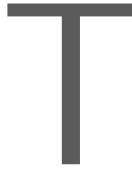


Part 1

Creating a Recovery-based Lifestyle



A rock pile ceases to be a rock pile the moment a single man contemplates it, bearing within him the image of a cathedral.

-Antoine De Saint-Exupery

Once upon a time, there was a man whose father gave him a field full of stones. And, let me tell you, where this guy lived, a field full of stones was no great gift. Our friend needed a field to plant crops. He sulked about his gift for a long time, eventually becoming so discouraged about the hopeless state of his land that he did nothing more than lay alongside the road, next to his stony field.

One day while the man was lounging along the roadside next to his field of stones along walked a stranger. The stranger led an ox, which was pulling a small cart.

“Why are you laying on the side of the road, friend? Don’t you know that a passing ox cart might run over you and cause an awful accident?”

“Who cares?” our hero answered. “ I am really down about this field of rocks I inherited. It’s worthless.”

“If it will make you feel better, I will trade you my ox and the cart for your land,” the stranger offered.

No sooner did the words fall from his lips than the man accepted, grabbed the ox, and shoved a deed into the stranger’s hand. Off our hero went, laughing as he walked into town to show off his trade.

The stranger looked out into the stone-covered field in awe. Slowly, he walked over and picked up a small stone. He took it to the edge of the field and placed it carefully on the ground. Over and over he picked up stones, some little and some big, and placed them on the edge of the field. But the task was too great for him to accomplish alone. He knew he would surely become discouraged working by himself. So he sent for his friends to join in the effort. In return for their labor, they would each receive part of the land.

Slowly, the stones began to form a fence along the

roadside. The man ached from moving the rocks, but day after day, as he moved the stones, he became very strong.

Remember our hero? Several months later he passed by and saw a very muscular man leaning against the new fence of his beautiful field, enjoying his friends.

“Excuse me, I must have the wrong neighborhood. Can you tell me where the rocky dump is that I owned last year?”

“It’s right here,” said the man.

“No, I traded it to a traveler. He was only a fraction of your size.”

With that the muscular man laughed, and replied, “That was me, but things have changed. I cleared the field, I feel great and am wealthy for my effort.”

The first man complained about being tricked out of his land.

The strong man replied, “All of us have chances to grow—they are presented every day. I took the chance you wasted. Do not stay here and moan a missed opportunity. Go and find the next one. Opportunity presents itself all of the time, take advantage of yours.” With that he turned and joined his friends.

At first glance, your life may appear to be much like the *worthless* piece of land in the story above—infertile, unusable, riddled with obstacles too big for you to overcome. If you lack the vision to imagine what you can transform your *field of stones* into, or the courage to construct your vision of what you hope your *field of stones* might become, you may not see the opportunity the miracle of staying clean and sober offers you. But the truth of the matter is that the miracle of staying clean and sober is pregnant with promise and hope for a great today and

an even better tomorrow.

The first step in staying clean and sober is to [re]construct a Recovery-based lifestyle. [Re]constructing a Recovery-based lifestyle is much like transforming the stone-covered land in the story above. There are *stones* in your life that need to be moved, rearranged, or discarded altogether. There are *structures* absent from your life that need to be built from the foundational building blocks of a Recovery-based lifestyle. The hard work to be done can only be accomplished by clinging to an unshakeable belief in what you can envision your life becoming.

Just like in the story above, removing the stones in your life will involve a lot of heavy lifting. You'll most likely need the help of others in order to properly [re]construct a Recovery-based lifestyle. But believe you me, all of the heavy lifting you do will make you emotionally and spiritually stronger for the experience.

So just what is a Recovery-based lifestyle? What role does it play in staying clean and sober? What are the building blocks that make up a Recovery-based lifestyle? How can you [re]construct a Recovery-based lifestyle? Part 1 of this book answers those four questions

In chapter 1, we'll examine the first two questions, *what is a Recovery-based lifestyle* and *what role does a Recovery-based lifestyle play in staying clean and sober*. Briefly, a Recovery-based lifestyle is a way of life that places the preservation of your abstinence from ALL alcohol and other drugs at the forefront of every choice that you make, every belief that you honor, every action that you take, every place that you go, and every person that you go there with. A Recovery-based lifestyle is constructed from the following four building blocks.

Pathfinder's Checklist

Building blocks of a Recovery-based lifestyle

- 1) Physical well-being
- 2) Psychological well-being
- 3) Social well-being
- 4) Spiritual well-being

In chapter 1 we'll examine thirteen elements that make up a Recovery-based lifestyle. These elements are the raw ingredients of the above four building blocks.

Pathfinder's Checklist

Elements of a Recovery-based lifestyle

- 1) Abstinence from ALL alcohol and other drugs
- 2) Accountability
- 3) Balance
- 4) Consistency
- 5) Fellowship
- 6) Joy
- 7) Integrity
- 8) Love
- 9) Rigorous honesty
- 10) Routines
- 11) Serenity
- 12) Spontaneity
- 13) Structure

In chapters 2 through 8 we'll answer the last two questions, *what are the building blocks that make up a Recovery-based lifestyle*, and *how can you [re]construct a Recovery-*

based lifestyle. Briefly, a Recovery-based lifestyle is constructed by *taking the right action at the right time to develop, protect, maintain, and enrich your physical, psychological, social, and spiritual well-being.* In chapter 2, we'll discuss how best to protect and preserve the first building block of your Recovery-based lifestyle, your physical well-being. We'll examine five elements of your physical well-being that are critical for you to maintain.

Pathfinder's Checklist

Five elements of the physical well-being building block of a Recovery-based lifestyle.

- 1) Abstinence from ALL alcohol and other drugs
- 2) Abstinence from ALL compulsive behaviors
- 3) Self-care
- 4) Stress Management
- 5) Minimization and/or elimination of the onset of Post Acute Withdrawal (PAW) symptoms

In chapters 3 through 6 we'll examine the second building block of a Recovery-based lifestyle, your psychological well-being. We'll examine in detail, the following four elements of your psychological well-being.

Pathfinder's Checklist

Four elements of the psychological well-being building block of a Recovery-based lifestyle.

- 1) Recovery-based belief system (discussed in chapter 3)
- 2) Recovery-based thinking (discussed in chapter 4)
- 3) Recovery-based behavior (discussed in chapter 5)

4) Recovery-based emotions (discussed in chapter 6)

In chapter 7, we'll examine the third building block of your Recovery-based lifestyle, your social well-being. Your social well-being encompasses both your environmental and interpersonal well-being. We'll examine in detail four elements of your social well-being building.

Pathfinder's Checklist

Four elements of the social well-being building block of a Recovery-based lifestyle.

- 1) Recovery-based environment
- 2) Recovery-based support system
- 2) Recovery-based relationships
- 4) Recovery-based daily routines and rituals

In chapter 8 we'll examine the fourth building block of your Recovery-based lifestyle, spiritual well-being. We'll examine in detail three elements of your spiritual well-being.

Pathfinder's Checklist

Three elements of the spiritual well-being building block of a Recovery-based lifestyle.

- 1) [Re]connection with your Higher Power
- 2) An active daily spiritual practice
- 3) Active working of a Twelve Step program

Please read the material in part 1 of this book slowly. Don't worry about how long it takes you to finish. Just focus on what you can learn about Recovery from read-

ing the material and what you can learn about yourself from doing the exercises. Make a special effort to apply what you're learning to your daily life.

Highlight those parts that seem important to you and be sure to share that information with a member of your Recovery-based support system. At the same time, make it a point to underline anything that you have questions about and discuss those questions with members of your Recovery-based support system.