

GET INVOLVED!

Quarterly Newsletter  
July– September  
2018



Living *Proof*  
Recovery Center

# Real Time Recovery

Living Proof Recovery Center Newsletter

## Recovery Awareness Day

at Living Proof Recovery Center

On Friday, September 14, 2018, Living Proof Recovery Center hosted a delicious luncheon in honor of National Recovery Awareness Month. Guest speakers from the recovery community brought their moving messages that expressed each individual's experience, strength, and hope. Each of our guest speakers found their very own paths to recovery. Our speakers shared stories of triumph over what they once believed to be, an undefeatable disease. Anthony Comito spoke about faith in Recovery, Dorothy Blindenbacher spoke about yoga for recovery, and Kristen Logan spoke about medication assisted recovery. Guest speaker Don Tollefson, of FOX Sports, shared his message of victory. Each speaker expressed a truly unique perspective with the audience about how their path to recovery enabled them to grow as a person. Their stories and experiences were very touching and inspirational. At the end of the luncheon, guests took a moment of silence to remember all the loved ones that were lost to this powerful disease. The silence was very emotional. The shift in energy was strong.



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## 3rd Annual Camden County Recovery Softball Tournament

On September 21, 2018 Living Proof Recovery Center Hope Dealers participated in the third annual Recovery Softball Tournament to raise awareness for those battling opioid addiction. The event was hosted by the Camden County Addictions Awareness Task Force and supported by the Camden County Board of Freeholders. Although the Hope Dealers were shut out by Humble Beginnings Recovery Centers and the Gloucester County Police Department, a great time was had by all. Looking forward to next year!



### Workshop Spotlight

By Courtney Haslett

Jeanine DuMont is one of our Recovery Mentors, at Living Proof Recovery Center. She is a certified Recovery Support Practitioner and holds a bachelor's degree in English. Jeannine has worked at the Living Proof Recovery Center for five years. Facilitating our peer-led workshops is one of Jeannine's passions. Jeannine facilitates Sharing Hope for Mental Wellness, Journaling for Recovery and Self-Esteem. In addition to all her hard work at the Living Proof Recovery Center, she also runs evidence-based workshops at Oaks Integrated Care in Berlin.

I decided to interview Jeanine because I wanted to give her an opportunity to talk about her workshop. Sharing Hope for Mental Wellness is all about giving support and talking about ways to maintain wellness. I feel as though it is vital to talk about wellness so that we can continue to grow.

#### **What made you want to start this group?**

I originally wanted to start a support group dedicated to mental health because I myself found help and support at a Depression Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA) support groups in 2012. I went into this support group and almost immediately, the facilitator of the group started to believe in me and what I was capable of accomplishing. I had very low self-esteem back then, and this particular support group helped me to build my confidence. I made myself commit to going every week, and this helped me to know I could handle taking on more responsibility in my life. I also developed new connections that helped me as well. My facilitator is the one that told me about the CORE Peer Certification program, and that she thought I would be a good fit for it. I was very interested in doing it, so I applied, and completed the CORE program. Toward the end of the training, an employee announced anyone is welcome to start his or her own workshop/support group at this center. I jumped on the opportunity!

#### **How long have you been running this group?**

My first group was on July 9, 2013, so a bit over five years! I would not be where I am today. I am very grateful for the Living Proof Recovery Center, and all the staff and all the members.

## Workshop Spotlight Continued...

### What type of topics do you cover?

I utilize my own experiences dealing with bipolar depression and mania to help people know that they are not alone. I also open up the group to other topics, where anyone can talk about anything that is on their minds at the time. I talk about the W.R.A.P. a lot, the Wellness and Recovery Action Plan. This plan is designed to help people overcome anything, be it a sickness, an addiction, or a mental illness. The plan has 'tools' that one uses every day to get and stay well. I sometimes bring in inspirational quotes or stories, read them aloud, and discuss them as a group. I guide people in turning a negative into a positive. I myself truly believe everything happens for a reason, and my reason for running this group is to illustrate that I and anyone that deals with a mental health issue does not have to only just survive, but can thrive! In addition, when the 'I' in illness is replaced with 'WE,' the word illness becomes wellness. I model empathy, a listening ear, and good feedback so that members can find it in themselves to not only help themselves, but also help another.

### Where do you find inspiration for your group?

At times, I find it within myself. I utilize what I have been through, what I have overcome, to show people it can be done. It is not easy, and it is not fun. Recovery is work, but it is well worth it. At times, I look to self-help teachers, such as Wayne Dyer, or Joel Osteen, at their books or quotes. I believe anyone has the power within himself or herself to change at any moment in time, to turn their lives around, for the better. I believe if you love life, life will love you right back. I believe what you give out you get back, tenfold. There are, and will be, dark times in life. However, I feel the greater one has sunk into the darkness, the more powerful and awe-inspiring the light can be. For inspiration, I also look to how far I have come in my life, and my recovery.

