

## HEALTHY RECOVERY DEFINED

There is more to recovery from alcohol or drug addiction than staying sober. According to Random House Dictionary, sober is defined as not intoxicated or drunk. However, sobriety is defined as the state or quality of being sober. There is a definite quality to a health care professional's life when a person is in sobriety verses just being sober.

A sobriety-centered lifestyle typically encapsulates some or all of the following for the health care professional:

- Abstaining from all mood-altering chemicals, not just the drug of choice
- Completion of a treatment program and aftercare program
- Regular attendance and participation at 12-Step meetings
- Active participation in discussions with a sponsor and working or reworking the 12-Steps as needed
- Identifying relapse warning signs, including those specific to health care professionals and actively managing them
- Following a defined relapse prevention plan
- Utilizing personal, professional and recovery support systems and accepting difficult feedback from those support systems when needed
- Using healthy coping skills when experiencing a craving or stress that could trigger a relapse
- Living a healthy lifestyle, including self-care, exercising regularly, eating healthy and stopping tobacco use
- Participating in pro-social, non-using activities
- Feel the feeling - not avoiding uncomfortable feelings, but rather identifying the feeling and choosing a healthy coping method to resolve the feeling
- Working to create an attitude of gratitude and not entitlement or grandiose thinking
- Being other-centered, not self-centered
- Striving for genuine humility
- Rigorous honesty – being honest with self and others despite the possible adverse consequences to the health care professional
- Taking a personal inventory daily, including constructively reviewing the days activities, thoughts and feelings, and then seeking guidance to learn from mistakes and correct them as necessary
- Promptly admitting when wrong and making amends whenever possible
- Practicing the 12-Steps in daily life and carrying the 12-Step message to others
- Accepting the addiction and internalizing the changes that have been made, not just making external changes

Sobriety signifies that the health care professional's recovery is a priority. In order to maintain sobriety and sanity, the alcoholic or addict must put "first things first" (Alcoholics Anonymous). Prioritizing the activities listed above will help ensure long-term sobriety and a healthy recovery.

*If you have further questions about the Nebraska Licensee Assistance Program, or feel that you may benefit from the alcohol/drug assistance services of the NE LAP, please contact the NE LAP Coordinator, Judi Leibrock or the NE LAP Counselor Michelle Hruska, at (800) 851-2336 or (402) 354-8055. You may also go to our web site [www.lapne.org](http://www.lapne.org)*

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