

FEBRUARY 2021

THE CROSSWALK: BENILDE HALL'S NEWSLETTER

Benilde Hall—Safe Haven—Matt Talbot

The Importance of Self-Care

How to Make Self-Care a Priority in Your Life

Self-care is a necessity for everyone to practice, but especially for those in recovery or those struggling with their mental health. Valentine's Day gave Benilde Hall staff and clients a chance to think about how to show love to themselves and others. Several Benilde Hall staff members shared their self-care advice in a few sentences on our bulletin board. To further expand on the idea of self-care and how to get started, two staff members gave an in-depth look at how self-care has impacted their lives and tips they would recommend to others.

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Self-Care Q&A

What does self-care mean to you?

"It means keeping a good inside condition mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually." -Rachel M.

"For me, self-care is about taking a break from things that are stressing me out and doing things that are fun and relaxing instead. Self-care is also taking care of the body physically—getting enough rest, drinking enough water, and putting good food in my body." -Travis C.

What activities do you do to practice self-care?

"I see a doctor and get regular check-ups. I start my day with prayer, meditation, and making my bed, then I take a shower and dress comfortably—look nice on the outside to feel good on the inside. I treat others the way I want others to treat me and always make amends; apologize when I'm in the wrong. I keep busy with work, meetings, family time, church, and I end my day with a gratitude list and prayer and make sure I get enough sleep for the next day." -Rachel M.

"I like to put on some coffee house jazz music, turn on my lava lamp and Christmas lights, and read a book or just relax on the couch or in bed. Exercise and yoga are also things that work to put me in a relaxed state of mind." -Travis C.

How has self-care helped with your mental health?

"I LOVE MYSELF TODAY! I AM NOT SCARED OF THE WORLD AROUND ME ANYMORE! I am independent and confident! I am happy and no longer feel alone." -Rachel M.

"I notice that when I am taking care of myself physically that my mental health is better. Also, when I start doing something fun and relaxing for 30 minutes to an hour then it helps break the negativity or whatever mental challenges were going on and helps me keep going during the rest of the day in a more positive flow." -Travis C.

If someone doesn't know where to start with self-care what are the first steps they can take?

"The first step I took was I made a list of things I wanted to change and work on. Baby steps each day with little goals like 5 min morning meditation, prayer, shower, get dressed daily, eat a healthy meal, with each baby step you take you will feel better, and you will want to set out to do more, and then one day you will wake up feeling accomplished. Smile at least once a day at someone and always treat yourself and others with kindness." -Rachel M.

"Think back to things you enjoyed as a child or anything that when you do it you notice you are in a good mood, it's relaxing, and gives you good vibes overall. It can be something simple like organizing your room or rearranging items in your kitchen. Whatever you notice you naturally are drawn to do that puts your mind at ease and takes you out of your head and your problems—that is a good place to start with picking things to do for self-care." -Travis C.

How has self-care helped in your recovery journey?

"Self-care and my journey to recovery has went hand in hand. I wouldn't have my recovery if I hadn't made the decision to make a change within myself. If I hadn't started with the baby steps I wouldn't have the love I have for myself today nor the confidence to be independent. I now have a year clean, have a job that I love, experience to help others. I have my own place, when a year ago I was homeless living in my van with broken-out windows, no heat, the only thing keeping me warm was a sleeping bag and 3 little dogs. I'm not scared to try new things and afraid of not being good enough because today, I know I am ok—no big deals today. That is what self-care has taught me." -Rachel M.

Benilde Hall Success Story: Ken Vick

Kenneth "Ken" Vick grew up in Phoenix, Arizona. He experienced a difficult childhood and began using substances at a young age. Ken dropped out of school during his freshman year of high school and started getting in trouble with the law. "I had my first felony at the age of 18," Ken says. When describing his young adulthood, he says he lived "the street life" for 20 years until he went to federal prison in 2001. February 12th, 2001, is an important day for him. He says February 12th, 2001 is "the day I walked into prison, and last day I used drugs." During his time in federal prison, he went through R-DAP (Residential Drug Abuse Program). Through R-DAP, Ken was able to learn about criminal thinking and behavior. This program significantly helped Ken in his recovery journey and made him realize he wanted to work in the field of recovery.

