
SERENITY RECOVERY LIVING



Serenity Recovery
Living

www.serenityrecoveryliving.com

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RESIDENT HANDBOOK

PHONE NUMBERS:

Program Director (Male): (239) 770-7495
Program Director (Female): (239) 888-1262
House Manager: (239) 770-7495
Managing Director: (305) 491-2379
Career & Financial Director: (305) 491-2379
Hot Line: (866) 577-5166
Fax: (239) 738-4841

MISSION STATEMENT

Serenity Recovery Living was established for the purpose of providing a temporary safe and healthy living environment in an affordable living arrangement for recovering addicts and alcoholics emerging out of treatment centers and/or institutions and helping its members make the transition into productive members of society.

It does this by affording its members structure, responsibility and accountability for their daily tasks of normal everyday living, and by providing rules and regulations and governing group living in an atmosphere of recovery and promoting abstinence-based long-term recovery and participation in twelve step programs guided by spiritual principles.

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INTRODUCTION

Our communities of residents are required to oblige by this policy and procedures manual developed for the purposes of primarily number one, staying clean from any and all mind and mood altering substances, two to build and develop self-confidence, three to learn how to build and maintain personal and inter-personal skills and relationships, four to acquire stable employment and/or schooling necessary to enrich their lives and return to being an active member of society.

The policies and procedures are enforced peer-to-peer and by the house manager and other management staff with the goal of producing a safe and sober living environment, it is done by encouraging a safe and supportive group atmosphere of social living and ZERO TOLERANCE policy for non-compliance with community rules.

Meetings on the property/off are supported and encouraged, peer group meetings, weekly community meetings, 12-Step Meetings, periodic reviews of the FOUR (4) STAGE EMPOWERMENT PROCESS are performed and personal case management are reviewed, and upon request career and financial counseling are available.

The house provides for all Bed Linens and Towels, Cable TV, Land Line Phone and Internet Access.

Services begins when the applicant meets with the Program Director and all the necessary forms and agreements are signed, this includes signing consent forms, establishing short and long-term realistic goals, developing a personalized plan of recovery and undergoing the orientation process.

RESIDENT EXPECTATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

Residents are expected to abstain from all drugs and alcohol and to exhibit a great degree of willingness to change their previous life style and learn healthier ways of living and enjoying life.

Residents are expected to abide by all rules and to participate in their personal recovery plans and become part of the group dynamics and facility and to also to get involved in their community by attending peer group meetings, house meetings and 12 step recovery meetings as outlined in the policy and procedures manual.

Residents must be willing to engage in conversation about their behavior and their recovery to discover new and more effective ways of dealing with recovery related behavioral issues.

Residents must be willing to accept responsibility and accountability for tasks and chores assigned by the house rules and the house manager and to actively work towards achieving personal short and long-term realistic goals as discussed with the Program Director.

Residents must be willing to display an attitude of honesty, open-mindedness and willingness to live in the sober house living environment and must always be respectful of others while handling their affairs.

Residents must be willing to allow "SRL" the ability to search at any time any and all of the residents personal items; including vehicles that are on the property, as a resident I understand that "SRL" has the right conduct such search.

PRIMARY FUNDAMENTAL RULES

I understand and agree that any resident who does not follow any of the Primary Fundamental Rules or encourages or allows any other resident to disregard or break any of these rules and does not bring the matter *immediately* to the attention of the House Manager and/or the Program Director can and will result in that residents termination without any further actions and the resident will forfeit any refunds for deposits or rent.

I understand and agree that as a resident I will remain free from engaging in substance abuse, manufacturing, distribution, sales, holding, passing or using any mood altering drugs including alcohol and *must immediately report* any incident of any resident that is involved in any of these activities mentioned to the House Manager and/or the Program Director.

I understand and agree that any resident thought to be in possession or under the influence of mind-altering substances such as alcohol, drugs, or non-prescribed medication *will be required* to go before a peer review group for judgment and sanctions. If the behavior persists the resident involved will be subject to termination without any further actions and the resident will forfeit any refunds for deposits or rent.

I understand and agree that as a resident I will not participate in any gambling, online or otherwise, pari-mutuel betting, possession of or use of any weapons or fire arms, knives, bullets, martial arts equipment, clubs; or anything else that can be construed as a weapon.

I understand and agree that as a resident I will not participate in any illegal activity, aiding and abetting of a crime, or be involved in any situations with law enforcement. Stealing anything from the facility or from any other member/resident is crime and will not be tolerated.

I understand and agree that as a resident I will not engage in any acts of violence physical or verbal, threats, intimidation, bullying, abuse, racial slurs,

sexual misconduct, religious or ethnic jokes, or the controlling of other resident members and I will conduct myself with mutual respect towards other members and residents of the community including the house manager, any staff, workers, program director and/or managing staff.

I understand and agree that as a resident I will not engage in any sexual activity or behaviors on site or on or around the property. *Absolutely No Overnight Guests or Sexual Activity of any kind is allowed in or around the premises, and this includes the watching of Pornography on a phone or tablet.*

I understand and agree that as a resident I will be required to participate in random drug and alcohol screening and testing and that such test results can affect the probation status of a resident. I understand and agree that *failure of a resident to participate* in a drug and/or alcohol screening and testing will result in the *immediate termination of said resident* without any peer review process and that resident will be terminated without any further actions and the resident will forfeit any refunds for deposits or rent.

I understand and agree that positive urine or breathalyzer screening may affect the probation status of a resident and if any residents test results ever show as positive that resident *will be required* to go before a peer review group for judgment and sanctions and the resident *will also be required* to meet with the house manager and program director before continuing residency/occupancy and be subject to more frequent screening. If the behavior persists the resident involved will be subject to termination without any further actions and the resident will forfeit any refunds for deposits or rent.

I understand and agree that any resident who does not show up on any given night *will be required* to go before a peer review group for judgment and sanctions and must attend a meeting with the Program Director and House Manager and undergo drug and alcohol screening before being allowed to return to the residence. If the behavior persists the resident involved will be subject to termination without any further actions and the resident will forfeit any refunds for deposits or rent.

I understand and agree that as a resident I will maintain my membership in good standing at all times by *paying my dues on time* and remaining current,

by following the rules stipulated in the resident handbook at all times, and by being a good citizen of the community and reporting any incidents of misconduct to the house manager or program director.

PERSONAL GROWTH RULES

I understand and agree as a resident to engage myself in the Four (4) Stage Self Empowerment Process of the residence and participate on all aspect of the program with an open mind and willingness.

