



Recovery Café
LONGMONT

NEWS

OCTOBER
2019

About Us What is Recovery Café Longmont?

Recovery Café Longmont is a community of refuge and healing for people in recovery from addiction, mental health, homelessness, and additional life challenges. We believe we are all in recovery from something. The original Recovery Café started in Seattle in 2004. From humble beginnings, that center has grown to serve over 900 Members annually. In 2016, the Recovery Café Network was launched to support an increasing number of requests from communities nationwide for guidance in their desire to create a recovery support center in their cities based on the Recovery Café model.

Recovery Café Longmont formed in late 2018 to address the unmet need for adequate, accessible, long-term recovery services in Boulder County. The need was self-evident: in Colorado, 1 in 8 suffer from a mental health condition, and nearly half of those also struggle with substance abuse. In Boulder County, more people die from heroin overdose than in car accidents, and Colorado ranks 9th in the nation for suicide. Treatment rates are poor: The Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration indicates that only 18% of those who need treatment receive it. Worse still, relapse is more common than continued recovery. The Recovery Café model was chosen for Longmont because it works. It works by standing in the gap between trauma/crisis and stability, between post-treatment and long-term recovery, and between loneliness/isolation and loving community.

The Café model is based on the new Recovery Oriented System of Care which meets people where they are on the recovery continuum, engages them for a lifetime of managing their disease, focuses holistically on a person's needs, and empowers them to build a life that realizes their full potential.

This person-centered system of care supports a person as they establish a healthy life and recognizes that we all need a meaningful sense of membership and belonging in community, thus Café participants are referred to as Members rather than clients, participants or consumers. The Café is committed to growing and nurturing our Members to rebuild their lives as well as support each other in this process. This peer-to-peer aspect of recovery support is one of the most powerful pieces of Recovery Café's success.

"WE BELIEVE THAT
CONNECTIVITY IS
THE OPPOSITE OF
ADDICTION."



Letter from the Executive Director

Welcome to Recovery Café Longmont!

Since opening our doors at the end of May, we've witnessed how the power of community can heal, inspire, and transform. 'Jason' reconnecting with his family after years of separation, 'Bruce' securing a full-time job, and 'Patti' finding housing are only a few of the many positive outcomes our Members have shared in the past few months. And they all credit the Café's culture of *radical hospitality* and *loving accountability* for empowering them to succeed.

Recovery Café Longmont is a community of refuge and healing for people in recovery. The Café model begins with the understanding that every human being is precious and worthy of love, regardless of past trauma, mental and emotional anguish, addictive behaviors or mistakes made. The model is membership-based, and requires commitments that are held through loving accountability. Membership is free and requirements are simple: be drug and alcohol free for 24-hours, contribute to the Café and to the healing of others, and attend a weekly Recovery Circle. The Café provides support, resources, and a community of care so all Members are supported across their entire continuum of need.

We know that recovery isn't just making a decision to be sober, and mentally healthy – it's an action that must be practiced every day. In fact, recovery from a substance use disorder generally requires a foundation of at least two years of sobriety to ensure long-term recovery. Recovery Café Longmont supports our Members throughout these years and beyond, as they rebuild their lives and break the cycle of addiction. The Café model aligns with the grassroots social recovery movement promoting non-clinical, peer-based recovery support services and activities. Please read About Us on page 1 to learn more about this transformative model.

We are deeply grateful to CENTRALongmont Presbyterian Church for initiating and nurturing Recovery Café Longmont. When church leaders learned of the Recovery Café model, they recognized its potential to address a critical service gap in Longmont: the lack of community-based recovery services in the area. Though only open for a short time, the Café's impact has already been profound – please see the Impact Report on page 8. Central has graciously invited the Café to operate rent-free for the first few years of operation while we build our base and solidify funding. Though located in a church, the Café is not faith-based but a charitable nonprofit where people of all faiths and beliefs are welcome.

We are so grateful for the tremendous support of our dedicated volunteers, referral partners, and generous donors for making Recovery Café possible. As a community-based nonprofit, we rely on social as well as monetary capital to operate. The Café is open Tuesday through Saturday from noon to 4pm, with classes offered at additional times. Our School for Recovery and recovery support meetings are open to anyone in the community.

We welcome you to visit the Café to learn more about this transformative model. Stop by for lunch, join a class, become a Member, or volunteer. As the founder of Recovery Café, Killian Noe, often states, "We are all in recovery from something." That's why we work hard to provide a healing community where everyone is known and loved – because it's our connections and relationships that sustain us.

In deep gratitude,



Lisa Searchinger
Executive Director



MISSION

We are a community of refuge and healing for people in recovery.

VISION

To be an enlightened community where people in all walks of recovery are empowered to be their best selves.

