

PURPOSE

REAL LIFE STORIES



OVERCOME ADDICTIONS
CHRONICLES OF REAL LIFE
RECOVERY IS THE WAY



PURPOSE

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EDITOR'S NOTE

"HONEST JOURNEYS, REAL HOPE"

Addiction is a deeply human experience—one that cuts across age, background, and circumstance. Often rooted in pain, trauma, or disconnection, it can leave individuals feeling isolated and unseen, with recovery feeling distant or unattainable.

At Common Purpose, we believe that healing begins with truth. That conviction is at the heart of this special issue, which highlights not just the struggle of addiction, but also the recovery, growth, and resilience that can emerge when individuals are supported and heard.

The stories in these pages were created as part of our first Healing Writing Group, a new initiative designed to help individuals in recovery reflect on their journeys, connect more deeply with themselves and others, and give voice to their lived experiences through writing.

This structured group provided a safe, supportive space for participants to explore the emotional layers of addiction and recovery while crafting narratives that are both personal and powerful.

We envision this as the beginning of an ongoing effort. Future cycles of the Healing Writing Group will continue to offer opportunities for storytelling as a therapeutic process—promoting self-awareness, reducing stigma, and building community.

By sharing these stories, we hope to inspire others, support healing, and spark conversation in families, treatment centers, and communities impacted by addiction.

This is just the start. We look forward to gathering more voices, amplifying more stories, and continuing to use writing as a tool for individual and collective transformation.

Thank you for reading—with compassion, curiosity, and an open heart. And thank you for the work you do to support recovery, dignity, and lasting change.



"FROM COMMON GOALS TO
**COMMON
PURPOSE:**
TWO DECADES OF TRANSFORMATION"

For over two decades, Common Purpose—formerly known as Common Goals—has been a trusted nonprofit organization and a pillar of recovery and hope in Nevada County. While originally operating under the name Common Goals, the organization transitioned to Common Purpose to better reflect its mission and vision.

Offering both outpatient and now inpatient recovery programs for substance use, it provides compassionate care, peer support, and evidence-based services that have empowered countless individuals to reclaim their lives from addiction and rebuild with purpose and dignity.

More than a program, this vibrant community is a place where people are truly seen, heard, and empowered. It honors authentic stories of transformation and fosters healing through connection—not isolation.

With a longstanding commitment to those in recovery, the organization continues to lead with empathy, integrity, and an unwavering belief in the potential for lasting change.

Come visit us and experience firsthand the compassion, connection, and empowerment that make this community so special. Together, we can build brighter futures—one step at a time.