I understand and agree as a resident to attend house meetings regularly and to participate in open discussions with the group, peer-to-peer discussions, and the house manager meeting with a willing attitude. *The house meetings held weekly are mandatory.*

I understand and agree as a resident to be on the property by the designated curfew times determined in the Four (4) Stage Self Empowerment Process, unless the Program Director or Management Staff has approved otherwise.

I understand and agree as a resident that no one will be admitted after curfew without approval from the Program Director and *The doors will be locked at 11:00pm.*

I understand and agree as a resident not to borrow any items, tools, money, or anything else from any other resident of the facility, asking for or borrowing anything including cigarettes is *strictly discouraged.*

I understand and agree as a resident that the Program Director *must approve all visitors* of any resident to the facility and that *no children are allowed* on the property grounds unless approved by the Program Director first.

I understand and agree as a resident to treat any property of the facility that is designated as community property such as books, cooking and kitchen utensils, furniture and other things with care and respect and is to share with kindness, and to respect the property and personal belongings of others.

I understand and agree as a resident to treat other residents of the facility, staff and other members of the community with respect at all times and to *respect the anonymity of other residents*, no information is to be given out to anyone about any other resident of the facility (i.e. phone numbers), you can take a phone number and have the resident of the facility call back (take info. don't give it out). No cameras or videotaping or recording of any kind is allowed in the facility.

I understand and agree as a resident to maintain my personal hygiene on a daily basis and to maintain a proper dress code at all times, as a resident of the facility women will not dress in revealing outfits and/or cutoffs and men will wear a shirt at all times while in the public areas of the facility.

I understand and agree as a resident not to enter another resident's room without permission first, from both people who reside in that room, for a coed facility, women and men are restricted and prohibited from entering the rooms of the opposite sex.

I understand and agree as a resident to keep peace and harmony with the neighbors in the surrounding area and neighborhood, to keep and abide by the speed limits in the community and to provide mutual respect for all the neighbors in the community.

I understand and agree as a resident not to break or destroy any house property, which includes the property that belongs to the residence/facility and the things and property of others.

I understand and agree as a resident not to use the staff office, the Staff Office is reserved for management use only and no resident is allowed in the Staff Office without the House Manager or Director present.

I understand and agree as a resident that all residents are expected to provide their own financial resources for food, toiletries, and personal hygiene items. "SRL" will only provide toilet paper and general cleaning supplies. Eating or borrowing other residents' goods is strictly prohibited.

HOUSE RULES

I understand and agree as a resident that there is to be no smoking at any time inside the residence that this is a smoke free facility and designated smoking areas are properly marked outside the facility in the front of the building outside. I will always use ashtrays and I will always make sure cigarettes are properly extinguished before throwing them away in the ashtrays; I will not throw cigarette butts outside and only dispose of them in the ashtrays provided. Ashtrays will be emptied regularly by the parties who smoke.

I understand and agree as a resident to keep my personal area neat and clean and make my bed every morning before leaving my room; I will keep the common area living spaces free of any clutter and dirty clothes.

I understand and agree as a resident to participate in the chores assigned at the house meeting in keeping the common areas cleaned, the common areas include the kitchen, and dining area, the living areas, the lanai in the back, and the bathrooms and garage and they are to be kept neat and clean at all times, there will be chores and tasks assigned on a rotating basis to everyone at your house meeting and everyone is expected to participate. The tasks will consist of dusting, sweeping and mopping the common areas, cleaning the bathrooms and showers, taking out the trash and putting the trash out by the curb on garbage days and cleaning the refrigerator out once a month.

I understand and agree as a resident to keep the kitchen area clean at all times, once I use it I will clean it the minute I am done and put things back in their proper places when finished, I understand that refrigerator space will be assigned to each person and I agree not to take and consume anything that is not mine and/or I did not purchase and I will respect others personal food. I understand that the kitchen area is accessible 24/7 with food and dining to be kept in the general kitchen and dining area. *(NO FOOD OR DRINK WILL BE ALLOWED IN THE BEDROOMS)*. Individual labels will be provided for personal food items, any items without a label will be available to all residents. The refrigerator will be cleaned once a month as assigned at your house meeting and any food that is expired or producing a foul smell will be disposed of periodically and thrown away.

I understand and agree as a resident that after 11:00pm it is important to respect the peace and privacy of all the other residents sharing the facility. Every resident is entitled to enjoy a peaceful nights rest and that starts every night at 11:00pm so noise in the common areas will be kept to a minimum and the television in the common area is also to be kept at low volumes.

I understand and agree as a resident that you share your room with a roommate and that your roommate is entitled to enjoy quiet time and enjoy a peaceful and restful night's sleep. 11:00pm is the cutoff time for televisions and/or music, computers and cell phones inside your room. 10:00am to 11:00pm are the hours for the no noise rule in the rooms. As a resident I must use common courtesy and respect for everyone in the community of the facility.

I understand and agree as a resident that laundry will be performed at the posted times as designated at your house meeting, each resident will have a specified time that they can do their laundry in, as a resident you must respect this and not use the laundry room other than the times that are designated for your use. There is to be no laundry left in the washer and dryer, each resident must complete their laundry in their designated times, and no resident is allowed to bring in laundry or anyone else's laundry to do at the facility who is not a resident of the facility.

I understand and agree as a resident to respect everyone else's belongings such as laptops, computers, telephones, tablets, articles of clothing, personal hygiene items, etc, remember the rule is never to ask, only accept if it's offered.

I understand and agree as a resident to make sure the doors are locked and all the lights are turned off if not in use. The lights outside in the front should be turned off after 11:00pm.

I understand and agree as a resident to keep my personal items such as hygiene, bathroom items and towels in my bedroom at all times except when used, the bathrooms are common areas and should be kept free from any and all personal items at all times.

I understand and agree as a resident that the house telephone is primarily used only for communication and contact with employers and sponsors; I

agree to keep my phone calls down to 15 minutes at any one time and I will not make or receive phone calls after 11:00pm. EXCEPT IN CASES OF EMERGENCY. I agree to use proper phone etiquette and politeness and to write messages down in the message book while answering the phone, and not give out any personal information out to anyone about any of the other residents, but to take a phone number and message.

I understand and agree as a resident not to use the garage that is a common area for personal storage or parking, parking is to be done outside on the driveway and on the front of the residence. If you are a resident that owns a motorized scooter or bicycle, parking of these vehicles will be the only ones allowed inside the garage area and must be cleared by and approved by the house manager or program director first.

