

## **PAL Study Results Reveal Need for Choice in Recovery!**

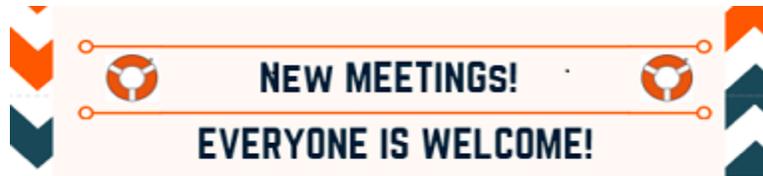
As reported by Craig Whalley in our [January 5, 2017 blog post](#):

A new study just released in the respected “[Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment](#)” (JSAT) offers firm support for LifeRing’s approach to recovery support. The study, conducted by Dr. Sarah Zemore and others from the Emeryville, California-based Alcohol Recovery Group, used a series of member surveys to provide comparisons between LifeRing, SMART Recovery, and Women for Sobriety (WFS), using criteria and methodology much like those used in studies of 12-step programs.

Some of the most encouraging language comes from the study’s carefully-worded Conclusion: “Results suggest differences across 12-step groups and their alternatives that may be relevant when advising clients and a choice of mutual help group. Meanwhile, *findings for high levels of participation, satisfaction, and cohesion among members of the mutual help alternatives* [emphasis ours] suggest promise for these groups in addressing addiction problems.”

Suffice it to say, all of us in the secular recovery community are thrilled and hopes are high that more treatment and clinical professionals will take it seriously enough to follow through on recommending more than just the same traditional support therapies to their clients/patients. Time will tell...and we hope the story’s good!





We're always thrilled to announce new meetings\* to you, and several have been started since the Fall and into this Winter. We hope there's one on the list close to you! Here are all the details:

As always, we're thrilled to announce new meetings\*, and we have several to tell you about that have been started since the Autumn Newsletter. We hope there's one on the list close to you:

- Wednesdays at 12:15 PM in Vacaville, CA. Please see [our blog post about it here](#) for more information.
- Wednesdays at 6:30 PM at a meeting returning to Los Alamos, NM. Please see [our blog post about it here](#) for more information.
- Wednesdays at 7:00 PM in Tralee, Ireland. Please visit their Facebook page at [facebook.com/liferingtralee](https://facebook.com/liferingtralee) for more information.
- Thursdays at 7:00 PM in Alpena, MI. Please see [our blog post about it here](#) for more information.
- Thursdays at 8:00 PM in Lubbock, TX. Please see [our blog post about it here](#) for more information.
- Saturdays at 11:00 AM in Post Falls, our very first meeting in the state of Idaho. Please see [our blog post about it here](#) for more information.

We're also very excited to announce a new online meeting hosted by DJM of LifeRing Ireland on Sundays at 9:00 AM PST, 5:00 PM GMT..Please visit [our Chat Room](#) for more information.

We'd like to thank all of our trailblazing meeting convenors - Chris, DJM, Kristin, Matt, Raven, Tralee's convenor, and Valerie for all of their hard work and dedication in getting these meetings up and running. We appreciate everything you're doing, and we wish you and all new/returning meeting members our very best!

*\*As of this edition's published date*



## CLOSED MEETINGS

We're sorry to also announce that two of our meetings have closed, one in Brighton, MI and the other in Marquette, MI. We'd like to thank the convenors for all the time and effort they put into getting those meetings going, and we wish them and former group members our best for the future.



## SPEAKING OF MEETINGS...

We've made it to over 200 meetings worldwide - 203, to be exact. The more, the merrier!

And, say...do you want to see or attend a meeting in your area? If you've been clean and sober for 6 months or more, then you can start one yourself!

It's our sincerest desire to bring choice in recovery to as many people in as many places as possible, and we hope you'll consider doing just that! We're also happy to lend all the support and materials we can to get you started, so please visit [our Start a LifeRing Meeting page](#) on our website for more information.



"Sobrietist" is a term LifeRing e-mail list members coined years ago to describe someone who's dedicated to their Sobriety Priority (DDOUNMW - Don't Drink or Use No Matter What!).

LifeRing has always encouraged people to empower their Sober Selves by using our support system along with developing a PRP (Personal Recovery Program) that works for them. Lots of LifeRingers have done just that, and we'd like you to meet some of them!

Here's our interview with longtime sobrietist Heather W. (aka "simplicity" in LifeRing Chat):

**LifeRing:** Hi, Heather! Thanks for doing this! How long have you been in recovery (or

recovered, depending on how you look at it)?

**Heather:** I've been sober since July of 2007.

**LR:** When/How did you find out about LifeRing Secular Recovery? Have you used it exclusively as, or as part of, your personal recovery plan?

**HW:** I first got sober in the Bay Area. I used another program, but their secular (atheist) meetings. They told me about LifeRing, but unfortunately I never went to a meeting there. I started using LifeRing when I had no other option I was comfortable with, after moving out of the area. I used the chat room exclusively. Over the course of years I started doing the email lists. I have never gone to a face to face meeting, although I've run online meetings, and convened an email list. I have never used other recovery programs. I find LifeRing works best for me.

**LR:** What part of LSR works best for you, or what do you like best about it, and why?

**HW:** Really, the thing that works the best is the fact that I can mold my program to what I want. There is so little judgement from the members as well. That worked especially well when I was new in sobriety because I was so incredibly fragile.

**LR:** What's your life in recovery like/how do you maintain your sobriety these days?

**HW:** I maintain my sobriety by not drinking. Pretty simple. When life gets tough, I use the above mentioned tools I've come to rely on to get help and support. I've made some very good connections with many people in LifeRing. And although I've never been to a face to face meeting, I've met many members in person, and I know they would be there for me, just as much as I would be there for them.

