

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

As we welcome the month of love, let's remember to extend that love to ourselves. One way to do that is by setting aside intentional time to reflect on positive habits we can begin—or continue—practicing.

What do you do for self-care?

In January 2025, I began treating myself to a massage every other week. This has helped reduce my stress and release the tension that tends to build up in my shoulders. I am also committed to attending at least one 12-step meeting each week, which helps me stay connected to my recovery and engaged with my homegroup, where I have the opportunity to be of service to others.

As of last week, I started following the monks on their Walk for Peace and listening to their words of wisdom and practices. One of the first suggestions was to begin each morning by grabbing a pen and paper and writing: "Today is going to be my peaceful day." Read it repeatedly, then say it out loud. With this intention, love and kindness can spread.

The monks also encourage staying away from your "lover" (your phone) for the first hour after waking, explaining that the mind is pure in the morning and that we should protect its clarity.

Another practice they recommend is daily mindful breathing to strengthen the mind. Breathe in and be aware that you are breathing in; breathe out and be aware that you are breathing out. Starting with just one minute a day is enough, you can gradually build up to five minutes, then twenty.

Finally, they encourage us to stop multitasking. When we drive, we drive. When we talk, we talk. When we listen, we listen. When we work, we work. In this way, we train our minds to be peaceful.

- Susan Gill, CSAC-A, R-CPRS



Staff Spotlight: Dwain

Dwain Whitfield is a Graduate of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff with a master's degree in Addiction Studies and over seven years of experience working in the substance use disorder field. Passionate about supporting recovery, building meaningful connections, and promoting healthy lifestyles. Outside of work, he enjoys working out, fishing, hunting, attending sporting events, cooking, and watching anime.



Alumni Spotlight: Kamal

This addiction really stole my soul, and that's the part people don't understand. It ain't just about what I used or how often—it's about how it hollowed me out from the inside. Somewhere along the way I stopped recognizing myself. I look in the mirror and see somebody who survived a lot but lost even more. I lost people I loved for real, people who mattered to my heart, and knowing I was the reason hurts worse than any withdrawal ever could. That guilt don't sleep. It sit with me when it's quiet, when I'm alone, when the world slow down and my thoughts get loud. My mind feel damaged in ways I can't explain right, like I been at war with myself too long and

don't know how to come home. Some days I feel numb, other days I feel everything at once—anger, shame, sadness, fear—like my chest gon explode. I be tired of being "the strong one," tired of acting like I got control when I really feel lost and scared and broken. This shit made me question my worth, my purpose, even if I deserve love or forgiveness anymore. I'm crying out because I don't wanna keep living like this, trapped in my head, pushing away the people I need the most. I don't wanna be another story that end bad. I need help because I can't carry this alone no more. I need someone to reach back when I'm reaching out, someone to remind me I ain't beyond saving. I wanna heal, I wanna find myself again. I wanna make it right where I can. I'm not asking for pity—I'm asking for a chance to breathe again before I completely break. - Kamal

Join the IB Alumni at the 22nd TACNA Convention in Norfolk, VA, at the Norfolk Waterside Hotel. Your tickets will be purchased for the alumni so I will need to know by Feb 12, 2026, who is going to attend. IB will NOT be providing hotel rooms. If you plan to get a room, you must do that on your own. We will meet up on Saturday morning.

Please RSVP by 2/12/26 to attend with Iron Bridge.

Contact Susan Gill if you are interested in becoming an Iron Bridge Alumni Ambassador 804-895-1886!



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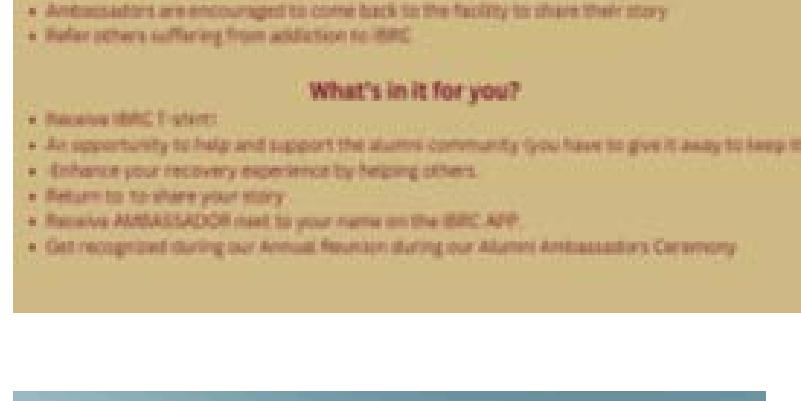
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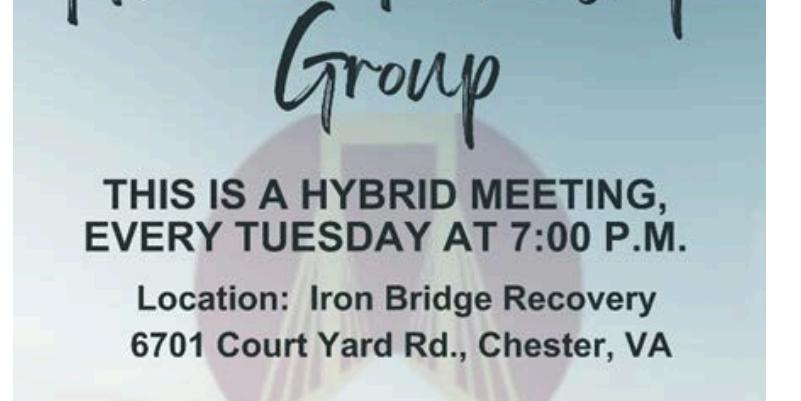
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