

January 2021



Celebrating 36 Years

Morton Center Updates

Greetings!

I was talking to a friend yesterday and she said her son had told her that he was tired of living through historic events.

We laughed and agreed, "ain't that the truth!"

Later that day, I watched a reporter break down on camera as she was talking to a news anchor about the two weeks she had spent inside COVID Units in Los Angeles where the death rates are soaring. She was so distraught she couldn't speak.

The anchor took over and she said something that stuck with me.

"As a nation, we are experiencing collective trauma."

In the last 11 months, we have experienced event after event after event that would normally be once in a decade events... once in a century events... and even first-ever events.

In the last week, almost everyone I've talked to - friends, family, colleagues – are having difficulty

focusing, are chronically exhausted, and even physical complaints are cropping up.

I'm not joking when I say that I think everybody in America needs to see a therapist. Very few of us are untouched. I also think that Mental Healthcare should be part of a future COVID relief package for those that are uninsured or underinsured.

But we are not without hope.

Step 2 in the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous says this:

Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

It's difficult to find a spiritual center sometimes... especially times like these. Who am I kidding? We've never had "times like these".

But, seriously, it's never been more important.

I don't know what or who your spiritual center - your Higher Power is. But whatever or whoever it is, I hope you are nurturing that part of yourself. It is a tenet of addiction recovery, and I know personally, it has been a powerful force in my life over these 11 months.

So, maybe instead of getting out of bed, grabbing a cup of coffee, and turning on the news, or opening your phone to "doom scroll" (I've been guilty), try a walk outside or finding a quiet corner to meditate or pray or read. Turn on music you love. Or just... be... in the silence. Whatever helps you connect with your spiritual self.

And sometime during the day, have that chocolate.

Be well. Be safe.



Priscilla McIntosh
Chief Executive Officer
The Morton Center, Inc.



Tips & Research

How Those in Recovery Are Staying Connected During COVID-19

I asked three people in recovery what they are doing to stay sober—and sane.

by Nina Christie

Published by *PsychologyToday.com*, July 14, 2020

I was at a typical New Years Eve party filled with people listening to upbeat music, wearing silly glasses, and congregating around the food. But one thing was missing from the party: there was no alcohol. It was hosted by my friend who is a member of Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). The concept of a sober NYE party may seem strange for "normies," (an AA term for social drinkers) but those in recovery celebrate the same events that we all celebrate, and they too do it surrounded by loved ones.

As a "normie," this was my first time (post-high school) ringing in the New Year completely sober. It felt strange; I had even brought a bottle of champagne—that I left in the car—in case there was social drinking among those of

us not in AA. Spoiler: there wasn't. But something happened that night. After I left, I felt a true sense of camaraderie and belongingness, something I don't usually feel when leaving a NYE party. Being sober enhanced my sense of connection. As I've been reflecting on the whirlwind that has been 2020 and how people have been impacted, I think about how devastating the loss of community has been for people in sobriety...

[Click to read the complete article first published by *Psychology Today*.](#)



Staff Spotlight

Toya Liggons, LCSW, LCADC

Clinical Manager at The Morton Center

Toya received a Master Degree in Social Work from Spalding University, and currently holds both LCADC (Licensed Clinical Alcohol and Drug Counselor) and LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker) in the state of Kentucky. She serves as Clinical Manager at The Morton Center. Toya has a strong desire to "help clients achieve goals to improve their life through the recovery process." She aspires to be a servant leader and works to inspire her team and student interns to follow their dreams. In her current role as Clinical Manager she hopes to increase employee retention and satisfaction.

In her free time Toya enjoys riding horses and camping out in the woods. She says she "loves being outdoors and connecting with nature."

The Clinician's Point of View

Celebrating Alumni

Michael Rose, MA, NCC, TCADC
Counselor at The Morton Center

Last week was Alumni Night at The Morton Center. It's something we do every five weeks as a special day in the Early Recovery Program. Alumni Night is an evening when individuals who have completed the program and are living in recovery come back to share their experience, strength and hope with those just beginning. While the details may differ, their stories typically follow a three part chronology: what it was like, what happened, and what it's like now. We are truly blessed to have such a wonderful group of Alumni willing to give back to the recovery community, and I enjoy hearing their testimony each time they share.



