

# Onesimus House

GOSPEL **RESCUE** MISSION

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Submitted by Pastor Mark S. Disbrow  
Director, Onesimus House  
POB 9, Del Norte, CO 81132  
719) 873-3014 [mark@cornerstonedelnorte.org](mailto:mark@cornerstonedelnorte.org)

## Introduction

The Onesimus House is a faith-work of life restoration for broken people located in Del Norte, CO. Rio Grande County. It is a ministry of Cornerstone Community Services (*not a state approved treatment provider*). Residential treatment is offered as a 6-12 month program. The addictions program is operated by the Onesimus House Gospel Rescue Mission and is funded with community and individual donations, and generated income through it's job corp program.

It's mission is to restore people to usefulness from their present broken state.

*We believe this program is worth your consideration.* ADAD is supportive of using multiple approaches to treatment from multiple sectors of society. (This is not to say that we have received ADAD endorsement.) Therefore, a faith-based program is rightfully included in the arsenal aimed at substance abuse.

### More Information

Addictions Recovery - [www.cornerstonedelnorte.org/onesimushouse.html](http://www.cornerstonedelnorte.org/onesimushouse.html)

Job Corp and Vocational Training - [www.ccswoodworks.org](http://www.ccswoodworks.org)

## Overview of Program

The Onesimus House Gospel Rescue Mission is a faith-based ministry offering life restoration services to those who are spiritually broken, suffering from addictions, unemployed and homeless, and suffering from broken family relationships. Residents come from many walks of life and are often referred in by Social Services, the Judicial System, DeTox centers, Jail, Community Corrections, Churches, family referrals. Most clients are voluntary walk-in.

The approach to restoration and treatment is centered on faith. The Onesimus House program motto is, "There is no recovery without God". Restoration occurs when people realize that their troubles (*being spiritually broken, suffering from addictions, unemployed and homeless, and suffering from broken family relationships*) have a spiritual foundation. The sufferer has made bad choices and engaged in purposeful sin. The sufferer must come to acknowledge that they are responsible for their actions and can no longer shift the blame on someone or something else. They come face-to-face with their selfishness. With this acknowledgment comes freedom and healing. The resident is shown the wonderful promises a healthy life in obedience to God can give.

The addictions recovery program uses Celebrate Recovery,<sup>®</sup> a program used nationwide in jails and prisons by Prison Fellowship and our proprietary Overcomers Recovery. Residents use the book for personal study and weekly house meetings. The twice weekly community group recovery meetings study from Addictions: A Banquet in

the Grave published by Christian Counseling and Education Foundation. Life bondage are not limited to substance abuse. CCS recovery programs treat those with addictions to pornography, sexual addictions (not child-molesters), over-eating, anger, laziness, depression, homelessness, etc. Most of these forms of life bondage are present with substance abuse.

## Contrasted with ADAD or STAR-TC Programs

ADAD and STAR-TC approaches to treatment are secular clinical psychology-based methods and used in the majority of Colorado treatment centers. They are based upon the belief that addiction is a disease which should be treatable. As with Alcoholics Anonymous, these programs commonly label the addict permanently as an addict (recovering or practicing). It is standard clinical treatment protocol to prescribe drugs (often addictive themselves) in the process of treating a drug addict.

To Wit: *“Addiction is a chronic, relapsing, and treatable disease. A variety of approaches are used in treatment programs to help clients deal with these cravings and possibly avoid drug relapse. Through treatment that is tailored to individual needs, clients can learn to control their condition and live normal, productive lives. Like people with diabetes or heart disease, people in treatment for drug addiction learn behavioral changes and often take medications as part of their treatment regimen.”* ([www.cdhs.state.co.us/adad/treatment.htm](http://www.cdhs.state.co.us/adad/treatment.htm)) Adapted from the website of the National Institute on Drug Abuse: [www.nida.nih.gov](http://www.nida.nih.gov)

To Wit: The American Medical Association declared alcoholism a disease in 1987.  
To Wit: The medical/scientific committee of National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence states that alcoholism and addiction are diseases that are primary and chronic yet treatable.

**In contrast**, faith-based programs believe that labeling addictions as a disease gives the addict someone or something else to blame their addictions on; a reason to not face it. They come to believe it is “out of their control”. Rather, we believe the addict has a lifestyle of not facing personal responsibility while pursuing their selfish desires. Taking personal responsibility and learning to serve others are two of the pillars in this faith-based program. Faith-based programs believe that there is no recovery without God.

## Methods of this Faith-based Program

1. Secure and protect sobriety,
2. Insert resident into group family setting, set up boundaries,
3. Healing through volunteer service and work,
4. Teach the Word of God and Biblical life principles,
5. Change the resident’s heart,
6. Teach proper decision making,
7. Teach life skills for successful living,
8. Push resident towards successful completion of court requirements,
9. Show godly love to the residents. Most have not had this in their lives.

In order to break the cycle of selfishness, the resident must do volunteer work within the program for 90 days. It is a principle that works! If you are broken or unemployed, serve others for 90 days and watch God provide you employment in an area with twice the unemployment rate.

As the person comes out of their state of denial they are given life skills through group meetings, personal studies, and community service efforts. They are supported by other program residents working on the same life issues. After an initial 90 day period of being shaped for work and strengthened for life issues, the resident is moved in to employment within the program or in the community. Daily volunteer work and personal study commences on day one of their residency. Work and selfless Community Service are given equal priority with spiritual training and personal counseling. This Program believes that one must change what he/she believes before their life values will result in useful actions. Idle hands and loitering are never permitted.

The Onesimus House faith-based approach is to be distinguished from the traditional recovery and rehab program. Traditional programs take a clinical-mental health approach founded on an addiction disease model. In contrast, the Onesimus House counseling is bible-based and given in groups and individual sessions. Much of the counseling occurs in the midst of community service and job corp functions.

The O.House approach was developed after watching many people released from incarceration and work-release programs immediately returning to their addictions and criminal behavior. The reason this recidivism occurs is due to a lack of life-skill training in the "real-world". Secondly, we believe addictive and criminal behavior is not a disease; it is a purposeful choice. The choice is often taken because the activity seems to be the best and only option to the offender. Offenders do not have the thought processes or practices in choosing the right option. They do not understand what the correct options are nor how to process their thoughts and decision making. Offenders simply do what they have always done.

The O.House faith-based approach gives residents "just enough rope" while living in a "real-world" setting and being accountable to a group home while concurrently undertaking rehabilitation education. In this program when the offender is presented with a real-world temptation, they have the opportunity to say, "yes" or "no". (While incarcerated the only option is "no" or "not available".) The offender has the group's support helping him/her to say, "no". If the offender says, "yes" and makes a mistake, he or she is shown the reason it was a bad choice and the consequences that could occur. They are held accountable by the program and must repent of the behavior and make restitution where appropriate. In standard probative supervision, the offender very often gets away with the offense. They do not have immediate accountability with anyone. In this program the offender lives with the mentors and is never more than a few minutes away from being held accountable.

In further contrast, as the offender struggles with real-world issues they are shown how to succeed while (actually) going through them. These mistakes and real-world issues are things everyone goes through. Their spouse-children-boy/girl friend-employer makes them mad or takes advantage of them, they cannot find employment, they run

out of money, their vehicle breaks down, a bill-collector harasses them, they become discouraged or depressed. Often, young parents neglect the care of their children as they ineffectively struggle with these life issues. Commonly, adults will seek medication (legally or illegally) of their feelings resulting in heightened problems which are further left unattended to. We can ALL relate to this. Many have learned to cope with these life issues. This program teaches the resident how to cope instead of prescribing the drug addict legal, addictive drugs.

This faith-based program gives the resident a reason to hope. The hope is a living hope and is dependent upon their relationship with God. Their relationship with God gives the resident a REASON to obey laws and to live a healthy life. Civil and criminal punishment can only punish, it cannot teach new behavior. Civil and criminal punishment has limitations of how many can be apprehended and incarcerated. Standard clinical treatment which convinces the offender they have a disease only teaches them how to live with the disease and how to legally cope - not how to be healed.

## **Onesimus House Therapeutic Community**

Individuals enter our Therapeutic Community (TC) and engage in a multi-dimensional, fluid, evidence-based, cognitive behavioral therapy. It begins with admitting the lack of control over compulsive behaviors and stating a desire to take personal responsibility. Upon entry the resident commits him or herself to engaging in all of the following activities and therapies.

Our TC is a holistic, non-medical, non-clinical approach to addictions and psychiatric diagnosis. Medication is not expressly forbidden but strongly discouraged with the stated goal of replacing addictive medication with natural foods and healthy living.

Our TC is a directed voluntary participation peer recovery program. The overall program and specific personal involvement are staff directed as per resident commitment upon entry. The resident is free to choose how they will participate in each specific therapy but must participate. This is a condition of entry. Non-participation is viewed as lack of desire or effort to engage in therapy. Residents are not given personal authority over which therapies they will participate in because every therapy is vitally critical to successful recovery. The adage, "you only get out of it what you put into it" applies to this requirement.

### **Therapies Employed**

1. Abstinence from drugs and alcohol
2. Personal Responsibility with Staged Privileges
3. Peer Counseling
4. Trained Counselors
5. Stress Reduction Techniques
6. Vocational Training
7. Volunteerism
8. Talking Circles
9. Spiritual Walking

10. Personal Study
11. Personal Quiet Time and Reflection Periods
12. Relapse Prevention
13. Relationship Skills
14. Beliefs and Values Building
15. Shared-Purpose Community Gathering
16. Effective Decision Making
17. Healthy Nutrition and Living
18. Successful Living Strategies
19. Authority and Rebellion Counseling

## **Specific Programs and Therapies**

### **Recovery Therapy & Life Skills:**

- “Celebrate Recovery” 12 step program for addictions and life bondages
- Abstinence from drugs and alcohol
- Personal Responsibility with Stated Privileges
- Peer Counseling
- Trained Counselors
- Stress Reduction Techniques
- Vocational Training
- Volunteerism
- Relapse Prevention
- Relationship Skills
- Effective Decision Making
- Healthy Nutrition and Living
- Successful Living Strategies
- Authority and Rebellion Counseling

### **Spiritual Growth:**

- Bi-Weekly talking circles
- Daily personal studies under CCS direction
- Spiritual Walking
- Daily Personal Quiet Time and Reflection Periods
- Daily Beliefs and Values Building
- Weekly Shared-Purpose Community Gathering

### **Vocational Training:**

- Cornerstone Employment Assistance Manual
- Computer skills training
- Work skills training
- Job Prep Training
- Recovery-to-Career training
- CCS Job Corp

### **Volunteerism:**

- CCS Job Corp Community Service
- Court-ordered Community Service

### **Education:**

- College studies
- Personal studies in areas of interest

### **Employment:**

- CCS Job Apprentice Program
- Colorado Work Force
- Employment search assistance
- CCS Job Corp enterprises

### **Marriage, Parenting, & Relationships:**

- Love and Respect by Dr. Emerson Eggerichs with workbook
- Reforming Marriage by Doug Wilson
- Created to be his Helpmeet by Debbie Pearl
- Relationship Counseling
- Relational Parenting book study, videos, and workshops
- Personal Purity counseling and book study

### **Financial Management:**

- “Using Your Money Wisely” by Larry Burkett
- Budgeting classes, training, personal study

### **Transportation Assistance:**

To employment, U.A. testing, Mental Health appointments, Medical appointments, Probation-Parole meetings

- Carpool matching
- Bicycle grants
- Econo-Shuttle
- Sponsored rides

# Pathways of Success

## I. Staged Responsibilities

Residents and program participants start with a high level of oversight and supervision. As they demonstrate responsibility, greater freedom is staged into their daily responsibilities. This holds particularly true for financial management training.

## II. Resident Recovery Objectives Completion Standards

A resident or program participant will have successfully completed or demonstrated proficiency in the following:

1. Achieved and maintained sobriety
2. Demonstrated reliability in commitments
3. Obedience to civil and legal requirements
4. Completed 90 days volunteerism
5. Maintained employment for 30-90 days.
6. Financial management - created and lived by a budget, paid off fines - restitution, current with child support, regularly paid rent.
7. Reached self-sufficiency - has a drivers license & insurance, employment, found safe place to live.
8. Completion of educational requirements of the O.House.
9. Demonstrated successful personal relationship skills
10. Demonstrated successful daily living strategies
11. Participation in and Completion of all therapies

## III. Graduation

Upon graduation qualification, Resident or Program participant will be eligible for long term housing search and assistance. TC staff attempt to stay in contact with graduate to monitor success. Often day therapy is employed and reunions are encouraged. TC staff often visit graduates.

## History

The Onesimus House has taken up the task of helping broken people in Rio Grande and Alamosa Counties, SW Colorado, out of necessity. People needing help regularly come to Cornerstone Community Church and Del Norte Ministerial Alliance asking for financial, personal, and employment assistance. While regularly visiting the Rio Grande County Jail the Director came in contact with many who had nowhere to go, and had no job waiting for them, once they were released. Moreover, they had few life skills to enable them to succeed.

