

The LRM, L.I.F.E. Recovery Model



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Welcome!

Thank you for taking the time to view this L.I.F.E. Recovery Model (LRM). What you are about to read is a compilation of “Best Practices” for addiction recovery from practitioners, group facilitators and those who have implemented these practices to successfully **Live In Freedom Everyday**. L.I.F.E. Recovery International is dedicated to continually provide proven addiction recovery information from a biblical and clinical basis. We hold great expectations for those who view this model and follow its practices.

*May God richly bless your efforts.
L.I.F.E. Recovery International*

Established in 2000, the Lord has equipped L.I.F.E. Recovery International with excellent materials written by the foremost authorities in sexual addiction recovery. The **LRM**, L.I.F.E. Recovery Model, written by Sue Moore, S.A.S., is fully endorsed by Mark Laaser PhD, the foremost Christian authority on sexual addiction recovery, a national board certified Christian counselor and a member of the Advisory Board for L.I.F.E. Recovery International.

Elements of the Addictive Condition An Introduction

SPIRITUAL DOCTRINE: If God can heal disease then He can heal me!

As a Christian, you may be wondering why you should submit yourself to a “man-made” recovery program. Why not, instead, spend your time praying for an instantaneous deliverance brought about by an outpouring of Gods power? After all, the Bible speaks of the POWER of the Holy Spirit that works within you, the Bible says that God did not give you a spirit of fear but of POWER, the bible says that the same POWER that raised Jesus from the dead resides inside you...so why the need for a PROCESS?

Well, this is a very fair question with a very simple answer. The truth is, nearly every addict that comes to our ministry has been praying intensely and often for God to deliver them from their addiction. This is a good thing to do and therefore it is something we encourage. God DOES pour out His power to bring healing to addicts. His power to heal addictions, however, does not strike once like a lightning bolt; it flows continually like a river. It is a power that can only be experienced through simple, authentic Christian fellowship. It requires the conduits of transparency, confession, debriefing, and relearning - all of which can only be experienced through community. So it's not a question of power vs. process; it's an embracing of God's power *through* process.

God often heals cancer and other physical ailments instantaneously because doing so does not compromise the overall health of our physical body. In the case of addiction, however, an instantaneous healing *would* compromise our overall emotional and mental health. Such an experience would teach us that our deepest emotional conflicts (that are at the core of our addictive condition) can be healed in isolation and this is not possible. This would be a lesson that is counter-productive to God's design for us, as He has created us for intimacy – with Himself, with His Son Jesus and with each other. We were wounded in relationship; therefore God has chosen to bring healing through relationship. Of course He could bring instant relief of the craving, but years of experience and biblical evidence indicates that He has chosen to bring wholeness through our active participation in a transparent Christian community. If in this transparent environment we address core issues that have hindered our spiritual maturity we will remove the tendency to switch addictions altogether. We will talk more about this later. Meanwhile, welcome to a L.I.F.E. Time of recovery!

FAMILY SYSTEMS: This looks familiar...

If there is one thing you need to understand about addiction it's this: Coping or self-medicating doesn't need an invitation...it only needs an opportunity.

At one time, you were an innocent, unsuspecting child. You, most likely, weren't guided through the experiences in your life that opened the door for a need to escape. Your family, much like any other, may have been unreliable and unskilled themselves to bear the challenge of making it through the day's circumstances. Maybe the best model you saw was how to simply survive. Perhaps you learned at an early age that life cannot be trusted to turn out well so you made your way through the turmoil by using any opportunity to cope and escape the reality. Yet this was your home, your family, your relationships and extended family. In fact, there is an entire psychological discipline about this. It was originally formulated by Dr. Murray Bowen and is called **family systems theory**. As Dr. Bowen explains,

A family is a system in which each member had a role to play and rules to respect. Members of the system are expected to respond to each other in a certain way according to their role, which is determined by relationship agreements. Within the boundaries of the system, patterns develop as certain family member's behavior is caused by and causes other family member's behaviors in predictable ways.

In short, Dr. Bowen believed that you, as a person, cannot be understood (or understand yourself) apart from your family system. This is true because of the following widely recognized principle: early influences operate to shape future behavior. And the majority of your early influences came to you through your family system. Unfortunately, the chaos and injury some of us experienced within our family systems set us up to be vulnerable to compulsive and addictive behavior as adults. Some family systems can even go so far as *modeling* this type of behavior for us! Is it any wonder that our addictive condition looks familiar?

