

# How Can I Help?

## Applying the Team of Three Approach



"And though a man might prevail against one who is alone...

...a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

Ecclesiastes 4:12

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# The Problem Determines the Solution

## Drafting a Problem Statement

- The two-fold nature of the problem
  - The need in the community

We have seen an unprecedented rise in opioid fatalities in Columbus. The 43204 zip code is ground zero in a war against addiction. While the numbers are trending down, that doesn't mean we are in the clear. (See: <https://www.odh.ohio.gov/-/media/ODH/ASSETS/Files/health/injury-prevention/doverdose18/ODH-2017-Ohio-Drug-Overdose-Report.pdf?la=en>) Reducing fatalities is a laudable goal, but reducing drug dependence is even better.

In addition to the addicted, are high populations of homeless that inhabit our streets. Short term solutions don't address the underlying causes of poverty and don't provide a way for individuals to move out the camps and into a place of their own. This places a burden on government and private resources to provide for those in need.

Looking at the situation from an even broader perspective, there is also an emotional toll that this takes on the families of those who are homeless. Whether it is parents or grandparents dealing with their children and grandchildren or students who face personal challenges in pursuing a basic education, the homelessness problem is a crisis in our midst.

- The need in our churches

In many church settings, the homeless and addicted are stigmatized and this prevents them from seeing help. As a result our churches rarely see them in their midst and are unaware of how to minister to their needs. This discourages those in need from seeking help from us because we are unprepared to minister to those in recovery. We err in the extremes. We often provide too much help or not enough. Another problem with the way we minister in churches is that it is often structured to be a ministry of the few to the many. There is rarely a congregational-level commitment to a ministry other than financial support while most of the work is done by a few individuals leading the effort. Most churches don't even have a plan for implementing a ministry where the many minister to the few.

The most telling illustration of this glaring lack in our churches is that ministries to the homeless and addicted are generally outward facing ministries that are aimed at meeting the needs of "them" rather than being inward facing ministries aimed at meeting the needs of "us." Part of the reason for this is obvious – there are no homeless or addicted that regularly attend services.



- The missing ingredient – Continuity of care over the long term

- Recidivism

One of the most challenging aspects of working with those in recovery is recidivism. Most people in treatment will relapse shortly after completing a program. Part of the reason for this is that once a person leaves a program, they are no longer under that program's care. Alcoholics Anonymous addresses this problem by setting up support groups and regular meetings over the long term. For many in recovery, AA is not an acceptable option. Another way needs to be found.



- Advocacy

The Team of Three approach is to assign three volunteers to an individual in recovery who will support them in achieving their goal of sobriety. The Teams of Three become advocates who provide the caring support over a minimum two year span and thus fill the gaps in our current care system.

In essence, they befriend the individual and surround one another with caring relationships that prevent the individual in recovery from seeking to return to their old environment.

This helps the person in recovery because they have now moved from one of "them" to one of "us" for the support group. This also helps remove that individual's stigma and makes them a welcome and vital part of the church family as the church body supports everyone involved.



- Defining the problem determines the nature of the solution
  - Working with the homeless or addiction problem vs. working with homeless or addicted people

When institutions see problems, they see them as institutional problems in need of institutional solutions. These often involve the implementation of programs, processes, and procedures. These are good solutions for problems that respond well to institutional approaches.

The Team of Three approach begins with the premise that we are reaching out to people who are beset with personal problems. Because we target individuals, we believe that many of the problems they experience are unique to them. This is why we believe an individual approach is the best for Teams of Three.

There are a number of reasons that institutional approaches to homelessness and addiction are the most common, not the least of which are economic and financial incentives that favor institutions. Agencies and governments invest in institutions and programs because they are able to measure results and document accomplishments. Volunteers who work as individuals don't have access to the financial resources provided to institutions.

Because of this, the Team of Three approach has to seek an alternative to institutional solutions. That alternative is a faith-based church-centered approach to the problem. Churches, while they exist as institutions, are well-versed in relating to people as individuals and ministering to them on an individual basis. Institutions generally employ a few-to-many approach where a few key individuals provide services to many who are seeking help. The Team of Three approach in a church context allows for the application of a many-to-few approach. With multiple individuals backed up by a congregation of prayerful supporters surrounding a single person, there is more power brought to bear on the problem than is possible in an institutional setting. Because this is a ministry of the church, they are able to implement these solutions at low cost and with less effort than traditional institutions.

