the days that I didn't. Because of my Saturday women, I have now joined another group which I very much enjoy. I've even started chairing this new meeting! I encourage you to find a community of your own. Being the newbie, walking into a new meeting, was one of the most difficult things I've ever done. But, I did it, and the rewards just keep coming. If you need help finding a community of your own, please contact us at SVVOR.org.

--A now happier sober person