VALUES

- Radical Hospitality
- Loving Accountability
- Champion for Recovery
- Stewardship
- Inclusive Community

Our Programs

RCL has three primary programs that are purposefully designed to help people maintain recovery, reduce relapse and fulfill their potential. These programs work toward connectivity and accountability. We believe that connectivity is the opposite of addiction, and we also know that accountability is a new concept to some. Many Members have never had the benefit of relationships that expected or believed good was possible for them. Accountability is being held to one's best self, being held to who we say we want to be and to become.

RECOVERY CIRCLES

are small peer support groups led by trained facilitators that educate members about recovery, help them to develop skills that prevent relapse and teach accountability. Weekly attendance is a requirement of membership.

SCHOOL FOR RECOVERY

offers curriculum featuring classes that address the underlying causes of addiction, teach coping skills, develop knowledge, develop new skills and build recovery capital. Examples of offerings include: Addiction Recovery, Grief and Loss, Art, Music, Letting Go, Building Healthy Relationships, Yoga, and Creative Writing.

MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

offer Members the opportunity to learn the rewards of giving back, improve communication skills, develop leadership skills, and learn to interact effectively and productively with staff, other Members and outside volunteers who spend time at the Café sharing their gifts.

Every day the Café is open we offer *radical hospitality*, which includes a communal meal, healthy snacks, coffee, beverages, and a supportive, loving community. This community includes Members, staff, and volunteers who listen - without judgment - and who meet our Members wherever they are on their recovery journey and support them as they work toward lasting recovery.





Volunteer Profile *Becky*

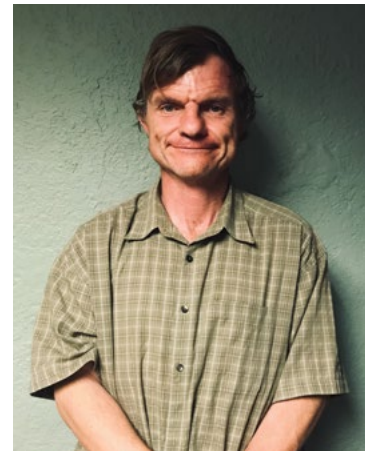
If you've ever had the chance to work or talk with Becky Milanski, then you've witnessed the light and joy she brings to the table. Don't be fooled by her small frame-- she packs a lot of love, power, and dedication to her service work here at Recovery Café. Becky has lived experience with substance use and disordered eating and now employs a well-supported recovery community in her life. Becky is married and has a 15-year old son. She volunteers as an Ambassador and Recovery Resource Team member.

Becky has worked as a chef, editor, and food writer (you can imagine she is very helpful in our kitchen!). When asked why she volunteers at Recovery Café Longmont, she said her recovery motivates her to be of service to others. "Seeing others stay sober, to go on and accomplish things in life-- that's inspiring to me," she says with her signature smile. "The mission of Recovery Café speaks to me, I want to be a part of this community. I'm in recovery, and I want to be able to use my story to help others."

She has brought three new Members to the Café, and recently established a 12-step meeting here at Recovery Café Longmont. We are thankful for your work, Becky! The world is better for your presence in it.

Member Profile *Andy*

Talk about a person of interest, entertainment, and inspiration -- Andy S., is a beloved and valued Member. A beautiful aspect of being one of the first Members is that Andy is able to provide influence and insight into what services we can best offer the community. RCL values Member feedback, and with his suggestions, we have added an AA 12-step meeting, a support group for the LGBT community, and social activities such as an Ice Cream Social and 4th of July picnic to our programming. He comes three to four days a week, depending on his appointments with other Boulder County organizations and resources, and stays almost the entirety of Café operating hours. When new Members or guests arrive, he's always willing to give them a tour, explain our purpose, and tell them about upcoming Café activities.



Andy is also very active in the Boulder County community. He enjoys his recovery community, LGBT community at OutBoulder, and is a guest speaker twice a year on mental illness for undergraduate psychology students at CU Boulder. Andy always has an entertaining story, an interesting fact, or a funny YouTube video or joke to share. His life journey certainly has its obstacles, but it also contains so much hope and strength for anyone to find inspiration. He is a true testament to what eight years of recovery can do for a person.

Andy sends RCL staff inspiring morning emails and has donated decor to bolster the welcoming environment of the space. He has promoted RCL to his communities and brought in new Members. He was key in motivating us to move our days of operation to Tuesday through Saturday.

We so appreciate Andy and the energy he brings to the table. Next time you're in the Café, make sure to spend some time to get to know him. Your life will be better for it.



Donor Profile Naomi

A life-long advocate for people in need, Naomi's service to others was instilled at an early age. "When I was a little girl my father taught us that you give God 10% of everything," she shares. "Over the years I have chosen to give 10% away every month to various causes." Why Recovery Café Longmont? "Because I believe in what you do. The addiction crisis is off the charts and I am committed to helping the Café provide services to help address this gripping challenge."