- Things we are not doing that currently exacerbate the problem

Some of the things we are failing to do in effectively reaching out to the homeless and addicted as churches are lack of early intervention, lack of understanding of the causes of addiction, and stigmatizing of the addicted.

Churches tend to view addiction as a simple choice by the individual and treat it as a sin problem. Early intervention efforts in church settings usually consist of the Nancy Reagan approach of "Just say no." Because we don't understand the causes of addiction, we are often unaware when an individual is at risk. Additionally, we tend to treat individuals struggling with addiction differently from others in church and this leads to them becoming estranged from the support of the congregation. Churches should take responsibility for the welfare of all members, or potential



members, in order to fulfill the commandment of Christ to love everyone. This is tragic when we consider that nearly everyone in church has a friend or family member who is struggling with addiction.

- Things we ought to be doing well as churches are often not applied to the problems of addiction

We believe in the power of the Holy Spirit to sustain us, so we should not fear to get involved with those who are in need. We believe in the power of Jesus Christ to transform lives, so we should be taking the gospel to those who are most desperate to hear the good news of captives being set at liberty. We have the power to surround people with the love of Jesus and give them hope through caring congregations.



## A Grassroots Alternative

- Let's build on the congregational strengths we already have
  - We form a Third Space beyond the spaces of Home and Work

As a supportive community of believers, we are already organized to provide mutual support in a caring environment. The challenge to believers who are comfortable within the four walls of their local congregations is to extend that same mutual support beyond the walls of the church house.

- We need to do this intentionally and systematically. We should have a plan for how we are going to recruit, monitor, oversee, and manage volunteers who are involved in ministering to those on the street. It's not enough to hope for the best or let things evolve on their own. We could create a program, but that often becomes an end in itself and the program takes on a life of its own that becomes burdensome to the church. In such a case, Chuck Swindoll's story of [The Lifeboat Station](#) is instructive.

- What we need – Team of Three

- What is a Team of Three?

The Team of Three is *not* a program or a system. It is an approach to being intentional and deliberate about connecting caring volunteers, preferably from our churches, with individuals in recovery to support them on their journey to sobriety.

- Who they are – Three individuals willing to spend time with someone in recovery, one of whom has been through a recovery program themselves
  - What they do – The Team of Three provides unstructured but ongoing support using a strengths-based model that is program-agnostic. The goal of the Team of Three is to support individuals in discovering and achieving their purpose in life as revealed by the Holy Spirit through the word of God.
  - How they do it – The Team of Three meets with their assigned individual on an intermittent but regular basis to build a tiny community within the wider community of the congregation. In essence, they become caring friends who meet together in a variety of ways to provide mutual support and encouragement in the Lord. Meetings can be as casual as a fourth for golf, or bridge, a fishing or hunting trip, or even something as casual as a cup of coffee at a local diner. The key to the success of the Team of Three approach is inclusion and involvement. These activities are the means by which we demonstrate our love and concern for them.



## Fielding a call

- This is a church-wide commitment to local missions
  - The Teams of Three will need the support of congregations

Church Leadership can extend an appeal rooted in prayer to the congregation at large, but ultimately this is a church ministry. Many church ministries are based on a one-to-many or few-to-many model. This approach puts a few individuals in key positions of leadership or coordination and they do most of the work while the many enjoy the benefits of their efforts. Most training classes have a single leader or team of leaders who minister to a full class. Youth ministry, Music Ministry, and even Nursery Ministry puts the responsibility for the ministry in the hands of a few while many derive the benefit of their efforts.

The Team of Three approach flips this arrangement to one where the ministry is many-to-few. The Team surrounds a single individual and invests their lives in helping that individual succeed. As a result, the Team of Three becomes an equipping ministry of the church, helping individuals learn and practice the skills they need to move beyond simply *being* disciples to the process of *making* disciples as they live out the Great Commission.

The church should provide training and internal support to the Teams of Three utilizing this Guide as a resource. Additionally, the church should recognize the ministry of the Teams of Three and their call to service by recognizing them at a commissioning service, similar to anyone who embarks on ministry. This helps legitimize the work of the Teams as well as promote the work that they are doing within the congregation and serve to recruit new members.