When Ken was released from prison, he began studying Addiction Counseling at Metropolitan Community College (MCC) while working full-time as a carpenter. During his time at MCC, he became a practicum student at Benilde Hall. Former Executive Director, Kent Jewell, offered him a job at Benilde Hall as a counselor-in-training. Ken was promoted to Senior Counselor at Benilde Hall in 2012 and worked as a Senior Counselor until 2014. In 2015, Ken started a new job at Dismas House of Kansas City, where he was the Director of Treatment Services from 2015-2016. He started working at Comprehensive Mental Health Services Inc. in 2016 as a Clinical Supervisor and then became the Program Manager at Recovery KC in 2018. In November 2019, Ken came back to Benilde Hall to serve as the Executive Director. While working full-time, he graduated from Thomas Edison State University in 2019 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology.

In the present day, Ken continues to serve as the Executive Director of Benilde Hall. He is working towards his Master's degree in Organizational Leadership-Ethics Concentration from Claremont Lincoln University. Ken is the Secretary and North West Representative on the Missouri Credentialing Board and serves as the Vice-Chair on the Kansas City Recovery Coalition Board. He is a Certified Peer Specialist (CPS), Certified Reciprocal Alcohol & Drug Counselor (CRADC), Certified Reciprocal Peer Recovery (CRPR), Medication Assisted Recovery Specialist (MARS), Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist (CTTS), and a SMART Recovery Facilitator.

For those in recovery, Ken says it is important to "change everything" and to "find the right people." "Keep growing," he says. "Keep trying to learn." He trusts in the importance of self-improvement and education. Ken believes that "recovery is possible" for everyone. He is a motorcycle enthusiast and is a past board member for Optimists International-Kruzers of Jackson County, a nonprofit organization that conducts service projects for young people in the Jackson County community. He can also be found playing guitar in his spare time. Ken is active in his church and believes that "spirituality and recovery fit together." He will be celebrating 20 years of sobriety on February 12th, 2021.



To read more Benilde Hall Success Stories, go to facebook.com/BenildeHall.

Past Benilde Hall Success Stories can be found on benildehall.blogspot.com.

MEET THE BOARD: Q&A WITH BOB JOHNSON

Can you tell our readers a little bit about yourself?

"I am the husband of one (Jana), the Father of 3 daughters, grandfather of 6 (soon to be 8) grandchildren. I am an Insurance broker, working with Cobbs Allen, I have been in the insurance business for 41 years. We live in Leawood KS, play golf, and follow The University of Kansas Jayhawks, where both Jana and I (as well as two daughters) graduated."

How did you become involved with Benilde Hall?

"I became involved with Benilde Hall at the invitation of Michael Tracy and the Board. I joined the Board along with Bob Koester and Jeff Zande. We all belong to a Breakfast Club where Michael is also a member."

What led you to the decision to become a board member?

"What led me to join the Board? I have the time now, I was in between serving on some Boards, and if I can help, I am interested, willing to do that."

What do you hope to see for Benilde Hall in the future?

"Benilde Hall and the Future, I must admit, I am still early in my term, so I would like to see financial stability so that Benilde Hall has a vibrant future. I would like to see Benilde Hall recognized in the larger community for the good it is doing, the contributions they are making, the community they serve."

"I would like to see Benilde Hall recognized in the larger community for the good it is doing, the contributions they are making, the community they serve."-Bob Johnson

HOW TO HELP



Want to help? There are many ways you can assist us with our mission!

Monetary donations are always appreciated, and we will provide a tax donation receipt.

You can go to <https://www.benildehall.org/how-to-help/donate.html> to make a monetary donation.

Are you hiring? You may employ one of our residents. Feel free to post your available positions on our job board, or email info@mail.benildehall.org with job info!

Is your organization looking for volunteer opportunities? Call 816-842-5836 x 100 to register your volunteers to assist with needs around our campus.



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