



STRENGTH IN PEERS COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PROJECT

for residents of Shenandoah and Page Counties of Virginia

**RECOVERY MONTH
SEPTEMBER 2021**

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Overview

Mental and behavioral health are growing challenges in Shenandoah and Page Counties in Virginia and many affected individuals do not get help. Community health needs assessments conducted in 2019 by the two local Critical Access Hospitals -- Shenandoah Memorial Hospital and Page Memorial Hospital -- found that substance abuse was the most frequently mentioned health status issue and was portrayed as growing and serious. Heroin was mentioned most often, however, alcohol, marijuana, and methamphetamine use were also mentioned. Mental health was the second most frequently mentioned health issue and while the community's mental health needs have risen, service capacity has not.^{1, 2}

Since these assessments were conducted, the extent of untreated mental and behavioral health challenges in the counties has grown as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and suffering economy. There is mounting evidence that rural communities are experiencing higher levels of stress, fear and anxiety and thus turning to substance misuse and other unhealthy coping strategies.

Lack of service providers, cost of care, transportation, distrust of the mental and behavioral health system, and real or perceived cultural stigma are barriers that prevent individuals with substance use and mental health challenges from getting help. Shenandoah and Page Counties have been designated health professional shortage areas for mental health.³

¹ Page Memorial Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment, Valley Health System, 2019.

² Shenandoah Memorial Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment, Valley Health System, 2019.

³ HPSA Find, Health Resources and Services Administration Data Warehouse, accessed Dec.2020, <https://datawarehouse.hrsa.gov/tools/analyzers/hpsafind.aspx>.



The goal of the Community Resilience Project is to encourage individuals who are struggling with mental and behavioral health challenges to seek help and raise awareness among community members and service providers on how they can better support individuals and help them obtain services that honor their needs, preferences and choices.

In this booklet, you will read personal recovery stories, find information about local mental health and substance use resources, and learn wellness tools and strategies that you can use every day.

Nowadays, many of us experience mental or behavioral health challenges ourselves or know someone who struggles with depression, anxiety, addiction, or trauma. It has never been more urgent to work collectively as a community to eradicate the stigma surrounding mental health and substance misuse. Together, and with empathy, we must find ways to lift people up and foster individual and community wellness and resiliency. Our hope is that you will use the Community Resilience Project booklet as a guidepost to help yourself, or someone you know, find recovery.

Nicky Fadley

Executive Director/Founder of Strength In Peers & Shenandoah County resident

This project is supported by the Virginia State Office of Rural Health of the Virginia Department of Health.

Grounded in our lived experiences, the Strength In Peers team offers support and advocates for individuals recovering from substance use, mental health, and trauma-related experiences in the City of Harrisonburg and Rockingham, Page, and Shenandoah Counties.



STRENGTH IN PEERS

**917 N. Main Street, Unit 1, Harrisonburg, VA 22802
9560 S. Congress Street, New Market, VA 22844
540-217-0869 | StrengthInPeers.org**

Personal Recovery Stories



Jeremiah Buracker,
Certified Peer Recovery Specialist (CPRS)
at Strength In Peers.

JEREMIAH

Prior to getting into recovery, I felt hopeless, isolated, not part of life as it happened around me - as if I was standing still. Some of the hardships I experienced from substance misuse and not taking care of my mental health included loss of relationships, loss of employment and job opportunities, health problems, incarceration, discrimination and stigma, along with financial instability. In September of 2017, I was jailed once again for my drug use. While I had tried many times before to get clean, something was different about my attitude at this point.

The first weeks in jail I really was taking inventory of all the people I hurt and how much I had to lie to myself to keep continuing my drug usage. Seeing so many of my friends dead or in prison and realizing any of those people could have been me. I couldn't handle the stress any longer of being in conflict with myself or all the negative, grimy things that go along with the drug scene.

I started using tools like 12-step recovery programs while incarcerated, I also did a lot of honest introspection about my drug use and my behaviors, and when I got out of jail I changed the people, places, and things that triggered my drug use.

Today, life is livable, hopeful and enjoyable. I celebrate small victories and I appreciate things I couldn't see when I was in active addiction. There are still hurdles, but now I can deal with them head-on and I don't allow myself to get too overwhelmed. I don't numb my emotions anymore, I allow myself to feel them.

