

Odyssey House *news*

odysseyhousenyc.org

In this issue:

- Where Recovery Gets Real..... Pg.4-5
- Today's treatment.....Pg. 6
- Ready for Prime Time.....Pg. 6
- Graduates celebrate their accomplishmentsPg. 7
- Celebrating women in recovery..... Pg.7

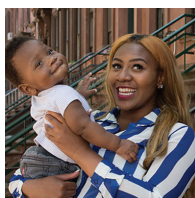


Celebrating a proud legacy of saving lives by treating addiction and mental illness and reducing homelessness

Where Recovery Gets Real

Real New Yorkers share their stories of recovery.

(see pages 4-5)



Ready for Prime Time

The Odyssey House Art Project partners with MoMA.

(see page 6)



50 Years of Service to New Yorkers

As Odyssey House looks forward to the next 50 years of service to the community, we are more determined than ever to evolve and adapt our programs to meet the needs of today's vulnerable New Yorkers. Just as earlier generations, the men and women who today turn to us for help demand, and are entitled to, the very best service.

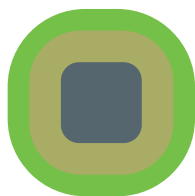
Their stories of struggle and success drive us. They are our legacy, and we are proud of all of them.

We are particularly grateful to the men and women who volunteer to share their stories. Each person who speaks out and shares his or her experience takes us all one step closer to ending the stubborn and harmful stigma of addiction. With your help, we are getting closer to this goal.

Evolving to meet today's challenges

In 50 years of continuous programming, Odyssey House has treated more than 100,000 New Yorkers from all walks and stages of life. Our individualized treatment plans include specialized care for pregnant women, women with infants and toddlers, middle and high school students, young adults, adults, and senior citizens. Our portfolio of programs is not only one of the broadest, it is also among the most intensive and extensive.

Since we opened our doors in 1967 as an experimental treatment community for heroin abusers looking for drug-free treatment, our approach has consistently been one of helping people rebuild their lives on all fronts.



Odyssey House®

Where recovery gets real

Continued on next page

Continued from page 1

It is an approach that is needed just as much today as we continue to grapple with substance abuse problems, mental illness, and homelessness.

Learning from the past

In the 1960s, the country was in the grip of a heroin epidemic that was laying waste to the lives of thousands of young people. From 1963 to 1974, 300,000 New York City residents were either known or suspected addicts, 95% of them for heroin abuse.

Today, opioid abuse, primarily prescription pain relievers and heroin, is again devastating communities. The latest national data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports as many as 80 Americans a day (or 29,200 a year) dying from opioid overdoses. Of these deaths, 2,002 are New Yorkers.

While the numbers of preventable deaths from opioid misuse are distressing, experts believe they would be even higher if it weren't for the advancements made in the treatment and prevention of substance misuse and mental health disorders.

Many of these advances are the result of treatment organizations on the front lines responding swiftly to the needs of their communities with peer-driven, residential and outpatient programs. At Odyssey House, we have expanded our programs to reflect the needs of families, youth, and older adults with flexible options that can include medication-assisted treatment (MAT) alongside behavioral health therapies.

This holistic model has been replicated throughout the country and overseas and is now regarded as the gold standard for treatment of substance misuse and mental health disorders. Along the way, this flexible treatment model that integrates peer-driven, self-help therapies with medical, psychiatric, educational, and vocational services, has saved thousands of lives. ●

In commemoration of our 50th anniversary, each month we have been sharing a story that highlights one of our programs or treatment populations. Here are the stories from the first quarter of our year-long celebration.

“Every minute I spent at Odyssey House was worth it.”



Ashley, 28, started using drugs and alcohol after graduating high school in Long Island. It started with the occasional use of marijuana and alcohol, mostly as a means of fitting in with her friends and dealing with low self-esteem. It also made it easier to ignore that she was directionless, in and out of college, unable to decide what to study or do with her life.

Her drug use developed into a full-fledged problem when she was 23. By then she was a new mother. To manage the trauma of escaping an abusive relationship with her daughter's father and the stress of single parenthood Ashley, turned to cocaine, marijuana, and alcohol.

