



Spindletop Center

BRIDGES OF HOPE

PEER CONNECTIONS

EDITION II 2026



CLEARED FOR TAKEOFF

Breakthrough testimonies from Spindletop Center Peer Specialists

SCAN THE QR CODE

to support our Peer Support Services. View step-by-step instructions on the back.





Dear Friends,

Today, I want to remind you of something powerful that lives within each of us even when life feels heavy: **the ability to shift our altitude.** Not our attitude alone, but our altitude is the height from which we see ourselves, our challenges, and our future.

An **Altitude Shift** is the moment we rise above what tries to hold us down.

It's the decision to breathe deeper, to see further, and to believe again.

It's the courage to look at life from a higher perspective, one shaped by healing, hope, and connection.

In mental health recovery, substance use recovery, and life recovery of all kinds, this shift doesn't happen alone.

It happens **together.**

When we walk beside one another, we lift each other higher.

When one of us gets weary, another steps in to encourage.

When one of us forgets our worth, someone else speaks truth back into our spirit.

So today, let this letter remind you:

You are worthy of rising. You deserve peace, clarity, and joy. You are stronger than the storm you survived. Your story is not over, it's unfolding beautifully.

And to anyone who feels stuck at ground level, please remember:

Sometimes all it takes is one step, one conversation, one moment of connection to start climbing again.

Together, we can uplift.

Together, we can empower.

Together, we can affirm each other's healing and rebuild each other's esteem.

Together, we can rise into a new altitude one where recovery is possible, hope is real, and none of us walk alone.

Keep climbing, friend. The view is getting better.

What is Peer Support?

Peer support in mental health refers to a form of support provided by individuals who have experienced similar mental health challenges or conditions. It involves creating a safe and supportive environment where people can share their experiences, gain understanding, and feel empowered to manage their mental health.

Peer support is a valuable resource for individuals with mental health challenges. It can complement professional treatment and provide a supportive network that promotes recovery and well-being.

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02. DEAR FRIENDS

I want to remind you of something powerful that lives within each of us even when life feels heavy: the ability to shift our altitude.

04. THE RUNWAY

A plane doesn't apologize for needing a runway. It doesn't rush the process. It prepares, and so do we.

06. THE FLIGHT PLAN

Before a plane leaves the runway, there is a flight plan. Not a wish. Not a vibe. Not "let's see what happens." A plan.

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This space is for lived experience without masks, where peers share honestly about setbacks, triggers, medication changes, grief waves, and starting over again.

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Next-level living. At some point, recovery stops being about staying alive and starts being about building a life.

19. THE LANDING STRIP

Stability and sustainability. The climb is collective: model it, live it, and multiply it.



Preparation Before Elevation

Before a plane ever leaves the ground, it doesn't apologize for needing a runway. It doesn't rush the process. It doesn't skip inspections. It doesn't ignore turbulence reports. It prepares. And so do we.

In recovery, in healing, in growth, we often focus on the "takeoff." We celebrate breakthroughs, milestones, sobriety anniversaries, restored relationships, and new opportunities. But elevation without preparation leads to crash landings.

The runway matters. For many of us with lived experiences, the runway didn't look glamorous. It looked like: Sitting in a support group when we didn't feel like talking. Learning to breathe through anxiety instead of numbing it. Admitting, we needed help. Taking accountability without shame swallowing us whole. Showing up one day at a time.

The runway is where humility meets hope. It's where grounding tools are practiced long before the storm hits. It's where we build foundations, routines, boundaries, safe relationships, spiritual practices, therapy, and peer support, the things that don't always look dramatic but make elevation sustainable.

In aviation, pilots run through a checklist before taking off. They don't skip it because they feel confident. They use it because confidence without structure is risky. In recovery, our checklist might include:

Have I been honest about where I am emotionally?

Am I connected to a safe community?

Do I have coping tools ready?

Have I forgiven myself enough to move forward?

Am I willing to grow?

The runway isn't a punishment. It's protection.

And here's the truth that meets everyone where they are:

Some people are just arriving at the airport.