I understand and agree as a resident that if I am yet not working not to be in the residence/house from the hours of 8:00am to 4:00pm, that I should be using those hours to find and look for a job or to attend meetings or therapy.

I understand and agree as a resident that I am NOT to use the facility/residence as a hang out to invite friends over or loiter at the residence/facility, the resident's significant other and/or friend(s) will not be welcomed to spend endless hours at the residency, visitation hours will be discussed and agreed upon at your House Meeting. Residents should limit the time a friend is over being that the residence/facility is shared with many others.

CO-ED FACILITY RULES

I understand and agree as a resident that the following facilities/residences are considered Co-Ed Facilities:

3910 NE 10TH AVE, CAPE CORAL, FLORIDA 33909

1769 EBENEZER COURT, FORT MYERS, FLORIDA

I understand and agree as a resident if I reside at one of the residences mentioned above that there are both male and female staff members and male and female member/residents who will be in this facility, therefore I must be dressed at all times, including when traveling to and from the shower.

I understand and agree as a resident if I reside at one of the residences mentioned above that Clothing (NOT PAJAMAS, SLEEPWARE or CUTOFFS) must be worn AT ALL TIMES, including shoes in all common areas of the facility.

I understand and agree as a resident if I reside at one of the residences mentioned above that No Clothing will be allowed that displays Drug or Alcohol Products.

I understand and agree as a resident if I reside at one of the residences mentioned above that if my clothing is inappropriate at the discretion of the House Manager and/or Director, I may be asked to change.

I understand and agree as a resident if I reside at one of the residences mentioned above that the bedrooms for men and the bedrooms for women are properly labeled as such, the men with the men and the women with the women, no-one is allowed to enter a bedroom that has been assigned to the opposite sex, the men have been assigned to the three bedrooms in front, while the women are assigned the two bedrooms in the back.

I understand and agree as a resident if I reside at one of the residences mentioned above that the bathrooms at some of these facilities may be assigned as co-ed bathrooms and the rule is, if the door is closed, that bathroom is considered occupied, so don't bother knocking.

FOUR (4) STAGE SELF EMPOWERMENT PROCESS

The Four (4) Stage Self Empowerment Process was developed by other recovery living facility Managing Directors and members of F.A.R.R., Florida Association of Recovery Residencies and N.A.R.R. the National Alliance of Recovery Residences in an effort to help its members make the transition into becoming productive members of our society.

It does this by Establishing Structure and Empowering its members to Maintain Commitments by seeking, soliciting and petitioning Responsibility and monitoring Accountability of its members.

Stage One (1) starts with you the resident making a commitment to stay clean from all mood and mind altering substances and committing to *making 90 meetings in the next 90 days* with the 12-Step Fellowship of your choice. There are many 12-Step Fellowships to choose from, we don't endorse any specific fellowship but our members usually participate in one of the few mentioned here, there is N.A. Narcotics Anonymous, A.A. Alcoholic Anonymous, C.A. Cocaine Anonymous, C.R. Celebrate Recovery, S.R. Smart Recovery, etc, just to name a few. The house manager and the program director have additional information to all these 12-Step fellowships and can guide you in the right direction in choosing one. There is also literature in the bookshelf/library of the facilities that are available for the taking, except the books, the books stay within the facility and are shared by everyone.

In order to complete 30-meeting in 30-days you must attend one meeting each day, attending two meeting in one day and then not attending a meeting the following day does not count.

As a member of the facility you will also be asked and required to get a sponsor and to call him/her every day and to get phone numbers from other recovering addicts from the 12-Step fellowship program that you choose and call those numbers regularly and start building your support team.

If you feel this is your time and you really want to stay clean above all else no matter what, than this is the plan to do so. If you follow your personal recovery plan and the guidance of your program director, your sponsor, the house manager, your other peers in recovery and you do the work outlined in

this handbook and in this Four (4) Stage Self Empowerment Process you will be successful in changing your life.

STAGE ONE (1)

ESTABLISHING STRUCTURE

I as a resident AGREE TO complete *30 meetings in 30 days*. That is one meeting or more per day signed on your meeting verification sheet. Two meetings one day and none the next day does not constitute completion of a 30 meeting in 30 days program, you must attend a minimum of at least one meeting each day *within the first 30 days* with the 12-Step Fellowship of your choice. This is the beginning of your 90 in 90 commitment.

I as a resident AGREE TO attain a *Sponsor* at the 12-Step Fellowship of your choice *with-in the first 14-days*, this can be a temporary sponsor and the sooner you get started with this the better off you'll be.

I as a resident AGREE TO *call your Sponsor at least once a day*, preferably twice, once in the morning and once in the evening, this can also be a temporary sponsor until you find a permanent person you are most comfortable with.

I as a resident AGREE TO attain a *home group* at the 12-Step Fellowship of your choice *with-in the first 30-days*, in a home group you will arrive earlier and leave later, you can ask at the meeting how to become a home group member and people there will help you and tell you all about it.

I as a resident AGREE TO seek *employment* and be gainfully employed full time *with-in the first 14-days* before being able to move to the next phase of the program, STAGE TWO (2).

I as a resident AGREE TO be on the property no later than *11:00pm Curfew* Monday through Sunday seven days a week, no exceptions unless arrangements have been made in advance with the Program Director.

I as a resident AGREE TO notify the Program Director in advance of any changes in schedule that will directly affect the rules and curfews of the residence.

I as a resident AGREE TO have a one on one *Progress Review* with the Program Director before completing Stage One (1) and moving on to the next phase of the program, STAGE TWO (2).

STAGE TWO (2)

MAINTAINING COMMITMENTS

I as a resident AGREE TO complete *30 meetings in 30 days*. This will bring your meeting count to 60 meetings upon completion of this stage. Again, this is one meeting or more per day signed on your meeting verification sheet that must be completed in the first 30-days of Stage Two (2). This is the continuation of your 90 in 90 commitment.

I as a resident AGREE TO *continue to call your Sponsor at least once a day*, preferably twice, once in the morning and once in the evening, this should be a permanent Sponsor by this point, please also introduce your permanent Sponsor to the Program Director.

I as a resident AGREE TO start sharing at meetings, especially at your *home group*, attend all meeting formats like speaker meetings, step meetings, tradition meetings, etc. to expand your awareness and to grow and change.

I as a resident AGREE TO take name and phone numbers down of others in the rooms and meeting places daily, preferably people with at least six (6) months clean time and to call these phone numbers and speak to people in recovery regularly, these are the people who will become part of your support group.