If anyone is contemplating getting into recovery, I want them to know that recovery is possible, that there are different pathways to recovery, relationships can be mended, and that even if you have tried before, you always have the choice to make a change. - JB



VERONICA

Before I found recovery I felt very lost, alone, tired, and hopeless. Due to my substance use, I experienced toxic relationships, loss of friendships, and I was broke, depressed, and anxious. My mental health was deteriorating. It took a lot longer to understand my mental health challenges while I was still using drugs and alcohol.

I decided to get into recovery on December 10, 2014. I was tired of feeling the way I was feeling and living the life I was living. I also wanted to be more present for my daughter and be a good role model for her. I have used meditation, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), self-care, and hobbies like camping, hiking, and getting into nature. I attended Celebrate Recovery groups and did a lot of research on what was going to work best for me. I also studied my mental health diagnosis and have learned a lot about myself.

Life now is more manageable for me today physically and mentally. I am able to have a more balanced lifestyle. I am fully present with my daughter and my relationships have improved.

The biggest thing I can pass on to others if they are contemplating recovery is how essential it is to learn about yourself and to be honest with yourself. Keeping the people, places, and the things around you healthy and positive are key components to getting better. Understanding that there are different recovery pathways and just taking one moment, or one day at a time, is crucial. For me, having good social supports in my life and having a recovery community to dip into has made a world of difference ! - VM



Veronica Martinez, Certified Peer Recovery Specialist (CPRS)
and Program Manager at Strength In Peers.



Wellness Tips

The following "Wellness Tips" were developed by Strength In Peers' Certified Peer Recovery Specialists.

- **Breathe!** Taking in oxygen and really feeling our breath go in-and-out of our lungs lets us take a minute to pause during stressful moments and it helps to rejuvenate our minds.
- **Get ample sleep.** Most adults need anywhere from 6-9 hours and kids and teens need 9-12 hours of sound sleep. It's fun to stay up late and watch movies or hang-out, but sleep deprivation is no joke! We are much more likely to get sick, irritated and upset when we aren't getting our rest.
- **Drink water.** Drinking water can be difficult to do throughout the day, but it's amazing what it does for our body! Remember to stay hydrated even on cold days.
- **Journal, doodle, develop a craft project, etc.** Doing something creative can really help us quiet our minds and it allows us to focus on something other than the daily grind. Even building with blocks or Legos can be meditative.
- **Be kind.** Getting angry, mad and upset drains us of our energy. It actually makes us feel good to help others and to lift people up. When you feel heated, take a few minutes for yourself to regroup. It's always better to respond to tension and conflict than to react and regret it later.
- **Play!** Explore local river beds, complete a jigsaw puzzle, or have a family or friend game night. Many times we are so busy that we forget to connect with those we love the most, so make time for FUN!
- **Don't Sweat the Small Stuff.** Sometimes we can create a complex situation just from over-thinking and over-doing, so be gentle with yourself and let the little things roll-off.
- **Eat healthy.** Stick to foods that are rich in vitamins and nutrients. While junk food tastes *REALLY* good, it can also zap our energy making us feel sluggish. It doesn't have to be all-or-nothing! Try to slowly cut out the things that are "weighing you down" and try to replace them with something more nutritious.
- **Talk.** Share your experiences or just vent to a trusted friend or family member. It's really hard to do this life thing alone, so reach out and ask for help when you need it. Join a support group, get a therapist, or talk to trusted folks in your local community or at church about your struggles. (There's no shame in that game!)
- **Nature.** Connecting with nature and wildlife is a great way to find peace and serenity. Activities such as going for short nature walks, birdwatching, gardening, hiking, biking, swimming, etc. can alleviate our stress levels.



