



STEPPING STONES CURRICULUM

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

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UNIT ONE: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

God created us to be social beings. No man is an island unto themselves. We need each other. We are created to give of ourselves to help other people.

Nothing is more satisfying than being involved in something bigger than ourselves. Volunteering in community projects or events are great ways to get involved with other people and give a little back to the wonderful community we live in!

There are so many benefits of volunteering to you, your children, and your community. It is an opportunity to find friends, reach out to the community, explore an interest, learn new skills, and even help your career.

Volunteering can also help you feel better physically, emotionally, and mentally. The following suggestions are reasons that volunteering is beneficial:

Volunteering benefits the community. One of the better known benefits of volunteering is the impact on the community. Volunteers are often the glue that holds a community together. Volunteering allows you to connect to your community and make it a better place. However, volunteering is a two-way street, and it can benefit you and your family as much as the cause you choose to help.

Volunteering helps you make new friends and contacts. Giving your time as a volunteer can help you make new friends or contacts. One of the best ways to make new friends and strengthen existing relationships is to share a common activity. Volunteering is a great way to meet new

people, exposing you to people with common interests, resources, and fun activities.

Volunteering increases your social and relationship skills. Some people are naturally outgoing, but others are shy and have a hard time meeting new people. Volunteering gives you the opportunity to practice and develop your social skills, since you are meeting regularly with a group of people with common interests. The more you enter in the easier it is to meet people and make more friends and/or contacts.

Volunteering as a family is very worthwhile. Children watch everything you do. By giving back to the community, you show your kids firsthand how volunteering makes a difference and how good it feels to help others.

Volunteering is good for your mind and body. There are many benefits both mentally and physically for volunteering. Volunteering increases self-confidence, combats depression, give you new job contacts, and brings a lot of joy into your life!

Volunteering increases self-confidence. Volunteering provides a healthy boost to your self-confidence and self-esteem. You are doing good for others and the community, which provides a natural sense of accomplishment. And the better you feel about yourself, the more likely you are to have a positive view of your life and future goals.

Volunteering combats depression. Reducing depression is another important benefit of volunteering. A key risk factor for depression is social isolation but volunteering can help you stay in regular contact with others and helps you develop a solid support system, which in turns protects you against stress and depression when you're going through challenging times.

Volunteering can increase your ability to explore potential job opportunities. If you're considering a new job, volunteering can help you get experience in your area of

interest and meet people in the field. Volunteering gives you the opportunity to practice important employment skills, such as teamwork, communication, problem solving, time management, and organization. Volunteering offers you an opportunity to try out a new career and gain experience. In some places, you can volunteer directly at an organization that does the kind of work you're interested in. For example, if you're interested in nursing, you could volunteer at a hospital or a nursing home.

Volunteering is fun and brings a lot of joy into your life.

Volunteering is a fun and easy way to explore things you are interested in and are passionate about. Volunteer work can be relaxing, energizing, and an escape from your day-to-day routine. Volunteering renews your creativity, motivation, and vision. Take some time to identify your goals and interests. Think about why you want to volunteer. Think about what you enjoy doing. Then find a volunteer opportunity that matches your interests.

HOW TO FIND THE RIGHT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

There are many, many volunteer opportunities available. There are national causes, community causes, your child's school or classroom volunteer opportunities, local organizations or events you can give your time to. Think about the things that you would enjoy and are capable of doing.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- * Would you like to work with people or would you rather work alone?
- * Are you better behind the scenes or do you prefer to be more visible?
- * How much time are you willing or have to give?
- * What skills can you bring a volunteer job?

* What causes are important to you?

As you search for the right volunteer opportunity, don't limit yourself to just one type of organization or event. Check it out first...see if it is the right fit for you. Try to visit different places and get a feel for what they are like. You will want a place that is fulfilling and inspiring!

WHERE DO I FIND THE RIGHT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES?

There are numerous opportunities for whatever interest you may have. The United Way, the Cancer Society, Red Cross... many organizations and events in need of volunteers. You can always find volunteer opportunities at your child's school classroom. A teacher's aide, chaperone for field trips, classroom helper for special projects, volunteer for school fundraising or school events, such as the concession stand at the ballgames, taking tickets for games, driver for events, craft helper, recess helper, etc. So many opportunities in the local school system! Contact the school office or your student's teacher to volunteer.

Local charities and events are always in need of volunteers.

- The Rainbow Shoppe • Community Christmas Project •
- Safe Haven Breakfast Club • Charlevoix Area Hospital •
- Charlevoix Public Library • Keep Charlevoix Beautiful •
- Charlevoix Venetian Festival • Senior Volunteer Program •
- Commission on Aging • Day of Caring • Local Churches •
- Vacation Bible School • Community Food Pantry •
- American House Senior Living Facility •

UNIT TWO: HEALTHY FOR LIFE!

What does your vision of optimal wellbeing look like to you? If you could be at your best level of health today, what would that include?

It can be overwhelming to think about how to improve physical health when there are multiple diets that come and go, diet pills that are for sale and claim to help the pounds “just melt off”, and different infomercials that portray picture perfect models in an attempt to sell particular workout equipment. So where does a person belong when they are trying to get — and stay — physically healthy? What diets and exercises are healthy without being extreme, expensive, and unrealistic?

As you read this section you will find some practical, basic steps that you can begin to practice today that will improve your physical health in a safe and simple way. The best part about it is that you can maintain these healthy habits for life!

HOW TO GET AND STAY HEALTHY

We live in a very body conscious society. As women, we are constantly bombarded with magazines, TV shows, movies, and advertisements that give off the message that women must be thin, clear skinned, and always maintain perfect hair, clothing, and make-up in order to be desirable or worthwhile.

While it is important to maintain good hygiene and take care of our physical health, the emphasis that is placed on physical beauty is out of proportion to the other parts of our lives that are also important, including the emotional, mental,

spiritual, and social parts of our lives that make up who we are in this world.

The Bible gives us a good example of how we, as women, can keep a balanced and healthy mindset about how to care for our physical bodies and experience wellness:

“Charm is deceptive and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.” —Proverbs 31:30, NIV

This scripture helps us to remember that beauty will not last; therefore, if we focus a lot of time and energy on our physical appearance alone, it will eventually fade. If we, however, focus on developing our inner beauty by working on life long characteristics that are attractive and desirable to others, this will last long after our physical appearance ages.

First Corinthians also has a great scripture to guide us in our pursuit of physical health:

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.” —1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Verse 19 reminds us that our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who lives inside of us after we accept Christ as our Savior. That means that we need to take care of our body as we would a temple.

Think about the things that you would not do inside of a temple or church. Does this change your thoughts on how you are currently treating your body or what you are putting into your body?

Verse 20 also tells us that God wants us to honor Him with our bodies. Besides maintaining good hygiene and dressing

in a way that shows we respect ourselves, how might we honor God with our bodies in other ways?

Have you ever heard the saying, “Too much of a good thing isn’t a good thing?” Think about food. As long as you are eating different types of food in limited amounts, this is healthy. However, when you begin to eat too much sugar, grease, fat, etc, this will begin to cause health problems within your body. Do you know the “good” and “bad” types of food you should be eating to keep your body healthy? Keep reading to find out!

GRAINS

- o Bad grains, or refined grains, can be easily recognized by looking at the ingredients on the food that you are purchasing. If you see “white flour” you can usually say that it is a refined grain. The process of “refining” grains removes some of the natural vitamins and fiber in food, so generally these foods will have very little nutritional value for your body. Examples include: white bread and crackers.
- o Good grains, or whole grains, are foods that usually contain the whole grain and the fiber. Examples include: whole wheat bread, brown & white rice, oatmeal, and whole wheat pasta.

PROTEIN

- o “Lean” protein is the best kind of protein to eat. Suggestions for lean choices of protein include: seafood, beans, peas, skinless chicken, lean ground turkey, and lean ground sirloin.
- o Look at the nutritional content that is listed on the package to choose foods that have a low-fat, high protein ratio.