I as a resident AGREE TO remain gainfully employed full time and to set an example to the new person and to others in the house.

I as a resident AGREE TO be a Little Buddy, that is to become a buddy with others with more clean time who can help you get acquainted, be available, be helpful, and be responsible.

I as a resident AGREE TO remain current with all financial obligations and up to date on your program fees or dues.

I as a resident AGREE TO be on the property no later than *11:00pm Curfew* Monday through Sunday seven days a week, *1:30pm Curfew* Friday, Saturday and Holiday Evening, no exceptions unless arrangements have been made in advance with the Program Director. With permission from the Program

Director and depending on your standings, you *may be eligible for an overnight pass*.

I as a resident AGREE TO notify the Program Director in advance of any changes in schedule that will directly affect the rules and curfews of the residence.

I as a resident AGREE TO have a one on one *Second Progress Review* with the Program Director before completing Stage Two (2) and moving on to the next phase of the program, STAGE THREE (3).

STAGE THREE (3)

APPLICATION & MOTIVATION

I as a resident AGREE TO complete the FINAL *30 meetings in 30 days*. This will bring your meeting count to 90 meetings upon completion of this stage. Again, this is one meeting or more per day signed on your meeting verification sheet that must be completed in the first 30-days of Stage Three (3). This is the completion of your 90 in 90 commitment.

I as a resident AGREE TO *continue to call your Sponsor at least once a day*, preferably twice, once in the morning and once in the evening, this should be a permanent Sponsor by this point, by this point you and your sponsor should also be working steps in the 12-Step Fellowship of your choice.

I as a resident AGREE TO continue sharing at meetings, especially at your *home group*, continue to attend all meeting formats like speaker meetings, step meetings, tradition meetings, etc. to expand your awareness and to grow and change.

I as a resident AGREE TO continue to take name and phone numbers down of others in the rooms and meeting places daily, preferably people with at least six (6) months clean time and to call these phone numbers and speak to people in recovery regularly, by now you should have a support group of people who you call daily, ideally you want to have 30-50 phone numbers of people you can call who are in recovery just like you.

I as a resident AGREE TO to continue to remain gainfully employed full time and to set an example to the new person and to others in the house.

I as a resident AGREE TO be a Big Buddy, that is to become a buddy with others coming in and helping them get acquainted, reaching out to newcomers, be available, be helpful, and be responsible, and to always lead by example. *By now you should be sharing some of the House Meetings.*

I as a resident AGREE TO remain current with all financial obligations and up to date on your program fees or dues.

I as a resident AGREE TO be on the property no later than 11:00pm Curfew Monday through Sunday seven days a week, 1:30pm Curfew Friday, Saturday and Holiday Evening, no exceptions unless arrangements have been made in advance with the Program Director. With permission from the Program Director and depending on your standings, you may be eligible for a weekend/holiday pass.

I as a resident AGREE TO notify the Program Director in advance of any changes in schedule that will directly affect the rules and curfews of the residence.

I as a resident AGREE TO have a one on one Third Progress Review with the Program Director before completing Stage Three (3) and moving on to the next and FINAL phase of the program, STAGE FOUR (4).

STAGE FOUR (4)

BEING OF SERVICE

I as a resident must have completed Stages One (1) Two (2) and Three (3) of the Self Empowerment Process first in order to move into this last and Final Stage Four (4) - Being of Service Graduation Stage. The first Three Stages (1) (2) and (3) were designed to be completed in the first 90 days of your program, by now you should have at least 90 days clean from any mind or mood altering drug or alcohol baring of course no relapses have taken place. Stage Four (4) is the last and final Stage and consists of the next 90 days, once you complete Stage Four (4) you shall have six months or (180) Days clean from any mind or mood altering drug or alcohol baring of course no relapses have taken place. During your participation in Stage Four (4) you become a graduate, now you are eligible to become a house manager and to continue to practice the principals that you have learned in all your affairs, you should continue to use your recovery tools, monitor and reinforce others behaviors, attitudes and beliefs and lead by example. As a resident you will continue to practice in all the activities set forth in the first 90 days of your program and focus on reconciling relationships with family members and loved ones.

The first 90 days focuses on yourself and your social skills and the *Personal Skills* and personal aspects of living clean, more emphasis is placed on focusing on the individual aspects of developing coping skills and learning about your recovery and the tools you can use for recovery. Individual social skills and competencies, including communication, problem solving, decision making, self-management, and peer relations are all learned during this stage.

The last 90 days focuses on cultivating *Interpersonal Skills* by being of service to others and by focusing on reconciling relationships with family members and loved ones, and focusing on career, finances and employment. Group Dynamics are also introduced during this sage. Interpersonal skills are the skills used by a person to interact with others properly. In the business domain, the term generally refers to an employee's ability to get along with others while getting the job done. Interpersonal skills are the life skills we use every day to communicate and interact with other people, both individually

and in groups. People who have worked on developing strong interpersonal skills are usually more successful in both their professional and personal lives.

I as a resident AGREE TO continue practicing all the principals of recovery learned in the prior Three Stages (1) (2) and (3) and to stay active in my recovery.

I as a resident AGREE TO continue attending meetings regularly. It is recommended 3 to 5 meetings per week.

I as a resident AGREE TO *continue to call your Sponsor DAILY at least once a day*, preferably twice, and to continue working steps in the 12-Step Fellowship of your choice.

I as a resident AGREE TO continue sharing at meetings, stay involved with your *home group*, continue to attend all meeting formats like speaker meetings, step meetings, tradition meetings, literature meetings, and to attain a commitment with the 12-Step Fellowship of your choice, your commitment can be serving in Area Services, Sharing or Bringing a meeting in to Hospitals and Institutions and/or becoming of service to your home group and attend the business meetings.

I as a resident AGREE TO continue to take the name and phone numbers down of others in the rooms and meeting places daily, even people with less than six (6) months clean time and to call these phone numbers and speak to people on a regular basis, specially your support group, and give rides to new comers to meetings, attend recovery social related events and conventions, etc.

I as a resident AGREE TO continue to remain gainfully employed full time and to set an example to the new person and to others in the house. I agree to seek career counseling and training for specific skills interested.

I as a resident AGREE TO reconcile and rekindle my relationships with family members, friends and loved ones, as long as none of these individuals are in active addiction.

I as a resident AGREE TO carry the message of recovery to the addict that still suffers; I am responsible for reaching out to new comers at meetings and to lead by example.