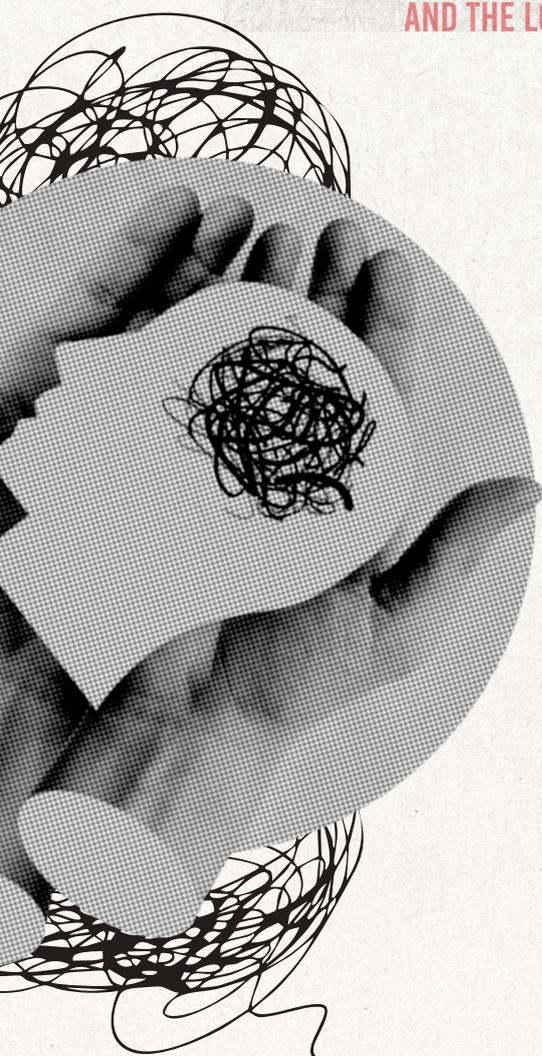


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FROM CHAOS TO CLARITY

A JOURNEY THROUGH ADDICTION, ROCK BOTTOM,
AND THE LONG ROAD TO RECOVERY

BY J.G



I was only two months old when my father died in a logging accident. By the time I entered kindergarten, my mother had remarried a man who completely ignored me and my two older brothers. As our family expanded with two younger sisters and a little brother, I often felt like a forgotten piece in someone else's puzzle.

Growing up without a dad—and not fully understanding why—left a deep emotional hole in me. The man my mom married cared only about his biological children. I felt unseen, unwanted, and lost before I ever had a chance to find direction.

Even as a child, I showed signs of addictive behavior. I was obsessed with video games, early internet access, and sugar. My actions often bordered on compulsive. Alongside this, I struggled with oppositional defiant disorder.

I refused to follow rules and resisted nearly everything expected of me. By age 13, I found alcohol. It felt like a solution—a way to escape the inner chaos I didn't know how to articulate. I finally found a group of people who drank like I did, and for the first time, I felt like I belonged.

Once I started with one substance, I was determined to try them all. Less than a year after my first drink, I discovered meth and various opiates. At the time, I thought I had found the key to becoming the best version of myself. I believed I was finally in control. In reality, I was just beginning to lose everything.

In my late twenties and early thirties, my addiction became all-consuming. I couldn't work, care for my kids, or function on any societal level. I began selling drugs to support my habit and withdrew from my family entirely. I'd vanish for days or weeks, returning only to drop off cash to the mother of my children.

Eventually, trouble with the law caught up to me. You can't sell heroin in a small town without getting noticed. At the time, I was living with my brother. My drug activity led to multiple police raids, and after the last one, my brother had had enough—he told me I had to leave. That was the first moment I realized I couldn't continue living like this. But I still wasn't ready to stop.

I entered rehab and completed 30 days. But I left with a dangerous thought still clinging to me: maybe I could still use—just a little, just on my terms. I relapsed the very first day out. Slowly at first, then rapidly, I spiraled into daily use again. It was the same cycle, just faster and more destructive.

A few months later, I was arrested again and sentenced to eight months in jail. In hindsight, that was a blessing. It gave me space to get sober and gain clarity. I remembered what I had learned in rehab. I'd been shown a path to recovery—it was up to me whether I followed it.

While incarcerated, I connected with Behavioral Health and began laying the groundwork for my release. I didn't know exactly how I'd rebuild my life, but I knew I couldn't do it alone. Narcotics Anonymous was going to be part of my plan.

When I got out, my case manager helped me set goals and got me into transitional housing. That decision changed everything. I started taking suggestions seriously—especially from people with long-term sobriety. I realized that every time I tried to manage my own recovery, it ended in relapse. Someone told me, "The only thing you have to change is everything." That line stuck with me.

My old life, my old habits, my old thinking—it all had to go.

**TODAY. I HAVE
469 DAYS
CLEAN.**

That may not seem like much to some, but for me, it's everything. I had never stayed clean for more than a few months—and only while in jail. The urge to use still visits me from time to time, but the impulse to self-destruct is gone. I can think clearly now. I know that using again offers me nothing.

My recovery today is built on connection. I go to meetings. I stay close to people who walk the same path. I go to therapy and work through my past instead of running from it. I've even found a job I love—working with others in recovery. I have service commitments, and I serve as the secretary for a local meeting. I give 100% to whatever I do.

My life has changed in ways I never thought possible. I no longer dream of escape—I've found a life worth staying for.