FRAGMENTATION: **I think I'm going mad...**

Well, speaking in terms of the work that was done by Christopher J. Charleton, M.A., LCSW, an internationally known addiction specialist, licensed clinical therapist and specialist in the resolution of addictive and cross-addictive behaviors, your dependency can certainly be driving you to **fragmentation**. According to Charleton, fragmentation is a result of disintegration, which is in direct contrast to God's design of integration. That sounds a bit confusing to me, so think of it this way: you were created in the image of the Triune God; God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The Trinity is a perfect example of integration; each aspect of the trinity is in union with the other, glorifying and reflecting each other's true value in relationship. Similarly, as someone created in God's image you were also designed to be integrated in relationships, thereby illuminating the true value of yourself and others.

The problem is, your family of origin experiences challenged your belief in God's design and skewed your perception of the value of being integrated in community. When your relationships were subsequently compromised (or even avoided altogether), disintegration occurred. Now, here's the main point: **fragmentation perceives both integration and disintegration to be true...**and an internal war between intimacy and isolation ensues. The apostle Paul said it this way, "I don't understand what I do. For what I want to do (intimacy) I don't do, and the very thing I hate (isolation) I do. Now if I do what I do not want to do it is no longer I who does it, but it is sin (dependency) living in me. So then, this L.I.F.E. Recovery Guide you're holding, its Principles and Journal Assignments will prove to be a huge benefit by giving you the tools to examine yourself and your experiences. After all, don't we want to live in freedom? It's our skewed perception that fuels the war between intimacy and isolation in the first place.

ADDICTIVE CONDITION: **So one more time... What's my problem?**

It's not alcohol. Alcohol does not create alcoholics. It's not pornography. Pornography doesn't create sex addicts. Neither is your addictive condition a box of Twinkies or a deck of cards or a freshly rolled joint or an eighty hour a week job.

The problem is your underlying addictive *condition* and it consists of a whole host of issues; neurochemical imbalances, arrested development, unresolved emotional wounds, fragmentation, and an incapacity for emotional wholeness and intimacy. These are the things that create addicts. The problem does not resemble a pair of dice, a sexual encounter, or a box of chocolates, although it likes to play with things like these - especially when you are in pain. Given enough pain and enough opportunity, these things then become the focus of your addictive *behavior*.

In recovery terms, your addictive behavior is simply your attempt to medicate the pain of some past trauma or relational wounding that has not been resolved, and the fact that it remains unresolved becomes the (often subconscious) excuse for continuing in your addictive behavior. It is a self-perpetuating cycle of destruction. And on top of that, Satan is always there to cooperate, using and intensifying your addictive behavior and further disabling your ability to have relationships with those you care about (or even with God Himself). Your problem, your addictive condition, is your enemy and is used by the enemy to bring devastation to your life. Nevertheless, your addictive condition, your coping method or self-medicating always masquerades as your friend.

You very likely found your method(s) of coping amidst the turmoil of your family system. Acting out was fun and even helpful at first, but as you continually fed your addictive condition through years the behavior became pretty burdensome. And so you're here, in need of a community of people who can help you to more clearly identify what's driving your addictive condition and help you through God's healing power to uncover and heal those wounds, for good!

Oh...so what you are really saying is I just need to get sober.

Nope.

Huh?

Sobriety is measured in time. You will be deemed "sober" when you have not engaged in addictive behaviors for twenty-four hours, or a week, a month, etc. That's a great start, but it is not enough.

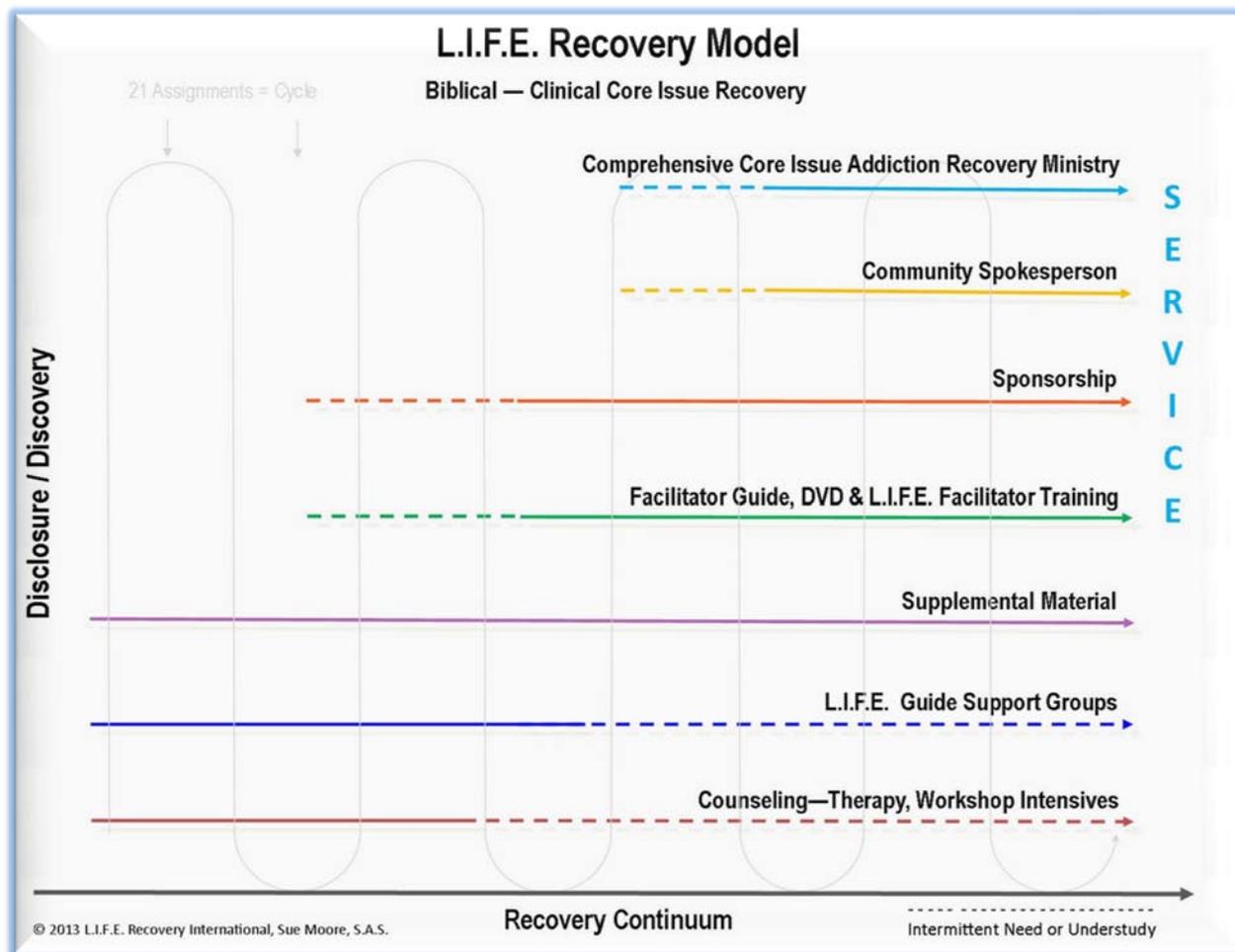
Your addictive condition is clever, resourceful and sinister, and it will let you be sober for a while if it means it can hang around for the long haul. Even Satan, after unsuccessfully tempting Jesus in the desert, simply waited for a more opportune time. Your addictive condition will do the same.

What you need is wholeness. Sobriety is a part of the equation but by itself sobriety does not equal wholeness. Being whole means you are practicing real intimacy. It means you are self-aware and capable of modulating negative emotions through healthy means. It means you are present in the moment instead of being lost inside your head. It means you no longer hide behind "fine." Being whole means God is having His way with you, and as a result you are being transformed inside and out. The point is, you can be sober and still be acting out of your addictive condition. But when you are whole your addictive condition is not only *not* driving - but has no opportunity to re-establish itself and get a seat within you.

By joining a local L.I.F.E. Recovery Group and completing the work that is found in the L.I.F.E. Recovery Guide you are holding, we believe you can achieve wholeness. Accomplishing this will require a lot of consistent effort on your part, but know this; there are thousands of men and women throughout the world who can give testimony to the fact that it was the community and self-discovery they found through L.I.F.E. Recovery that God used to set them free. You can live in freedom everyday! Welcome to L.I.F.E.!

