



# MARCH 2023 NEWSLETTER

## Recovery In Action

BY JUSTIN ZELL

My name is Justin Zell. When I was just 9 years old I started to dabble with drinking and smoking weed. At age 12 I broke my ankle and I was prescribed opioids for the pain. One day I took more than prescribed and realized I liked the feeling, and from that moment on I was chasing that high.

When I was 16, I tried heroin for the first time because it was cheaper to buy than pills. In high school I received a scholarship to go off to college to play football and I let that go as at the time, I cared more about being high than going off to college. At 18 I had my first son, and being a father was the best feeling in the world. When my son was only 2 years old, his life tragically ended in a car accident when the car he was in was hit by a drunk driver. Losing him was the start of my downfall. I become a high functioning addict, all I wanted to do was numb the pain. It was incredibly hard to live with the reality that my son was no longer here.

Trying to escape the pain I purposely overdosed on 3 different occasions. The first few times I overdosed, I was given Naloxone, each time it took multiple doses to get me to come to. The third and final time I tried to end my life I took 15 opioids, a dose lethal enough to end my life, and went for a drive. I ended up passing out at the wheel flipping my car three times landing into a ditch, I was not wearing a seatbelt. I woke up with nothing but a small scratch on my leg, realizing there's a reason I am still here. That day was January 17, 2018, and I have been in sobriety since. Due to the accident, I had the choice to go to jail on numerous charges or to go to rehab to get help, I chose rehab. A few days later in rehab I found out I was going to be a father again and that's when I made the decision to never go back to that lifestyle. I wanted to be a better person for not only myself but for my children. I now have 3 beautiful children and get to live a life free of addiction, I was given a second chance at life.

Since I have been in recovery, I knew I wanted to help others struggling with addiction. I currently work at Turning Point in Rapid Access. I get to speak at different support groups offered by Turning Point and in the community. I can relate with those struggling because I know how it feels to be in a low place and to feel hopeless. I am here today to say that recovery is possible and that there is hope. I thankfully have always had the support of my family, friends, and a huge support group in the recovery community and without them I don't know where I would be today.



## This Issue

Recovery In  
Action Spotlight  
By Justin Zell  
pg. 1

Turning Point  
Upcoming &  
News  
pg. 2

CEO Report  
by Matt Oliver  
pg. 2

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events, employment  
opportunities, and  
updates visit  
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## March is Women's Month

### Below are 5 Tips from Powerful Women Leaders in Recovery

1. Being open and honest about your recovery reduces stigma.  
- Kelly Fitzgerald
2. Anything I use to escape the present moment can become an addiction.  
- Nikki Myers
3. How can you turn your struggle into triumph? Write your recovery.  
- Ann Dowsett Johnson
4. Nobody else will make your self-care a priority.  
- Elizabeth Vargas
5. Show up for your pain.  
- Gabby Bernstein

## CEO Report

I frequently get asked what makes Turning Point different? When I think about this question, I have to pause and think about the answer on a few different levels as there are many aspects of our care that are similar to other caregiving agencies. But I think there are at least three primary defining characteristics.



First is the focus on lived recovery experience in our team members. All of our peer coaches and most of our other team members are in recovery themselves or have grown up with family members struggling with substance use addiction and/or mental health challenges. This impacts our culture significantly and does so in a way that we regularly focus on how can we sincerely welcome, accept, and support individuals in their recovery journey.

Second, we typically don't see formal treatment as the most important part of the recovery process but rather see it as a critical foundational step to building an ongoing commitment to engaging in a recovery community. This is simply because recovery is a lifelong process that can be full of ups and downs -- as we say, take nothing for granted in recovery.

Third, Turning Point is committed to being a strong recovery community organization where our continuum of care focuses on removing barriers to care access, offering best-practice support, conveying a genuine sense of hope and encouragement, and bringing people together outside of treatment. Whether through the Recovery Café for adults, the Discovery Café for youth, or other support groups, it is essential to bring people together to connect, be themselves, and appreciate that one is far more than an illness.

It is often said that the opposite of addiction is connection, and it is vital for people in recovery -- especially early recovery -- to find a supportive community to change "people, places, and things." But it is also about healing. Healing hurt relationships with those who have supported our recovery journey. This may be making amends with family members, friends, significant others -- those that have done their best to support us in getting the help we need. All of these elements are essential for maintaining and enjoying sobriety, avoiding feelings of isolation, rediscovering oneself, and connecting with others who understand what we're experiencing -- we focus on these relentlessly to make Turning Point different.

*Matt*

Matt Oliver, CEO

## Upcoming

### Lifting The Stigma

Lifting The Stigma is a weight lifting fundraiser for our REACH youth program. The event will be held at FIT Kokomo on Saturday May 6th. We are looking for sponsors, teams, and individuals to participate. Registration ends April 14th, click the link below to sign up!

<https://www.turningpointsoc.org/lifting-the-stigma-registration/>

### Rise & Grind

Rise & Grind is a breakfast fundraiser for our Recovery Cafe. The event will be held at Turning Point on Tuesday May 23rd at 7:30am. This is a great opportunity to see what our Recovery Cafe has to offer. If you're interested in sponsoring this event or joining us for breakfast, click the link below.

<https://www.turningpointsoc.org/event/rise-grind/>

## News

### Turning Point News

-In the month of March over 620 Naloxone kits were distributed in Howard County. The average has been about 700 per month since January 2023.

- On March 29, 2023 the FDA approved Naloxone to be sold over the counter directly to consumers in places like drug stores, convenience stores, grocery stores and gas stations, as well as online. The goal is for more availability of the medicine to reduce the nation's alarmingly high drug fatality rates.