Some are taxiing slowly.

Some are repairing their aircraft after hard landings.

Some are already climbing.

Wherever you are, you are not behind.

An altitude shift doesn't begin in the sky.

It begins with preparation. For those rebuilding after relapse, loss, trauma, incarceration, divorce, depression, burnout this is your reminder: you are not disqualified because your runway is longer. Longer runways are often built for heavier planes, and some of us carry heavy stories. But heavy doesn't mean grounded forever.

It means your lift will be powerful.

In peer support, we don't rush people into the air. We walk beside them on the runway. We hold space for fear. We normalize the shaking. We remind each other that preparation is not a weakness, it's wisdom.

The goal is not just to take off.

The goal is to stay airborne.

Your grounding practices are not small. Your slow progress is not failure. Your consistency is building capacity. Before elevation, there is alignment. Before breakthrough, there is structure. Before altitude, there is readiness. This is your runway season.

Build it strong. Check your instruments. Fuel your faith. Strengthen your support. And when it's time you will rise. Not rushed. Not forced. Not fragile. But ready.



Spindletop Center

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THE FLIGHT PLAN

Vision, goals and direction.

Before a plane leaves the runway, there is a flight plan.

Not a wish.

Not a vibe.

Not "let's see what happens."

A plan.

It includes destination, fuel levels, weather conditions, altitude goals, emergency routes, and communication strategy. Pilots don't take off hoping they'll figure it out midair. They prepare with intention. Recovery works the same way. Many of us began this journey just trying to survive. We weren't thinking five years ahead. We were thinking five minutes ahead. And survival is sacred but at some point, survival must shift into strategy.

That shift is your flight plan. A recovery plan is more than staying sober. It's more than attending meetings. It's more than avoiding relapse. It's about asking: Where am I headed? Who am I becoming?

What kind of life am I building? What must I maintain to protect my peace?

Without direction, we drift. And drifting in recovery can feel subtle at first; missing routines, disconnecting from community, neglecting self-care, abandoning boundaries. You're still moving, but you're not navigating.

A flight plan gives you direction when visibility gets low.

Vision isn't denial of your current reality. It is a belief that your story doesn't end here.

Some of us have lived through addiction, incarceration, trauma, grief, rejection, church hurt, family breakdown, depression, anxiety, and burnout. Vision says: This is part of my story, not the end of it.

In peer support, we hold vision for one another when someone can't see clearly for themselves. We remind each other: You are more than your diagnosis. You are more than your records. You are more than your worst day.

Vision is spiritual. Vision is strategic. Vision is necessary.

Goals: Break the Sky into Sections

No pilot flies to cruising altitude in one leap. There are stages of climbing.

Likewise, recovery goals must be layered:

Stabilization (mental health, sobriety, safety)

Structure (routines, work, relationships, boundaries)

Sustainability (financial planning, purpose work, service)

Significance (impact, mentorship, legacy)

If we only set emotional goals ("I want to feel better"), we miss structural goals ("I will attend support twice a week," "I will create a morning routine," "I will repair one relationship at a time").

Strategic growth is intentional growth.
 And here's the truth that meets everyone where they are:
 Some people are still writing their first plan.
 Some are rewriting theirs after unexpected turbulence.
 Some are adjusting destinations after discovering new purposes.

You are allowed to update your flight plan.

Direction: Know Your Why

When turbulence hits and, it will you need more than motivation.
 You need meaning.
 Why are you choosing recovery? Why are you protecting your
 mental health? Why are you rebuilding your life?
 Purpose anchors you when emotions fluctuate.
 For some, it's their children.
 For some, it's breaking generational cycles.
 For some, it's honoring God.
 For some, it's simply deciding, "I deserve peace."
 Direction doesn't mean perfection.
 Even with the best flight plan, pilots adjust midair. Weather shifts.
 Winds change. Delays happen. But they don't abandon the
 mission they recalibrate.
 Recovery requires recalibration, not resignation.
 If you've had setbacks, this is not failure. It's data. It's information
 to refine your plan.