For a more in-depth study of the topics that were introduced here please see Christopher J. Charleton's, book, Relapse.

The L.I.F.E. Recovery Model



The **LRM** was created out of compassion for persons seeking sexual addiction recovery in an ever increasing and diverse market of programs, materials and books of which most offer incomplete or misguided information.

The **purpose** of the LRM is now to provide proven methods for general addiction as well as sexual addiction recovery methods that unite the recovery strategies of individuals, organizations and ministries to work together, worldwide.

As a forerunner in core issue addiction recovery, the LRM is intended to set the industry standard by providing practical applications for individual recovery and service that is designed to duplicate the ministry at every level. We invite you to join us as L.I.F.E. Recovery seeks to be obedient to God's mandate and carry out His kingdom work in the area of addiction recovery.

Goal of the L.I.F.E. Recovery Model is to...

- ♦ Work Together
- ♦ Uniting Ministry Strategies
- ♦ Teaching Trauma Model/Core Issue Recovery and
- ♦ Planting Support Groups

L.I.F.E. Recovery is motivated to work together with...

- ♦ The Christian community
- ♦ Addiction Recovery Ministries
- ♦ Counseling Professionals
- ♦ Colleges, Civic and Social Service Agencies and Prisons

We recognize that the methods demonstrated in the **LRM** are not exhaustive and that research may uncover new insights and in this endeavor to establish an industry standard we seek to remain open to new applications. However, in order for these additions to be adopted they should embrace and enhance the current **LRM** principles for addiction recovery and be approved by L.I.F.E. Recovery review board.

