

Resources for Recovery

Reaping and Savouring the Rewards of Recovery

Reaping and sowing are a part of life, regardless of our current circumstances. At some point in our recovery journey, many of us have had to come to the tough realization that in active addiction we alone were responsible for creating the mess we were living in.

Thankfully, while living sober, we find that we can create something completely different. If 'garbage in, garbage out' was true in the days prior to recovery, then life in recovery gives us the opportunity to experience the opposite: 'sober living brings sober results' and, in time, our new healthy behaviours, choices and outlook bear fruit.

One way this process has been described is through 'The Twelve Rewards' of recovery, a concept presented at the AA International Convention in 1985 and we at Tamarack believe it still holds true today. The Twelve Rewards of recovery are as follows:

- Hope instead of depression
- Faith instead of despair
- Courage instead of fear
- Peace of mind instead of confusion
- Self-respect instead of self-contempt
- Self-confidence instead of helplessness
- The respect of others instead of their pity and contempt
- A clean conscience instead of a sense of guilt
- Real friendships instead of loneliness
- A clean pattern of life instead of a purposeless existence
- The love and understanding of our families instead of their doubts and fears
- The freedom of a happy life instead of the bondage of an alcoholic obsession

Ann C. - Presented at the 1985 International convention.

Of course, the process of recovery can be very hard. At times we struggle to see our progress and can feel stuck, but once we experience the 'fruits of our labours' in recovery—improved

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relationships with family and friends, for example—a renewed sense of purpose and determination takes hold and we find that we no longer miss our old way of life.

Eventually, we look at where we are and realize we have come so far. So far, in fact, that we can see there is too much to lose by going back to old behaviours.

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Stopping and appreciating the rewards of recovery helps us to not only actively embrace (and even celebrate) where we are in the present, but also grow to understand that we have the potential to live beyond the self-perceived limitations we had previously held.

So, take some time to reflect, focus on the present and see how far you have come. Savour the moment and the rewards of your recovery!