**AND FOR THE FIRST TIME,
I'M HAPPY JUST BEING ME.**



"THROUGH THE FOG: - A JOURNEY BACK - TO MYSELF"

BY T.D

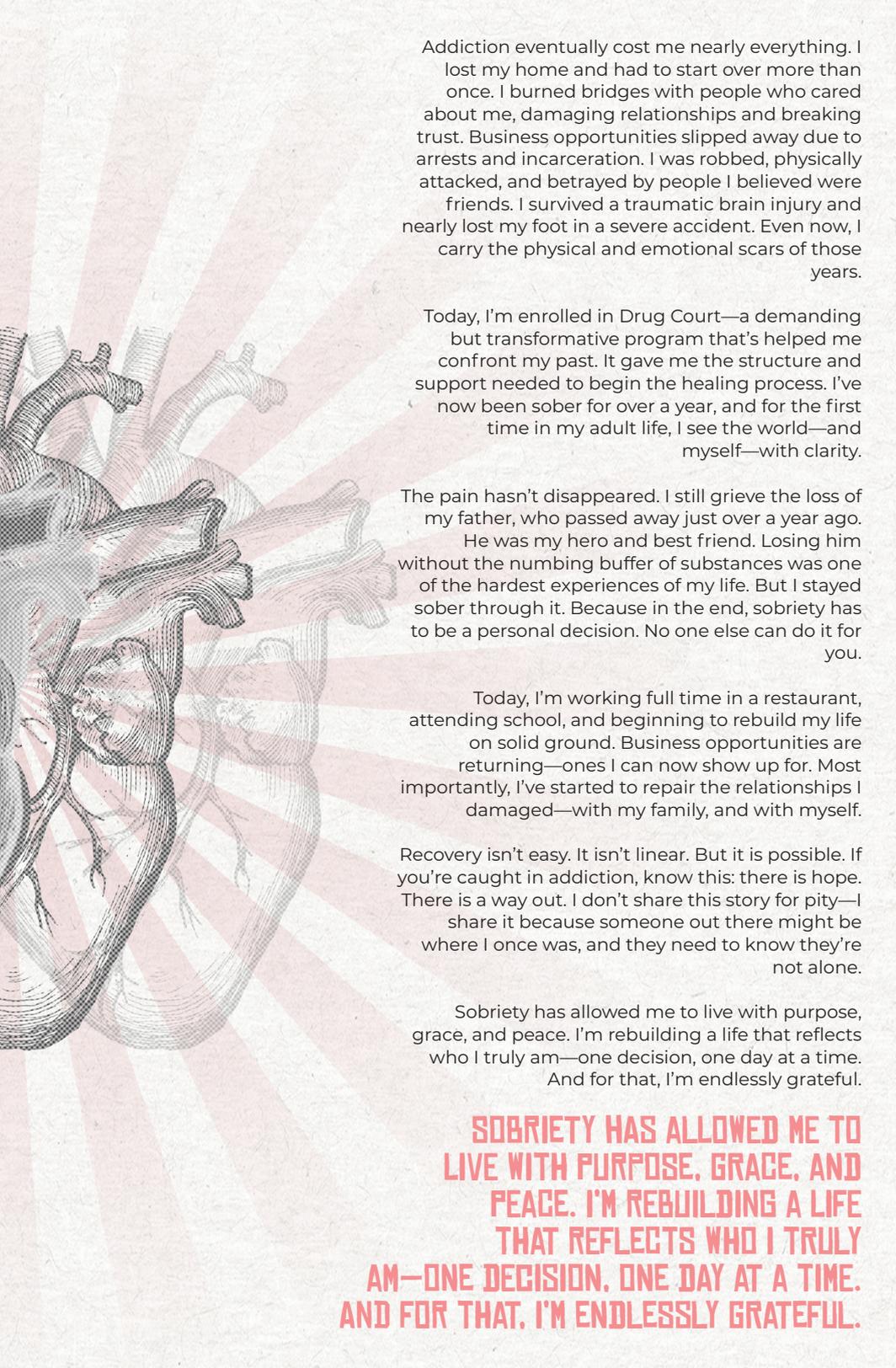
My parents separated when I was very young. At the time, I didn't fully understand the emotional toll it took, but I could feel that something essential was missing. In the aftermath, my sister and I became each other's anchor—inseparable, bonded not just by blood, but by shared pain and a deep need to feel connected in a world that had shifted beneath our feet.

