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HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



Name	Date	Years	Groups
Andrew	Jan 26	3	Study Group
Cydney	Jan 29	2	Sunday Night Candlelight
Mark O	Feb 1	1	Recovery Salt Spring
Renee G	Feb 2	1	Study Group
Michael C	Feb 4	11	Saturday Night Live
Bailey	Feb 5	3	A New Hope
Shawna P	Feb 11	11	Recovery Salt Spring
Will M	Feb 12	7	Sunday Night Candlelight
Christal.C	Feb 20	8	No Matter what club



Executives:

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Women's campout committee will be meeting Feb 7 2023 at 6pm at Quality foods on 27 Helmcken Rd.

New Meetings

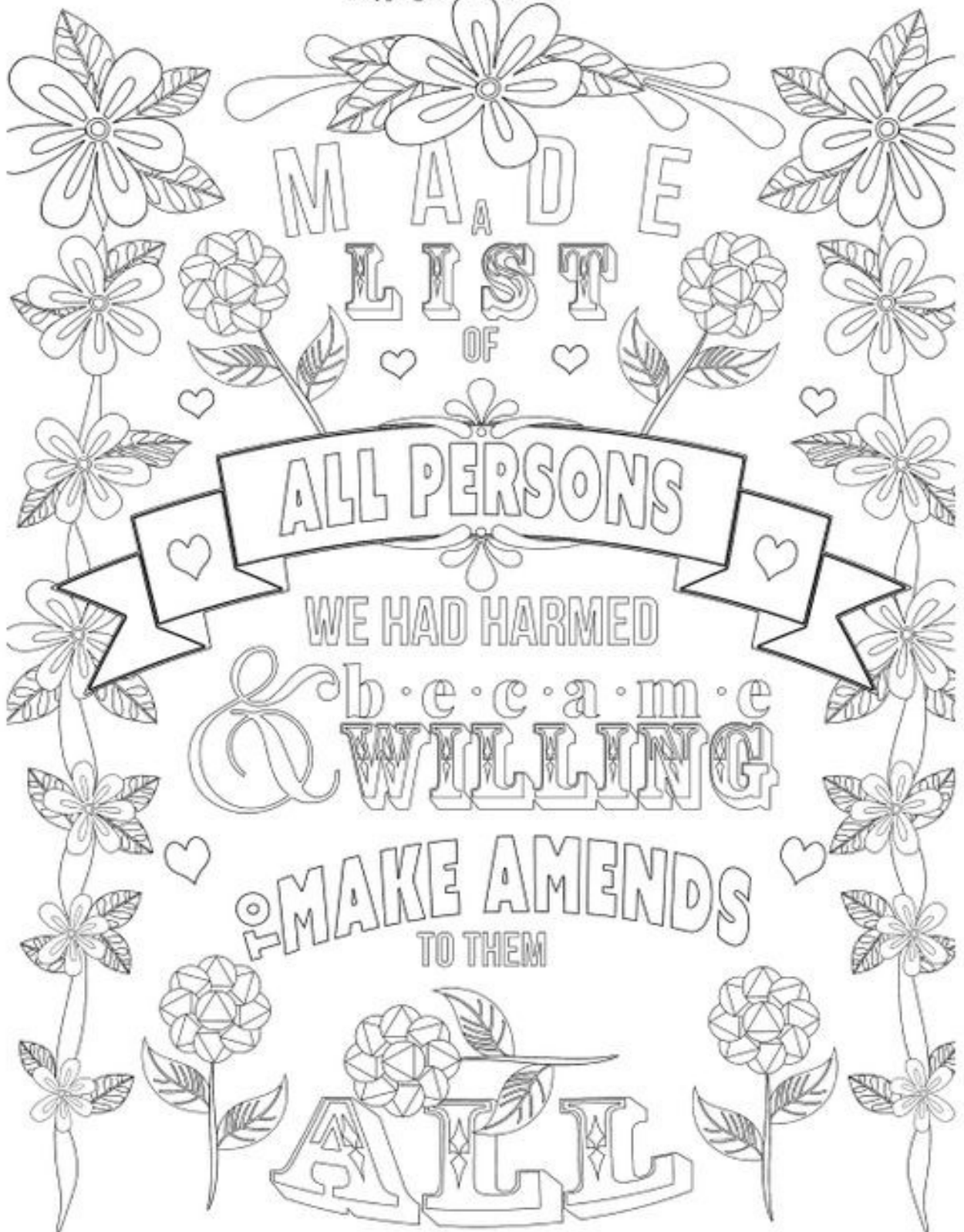
A New Hope open 6pm-7pm Sunday nights 511 Michigan St. in James Bay Literature Study meeting.

