



Sauk Valley Voices of Recovery



NEWSLETTER



JUNE 2021

A Personal Journey through LONG TERM RECOVERY AVOIDING RELAPSE TRIGGERS THIS SUMMER

For most people, summer is our favorite time of the year. Warm weather, sunshine, beach days, vacations, outdoor activities and family events occupy our free time and weekends. When you are in recovery, however barbecues and pool parties coupled with vacations at destination venues can be major relapse triggers. Without recognizing this, it is easy for our thinking to change, which will in turn change our behaviors and before we know it we have gotten off track and what we have learned from our programs gets placed on the “back burner”. There are many things an addict in recovery can implement into their everyday lives to enjoy this active season while avoiding getting off track.

The most important factor preventing me from drifting from my program of recovery at summer events is to plan ahead. It is important for me to fully understand every aspect of the event. I need to know where I am going, who will be there, what will be taking place, and what could possibly be a trigger. I must also have a plan of action IF my triggers become more than I can manage. Some of these plans are simple. I should always have an exit just in case the situation becomes dangerous for me. I can drive my own car so I can leave at the time I feel I need to. I never want to be “trapped” and at the mercy of someone else. Also, bringing a sober friend is one thing that I have found to be extremely helpful. This friend is someone that can help hold me accountable and will understand should I start to experience any unpleasantities such as triggers or strong cravings. This sober friend can also be on the lookout for red flags that I might miss while wrapped up in the moment.

Summer is the perfect time to focus on enjoying healthy activities such as hiking, biking, and swimming. Exercise is a great recovery tool. So many people experience the blues during inclement weather through the winter and the rainy season of spring. The bonus of warm weather and sunshine can provide a great source of energy and will help to boost your mood.

Practicing self-care has been a crucial part of my recovery and is important for anyone. Let’s face it, we lead busy lifestyles. We have meetings, appointments, service work, not to mention the tasks of everyday life such as juggling our work and our families. It can quickly become overwhelming and we can easily become “burnt out”. Self-care gives us the “me” time everyone needs, whether they are in recovery or not. In addition, getting plenty of sleep is just as important and with out . We cannot focus and be productive without the appropriate amount of rest. So, take the time for yourself. Relax and stay in, watch that movie, have some ice cream.