As you can see Jeanine is passionate about what she does. She has a lot of personal experience and is able to use it to help others. Anyone is welcome at her groups and is able to receive the support they may need.

## Community Outreach





## Pro-Act Walk for Recovery

On September 22, 2018 Living Proof Recovery Center, in collaboration with Camden County College and the Camden County Addictions Awareness Task Force, walked in the Pro-Act Recovery Walk. As Friends of the Walk, Living Proof Recovery Center members, volunteers and staff and their family members were grateful to walk with over 27,000 walkers in support of recovery and recovery support services. Afterwards, there was a fantastic fellowship opportunity at lunch at Camden County College. Recovery is possible.

We are Living Proof!



## Recovering In Your Reality

By: Stephanie Jennings

Exactly what does recovering in your reality mean? Let me give you a little back history on where this term originated from, at least in my life. I was introduced to 12- step recovery in August of 1987. That is where I met my first sponsor and her husband; they both were people of what we would consider “long- term recovery”. I lived in Atlantic City where I was born and raised and meetings were scarce at that time. So we started a meeting in a church basement which met at 9 pm every night of the week and it was two hours long for quite a number of years. We did this to meet the needs of the potential recovering person, who was working third shift in the hotel and casino industry at that time. Not to mention anyone seeking recovery. My first sponsor’s husband coined the phrase, “recover in your own reality” and with that, we created more and more 12- step meetings.

There was a great need to “recover in our own reality” and in order to do that we had to pull together and become solution oriented. We were given a choice to continue to whine and complain about the long distance we had to travel to attend meetings, or the challenges we faced when we entered the workplace finding ourselves surrounded by drugs, or when some of us had to serve alcoholic beverages as part of our job description. We desperately needed a safe place to share with like-minded people who could relate and identify with some of the day to day issues we were facing. Our lives are busy, full , and time seemed short, yet the importance of the “sticking to the basics” such as making meetings, sponsorship, reaching out to someone in our network, and being of service to others (volunteering) were weighing in the balance. Placing relapse prevention within our community became a top priority. For those of us with experience, we knew the importance of these principles in our lives.

Recovering in my reality is based on “Who am I?”. What are my needs as a recovering person? I struggled most of my life answering the question “Who am I?” Today I am a strong independent woman who happens to be in long-term recovery, and a woman with Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (C-PTSD). I use to label myself as a daughter, significant other, lesbian, ex-con, recovering addict, aunt, etc. I always tagged myself based on an attachment to “You” whoever you may be, or to what I have done no matter good, bad, right, wrong, or indifferent. Or better yet, how you felt about me in that moment (I’m okay “if” you think I’m okay). I am simply Stephanie, made up of many facets. Recovering in my own reality doing my very best not to compare myself with you, my sponsor, my therapist, the grocer, the gas station attendant, whoever. You see when I do compare myself I am usually living in a fallacy of being better or less than and that causes separation, which causes more pain and uncomfortable feelings, and then even more self-deception. There is a difference between comparison and identification. When I identify I’m able to see what we have in common even if we look nothing alike I can still “identify “ with that one thing and feel a connection and that helps me recover in my reality. I shared a few years ago at Center For Family Services that it wasn’t until I acknowledged and accepted myself as a person recovering with C-PTSD along with being a person recovering from addiction and its many facets was I then able to completely see myself as a whole individual in the recovery process and seek the help I needed in my life.