I as a resident AGREE TO be accountable and responsible for my own curfew, I am now empowered to make decisions that are healthy of sound mind.

I as a resident AGREE TO continue to stay ACTIVE in MY RECOVERY and continue to grow through the process of recovery and the 12-Steps and to practice the principles of recovery in all my affairs and situations as they may arise, I understand that if I don't stay ACTIVE in MY RECOVERY, I may FALL for ACTIVE ADDICTION.

I as a resident AGREE TO **Put Recovery First** in my life and to make recovery the number one priority, today we have the freedom to choose, the freedom of choice is ours, we can choose ACTIVE RECOVERY or we can choose ACTIVE ADDICTION, the choice is ours and only ours to make, no one has the power to choose this for us, only I can make this choice. Putting RECOVERY FIRST simply means doing the following, getting up in the morning and acting on my recovery before doing anything else that I do, before taking phone calls, before watching television, before doing anything at all. Set some time aside in the mornings first, preferably a half hour or so, do my readings, read my literature, my spiritual daily reading and meditation whether it's the NA JFT- Just For Today, or the AA DR - Daily Reflections, or any other daily reading, do it first thing in the morning to get your day kick started in recovery, this could take 10-15 min., afterwards make your first phone calls, call your Sponsor, or people in your Support Group, tell them what you plan to achieve today, discuss the weather, sports, it doesn't matter, as long as we are reaching out, we are doing what we need to do to Put Recovery First. During the day if works allows you to, attend a Lunch meeting, if not attend a meeting in the afternoon when you get off work, this will be your commitment to attend a meeting in the 12-Step Fellowship of your choice. Call your Sponsor or other members of your Support Group at the end of the day and talk about how your day went, if you practice doing this daily, you will be accounted for and accountable, if you fail to call one day, people will be calling you. Work on your step work or literature and prayers at night before you go to sleep, and pray the third step prayer before you head out in the morning, and the serenity prayer at night. Third Step Prayer - "God, take my will and my life, guide me in my recovery, and show me how to live, CLEAN".

MEDICATIONS

While you are a resident at “SRL” Serenity Recovery living you will learn to take responsibility for your own life and your own decisions, your own health, your own emotional and spiritual well-being. Taking responsibility for your health and well-being means visiting your doctors and counselors regularly and scheduling preventive checkups, this may entail taking certain medication as prescribed by your licensed physician. It is up to you to take the responsibility of administering your own medications as prescribed, *SHARING YOUR MEDICATION WITH OTHERS IN STRICTLY PROHIBITED AND CAN RESULT IN YOUR IMMEDIATE TERMINATION.* Taking responsibility for your medications means administering your own medicine as prescribed, understanding what they are, when to take them, what the correct dosage, and any side effects, side effects must be reported you your physician immediately. Any medication that is prescribed by your physician that is a ***NARCOTIC*** must be cleared through the Program Director first and the Program Director must be put in contact with your physician in order to learn what the medication is and what it is suppose to be treating. If the medication is cleared and approved by the Program Director, and the Program Director deems and determines that the medication prescribed will not endanger the health and the well-being of other recovering residents, you as a resident will still be required to administer your own medication, but the medication will be kept under lock-in-key in a floor-safe and only the House Manager and the Program Director will have access to the floor-safe.

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

By acknowledging receipt of this statement of responsibility, I attest to the following:

I as a resident hereby understand and agree that I am competent to self-administer my own medications.

I as a resident hereby understand and agree that the medications prescribed to me are my own personal property.

I as a resident hereby understand and agree to take full responsibility for my medications and to follow my physicians’ instructions as prescribed.

I as a resident hereby understand and agree that it is my responsibilities to have my doctor explain the risks, the benefits, and the possible side effects of the medications that are prescribed to me.

I as a resident hereby understand and agree that the staff at “SRL” is not medical professionals, and do not dispense or administer medication.

I as a resident hereby understand and agree that “SRL” administers drug and alcohol tests upon admission and twice per week at different intervals during the week, and am in agreement with the Urinalysis Agreement Section of this Manual. I also understand that my insurance will be charged \$50 per test that I may be requested to take without advance notice to provide a urine sample or breathalyzer to detect alcohol or other drugs upon suspicion.

I as a resident hereby understand and agree that “SRL” does not allow any Non-Approved Medications, Any medication that a resident is required to take must be approved by the Director beforehand and before bringing it into the residence/facility, including over-the-counter items. The following Over-the-Counter items are NOT Allowed, Mouthwash with alcohol, Vanilla Extract, Inhalants, Diet Pills or other Stimulants, Sleep Aids or other Depressants, check with management first beforehand.

I as a resident hereby understand and agree that in order for “SRL to release any health information about myself and my condition that I must first sign and execute a HIPPA Privacy and Authorization form authorizing us to disclose your protected health information according to the following rule.

HIPAA – FEDERAL PRIVACY ACT.

There is a federal law, called the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), that sets rules for health care providers and health plans about who can look at and receive your health information, including those closest to you – your family members and friends. The HIPAA Privacy Rule ensures that you have rights over your health information, including the right to get your information, make sure it’s correct, and know who has seen it.

What Happens if You Want to Share Health Information with a Family Member or a Friend?

HIPAA requires us, and other health care providers to protect the privacy of your health information. However, if you don’t object, we may share relevant information with family members or friends involved in your health care or payment for your health care in certain circumstances.

When Your Health Information Can be Shared

Under HIPAA, we may share your information face-to-face, over the phone, or in writing only if:
You give us permission to share the information.
You are present and do not object to sharing the information.
You are not present, and we determined based on professional judgment that it's in your best interest.

Examples:

We may discuss your treatment in front of your friend or family member when you ask your friend or family member to come into the treatment room or residency with you.

We may discuss your bill with your family member who is with you and has a question about the charges, if you do not object.

We may discuss the drugs you need to take with your health aide who has come with you to your appointment.

We may **not** discuss your condition with your family member or friend if you tell us not to.

HIPAA also allows us to give prescription drugs, medical supplies, and other health care items to a family member, friend, or other person you send to pick them up.

We may also share relevant information if you are not around or cannot give permission when a health care provider or plan representative believes, based on professional judgment, that sharing the information is in your best interest.

For more information about sharing your health information with family members and friends, or more information about HIPAA, visit www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/index.html.