FRUITS & VEGETABLES

- Fresh fruit is always the best source for healthy carbohydrates, natural sugar, and fiber. Many fruits and vegetables also have antioxidants and multiple vitamins that help to build up your immune system, something that is very important while you are healing from your substance use as your immune system builds back up to be able to fight off illnesses and disease.
- Most vegetables are very low in carbs and fat. So these are good for snacking in place of chips. If you have a craving for something sweet, try eating a piece of fruit.

DAIRY

- For healthy options, look for dairy products that are made with skim milk and low fat milk in order to reduce the amount of calories, sugars, and fat you are eating or drinking.
- If you are lactose intolerant (allergic to lactose/dairy), you can purchase dairy-free products such as almond milk, soy milk, or rice milk. These choices will give you the same amount of vitamins and protein. Unsweetened options of these alternatives will give you the best amount of protein with minimal sugars.

OILS

- Healthy oils include: Olive oil, oil from nuts (like walnut oil or sunflower oil), fish oil, as well as certain foods that are high in healthy oils, like avocados. You can often tell if a food product contains a healthy oil because it will contain little or no “trans fat”. Find the nutrition label and look for products that contain little to no “trans fat” and are low in “saturated fats.”

- o Unhealthy oils are those types of oils that go through a process called “hydrogenation”. These types of items are: butter, shortening, stick margarine, and partially hydrogenated oil.

SUGARS

- o Foods that are made with high amounts of sugar have very little (if any) nutritional value; therefore, it is best to avoid eating most foods that are full of sugar. Your body sees this type of food as “empty calories” that your body does not benefit from. Examples of these types of foods would include doughnuts, pies, candies, pastries, cookies, cakes, ice cream. Really, most desert items. It is okay to allow yourself to indulge in these items for special occasions and in limited amounts. Just remember that these types of foods should not be part of your normal daily food intake.
- o Note: Naturally occurring sugar, such as pure honey, can be a healthier substitute for refined sugars, especially in your tea, coffee, and in baking.
- o When baking, you can often substitute sugar and sometimes even oils with applesauce! Applesauce adds sweetness with fewer calories. Replacing oil with applesauce is helpful to reduce the amount of fat in a recipe.

BUILDING A HEALTHY MEAL

If you visit the website <https://www.myplate.gov>, you will find helpful tips on how much from each type of food category you should eat each day and at every meal in order to be healthy. Some basic tips for what your plate should look like include:

- Fill at least half of your plate with fruits and vegetables. The items are high in vitamins, minerals, and fiber. It will leave you feeling full without eating a lot of calories.
- You can add vegetables to many different main dishes. Adding lettuce, onions, tomatoes, and/or peppers to your sandwiches, casseroles, or tacos, for easy incorporation to your diet.
- Eat dairy products made with skim or low fat milk.
- Choose lean protein. Protein will keep you feeling full, will help to build muscle, and keep your energy levels balanced throughout the day.
- Avoid “drinking” your calories! The easiest way to cut calories and lose weight is to stop drinking beverages that have calories in them. Beware of sodas, juices, fruit punch, sweet tea, alcoholic beverages (which you can’t have at Joppa House anyways!), and specialty coffee drinks, like lattes and mochas. The calories in these drinks are from sugar, which is bad for your figure as well as your teeth!
- Pay attention to high-sodium foods, such as soups, pickled foods, and processed foods, like packaged sliced meat. Sodium will leave you feeling bloated and high amounts are dangerous to your health. Look for “low-sodium” options.
- Don’t be fooled by foods that are marked as “low fat” or “fat free”. If you look at some candy packages you will see those words listed on the package. Candies are made with sugar which equals empty calories!
- Look at the nutrition and ingredient labels on the foods you buy. Even though something is marked “healthy” or “organic” or “natural” or “low fat” it may not actually be healthy because of the artificial sweeteners, food dye, and active calories it contains.
- Ingredients to be aware of:
 - Aspartame
 - High Fructose Corn Syrup

- Artificial food coloring
- Hydrogenated oils
- Sodium nitrite
- Sodium nitrate
- MSG
- Sucralose

Simplifying It

A simple rule to follow is to try and eat as many fresh, natural foods as possible for each meal and for snacks.

Fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and small amounts of nuts, healthy oils, and whole grains are good staples for a healthy diet. All other types of foods should be eaten in very limited amounts. Fresh fruits and vegetables are great options for snacks. Remember though, that if you are using “dips” with your fruits and veggies, these are usually full of unhealthy calories and fat.

What is the most interesting is the less sugar you eat, the less you will crave it! Your brain can actually get addicted to sugar and will send you messages to continue eating it. When you begin to cut it out of your diet, you will not want it as often and you will reduce your “sweet tooth” cravings.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Did I just hear you groan?! Yes, I’m sure you already know that part of being physically healthy means moving your body. You may be having flashbacks of a bad experience in gym class or thinking about the endless hours of sweating in a fitness center surrounded by body builders and skinny people. But that doesn’t have to be a drag. You can come up with some fun options to burn calories and move your way to better health!

Some basic tips before we get to the fun part:

- ◆ Start out with limited amounts of physical activity if you are not usually active. Try being physically active

10 minutes a day. If you overdo it, you risk injuring yourself, being too sore to exercise for many days to follow, and it will probably become something you dread if it is painful. Your body needs time to build up to longer periods of exercise.

◆ Talk to a health care professional before beginning any intense exercise plan to make sure you are healthy enough for physical activity.

◆ Make sure you have a pair of tennis shoes to exercise in. Trying to work out in heels, heavy shoes/boots, or footwear that is the wrong size will cause foot injuries. If you are unable to afford tennis shoes, talk to the Joppa House staff or your case manager about options.

HAVING FUN WITH PHYSICAL FITNESS

* Recruit friends, family members, pets, co-workers, or other support to exercise with you! Being able to socialize while exercising helps the time go by faster and it also creates accountability. Having someone else hold us to our commitment to exercise can help us stay on track with physical activity.

* Try many different physical activities to find out which ones you enjoy. You are much more likely to stick with exercise if you enjoy what you are doing.

* Have fun with your kids! Children are generally active and it can be fun to spend time with your kids while also being physically active together. Build a snowman, teach them how to throw a baseball or play soccer, join in on a game of tag. All of these activities burn calories and build great memories with your children.

* Research different free activities in the community that involve physical activity.

Now it's your turn. Write down as many ideas as you can think of in **5 minutes** on how you can have fun and be physically active at the same time. Take this piece of paper with you to your next case management and chat with your case manager about what you wrote down!

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR IMPROVED PHYSICAL HEALTH

The Library

Check out the selection of DVDs on aerobics, yoga, pilates, etc. You can also look for cookbooks or literature on nutrition, fitness, and health. All these resources are free! All you need is a library card.

The Newspaper & Social Media

The newspaper often provides a list of upcoming community events, which may include free dance lessons, free exercise classes, or free health and fitness events. Also, look for opportunities for free cooking or nutrition classes and workshops.

Social media and different groups on Facebook that are specific to Charlevoix and the area you may relocate to will also be full of opportunities that you can get involved in.

The Pool

Local pools usually have at least one day per week where they offer special rates for families or women. Contact your local pool to find out about their rates and special discounts.

Student Rates & Discounts

If you are going to school, you can usually get a special "student rate" at pools, fitness centers, exercises classes, etc. Also, you may be able to take advantage of fitness facilities and equipment at the school that you attend.

Local Festivals

Local festivals occur throughout the four seasons in Northern Michigan and often offer free admission and activities. Look for advertisements on upcoming festivals in your local area and join in on free activities that are offered to you and your family.

The Beach

The beach is free and is a source of great options for physical activities! Go swimming, go for a walk in the sand, or play on the playground with your kids. Some beaches even have volleyball nets for you to use.

Schools

Often times you can use basketball courts, tennis courts, running tracks, and baseball/soccer/football fields after school hours or during the summer for free!

Local Parks & Recreation Areas

Many times you can find free hiking, biking, cross country skiing, and snow shoeing trails in your local area. Also, sledding hills can be a free, fun activity in the winter.

Thrift Stores

Go to your local thrift store and look for affordable sports equipment, bicycles, tennis shoes, swimwear, and workout clothing.

Local Fitness Centers

Some gyms and fitness centers will offer a free one-day pass to try their facilities and sometimes they offer a free fitness class as well. Student rates are generally offered.

Online Resources

The internet can be a great source for free healthy recipes, nutritional tips, as well as online support groups for weight loss.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

What do you value most in life? Is it your children, your family and friends, your freedom? Think of how your values relate to your health: If you want to be around to watch your children grow up or be able to enjoy activities and making memories with your loved ones, all of these things will require you to be in good physical health. It is hard to play with your children at the playground if you are overweight or have medical conditions. It is also difficult to get the most out of life when you have a hard time walking or maintaining enough energy to get through the day.

Although God reminds us (see earlier in this section) that our beauty and physical beings will change and eventually fade away, He also tells us to honor Him with our bodies and treat our bodies well. Therefore, if we want to experience optimal well-being, then we need to make sure and care for our physical health. By making simple changes to your daily routine, you can improve your health.

For better nutrition, limit sugars and unhealthy fats while adding extra vegetables and fruits to your meals and snacks. For physical activity, you can begin by moving your body at least 10 minutes each day, working up to 20 minutes daily. Taking the stairs instead of an elevator or parking your vehicle at the far end of a parking lot to walk to a building are simple ways to add physical activity to your everyday schedule.

Make it a point to pay attention to what foods you put into your body and also look for opportunities to add physical activity to your normal daily routine. These simple changes can increase your physical health and also lead to a more fulfilling, meaningful life.

Now, it is time to put this into practice and get moving. I know you can do it!

UNIT THREE: RECOVERY

What do you know about substance use disorders? Coming from a rehabilitation facility, you definitely know the basics on the impact that substance use disorders can have on ourselves, our family, and on our friends. This topic is very important because substance use disorders affect so many (including teenagers and adults), impacting those around them.

The following information is to help increase your awareness of how you can recognize if someone you know has a problem with substances. The following information will also help you to increase your awareness in yourself when it comes to emotional and mental relapses.

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation;
old things have passed away;
behold, all things have become new.”*
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) -

AWARENESS OF SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS AND HOW TO GET HELP

In order to lower your risk of developing a substance use disorder, it is important to understand what things (sometimes referred to as “risk factors”) can increase your likelihood of substance abuse.

Did you know that if someone in your family (blood related) has or has had a problem with alcohol or drug abuse, this increases your chances of also developing a substance use disorder? Research has found that addiction can be linked to genetic (physically inherited) factors. Therefore, if you know that your relatives, especially your biological

parents, have an alcohol/drug problem, then you may want to completely avoid the risk of developing a substance use disorder yourself.

Other risk factors include how young you are when you first began drinking alcohol or experimenting with drugs. Pre-teens and teens that use substances are more likely to develop a substance use disorder later in life.

Who you surround yourself with can affect how much you drink or use. For example: if you hang out with people with drink a lot of alcohol or use drugs regularly, you will be exposed to peer pressure. It may begin to seem normal to you to drink alcohol or use drugs regularly.

Lack of parental supervision over their children/teens can increase the risk of them being more likely to experiment with or abuse alcohol and/or other drugs.

The good news is that protective factors (the opposite of risk factors listed above) can decrease or prevent children and teens, as well as yourself, from developing an alcohol or drug problem. If you are a parent, it is important to talk to your kids about the dangers of trying alcohol or drugs. It is also important that you demonstrate healthy behaviors for your kids. In other words, be a good role model. Be there for your kids so they have someone to talk about peer pressure about substances about. Don't be afraid to supervise your children or check in with them when they are away.

THINGS NOT TO DO

❖ Don't share your prescription medications with others.
Do not take other's prescription medications EVER!

a) Medications can cause allergic reactions.

b) Medications can also interact badly with other medications, supplements, or vitamins you may be taking and can even be fatal.

c) A doctor needs to know your history before prescribing medications. Also, dosage of medications are based on a person's age, weight, gender, etc. Prescription

medications are specifically for the person whose name is on the bottle and NO ONE ELSE!

d) It is illegal to share, sell, or buy prescription medications.

❖ For women, “drinking in moderation” is defined as no more than 3 alcoholic drinks in one day & no more than 7 alcoholic drinks per week. Anything more than this is bad for your health and can lead to a substance use disorder. REMINDER: “1 drink” is 12 ounces of beer (4-5% ABV), 5 ounce glass of wine, or 1.5 ounces of liquor.

❖ Don’t accept drinks from others without watching them pour or prepare the drink. People can put things in your drink that can harm you, such as a “date rape” drug.

❖ Don’t use illegal drugs.

❖ Don’t buy, sell, or be in possession of illegal drugs. This can get you into big legal trouble.

❖ Keep your prescription medications in a locked and secure location. This is important for many reasons:
a) It protects young children from getting into them and overdosing/poisoning themselves,
b) It reduces the likelihood of others in your home experimenting with medications, such as curious teens.
c) It prevents visitors in your home from stealing your medication.

❖ NEVER consume alcohol when you are pregnant, if you become pregnant, or if you are breastfeeding. Serious long-term side effects can occur in your baby if he/she is exposed to alcohol.

❖ DO NOT drink if you have to drive or operate machinery. Also, some medications may not be safe to take if you will be operating a vehicle or machinery, due to the side effects. Usually there are warning labels on the side of your prescription bottles regarding this. Ask your pharmacist if you are unsure.

❖ Be aware that mixing alcohol with certain medications (prescription and over the counter (OTC)) can have bad side effects. Always read the warning labels on your medication so you know what to avoid while taking it.

DO I HAVE AN ALCOHOL PROBLEM?

It is hard to know what is considered a “normal” or “social” drinker based on the messages from society and how the media portrays alcohol use. By becoming educated on what symptoms may suggest a substance use disorder, you may be able to get yourself or someone you know the help that is needed.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Symptoms</u>
“Moderate” Drinking	For Men: No more than 4 drinks on any given day; no more than 14 total drinks per week. For Women: No more than 3 drinks on any given day; no more than 7 total drinks per week
“At-Risk” Drinking	Consuming more than the single-day or weekly amounts listed above.
“Binge” Drinking	Drinking a large amount of alcohol within 2 hours, causing blood alcohol concentration (BAC) levels to exceed 0.08g/dL. For women, this is usually after about 4 drinks; for men, after 5 drinks or so.

Alcohol Abuse	✓ Not fulfilling one's responsibilities at home, work, or school because of their drinking. ✓ Putting one's self in dangerous situations (like driving under the influence). ✓ Legal or social problems (such as arrests or arguments with family members) related to drinking. ✓ A person with alcohol abuse is not physically dependent on alcohol.
Alcoholism (Alcohol Dependence)	✓ <u>Craving</u> A strong need/urge to drink. ✓ <u>Loss of control</u> Not being able to stop drinking once drinking has begun. ✓ <u>Physical Dependence</u> Withdrawal symptoms, such as nausea, sweating, shakiness, and anxiety after stopping drinking. ✓ <u>Tolerance</u> The need to drink greater amounts of alcohol to feel the same effect.

If you find yourself in the category of “at-risk” or “binge” drinking, it is important for you to develop a plan to cut back on your drinking in order to avoid the possibility of developing alcoholism.

If you can identify with the symptoms of alcoholism/alcohol dependence, then it is important for you to reach out and get help. Consult with your doctor or a trusted professional. Refer to the section on “Getting Help for a Substance Use Disorder” for further information on how to get help.

WHY PEOPLE USE DRUGS

Most people do not set out to develop a drug or alcohol addiction. This is not the ultimate goal in life! Some of the reasons people choose to begin using drugs include:

1. **To Feel Good**

Drugs work on the chemicals in your brain that produce good feelings. That is partly why drugs can become so addicting! The problem with this is that it alters your brain and can lead to long-term brain damage.

2. **To Lessen Negative Emotions**

Some people who struggle with anxiety, being uncomfortable in social settings, depression, or increased stress may turn to drug use in an attempt to reduce or “numb out” those negative feelings.

One of the down sides to this behavior is that when the drug wears off, the negative emotions return. Often times, a person will experience *increased* negative emotions because of how the drugs act on your brain chemicals, along with the guilt of using the drug or what that person did while under the influence of drugs.

This behavior feeds the development of an addiction because a person begins to feel dependent on the drug in order to temporarily get rid of the negative emotions.

3. **To Improve Performance**

Some individuals use drugs to improve their physical performance, increase their energy levels, or increase cognitive performance (for example, to stay alert or stay awake longer).

Athletes may feel pressure to perform better, faster, harder, and turn to chemicals for a “boost”. As discussed already, an addiction to these drugs can develop because

the person becomes mentally dependent on the drug (believing they cannot function well without the substance) and/or physically dependent (the person's body adjusts to "expect" the drug in the body's system and, without it, the person cannot perform as well or may even experience physical withdrawal symptoms).

SYMPTOMS OF DRUG ABUSE

Neglecting Responsibilities	At school, home, and/or work
High Risk Behaviors	Driving under the influence of drugs, using dirty needles, engaging in behaviors you normally wouldn't when you are sober.
Legal Problems	Drug related arrests
Relationship Problems	Drug use is negatively affecting your relationship with your family, friends, co-workers, or at work/with your boss

SYMPTOMS OF DRUG DEPENDENCE/ ADDICTION

Tolerance	It takes more and more of the substance to experience the same effects that you used to experience the same effects that you used to experience in smaller amounts.
Physical Withdrawal	If you go too long without the drug(s), you get physically sick. Symptoms such as nausea, restlessness, insomnia, depression, sweating, shaking, and anxiety can occur from withdrawal.
Loss of Control	You find yourself using more than you intended. You may feel that you are powerless to control/stop your use, even if you want to.
Time	Much of your time is spent seeking, using, or recovering from the use of the substance.
Activities	You may notice that you don't spend as much time or completely stop engaging in hobbies or activities that you once enjoyed, as a result of your drug use.
Continued Use Despite Health Problems	Drug use continues even though you know it has caused or complicated a medical problem or mental health problem.

GETTING HELP FOR A SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

- Call **1-800-662-HELP (4257)** in the U.S. to reach a free referral helpline from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). This is a **FREE** 24 hours a day, 365 days a year information service.
- You can text your Zip Code to **435748 (HELP4U)** to find help near you.
- Visit a Narcotics Anonymous meeting in your local area. Visit www.na.org to find a meeting or check on the board at your 801 or 803 Campus to find local meetings.
- Visit an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting in your local area. Visit www.aa.org to find a meeting or check on the board at your 801 or 803 Campus to find local meetings.
- Visit a meeting online In the Rooms. You can find a schedule at: intherooms.com
- Seek Support! It can be very difficult to get clean and sober on your own. Your mind can be your worst enemy and convince you that you don't have a problem or you can handle getting high once more. Recovering from a substance use disorder is easier when you can lean on others for support and guidance.

Support can come from many different sources, including: family, friends, therapists/counselors, doctors, pastors, a community of faith, self-help groups, etc.

Just remember: People who you are using with will most likely not be a good sources of support for you getting help because they, too, are stuck in a cycle of addiction.

- Be aware that, depending on your substance of choice and the length and severity of your addiction, you may

need to be under supervision by professionals when you decide to quit using. Detoxification services are available and you may qualify for funding to enter a detox program.

- Northern Michigan Substance Abuse Services (NMSAS) provides funding for inpatient and outpatient substance use disorders treatment, as well as detoxification programs for low income individuals in Northern Michigan. To complete a screening for funding and treatment options, contact the Access Center at: 1-800-686-0749.

SUPPORT IN RECOVERY FROM ADDICTION

There are many forms of support that can be helpful in your recovery from alcohol and/or drug addiction. It is very important that you seek support and help outside of yourself because your brain can be “hijacked” by the substances you’ve been abusing and, therefore, your own mind will often try to talk you into all the reasons why you should go back to using. It can take up to 24 months for your brain to recover from the effects of the substances you have been abusing, depending on how long you have been addicted and the severity of your addiction.

Self Help

12-Step Programs, such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, are popular forms of support groups for those in recovery. The only requirement for those interested in attending a meeting is that the person has a desire to stop drinking or using substances.

These groups are organized and led by individuals who also struggle with addiction. There are usually multiple options for local meeting times and locations in your area.

Another 12-Step program, Al-Anon, is available to family and friends of individuals who have a substance use disorder. Al-Anon focuses on helping family and friends know how to

support a loved one in their recovery without becoming part of the problem.

There are other forms of support groups available, such as Celebrate Recovery, which is a Christian based support group.

Since the Covid Pandemic, online support groups have grown in popularity. To find further information support resources, you can go to aa.org, na.org, or intherooms.com.

UNIT THREE-A: SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS & NUTRITION

Nutrition plays an important role in recovery from substance abuse. Drugs and alcohol can affect your metabolism, organ function, and your mental well-being, which can prevent the body from properly absorbing, digesting, and using nutrients. Together this leads to vitamin deficiencies and overall poor nutrition. By making good nutritional choices, you can help to aid in your body's healing process. Food and nutrition supplies the body with energy, as well as important vitamins and minerals that you need to start physical repair and boost your immune function.

As you detox, there can include side effects such as nausea, vomiting, fatigue, constipation, and diarrhea. Balanced nutrition helps improve your mood and health physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually, which can help you to feel better.

While in detox your body begins to wake up again and the following may take place for you:

- * You may forget what hunger feels like and may mistake it for substance cravings. Eating three meals a day, as well as snacks when you need them, can help you to re-regulate your hunger and metabolism.
- * Your appetite might be poor at first and then wake up as you continue the detox and rehabilitation process. Nutritional supplements may be a good additive to your diet as you begin to get back into "regular" eating.
- * As you detox and continue to rehabilitate, you may experience nausea. Choosing foods that are easy on

your stomach like broths, rolls, Jell-O, or yogurt may help with an upset stomach.

✱ You may feel like you want to replace one addiction with another. Food can sometimes fill that void, which can often lead to unwanted weight gain.

✱ You may also experience constipation. Choosing high in fiber foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains can keep your body “regular”.

UNDERSTANDING FOOD CRAVINGS

There is scientific evidence that changes take place in the chemistry of our brains that is linked to cravings, which is very similar to how the brain changes when addicted to substances. This is why so many people who are in recovery for Substance Abuse Disorders complain of struggling with food cravings during treatment and in their establishment of active recovery.

So what should you do as an a woman in active recovery?

✱ Eat regular meals and snacks.

✱ Don't wait until you are starving to eat.

✱ Eat until you feel full, not stuffed.

✱ Get plenty of exercise.

✱ Use moderation.

✱ Keep a food log or diary.

✱ Track your emotions to find which emotions cause you to crave certain foods so we can work together to help you handle those emotions in other ways.

✱ Practice mindful eating.

✱ Find your motivation.

✱ Practice “done-ness”.

✱ Find something else to do.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU EXPERIENCE WEIGHT GAIN WHILE IN RECOVERY

If you are struggling with weight gain while you are establishing active recovery, implementing some of these things may be helpful:

- ✱ **Listen to your body.** Eat when you are hungry, stop eating when you are full.
- ✱ **Honor your craving!** Just eat in moderation and within the “serving sizes” that come with each package of the craving that you have.
- ✱ **Participate in groups as much as possible.** Moving and thinking will engage your mind and body more than taking a nap.
- ✱ **Make exercise a part of your daily routine.** Even walking around outside, getting “fresh air breaks” can be a good start.
- ✱ **Load up on fruits and vegetables.** These low-calorie, high in fiber options can help you to feel full without contributing to weight gain.
- ✱ **Limit your sodas and energy drinks.** Your body needs fluids right now more than ever, and sodas and energy drinks can actually dehydrate you more. Aim for no more than 16.9 ounces of soda and/or energy drinks per day.
- ✱ **Limit your coffee intake.** Coffee and caffeinated drinks can actually dehydrate you more. Aim for no more than 8 ounces of coffee per day.

HOW SUBSTANCE ABUSE AFFECTS APPETITE

Like we just talked about, substance abuse can have many long-term effects on your health and nutrition. Substances vary in their effects, but many of them equally disrupt the

physiological functioning and impair your body's ability to receive the proper nourishment.

Drugs and alcohol can interfere with your nutrition and diet in the following ways:

- * **Failing to eat.** When you forget to eat while under the influence, you suppress your appetite to a point where you no longer eat at normal times.
- * **Eating poorly.** When using is prioritized over eating properly, diets can be poor and can lack the sustenance needed to function properly.
- * **Malnourishment.** Malnourishment happens when you fail to eat consistently over time, or from your body's inability to absorb the nutrients necessary for the biological processes.
- * **Overeating.** Eating too much can lead to obesity and a number of health conditions that are associated with excess body fat.
- * **Organ Damage.** Substance abuse can damage the liver, stomach lining, pancreas, and the small and large intestines, all of which contribute to the proper absorption, digestion, and storage of nutrients in the body.
- * **Immune System Damage.** Substances, such as alcohol and opiates, can suppress the immune system and make you more susceptible to infections and illnesses.
- * **Gastrointestinal Disorders.** Alcohol can contribute to chronic gastrointestinal tract inflammation, irritable bowel syndrome, leaky gut syndrome, pathogenic bacterial overgrowth, fungal intestinal infections, and acid reflux.
- * **Hypoglycemia.** Low blood sugar can be caused by a lack of sustenance or lack of a proper diet.

Alcohol & Nutrition

Those who abuse alcohol often do not make proper nutrition a priority, making their diets poor. Alcohol abuse

also interferes with the breakdown and the absorption of nutrients due to damage of the stomach lining and digestive enzyme deficiencies.

Chronic alcohol abuse can significantly harm the pancreas and the liver. The pancreas produces enzymes and pro-enzymes for the digestion of lipids, proteins, carbohydrates, and hormones that delicately balance blood sugar levels, while the liver metabolizes toxins, such as alcohol and drugs.

Damage to the pancreas and the liver, two vital organs in the human body, can lead to an imbalance of electrolytes, protein, calories, and fluids. Persistent alcohol abuse can cause severe nutritional and vitamin deficiencies. The most common of those deficiencies being folic acid, vitamin B6, and vitamin B1 (also known as Thiamine). These vitamin deficiencies can cause anemia, as well as neurological issues. Anemia can lead to frequently feeling cold, fatigue, and dizziness, as well as experiencing headaches and a shortness of breath. The lack of thiamine (B1) can sometimes lead to severe learning disabilities and memory problems.

Opioids & Nutrition

When someone begins regularly misusing opioids (heroin, codeine, morphine, oxy, percocet, vicodin), they often begin to develop disordered eating. There are several patterns of eating that result from appetite suppression due to excess dopamine production and the competing priorities of eating and continuing drugs use. These include:

- Eating fewer than two meals a day
- Putting off meals to prolong the opioid intoxication
- Skipping meals
- Failing to eat enough fruits and vegetables

Another issue that can arise is “opioid-induced constipation,” which can become severe over time. As the condition worsens, appetite suppression increases and eating can become painful. Stopping opioid abuse and

increasing fiber intake is the only way to get back on track after opioids have hijacked your nutrition.

Stimulants & Nutrition

Stimulants (amphetamines and cocaine) cause increased energy, euphoria, and decreased appetite. Satiety centers within the brain are influenced by the activity of stimulant drugs. Through mechanisms not altogether understood, their presence in the brain can send signals that turn down the drive to eat.

When using stimulants, staying up for days at a time is often typical, with each binge leading to dehydration, electrolyte imbalance, and can cause severe weight loss and malnutrition. Problems associated with malnutrition include:

- Suppressed immune system
- Muscle wasting
- Respiratory muscle strength inadequate for forceful coughing, increasing the risk of pulmonary infection and lengthened recovery duration
- Impaired healing of wounds
- Low levels of phosphate, magnesium, and potassium
- Cardiac rhythm disturbances
- Low body temperature
- Psychological and cognitive issues (depression, low-self esteem, apathy, confusion, and a lack of sex drive)

When people who abuse stimulants stop, their appetites may spike. They may feel compelled to overeat, which can shock the digestive system. The best nutrition plan at that point is to reintroduce foods slowly to help with properly awakening the brain and digestive system.

Marijuana & Nutrition

Marijuana can increase a user's appetite, particularly for junk food, which doesn't contain essential vitamins and

nutrients. Over time, a chronic marijuana user may gain an excessive amount of weight due to overeating and making poor food choices. Regular marijuana users may also be deficient in essential omegas 3 and 6 fatty acids. When someone doesn't have enough of these nutrients, they may experience inferior wound healing, increased risk of infection, a dry rash, and other inflammatory skin issues.

Those who use marijuana and binge on junk food consume more trans fats than recommended, which, along with THC, impairs a cell membrane's ability to work properly and repair damage. The overconsumption of unhealthy food can lead to obesity and increased risk of conditions such as heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, female cancers (colon, breast, endometrial), type 2 diabetes, sleep apnea, reproductive problems, and gallstones.

How Nutrition Helps with Recovery

Long term substance abuse puts remarkable stress on the mind and the body. Proper nutrition can help both the brain and the body to heal from chronic substance abuse and can increase your odds of getting and staying sober.

Benefits of a healthy, balanced diet include the repair of damage to organs and tissues, improved immune defenses, increased energy, improved mood, and a reduced risk of relapse due to fatigue and/or depressed mood.

You may be tempted to indulge in junk food while you're recovering from addiction, or drawn to "get it off fast" weight loss programs. These two things can actually hinder your recovery process and make it more difficult to stay clean. The best option is to eat a nutritious diet that will foster physical and mental health, improving your chances for long-term sobriety.

OUR NUTRITIONAL STRUCTURE AT JOPPA HOUSE

As you work through your active recovery process, we will help you to stay within your recovery and decrease your likelihood of relapse by working with you to establish the following:

1. Getting more complex carbs

1. Complex carbohydrates (vegetables, whole grains, fruits) provide you with steady, long-lasting energy without the spike and crash of simple carbs (chips, candy, sodas).

2. Exercise

1. Regular exercise can boost your mood, improve body image, increase energy levels, alleviate cravings, and lower the risk of relapse.

3. Taking vitamins and supplements (with consent of your nutritionist & doctor)

1. Vitamins A and C, Zinc, and B-complex vitamins can help restore any deficiencies. Amino acid supplements can also help repair neurotransmitters in the brain.

4. Reduce caffeine

1. Caffeine can cause dehydration as well as appetite suppression.

5. Drink plenty of water

1. People who are recovering from addiction are often dehydrated. You will begin to heal by consuming water with meals and increasing that intake by drinking water in-between mealtimes.

6. Monitor your sugar intake

1. You crave sweets because they trigger dopamine, which is a neurotransmitter activated by some forms of drug use. They help to unnaturally suppress your substance cravings.

7. Avoid processed foods

1. These foods lack nutritional value and typically are full of unhealthy fats.

8. Eat more protein and fiber

1. Fiber makes you feel full, and protein can help to build muscles weakened by malnutrition.

9. Eat regular, smaller meals

1. Eating regularly will keep your blood sugar levels stay high and decrease the craving for unhealthy snacks between meals.

UNIT THREE-B: TRAUMA AND NUTRITION

Nutrition is important after a traumatic experience because our bodies have greater nutritional needs as we heal, as found in the research done by Julia Rucklidge. Traumatic experiences can also have a direct effect on our gastrointestinal track. Trauma does significant damage to every part of our digestive system, including the cells that line the small intestine, which absorb the nutrients we need for every cell in our bodies.

Trauma can also lead to a condition known as “leaky gut” where the cells lining the small intestine separate, which cause proteins to leak into the bloodstream. This allows gluten and milk proteins to get into the blood stream, which can cause inflammatory reactions everywhere in the body, including the brain. Trauma can also damage and disrupt the microbiome, or what is more commonly known as the bacteria in the intestines, essential for gut health. The microbiome is an integral part of our immune systems, producing many of the neurotransmitters our bodies rely on. Post traumatic changes to the microbiome may account for the greater risk for physical health problems after trauma.

HOW TRAUMA AFFECTS OUR FOOD CHOICES

Food has a powerful effect not only on our physical health, but our mental and emotional health as well. When we are traumatized we either don't want to eat anything, or we start eating comfort food: sugary, fatty, salty foods. McDonald's, boxes of mac and cheese, ice cream, and those lovely sodas and energy drinks. Comfort foods increase the levels of certain neurotransmitters in the brain that are tied to a sense of well being: serotonin, dopamine, and endorphins. To some

degree those neurotransmitters help us to suppress traumatic memories. The problem comes with the negative effects comfort food have on our physical being as the short term gain suddenly becomes a long term frustration, as the comfort food becomes an addiction. As the serotonin, dopamine, and endorphins begin to deplete in our systems, our cortisol (one of our stress hormones) starts to go up, and the memories of the traumatic events begin to start returning. Feeling poorly and being haunted by traumatic memories can lead to an even greater reliance on helpful food choices, and the addiction cycle begins.

THE TRAUMA DISCONNECT

Trauma has a way of distancing us from our bodies. When involved in a physical attack like an assault, your body can continuously be reminded of the event, keeping you in a constant state of avoidance to your body as you begin to unconsciously suppress the trauma memory. At times, it may even be a conscious suppression, as you look to avoid any memory of the event entering your mind.

Our bodies are also the home to post traumatic responses, like shallow breathing or racing hearts. Physical indicators often serve as trauma reminders, providing more incentive to disconnect from our bodies, but separating from our bodies can interfere with recovery after trauma, since part of the trauma is stored in the body.

The process of healing often involves reconnecting with our bodies. As we begin reinvesting in ourselves and our bodies, we begin to see our bodies as more than just an empty vessel to get us from Point A to Point B. Our bodies become more than something we just have to get in shape, or something to be ashamed of, reclaiming the simple pleasure of being in our bodies. We are whole beings and we need to begin to realize that more than anything, we are not broken, but instead, even if we are shattered, can become

brand new. Your body can be a powerful ally in your healing journey if you make friends with her again!

RECONNECTING WITH YOUR MIND, BODY, AND SOUL

While at Joppa House we will encourage you to reconnect with your body and who you are to help with the triggers you may be facing when in community living. Some ways that you can help reconnect with your mind, body, and soul are:

1. **Take a bath.** Taking a nice bath or a nice long shower can help you to reconnect. Taking your time and not rushing allows you to check-in with you and feel what is going on with your body.
2. **Mindful breathing.** Trauma also affects the body by causing rapid, shallow breathing. Rapid and shallow breathing feeds the nervous system, causing further tension and stress. Soft belly breathing soothes the nervous system and moves you out of your fight or flight mode.
3. **Get moving!** Physical exercise of any kind helps you to reconnect to your body by learning balance and being able to adjust your body as you move. Make sure to find a physical activity that you enjoy doing. Don't fight against your body as you move, but work with your body in a more relaxed and meditative way. Enjoying the movement of exercise and your body in motion helps you to learn who you are and what you are truly capable of.
4. **Check-in with yourself.** When you have a history of trauma, you tend to brace yourself against the tension of life or escape it all together. That type of reaction tells your brain and your body that you are in danger. When you take the time to check in with yourself you can begin to breathe deeply and relax instead of tensing yourself up in discomfort. When you pair this practice with mindful

breathing, you can begin to release the trauma from your body and your “remembered” responses.

5. **Do a body scan.** Begin with directing attention to each area of your body. Settle on a place where your body is calling you and ask your body why it is tense; ask your body what it needs from you in that area. Listen to what your body is saying and it will become easier to move through those trauma responses when they arise.

OUR NUTRITIONAL STRUCTURE AT JOPPA HOUSE

Food alone cannot heal someone from the trauma, but it can play an important role. Chronic stress breaks down healthy tissues, so we need to give our bodies the building blocks it needs to counteract the inflammation that is caused by the stress that was experienced. This can be accomplished with nutrition. Here are some nutrition basics for trauma:

1. **Eat regular meals & snacks**

1. When you are working through trauma, eating regular meals often falls by the wayside, but when you aren't fueling your body regularly, it can cause even more stress to your body. Irregular meals send a signal to your brain that food is scarce, which disrupts blood sugar levels
2. Filling up on both macro and micro nutrients is essential, as these are being used up at an increased rate to sustain the flight-or-flight response.

2. **Get plenty of Omega 3 & Omega 6 fatty acids**

1. Omega 3's and Omega 6's help to nourish the brain, keeping depression and anxiety responses at bay.

3. **Support your digestive function**

1. The gut is very sensitive to stress and probiotics help to support the digestive system.
2. If you are experiencing high stress, or trauma-related digestive stress, choose a calm environment to eat in.
3. When you are eating, chew your food really well, making it easier for your digestive system to break it down when you eat.
4. 5 minutes of deep breathing before a meal can be a simple, yet effective way to increase the calming chemical messengers that aid in the digestive process.

4. Eat the rainbow! (And I don't mean Skittles!)

1. There are so many beautiful, colorful fruits and vegetables. Stock up and eat those fabulous foods! Here are some colorful suggestions:
Red: tomatoes, watermelon, grapefruit, strawberries, raspberries.
2. Orange & Yellow: carrots, sweet potatoes, yellow peppers, bananas, pineapple, tangerines, pumpkin, yellow squash, corn.
3. Green: spinach, kale, broccoli, avocados, asparagus, green cabbage, brussel sprouts, green herbs, zucchini, green grapes.
4. Blue & Purple: blueberries, blackberries, concord grapes, purple cabbage, eggplant, plums, elderberries.
5. Dark Red: beets, prickly pears.
6. White: cauliflower, garlic, leeks, onions, mushrooms, radishes, parsnips, white potatoes.

5. Limit coffee, energy drinks, and sodas

1. A common result of trauma is not being able to sleep. Drinks with caffeine can disrupt the sleep cycle and lead to dehydration.
2. Increasing water intake can help you to stay hydrated and help you sleep!

6. Eat lots of protein rich foods

1. Meat proteins include: eggs, chicken, turkey, and lean cuts of pork and beef. Venison and lamb are good sources lean red-meat proteins.
2. Plant proteins include: nuts, soy & tofu, beans, quinoa, kale, broccoli.

7. Don't cut the carbs!

1. Complex carbs (veggies, fruits, whole grains) are key to maintaining energy and blood sugar levels.
2. Simple carbs (candy, chips, white breads) can create more stress in the body.

8. Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate!

1. The brain is 70% water. Dehydration has a negative impact on both cognitive and digestive function.

UNIT FOUR: SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

Joppa House Ministries was founded by Christian principles, which means that we believe that Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross, was in a tomb for three days, rose from the dead, and now sits at the right hand of God in heaven. And because of the sacrifice of Christ, our sins are forgiven. Our old ways have been replaced with new ways.