## “A New Beginning”

By: Myisha Scott

My name is Myisha Scott. I am a local resident of the community and now a volunteer at Living Proof Recovery Center (LPRC). Before I came to LPRC, I also was volunteering at an animal adoption center. I got a wonderful chance to help rehabilitate some felines that had been suffering from anxiety, and depression. I also medicate them back to health for a chance for adoption. After that experience, I remembered just wanting to rescue every feline I saw in my neighborhood off the streets and get them into a loving home. When I had to leave the shelter, it felt like something in my life was missing. I felt that I was letting the animals down. I was very heartbroken, something about how the animals would look at me when I would open up their cage to feed them and let them free touched my soul. I thought for sure that I would be working with animals forever. There was a sudden change in my life that led me to Center For Family Services' Living Proof Recovery Center. Wow! I can remember my first day as if it was yesterday. I had my interview and afterwards received a tour around the building. I will never forget the first time I walked down the back stairs. There was a beautiful painting on the wall of a sun shining bright. The moment I saw that painting, I truly had a sense of joy in my heart that I cannot explain. It reminded me of a song I use to sing called “There is a Bright Side Somewhere.” That special painting gave me a sense of peace in the time of my storm after leaving the building. Since I have been volunteering at LPRC everyone has welcomed me and made me feel at home. There was a point in my life when I struggled with sobriety. If this place would have been around then, I know that it would have been a big impact on my life. It has been truly a pleasure to be a service at LPRC and meet others like myself who are also working towards a positive pathway to success. There are many awesome people at LPRC, but the one that has stood out the most to me happens to be the Administrative Assistant, Lee Bergin. Lee has encouraged me and inspired me to want to help those in recovery in the same way I wanted to help the felines who needed my support. I am happy just to be able to help anyone. It brings me joy just to see someone smile. Recently, I had the honor to sub for the art wellness group. The activity was for everyone to paint a rock. Who could ever imagine that something as simple as painting a rock, could bring so much joy and laughter into someone's life. While I was painting my rock, I thought about another song called "The Wise Man Built His House Upon A Rock". When I think of a rock, I think of climbing a mountain. I also think of determination, ambition, struggles, obstacles but most importantly strength and strong support. I hope that while I am at LPRC, I can also be someone's rock.

## Stories of Hope



## “My Recovery Process”

By: Robert Thomas

My recovery process today is much different than what it was when I first tried to get clean. However, during this process I had to learn a great deal of things about myself if I were ever to stay clean. It was during this process that I had been given many tools which enabled me to finally make the positive changes in myself to live a rewarding and sober life. My life has never been unique, many people who suffered from some type of addiction had gone through similar experiences with the trauma of severe abuse within their homes. For me as a little boy I couldn't understand why my family was hurting me, nor did I know that I suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). I began using alcohol/drugs when I was 9-years old and it was from the very first moment of my use that I realized that I wasn't afraid anymore. This is what kept my addiction going for many years. Every time I tried to get clean I struggled because I never knew that I was truly suffering from an emotional pain that I couldn't escape. The false sense of security that alcohol/drugs gave me allowed me to put on a disguise that enabled me to be whatever I wanted to be and not live a life of fear. I never knew the term of self-medicating until I began my recovery process. It was this process that had taken me decades to finally understand myself. Today I am a person in long term recovery and it came only by my being able to make the positive changes within myself. Does this make me perfect? No! One thing that I learned through my process is progress not perfection. This allows me not to be too hard on myself when I make mistakes. I was always my own worst critic. My recovery process includes continuing with my education by being a college student with a GPA of 4.0. My major is Addiction/HSR and this allows me to meet people where they're at. It is my own experiences that help me to help others through their own pain that comes from addiction. I am employed by Living Proof Recovery Center as a Recovery Coach Peer Specialist. This service allows me to meet people where they're at and help them to move forward in their lives. We provide linkage to detox/treatment and provide peer led recovery support services. We do what we love to do as a team. My recovery process is a rewarding one because today I've realized just how much I care about people. It also is a sad one when I look at the people that didn't make it. This disease takes 175 people a day. That's why everyone that works in this field will bend over backwards to help those still suffering. Recovery is possible one day at a time.

# Living Proof Recovery Center Outcomes

Every day at Living Proof Recovery Center, our amazing Recovery Mentors work tirelessly to help individuals who are seeking recovery get linked to a pathway to recovery that the individual feels will work for them. Living Proof Recovery Center believes in multiple pathways to recovery and educating individuals on all the different pathways that exist. Here are numbers for the different linkages that our Recovery Mentors have successfully made this quarter.

## Detox

35 individuals were linked to different detox centers across NJ.

## Sober Living House

12 individuals were linked to different sober living homes in the surrounding areas.

## Inpatient Treatment Facilities

9 individuals were linked to different inpatient treatment facilities across NJ.

## Medication Assisted Treatment

3 individuals were linked to medication assisted treatment centers in our region.