*Are you a Sobriest, too? We'd love to hear your story - e-mail the Editor at [bcampbell@lifering.org](mailto:bcampbell@lifering.org) if you'd like to share it.*





Thanks to stories like Heather's in our last edition, we found so many of you enjoyed reading them that not only will we continue to share them here, we've also started a new page on our website, "LifeRing Success Stories".

We've already got several LifeRingers' stories up on the page - we hope you'll enjoy them and will continue to check back in from time to time to see the new ones.

And by "success" we mean whatever's worked for someone in their recovery, no matter how long they've been in it, including yours. If you'd like to share your story, we'd love to post it! For more information and to see the page, please visit [lifering.org/lifering-success-stories](http://lifering.org/lifering-success-stories).



## **AND HERE'S ANOTHER STORY FOR GOOD MEASURE!**

In our Autumn Newsletter we highlighted stories some of our members sent in about their participation in September Recovery Month events. Colorado LifeRing meeting convenor Denis W. attended several events in his area as well, and contributed his story\* to us:

I attended two National Recovery Month events in September. The first was called Choice in Recovery which is an annual event designed to increase awareness about Choice in Recovery. They strive to educate not only the public but professionals as well that there are choices. There were panelists from LifeRing, NA, SMART, Moderation Management, Women for Sobriety and the UC Collegiate Recovery Center as well as speaker Dr. Christian Thurstone.

The second was Surrounded by Recovery. This event took place at the Colorado State Capitol, and is also designed to raise awareness about not only choices in recovery but to the current unmet health needs of addicts of all kinds but particularly in the areas of prescription drug and opioid addiction, and to promote treatment over incarceration. There were a number of speakers and tables set up from numerous organizations, recovery centers and sober living establishments.

The Choice in Recovery conference was in Denver. I have attended the last two years and always come away with something. This year I learned that a group of students in Boulder had begun their own LifeRing meeting on campus in the Collegiate Recovery Center. Myself along with another area convenor went out and met with the Program Director there to give them a couple of books and LR literature. Jim C. from Denver has been on the panel the last couple of

years. Everyone on the panel has a few minutes to give a brief description of their program or organization and then the floor is opened up for questions.

Surrounded by Recovery was a new one for me. A bunch of LifeRingers met for coffee/breakfast a couple of blocks from the Capitol before walking over to the event. I wasn't able to stay as long as I would have liked but I did walk around and spoke with several organization representatives, and Kathleen G. had a LR table set up. I spoke with folks from sober living facilities, one outfit whose sole purpose is to help veterans with addiction, and a couple of folks from Young People in Recovery about their efforts in Denver and all the way to Washington not only to assist younger folks in recovery find housing and jobs but also as advocates to government to help with recognition and awareness along with better access to treatment.

I really enjoyed both events and the word is getting out, albeit slowly, that there are alternatives to a 12-step approach that can work. It is especially encouraging when professionals and even the court systems begin to realize that there is more out there than just AA.

\*Additional Note: Denis is a featured contributor to our new Success Stories page, too.



After a very slow but steady journey upward, LifeRing can officially announce that its main Facebook page now has over - get this - 1,000 Likes! Coupled with our newly-revived Twitter account with 375 Followers, we may have what one might call an “online presence” (even though we’ve been an online presence since the very beginning!)

Additionally, we’d like to welcome a couple of newly created LifeRing local-area Facebook pages that feature meeting information, news, and other relevant content in their neck of the woods. They are:

LifeRing England and LifeRing Tralee

If you haven't already, please stop by any of our social media venues - we'd all really appreciate your Likes, Follows, and Shares!



## CHAT PLATFORM TRIALS

Those of you who are old hands at using our Chat Room and/or attending any of our Online Meetings are well aware that our Platform Host provider went belly up some time ago, and that we've been using a temporary version until we can find something permanent (one that preferably doesn't cost an arm and a leg).

Even if you're new, you have probably noticed that we're now trialling a new Adobe-based platform to see if it will meet our needs. It still works much like the old one did, so don't be afraid to scoot on in whenever you'd like!

We will let you know when a new platform has been chosen for good, and in the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact our Chat Coordinator, Melly, at [liferingchatcoordinator@yahoo.com](mailto:liferingchatcoordinator@yahoo.com).



As many of you know, we decided to use our new online presence as a force for ultimate good this year and participate in the annual "Giving Tuesday" online charitable giving drive, this year on November 29th, wherein need non-profit organizations such as ourselves busk for end-of-the-year gifts to help us further our cause into the New Year and beyond.

We're happy to report our drive raised considerable funds, and we'd like to thank everyone who contributed, as well as our newly-appointed Fundraising Chair, Richard Campbell for his work in getting us involved in greater efforts to raise the dollars we

need to continue growing and thriving.

We'll be especially acknowledging our donors so far in the near future, so if you're one of them please keep your eye out for that, and if you haven't had the chance to donate yet, please - do!

It doesn't have to be a lot, and it doesn't have to be a hassle, either. Perhaps you might a buck in a meeting basket, or support LifeRing as your organization of choice on [Amazon Smile](#).

If you'd like to make a larger donation, please visit [the Donate page on our website](#) and see what you can do there. Truly - we appreciate anything you can give, because anything helps!



## **And Finally...What Are We Missing?**

After reading this edition, did you find...

Something missing?

Something incorrect?

Something else to read?

You have thoughts, information, stories, or ideas about what you'd like to see in future issues?



## **LifeRing Secular Recovery**

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