Another important function of the church in supporting the Team of Three efforts is to embrace those who are the beneficiaries of the Teams. As Team members move to include their new friends in activities that support their recovery efforts, this will include church attendance and participation in church functions. These individuals should be welcomed as heartily as any other visitor to the church and made to be a part of the services.



- The congregations will need the support of the Teams of Three

This is a reciprocal effort – The To3 members become the hands and feet of the church, actively involved in the community where Jesus Christ is needed. Many individuals in church are willing to minister, but because they lack the talent, skills, and inclination to join the one-to-many ministries like teaching, music, and youth, they feel inadequate to serve the Lord in any but the most rudimentary way. By implementing a To3 approach to ministering to those in recovery, these individuals realize that it takes no specialized gifting or call to befriend those who are struggling with addiction. All it takes is a willingness to come alongside those in need and encourage them in their walk with the Lord. This is ministry at its most basic, but at the same time is capable of energizing a congregation.



Some pastors and leadership teams spend a significant amount of effort concerned with church growth, personal evangelism, or discipleship programs. With a Team of Three approach, most of this happens organically. Instead of a class on discipleship, To3 members will be actually doing discipleship in real life. Rather than trying to reach out to the “unchurched,” To3 members will be encouraging their new friends to join them in attending church. Personal evangelism classes become un necessary because To3 members will be sharing their faith naturally with those they are ministering to. The more they work with individuals in recovery, the greater their ability to share the gospel will grow as they encourage and support one another in a team environment.

As for leadership development, that will take place organically as well. To3 members actively involved in the work of recovery ministry will grow as they face new challenges and ever more difficult situation. Helping one another, they will prepare future leaders in the church to step into ever more challenging roles as a part of supporting the recovering process for the individual that Team is ministering to.



## Implementing the Alternative

### Required Strengths

- **Assessment**—Our Team of Three approach depends in part on the ability of the team members to discern those sincerely seeking help from those who are running a scam. One key to this ability is to have at least one person in recovery as a team member who is candid about voicing their opinion within the group and mutual accountability to all persons involved. Transparency and authenticity form the basis of the relationship that allows for honest assessment and caring support.
- **Fill Gaps**—The biggest challenge of current providers is continuity of care over the long term. Most institutions and programs do a great job with people in recovery as long as they are part of the institution or program. The Team of Three provides the gap-filler that sustains the continuity of care beyond the immediate need.
- **Faith**—We are wholly and completely dependent on the power of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit to transform lives including our own. As a faith-based enterprise, we recognize that prayer, devotion to the Bible, and consistent Christian principles infuse every aspect of what we do.
- **Purpose**—We are surrendered to our purpose, whether it is to create beauty, fix what is broken, put things in order, or care for someone else. We are developing a compassion-laden ministry around helping those in recovery discover their purpose around these same four general categories, all in relation to God's care for creation.
- Our 4 Organizational Pillars:
  - **Faith**—We begin from a premise that anything that is going to be accomplished must be rooted in a faith in the power of Jesus Christ to transform lives permanently.
  - **Purpose**—We are to love like Jesus all day, every day. That means we will meet the needs of those who desperately need the love of Jesus in a tangible, visible way to overcome their addiction.
  - **Character**—We will act with honesty and integrity at all times. We are not motivated by the prospect of financial gain, but are engaged in the work of building the kingdom of God and extending his rule and power in the lives of those on the west side of Columbus.
  - **Compassion**—We will conduct ourselves at all times with compassionate regard and respect for all persons: clients, staff, volunteers, and supporters at all times.



- **Our Method** – To seek and find individual who can be securely interlocked into our chain of community
  - Team of Three
    - We strongly recommend that at least one member has been through a recovery program or is a veteran of recovery work. There are conversations that can only be conducted effectively by someone who can truthfully say, “I know what you’re going through. When I was in recovery, this is how I felt...” There are a number of other reasons for having a veteran of a recovery program on a Team of Three, but the most important is for compassionate honesty that is able to face the challenges of recovery with candor and accountability.
  - Support
    - We come alongside those in recovery to help them achieve God’s purpose for their life in a volunteer support role. We are not caseworkers, psychologists, or treatment providers. In a word, we are friends to the individual in recovery. It is our duty to embody our four Organizational Pillars in the context of Christlikeness. Our method is to support the individual in recovery in the goals *they set for themselves*. This is evidence of our reliance on the power of God and the Holy Spirit to work out the salvation that he put in their hearts.