Ashley was admitted to the young adult women's program in the Bronx last October. It took time, but once she adjusted to the structured environment, she began to feel herself change. Being in treatment “helped me open up to others, understand that the way I was living was wrong, and bridge the gap between me and my family,” she says. The groups were particularly beneficial in helping Ashley find peace. “The more I talked to my peers, the lighter my burden felt.”

Taking the first step to putting her family back together



When Joi entered the Manor Family Center in August 2015, she was lost. Struggling with depression, low self-esteem, and alcoholism, she needed a “new beginning” – an opportunity to turn her life around and regain custody of her children.

The 31-year-old mother of four had experienced a number of difficulties, including domestic violence and homelessness, but it took the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) removing custody of her baby to underscore the urgency of her situation.

Though ACS recommended an outpatient program, Joi chose residential treatment. While in Odyssey House, Joi regained custody of her youngest child in only four months, and with the support of their grandfather, repaired her relationship with her older children. Joi also successfully completed vocational training and earned a security guard license.

Joi completed treatment in early May and is continuing to work on her recovery at our Outpatient Services in the Bronx. With help from her counselors, she found an apartment to move into after treatment and now lives with her youngest child, with regular visits from her older children.

“I can find joy in life again.”



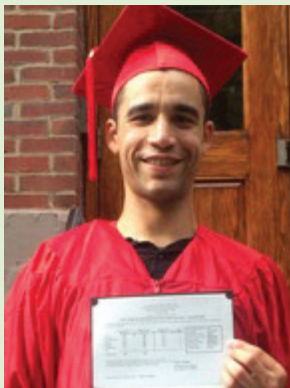
Art has been a part of Kenneth’s life for more than 40 years. Growing up, the comfort of creation helped distract Kenneth, 55, from the stresses of growing up in the projects with a single mom raising him and his siblings. As Kenneth reached his teenage years, art gave way to drugs and alcohol as a means of escape. For the next twenty-five years, Kenneth

struggled with his addiction to cocaine and alcohol and found himself in and out of treatment programs.

A few years ago, Kenneth became homeless after he lost his job, and he had no money to pay his rent. Feeling hopeless about his future, Kenneth isolated himself. He relapsed, and knowing he needed to make a change, he entered residential treatment at Odyssey House.

In treatment, Kenneth found sanctuary by participating in workshops at the Odyssey House expressive arts studio. Kenneth says creating art allows him to express himself in ways he cannot verbally, and supports his recovery in a safe and sober environment. “The Odyssey House Art Project helped me find myself. I can find joy in life again.” This July, Kenneth celebrated one year of sobriety, giving him a more hopeful outlook on his life: “Now that I’ve reached this milestone, it’s going to be a brighter future for me.”

“Focus and persistence is a powerful tool”



From a very young age, Chane, 29, let his opioid addiction dictate his actions, leading to expulsion from high school and involvement in the judicial system. After being arrested for stealing to fund his drug habit, he was offered treatment at Odyssey House as an alternative to incarceration. Seeing an opportunity, Chane knew it was time to take control of his future.

While in treatment at the Leadership Center, he dedicated himself to finishing his high school education and passing the TASC. Chane was nervous about how he would do, as he hadn’t been in a classroom in more than 10 years and had always struggled with math. Discussing his concerns with his vocational counselor gave Chane the confidence he needed to succeed as long as he worked hard and applied himself.

The breakthrough came from his math teacher. Chane says, “My teacher’s unique way of looking at math problems made problems that looked difficult become really simple.”

Chane not only passed the TASC but received the second highest score among his peers.

ELEVENTH ANNUAL



Run For Your Life

SEPTEMBER 24, 2016



Save the date! Run for Your Life 5K
Saturday, September 24, 2016
Join the voices for recovery*

- Children’s races
- Fitness demos
- Prizes
- Recovery Walk
- Zumba
- Refreshments

Registration & details @
odysseyhousenyc.org

*A National Recovery Month Event



WELCOME TO ODYSSEY HOUSE

Where recovery gets real™

Odyssey House goes beyond helping you beat drugs and alcohol. We help you rebuild your life. If that sounds different than other treatment programs, you're right. Because Odyssey House is where [recovery gets real](#).

