



Recovery Café
LONGMONT

NEWS

FALL
2023



Introducing Jen Jepsen!

The Café welcomes a new executive director

Jen Jepsen is a former board member of Recovery Café Longmont. After founding and leading Left Hand Church in Longmont, she obtained a Master of Social Work (MSW) from the University of Denver. Jen has been involved in a variety of local organizations in a volunteer capacity while raising her three children with her spouse, Eric.

On July 1, 2023, I took on the role of Executive Director of Recovery Café Longmont. I was equally nervous and excited, which tells me I was in the right spot. When starting a new chapter it's hard to know how to be. It's hard to know how to show up. But the minute I stepped over the threshold at the Café as Executive Director, I showed up as myself.

This action may not seem profound, but it was for me. I am discovering how to BE. How to be present. How to be myself, while inviting others to do the same. When we show up with presence and authenticity, we break down barriers to human connection - making the world a more hospitable and compassionate place.

Our temporary residence in the basement of CentraLongmont Presbyterian Church has provided a warm and cozy place over the last four years. And now we are preparing to take our transformative work into a larger space where we can grow our community of refuge and healing.

This is what we do best at the Café. We show up as we are, wherever we are, even when the space feels snug. We show up curious, filled with grace, and ready to adapt. Each day in the Café brings new lessons and changes lives, as it has mine.

Come join our delightful community for a warm meal and rousing conversation. I guarantee you won't be the same. Just make sure to be yourself.

2022 IMPACT REPORT



72 Members enrolled
(47% increase over 2021)



173 Recovery Circles
(27% increase over 2021)



3,720 Nutritious meals served
(77% increase over 2021)



160 School for Recovery classes
(93% increase over 2021)



2,667 Total volunteer hours
(37% increase over 2021)

“I Keep What I Have by Giving it Away”

The Work of a Peer Support Specialist



By Elyssa Hamilton, Peer Support & Communications Specialist/ Volunteer Coordinator

As a peer support specialist, I draw strength from my personal journey through substance use and mental health conditions, walking alongside others on similar paths. This career allows me to transform my hardships, self-pity, and shame into something beautiful and productive.

At Recovery Café Longmont, I guide members in unraveling shame and focusing on self-investment. Throughout this process, I emphasize each person’s inherent worth, love, dignity, respect, and healing. Together, we define goals and explore resources, fostering nurturing accountability.

To illustrate a typical workday, allow me to share a special interaction I had in the Café. A vibrant woman joined us for the first time inquiring about membership. With an endearingly eccentric demeanor, she carried an air of solitude, yet her eyes revealed a deep longing for connection.

Like many of our members, the woman struggled with maintaining relationships and turned to substances for comfort. She believed that she never truly belonged anywhere. I described membership to Recovery Café as having a community of unlikely friends that belong to each other. **We celebrate the wins, provide support for the losses, and navigate life together.**

We had a one-on-one conversation, sharing painful and joyful moments. This is often the highlight of my day — when someone invites me to join them in an emotional memory so they feel less alone.

We joined the larger group for meditation, announcements, and lunch. My new friend eagerly connected with others, bonding over a love for art. At the end of the day I offered a hug — a gesture she embraced with the gratitude of someone who has been long deprived of compassion. She hugged a few others and danced out the door with the joy of newfound friendships.

This story epitomizes the rejuvenation that community power brings. Holding space for about 10 members that day, each carrying their burdens, filled me with love for my job. The morning’s depression, once stifling, had dissipated. This exemplifies the magic of peer support: My recovery intertwines with community healing, transcending personal confines. I keep what I have by giving it away

In my role as a peer support specialist, I’ve discovered a profound truth – in uplifting others, I too find upliftment, and in healing others, I am healed.





Member Moment

Gypsy



Gypsy's transformative journey finds its heartwarming haven at Recovery Café Longmont. Struggling with the sense that the world had turned its back on him, he stumbled upon this sanctuary where his life took a meaningful turn.

Gypsy found more than camaraderie at the Café; he found a community of compassionate members that shattered his solitude, replacing it with connections that nurtured his spirit.

“When I first came in I met people who had been where I had been. I didn't feel alone anymore.”

His Café experience went beyond companionship. It became the foundation of his commitment to sobriety, offering vital resources like employment navigation and recovery support groups. Crucially, Recovery Café Longmont granted Gypsy a place where he truly belonged. The Café's warm and radically hospitable environment offered solace in his quest for healing, helping him reclaim his life from the grip of substance use disorder. Today, he paints, listens, and shares stories, serving as a beacon of hope for others.

“This place has been a godsend for me. The meals for one thing, but even more so, it's the familiarity. Here, I can open up about my life and what I need. People offer guidance, or just sit and listen, which is so important to me. It's tough when you feel like no one cares at all.”

Gypsy's story epitomizes the vital role of having a community that understands and accepts you. With the support of people on similar journeys, Café members like Gypsy rewrite their narratives, embracing futures filled with promise.