In peer support, we don't shame detours. We help navigate them.

Your flight plan might include:

- Consistent peer connection
- Therapy or counseling
- Spiritual disciplines
- Physical health goals
- Financial rebuilding
- Education or certification
- Serving others

Every healthy system in your life becomes part of your navigation
 panel.

You are not flying blind.

You are building a life with intention.

The truth is: drifting feels easier in the beginning. Planning requires
 accountability. Vision requires courage. Goals require discipline.
 But direction brings dignity.

You are not just trying to stay afloat. You are charting a course.

Altitude Shift isn't about random elevation. It's about strategic
 ascents.

So write your plan. Map your purpose. Clarify your next level.

And remember even if you're still taxiing, you are moving with
 intention.

The sky is not your limit. It's your direction.



TURBULENCE TALKS

Before every smooth landing, there have been moments of shaking.

Turbulence Talks is where we lean into the real, unfiltered conversations, the relapse no one posted about, the panic attack that came out of nowhere, the depressive episode after a big win, the doubt that whispers even in strong faith. This space is for lived experience without masks where peers share honestly about setbacks, triggers, medication changes, grief waves, and starting over again. Because turbulence doesn't mean you're failing, it means you're still flying. And here, we tell the truth, so no one has to navigate the shaking alone.



Meet Leroy Faultry
Spindletop Center Peer

My name is Leroy Faultry, and I am not what my past says I am.

Before the turbulence, I was a happy kid. I love dogs. I had a stepfather who provided for me financially, but quality time and guidance were limited. I had the potential to reach incredible heights, but without consistent leadership and direction, I began navigating life on my own terms.

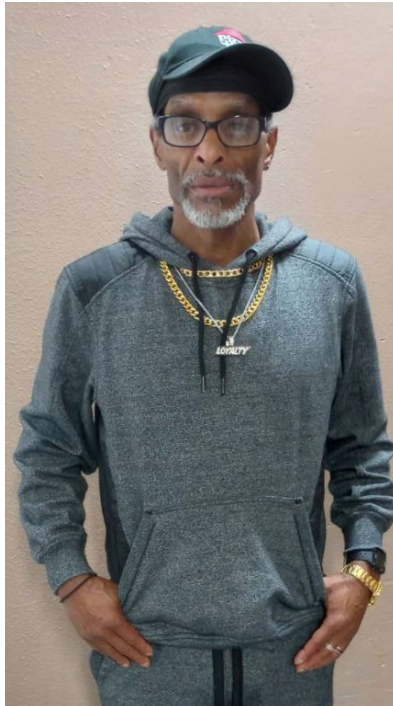
The choices I made led me into the streets. I chased a false image of glamour and success, hustling in

search of identity and belonging.

What I found instead were serious consequences that altered the course of my life. I eventually spent 20 years in prison.

Prison was my lowest altitude, but it was also the place where I experienced my first internal shift.

Before incarceration, I had started drifting from academics and positive opportunities. I even encountered a military recruiter who saw potential in me and



CONTINUED. . .
 offered me a path forward. I declined.

At the time, I believed I had everything figured out. I was making good money and purchased my first home at 21 years old.

On the outside, it looked like success. On the inside, I was still searching for purpose.

While incarcerated, I had time to reflect. Turbulence has a way of forcing you to examine your life.

I worked jobs I enjoyed, developed new skills, and committed to personal growth. I had learned something powerful during that season:

I am not a lost cause. I still have everything within me to become successful. That became my turning point.

I was raised with old-fashioned values, and even today, I operate with integrity, accountability, and respect.

Growth did not happen overnight.

“MY GOALS NOW ARE CLEAR. I WANT TO OWN MY OWN HOME AGAIN. I WANT TO RUN MY OWN BUSINESS. I WANT TO GIVE BACK TO THE LAND AND TO MY COMMUNITY. A BRIGHT FUTURE TO ME LOOKS RECHARGEABLE AND PROSPEROUS FOR A LIFE THAT CONTINUES TO RENEW ITSELF THROUGH GROWTH, LEARNING, AND SERVICE.”

