



Monthly Newsletter

FELLOWSHIP
HOUSE

December 2024



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Here's what has happened in the last month and what's to come!

Dear Friends,

As we transition into winter, I want to take a moment to reflect on all the incredible progress and changes we've experienced together over the last month. At Fellowship House, our mission to guide individuals on a path of purpose and recovery continues to unfold in ways that inspire hope, resilience, and growth.

This month has brought an increase in our census, reaching full capacity for our residential services. We've also celebrated the successes of many flourishing graduates, including Mike Gell, Eli, Dylan, Hosh, and others in our intensive IOP program, which continues to run both five days a week and in the evenings.

Our CRS (Certified Recovery Specialist) services have expanded significantly, connecting clients to meaningful employment opportunities, skills training, and regional colleges, such as the University of Scranton, LCCC, and Johnson Technical School. Sobriety, while a cornerstone, is just the beginning. Purpose is what sustains the journey—through challenges, joys, and everything in between. It's our privilege to help reignite that sense of purpose in every client, knowing it lasts longer than fleeting happiness and fortifies them against life's inevitable ups and downs.

We've also been busy building memories! From pumpkin patches and Thanksgiving dinner to art classes, hikes, movie nights, and even axe throwing, these moments remind us of the joy and connection that recovery can bring.

Our podcast will soon return with Season 5, where we'll share exciting announcements about new services and the groundbreaking of our new clinical center, set to open in 2025. These expansions reflect our commitment to creating a deeper sense of empathy and understanding, especially as we honor and celebrate the diverse cultures, rituals, and beliefs within our community this season. Empathy, after all, fuels compassion—and compassion is what drives us to not just feel what others feel but to actively help.

Looking Ahead

We invite all alumni, clients, providers, and staff to join us for our Christmas Party as we come together to celebrate the season and the shared journey of recovery. Many more events and exciting updates are on the horizon, and we can't wait to share them with you in the coming months.

As always, thank you for being part of this incredible community. Your dedication and support remind us every day why we do this work.

Wishing you peace, purpose, and joy this winter season,

Joe Van Wie

In this newsletter
you can expect:

Community
Updates

Podcast
Interviews

Stories of Impact

Volunteer
Spotlight

Mandala Room

Staff Profile
Highlights





Community News

This winter, we are proud to celebrate the accomplishments and milestones of our Fellowship House community.

We are thrilled to announce the successful graduations of many of our fellows, including Hosh, Eli, Mike L., Khalil, and Dylan. Each graduate has earned their place in our now-traditional coin-out ceremony, symbolizing their progress and resilience. This includes receiving the Owl Mandala, a powerful emblem of wisdom that sees clearly even in the darkest times—a fitting reminder of the strength they carry into their next chapter.

This past month, we've seen remarkable engagement among our younger clients, particularly in academics and career

Volunteer Spotlight Graig Hill

We are thrilled to introduce Graig Hill, our Volunteer of the Month, who has now officially joined the Fellowship House staff. Graig, an alumni of our evening IOP program, has generously dedicated countless hours this summer leading our weekend nature program and supporting clients through their recovery journey. Each Saturday, Graig brings his expertise as a master outdoors man to guide PHP and IOP clients through intermediate to upper intermediate hiking trails across northeastern and southern PA. His contributions have become an essential part of our team, offering everyone the chance to decompress, recover together, and connect with nature. Join Graig on the trails and experience the transformative power of nature as part of your recovery journey!



An Inspiring Evening with Chris Herren at Kalahari Resort

Fellowship House had the privilege of spending an incredible evening with Boston Celtics legend Chris Herren to discuss addiction and the powerful journey of recovery. The event took place at the beautiful Kalahari Resort, where our group of residents engaged in a heartfelt and eye-opening Q&A session with Chris, whose own story of overcoming addiction has inspired thousands. Chris shared his personal struggles, triumphs, and insights into recovery, providing our guys with a unique opportunity to connect, learn, and feel empowered in their own recovery journeys. It was a night filled with motivation, support, and a deep sense of community—a true reminder that recovery is possible, and no one has to walk the path alone. We are incredibly grateful to Chris for sharing his time and story, and to Kalahari Resort for hosting this memorable event.

Podcast & Blog Highlights



Mike “G” FH Alumni

We're thrilled to highlight Mike G, a dedicated Fellowship House alumnus who recently returned from Italy. Mike, who once pursued a promising European football career, now shares his incredible journey from the football field to his path of recovery.



Luzerne County Community College

In this episode, we also highlight our exciting new partnership with Luzerne County Community College (LCCC). This collaboration offers educational programs and opportunities for Fellowship House residents, providing a pathway to personal growth and career advancement as part of their recovery journey.