Joining the Café is easy and free. Visit us during open hours to learn more. Membership requirements include 24-hours of sobriety, contribution to the Café's operation and to the healing of others, AND attending a weekly Recovery Circle.

Inclusive Recovery

BRIDGING A CULTURAL DIVIDE

Peer Support Specialists María Estandía and Kristina Garcia have worked hard to expand our bilingual/bicultural program and as a result of their outreach, our membership demographics now reflect the City of Longmont at 25% Hispanic. In addition to community outreach, María and Kristina host satellite Spanish language Recovery Circles at the local halfway house where participants experience the power of the support circle in a familiar environment, and later join us in the Café with the comfort of friendly faces they've come to know in their satellite circle.



MARÍA

“As a member of the Latino/Hispanic community, creating inclusion and visibility for my group is so important to me. This is especially vital here in Longmont, where we are one quarter of the population, yet often find our community overlooked. I truly believe in the enriching influence of diversity on this solid and fertile ground — a more diverse society helps to make our community more complete, powerful, and strong. I love living in Longmont and being a part of Recovery Café’s inclusive community. The impactful programs and values we uphold make this a wonderful place to live.”



KRISTINA

“We are more apt to share our stories of struggle, challenges, and uncertainty with those who share a familiar background. Rooted deeply in Latino culture, some challenges and coping mechanisms are viewed as survival skills, as a normal way of life. My experience as an American-Mexican woman has taught me that healing begins with breaking down these old ways of thinking and creating space for new ways of life without substance use to surface fresh roots of a healthier lifestyle. This includes cultivating love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, generosity, self-discipline, establishing trustworthy connections, and nurturing relationships with community partners who are also genuinely driven to help those in need. This is exactly what we need to grow our loving and inclusive community.”

Volunteer Spotlight

Dee

Dee is a Café Cook and taught a limited series School for Recovery class titled “Fabulous Foods for Bodies and Minds.” When she enters the room, Dee’s bright eyes and warm smile reveal her passion for helping others. She is easily approachable and deeply compassionate.

For 17 years, Dee worked as a dietician for patients with chronic kidney disease. In this field, she helped many people struggling with alcohol use disorder. As a dietician, Dee recalls that she solely addressed diets, not the person as a whole. Dee is aware of how different substances impact appetite. With people in recovery, she places the priority of care on supporting their general sense of well-being.

“Volunteering here, I am able to take a look at the whole picture, including lifestyle and trauma. In healthcare, I wish we looked at the whole person with unconditional, divine love as seen in the Café.”

“They need regular access to meals if their bodies have been deprived of nutrients. Early recovery is a period of rebuilding brain and muscle cells.”

In Dee’s School for Recovery class, she looked at individual issues and challenges rather than prescribing a one size fits all solution for the group as a whole, as food needs can be different in early versus long-term recovery.

“If you don’t have a family or someone to enjoy a meal with, you may not enjoy the food as much. It’s a proven social success.”

Recognizing the importance of a shared meal paired with compassionate conversation, Dee has often provided a nutritious food selection for our shared meal times.



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. Please visit our website to learn more about volunteering: recoverycafelongmont.org/volunteer

SIGN-UP FOR E-NEWS!

Join our email community to receive news, announcements, and updates. We only use your information to keep you connected with us — we don’t share with or sell to anyone. Please visit our website and click on the SUBSCRIBE tab. You can also add your name and email on the envelope inserted into this newsletter and mail it back to us.



Recovery Café LONGMONT

402 Kimbark Street
Longmont, CO 80501
(720) 815-2885
www.RecoveryCafeLongmont.org

About Us

Recovery Café Longmont is a community of refuge and healing for people in recovery from all life challenges including mental health and substance use conditions, trauma, and grief. The Café was formed in 2018 to address the unmet need for adequate, accessible, long-term recovery services in Boulder County.

What We Do

We support our members as they learn to manage their mental and physical health, maintain sobriety, build community, and reclaim life as a person worthy of giving and receiving love.

Who We Are

We are individuals who are new to recovery, in long-term recovery, have had relapses, difficult life changes, physical health challenges or mental health transitions.

GIVE TODAY, TRANSFORM TOMORROW

Everything we do at Recovery Café Longmont is because of generous and compassionate supporters like you. YOU make our programs and services possible. Here are some of the many ways you can and do help.

- Become a GEM (Give Every Month) donor to provide the Café with consistent and reliable funds.
- Visit our website to make a tax-deductible donation today.
- See if your company will match your donation to double your impact.
- Mark your calendar for Colorado Gives Day, Tuesday, Dec. 5 and give online.
- Give a gift of appreciated stock.
- Donate items from our wish list: Grocery store gift cards, fresh fruit, half & half, white sugar, Splenda packets, powdered drink mixes (such as lemonade).
- Create a lasting legacy by including us in your will.

For more information on giving options, please contact virginia@recoverycafelongmont.org or call her at 720-815-2885.