## Recruiting

- Promote in churches – Speaker’s Bureau
  - The Speaker’s Bureau operates independently from Training function  
It is composed of a mix of Supporters, Providers, and Support volunteers. They are responsible for representing the organization to the public and serving as primary recruiting arm. To that end, they should be allowed latitude to promote the organization in a variety of venues using whatever means at their disposal to get the word out about the organization in general, who we help, and in particular how the Team of Three works.
  - Recruiters may enlist other individuals to help in this effort on either a regular or intermittent basis.  
Examples include Trainers who conduct the To3 classes, Team Members who are currently serving or recently came off a successful Team of Three. Friends who have been helped by To3 that has surrounded them with compassionate support.  
Success stories are the most powerful, but the temptation is to focus only on those who have completed a recovery effort. A key component of the Team of Three is that it is equipping Christians to do the work of discipleship. The Speaker’s Bureau should also consider the power of moving people from warming the pews and being spectators at church to becoming disciples and disciple-makers as they live out the Gospel in a tangible way. A lot of people at church feel like they have no place to fit in or that there is nothing for them to do because they don’t have any special talents, abilities, or gifts. A Team of Three experience will help them discover their purpose in serving God in a real way that actually touches other lives.
- Outreach Coordination  
Depending on the how ecumenical the group is, Teams of Three can be multidenominational efforts or the outreach of a single church. There are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches. The key point is that the efforts of the Team of Three are centered on victory in Jesus for the client.  
The main benefit to the church is that it promotes tangible service opportunities to the church and community at a minimum of cost. Many ministries have initial start-up investments that may adversely impact their success. Teams of Three have minimal ongoing expenses once the initial training is completed. Even then, the costs can be defrayed by having volunteers pay their own tuition as a first step in their commitment to the work. This means that ongoing support can be managed at low to no cost depending on the church’s set-up of their program.



- Coordination with <https://teamofthree.org> web site
  - Volunteer candidates complete online application and sign-up information populates a spreadsheet available online to the church. They can see everyone who signs up and have all the contact information at their fingertips. This is an option that the Team of Three organization provides to local churches.
  - The Outreach or Volunteer coordinator from the church will schedule follow-up contacts with those who sign up. Payment arrangements are explained and handled along with coordinating logistics for attendees.
  - The Outreach or Volunteer coordinator will then prepare for candidate screening and set up the Introduction and initial classes. They must also communicate with participants so they know what steps are taken before, during, and after class to ensure the successful implementation of the local Teams of Three.



## Screening

- Review Application and evaluate per criteria:

Because Team of Three volunteers come from all walks of life, criteria are not as strict for other ministry workers. At minimum, volunteers need a clean drug test indicating that they are not active users.

Individuals who have completed a recovery program are not only acceptable, but are preferred in many cases as Team of Three members. This is because they will have insights into the recovery process that those who have never been in recovery lack. They will have more experience than the average person with the issues involved in drug addiction.

Volunteers should have no outstanding warrants. If they have been incarcerated or otherwise involved with the justice system, they will need to have completed probation for their offense(s). At Team of Three, we believe in the healing power of the Holy Spirit and God's amazing grace to sustain individuals regardless of their past. However, the requisite commitment necessary to be a productive member of a Team means that members will need to be able to complete their two years of service without risk of incarceration.

Most importantly, Team members need a firm faith in Christ as evidenced by their lifestyle. As noted in our [12 Steps for Sinners](#), we recognize that we are all in the process of recovery from a life of sin and dependent every day on God's sustaining mercy to help us along the journey. We don't expect anyone to be perfect, but at the same time, we are all striving to live out God's plan for our lives on a day to day, hour by hour basis.

- Interview for suitability as a support volunteer

Volunteers can be initially screened by phone, using the Volunteer Application form, or they can complete the form online and submit it. This initial contact should be followed up with an in-person on-site interview and evaluation per established criteria. The purpose of the interview is to see if the candidate for a Team of Three membership is compatible with our mission and values and whether our strengths-based approach is compatible with their personal style of working with those in recovery. We do not expect everyone to be a good fit and the purpose of this process is to assure everyone involved that we are headed in the same direction.

- Set expectations that this is a commitment over the long haul, not a short-term jump in and jump out

Team of Three membership is not without a high level of commitment. First of all there is a financial commitment for course materials and organizational support. Next is the time commitment. There is the initial six weeks of training followed by 2 years volunteering.

There are also less tangible commitments including an emotional commitment. The path through recovery is never easy and is often full of setbacks and reversals. Volunteers should expect both successes and setbacks. Preparing for them is a vital part of the training.



Spiritual commitment is an equally important part of the Team of Three. Individuals need to be bathed in prayer and well versed in scripture. It is unrealistic to believe that recovery efforts will succeed without the support of everyone in the church. Team members need to be bathed in prayer, the Word, and the sincere support of other Followers on this journey.

- Set behavior expectations for support volunteer

The client-centered and strengths-based approach is one of the hardest things for new volunteers to accept and understand. Most organizations work in a top-down format where direction comes from the leadership. The Team of Three comes alongside the client rather than dictating the direction for their recovery to take. Additionally, they support the individual in their choices and strive to make it possible for them to achieve their goals as they are led by the Holy Spirit.

This is not to say that “anything goes” in this approach. Rather the strengths-based approach holds clients accountable to their own goals. If they determine that they want to achieve something, the Team takes them seriously and holds the individual accountable for what they said they want to accomplish. Team members need to be firm in their faith with regular reliance on church attendance, prayer, Bible study, and devotions to empower them in this endeavor.

Volunteers need to be willing to work alongside clients through the entire cycle of recovery, including relapse which is regarded as a step in the recovery process, not a failure of the process. Everyone makes mistakes. The difference with the Team of Three approach is that those mistakes are evaluated and serve as further lessons for the future. They are steps in the journey to sobriety.

Finally, volunteers need the support of church and family in this endeavor. Without it, they will fail the individual they are trying to help.

- Notification of acceptance or rejection

Volunteers should be notified of their acceptance or rejection by the volunteer coordinator of the sponsoring organization. The less ambiguity about their status, the better things are for everyone concerned.



## Orientation

- Initial site visit and facility tour prior to training

Volunteer Team of Three members should have at least one facility tour of the Resource Center. The purpose of the tour is to meet clients on site as they are enjoying the use of the facility's services. During the tour the guide will demonstrate the skills taught in the Volunteer Training course during their interactions with clients. This will also introduce volunteers to the available resources at facility as well as off-site. It will also provide opportunity for them to meet staff.

The Orientation tour should focus on the following points:

- Mission
- Vision
- Four Personal Pillars
- Four Strengths
- Four Relationship Pillars

During the tour, new volunteers will be provided with a brochure that covers the services offered by the Resource Center and other materials so they understand where they fit in to the overall structure of the ministry. They will also receive a Volunteer Guide outlining their role and responsibilities in supporting the ministry. By the end of the tour, they should receive information on the training cohort they are assigned to, dates, locations, and times of the classes, and any other information necessary for them to succeed in training.

- The Volunteer Guide should provide a description of the support volunteer role and the expectations for them in this role. Contents should cover the following topics:
  - Roles and Responsibilities of Support volunteer
    - What is a Support volunteer?
    - What does a Support volunteer do?
  - Basics on psychophysiology of addiction
  - Description of support volunteer role in recovery process
    - Team-based approach
    - Strengths-based stance
    - Client-based decision making
    - Christ-centered ethic
  - Examples of how support volunteers exercise that role
    - Support volunteer testimonials
    - Client testimonials
  - High-Level overview of how To3 is organized and supports volunteers



## Training

- Register online for available class including registration fee and sponsor notification at <https://teamofthree.org/training>

Volunteers should have a sponsoring organization, usually a church or faith-based organization to support them in their efforts. Depending on the relationship with the sponsoring organization, fees will be billed either to the individual being trained or the organization sponsoring them.

The Registration form will collect information necessary to conduct background check for eligibility and will populate volunteer database. This will also allow the instructor team to communicate with members of the class once they are assigned to a cohort.
- Attend 6 week program and graduation

Volunteers will show up for an Introductory session where they will be given an overview of the program and will be provided with their Workbooks and other support materials needed to complete the class.