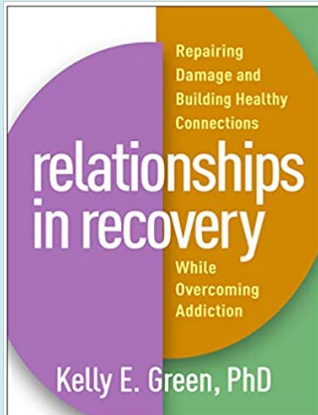
One common component of their stories is their commitment to remain connected, not only with others in recovery, but with themselves. Last week I heard each of them in their own way thank their listeners for "helping [them] stay sober." This is a concept that may not resonate with the general public, but is quite well known in an action oriented program of recovery. Those successful in recovery have realized several important truths that contributed to their success.

First, they have realized that it's not all about them. They are no longer selfish with themselves or others. The idea that one can "do this" alone is delusional. The frontier mentality that one should be able to accomplish any task by themselves is not only incorrect, but quite damaging; it's what has kept many of us embroiled in a seemingly inescapable addiction for so long. Successful recovery requires us to relinquish our pride, and recognize the importance of humility. Addiction is about isolation. Recovery is about connection.

Second, they are grateful. Gratitude is an essential pillar for sustained recovery, no matter how much one feels they may have been cheated in their addiction. Recognizing what we have is paramount for success. Verbalizing gratitude is a practice that can help. Notice that each of the Alumni said "thank you." Not only were they grateful in their heart, but spoke of it openly, freely, and without prejudice. It's hard to remain selfish and isolated when practicing gratitude.

Third, they understand that recovery is an ongoing process. Not one of the alumni said or inferred that "they got this." They have a clear understanding that recovery is illusive; it can disappear as quickly as it appeared, leaving one to wonder what happened. As with any manageable disease, the maintenance of ones recovery requires effort. We must continue to take our "medicine" if we wish to remain well. Remaining connected and giving back is an important component of our medicinal regimen. Successful individuals recognize that they are in recovery (a process), and not fully recovered (an event).

There is no question that our Alumni have discovered many more elements to their success than the three mentioned above, but each is willing to share the importance of these. I am grateful for our Alumni Group. They exemplify the possibilities of a life in recovery and they are committed to taking the actions necessary to sustain it. If you haven't already, speak with your counselor about joining the Alumni Group. Stay sober, give back and stay connected.



Reading List

Relationships in Recovery: Repairing Damage and Building Healthy Connections While Overcoming Addiction

by [Kelly E. Green](#)

Addiction can wreak havoc on relationships, destroying trust and damaging bonds with family, friends, and colleagues. Substance use both causes these interpersonal problems and becomes a method of trying to cope with them. Psychologist and addiction expert Kelly Green has learned through working with thousands of clients that maintaining healthy relationships is key to the recovery process. In this compassionate, judgment-free guide, Dr. Green shares powerful tools for setting and maintaining boundaries, communicating feelings and needs, ending harmful relationships respectfully, and reestablishing emotional intimacy. With inspiring narratives, downloadable self-assessment worksheets, and journaling prompts, this book lights the way to a life untethered from addiction--and filled with positive connections.

[Click here to purchase on Amazon.](#)

Video Spotlight:

Everything You Think You Know About Addiction is Wrong

by Johann Hari - July 9, 2015
Posted on YouTube.com

What really causes addiction — to everything from cocaine to smart-phones? And how can we overcome it? Johann Hari has seen our current methods fail firsthand, as he has watched loved ones struggle to manage their addictions. He started to wonder why we treat addicts the way we do — and if there might be a better way. As he shares in this deeply personal talk, his questions took him around the world, and unearthed some surprising and hopeful ways of thinking about an age-old problem.



Winter Programming News:

The Morton Center Launches New Website and Expanded Services

The Morton Center is proud to announce the launch of a new website to better serve clients and the community. "As we continue to expand our services, and the number of clients we reach increases, we wanted an improved and

refreshed platform on which to provide this information to the public. We're happy with the results of the new look and the user-friendly navigation of the site," said CEO, Priscilla McIntosh.

Email tmcinfo@themortoncenter.org for more information, or [click here to explore the new site.](#)

Online Recovery Resources



Being at home doesn't have to mean
being disconnected.
Be smart. Be safe. Be connected.

About The Morton Center

The Morton Center is a full-service addiction recovery facility offering professional counseling and therapy, as well as prevention and educational services, for individuals and families struggling with substance abuse issues. Since 1984, our customized, holistic approach has helped to reengage individuals and their families with lives of meaning and purpose often lost in addiction.

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