- **Take Technology Breaks.** Look up from your phone and computer and be present with those around you. We've become so reliant on our devices that we've forgotten how to really talk to one another and we miss out on more meaningful relationships with family, friends and co-workers. (When needed, conversations with our kids or others about the harms of cyber-bullying and appropriate social media behavior, won't hurt either!)
- **Get Active.** You don't need a gym membership to get some daily activity. Start slow with short walks and light stretching. Try to move a little more every day by taking small steps and making small goals. If you are ambitious, you could go for a run, join an on-line workout/health group, or pull-up videos on your phone/computer that will coach you through exercise routines.
- **Rest.** Trust your gut. If you are over-doing things then slow down, put your feet up and relax. Give yourself small breaks throughout your day and try to focus your thoughts on things that calm your spirit.
- **Separate your work-life from your home-life.** When you clock-out, then clock-out! Try to leave work at work so you can give yourself time to recoup and to be with those you love.
- **Try something new.** Life is short, so if you've always had a goal or a dream, start making a plan to "go for it" even if you start small. Share your ideas with the people you are close to and allow them to cheer you on and, if they are knowledgeable about a subject, let them help guide you!
- **You are enough.** Spend time with yourself and get to know your personal likes and dislikes. Look at all of your strengths and everything you have overcome in life. Allow yourself to be proud of your accomplishments while remaining open-minded and teachable.
- **Get into recovery.** Most likely we all have vices that hold us back from accomplishing the things we want to do in life. Take an earnest look at what you really want. If you are struggling to move forward, if you are in constant fear, or if you just feel like things are hopeless, then you may want to consider getting into recovery. Whether you are addressing a mental health issue, substance use, anger, sadness, etc., know that there are supports out there to help and that you don't have to go it alone. People do recover. It's really brave and empowering to admit to our struggles and then to take action to actually do something about them.

Guide to Recovery Services

Clinical Services

North Western Community Services Board, Mental health, substance abuse, and developmental services. Page County Clinic, 540-743-4548; Shenandoah County Clinic, 540-459-5180; Warren County Clinic 540-636-2931; Winchester Area Clinic, 540-667-8888.

Shenandoah Memorial Hospital, 759 S Main St, Woodstock, VA, 540-459-1100. In-patient care is available at Valley Health Winchester Medical Center In-patient Behavioral Health, 540-536-4881. Outpatient Care is available at Valley Health Outpatient Behavioral Health Winchester, 540-536-4881 and Valley Health Outpatient Behavioral Health Woodstock, 540-459-1505. Services include assessment, general adult in-patient care, senior adult in-patient care, and outpatient care.

Page Memorial Hospital Multi-specialty Clinic, 125 Memorial Dr, Luray, VA, 540-743-2282, comprehensive medical services, including addiction treatment.

Sentara RMH Behavioral Health, 644 University Blvd, Harrisonburg. Individual counseling, group therapy, and partial hospitalization program 540-564-5100. Psychiatry services/medication management 540-564-7007.

Shenandoah Community Health Clinic, 124 Valley Vista Dr, Woodstock, VA. 540-459-1700., Behavioral health services for adults and children.

The Health Place, James Madison University, 294 E Main St, Stanley, VA, 540-778-4061., Counseling and psychological services.

Healthy Families of Shenandoah & Page Counties, located at The Health Place, 540-778-4061. Family support services.

Winchester Community Mental Health Center, 36 Ricketts Dr, Winchester, VA, 540-535-1112. Services for adults and youth with mental health, substance abuse, and early childhood development challenges. Accept Medicare, Medicaid, Private Insurance, and self-pay.

Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 24/7 referrals for mental health and substance abuse treatment, 800-662-HELP (4357) or findtreatment.samhsa.gov.

If you have insurance, you can also call the customer service phone number on the back of your card and ask for assistance identifying treatment providers who are in-network. Be sure to ask about providers who offer treatment services both in-person and over tele-medicine.

Guide to Recovery Services

Peer-Run Centers

Strength in Peers, Nonprofit, peer-run Recovery Community Organization with offices in Harrisonburg & New Market, VA, 540-217-0869, www.StrengthInPeers.org. Comprehensive recovery programs, harm reduction services, and peer support groups

Peer Support Groups

Narcotics Anonymous (NA), 1-800-777-1515; <https://www.shevana.org>; check meeting lists online at www.na.org.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), 540-743-6881 | 540-743-7459, www.aavirginia.org. For online AA meetings visit www.thetokenshop.com/Online_AA_Meetings

SMART Recovery, www.smartrecovery.org. SMART Recovery is a global community of people and families working together to resolve addictive problems.