It happened through both big steps and small steps consistent decisions to move in the right direction.

Today, I actively participate in peer support groups and engage in one-on-one peer counseling. I serve others because I understand struggle. One of my proudest accomplishments is earning the trust of professionals and individuals outside of my inner circle.

Trust is something you can't demand; it must be demonstrated through consistent change. And my change is visible. Hope is now my foundation. I believe that where there is hope, there is victory.

My transformation allows me to help others not just with words, but with evidence. When people see change, they believe change is possible.

To anyone who is struggling:
 Never give up. Be persistent. Be consistent. You can grow beyond even your own expectations.

My goals now are clear. I want to own my own home again. I want to run my own business. I want to give back to the land and to my community.

A bright future to me looks rechargeable and prosperous for a life that continues to renew itself through

growth, learning, and service.

How do I move forward?

One step at a time.
By being assertive.
By remaining teachable.
By continuing to learn more about my life and my eternity.

Turbulence may shake you, but it does not have to define your destination. Sometimes altitude shifts require pressure, but pressure produces strength.

And I am proof that transformation is possible.

CABIN PRESSURE

WHAT HAPPENS INTERNALLY WHEN YOU'RE RISING.

Nobody talks enough about cabin pressure.

They celebrate takeoffs.

They applaud the climb.

They post the cruising altitude.

But nobody warns you about what happens inside your chest when you start rising.

See, when an aircraft ascends, the air gets thinner. Pressure changes. Ears pop. Systems adjust. The cabin must be regulated intentionally, or what's happening outside will damage what's inside.

Growth feels the same way.

You prayed for elevation.

You worked for stability.

You asked for healing.

And then anxiety showed up.

Old triggers resurfaced.

Tears came without warning.

You felt overstimulated in rooms you used to dominate.

Success made you nervous.

Peace felt unfamiliar.

That's cabin pressure.

When you rise beyond survival, your nervous system doesn't automatically trust the altitude. Especially if your body has been conditioned to chaos.

If you've lived through trauma, addiction, abandonment, betrayal, depression, and instability, your system learned to survive at low altitudes. Hypervigilant. Guarded. Reactive.

Now you're healing.

And healing requires recalibration.

Emotional regulation becomes oxygen.

You are encouraged to learn how to breathe differently.

Not every racing heart is danger.

Not every disagreement is abandonment.

Not every closed door is a rejection.

Not every hard day is relapsing waiting to happen.

But your body may respond as if it is.

Triggers don't disappear just because you've grown up. They get revealed at higher levels.

You thought you forgave them until you got promoted.

You thought you were over it until you entered a healthy relationship.

You thought you were strong until the silence got loud.

Rising exposes what hiding suppresses.

Anxiety at elevation doesn't mean you're weak. It means you're adjusting.

Cabin pressure forces intentional balance.

You must check your internal systems:

How am I talking to myself? Am I catastrophizing?



Am I assuming the worst? Am I abandoning boundaries to stay liked? Am I shrinking because growth feels unfamiliar? Mindset shifts are not motivational quotes. They are daily confrontations with old narratives.

From: "I'll mess this up."

To: "I am learning at a higher level."

From: "I don't belong here."

To: "I earned this altitude."

From: "Peace won't last."

To: "I am building sustainable peace."

But let's be real.

Sometimes rising feels lonely. Sometimes elevation isolates you from people who knew the old you. Sometimes healing costs access. Sometimes sobriety costs friendships. Sometimes emotional maturity costs arguments you no longer entertain.

That pressure? It's real.

So what do you do about your stance? Your charge?

You don't panic at the popping ears.

You regulate.

You breathe before you react. You pause before responding. You call a peer instead of spiraling alone. You go back to your grounding tools. You pray instead of projecting. You journal instead of exploding. You feel without fleeing.

You stay seated when turbulence hits instead of trying to jump out midair.

You stay seated when turbulence hits instead of trying to jump out midair.

