



ESTHER ASKED FOR HELP; SO SHOULD YOU

THE POWER OF SUPPORT GROUPS IN RECOVERY

Recovery journeys can be about a variety of conditions, including alcoholism and substance misuse. Regardless of what your recovery journey looks like, it shares something with everyone else's journeys: the feeling of solitude. With the overabundance of messaging around addiction and drug use online and in popular culture, many struggling with addiction feel they can face it on their own, believing they already know what they need to do to overcome their struggles. This sense of independence can be healthy and lead to successful recovery for some, but for others, the lack of community and accountability can be a barrier to healing, leaving them feeling isolated or unsupported in their recovery process. That is where support groups come in.

In support groups, vulnerability is met with understanding and acceptance. Individuals can express their fears, frustration and victories, knowing they are not alone in their struggles and have a community that can help keep them accountable. Each participant brings their unique story, but they all share a common goal: recovery. This sense of shared experience can be incredibly powerful; it fosters a deep sense of connection and solidarity, which are vital pieces of the recovery process.

A common and dangerous misconception holds that support groups are only for those who have reached rock bottom or who are struggling to maintain sobriety. In reality, recovery groups are beneficial at every stage of the journey. Even those who feel they have a handle on their addiction can benefit from the collective wisdom and experience of others. The guidance of peers who have walked similar paths offers perspectives that are often difficult to find elsewhere. Support groups provide a safe, nonjudgmental space where individuals can reflect on their progress, confront challenges and receive encouragement. It also allows individuals to see there is no single path to healing but rather many ways to approach and manage addiction.



Written in Collaboration with Selah Bk.

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This lesson sits at the heart of the Purim story. When her uncle Mordechai assigned her the monumental task of approaching King Ahasuerus to plead for her people, Queen Esther could have acted alone. She had the strength and knowledge to carry out her mission by herself. Instead, she asked her community to join her in fasting and praying before she took the next step.



Go, assemble all the Jews who live in Shushan, and fast on my behalf; do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maidens will observe the same fast. Then I shall go to the king, though it is contrary to the law; and if I am to perish, I shall perish! (Esther 4:16)

Her choice to ask for help and support offers a lesson that remains relevant today. Even though Esther was a queen, capable and wise, she understood knowing what to do isn't always enough. She needed the strength of her community behind her, spiritually and emotionally, before facing the risks that lay ahead. This is a poignant reminder in the context of recovery: Even when we feel we know the steps we need to take, we cannot take them alone. Recovery requires vulnerability, and asking for help — whether from a professional or a peer in a support group — is a courageous and necessary step.

In the world of recovery, individuals often receive guidance from various sources such as family members, therapists or support group leaders. But some believe they know what they need to do and can handle it on their own. They distance themselves from others. This mentality can lead to isolation and missed opportunities for growth. Just as Esther sought the help of her community, individuals in recovery must recognize the importance of leaning on others, even when they feel capable of managing their recovery independently.



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Uplifting the Role of Recovery Groups:

Support groups are more than just a place to talk — they are integral to the recovery process, because they offer connection, encouragement and accountability. They help individuals build relationships that provide emotional support and foster a sense of belonging. The bonds created within these groups can serve as a lifeline during moments of doubt or temptation.

As recovery groups play a crucial role in healing, it is important to recognize and nurture their potential too. The communal aspect of recovery is not just about receiving support; it is about giving support as well. In these spaces, individuals can learn to serve others, sharing their own stories and wisdom in ways that empower those around them. This reciprocal nature of recovery groups helps to create a thriving environment where everyone can contribute to one another's growth and healing, offering a unique opportunity for both tikkun olam, repairing the world, and tikkun hanefesh, repairing the soul.

Activity - Talking About Recovery

For Someone Facing a Recovery Journey

We encourage anyone reading this resource to seek out local support groups. For now, though, consider having a select group of people ready for you to call at a moment's notice for support. Set times to check in regularly with one another and build accountability and community as you search for a broader one. Use the space below to write down who you can call, how you can reach them and when you can reach them. Make a schedule with them to ensure regular communication.

Name**Contact****Time**

1

2



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For Someone with a Loved One Facing a Recovery Journey

It can be hard to know what to say to someone you love who is struggling with recovery. Here are some small talking points you can use to manage difficult conversations (while being a supportive and loving friend) and help them find a more informed recovery space.

- I may not fully understand what you're going through, but I want to learn so I can support you better.
- I love and care about you for who you are, not just for where you are in your recovery.
- You are not your past mistakes. You deserve kindness, compassion and a fulfilling life.
- I see how hard you're working, and I want you to know I'm proud of you.
- You don't have to go through this alone. I'm here to support you in whatever way you need.
- You don't have to have all the answers right now. I'm here to walk alongside you as you figure things out.
- If you ever want to share your experience with me, I'd love to hear what this journey has been like for you.