Celebrate Recovery, 766 S. Main St., Woodstock, VA, 540-746-0482. Christian-based recovery. Call for meeting details.

National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI), NAMI Northern Shenandoah Valley (Shenandoah & Page), 540-533-1832, www.naminsv.org.

Hotlines and Warmlines

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, 1-800-273-8255, or text TALK to 741741.

Northwestern CSB Substance Abuse Peer Warm Line, 1-833-626-1490

Counseling for Veterans, 1-877-WAR-VETS (927-8387). Around-the-clock access to the Veteran Counseling Center. Visit their website for more services: www.dvs.virginia.gov/

Domestic Violence Shelters

Choices, 216 W Main St, Luray, VA, 540-743-4414, choicesofpagecounty.org

Response, 540-459-5599, Woodstock, VA, www.responseva.org

National Domestic Violence Hotline, Call 800-799-SAFE (7233), Text "START" to 88788, www.thehotline.org



STRENGTH IN PEERS RECOVERY CENTER SCHEDULE

SCHEDULE
BEGINS
AUGUST
2ND
2021!

FREE, Confidential & Non-Judgmental.

MONDAYS

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM - Members-Only Peer Support and Case Management

Individual peer recovery support and case management services are available to our members by appointment. Membership is free! Interested? Give us a call at 540-217-0869 to find out about the perks!

TUESDAYS

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM - STRENGTH THRU RECOVERY

New to recovery? If so, then this group is for you! We'll discuss what recovery means to us, share our initial fears and apprehensions about recovery, explore various wellness tools, and learn coping mechanisms for when times get tough.

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM - WHOLE HEALTH & RESILIENCY

This group workshop is all about setting your own goals, getting motivated to achieve those goals, and reaping the benefits of your actions! We discuss various topics such as stress management, restful sleeping, social support, health and wellness, and more!

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM - SMART Recovery® for TEENS Ages 14-17, via ZOOM!

Self-Management And Recovery Training (SMART) offers teens the chance to get together virtually with other teens to look into behaviors that might hurt themselves or others. In this judgment-free environment, teens are invited to talk about the pressures they are experiencing as they relate to school, home life, drinking, drugging, fighting, anger, relationships, etc. along with coping techniques to calm and soothe. Zoom Website: zoom.us/j/88216010316 Meeting ID: 882 1601 0316 Password: Teen

WEDNESDAYS

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM - Resource Center Walk-Ins Welcome!

Need to connect to local resources? Or maybe you just need help with a job search or an online application? Come on in and use our Community Resource Center and computer lab to get connected to what you need! ALL are welcome!

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM - SMART Recovery® for Friends & Family In-person & on Zoom!

Are you looking for resources to help you support someone struggling with addiction? Is someone else's addiction negatively affecting you? Perhaps you're seeking an alternative to tough love? We provide effective, easy-to-learn tools to help both you and your loved one. Join us for your lunch break, in-person at our Harrisonburg office, or online through Zoom! Zoom Website: zoom.us/j/81228707674

Meeting ID: 812 2870 7674 Password: Family

"But wait, there's more!" →

Trying to manage anger and frustration?
Our Certified Anger Management Specialists have got you covered!
Ask us about our next ANGER MANAGEMENT class and we'll get you registered!

THURSDAYS

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM - WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT GROUP

In this women-only group, we will explore what it means to be a woman, build our self-esteem, and set healthy boundaries. Topics encourage group discussion, social interaction, and opportunity for learning and personal growth.

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM - WRAP - Wellness Recovery Action Plan® In-Person & on Zoom!

WRAP is a wellness and recovery approach that helps people to 1) decrease and prevent intrusive or troubling feelings and behaviors, 2) increase personal empowerment, 3) improve quality of life, and 4) achieve their own life goals and dreams. Offered in-person at our Harrisonburg office and via Zoom. Website: zoom.us/j/85645569677 Meeting ID: **856 4556 9677** Meeting Passcode: **WRAP123!**

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM - SMART Recovery® Ages 18 & up, via Zoom

Self Management And Recovery Training (SMART) group meetings emphasize 1) motivation, 2) coping with urges, 3) managing behaviors, and 4) living a balanced life. This is a great group for individuals who struggle with addiction. Join this meeting online through Zoom! Website: zoom.us/j/83588193479 Meeting ID: **835 8819 3479** Passcode: **Smart**

FRIDAYS

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM - Resource Center Walk-Ins Welcome!