They will be expected to attend all six weeks of training in order to receive credit for the course. If they miss a session, they are allowed one make-up that they will need to schedule before the next class in the series. Facilitators will work with them to make sure they are able to make up the session. Volunteer candidates are strongly discouraged from missing any sessions because of how the training builds on the previous session and because of the value of the in-class participation. Volunteer candidates that miss a second session will be dropped from that cohort and re-enrolled in a future cohort so they can maintain the continuity of training.

At the conclusion of the course is a graduation ceremony that they will be expected to attend. Graduation is open to previous graduates who have completed the training and are currently serving on a Team of Three. Representatives from the sponsoring organization are strongly encouraged to attend graduation so they can see what the Volunteer Candidate has learned.



- Communication Plan – Facilitators will need to send notifications (e-mails or text messages at candidate's preference) at the following points in the training schedule:
  - Acknowledgement that completed application has been received, cc Sponsor
  - Acceptance notice with Program outline and schedule, cc Sponsor
  - Notify sponsor one week prior to beginning of classes that Volunteer Candidate is due to begin training and include prayer request for their success
  - Upon completion of Lesson 3, send **Halfway There** notification to Sponsor and remind them of Graduation date and online **RSVP**
  - Upon completion of Lesson 5 confirm **RSVP** with Sponsor on number of attendees they expect to bring from their organization
  - Post-Graduation – Get date from Sponsor of commissioning service
  - Initial Assignment – Notify Sponsor peer-advocate is entering service and request prayer for them on their initial assignment



## Assignment

- Include one veteran

When assigning an individual for the first time, they should not be part of a group that includes all first-timers. It is preferable to have at least one veteran of a prior Team of Three on the new team. There are a number of reasons for this, but the most important is to share and distribute the experience. Seasoned volunteers can tell what did and did not work on the previous Team and offer suggestions for setting up and organizing the new Team. While teams are not intended to be hierarchical, there is a benefit to deferring to someone with experience when trying something new or different.

Individuals may be assigned to a Team of Three immediately following graduation or at a separate meeting later. These initial assignments may occur at a center during intake for new individuals in recovery, but it is generally recommended that the team is assembled and has their initial meeting before their first client is available. That way, they can work out tentative schedules and share contact information from the beginning.

Teams should schedule a team meet & greet at the Resource Center or other location suited to discussion about recovery issues. At this time they can introduce themselves, explain their backgrounds, and help set expectations for their coming participation in the group. Make sure everyone shares contact information and possibly back-up communications for emergency notifications. It is best to have more than one method of contact so availability is assured.

- Three-person team sets schedule

Teams of Three are intended to be self-directed and autonomous. While they thrive best as part of a larger ministry, the individual Teams themselves are expected to work independently on agreeing which individual roles and responsibilities are filled by which member, when they are going to meet, the format of their meetings, and even the content of the meetings. They should have most of the logistics set prior to their initial meeting with the client. Many decisions have to be made with the input of the client, but getting as much out of the way beforehand as possible provides a high level of confidence and trust in the Team's ability to manage their contribution to the individual's recovery effort.

During the initial meeting with the client, the Team should share the proposed schedule of the number of meetings they want to have, how often they want to have them, and the best time for holding those meetings. All parties should be flexible in accommodating the needs of everyone else, but if there are blackout dates where individuals are completely unavailable, it is best to highlight those up front. They should also agree on a meeting schedule for what items will be covered in each session based on the client's goals as they seek to discover God's purpose for their life and how they can achieve that purpose once they discover it.



- Team assigned to client/guest

The initial meeting with the client should occur on site if possible or in an approved facility such as a church or other gathering place. This assures the client that they are in a safe place and on neutral ground where they are on an equal footing with everyone else. Part of what sets the Team of Three concept apart from other programs is that it treats everyone equally. There is no intention of creating a hierarchical structure where one or a few individuals are in charge and they run everything. It is a collaborative effort where everyone shares in the work and the responsibility for success.

Teams should plan on structured meetings where the client sets their own goals for recovery. The responsibility of the team is to help the client succeed in their recovery goal, whether that is to get an education, a job, a home, or be reunited with family in a sober lifestyle. The Team's role is to provide support and share tips, techniques, and encouragement with the client as to how they will help in achieving their goal. A simple approach for Team members is to approach the conversation with the question, "What can we do to help you today?"

Once the session format is established, the Team should follow it at every meeting. This creates a continuity and routine that helps make sure things are not overlooked. It is best if at least one person writes down the goals and reviews them at the next meeting to make sure everyone is on track. Expect goals and aspirations to change, but be direct when facing challenges. Recovery is a long road and the two-year commitment is a minimum for ensuring an individual's success in life.