F Kyle: Brooklyn

5 Sylvester: Queens

866-888-7880 Get help now, for you or someone you love.

We'll help you find a way, regardless of your ability to pay.

GET INFORMED GET SUPPORT GET ADMITTED GET INVOLVED

Getting real. It's more than a tagline

Last year, we embarked on a challenge: how to fully articulate what we stand for – the compelling, focused idea that sets us apart and puts our clients at the heart of our identity. Through extensive research, and interviews with our staff and clients, we found it: getting real.

What does that mean – to get real about recovery?

- *Getting real* means understanding the unique problems of New Yorkers because we're New Yorkers, too.
- *Getting real* means providing integrated, personalized treatment plans that address all of our clients' needs— their physical and mental health, home and family, and job and education.
- *Getting real* means providing our client with a support network of people who understand their challenges—for life.

This project informed our new tagline and culminated in the creation of a fresh, new website that reflects what it means to get real about recovery, and how we help our clients do just that, so they can live healthy, happy, and substance-free lives. Visit the new website at odysseyhousenyc.org and let us know what you think.

Our aim with this new site is to present Odyssey House through the experiences, hopes, and achievements of our clients. We talked to clients from every program, listened carefully to what they had to say, and wove their stories into a narrative that presents Odyssey House as an organization that offers hope and opportunity to all New Yorkers.

NEW FEATURES:

- Integrated social media buttons for Facebook, Twitter, and more
- An improved News section with helpful information, articles, newsletters, and events that will be updated regularly
- New recovery stories from residents of our treatment and housing programs (see opposite page)
- Two ways to contact our Admissions department: through an online form and a toll-free number, **866-888-7880**

REAL RECOVERY STORIES

Every day, New Yorkers come to Odyssey House for help—and the results are life-changing. Here are excerpts of some of their stories.



ANGEL: SPANISH HARLEM

Now I understand I have to stay focused on my recovery every day.



AMANDA: LONG ISLAND

I've already noticed how my behavior and attitude have changed for the better.



HEAVEN: HARLEM

My kids need me to be the best I can be, so that they can be the best they can be.



SHAVAR: HARLEM

It's a peaceful environment that gives me a place to focus on my recovery and stay healthy.



JEAN: BRONX

I'm more focused on schoolwork and responsible for my actions now.



AARON: LONG ISLAND

I never want to disappoint myself or my family again, so I'm making each day in treatment count.

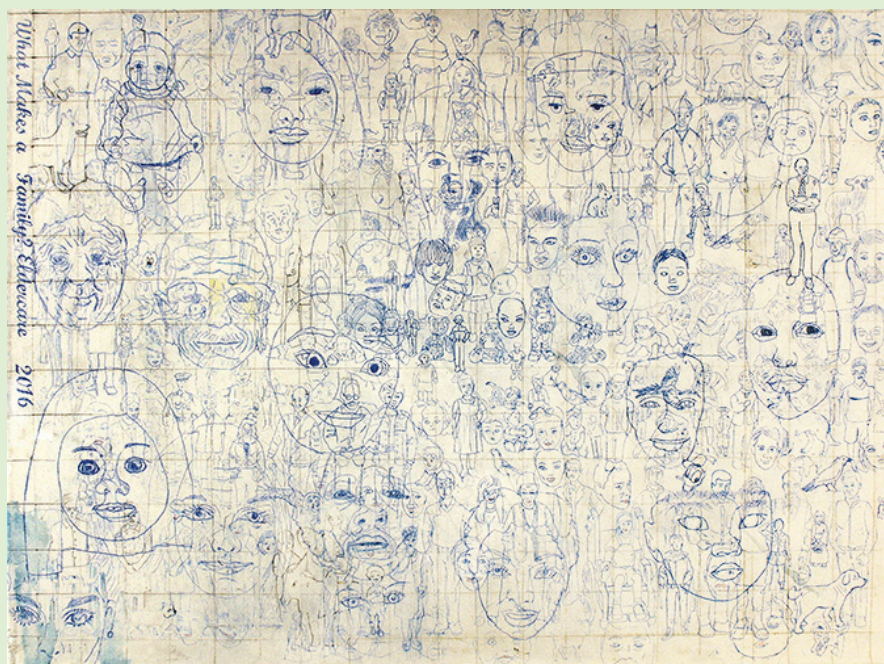
Visit odysseyhousenyc.org to read the full-length stories from Heaven, Angel, Amanda, and many more.

Ready for Prime Time

Members of the Odyssey House Art Project went back to school earlier this year to study contemporary art at one of New York City's premier museums. In a special partnership between the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) and Odyssey House, clients in treatment at the ElderCare program participated in a new initiative that connects older New Yorkers with modern and contemporary art; a project MoMA says aims to "rethink how museums and cultural institutions can support a fulfilling aging process—one defined by creativity, curiosity, connectedness, and continued growth."

Over a six-week period, students were treated to in-depth guided tours of the museum's exhibits and given the opportunity to try out some of the artistic techniques they'd studied at hands-on workshops at MoMA's education center, and also back at the Odyssey House studio.

But the special treatment didn't end there. At the completion of the course, the artists were invited to a reception at MoMA and their artwork was proudly displayed as part of the museum's Prime Time series.



"What Makes a Family," a group project by members of the ElderCare Program on display at the Prime Time show.



Odyssey House ElderCare participant, Robert C., spoke at the reception about how studying at the museum had opened his eyes to modern art and helped him understand the powerful role creativity can play in his recovery. He is seen here with Odyssey House Geriatric Counselor Temmi Merlis.



Jerald Frampton, director of Odyssey House Art Project, with MoMA educators Sally Paul (right) and Laurel Humble.

Today's Treatment:

Combining behavioral therapy and medication assistance

Medication-assisted treatment (MAT) is pharmacotherapy used to support treatment and recovery efforts for people seeking to overcome addictive disorders. It combines prescribed medications with counseling and behavioral therapies, monitoring, community-based services, and recovery supports. MAT is designed to assist, not replace, other treatment and recovery efforts and supplements psychological, behavioral, and social interventions. At Odyssey House we currently offer the following medication assistance:

Naltrexone (*Revia, Vivitrol*) is an opioid antagonist that is non-addictive or sedating, does not result in physical dependence, and has no potential for abuse. Naltrexone can be taken orally (*Revia*) or through an extended release formulation (*Vivitrol*) that is delivered in a monthly injection. Naltrexone can only be used after a client has undergone detoxification.

We also offer both the oral and injectable forms of naltrexone to clients diagnosed with a history of an alcohol use disorder. Although it is not fully understood as to why an opioid antagonist works in treating alcoholism, it is believed that naltrexone blocks the pleasurable effects of alcohol by blocking the release of endorphins.

Acamprosate (*Campral*) is used along with counseling and social support to help people who have stopped drinking large amounts of alcohol to avoid drinking alcohol again. Drinking alcohol for a long time changes the way the brain works. Acamprosate works by helping the brains of people who have drunk large amounts of alcohol to work normally again, but does not prevent the withdrawal symptoms that people may experience when they stop drinking alcohol. Acamprosate has not been shown to work in people who have not stopped drinking alcohol or in people who drink large amounts of alcohol and also overuse or abuse other substances such as street drugs or prescription drugs.

Disulfiram (*Antabuse*) is an alcohol-abuse aversion therapy used to treat alcohol use disorders. Disulfiram works by blocking the breakdown of alcohol, causing unpleasant side effects (e.g., headache, nausea, vomiting) when even a small amount of alcohol is consumed. ●

Graduates Celebrate Their Accomplishments



Sunita Manjrekar (front, red shirt), who helped establish our vocational department years ago, encouraged the TASC graduates to continue their education and pursue new opportunities.

“I was like a fish out of water,” laughs Mavies, thinking back to her first day of adult basic education (ABE) classes. After leaving school more than three decades years ago, the prospect of learning math, science, and more at her age was daunting. But she persevered, and passed the Test Assessing Secondary Completion (TASC), earning her high school equivalency diploma.

After spending several years drifting from one place to another, with no sense of direction or ambition, Mavies, 53, came to

Odyssey House to deal with her addiction. When a counselor suggested she enroll in ABE classes, she was hesitant but decided to give it a try. Focused and determined, Mavies worked hard to attend every class, engage with the instructors, and study for the test. She failed the first three times she took the exam. Rather than become discouraged, Mavies worked even harder, a lesson she imparted to her peers in her graduation speech: “You only fail when you give up. If you try once and fail, just keep trying until you make it.”

Looking ahead to the future

TASC graduation day is a special day at Odyssey House. It’s an opportunity for our clients to celebrate their accomplishments and share their future plans with their peers and families. This year, more than 40 clients passed the TASC.

For this year’s keynote speaker, Sunita Manjrekar, the ceremony was a homecoming of sorts. Now the director of employment programs for the Nassau County Department of Social Services, Ms. Manjrekar was once the director of vocational services at Odyssey House and had a significant hand in developing the department as it exists today.

Pleased to see so many clients pursuing their education, Ms. Manjrekar encouraged them to keep going. “I challenge you: don’t stop here,” she said. “This is just the very first step. There are many opportunities still waiting for you. Never stop learning.”

At least one graduate is planning on listening to that advice. Jason, 38, addressed the graduates as the class valedictorian. “The only thing that can hold us back now is ourselves. So let’s not see this as the end of our academic goals but the beginning,” he said. “I’ve never thought of college as an option for me. Now it’s not whether I’ll attend college, but rather what I’ll study when I get there.” ●

Celebrating Women in Recovery



Janice Slaughter, VP, director of Mental Health & Housing Services (right), embraces a resident after an emotional poetry reading.

Every year, Odyssey House commemorates Women’s History Month with events that are aimed at boosting confidence and encouraging female bonding. It’s an important event here as the women in our programs face a number of challenges coming into treatment, including coping with low self-esteem and a history of domestic violence or sexual abuse. This year, the Manor Family Center celebrated the achievements of women in recovery with a special event for staff, residents and their families.

The program included musical performances and readings from residents, and an inspirational address from Annette Gordon-Reed, a Pulitzer Prize-winning historian and law professor. The songs and readings selected by our residents held deep meaning for them. Belinda sang Whitney Houston’s “Greatest Love of All” in a moving

performance. She said that song resonated with her, because “learning to love myself has been something I’ve really had to work on in treatment. My addiction destroyed my sense of worth, and Odyssey House has helped me build it back up.”

Ms. Gordon-Reed spoke about the history of female oppression and the importance of uniting to overcome it. “We can’t succeed individually, we must work together – especially if we come from any kind of disadvantage, be it gender, race, or economic,” she said. But it was her parting words that best captured the attention of the women in the room: “Learn from everything that happens in your life – we have to be ready and open to it. Sometimes the thing you think is the worst thing to ever happen to you, turns out to be a blessing.” ●



Odyssey House®

Where recovery gets real

120 Wall Street
New York, NY 10005

odysseyhousenyc.org
212-361-1600

On the Horizon



Save the date!

*TCS New York City Marathon
November 6, 2016*

*Cheer on our marathon team
at the Mile 19 water station!
Located on 1st Ave between
115th & 116th Streets.*



Help us spread the word
[facebook.com/OdysseyHouse](https://www.facebook.com/OdysseyHouse)



Follow us at
[@OdysseyHouseNY](https://twitter.com/OdysseyHouseNY)



It is the mission of Odyssey House:

To provide comprehensive and innovative services to the broadest range of metro New York's population who:

- Abuse drugs
- Abuse alcohol
- Suffer from mental illness

To provide high quality, holistic treatment impacting all major life spheres: psychological, physical, social, family, educational and spiritual.

To support personal rehabilitation, renewal and family restoration.

In all of its activities, Odyssey House undertakes to act as a responsible employer and member of the community, and manage the assets of the organization in a professional manner.