Need to connect to local resources? Or maybe you just need help with a job search or an online application? Come on in and use our Community Resource Center and computer lab to get connected to what you need! ALL are welcome!

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM - HIV & Hepatitis C Testing Day!

Play safe, keep others safe & know your status! In the event of a positive test, we'll connect you to health and human services that can help -- you don't have to walk through it alone! Call us if you'd rather make an appointment for another day and we'll be happy to help you.

2:00 PM - 3:00 PM - SMART Recovery® Ages 18 & up, in-person

This in-person recovery meeting emphasizes coping strategies, self-care, and social support. If you are like some of us and struggle with substance use and/or mental health challenges, then this is the group for you! Self Management And Recovery Training (SMART) helps us build motivation and empowers us to make positive changes.

**In-person peer groups, walk-in hours, and testing services
take place at our Harrisonburg office location:**



STRENGTH IN PEERS

**917 N. Main Street, Unit 1
Harrisonburg, VA 22802**

Attend 4 peer groups and receive a free wellness gift!

StrengthInPeers.org | 540-217-0869 |  /StrengthInPeers

Strength In Peers

Program Information

Side by Side Recovery Program

Comprehensive Recovery Services for People with Substance Use and Mental Health Challenges

- Available to people ages 18 & up with substance use, mental health, and/or trauma-related challenges, who are under 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, and that are on Medicaid, uninsured, or under-insured
- One-on-one support from a Certified Peer Recovery Specialist (CPRS)
- Case management to overcome housing, employment, & other challenges
- Counseling with the Harrisonburg Center for Relational Health
- Telepsychiatry with the UVA Department of Psychiatry

Comprehensive Harm Reduction Program

Support and Supplies to Reduce Your Risk of Using Drugs

- Clean needle & syringe exchange
- Naloxone for opiate overdose
- Fentanyl test strips
- HIV & Hepatitis C testing
- Condoms
- Peer recovery support & connections to recovery programs when people are ready



Peer Recovery Groups

Group Support for Substance Use, Mental Health, and Trauma

- In-person and online groups available
- Access to other like-minded individuals with similar struggles
- Collaborative discussions of coping strategies and tools for well-being



STRENGTH IN PEERS

540-217-0869
StrengthInPeers.org

MENTAL HEALTH MONDAYS @ The REC!

Free and geared towards our community members.

Held on the 1st and 3rd Monday of every month at 7pm.

The 1st Monday focuses on adults and the 3rd Monday focuses on children.

Each month presents a new mental health development topic.



SEPTEMBER RECOVERY RESOURCE PRESENTATIONS:

- **Page Alliance for Community Action (PACA)** non profit coalition will present on family & youth programs central to the Page County community.
- **Dr. Tresha Ward, Valley Health Page Memorial Hospital Multispecialty Clinic**, will present on the Clinic's addiction recovery services.
- **Nicky Fadley, Executive Director of Strength In Peers** will discuss the organization's new Comprehensive Harm Reduction Program and the importance of clean needle exchange and naloxone distribution in relation to public health and individual recovery support.

The REC is located at 630 W. Main St. Luray, VA
For more information on Mental Health Mondays:
MHM@LivingLegacyLuray.org



STRENGTH IN PEERS

Our Mission.

We offer hope, support and advocacy for those seeking recovery so that we can build resilience and thrive in our lives and communities.

Our Vision.

We envision a world where we have an abundance of recovery options and are supported in our right to decide our recovery pathway.

Our Growth Directly Supports A Thriving Community.

We regularly expand our resources and services in northwestern Virginia to fulfill our mission and reach towards our vision. Since 2015, we've focused on filling the gaps in services and resources available in our community for those with substance use, mental health, and trauma-related challenges. We believe each person deserves the opportunity to have a voice in their recovery and to choose the path that works for them. As long as there are people pursuing recovery, we'll be here with peer to peer support. Contact us to learn more about Strength In Peers.

540-217-0869 | StrengthInPeers.org | Services@StrengthInPeers.org

Strength In Peers services are FREE, confidential & nonjudgmental.





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TO:

