

Show Notes

Title: [RRP 74 Andrea L.: Keep Coming Back – Recovery, Relapse, and the Power of Community](#)

Presenters: Julie L and Peter B

Guest: Andrea L

Length: Approximately 1:14:30

Date: August 8, 2025

Summary

Join hosts Julie and Peter as they welcome Andrea L., a social worker and cherished friend from Extended Family AA. Andrea shares her honest journey through functional alcoholism, treatment experiences, workplace protections, and the cyclical nature of recovery. Her story emphasizes that recovery isn't about perfection—it's about persistence, community, and never giving up, even through relapse.

Key Points with Timestamps

Introduction & Background

- **[00:00:19]** Julie welcomes listeners, emphasizing healing and transformation journey¹
- **[00:01:00]** **Crisis Resource:** Recovery Crisis Line 503-223-8569 available 24/71
- **[00:01:57]** Andrea introduced as Julie's good friend from [Extended Family AA](#)¹
- **[00:02:25]** Service commitment: Andrea hosted Wednesday night meetings for over a year, which helped maintain sobriety¹
- **[00:03:30]** Core themes: Jim Valvano's "Never Give Up" and AA's "Keep Coming Back"¹

Family History & Early Drinking

- **[00:07:59]** Generational addiction background - parents from Midwest where addiction wasn't discussed¹
- **[00:09:27]** Mother's death at age 23 became major turning point in Andrea's drinking progression¹
- **[00:10:35]** Married Chris at 24 (still married today) after mother encouraged reconnection¹
- **[00:12:38]** Became father's guardian at 34/35 after brain surgery removed frontal lobe¹

Addiction Progression

- **[00:14:41]** Recognition that "we're drinking too much" (collaborative acknowledgment that really meant Andrea)¹
- **[00:15:05]** Worked in addiction field 5 years helping people "straight from prison" but didn't see own problem¹

- [00:16:42] "Normal evening": 3 vodka sodas and 4 beers - double the problematic threshold¹
- [00:18:21] **Rock bottom moment:** Fell on sidewalk walking home, decided to "take a little nap" with backpack on¹

Treatment & Recovery Journey

- [00:19:41] Initial AA attendance motivated by making people "leave her alone" rather than genuine desire¹
- [00:22:21] Entered treatment February 2022 - facilities packed post-pandemic¹
- [00:23:35] **Pandemic impact:** Liquor stores/dispensaries stayed open, day drinking normalized¹
- [00:24:03] Home detox with [Kaiser Addiction Medicine](#) - emphasized medical supervision necessity¹
- [00:24:28] **Critical message:** "Just quitting drinking is not an option" - withdrawal can be dangerous¹

Workplace Protections & Resources

- [00:26:54] Andrea's disclosure approach: brought HR and supervisor together (not recommended)¹
- [00:27:33] **Legal protections:** FMLA and American Disability Act protect recovery treatment¹
- [00:29:42] **Workplace resources:** EAP (Employee Assistance Program), Oregon's family paid leave act¹
- [00:29:00] **Professional advice:** Contact EAP first, don't disclose unnecessarily¹

Community & Meeting Life

- [00:30:38] Early meetings: attended but rarely spoke, felt safe in community¹
- [00:32:45] Journey to understanding "grateful alcoholic" concept¹
- [00:33:16] Relapse pattern: episodes got progressively shorter over three-year period¹
- [00:33:51] **Barry's wisdom:** "We don't shoot our wounded" - community acceptance after relapse¹
- [00:38:55] Doesn't work the steps but found safety in home group community¹
- [00:39:38] **Home group selection:** "You just pick us and we're your home group"¹

Service & Connection

- [00:39:54] Service commitments keep connection even when motivation lacks¹
- [00:42:51] Practical service: carrying coffee pot up stairs at meeting location¹
- [00:44:43] Showed up for Julie and Peter at first live "Out in Recovery" event¹

- [00:44:52] **Skyler Ray connection:** Former client who became successful rapper¹
- [00:46:04] [Skyler Ray](#) now on Road to Recovery tour, third year¹
- [00:46:23] [Another Chance](#) treatment center mentioned¹

Relationships & Social Challenges

- [00:47:00] Early recovery compartmentalization: separate sober and work identities¹
- [00:50:34] Family support: brother-in-law Matthew also in recovery, no judgment at family functions¹
- [00:51:27] Social navigation: friends "scan to see what you're drinking" after 20+ year relationships¹
- [00:56:30] Italy trip challenge: 11 people, only Andrea and Matthew abstinent¹

Integration & Growth

- [00:58:37] Julie's workplace integration: first complete honesty about podcast and recovery¹
- [01:00:59] Professional world integration: company now sponsors [GTD 5K](#)¹
- [01:02:20] Peter's health crisis: applying recovery tools to cancer treatment¹
- [01:03:37] Understanding gratitude: recovery forces self-examination leading to better relationships¹

Key Recovery Insights

- [01:07:01] **Andrea's powerful statement:** "I have been working on getting sober for three years. I have had many ups and downs... And I have had many successes"¹
- [01:08:22] Community concern when members disappear from meetings¹
- [01:09:20] Healthy boundaries: can love someone in meetings without socializing outside¹
- [01:10:49] Safety in acceptance: "welcome back" creates safe space after relapse¹

Featured Organizations & Resources

Recovery Support:

- [Real Recovery Podcast](#) - Main website and resources²
- Crisis Line: **503-223-8569** - 24/7 Oregon Recovery Crisis Line²
- [Extended Family & Lunch Bunch AA](#) - Andrea's home group, hybrid meetings³⁴
- [Portland Alano Club](#) - Recovery community center⁵

Treatment & Services:

- [4D Recovery](#) - Youth and young adult recovery services⁶

- [Another Chance Clinical Services](#) - Portland treatment center [78](#)
- [Go The Distance \(GTD\)](#) - Recovery through fitness and community [9](#)
- [Kaiser Addiction Medicine](#) - Medical supervision for detox

Inspirational Figures:

- [Skyler Ray](#) - Recovery artist on Road to Recovery tour [1011](#)
- [Jim Valvano Foundation](#) - "Never Give Up" inspiration [12](#)

Powerful Quotes

"I have been working on getting sober for three years. I have had many ups and downs... And I have had many successes." – Andrea L [**01:07:01**]

"We don't shoot our wounded." – Barry [**00:33:51**]

"If you reach recovery, who cares how you got there? It's the connection piece." – Peter B [**00:46:07**]

"I'm grateful I went to prison 'cause it gave me the timeout to get sober." – Julie L [**01:01:36**]

Listen & Read

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Blog: [Full Blog Post](#)

Website: [Real Recovery Podcast](#)