Born and raised in a Christian environment, Naomi has dedicated her life to helping people in need. After working full-time in ministry and raising three

children, she pursued a career in nursing at the age of 48 and became a wellness educator supporting people in poverty. Choosing psycho-social over clinical nursing, Naomi explains her preference to walk beside and support people in the field rather than a clinical setting. "My happiness comes in working with women in marginalized communities, in shelters and in community and refugee centers. Teaching women the basics on healthy living and taking responsibility for their own wellness is my passion."

After more than 21 years of extensive field experience in rural and inner city poverty, working in Washington DC, Mississippi, Guatemala, Kenya and Ethiopia, Naomi made the decision to move back to Longmont in 2011 and spend time with her family. "My kids and grandkids are my joy and first priority now, but I will never stop volunteering and giving back."

Several years ago, Naomi started a local women's giving circle to support nonprofits serving women, children, education and sustainable causes. The group met for six years and raised \$85,000, half of which was gifted to organizations in northern Colorado and half to global villages with which she had a personal contact.

Naomi also volunteers as an Ambassador of Hospitality at the Café. Staff and Members are always excited to see her name on the schedule. Her warm smile, valuable feedback, and loving demeanor are a true gift to our community. She has helped influence our meal preparation and distribution, listened intently to countless Members recall powerful stories, and given unselfishly of her time and wisdom. We are endlessly grateful for Naomi's dedication to our work.

"Because I believe in what you do. The addiction crisis is off the charts and I am committed to helping the Café provide services to help address this gripping challenge."

Accountability

"WE'RE TEACHING REAL AND MATURE LIFE LESSONS - ACCOUNTABILITY, DISCIPLINE, RESPONSIBILITY."

What I love about Recovery Café is the accountability piece. We are not a handout or a drop-in center. If our Members commit to spending one hour a week in their Recovery Circle, if they take care of the space by completing a cleaning task, if they come in drug and alcohol free— they “earn” the meals, the freedom to come and go, and the joyful and inspiring community of like-minded peers committed to growth. Low-barriers, yet those requirements are vital. These are the healthy boundaries that build the structure that our humanness craves.

While the boundaries have prevented people from coming through the door, those same boundaries have also fostered a sense of trust and bonding among the Members who understand that what we do is so much more than meals and group discussions. We're teaching real and mature life lessons— accountability, discipline, responsibility. These qualities build integrity, self-confidence, and give structure where their former lifestyle lacked. And when someone can demonstrate these skills and possess this structure, real life progress can be made. Real contentment and fulfillment can be realized.

We've seen Members gain partial custody of their kids, secure jobs, find housing. Many of them credit Recovery Café for being a place of safety from the chaos so that when they leave, they have a clearer mindset when strategizing. We can measure demographics and continuous sobriety time, but mental clarity? Inner peace? Hope and joy? The human heart cannot be measured, only felt. Please visit the Café and share heartbeats and smiles with us.



Leigh Larson, PROGRAM MANAGER

Donate!

Everything we do at Recovery Café Longmont is because of generous and compassionate supporters like you. YOU make our programs and services possible. Please visit our website to make a tax-deductible donation and learn more about additional ways to support our work: recoverycafelongmont.org. THANK YOU for supporting this transformative work!

Volunteer!

Volunteers help hold the spirit of Recovery Café Longmont by nurturing a sense of loving community and a culture of recovery for everyone who comes through our doors. Opportunities abound for people who wish to share their time and gifts with the Recovery Café community.

- *Café Cooks* - Greatest need. Each cook prepares 15 nutritious meals at home, complete with an entrée and side. Instead of dessert, we ask for a healthy snack or fruit. We provide all serving utensils and plate ware. **COMMITMENT:** Minimum one day per month.
- *Ambassadors of Hospitality* - Greet and engage Members, facilitate Recovery Circles, and interact with our Members on a more personal basis. **COMMITMENT:** Minimum commitment of two 2-hour shifts per month for 4 months. There is additional training and education for this position.
- *School for Recovery Teachers* - Teach a class or activity or facilitate a support group. Topics include: fitness, art, mindfulness, recovery, mental health, or practical life skills. **COMMITMENT:** A minimum of 30 minutes per week or every other week.



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Please visit our website to donate and learn more about volunteering at the Café:

recoverycafelongmont.org



Recovery Café
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WWW.RECOVERYCAFELONGMONT.ORG

IMPACT REPORT



FROM MAY THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2019, THE Recovery Café HAS...
LONGMONT

Provided **2,400**
cups of hot coffee



Provided
1,200
nutritious
meals



Enrolled **55**
New Members



Partnered
with **47**
referral agencies
and departments



Joyfully
supported by
100 volunteers
for a total of more
than
2,000
hours