SANCTIONS

Sanctions are introduced to promote conditions of a safe and healthy living environment for all residents and members of “SRL”. There are always consequences to our actions, this is one of the biggest reasons we are here and rules need to be followed. If we keep doing what we always did, we will be sure to keep getting what we always got, in other words, if nothing changes, nothing changes, and we at “SRL’ are change agents who are committed to promote the change needed to become productive and constructive members of our society.

I as a member and resident hereby understand and agree that ANY VIOLATION could result in a vote by the other residents in the community for SANCTIONS or TERMINATION.

(1ST) FIRST OFFENSE – Verbal Warning, a one on one meeting with a Program Director.

(2ND) SECOND OFFENSE – Hearing, resident is subject to go before the house committee to determine Sanctions.

(3RD) THIRD OFFENSE – Termination, resident is subject to termination of residency and forfeiture of rent and deposit.

I as a member and resident hereby understand and agree that “SRL” Program Rules do not replace or amend a Court Order, or the Department of Corrections Policies. ALL DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS POLICIES AND COURT ORDERS WILL BE OBEYED AND FOLLOWED.

TERMINATION

SUCCESSFUL TERMINATION

Successful termination occurs when a resident successfully graduates the program and has completed the FOUR (4) STAGES OF THE SELF EMPOWERMENT PROCESS and voluntarily terminates his/her residency with “SRL”, the resident will then and only then receive his/her full deposit back.

UNSUCCESSFUL TERMINATION

Unsuccessful termination occurs when a resident is terminated as a result of sanction for violations of rules and procedures and the resident is asked to leave and the residents’ residency is immediately terminated, usually without any refund of rents or deposits and usually happens same day on the spot.

I as a member and resident hereby understand and agree that unsuccessful termination from this program may constitute a violation of probation and will be reported to the judicial authority as deem necessary and appropriate.

I as a member and resident hereby understand and agree that if I am involuntarily terminated from the program, that my belongings including my valuables, will be held for a period of no more than three (3) days or 72 hours from the hour of termination, and that in order for you or your personal representative or family member to pick up the residents personal belongings after termination, that *a phone call must be made to the Program Director* ahead of time to make arrangements and to authorize your family member or personal representative to pick up your belongings. After three (3) days or 72 hours any personal belongings or valuables not picked up will become property of “SRL” and will be disposed off with no other recourse of action from the residents’ standpoint.

GRIEVANCE

All residents have the right to be included and take part in the resolution of disputes as stated in the Grievance and Dispute Policy and Procedures below. Problem resolution and problem solving is part of the focus of cultivating Interpersonal Skills related to a residents dissatisfaction or problem arising as a result of a resident being dissatisfied with another resident, the group as a whole, the house manager, the program director, or any other condition related to the residents living arrangements that may arise.

There are steps to follow in the “SRL” residence to resolve your grievance or complaint that if followed properly can aid and assist in resolving the residents grievance or complaint to the residents satisfaction, these are tools that a resident can use not only as a resident in “SRL” but also in the real world with problems that may arise in jobs, living arrangement, family members, friends, and other groups or associations as a whole.

There is always a protocol or an escalation process that should be followed when escalating a problem or a situation that a person may be faced with. It is always a good idea to follow that protocol and to properly document any facts, occurrences of violation, repeated situations, circumstances, status, the person’s position and how the person feels, and the date, time and place of such occurrence.

The grievance procedure shall apply to any resident who has a complaint or dissatisfaction arising out of unmet expectations, assumptions, interpretation, application or claim of a violation of any “SRL” Policy and Procedures defined or recited in the Residents Handbook, or any other violation such as sexual harassment, legal or ethical misconduct, conditions of residency, or conflict with any resident, group of residents, staff, house manager or program director.

Problem solving between residents who are experiencing a problem with another resident or a group of residents, or the house manager, or who feel they are being treated unfairly by a staff person or house manager, should begin the grievance procedure with a mediated verbal exchange.

STEP ONE – GRIEVANCE PROCESS

This is The First Step of the Grievance Process. Any problems with conflicts among residents or group of residents should be brought up to the house manager or staff attention first. Any resident with this type of a complaint or conflict should schedule a mediated meeting with the house manager present acting as the mediator if the complaint is against another resident or group of residents, if the complaint or conflict is against the house manager, the resident should schedule a mediated meeting with the Program Director present acting as the mediator. Every effort should be made to resolve the dispute at this meeting.

STEP TWO – GRIEVANCE PROCESS

If the matter is not resolved at this first meeting, The Second Step of the Grievance Process is for the resident filing the grievance to put the discussed grievance in writing using the “Writing Instructions for Grievance” found below and given to the on-site house manager to be discussed at the next scheduled house meeting.

Any problems with a violation of Policy and Procedures, harassment, legal or ethical misconduct, conditions of residency or any other matters *not associated with a grievance against another resident or group of residents* should be brought up to the house manager or staff attention first and shall be followed by the resident initiating the complaint putting the grievance in writing using the “Writing Instructions for Grievance” found below and given to the on-site house manager and the Program Director.

If the grievance is towards the on-site house manager, or If the grievance or problem is not address and resolved at the house meeting after the grievance has been put into writing, the matters must be brought up to the attention of the Program Director.

STEP THREE – GRIEVANCE PROCESS

In The Third Step of the Grievance Process if the grievance is against the Program Director or the problem still goes unresolved after the previous protocol has been followed, the resident can file a formal grievance complaint with the F.A.R.R., Florida Association of Recovery Residencies (561-288-1721

or 561-299-0405)/info@farronline.org) and/or the N.A.R.R. the National Alliance of Recovery Residences (855-355-6277/info@narronline.org).

Writing Instructions for Grievance

Describe the event in writing about that which you are filing a grievance. Include all the facts, and describe as clearly as you can exactly the nature of the event, include things such as date, time and place of occurrence or occurrences, include in your report other residents or staff that were present, describe what was said or done, etc.

Ask yourself, have you taken any steps to resolve this on your own first and have you followed the process and protocol to resolve this situation before filing a formal writing grievance complaint? If so, what are they, list what you did to try to resolve the problem or issue.

State what you would like the outcome to be, what would you like to be done in response to your grievance or complaint?

NOTE: "SRL" Serenity Recovery Living will not tolerate retaliation or retribution of any kind directed towards a resident who has or is in the process of filing a grievance.