## Support

- New volunteers provide mutual support to other members of the team as well as the individual they are working with.  
At the Team's initial meeting, they should set a schedule for when they want to conduct their meetings and what the goals are for each meeting. This way they are intentional and purposeful about their meetings.  
Volunteers should follow the schedule set at initial the meeting, but they are not locked into this. They may need to adjust the schedule as necessary. This should be a mutual discussion among team members, rather than a unilateral decision.
- Work within team framework to help client/guest achieve recovery goals using skills learned in class  
This will likely involve working closely with Providers so they understand your role and you can follow client progress through the program they are attending. You should maintain daily/weekly communication within group to ensure common understanding of what is going on and expectations are clear and unambiguous. Meet regularly as a group to discuss goals and progress and how the group can employ strategies to help the individual attain success in the program they are in.



## Evaluation

- The purpose of evaluation is for individual team members to improve the level of support they provide individuals in recovery.  
These reviews are not punitive. They may involve criticism and corrective recommendations, but they are always administered to help individuals improve the level of service they supply both the team and the individual in recovery.
- Peer reviews on performance help team members hone the skills learned in class on Caring, Encouraging, and Celebrating Success. They also allow team members to reinforce points learned in class in a small group setting. Teams can evaluate themselves on at least two levels:
  - Level 1 Review – Evaluation of progress Team of Three is making in achieving objectives set by the client. In other words, is the Team helping the client move toward their sobriety goal.
  - Level 2 Review – Self-Evaluation of individual contribution in achieving team goals that support client goals. Individuals should reflect on the contributions they make to both the individual in recovery and the functioning of the team. This may involve any number of tools including spiritual gifts inventories, personality tests, or other assessments they deem valuable.
- The organization that is sponsoring or supporting the Team of Three approach needs to have at least one Supervisor who reviews the teams on their performance from both client/guest and organizational perspectives. This individual needs to be able to have the candid conversations required of anyone in an oversight role.



## Support

- Access to recovery resources

Individuals in recovery come from a variety of programs. The Team of Three approach is program-agnostic. This means that regardless of the program the individual has chosen, the role of the Team of Three is to support them in this program. Volunteers should take time and make an effort to become familiar with resources specific to the recovery initiative chosen by their assigned individual.

Volunteers should endeavor to work with resource providers to make sure their support efforts align with the objectives of the program. It is not the role of the support volunteer to assess resource providers or provide commentary/critique of their services once a client has chosen that resource provider. The volunteer's role is to make sure the individual achieves their recovery goals, irrespective of the provider they choose. Where these goals are incompatible with the resource provider, you may bring that to the client's attention, but always in the context of focusing on solutions rather than raising objections.

- Access to continuing education opportunities (internal and external)

In order to achieve God's purpose in their lives, some in recovery may need further education. This can be as basic as a GED or even progress toward a college degree. One of the ways the Team of Three can support the individual they are mentoring is in the area of continuing education. Regardless of the educational opportunity the individual may need, the Team of Three can provide invaluable assistance in helping them with study help and other academic preparation.

Churches where the Teams of Three are employed should be on the lookout for skills training for job training opportunities as part of their recovery ministry. The Team is a great opportunity to improve the kind of friends recovering individuals have, but in order to change their environment, they need to find a place to work. The Team of Three can support individuals in helping with placement, but even more importantly, in coaching them with the necessary skills they need to succeed in the workplace. This includes time-management skills, taking on responsibility for their success, and the basics of setting and achieving goals. Rather than doing this as a class, Teams of Three can accomplish this through conversations, encouragement, and direct coaching.

This naturally leads to life skills training for day-to-day living as needed. Conversations give rise to topics of money management, budgeting, paying bills on time, saving for big-ticket items, etc. However, not all life skills involve economic concerns. There are ethics and social skills that are more often caught than taught when individuals are in stable relationships with others who care about them. This is one of the key strengths of the Team of Three approach – improvement opportunities come naturally, organically, as-needed, as part of normal everyday relationships.