*If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation;
old things have passed away;
behold, all things have become new.*
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 -

Anyone who has accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior is now part of the Body of Christ. As a part of the body, it is important to nurture our spiritual life (feed our souls) much the same as we feed our bodies.

Our bodies require food and water to live. So also does our spiritual bodies. We need to be “feeding” our souls with the things that will help us grow and become mature in our faith. This unit will discuss the various ways we can nurture our walk, growing in Christ-likeness.

There are many different beliefs regarding religion and faith, and many different ideas of who God is in our society. This unit will explore the beliefs that are of Joppa House, founded by Rev. Ginger Stevens, an ordained Assemblies of God minister.

You may not have had exposure to the love of God in your lifetime. You may even be questioning if you truly believe all of this “religious stuff” and that is okay! We will help you sort

out any confusion or mixed doctrines you may have in your heart and your mind.

First of all, you have to know that God is a loving God. The idea that God is up in heaven shaking His fist at you every time you mess up is not an accurate view of God at all. God is love. Love is not something that God DOES, it is who He IS! The following depicts who God is by describing how love acts:

Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails.

- 1 Corinthians 13:2-8, NKJV -

It does not matter what you have done in this life, nothing can separate you from God's love if you ask Him to come into your heart. Accepting Jesus Christ as your Savior is one of the most wonderful, rewarding decisions you will ever make in your entire life! If you have never accepted Jesus before, ask Pastor Ginger or any one of our volunteers to help you pray a short prayer that will open this new life for you! Then after you pray, God makes you a new creation!

Every believer in Jesus Christ is already a new creation, a new person, with new direction in life, new ambitions, new hope, and a new life! Everything for the believer is new! God has even put within our hearts "a new song" (Psalm 40:3).

Jesus Christ is the bridge between us and God. Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, which caused separation between all mankind (God's creation) and God. There had to be a way to bridge the gap, to SAVE mankind from eternal separation from God. Jesus Christ is that bridge. Jesus came to atone for our sins, sacrificing Himself on the cross,

crucified, dead, and resurrected to bridge the gap and make us right with God once again.

Born Again

When babies are born, it is a very important day in the life of parents. We celebrate birthdays with great fanfare each year, showing our love for our children. When someone accepts Christ as their personal Savior, they are “born again”. Even though the day you were born was an important day, it was not the most important day of your life. The Lord Jesus spoke of a birth more important than even your physical birth. He said that it is not enough for someone to be born once, they must be born twice (John 3:7). To be “born again” simply means to be born anew into God’s family. It means to become a child of God.

Blessed Assurance

With this rebirth comes as assurance that you are now in the family of God and will have eternal life with Him. Death in the natural sense ends physically, but does not end eternally.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

- John 3:16 -

This means that you are given peace and assurance that you will live in heaven with the Lord when you pass from this earth. There is a true heaven and a real hell. Everyone will spend eternity in one place or the other. The child of God is assured of their place in heaven when they follow Jesus Christ and His teachings. And yet, we all have shortcomings and often fall into sin. When we do, we can be assured that we serve a loving God who will show us mercy and grace when we turn to Him, admit our sin, and repent of it, endeavoring to do our best to not repeat that cycle to the best of our ability. God is slow to anger, and quick to forgive. If you sin after you have been born again, be quick to repent,

asking God for forgiveness and asking Him to help you be stronger next time you face temptation. Rely on Him and you will soon see a difference in your life! A good difference!

Hunger and Thirst

Have you ever heard the phrase, “You are what you eat?” Maintaining good health means you have to have a well balanced diet. The same is true for your spiritual health. The spiritual part of you — your soul — must be fed. This “spiritual food” comes in the form of God’s Word — the Bible. Your life will get better and better if you read the Bible on a daily basis. The reason is because the Bible is absolutely true and trustworthy. You can totally depend on it, because it is God’s Word to man; it is not man’s Word about God.

The Bible holds many principles to help you find the right way to handle life’s situations and problems. It contains many promises that God made with His children that will help you to remember that God is for you and not against you! There are many options for reading and studying the Bible:

- ✖ Bible Studies are offered in many churches and groups; attending church allows you to listen to a message of solid, biblical teaching from pastors and leaders of the church.
- ✖ Visit various Bible-believing churches to find one that fits your needs and you feel comfortable in.
- ✖ There are many online Bible studies and apps, like YouVersion, you can use to help you with your Bible Studies and devotions.
- ✖ Acquire a simple devotional to help you open the Word of God on a daily basis.
- ✖ Seek out a mentor or a group to hold you accountable to feeding your soul, to help you answer any questions you may have.
- ✖ Ask God to give you a hunger for His Word, to know more, to give you revelation of what the Scriptures mean and help you to apply it to your life. Believe me, He will!

Prayer

Many people say that they do not know “how” to pray or feel inadequate when they pray. Prayer is really very easy. Prayer is simply “communicating” with God and having a conversation with Him. Communication is an important part of any relationship. Without good communication, thoughts, feelings, and desires remain unknown. God wants us to talk to Him. Your Heavenly Father loves to hear His children talk to Him; to ask Him for things that He desires for us that are in His “will” for us, His plan for us.

God Himself says, “The prayer of the upright is His delight!” Proverbs 15:8, NKJV.

Prayer is simply talking to God from your heart. Since you have been “born again,” you have a personal relationship with God. Because of this relationship, you can call God by “Father”. He is your Dad, your heavenly Dad! He hears you when you speak to Him. He has promised in His Scriptures to give us what we need; not always what we *want*, but always what we *need*.

Ask God to help you know what His plan and purpose is for your life. Ask Him for protection from harm; pray protection over your children every day. Ask Him to provide for your needs. Give Him thanks for the gift of His love, mercy, and grace, and for all His is doing in Your life!

Abundant Life

There was once a country song called *I Never Promised You A Rose Garden*. Accepting Jesus Christ as your Savior does not mean that life is going to suddenly be easy. In fact, the Scriptures say that we will experience trials, suffering, and temptations. Life is never easy and it is nearly impossible without the power of God in your life. Life is just plain tough!

The Christian life is an abundant life, but not necessarily an easy life. There will be obstacles, conflict, and discord. We

have an enemy of our souls who prowls around looking for those to kill and destroy. The devil would love to have us succumb to our old lifestyles, to temptation and sin. It is a spiritual battle. It is challenging to push down our old ways and onto the new that God has put in us. But God can and will give us the power to win over our old natures if we ask Him for help. This is why communication (prayer) with Father God is so important. It is also why feeding on the Word of God (the Bible) and being accountable to a group or church is important. These elements keep you strong in battle until you are better equipped to handle trials and temptations in your life.

It may be a tough road, but, “you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you.” Philippians 4:13, NKJV.

Following Christ

Once a person has accepted Christ as their Savior, they are now called a “Christian” or “Christ-follower” or “a little Christ”. This means you are now identified as a follower of Jesus. Sometimes this can be very confusing, so what does it mean to follow Christ?

In all of life someone leads and other follow, someone is in authority, and others are in submission to that authority. Take for example, an employment situation: the boss is your authority, and you are the follower, or the submissive one. Your employer has authority over you and it is your job to do what is asked or expected of you to do according to your job description. This principle is especially true between Christ and the Christian. Jesus said in Matthew 6:24, “No man can serve two masters” (NKJV); which means no man can serve evil (sin) and good at the same time.

A Christian has only one Master — Jesus Christ. God has been so good to you by redeeming your soul, that we owe Him our best, letting Him have our entire heart, mind, and

soul. A sacrifice of ourselves, giving our lives to serve Christ because the Lord deserves the best we have to offer.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

- Romans 12:1 (NKJV) -

Giving your body to God as a living sacrifice means to totally surrender (or give) your life to Him. It means to recognize that He is the Lord and Master of your life and that you are His obedient servant. This is called “dedication.”