CAREER AND FINANCIAL COUNSELING

Career and Financial counseling is provided to residents and members of “SRL” on a per request basis. In order for a resident/member to enjoy these services they must contact the Career and Financial Director and the candidate must have graduated Stage Three (3) and working on graduating Stage Four (4) of the Self Empowerment Process, but a candidate can contact the Career and Financial Director anytime during the four stage process for advice. The candidate must contact the Career and Financial Director and set up an initial interview, the initial interview can be scheduled anytime during the Stage Four (4) Process. Some of the topics that will be discussed will include but not be limited to the following and will be based on the candidates needs determined after this first interview:

FINANCIAL COUNSELING

Financial Counseling will be provided to any resident/member who qualifies and a one on one interview session can be scheduled followed by as many sessions necessary to complete the counseling and coaching of that candidate. The financial counseling can cover both personal financing and business. Topics to be discussed are; Banking knowledge, basic bookkeeping, the basics for opening a business, taxing information such as how and when to file both personal and business, how to establish credit/restore it, mortgages and how to apply for one, how to purchase your first home, savings and other saving instruments, and any other topic that the candidate may need assistance with.

CAREER COUNSELING

Career Counseling will be similarly provided to any resident/member who qualifies and who requests his/her one on one interview session during the State Four (4) Process. Topics to be discussed are; Going back to school, college or vocational school, financial aid and how to apply for it, the benefits of a placement or career aptitude test and personality testing and where to get tested, how to go about applying and registering for courses at your local community college or trade school, and any other topic that the candidate may need assistance with.

CASE MANAGEMENT & REFERRALS

It is recommended that you stay at “SRL” for at least six (6) months, although some residents may need additional time, if additional time is needed it will be discussed on a case by case basis. A current resident may qualify for further residency consideration or may be referred into the “LIFT” Program. The “LIFT” *Living Independent For Today* Program is that final “lift” to get out of homelessness by providing coordination of services and financial assistance resources to help residents reach their goals of securing and maintaining housing and self-sufficiency. LIFT is not an entitlement or income subsidy program. It is a housing and self-sufficiency program. For eligibility Applicants must meet the HUD or Challenge Grant definition of homelessness to be eligible. For further info look at: http://www.swflresourceink.com/www.howinc.org/programs/HUD_Definition_of_Homelessness.pdf.

“LIFT” is a non-profit organization that will assist residents get into regular housing by assisting the resident with their Security Deposit, First and Last months Rent.

To qualify for “LIFT” members/residents must have resided at “SRL” for a minimum of six months and graduated and completed the program, have a zero balance due, and must have two weeks paid in advance in order to have their application submitted, along with their two week notice of termination.

Assistance and help will be provided based on the residents’ needs; assistance will be provided if the resident needs assistance applying for food stamps if the resident qualifies, applying for jobs and with job applications, and in some cases initial transportation.



EMERGENCY NON-EMERGENCY

EVACUATION POLICY

(EMERGENCY) In case of **EMERGENCY** or if someone is found unresponsive, **CALL 911 - Paramedics at once.** Everyone who is a resident/member agrees to take on this responsibility and **you must call 911 immediately** if someone is hurt or injured or found to be unresponsive or falls into convulsions.

(EMERGENCY) In case of **EMERGENCY after calling 911**, contact the HOUSE MANAGER first then call the PROGRAM DIRECTOR and/or MANAGING DIRECTOR, Contact Sheet found on page two of your handbook.

(NON-EMERGENCY) If a **NON-EMERGENCY** Incident occurs such as an Epilepsy Attack, or someone falls, contact the **HOUSE MANAGER FIRST** at once, the House Manager and other resident/members have received Epilepsy Training and know how to identify the symptoms, **If the House Manager is not present, CALL 911 - Paramedics at once**, and afterwards call the PROGRAM DIRECTOR and/or MANAGING DIRECTOR, Contact Sheet found on page two of your handbook.

(EMERGENCY FIRE EVACUATION POLICY) In case of a fire there is a **Fire Evacuation Exit Plan** by each doorway and each exit, the three **EXIT DOORS** are properly labeled **EXITS** and there is a **Fire Evacuation Exit Plan** and a **FIRE EXTINGUISHER** by each **EXIT**. **In case of a fire evacuate at once**, call 911 - Fire Rescue after evacuation.

(EVACUATION POLICY) In case of a storm/hurricane or any other evacuation needs that become necessary you will be instructed on what to do by the **PROGRAM DIRECTOR** and/or **MANAGING DIRECTOR**.



Serenity Recovery
Living

RESIDENT

RIGHTS

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to be treated with dignity and respect, autonomy and privacy.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to receive all services mentioned on this handbook and to live in a safe atmosphere of recovery.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to enjoy peace and quiet time and be treated with freedom and autonomy.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to the freedom from unnecessary physical or psychological restraint.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to be informed of one’s own condition and to receive progress reports as scheduled or upon your request.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to be informed of all available program services.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to participate in the development, review and revision of one owns individual recovery and empowerment four sage plan and to receive a copy of it.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to consult with independent treatment specialist or legal counsel at your own expense.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to confidentiality and anonymity and the protection of personal and medical information and communication as described by State and Federal Rules and guidelines.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to access all of one’s own resident/member records in accordance with the program procedures and rules.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to be informed of the reason(s) for denial of service.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to be informed of the reason(s) to termination.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right *NOT* to be discriminated against on the basis of age, race, sex, religion, physical or mental disability, or medical condition or HIV or AIDS.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to know the cost of services ahead of time.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to be informed of all member rights and to receive an introduction session to explain the “SRL” program.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to exercise one’s own right without reprisal or attrition.

As a resident/member of “SRL” you have the right to file a grievance report without reprisal or attrition and to receive oral and written instructions on the process and procedures on filing a grievance report.



Serenity Recovery
Living

“YESTERDAY, TODAY

AND TOMORROW”

There are two days in every week about which we should not worry. Two days which should be kept free from fear and apprehension. One of these days is “yesterday”, with its mistakes and cares, its faults and blunders, its aches and pains. “Yesterday” has passed forever beyond our control. All the money in the world cannot bring back “yesterday”. We cannot undo a single act that we performed. We cannot erase a single word that we said. “Yesterday” is gone beyond recall.

The other day that we should not worry about is “tomorrow”, with its possible adversities, its burdens, its large promise and perhaps its poor performance.

“Tomorrow” is also beyond our immediate control.

Tomorrow’s sun will rise, either in splendor or behind a mask of clouds, but it will rise. Until it does, we have no stake in “tomorrow” for it is as yet unborn.

This leaves only one day – “Today” ... Anyone can fight the battles of just one day. It is only when you and I add the burden of those two awful eternities, “yesterday” and “tomorrow” that we break down. It is not the experience of “today” that drives us mad. It is the remorse or bitterness for something, which happened “yesterday”, or the dread of what “tomorrow” may bring.

