



*"Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see a shadow."
~ Helen Keller ~*



SOBER STORIES

"My life is amazing today. I am clear-headed and able to live life without the constant anxiety of waiting for my next drink or anxiety about what I did or said when I blacked out. I am back in school getting my Masters Degree, I have a fulfilling job helping others, and I've managed to rebuild relationships. Being in recovery is pretty amazing."

~ Brittany C. ~

SOBER SUMMER 2026



Summer is the perfect time to reconnect, recharge, and re-discover the joy of sober living. Recovery is about more than staying sober, it's about building a life filled with meaningful moments, laughter, connection, and new memories. From backyard barbecues and lake days to alumni gatherings, game nights, and community events, there are so many ways to experience the fun and freedom that recovery makes possible.

At Valley Hope, we believe healing happens best in community. That's why we encourage our alumni to stay connected throughout the summer through sober events, fellowship opportunities, and activities that celebrate life in recovery. Whether you attend an alumni event, reconnect with old friends, or simply spend intentional time with loved ones, every positive experience strengthens the foundation you've worked so hard to build.

This summer, choose joy. Choose connection. Choose experiences that leave you feeling refreshed, encouraged, and proud of the life you're creating. We hope to see you at upcoming alumni events as we continue celebrating recovery together, one sunny day at a time.



Visit us online for a special summer event near you!

- ///Block Party - Wichita
- ///Golf & BBQs - Kansas City
- ///Fireworks - Oklahoma
- ///Animal Yoga- Omaha
- ///+ MUCH MORE!

New events added weekly -
+ Save the Date for Renewal
Days & Alumni Meetings!

Explore ValleyHope.org/
events for details.



Sober Summer: Staying on Track

- 1. Rebuild Summer with New Rituals**
 - // Host a sober picnic or mocktail cookout with supportive friends or alumni
 - // Explore hiking trails, paddle boarding, or community events that align with wellness
 - // Take a road trip with recovery-friendly companions and build new memories
- 2. Prepare for Triggers Before Events**
 - // Who will be there?
 - // Will alcohol or substances be present?
 - // What is my exit strategy if I feel uncomfortable?
 - // Bring your own beverages (like flavored water/non-alcoholic options), and line up a sober support buddy you can text or call during the event.
- 3. Surround Yourself with Support**
 - // You don't have to go it alone. Tap into support by:
 - // Attending local or online 12-step meetings
 - // Connecting with Valley Hope alumni groups or events
 - // Scheduling weekly check-ins with a sponsor, mentor, or therapist
- 4. Prioritize Self-Care**
 - // Stay hydrated and get enough rest
 - // Set healthy boundaries with your time and energy
 - // Journal or meditate in the mornings to stay grounded
 - // Keep a gratitude list to reinforce your mindset
- 5. Celebrate Your Sober Wins**
 - // Reflect on how far you've come
 - // Treat yourself to a meaningful reward
 - // Share your journey with someone new to recovery
 - // Help others by volunteering or being a sober presence in social circles

>>> Recovery isn't about restriction, it's about freedom. Summer can be one of the most joy-filled seasons of your life when you embrace it with purpose and positivity.<<<

I was a rough-tough athlete. After high school, I went to a state university in Western Kansas, played football — and was introduced to speed. It was a lot of fun. I got my degree and became a geologist. I would set wells in the countryside. I was doing well in the business, having discovered quite a bit of oil.

After doing speed for four years in college, I was given this white powder: cocaine. Whenever I did it, I wanted more. I couldn't get enough. I started a \$300-a-day habit. In 1984, the oil crisis hit. I was unemployed now too. I lost everything, which made my cocaine use go up higher.

My wife and I had three children, a nice house. She didn't worry about anything other than taking care of us. She was blissful about it all, and I didn't feel good about myself, as a person, as a father. I felt like I was ruining everything.

One night in 1987, I was out on a well sight, and with a bunch of coke, beer, valium — and a shotgun. I planned to kill myself. I had the shotgun in my mouth. I felt an angel telling me not to do this thing. So, I confessed. I came home and told my wife what I had been doing. You see, for all those years, my addiction ... she didn't know. I was able to hide it by being out of town so often.

My dad took me to Valley Hope. I had a couple of aunts who went to treatment. One had success and the other died in her bathtub at home. What would be my fate?

My wife stood by me, showed up for me during treatment. We are on the journey together. We've been married 47 years now. Why did she not only stay but immerse herself in my treatment? She said: "I knew we were meant to be together no matter what and we would get through. I knew deep down he was a very good man."

Spurred on by her support, I went with a willing heart. My time had come. I had to do something with my life or die. I was clean and free from all drugs within a week. I didn't know what living without cocaine would be. I thought it would be horrible. It wasn't.

When I went to Valley Hope, I was happy to be at a place that would show me the correct way to live. And they did show me that. They were not judgmental. After treatment, I attended AA meetings, spoke at schools. I started speaking about my life and doing things the right way.

We moved to Seattle, where I worked on international procurement, managing hundreds of millions of dollars, until I retired. I traveled all over the world. I never drank. I stayed sober.

Today, I remain engaged with Valley Hope and supporting current patients. I'm trying to save lives. If I can help one person, I will have met my goal.

DID YOU KNOW? ValleyHope.org/RecoveryStories provides the full Voices of Hope archive to explore. Simply choose a campaign year to explore the Voices of Hope. These stories, shared by Valley Hope alumni, family members, and partners, offer inspiration, connection, and proof that recovery is possible. Share your favorites with someone who needs some hope. You can also download and share a free copy of the Voices of Hope Anthology that features in-depth recovery journeys.

FOUNDATION FLASH REPORT

Fiscal Year-to-Date July 1, 2025–March 31, 2026

Patients Helped

Thanks to donors, 316 patients have received partial grants for treatment. A total of \$509,483 has been distributed to help patients with financial barriers extend their stay in residential and outpatient treatment to support long-term recovery. Many hundreds of patients have also been helped with immediate needs funded by charitable donations.



Shelter Living:
65 patients



Clothing Assistance:
346 patients



Hygiene Products:
8,078 products



Treatment Materials:
259 books



GEMs make patient assistance a reality.

Give Every Month (GEM) members help Valley Hope patients with steady and available resources. **GEM donors assisted 2,300 patients in the past year.**

We would be honored to have you join this special community. Set it and forget it. GEM donations are automatic and you are free to edit or pause/cancel anytime.

For information, visit <https://valleyhope.org/donate/> or (call/text) Briana Renner (785)202-1649 or brianarenner@valleyhope.org

Donor Spotlight - John and Karen Miller (Lincoln, NE)

John was a great friend, mentor, and Valley Hope alum. Six months ago, he passed away with **52 years of sobriety**. John was direct, smart, and cared deeply for the patients. Karen has always exuded kindness and curiosity. She has a way of making everyone feel special.

The Millers have contributed time, talent, and treasure to our mission, referring patients to Valley Hope, serving as board members and annual donors. They have supported the Gift of Recovery year end appeal, GEM Program, and 1967 Circle Legacy Giving. Many lives have been transformed because of their support.

Valley Hope is a better place having the Millers as part of our family.



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ADDICTION TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

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