Your charge is this:

Don't descend just because growth feels uncomfortable.

Regulate, don't retreat.

Build capacity instead of abandoning altitude.

Pressure is not proof you should go back. It's proof you are higher than you've ever been.

And higher requires new discipline.

So drink water. Rest intentionally. Go to therapy. Stay in the community. Guard your thoughts. Rehearse the truth. Name your triggers without shame. Forgive yourself when you wobble.

Because cabin pressure unmanaged causes implosion. But cabin pressure regulated builds endurance.

You are not crazy for feeling overwhelmed while blessed. You are not ungrateful for struggling while stable. You are not weak for shaking while rising.

You are adjusting to new air.

And here's the truth we drive home:

You asked for this altitude.

So strengthen your lungs. Adjust your mindset. Secure your mask.

Help others breathe.

Stay the course.

The pressure means you're climbing.

And this time you're built for it.

CLEARED FOR TAKEOFF

Breakthrough testimonies.



Meet Dakota Bardwell **Spindletop Center Peer Specialist**

My journey hasn't been a straight line, more like a winding road with a few unexpected detours and a lot of lessons along the way.

I was born into addiction and chaos. I was placed in foster care at 18 months old, and I was adopted as a young child and grew up navigating a quiet sense of not fully belonging. I was very loved growing up but also a very challenging child.

As a teen, I faced significant mental health challenges and was diagnosed with bipolar and schizoaffective disorder, which eventually led to time in a state psychiatric facility and into residential care where I aged out of.

Those early years taught me resilience long before I realized I was building it. As a teenager and into adulthood, I struggled with addiction and not understanding my mental health, along with severe anxiety.

What I learned is I had to be my own advocate if I wanted real help. I spent years in and out of recovery. Making one bad choice after another. Relapse after relapse.

I first tried getting clean in 2012, but it took time, and a lot of life experiences before things truly clicked. On July 15, 2021, I made the decision to fully commit to recovery and to doing the deep personal work that comes with it.

Along the way, life handed me both healing and heartbreak, including reconnecting with my biological family and later losing my birth father to addiction.

Finding out my birth mom was in prison for life. Losing people that I thought I could not live without. Those experiences reshaped my perspective and strengthened my purpose.

Faith has also become a cornerstone of my life. What started as something I inherited eventually became something personal.

Today, my relationship with Jesus Christ is a grounding force that continues to guide my growth.

One constant throughout every season of my life has been my love for animals. I've spent my entire adult life working with them in various roles, from vet tech work to rescue/shelters, and even boarding and grooming facilities.

Animals have a way of keeping life honest, humble, and occasionally hilarious (especially when you share your home with three ratty boys. Templeton, Rizzo, and Bernard, and a very charismatic ball python named Sherwin).

Today, I'm proud to say I'm clean, grounded, and continually growing. My story isn't about perfection, it's about perseverance. I've learned that healing takes time, growth takes courage, and sometimes strength looks like simply refusing to give up.

If my journey has taught me anything, it's this: your past may shape you, but it doesn't have to define you. And sometimes the strongest people are the ones who learned to rebuild, with a little faith, a lot of grit, and just enough sass to keep going.



Meet Clevonna Stevens Spindletop Center Peer Specialist

On May 28, 2002, my father passed away when I was five years old.

At that age, I didn't fully understand what death meant, but I understood that something in my world had suddenly changed forever. My dad and I were inseparable. He was my hero, my protector, and my best friend.

When he was gone, it felt like the color drained out of my world. As a child, I didn't have the words to describe the pain I carried.

I just knew there was an emptiness in me where my dad used to be.

That loss followed me as I grew up, and in ways I didn't fully realize at the time, it shaped my life. I struggled with deep sadness and depression, carrying grief that my young mind never really learned how to process.

As the years went by, I held tightly to the people who helped keep me standing—my mom, my granny, and my grandfather. They became my safe place. Their love, their laughter, and their presence helped hold the broken pieces of my heart together when life felt heavy.

