



Bio for Ashley Carr

How Ashley found the Recovery Community:

I have watched several close family members and friends struggle with addiction and substance use. Watching them suffer and feel such shame, moved me deeply to help others in similar situations. While I have not personally been in recovery myself, I have dealt with mental illness most of my life. Seeking out help for myself, including counseling and medication, I was able to arrive at a stable place and gain some management over my needs.

How Ashley came to Next Step:

I began my career in Virginia as a play therapist for kiddos who had experienced severe trauma. They ranged in ages from 18 months to 17 years and everything in between. It was an honor, not to mention tons of fun, to play and watch these children grow from their pain. In 2017, my husband and I decided to move to North Carolina to be closer to my family, who are all WNC born and raised! I continued my work with at-risk kids working for Youth Villages as an intensive in-home Family Intervention Specialist. I helped children who were at risk of being removed from their home or were being reunited back into their home

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and needed help to navigate the big feelings of change. It was rewarding but difficult work.

I soon decided to begin work for the state of NC Vocational Rehabilitation Services. I helped individuals with chronic disabilities get connected to resources and support that would allow them to find suitable and sustainable work. Having a mental health and substance use caseload, this is where I began my passion for working with individuals who struggle with substance use. After working for the state for 5 years, I decided I was ready to move back into more traditionally clinical work. That is when I found Next Step Recovery. As soon as I walked through the doors, I could feel the comforting home-like environment NSR offers. Susan and I connected on many levels and ways of thought during my interview and I waited not-so-patiently by the phone. Fortunately for me, Susan called and I jumped on the chance to become a therapist for NSR!

Ashley's advice for recovering addicts and their friends & family:

My advice for folks in recovery is to not be afraid to ask for help. We all struggle and need extra support during certain periods of our lives. Finding a treatment program, group, or therapist who you click with is important to begin rebuilding your life. To quote Mr. Rogers, "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping." Remembering to take care of yourself during your recovery journey and practising self-care will allow you grace in understanding yourself.

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A little known fact about Ashley:

My entire family has lived in WNC for decades, I am rooted to these beautiful mountains! I have been with my high school sweetheart for 21 years and we have been married for 16. We have two incredibly smart and creative children, 13 and 7. We love to spend time outdoors including hiking, long evening drives, and visiting cemeteries! We also have a house ton of animals including 3 dogs, 6 cats, and 3 rats. We love the country life! I am also a foodie for life and love eating at new places as well as familiar favorites!

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