Patrick's Story

“There’s a couple different ways that obsession happens. Some obsessions are just unwanted, repetitive thoughts – they feel like a really intense craving. Then there’s the type that happens but doesn’t have that feeling behind it. It’s just a thought. For me, I could be driving down the road, completely sane, thinking, ‘Oh I’ll just stop for a couple beers.’ And it could end up ruining my life.” Patrick’s road to recovery has been long and difficult, but in the end, rewarding. His substance use began when he was a teenager. And like many types of progress, his improvement did not always happen in a straight line. “I got in a fight with a cop at 16 years old. My first rehab was at 17, got kicked out of it after 10 days, then back in there 3 months later. I had 6 or 7 months sober, maybe even a little bit longer. Then I went back out and drank. “I got sober again when I was 24. During that period of time I had 11 years’ sobriety. At 35, my wife and I went through a divorce – and a lot of stuff happened. I just drank. It would take me 10 years to get more than 30 days sober.” “I was in and out of Alcoholics Anonymous, that was constant. I would go to meetings and nothing would happen, I would still want to drink. Really bad obsessions. That went on for about 10 years. I lost everything. I lost a really nice house, my car was reposed, and my 401k was gone.” Even though Patrick had hit bottom after bottom, he was unable to stay sober. Eventually he decided to ask for help from his father, who had 28 years sobriety. “I showed up at my dad’s house with two gym bags. I finally said, ‘This is it. I’m spiritually broken – I can’t do this anymore.’ “I was able to stay sober for 9 months – meetings every day, praying every day, really in the middle of the program. But the day came when I drank again’. “I went into rehab for about 10 days, and I just kept thinking to myself,

'I'll do anything, please God, I do not want to drink ever again.' "After rehab, I went to another meeting. A guy there recommended I go to someone's house that was having a Big Book study. I went to the house, and he started talking, and everything he was talking about, I was like, *that's me – he knows what I'm going through*. So he started taking me through the Big Book and the steps, and I started to get freedom from stuff that was causing me to drink." Maybe the most striking part of Patrick's personality is his acute self-awareness. It's a trait that he sharpened while in recovery, and it's a significant reason why he's finally found so much success staying sober. "It was primarily my self-centeredness, my ego. And I don't mean like egotistical. I mean selfishness, resentments, fear, the things that engulf people with drinking problems. The steps are designed to look at that from a different point of view. There's got to be that internal surrender for sobriety to happen. It helps for you to be other-centered. Gets you out of yourself. It keeps you really connected to other people. "I've been going pretty regularly for the past year or two into jails to meet with people who have a drinking problem. Even though I was never in jail, I can relate to some of them who are near low-bottom with their drinking. When I talk, I describe my experience and what happened to me with my recovery. I say to them like I say to my sponsees, 'We're going to go through this book. Line by line. Page by page. And we're going to have a load of work to do.' "I get a lot of contentment from helping other people. Companionship. Because of that, I have freedom from my addiction." Patrick found freedom by surrendering, taking the steps through the Big Book, and clearing the path for his relationship with God. By doing so, he reclaimed a part of himself that was missing while he was drinking. "It starts with surrendering. And the first thing in surrendering is [asking somebody for help](#). Whatever that help is. And hopefully you get to a place that can offer the help you need. It's worth it."

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