“NO MATTER HOW PAINFUL THE JOURNEY HAS BEEN, AND NO MATTER HOW DIFFICULT THE ROAD AHEAD MAY LOOK, I REFUSE TO GIVE UP.”

But on December 13, 2013, another piece of my heart broke. My grandfather passed away from a massive heart attack.

That loss hit me differently. I was older, old enough to truly understand what death meant. I realized that sometimes life can take the people you love without warning, and there's nothing you can do to stop it.

It felt like the progress I had made in healing was suddenly erased, and I was standing at the beginning of my grief all over again.

Then life again tested me in a way I never expected. In July of 2023, my mom was diagnosed with stage 4 cervical cancer. Hearing those words felt like the ground beneath my feet had disappeared.

My mom was my strength, my comfort, and the person who had been there for me through everything.

Having to watch someone you love fight a battle like that is one of the hardest things a person can experience.

Sadly, she didn't make it. Losing her left a silence in my life that words can barely describe.

Just when I was still trying to learn how to live with that loss, another heartbreak came. In August of 2025, I lost my granny, one of the closest and dearest people in my life.

She was more than just my grandmother. She was love, warmth, wisdom, and comfort all wrapped into one. Adjusting to life without both my mom and my granny has been one of the hardest journeys I've ever had to walk.

Some days, the grief feels like a shadow that tries to follow me everywhere. But when the darkness starts creeping in, I remind myself of the beautiful moments they left behind.

I think about the laughter we shared, the family gatherings filled with love, the holidays that brought us all together, and how they used to smile and call me their "little fatso."

Those memories are like small lights that guide me out of the darkest moments. Through all of this, my faith has become my anchor. In my walk with God, I've learned that even when life feels unbearable, He is still there. He sees every tear, every broken moment, and every silent prayer. And somehow, He gives the strength to keep moving forward, even when your heart feels heavy.

This chapter of my life has a name. I call it Resilience. Because no matter how painful the journey has been, and no matter how difficult the road ahead may look, I refuse to give up. I will keep going. I will keep believing. And with God as my strength, I know I will make it through.

THE CONTROL TOWER

Guidance and mentorship.

The night Marcus almost relapsed; the sky was clear.
That's what scared him.
No chaos.
No fight.
No bad news.
Just silence.

And in that silence, the old thoughts came taxiing back.
"You're strong now. You can handle just one."
"You've been doing good you deserve it."
"No one would even know."

He sat in his car outside the store, hands tight on the steering wheel. His heart wasn't racing. That's what made it dangerous. It felt calm. Logical.
But Marcus had learned something in recovery: calm doesn't always mean safe.
He looked down at the folded paper in his console worn at the edges. His WRAP plan.
Wellness Recovery Action Plan.

He remembered when his peer specialist helped him build it.
He thought it felt "extra" at the time. Writing down triggers.
Early warning signs. Crisis plans.
Now it felt like oxygen.
He unfolded it.
Daily Maintenance Plan:
Stay connected.
Attend one support touchpoint daily.
Pray before major decisions.

Eat. Rest. Hydrate.
He exhaled.
He hadn't called anyone that day.

Triggers:
Isolation.
Overconfidence.
Financial stress.
Unstructured evenings.
He checked three of the four.

"That's not random," he whispered.

That's when he remembered the Control Tower.
Planes don't guide themselves in and out of airspace. No matter how experienced the pilot, there is always a tower watching radar tracking movement, weather, proximity, risk.
In recovery, the Control Tower is your peer specialist. Your mentor. Your sponsor. Your therapist. Your crisis line. Your faith leader. The people trained and lived enough to see what you can't when you're in it.

Marcus picked up his phone.
He didn't want to call.
Pride whispered, "You got this."
But his WRAP plan had a section labeled:
When Things Are Breaking Down:
Call before I act.
Tell the full truth.
Remove myself from the trigger location.



Do not negotiate with cravings alone.

He dialed.

His peer specialist answered on the third ring.

"I'm outside the store," Marcus said. "I haven't gone in. But I'm thinking about it."

There was no shame on the other end. No lecture. Just steady guidance.