We were adventurous kids—curious, fearless, and always chasing something new. We found excitement in nature, house parties, and anything that made us feel alive. At twelve years old, we brought 40 oz's of Old English to the river—our favorite escape. The air was crisp that day, the kind that carries both promise and danger. That first drink felt exhilarating—like stepping into adulthood. I didn't realize then that it would be the beginning of a much longer struggle.

That day, alcohol made it easier to talk. We opened up about our parents' divorce, our fears, and what life meant to us. But soon, the excitement gave way to dizziness. I stopped rock-hopping and sat down, overwhelmed and confused. The next thing I remember is my mother picking us up, unaware of what had happened—until the smell gave me away.

I was so intoxicated I couldn't even open the door to be sick. My shirt was stained with the remnants of breakfast, and the disappointment in my mother's eyes was devastating. That moment stayed with me—not because it was the last, but because it was the first of many missed opportunities and broken memories. What should have been our first family trip to the hot springs turned into something very different. I had robbed my loved ones of time they hoped to spend with me—and myself of an experience that could've meant something.





Addiction eventually cost me nearly everything. I lost my home and had to start over more than once. I burned bridges with people who cared about me, damaging relationships and breaking trust. Business opportunities slipped away due to arrests and incarceration. I was robbed, physically attacked, and betrayed by people I believed were friends. I survived a traumatic brain injury and nearly lost my foot in a severe accident. Even now, I carry the physical and emotional scars of those years.

Today, I'm enrolled in Drug Court—a demanding but transformative program that's helped me confront my past. It gave me the structure and support needed to begin the healing process. I've now been sober for over a year, and for the first time in my adult life, I see the world—and myself—with clarity.

The pain hasn't disappeared. I still grieve the loss of my father, who passed away just over a year ago.

He was my hero and best friend. Losing him without the numbing buffer of substances was one of the hardest experiences of my life. But I stayed sober through it. Because in the end, sobriety has to be a personal decision. No one else can do it for you.

Today, I'm working full time in a restaurant, attending school, and beginning to rebuild my life on solid ground. Business opportunities are returning—ones I can now show up for. Most importantly, I've started to repair the relationships I damaged—with my family, and with myself.

Recovery isn't easy. It isn't linear. But it is possible. If you're caught in addiction, know this: there is hope. There is a way out. I don't share this story for pity—I share it because someone out there might be where I once was, and they need to know they're not alone.

Sobriety has allowed me to live with purpose, grace, and peace. I'm rebuilding a life that reflects who I truly am—one decision, one day at a time. And for that, I'm endlessly grateful.

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AND FOR THAT, I'M ENDLESSLY GRATEFUL.**

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A Journey from Addiction to Recovery

By D.P

Running Away to Find Myself

I remember the long drive like it was yesterday. At the time, I didn't realize we were running—not just from a place, but from everything: pain, responsibility, even ourselves. As we moved along Interstate 5, the scenery slowly shifted. The soft, rolling hills reminded me of overstuffed mattresses—comforting, but unreal. Eventually, they gave way to towering redwoods—silent giants lining the road like ancient witnesses.

When I saw the sign for Avenue of the Giants, I thought I'd found peace. I wanted that forest to be my home. It felt like maybe, just maybe, I could start over there. But like so many moments in my past, it was fleeting. Peace didn't last. I wasn't just running from something—I was still lost inside myself.

Life in the Grip of Addiction

Today, I'm 46 years old and 142 days into my recovery. That number matters. Every day clean and sober is a battle won—a small, quiet victory over a disease that nearly took everything from me.

Looking back, I see how much addiction stole: my time, my relationships, my dreams. I used to imagine a life where I had stability—a family, a steady job, purpose. But addiction doesn't care about what you once hoped for. It drowns it all. For years, I was surviving day by day, stuck in a cycle of shame, silence, and self-destruction.

The Turning Point

It wasn't one dramatic moment that turned things around.

It was a slow awakening—the realization that I wanted to live. Not just exist, but live. I began to reach out. I started attending groups, talking to people who had walked this path, people who saw something in me when I couldn't see it myself.

