

# All-Together Tethered

Connecting the unconnected.

TetherAll promotes real-time digital check-ins, connecting patients to their health team in the spaces between visits.

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## TryCycle Partners with Treatment Providers to Tackle Problem Gambling

*In 2021, online sports betting barreled into Connecticut, prompting worries about an explosive increase in gambling addiction.*



“What was once the image of a little old lady at a slot machine has shifted to the 20-something male engrossed in sports betting,” emphasized Diana Goode, Executive Director of the CT Council of Problem Gambling.

The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services warns that online betting makes gamblers vulnerable to a host of mental health symptoms. Remarkably, hotline calls soared an astonishing 87% within a year of the online gambling switch.

In response to shifting dynamics of problem gambling, **TryCycle's** TetherAll app is boldly expanding, introducing a new (digitized) module for clients in treatment for problem gambling. Teaming up with the Midwestern Connecticut Council on Alcoholism, **a non-profit treatment facility assisting individuals with addiction and co-occurring disorders since 1972, TryCycle will expand the use of the TetherAll app for problem gamblers and their loved ones.** The new module will be available in 2024.

If you or someone you know is dealing with gambling addiction, visit:

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline>

or <https://www.responsiblegambling.org/for-the-public/problem-gambling-help/help-for-canadians/>

## Battling Loneliness and Depression Among Older Adults: Connecting and Offering Support

*As we age, loneliness and depression can become silent battles for many older adults. These emotional challenges often go unnoticed, but they affect a significant portion of our elderly population, impacting their overall well-being and quality of life.*

Loneliness and depression, affecting people of all ages, are notably prevalent among older adults. For this group, loneliness is not just a fleeting emotion, but a persistent condition influenced by various factors like retirement, loss of loved ones, and physical limitations.

Emotional distress in the elderly can trigger “broken heart syndrome” or takotsubo cardiomyopathy, mirroring heart attack symptoms, compounding their health concerns alongside loneliness and depression. These emotional challenges often lead to severe mental health problems, such as increased stress, anxiety, and substance abuse, harming their well-being and necessitating swift and comprehensive intervention.

Strong social connections and a profound sense of belonging are powerful protective factors against the ravages of loneliness and depression. The impact of genuine human connection cannot be overstated, as it can serve as a lifeline for older adults facing these challenges. For more information on supporting older adults, you can refer to the following resources: <https://www.seniorlifestyle.com/resources/blog/40-mental-health-resources-for-seniors/> and/or <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/aging-seniors.html>.



## From Incarceration to Inspiration: How Journaling Connects and Heals Behind Bars

*In the often-overlooked corners of the criminal justice system, where hope seems scarce and the prospect of transformation appears distant, a remarkable change is unfolding.*

Within the confines of prison walls, creative writing programs are nurturing the seeds of healing and improved mental health among incarcerated individuals. These programs go beyond the act of putting words on paper; they are about fostering a sense of common ground, enabling self-expression, and teaching prisoners how to enhance their emotional well-being.

Healing is a fundamental mental health requirement, and writing can play a pivotal role in fostering this process. Author and activist Luis J. Rodriguez, a prominent advocate for prison reform, passionately underscores the profound impact of [writing programs in correctional facilities](#). He contends that vulnerable communities often lack educational and employment opportunities, leading some individuals toward drugs and crime.

Writing programs, especially [therapeutic journaling](#), are valuable tools for individuals to express emotions, reactions, and perceptions tied to difficult or traumatic life events. This therapeutic writing power transcends prison boundaries, enhancing overall well-being and mental health. It allows people to free up stuck memories, offering clarity and a fresh outlook. Expressive writing, notably, holds promise in addressing conditions like [post-traumatic stress disorder \(PTSD\)](#) and depressive symptoms, occasionally matching the efficacy of trauma-based cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). This is especially crucial for those with limited avenues to share their experiences and seek help.

Some prisoners have shared their personal stories of how therapeutic journaling has helped them cope with the challenges of incarceration and recovery. For example, John (name changed for privacy), a 35-year-old inmate serving a 10-year sentence for robbery, wrote about his childhood trauma and how it led him to substance abuse and crime. He said that journaling helped him release his anger and guilt and motivated him to seek treatment and education. His story is one of the many examples of how therapeutic journaling can provide a healing outlet for prisoners who have experienced trauma and adversity.

Incarcerated individuals who are fortunate enough to participate in writing programs may find solace and empowerment in the act of putting their thoughts and emotions onto paper. Through the written word, they have a means to express their experiences, fears, and pains, transcending the limitations of their prison identities, which often reduce them to mere numbers and their crimes. Writing becomes a conduit for redefining self and identity. Furthermore, this creative outlet fosters organization of thoughts, promotes self-reflection, and facilitates a deeper understanding of the circumstances and choices that led to their incarceration, ultimately aiding them in their journey towards rehabilitation and self-discovery.

For those fortunate enough to have access to writing programs within prison walls, writing, becomes a lifeline enabling them to share suppressed experiences, fears, and pains. It fosters a renewed sense of self and identity, promoting the organization of thoughts, self-reflection, and a potential deeper understanding of the actions that led to their incarceration.



## Navigating Sober Etiquette: Supporting Family and Friends in Recovery

*Recovery from addiction is a courageous journey, and the support of loved ones can make all the difference.*



It's essential to approach this support with sensitivity and understanding, which is the essence of [sober etiquette](#). To provide the right support, take the time to educate yourself about addiction and recovery, avoid situations that may trigger relapse, foster open and judgment-free communication, respect their recovery-related boundaries, celebrate their achievements, no matter how small, and offer compassion during setbacks.

Consider joining support groups for families and friends of those in recovery, and don't forget to prioritize your emotional well-being through self-care. Remember that recovery is a lifelong process, and your [unwavering support](#) can serve as a beacon of hope on this journey. It's a path marked not just by obstacles but also by moments of triumph and growth.