Recovery Through Photography

STRESS RELIEF FOR MENTAL ILLNESS AND ADDICTIONS

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Photography is a stress management skill that you can use to relieve stress and promote good mental health. This particular stress management skill allows you to place your focus outside of yourself. Photography is a creative and fun hobby that can help distract you from the stress, anxiety, and depression you may be feeling from sobriety as well as your mental well-being.
“Old habits die hard but they still have to die.”
-Anonymous
People love to photograph just about everything. I don't know about you, but some of my favorite things to photograph are sunsets, nature scenes and beaches. Just the action itself of seeking out the perfect sunset or beachfront so I can get the best possible picture, it can really takes your mind off the stressors of the day and allows you to have fun and be in the presence of something you absolutely love.
Mental illness can mean a serious loss of identity
By picking up a camera and using any or all of these simple tools and techniques, you are not only being present and creative, but you are actually practicing mindfulness, which reduces stress and helps leave you balanced and ready to take on the rest of your day.

So go on...relax, observe, and photograph your way to a better day!
- **Pick a color (or shape).** And look around specifically for that color. Perhaps select a color that is prominent in your living space, so you can print out any good photos and hang them on your walls. Surrounding yourself with your art can help you feel good and inspire you to create more.

- **Carry a prop.** Take an item with you, especially something you find calming or comforting, and photograph it in different locations and different ways. Remember to vary the angle and lighting of your shots to keep them fresh.

- **Don't focus on the finished product.** While it's nice to end up with photos you can appreciate and feel proud of, it is actually the process of taking the photo and not the result that is therapeutic.

- **Stop and breathe.** If you feel stuck or stressed, put your camera aside and concentrate solely on breathing for 10 seconds, then look around and start again from a fresh and balanced place. You may see things that you missed just moments before.
Trashed
Tell your story
Try to shoot photos that tell your life story. Sobriety is a story to be told. You can tell your story in the pictures that you take by telling what sobriety means to you. Maybe even how you see the world through sober eyes now. It can be refreshing and very enlightening.

 Shoot some gifts
If you need something special to give someone for an occasion or just to say "I care" take many photos and then choose the best one to frame and give away. An inexpensive cost for you but it means a lot to the receiver.
The Bottle
I remember my last drink
Why won't this bottle sink
Float away, just leave me be
From its grip I have been set free
I once was in a cocoon so dark and all alone. My world was bleak and dreary, my emotions hard as stone. Now I stop to rest as my grateful heart sings. It's been a long hard journey to finally have my wings.
Life is like a camera...
Focus on what’s important,
Capture the good times,
Develop from the negatives,
And if things don’t work out,
Take another shot!
Thank You!

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