"Okay," she said calmly. "You called before you walked in.

That's strength. Let's land this safely."

Land this safely.

She didn't panic. She assessed.

"Are you alone?"

"Yes."

"Engine still running?"

"Yes."

"Good. Put the car in drive."

He hesitated.

"Marcus," she continued, "this is turbulence, not destiny. You don't have to crash because you hit a rough patch."

He pulled out of the parking lot.

They stayed on the phone while he drove to a late meeting.

She reminded him of his early warning signs: isolating, skipping meals, glorifying old coping mechanisms.

She reminded him of his long-term vision.

She reminded him relapse wasn't a moral failure, and it wasn't necessary either.

By the time he parked at the meeting, the craving had dropped from a roar to a whisper.

That's what the Control Tower does.

It sees the bigger picture.

It tracks patterns. It offers instruction when visibility is low. It prevents collisions. It reminds you of protocol when emotions cloud judgment.

Peer specialists don't fly the plane for you.

They guide you through the airspace.

Leaders don't eliminate turbulence.

They help you navigate it.

Crisis response isn't about punishment.

It's about preservation.

Here's the charge:

Build your Control Tower before you need it.

Create your WRAP plan when you're stable not spiraling.

List your triggers. Name your warning signs. Write your crisis plan clearly. Give someone permission to speak into your life.

Answer the phone when they call you, too.

And when you feel steady again?

Become part of someone else's tower.

Because elevation isn't just personal. It's communal.

No plane lands safely without guidance.

No recovery journey sustains itself alone.

The sky is wide.

Stay in communication.

BLACK BOX LESSONS



BLACK BOX LESSONS

Learning from what knocked you down.

After every crash, they search for the black box.

Not to shame the pilot

but to understand what happened.

In life, we have black box moments too.

The relapse that almost erased your progress.

The relationship that drained your worth.

The decision that cost you peace.

The breakdown that nearly convinced you to quit.

You survived it.

Now the question is will you study it?

Growth isn't pretending it didn't happen.

Growth is asking: What was the warning sign?

Where did I override wisdom?

What system was missing?

What truth did I silence?

Accountability is not self-hate.

It's self-leadership.

You don't revisit the crash to relive the pain.

You revisit it to prevent repetition.

Your setback holds data.

Your mistake holds instruction.

Your survival holds power.

The thing that almost took you out can become the very thing that sharpens you if you let it teach you.

Don't waste the lesson.

QUESTIONS FOR GROWTH:

What warning signs did I ignore and, what will I do differently next time?

What pattern keeps repeating in my life?

What support system do I need to strengthen right now?

How can my lesson become someone else's lifeline?

You're still here.

Fly wiser.



NEW ALTITUDES

Next-level living.

At some point, recovery stops being about staying alive and starts being about building a life.

That's New Altitudes.

It's the shift from "I'm just trying to make it" to "I'm building something that will outlive me."

For many of us with lived experience, survival was the first victory. We fought addiction. We fought depression. We fought systems. We fought cycles. And when we finally stabilized, we exhaled. But stability is not the ceiling. It's the foundation.

New altitude living means we don't just break cycles we replace them.

Financial wellness becomes intentional.

No more living crisis to crisis.

No more ignoring credit, savings, budgeting, ownership.

We learn money management not for status but for freedom.

We build emergency funds so emergencies don't break us.

We create wealth so our children inherit stability instead of survival trauma.

That's altitude.

Leadership development becomes personal responsibility.

We stop waiting for someone to choose us.

We become disciplined.

We develop communication skills.

We learn emotional intelligence.

We lead in our homes before we lead in rooms.

Because leadership isn't a title it's consistency.

Many of us were told what we couldn't do.

Told we had records.

Told we had limitations.

Told to "just be grateful for what you get."

But altitude thinkers build tables instead of waiting for seats.

We start businesses.

We create nonprofits.

We write books.

We mentor youth.

We invest in ideas.

We turn pain into platforms.

Not for applause but, for impact.

And then comes the real shift:

Generational change.