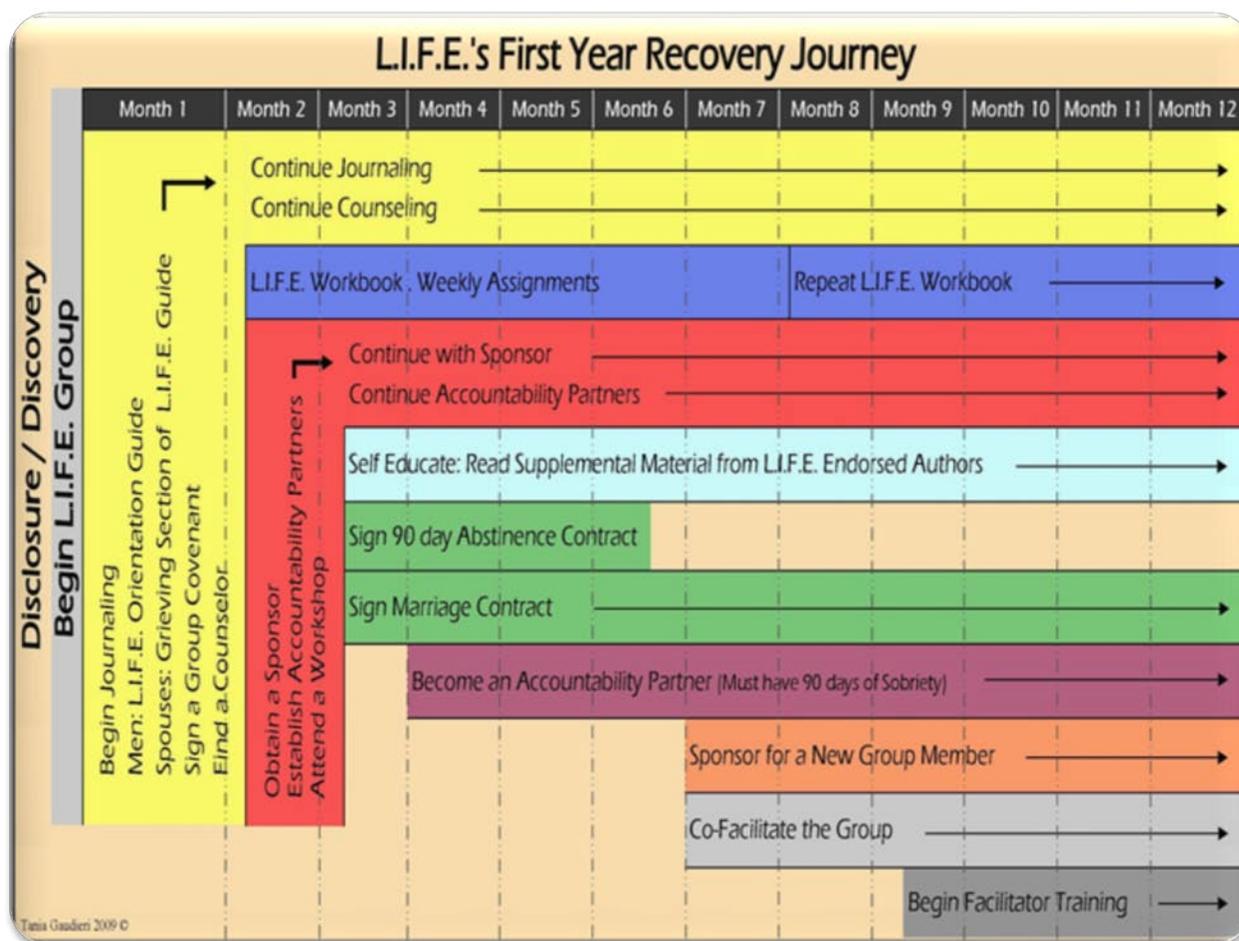
The First Year of Recovery

Before a lifetime of recovery can be experienced one must intentionally develop disciplines that pursue wholeness, all of which are presented in this **LRM**, with particular emphasis on the initiatives begun in the **First Year of Recovery**. Frequent evaluations of a “Recovery Plan” are crucial for success, especially at times when fulfillment appears illusive.

Please keep in mind that every recovery journey is different. Experiences and circumstances vary for each of us. Nevertheless, the entry point for a lifetime of true recovery is through commitment. This timeline for recovery begins the moment we are committed. Are you ready?

The following sequence details the non-negotiable aspects for a successful **First Year of Recovery**. The monthly timeframe is secondary to the sequential building of recovery disciplines and their consistent application within and after each period represented.

The following details the non-negotiable aspects for a successful **First Year of Recovery**.



1st Month - Begin attending L.I.F.E. Recovery Groups and connect with others on the road to recovery. Sign the group covenant as this begins the accountability process and begin journaling to express your feelings, asking and answering questions, identify emotions and thoughts. Journaling is a valuable tool that allows a look back to see changes and growth on the journey. Also find a counselor for individual and couples recovery.

2nd Month - Continue attending groups, journaling and counseling. Begin weekly L.I.F.E. Recovery Guide Assignments. Financially give back: investing into the recovery of another through L.I.F.E. Recovery Group contributions is another sign of the transformation process. Obtain a Sponsor and Accountability Partners. Attend recommended intensive workshops.

3rd Month - Continue attending groups, journaling and counseling; Maintain accountability, check in daily using the "I feel ___ about ___ because ___" dialog with sponsor and or accountability partners. Begin addiction recovery Self-Education. Sign a 90-day Abstinence Contract this is recommended for individuals as well as couples. Sign a Marriage Contract with your spouse. This will establish healthy boundaries and encourage commitment that allows the couple to work on their individual recovery without fear that the marriage will end.

4th Month - Continue attending groups, journaling, counseling, daily check in with accountability partners and abstinence commitment. After 90 days of sobriety and confirmed accountability, become an accountability partner for someone else.

5th & 6th Month - Continue with groups, journaling, counseling, sponsor, accountability partners and abstinence. **Be vigilant**, between the 3rd and 9th month is a dangerous time; one can become tired of disappointments, restrictions and all the hard work involved in recovery. Begin to seek God's vision for your life to Give Back.

7th & 8th Month - Continue with groups, journaling, counseling; sponsor and accountability partners. Before becoming a Sponsor maintain sobriety, accountability and, if married, must have finished 90 days of abstinence. Co-Facilitate the group, help set up for the meeting and/or lead the opening prayer. Continue to seek God's vision for Giving Back.

9th – 11th Month - Continue with groups, journaling, counseling, sponsor and accountability partners. Using L.I.F.E.'s Facilitator Guide, begin Sponsorship and/or Facilitator Training while practicing and teaching the **LRM**. As you seek God's vision for using your story, we strongly encourage the pursuit of using your story to serve in areas shown in the **LRM**.