Let us, therefore, do our best to live but one day at a time!!!



Serenity Recovery
Living

10 FOR REDUCING

COMMANDMENTS STRESS

01. Thou shalt not be perfect, or even try to be.
02. Thou shalt not try to be all things to all people.
03. Thou shalt sometimes leave things undone that ought to be done.
04. Thou shalt not spread thyself too thinly.
05. Thou shalt learn to say no.
06. Thou shalt schedule time for thyself and for thy supportive networks.
07. Thou shalt switch off and do nothing regularly.
08. Thou shalt be boring, untidy, inelegant, and unattractive at times.
09. Thou shalt not even feel guilty.
10. Especially, thou shalt not be thine own worst enemy but be thine own best friend.



Serenity Recovery
Living

I'M YOUR

DISEASE

I hate meeting. I hate a Higher Power. I hate anyone who has a program. To all who come into contact with me, I wish you suffering and I wish you death.

Allow me to introduce my self; I am the disease of addiction. CUNNING, BAFFLING and POWERFUL, that's me.

I have KILLED MILLIONS and I am pleased.

I love to catch you with the element of surprise. I love pretending I am your friend and lover. I have given you comfort, have I not? Wasn't I there when you were lonely? When you wanted to die didn't you call me? I was there.

I love to make you hurt. I love to make you cry. Better yet I love to make you so numb you can neither hurt no cry. When you can't feel anything at all, this is true glory.

I will give you instant gratification and all I ask of you is long term suffering. I've been there for you always. When things were going right in your life, you invited me. You said you didn't deserve these good things, and I was the ONLY ONE who would agree with you. Together we were able to DESTROY ALL THINGS GOOD in your life.

People don't take me seriously. They take strokes seriously, heart attacks seriously, even diabetes they take seriously. Fools that they are, they don't know that without my help many of these things would not be made possible.

I am such a hated disease, and yet I don not come uninvited. YOU CHOOSE TO HAVE ME. So many have chosen me over REALITY and PEACE.

More than you hate me; I hate all of you who have a Twelve-Step Program. Your Program, your Meetings, your Higher Power, ALL WEAKEN ME and I can't function in the manner I am accustomed to.

Now I must lie here quietly. You don't see me, BUT I AM GROWING, BIGGER THAN EVER. When you only exist, I may live. When you live, I only exist. BUT I AM HERE... and until we meet again, if we meet again, I WISH YOU SUFFERING AND DEATH.



Serenity Recovery
Living

LET GO,

LET GOD

To “let go” does not mean to stop caring,
it means I can’t do it for someone else.

To “let go” is not to cut myself off,
it’s the realization I can’t control another.

To “let go” is to admit powerlessness,
which means the outcome is not in my hands

To “let go” is not to try to change or blame another,
it’s to make the most of myself.

To “let go” is not to care for,
but to care about.

To “let go” is not to fix,
but to be supportive.

To “let go” is not to judge,
but to allow another to be a human being.

To “let go” is not to be in the middle arranging all the outcomes,
but to allow others to affect their destinies.

To “let go” is not be protective,
it’s to permit another to face reality.

To “let go” is not to deny,
but to accept.

To “let go” is not to nag, scold, or argue,
but instead to search out my own shortcomings and correct them.

To “let go” is not to adjust everything to my desires,
but to take each day as it comes, and cherish myself in it.

To “let go” is not to criticize and regulate anybody,
but to try to become what I dream I can be.

To “let go” is not to regret the past, but to grow and live for the future.
To “let go” is to fear less, and love more.



Serenity Recovery
Living

A COMMITMENT

TO MYSELF

Keeping clean/sober is the most important thing in my life!

The most important decision that I ever made was my decision to give up drinking and drugging!

I am convinced that my whole life depends on not taking that first drink or drug!

Nothing in the world **(NOTHING)** is as important to me as my own recovery!

Everything that I have, whatever I have, my whole life now and in the future depends upon not taking the first drink or drug!



Serenity Recovery
Living

SRL

ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance is the answer to all my problems today. When I am disturbed, it is because I find some person, place, thing, or situation – some fact of my life – unacceptable to me, and I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing, or situation as being exactly the way it is suppose to be at this moment. Nothing, absolutely nothing happens in God’s world by mistake. Until I could accept my addiction, I could not stay clean/sober; unless I accept life completely on life’s terms, I cannot be happy. I need to concentrate not so much on what needs to be changed in the world as on what needs to be changed in me and in my attitudes.



Serenity Recovery
Living

SRL

ATTITUDE

“The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failure, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company... A church... A home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude... I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you.. We are in charge of our Attitudes.”



Serenity Recovery
Living

SRL

BUTTERFLY

The butterfly is a fascinating creature. It is truly a work of art: beautiful colors and delicacy, flying high and wide on gossamer wings... free.

But the butterfly didn't begin its life in such a lofty state. In its earliest stages it was a caterpillar, crawly, slow, unattractive, plodding along inch by inch. I wonder if in its wildest dreams it ever imagined what its destiny could be.

Later in its development it spent time locked in a cocoon of its own making – alone and perhaps ever secure – warm and safe. There, through the simple yielding of its nature to a higher nature, it became one of God's most wondrous and glorious creatures.

Before transformation was complete however, an intense and agonizing struggle had to be worked through. In order to become the magnificent creature it was destined to be, it first had a life and death struggle to work its way out of the cocoon – an exhausting and seemingly impossible task for such a delicate creature. Could he endure?

On one occasion a well-meaning person watching this struggle decided to help the helpless butterfly, since it seemed such a gargantuan task for it to have to do on its own. So the person carefully sliced an opening in the cocoon with a razorblade and the butterfly was indeed able to get out much more quickly. The problem was that the butterfly was never able to fly. You see, the struggle is actually part of the butterfly's was of becoming a butterfly, and the strength it gains through the struggle gives it the strength needed for flying. By solving the butterfly's problem, the person had created a flightless butterfly.

The butterfly's development from a crawly, creeping caterpillar to a glorious free-flying butterfly depends on the butterfly's acceptance and achievement of its own struggle – on its faith that the struggle would lead it to something better.

If only people would accept their life and the changes in it with the same faith as that of the lowly caterpillar, perhaps they too, would see that they could "fly". We are called to prayer and trust in willingness to wait in patient expectation. Will not our God who provides such a glorious end for the little caterpillar provide for us in a way that we cannot envision? Even in our wildest dreams!