\* Please note that these numbers do not reflect the number of individuals linked to 12-step programs due to anonymity. \*

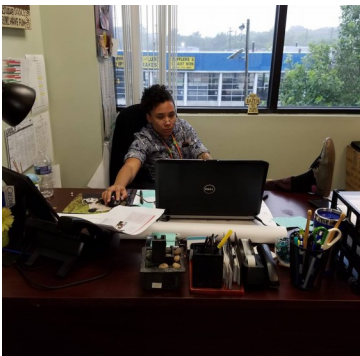
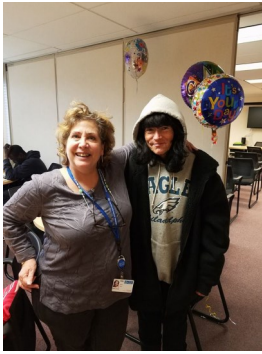
# Peer Recovery Specialist Training

The Certified Peer Recovery Specialist Training is designed to educate individuals on areas used in peer recovery support. The training is broken down into several different domains; mentoring and education, recovery and wellness, advocacy and ethical responsibilities. The successful completion of this training will allow the individuals to be eligible to apply for the Certified Peer Recovery Specialist credential (CPRS) recognized by The New Jersey Addiction Professionals Certification Board, Inc. Pictured is our first graduating class! Congratulations to all!



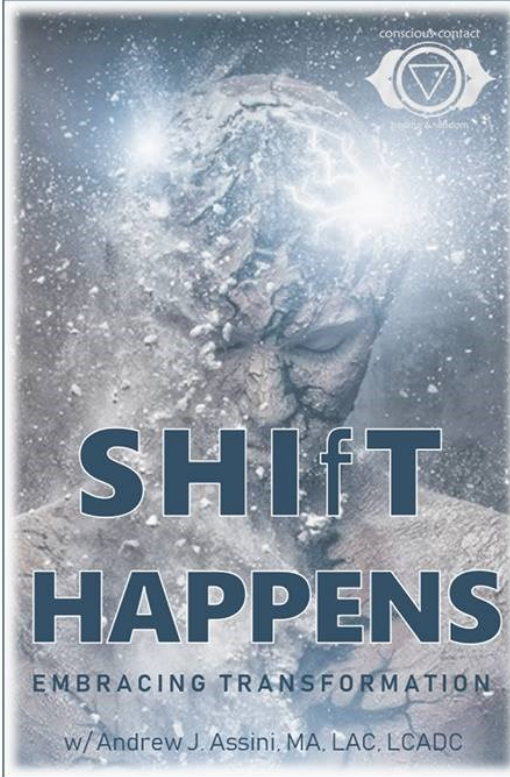


# Moments in Time





# Coming soon to Living Proof Recovery Center!



## SHIFT HAPPENS: EMBRACING TRANSFORMATION

Utilizing empirically supported clinical theory, examples from nature, and personal insight, Andrew J. Assini MA, LAC, LCADC facilitates an enlightening and empowering presentation on change and transformation.

This presentation is appropriate for counselors, therapists, social workers, peer recovery specialists, advocates, persons in recovery, educators, health professionals, and/or anyone else involved or interested in the process of change and transformation.

*Assini is a licensed mental health professional and person in long term recovery who specializes in creating conversational, engaging, and interactive experiences. This presentation can be custom tailored to specific populations as desired. Visit [www.consciouscontact.org](http://www.consciouscontact.org) for more information.*





# Center For Family Services Empower 5k Run & 1 Mile Walk

This year, Living Proof Recovery Center had the privilege of participating in Center for Family Services' Empower 5k Run & 1 Mile Walk. The event is all about coming together to support those who have experienced trauma in their lives. Trauma can come in all different forms, including addiction and recovery but no matter what form of trauma one has experienced it has the power to rip a life apart. This was a day for survivors, loved ones of survivors, and advocates to come together in unity and raise money for the cause. With this fundraiser, Center for Family Services was able to raise \$25,350 to provides services for victims of trauma such as counseling, safe housing, advocacy, and much more. This year Living Proof Recovery Center walked in memory of the 75 names that are written on the memorial plaque on our wall. These are the names of our family and friends that the Living Proof Recovery Center has lost to addiction. It meant the world to walk in their honor. It was a beautiful and amazing day and we look forward to participating in this event next year!

Check out some of our pictures from this event.





# UPCOMING EVENTS



Halloween Fun Day - October 29, 2018 4:00 pm

Family Thanksgiving - November 22, 2018 2:00 pm

Happy Holidays Party - Call for date and time

## Did you know?

### GET INVOLVED!

Welcoming:

Members

Volunteers

Interns

Advisory Board

Members

### The Living Proof Recovery Center offers a variety

### of on site services, such as:

Emergency Food Assistance

Support Groups

Food Bank

NARCAN Training

Youth Girl's Group

Resume Workshop

Journaling

GED Preparation

Recovery Mentors

Quarterly Outings

12-Step Groups

Job Skills Training

### Living Proof Recovery Center

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### **Keeping up to date with the center is as easy as...**

Joining our e-mail list to get monthly calendars and new workshop updates!

Just send us an email asking us to add you. Check us out online! The calendar and special events are always posts to keep you in the loop!

Stop in! We'd love to see you!