You don't just heal for you.

You heal so your children don't inherit your coping mechanisms.

You budget so your family inherits ownership, not debt.

You regulate your emotions so your home becomes safe.

You speak life so your bloodline changes language.

New altitude living says:

It stops with me and, it starts with me.

This is next-level living.

Not flashy.

Not ego-driven.

But intentional.

You track your spending.

You invest in learning.

You surround yourself with thinkers, not just survivors.

You protect your time.

You build legacy systems.

You plan five years ahead.

You teach what you've learned.

Because surviving was step one.

Thriving is the assignment.

And here's the charge:

Stop shrinking your vision to match your past.

You were not delivered just to be comfortable.

You were healed to build.

You were restored to lead.

You were sustained to shift bloodlines.

New altitudes require new habits.

New discipline.

New conversations.

New standards.

But you've already proven you can do hard things.

Now do higher things.

This isn't just recovery.

This is legacy.

Climb.

THE LANDING STRIP

Stability and sustainability.

The Climb Is Collective (Model It. Live It. Multiply It.)

We've talked about the runway.
We've written the flight plan.
We've faced turbulence.
We've regulated cabin pressure.
We've learned from the black box.
We've stepped into new altitudes.

Now what?

Now we model it.

Because elevation was never meant to be private.
Here's the truth: People don't rise from what we preach. They rise from what we practice. Your children are watching how you regulate. Your peers are watching how you recover. Your team is watching how you lead. Your community is watching how you handle pressure. Whether you realize it or not you are somebody's blueprint.

So what are you demonstrating?
If we want generational change, we must become visible examples of it.

This is where the modeling technique comes in:

The S.A.F.E. Model

S — Self-Regulate First

Before you correct others, correct yourself.
Before you react, pause.
Model emotional discipline, not emotional dominance.

A — Align Actions with Values

If you preach recovery, live recovery.
If you teach financial literacy, practice it.
If you speak about boundaries, enforce yours.
Integrity is the loudest leadership.

F — Fail Forward Publicly

Stop pretending you're perfect.
Let people see you own mistakes.
Let them hear you apologize.
Let them watch you recalibrate instead of collapse.
Transparency builds trust.

E — Empower Others to Lead

Don't just inspire equip.
Share resources.
Teach the tools.
Invite others to the table.
Make room in the cockpit.
Because true elevation multiplies.
We don't climb to look down.
We climb to lift.

This magazine wasn't just words.
It was a mirror.
You've survived storms.
You've studied setbacks.
You've built systems.
You've strengthened discipline.

Now the assignment is simple:
Live so clearly that someone else believes change is possible.
Model peace in chaos.
Model structure after instability.
Model faith after failure.
Model wealth-building after poverty.
Model leadership after trauma.
Model softness after survival mode.

The world does not need more noise.
It needs examples.
And here's the fire to close this out:
You are not just recovering.
You are redefining.
You are not just climbing.
You are clearing the path.
You are not just healed.
You are becoming a standard.

So when the next generation looks up let them see altitude that feels attainable.
Let them see discipline without ego | Power without pride |
Success without forgetting where you came from

YOU are cleared for takeoff.

Now fly in a way that others learn how.



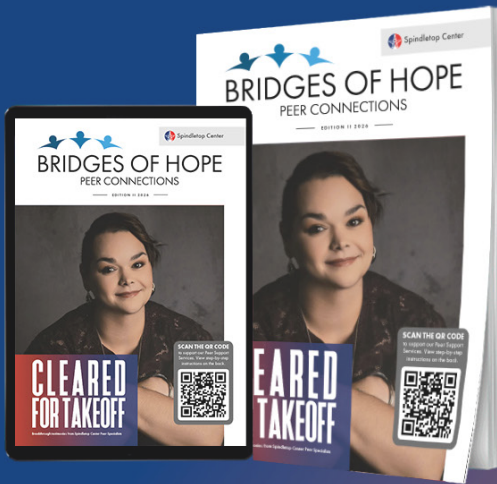
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