- Enforcement of self-care ethic

Self-care needs to be embedded in what the Teams of Three do. The Teams should do more than just talk about this. They need to model it in their behavior and hold one another accountable to regularly practicing self-care routines. The Team of Three approach has opportunities built in that support these practices. The single most important area of self-care revolves around the need to hold regular celebrations. Teams should take advantage of every opportunity to celebrate the successes of others as well as their own successes. These include (but are not limited to):

- Graduation Ceremonies –At the end of every Team of Three Volunteer Training there is a Graduation Ceremony for individuals who are completing the class for the first time. To3 graduates are all invited to join with the new class and celebrate with them. Attending graduations will help energize To3 members by reminding them of what they have learned and hearing first-hand how others have already benefited from the training before they are even assigned to a Team.
- Attend regular celebrations –These celebrations can be as simple as a church communion service or as elaborate as an anniversary extravaganza. The key is to set aside some time specifically for celebrating a milestone or commemorating a memorial event. These can be sobriety anniversaries, birthdays, life change anniversaries, or any other occasion of note. Sometimes these can be sobering occasions mourning the loss of those who weren't able to get out of their addiction before being struck by tragic consequences, but they should hold out hope for those who have escaped addiction. Celebrations and memorials don't all have to be happy, but they do have to be meaningful and significant.
- Attend refreshers as needed –After time, we develop habits that may not be helping us in our journey. Sometimes we need to go back and brush up on the lessons we've learned and repeat them so we don't forget. This is why 12-Step organizations prominently feature their Steps and repeat them often. They recognized the need for refresher training. The To3 approach doesn't formalize this aspect of training, but recognizes the need for it and encourages teams to practice it.
- Regular retreats/conferences/Meet-ups –Using the online resources at <https://teamofthree.org> and other resources, To3 members need to take advantage of sponsored conferences, camps, retreats, meetings, and other offerings. We comprise a family of individuals who are all working together and it is a vital aspect of self-care and encouragement to meet some of the other "5,000 who have not bowed the knee to Ba'al" as Elijah discovered. The more we meet with others engaged in the work (whether we have to organize these events ourselves, or whether they are organized by others), the more we will be encouraged in the work. And the more we will be an encouragement to others.



## Exit

- Termination of support volunteer status before end of serving term
  - Voluntary termination

Recovery work is very challenging and stressful and can wear people out over time. While we expect individuals to commit to a Team of Three for a minimum of two years, we don't require them to commit for life. As a result, we need to allow volunteers to leave this work at will and without prejudice. They should be replaced as soon as it is practical to do so in order to reduce the burden on the other Team members.

Churches need to celebrate the years of service of those who have been involved in recovery work and express appreciation for what they have done. Additionally, churches need to leave the way open for re-entry back into the program after a time away.

We need to recognize that even Jesus, during his short earthly ministry, took many opportunities to withdraw from the crowd and his work in order to have a season of prayer and spiritual refreshment. (Matthew 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-51; John 6:16-21) It is only reasonable that we allow the same opportunities for spiritual retreat for our volunteers. Records need to reflect recommended level of service and where they can be expected to pick up when returning to serve again.
  - Involuntary termination

Not everyone is suited to recovery work. As part of the evaluation process, leaders need to have ongoing conversations with individuals who appear to be struggling in the work. If they are not making progress toward the goal of being an effective Team of Three member, they will need to be replaced on the Team. This should be done with an eye to helping them to understand that this work may not be the best fit for the gifting that God has given them. Let them know that there are other ways to help those in recovery other than being on a Team of Three. Keep the counseling positive, upbeat, and with an eye toward forward progress in helping them discover God's purpose for their lives. Make sure to involve the other members of the Team and bathe everything in prayer, scripture, and the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- Termination of relationship with organization while maintaining confidentiality and good relations

Volunteers should maintain confidentiality after their term of service. As volunteer support, there is a high level of trust that is established and volunteers should seek to maintain that trust even after they leave the program. This also applies to volunteers not on a Team of Three, but performing other services. We highly prize the trust of our friends in recovery and strive at all levels to maintain it.

Terminated Volunteers are still welcome to participate in community activities and some organizational level activities including the Speaker's Bureau in support of the Team of Three mission and vision.



## Outside Resources

Team of Three <https://teamofthree.org>

Reformers Unanimous; It's Personal daily Journal

Joshua Recovery Ministries <http://joshualife.org/>

Life Recovery Ministries: <http://www.liferecoveryministries.org/>