God expects our dedication. The question is: are we really willing to give it? To really answer that question, ask yourself:

- ❖ Am I willing to give up (or stop doing) anything in my life that is not pleasing to God?
- ❖ Am I willing to change anything in my life that God’s Word tells me to?
- ❖ Am I willing to do whatever God asks of me?

To show your dedication to the Lord and your new way of life, you might want to consider being baptized. The word “baptized” simply means to be immersed (submerged) under water. Baptism is an outward expression of an inward change. It is a picture or symbol of your spiritual union and oneness with Christ (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12). Baptism is God’s way for you to show your faith in Christ and your desire to follow Him for the rest of your life. A believer’s Baptism is the first step of obedience for the Christian. When we truly are dedicated to the Lord, submission and obedience follow because we desire to please Him above all else in our lives.

Fellowship

Gathering with other believers is a way to foster growth in our Christian lives, gain understanding, and be held accountable in following the truths and principles given in

God's Word: the Bible. Fellowship with people of "like mind" keeps us strong in the faith and creates a positive environment for our spiritual lives to flourish. In the section above, you have been encouraged to attend a church of your choice, attend small group activities and/or Bible Studies, and other ways to be involved in Christian fellowship opportunities.

All of us need friends — someone to confide in, talk to, laugh with, and trust. God created humans to be social beings. Because of this, we all have an inner desire to have personal relationship with others. However, you should not have a close friendship with just anybody. You should start associating with good company. God wants you to make friends with His children, with people that share the same beliefs and love the same Lord as you do.

God has established a setting to make genuine friends and to build good relationships. This setting is a Bible-centered Church. It is through such a gathering that Christian's commune together, pray together, sing together, learn together, and mature together. People who suffer with substance abuse issues or alcoholism know the value of attending meetings and gathering with their support group. I cannot stress enough the importance and blessing of assembling with God's people.

Look for a local church. These are usually listed in a local newspaper or on a Google search/maps and Apple Maps. Visit a church for at least 4-6 weeks to get the true feel of what a church is like and if it will be a fit for you and your family. Check the things a church offers that will help you sustain and grow in your new found faith:

- ▶ Do they have a nursery or children's program for the kids?
- ▶ Do they offer a women's Bible Study or have small groups based on something that interests you?
- ▶ Do they offer multiple worship times?

- ▶ Does the style or order of service seem agreeable to your personality?
- ▶ Is the message a good, sound, biblically based message?
- ▶ Is the church welcoming and friendly?
- ▶ Is it located within a reasonable distance to where you live?

These are just a few of the questions that may arise in your mind as you look for a place to fellowship. And above all, pray! Pray that God will guide and direct you to just the right place of worship for you! And He will!

Fruit

As you get to know who God is through study and fellowship, you begin to realize that your old nature is slowly disappearing. A new you is appearing as God works on the inside of us, on our heart issues and makes a better person. It is a process called “sanctification”. Sanctification means simply to be “made holy”. The closer we get to God, the more we become like Him. Our attitudes start to change and we become more agreeable and less argumentative, more loving and less hateful, slower to anger and easier to get along with. The fruits of the Spirit are: love, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, patience, joy, peace, long-suffering, and self control (Galatians 5:22) that take residence in our souls. We are not the same. We have changed!

Our attitudes and our actions are much, much more pleasing to God and to those around us. And that should be our ultimate goal: becoming more Christ-like by replacing worry with peace, strife with long-suffering, hate with love, sin with self-control, gloom with joy, and harshness with gentleness.

Getting to know Jesus will make dramatic changes in your view and outlook on life. It will make dramatic changes in how you act and react to people and situations in your

relationships and in your employment. Asking Jesus to be your Lord and Savior is the best thing you could ever do in your entire life! Congratulations on taking this first step to becoming a new creation!

APPENDIX B: JOPPA HOUSE MINISTRIES BELIEFS

Joppa House Ministries is a Christ-centered recovery home for women and children.

Our mission at Joppa House Ministries is to provide a safe, sober, rehabilitative environment for women and women with children. Our program empowers women to remain substance-free while mentoring and training them in the life skills they need, providing them with a healthy, stable environment as they begin to transition and sustain independent living.

Joppa House was birthed out of a desire to help the multiple clients who can through Third Day Fellowship and Outreach's doors that were homeless or facing homelessness; creating a program that can break the cycle of poverty that is plaguing this generation. Trends have changed since Joppa House opened its doors in 2014. Most of our residents were struggling with addictions. To meet this specific and prevalent need, Joppa House has transitioned from its original mission into a recovery residence.

Joppa House Ministries adheres to the following non-negotiable Biblical beliefs:

1. We believe **the Scriptures are inspired by God.** We believe that God declared His design and plan for

mankind, authoritative rule of faith, and conduct.
(2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21)

2. We believe **there is only One True God** revealed in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, commonly known as the Trinity.

(Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10-11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22)

3. We believe **in the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ**. As God's son, Jesus is both human and divine.

1. His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31, 35)

2. His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22)

3. His miracles (Acts 2:22, 10:38)

4. His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21)

5. His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4)

6. His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9, 1:11, 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3)

4. We believe, though originally good, **man willingly fell into sin**, ushering evil and death, both physical and spiritual into the world.

(Genesis 1:26-27, 2:17, 3:6; Romans 5:12-19)

5. We believe **every person can have restored fellowship with God through salvation**, trusting Christ, through faith and repentance, to be our personal Savior.
(Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11, 3:5-7; Romans 8:16; Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12)

6. We believe and practice two ordinances: (1) **Water Baptism by immersion** after repenting of one's sins and receiving Christ's gift of salvation (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12), and, **Holy Communion** — the Lord's Supper; a symbolic remembrance of Christ's suffering and death for our salvation.

(2 Peter 1:4; 1 Corinthians 11:26)

7. We believe **the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is a special experience following Salvation** that empowers believers for witnessing and effective service, just as it did in New Testament times.

(Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-31; Acts 8:12-17, 10:44-46, 11:14-16, 15:7-9; John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8, 2:43; Hebrews 12:28; Acts 2:42; Mark 16:20)

8. We believe **sanctification initially occurs at salvation** and is not only a declaration that a believer is holy, but also a progressive lifelong process of separating from evil as believers continually draw closer to God and become more Christ-like.

(Romans 12:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12)

9. We believe **the Church as a Mission** to seek and save all who are lost in sin. We believe the Church is the Body of Christ and consists of the people who, throughout time, have accepted God's offer of redemption (regardless of religious denomination) through the sacrificial death of His son Jesus Christ.

(Ephesians 1:22-23, 2:22; Hebrews 12:23)

10. We believe **divine healing of the sick is a privilege for Christians today** and is provided for in Christ's atonement (His sacrificial death on the cross for our sins).

(Isaiah 53:4-5; Matthew 8:16-17; James 5:14-16)

11. We believe in **the blessed hope — when Jesus raptures His Church prior to His return to earth** (the second coming). At this future moment in time all believers who have died will rise from their graves and will meet the Lord in the air, and Christians who are alive will be caught up with them, to be with the Lord forever.

(1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1

Corinthians 15:51-52)

12. We believe in **the millennial reign of Christ** when Jesus returns with His saints at His second coming and begins His benevolent rule over earth for 1,000 years. This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel and the establishment of universal peace.
(Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24:27, 30; Revelation 1:7, 19:11-14, 20:1-6; Ezekiel 37:21-22; Zephaniah 3:19-20; Romans 11:26-27; Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:308; Micah 4:3-4)

13. We believe **a final judgment will take place** for those who have rejected Christ. They will be judged for they ruin and consigned to eternal punishment in a punishing lake of fire.
(Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Revelation 19:20, 20:11-15, 21:8)

14. We believe and look forward to the perfect **New Heavens and a New Earth** that Christ is preparing for all people, of all time, who have accepted Him. We will live and dwell with Him there forever following His millennial reign on Earth. "And so shall we forever be with the Lord!"
(2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21, 22)