12th Month – **Celebrate** as you continue walking in your recovery plan! Continue with group, journaling, counseling, sponsor and accountability partners. Experts suggest a **minimum of two cycles** through the L.I.F.E. Recovery Guide assignments to reinforce learned recovery truths that now, from a sober perspective, deepen intimacy and relationship skills. Proactively engage in Giving Back using your witness of God's transformation power to minister to those still in captivity.

The **First Year of Recovery is simply the beginning of the LRM** which represents a lifespan of recovery. Recovery begins at the disclosure or discovery of addiction and moves toward freedom and service to the right, and stops at the end of life.

You will notice in the visual **LRM** illustration that there are solid and dashed lines in the **LRM**. Solid lines represent continual involvement, whereas a dashed line either signifies an intermittent need or, in regards to methods of service, represents a learning phase as an "understudy."

This **LRM** illustration is a lifespan continuum. Please note the "threads" or lines that represent roles or aspects of addiction recovery. There are simultaneous threads pictured in this illustration representing different aspects of recovery occurring at the same time. Some of these threads are non-negotiable methods for successful recovery and others are opportunities for selective means of service determined by one's calling. These practices work in harmony toward the same end, a servant's heart.

The vertical curving continuous line represents the L.I.F.E. Recovery Guide workbook assignment cycle of 21 weeks. We will describe the application of each horizontal thread (line) needed for a lifetime of successful recovery. Please keep in mind, this model portrays an ideal recovery scenario. Each recovery plan consists of a unique timeline taking into consideration specific circumstances for each individual.

Recovery Continuum - Carnes and Laaser imply an active recovery of 3 to 5 years contingent on the investment of working one's program **in addition to** a maintenance phase of recovery demonstrated by continual service that invests into those ensnared by addiction. Leaving the recovery process increases the incidence of relapse substantially. In alignment with biblical principles, transformation continues until we pass from this life into the next.

Counseling, Therapy, Workshop Intensives - Participants need the benefit of Christian counseling, therapy and workshop "Intensives" to help work through deep rooted issues or troubling areas to maintain growth and sobriety. In addition to the benefits of counseling in

the beginning of the recovery process, a need to return to counseling may occur intermittently to move beyond obstacles revealed on the journey. Professionals aid in the process by working through hidden factors that hinder our complete surrender. Workshops provide brief but intense help with underlying spiritual and emotional issues in the recovery process. In an intensive, participants can work on dynamics that might have taken many months if not years of counseling to uncover.

L.I.F.E. Recovery Guide Support Groups

The L.I.F.E. Recovery Guide principles and assignments are vital to revealing hidden factors needed to heal from addiction and to establish a lifetime of recovery. The L.I.F.E. Recovery Guides are based on 7 biblical principles and 21 assignments, plus 7 grieving assignments in the Spouses Guide. To ensure successful recovery, the authors recommend multiple cycles of the L.I.F.E. Recovery Guides in an ongoing, open or closed, group.

“L.I.F.E. Recovery Guides have been recommended as the most adaptable workbooks on the market today. They can be used in groups, mentoring one-on-one, adapted for therapists and therapy groups, churches and other organizations can use the material for “free standing” support group ministry (exclusive to sexual addiction), as a part of a broader recovery ministry for all kinds of issues and addictions, as part of existing programs, or if two people had no resources whatsoever they could work the L.I.F.E. Recovery Guide together. There have not been many, if any, programs/series that have this wide of utility.” Richard Blankenship, LPC, NCC - Executive Director, American Association of Certified Christian Sexual Addiction Specialists

Also vital to the **LRM** is the L.I.F.E. Recovery Group environment. Reinforcing the L.I.F.E. Recovery Guide, a L.I.F.E. Recovery Group offers the essential crosstalk component which empowers participants to speak truth in love and to hold one another accountable; this creates an “iron sharpens iron” environment that spurs growth and builds healthy intimacy skills. In the safety of a L.I.F.E. Recovery Group participants exercise their abilities to speak truth without fear and begin to practice these healthy behaviors in other relationships outside of the group environment. Please note, as one follows their recovery plan and sobriety and stability grow the L.I.F.E. Recovery Group attendance becomes intermittent (dashed line); however, the recovery effort is picked up on another line of service. Successful recovery ***never*** drops off the timeline.

IMPORTANT: New group attendees should be given a list of group members and their contact information, who have volunteered to mentor them during their first six weeks. We suggest that each new attendee be called within a few days after their first visit and encouraged to choose one of these volunteers to come alongside them.