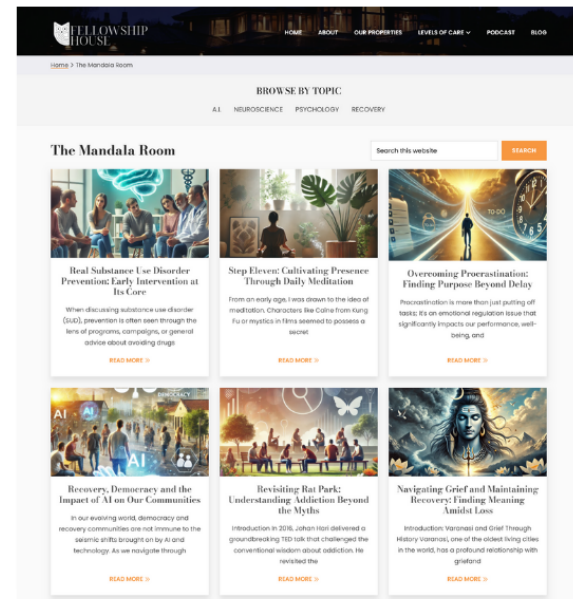
Amir “F” FH ALUMNI

We sit down with Amir to discuss his unique journey growing up in a military family and how it shaped his life. Amir shares his experiences with the discipline and challenges of being part of a military household, his love for football, and his personal path through substance use disorder (SUD) treatment.



Joey “C” FH ALUMNI

Joey C's journey is a remarkable one, starting at Westchester University and now bringing him to a new chapter in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Transferring to a local school, Joey has become an active member of our vibrant recovery community.



The Mandala Room

Exploring New Insights in Therapy and Recovery

Last month, we explored important topics such as **early intervention, 11th Step practices, the intersection of AI, democracy, and recovery, and the science behind procrastination.** These discussions offered valuable perspectives on how these themes shape personal growth and recovery journeys. The Mandala Room is more than just a blog—it's a space where heart, authenticity, and in-depth exploration come together. Inspired by our mandala logo featuring wise owls, we are committed to exploring a wide range of subjects that resonate deeply with our community, including therapy, neuroscience, psychology, sociology, and substance use disorder (SUD). Each weekly post is carefully crafted to offer valuable insights, helping our readers navigate the complexities of the human experience. Our latest posts on cost letters, anger, free will, and grief provide a rich tapestry of knowledge that not only informs but also supports our readers, whether in recovery or professional practice.



"Joe Van Wie: Bridging Creativity, Leadership, and Recovery Advocacy"

Meet Joe Van Wie, Co-Founder and CEO of Fellowship House in Scranton, Pennsylvania, which serves up to 75 men per month through a 90-day Partial Hospitalization Program designed to treat Substance Use Disorder (SUD).

Joe brings a diverse and unique background to his work in recovery. Before dedicating himself to the field of SUD treatment, Joe had a celebrated career as a filmmaker and media consultant. He is an award-winning filmmaker, having won HBO Latino's Film Festival "Best Picture" for his feature film *Forged*, among other accolades throughout his film career. A former member of the Screen Actors Guild and the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, Joe also owned a successful advertising agency for 13 years. His agency specialized in market and dial research for political, legal, and energy clients on a national scale, shaping impactful campaigns that drove measurable outcomes.

In 2020, Joe completed a trauma-focused CE course with Gabor Maté through the California School of Integrated Studies, which further deepened his understanding of addiction as a response to trauma. His vision for the future of Fellowship House is to provide more intelligent and compassionate care for individuals with SUD, grounded in authenticity, purpose, and connection.

Joe views the current age as defined by three significant challenges: disembodiment, untruth, and the post-labor market, driven by the rise of AI and advanced technology. These societal shifts have been correlated with a rise in SUD and mental health disorders, even as we live in a time of unprecedented abundance in food, shelter, and medicine. He sees these complications as opportunities for the field of recovery to evolve and address the root causes of addiction in a way that produces lasting recovery—not just temporary comfort.

Joe also hosts a podcast dedicated to exploring addiction and recovery through thought-provoking conversations with clinicians, researchers, legislators, and individuals who embrace diverse pathways to healing. As a father, husband, filmmaker, and reformed media consultant in recovery, Joe brings a unique and compassionate perspective to every discussion.

He holds a B.A. in Psychology from the State University of New York and is a Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor (CADC). In 2023, Joe completed the Executive Leadership Program at MIT's Sloan School of Management and Schwarzman College of Computing, specializing in Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence in Business. He is currently in the one-year residency program at Columbia University's School of Social Work, pursuing a Master of Science in Social Work.

Thank you for reading!

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