Recovery gave me a second chance—but more than that, it gave me choice.

Every morning I wake up now, I get to choose who I want to be. I get to choose honesty, connection, and hope. That's what freedom really is.

To Anyone Still Struggling

If you're in the darkness right now, I want you to hear this: you're not alone. Addiction wants you to believe you're broken beyond repair. That's a lie.

You are not your worst day. You are not your addiction. You are a human being worthy of healing. Recovery is hard. It's messy. But it's possible. I know, because I'm living it—one day, one choice at a time.

**Choose freedom.
Choose hope.
Choose recovery.**



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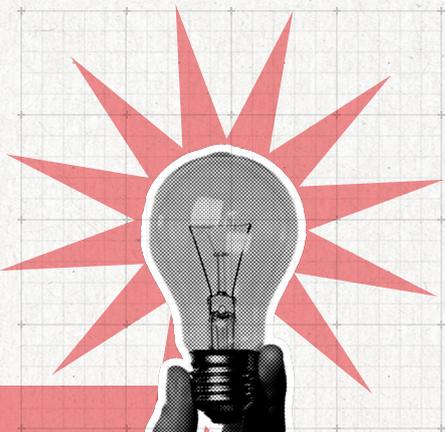
TAC!

REFLECTIONS ON THE POWER

OF REAL STORIES IN ADDICTION RECOVERY

There is something profoundly human about storytelling. Long before we had diagnoses, statistics, or treatment protocols, we had stories—shared around fires, across dinner tables, and in quiet corners between people who needed to feel less alone. Today, in the face of an addiction crisis that continues to touch every community, the most powerful tool we still have is often the simplest: the truth of someone's lived experience.

Real stories about addiction and recovery do more than inform—they connect. They remind us that behind every headline or number is a human being. Someone's child. Someone's parent. Someone who fought hard battles, made mistakes, and still found the courage to begin again.



When people share their recovery journeys, they do more than reflect on where they've been. They break the silence that stigma feeds on. They create space for empathy to replace judgment. And they light the path for others who are still in the dark, proving that recovery isn't just a possibility—it's a reality being lived every single day.

These stories matter for society because they remind us that addiction is not a moral failing—it's a complex human struggle. One that deserves compassion, support, and above all, understanding.

They remind us that the people most affected by addiction are not strangers. They are us. And when one person recovers, we all gain something—healing, wholeness, hope.

Sharing these truths requires immense courage. But listening to them, and allowing them to reshape how we think and feel, requires courage too. As a society, we move forward not just by fixing broken systems, but by honoring the people who've been hurt by them. One story at a time.

FINAL THOUGHTS

As you close these pages, we hope you carry with you the voices, truths, and resilience shared throughout this issue. Addiction may be a personal struggle, but recovery is a shared journey—one built on community, compassion, and the belief that change is always possible.

At Common Purpose, we remain committed to walking alongside those in recovery and to amplifying the stories that too often go unheard. Thank you for reading with empathy, for listening with intention, and for being part of a community that chooses connection over judgment and hope over despair.

UNTIL NEXT TIME,
THE COMMON PURPOSE TEAM

THE LEGEND OF THE TWO WOLVES

An old Cherokee Indian chief is teaching his grandson about life:

"A fight is going on inside me," he said to the boy.
"It is a terrible fight between two wolves."

"One is evil – he is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority, and ego."

He continued:

"The other is good – he is joy, peace, love, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, and faith."

"The same fight is going on inside you—and inside every other person, too."

The grandson thought about it for a moment and then asked:

"WHICH WOLF WILL WIN?"



THE OLD CHEROKEE SIMPLY REPLIED:
"THE ONE YOU FEED."



PROGRAMS

- To provide quality counseling and treatment programs to individuals and their family.
- Help raise awareness in our community of the social, health, and financial impacts of substance abuse.
- Anger Management
Adult Anger Management Using SAMHSA/Anger Management Program and "The Anger Management Program" by Oakwood Solutions for the adult groups. We offer separate classes for male and female clients.
- To establish and maintain our programs within federal, state, and county mandates.
- To provide the most effective programs and qualified personnel through continued education and training, and to provide these services in a positive and respectful manner within a professional environment.