Availability of L.I.F.E. Recovery Groups – At some point the facilitator must decide if the group will remain open for anyone in need at any time or if the group will be closed. Discern the Pros and Cons presented on the illustration and then optimize your L.I.F.E. Recovery Group as a recovery resource for your community. A final note on L.I.F.E. Recovery Groups, no matter if your group is open or closed, lesson breaks, holidays and the summer season tend to disrupt attendance and progress.

Supplemental Material

Reading supplemental material is essential to the LRM. Self-education is necessary to the recovery process, but supplemental material should ***never*** replace or interrupt the recommended L.I.F.E. Recovery Guide assignment cycles. As new people come to your L.I.F.E. Recovery Group, they have an acute need to begin their recovery process immediately with the tested Principle work in the L.I.F.E. Recovery Guide.

Supplemental materials provide valuable information and are suggested to increase the understanding of the origins, consequences and behaviors of addiction and should complement consistent attendance in a L.I.F.E. Recovery Group. Supplemental materials are not sufficient to replace the L.I.F.E. Recovery Group's involvement in the recovery process.

In addition to utilizing L.I.F.E. Recovery materials, as supplemental material, here are some of L.I.F.E. endorsed authors to build your library and understanding, Patrick Carnes, Mark Laaser, Debbie Laaser, Marnie Ferree, Richard Blankenship, Russell Willingham, and Cloud and Townsend. To see a complete list on our website go to <http://astore.amazon.com/lifemin-20>.

As the threads in the LRM are faithfully implemented and our understanding of God's design is received, a time will come to *take recovery to the next level of giving back*. The remaining components listed in the **LRM** provide opportunities to make a difference and serve future generations.

L.I.F.E. Recovery Facilitator Training – The proper sequence for raising up future L.I.F.E. Recovery Group leaders begins with sharing the facilitator's role with other group members. Ask for volunteers to open the meeting with prayer or readings, or to be the group's treasurer passing the envelope for weekly contributions, or to lead the discussion during "Principle" group or to facilitate a small breakout group during the "get current" time. Each responsibility allows the member to "give back" and invest into another's recovery and therefore advancing their own. Offer L.I.F.E.'s Facilitators Guide and Starting a Group DVD as a tool to equip new leaders and encourage everyone to subscribe to L.I.F.E.'s e-newsletter to be up to date on advances in core issue recovery and Facilitator Training events.

L.I.F.E. Recovery Sponsors - One of the most honorable roles in recovery service is becoming a L.I.F.E. Sponsor for someone seeking a life of sobriety. As with Co-Facilitating, similar timing occurs for participants to become involved as a mentor or sponsor. Dependent on prompting and personal circumstances, mentoring or sponsorship may occur simultaneously with Facilitating or Co-Facilitating or in its place. The requirements to be a L.I.F.E. Sponsor are:

- Must be a believer in Jesus Christ.
- Not necessarily be in a L.I.F.E. Group, but...
- Must have a Sponsor themselves, or have been sponsored before.
- Must be progressing in their own healing journey,
 - *Emphasize progress not perfection.*
- Should have at least 6 months sobriety, not a requirement, but highly recommended.
- If married, have completed 90 days of abstinence.

A **Community Spokesperson** advances addiction awareness and provides solutions that address the epidemic in their area or region.

L.I.F.E. Recovery International offers core issue addiction recovery materials for Men, Women, Spouses, Couples, Young Men and Young Women in both sexual and general addiction recovery to establish a **Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Ministry** in your community.

L.I.F.E. Recovery is grateful for the Lord's provision for the aforementioned opportunities to use one's gifting. L.I.F.E. also acknowledges the Holy Spirit may lead a servant into ministry outside the realm of addiction recovery. As in every case of restored relationship with the Father, we are to be witnesses and testify of the path of redemption from sin so others may be encouraged by the hope of our calling.

Simply stated, the L.I.F.E. Recovery Model brings hope to the hopeless with proven recovery applications while offering purposeful opportunities to give back and comfort in the way we were comforted.

Our heart is that you too will be inspired to serve others and make a difference in your generation.

The L.I.F.E. Recovery Model

Sets the Biblical and Clinical Standard for Core Issue Addiction Recovery

Work the Program - the Program Works