

# GETTING STARTED

You were strong enough to survive your addiction; you're more than strong enough to recover from it.

**C**ongratulations on making the step to take your life back from addiction! To maintain an addiction, and live through it, you have to be tough, determined and resourceful. That same toughness, determination and resourcefulness are there within you. Now is the time to put them to work to get you well instead of keeping you sick.

The road that brings someone to addiction is different for everyone. Some people start using because they were hurt or traumatized. Others because they were lonely or hopeless. Still others were just having fun...until they weren't anymore. No matter how your use began, no one starts out thinking it's going to end in the pain and suffering of addiction. People start using and keep using because it solves a problem for them. But use turns into addiction when the using causes more problems than it solves. In your addiction you figured things out and did things you needed to do that kept you alive, but you're with us today because just surviving isn't enough for you anymore: you want to thrive. You're a fighter, a survivor, and we respect this about you.

We at BHG are here to help you attain your goals. We're honored you chose us to be your coach and your guide as you walk the path toward recovery. It's a path that tens of millions of people have successfully walked. You have it in you to be one of them.

**What is recovery?** Addiction takes many things from people: their family, friends, jobs, their physical and mental health, their freedom. For some people, addiction takes everything. Stopping substance use (*getting sober\**) is just a piece of recovery. Simply not using substances won't get back what you lost. Recovery is getting back what was taken, and then getting more. It isn't about not doing something (*like using substances*), it's about actively doing

the things that help you live a full and fulfilling life. To get into recovery, people need treatment.

**What is treatment?** When we say "treatment" we are talking about the process that gives you the knowledge and skills you need to get into recovery. Treatment teaches you about the brain disease of addiction and the substances that cause it. It teaches you about how your brain and your mind change over the course of addiction, and how to let it heal and change back. Treatment teaches you to identify triggers that could lead to relapse and how to avoid them. And, for those times when risky situations can't be avoided, treatment teaches coping skills to get through it without relapsing. Treatment is the counseling you get alone or in a group with a counselor. It also involves getting connected to the physical and mental healthcare and other services you might need to heal.

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*\*We at BHG don't say "clean" as in "clean and sober." People with addiction aren't dirty; they're suffering from the chronic brain disease of addiction.*

## What is Medication Assisted Treatment

**(MAT)**? There are medications that can be used to help treat the withdrawal and the cravings that keep a person using. We'll talk more about those in a minute. The important thing to know right now is that these medications are safe, effective, and approved by the federal government. They are powerful tools you can use to help you stop using, but like we said before, "not using" and "recovery" aren't the same things. The medications can help you break the cycle of having to get the money to buy substances, find substances, use substances, and deal with the aftermath of using substances. The medications can reduce the drama in your life and give back hours of your life every day. What you do with those hours decides whether you get into recovery. In the beginning of this process, we at BHG believe that a good piece of that time should be devoted to treatment.



**Why does BHG say "MAR" instead of "MAT"?** We at BHG believe in Medication Assisted Recovery (*MAR*). Medication Assisted Treatment is the term that most people use, and it's not a bad thing to say at all. It reminds people that the medications aren't the treatment, they just assist the treatment. It would be almost impossible for someone actively using opioids to sit through groups or individual sessions.

But we at BHG take this one step further. The point of this whole process you are starting isn't just to go to treatment; the point is to get into recovery. You'll almost certainly going to need more treatment at the start to get you stabilized and help you stop using. As you progress, you'll need less treatment, and you'll see us back off as your life fills back up with normal and healthy things. If there is a slip or a relapse along the way, we'll be there to help you through it. We will temporarily come closer in to provide more treatment until the crisis passes. But our point, our goal, is never to give you treatment for treatment's sake. It's to get you into recovery. Some people find that the medication still helps them long after they get back what they lost. In those cases, if they want to continue the medication we'll be there to support them then, too. Recovery is the goal, treatment is how you get there, and medication makes treatment possible.