ADOLESCENT TREATMENT PROGRAMS

Teen Intervention Program (TIP)

This program focuses on first time student offenders with early intervention associated with drug and alcohol offenses as required by Juvenile Court.

Teen Outpatient Program (TOP)

Individually tailored to the young person's needs based on assessments and, if applicable, court requirements. The program consists of groups, individual counseling, and family groups (highly recommended).

Individual and Family Counseling

Family Group Counseling is designed to help the family cope with the problems of having a loved one struggle with sobriety/addiction and how to best work together to achieve success.

Marriage and Family Therapy is support for teens, adults, couples, and families to provide solutions for problems with communication, anger, and life change.



OUTPATIENT SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

Assessments & Evaluations for Adults and Adolescents

Written assessments and evaluations that are accepted by Family Court Services, Children's Protective Services, etc. for determining necessity and/or appropriate level of treatment.

Adult Intensive Out-Patient & Out-Patient Treatment Programs

Individually tailored program which includes groups, individual counseling, and drug testing as determined at the time of assessment and/or by a court ordered program.

Adult Detox and Residential Services

Providing Detox and Residential services in a co-ed setting. Up to 27 beds, 4 being detox and 23 residential beds. Provides one on one counseling, group counseling and therapy.

FINANCIALS



Treatment programs are 100% covered by Medi-Cal except the Teen intervention program (T.I.P) Anger Management- DV.

For more information visit:
<https://commongoalsinc.org/>



256 Buena Vista St. STE 100
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REFERRALS

RECOVERY

- **Common Purpose/
Common Goals Inc.**
(530) 274-2000
256 Buena Vista St. STE 100
Grass Valley, CA 95945
- **Granite Wellness Center**
(530) 273-9541
180 Sierra College Dr,
Grass Valley, CA 95945
- **Aegis Methadone Clinic**
(530) 280-0553
109 Margaret Ln,
Grass Valley, CA 95945
- **Pathways-Addiction
Treatment**
Center (Yuba City)
(530) 674-4530
- **Buddy's Ranch (Yuba City)**
(530) 684-4015
737 Lask Dr,
Yuba City, CA 95991
- **Yuba Harm Reduction Collective**
(530) 362-8163
<https://yubaharmreduction.com/>
-Outreach
-Supplies
-Sharps collection
-Low barrier MAT services
-Delivery of fentanyl test strips & Narcan
- **Faith Fueled Recovery**
(530) 368-4169
1864 Ridge Rd.
Grass Valley, CA 95949
- **Spirit House Peer
Empowerment Center**
(530) 274-1431
276 Gates Pl,
Grass Valley, CA 95945
- **Project H.E.A.R.T**
(530) 446-6025
522 Brunswick Rd.
Grass Valley, CA 95945
- **Narcotic's Anonymous**
(530) 645-1635
<https://www.sfana.org/meeting>
- **Alcoholics Anonymous**
(530) 272-6287
<https://dist20aa.org/>
- **Turning Point
Community Programs**
(530) 273-5440
333 Crown Point Cir #125,
Grass Valley, CA 95945
- **Truckee Adult
& Children's Services**
(530) 582-7803
10075 Levon Avenue,
Suite 204 Truckee, CA 96161
- **Community Connection Center
- Grass Valley School District**
530-273-9528 x 4081
235 S Auburn St.
Grass Valley, CA 95945
- **Bright Futures for Youth**
(530) 265-4311
200 Litton Dr suite 308,
Grass Valley, CA 95945
- **211 Connecting Point**
(530) 280-0553
109 Margaret Ln,
Grass Valley, CA 95945
- **Crisis Services**
*24-hour services to help
resolve crisis situations
1-888-801-1437 or (530) 265-5811
- **988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline**
<https://988lifeline.org/>





**"SOME OF THE GREATEST BATTLES WILL
BE FOUGHT WITHIN THE SILENT
CHAMBERS OF YOUR OWN SOUL."**

**"THE FIGHT IS ANCIENT,
BUT YOUR CHOICE IS ETERNAL."**

COMMON PURPOSE
2025
FIRST EDITION