#### **How do people enter a BHG Treatment Program?**

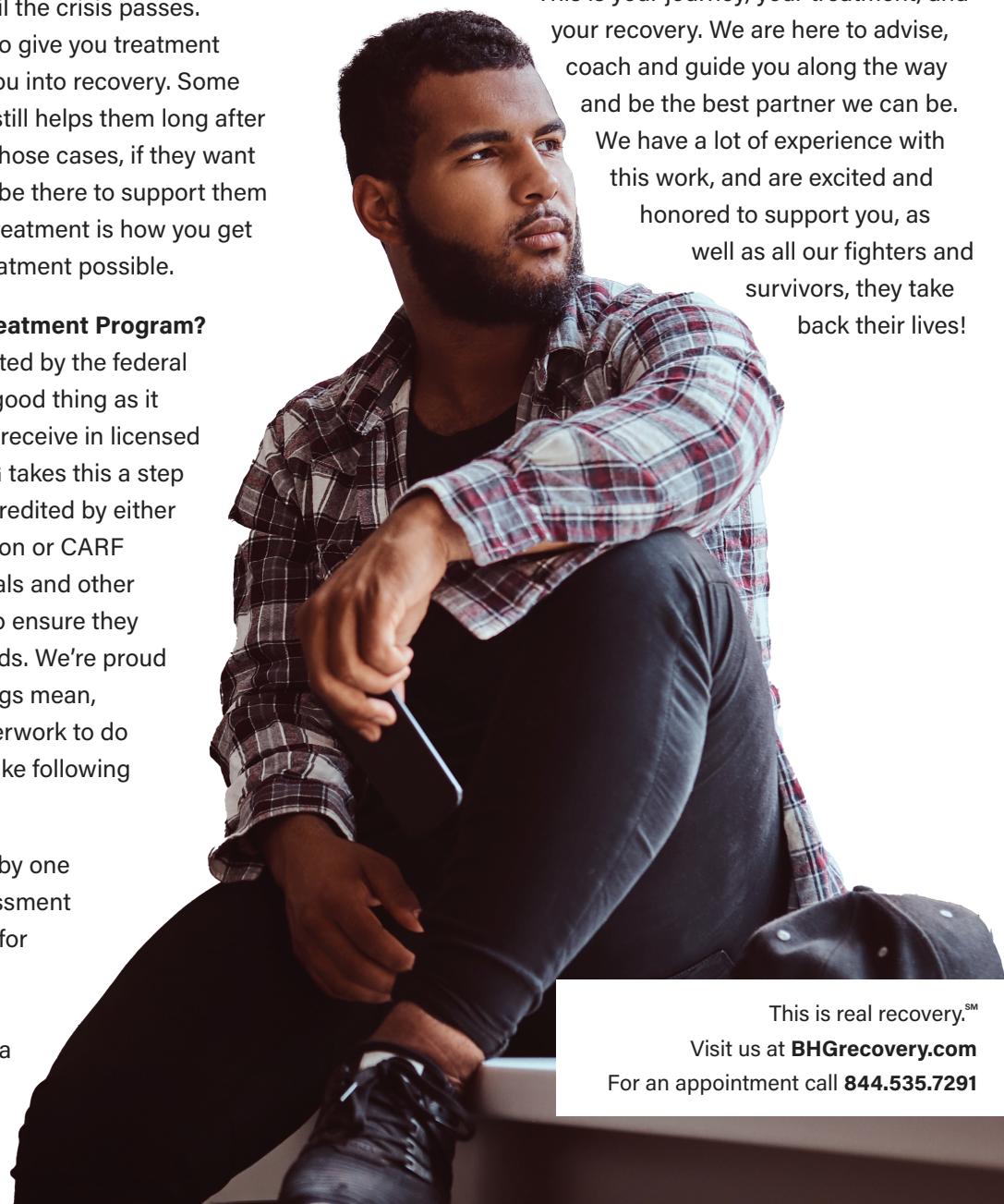
The work we do is heavily regulated by the federal and state government. This is a good thing as it makes sure that the care people receive in licensed treatment programs is safe. BHG takes this a step further and has all programs accredited by either the Joint Commission Organization or CARF International, groups that hospitals and other healthcare organizations invite to ensure they meet the highest quality standards. We're proud of the fact we do this. These things mean, however, that there is some paperwork to do at the beginning. You'll see we take following regulations seriously.

You'll have an assessment done by one of our counselors. The first assessment makes sure our program is right for you, and that we can meet your specific needs. There are also a physical health assessment and a

physical exam and some laboratory studies we'll need. If the program is right for you, you'll get some medication and the process of treatment will be underway. Soon, you'll have another assessment, but this one is designed to get to know you as an individual. The information you provide us over all these assessments will be used to create an individualized treatment plan (*ITP*).

**What is an ITP?** The ITP is your personal roadmap to recovery. It is the document you create with your counselor that lays out your short-term and long-term goals. The ITP describes what you want in recovery, then breaks the process down into steps that we'll take together to get you there. Through our work together your ITP will be reviewed and updated as you accomplish your goals and make new ones. Remember: recovery is about getting back what addiction took, and then getting more.

This is your journey, your treatment, and your recovery. We are here to advise, coach and guide you along the way and be the best partner we can be. We have a lot of experience with this work, and are excited and honored to support you, as well as all our fighters and survivors, they take back their lives!



This is real recovery.<sup>SM</sup>  
Visit us at [BHGrecovery.com](http://BHGrecovery.com)  
For an appointment call **844.535.7291**