Del Norte and Rio Grande Counties are demographically noted as an economically depressed region. The unemployment rate is significantly higher than most other areas within the state of Colorado. The rate of substance abuse and addiction is critical. In Rio

Grande County and the San Luis Valley is estimated by CCS that 1 in every 10 or 15 people are either on probation, under court supervision, parole, incarcerated, or have a drunk driving ticket.

The Onesimus House began in November of 2006 to fill an urgent need and because of a “calling” by God to help. The Onesimus House, the CCS Job Corp, and the Thrift Store are programs within the organization Cornerstone Community Services. CCS began as a charitable effort by Cornerstone Community Church and volunteers from that church, then the community.

## **Present Day**

The Onesimus House is overseen by a 5 member volunteer Board of Directors and is a Colorado non-profit faith-based ministry of Cornerstone Community Church. We are a member of the Association of Gospel Rescue Mission, a nationwide association. AGRM exists to proclaim the passion of Jesus toward the hungry, homeless, abused, and addicted; and to accelerate quality and effectiveness in member missions. Presently, CCS employs one Director/Counselor, one Manager/Counselor, two Manager Assistants/Counselors, one bookkeeper, one Job Corp manager, one Teacher/Counselor, three Jail Ministers. Each position is either volunteer or paid on a ministry-stipend level.

Most of the counseling is done by the pastors within the organization. O.House occasionally engages outside counselors as needed and sends/receives referrals to Mental Health when appropriate.

The O.House serves 12-25 people at a time with their residential program. The O.House does not discriminate in the selection of individuals on the basis of race, creed, gender, disability, ethnic background, criminal record, religion, or any other characteristic protected by law. The Onesimus House is a Christian ministry of Cornerstone Community Church.

## **Is This Program Appropriate for Probation and Corrections Department Clients?**

It certainly can be. The potential resident must have a genuine desire to change their life. If they are simply trying to “get out of jail” it is of marginal use. Understandably, it is often hard to see in to the minds and hearts of an offender to know their motivations. The O.House is willing to take a chance with the Court even with those who are questionably motivated; if the Court or Probation is willing to receive them back in the event of failure.

A community must also wrestle with the real-world issues the released offenders face. “How are they going to pay their fines?” They need jobs. “How will they get to and from work?” They need a ride or a vehicle. “How will they get auto insurance?” They need money to pay for this. This life problem is circular in nature and not easily solved without

help. Those who can't solve the puzzle often go on social benefits or remain unemployed. Sadly, many return to their previous criminal actions.

The O.House is able, and desires, to assist the judicial, probation, and corrections departments in the rehabilitation of offenders. Our remote location in South West Colorado takes the offender from their neighborhood and friends who are associated with their behavior and temptations. This respite gives the offender the space to look at new things and a new way of living.

Civil and criminal punishment are necessary corrective and protective measures for the community. However, they are only part of the solution. Released offenders need help with life skills and reasons to have hope. The lack of these is a primary component of their original criminal offense. Community Detoxification centers, emergency room and ambulance rides for overdose and alcohol-related injuries costs local taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars each year.

A community is often tempted to turn a blind-eye to these problems within it's midst. One finds it tempting to believe addictive and criminal behavior happens only elsewhere or that "those people" are already in jail. A significant amount of addictive and criminal behavior is "out of sight" and therefore never apprehended. (A natural component of a free society.) To Wit: A drunk driver is rarely caught the first time they get drunk or drive drunk. A drug addict is rarely caught the first time they buy and use an illegal substance. Domestic violence often goes unreported. Thefts are often unreported due to the absence of evidential information and the size of the loss. Drugs and alcohol are involved in a significant majority of any these common crimes.

Statistics show that:

- Ø One in four Americans has a primary family member who is struggling with addiction.
- Ø More than half of adults have a family history of alcoholism or problem drinking.
- Ø Nearly one in ten Americans over the age of 12 is classified with substance abuse or dependence.
- Ø Almost all addicts become addicts between ages 18 to 25.

(Source: RGPP provided the above information from the Planning Guide by [www.AddictionAction.org](http://www.AddictionAction.org) and other sources provided during February/March 2007)

Substance abuse may not always be involved in the specific criminal event but are a regular part of the offenders life. Theft, violence, anger, unemployment, and broken families are most always a part of an offenders life. Drugs and alcohol become an approach to coping with and medicating their inner hurt.

Something must be done. Every member of the Community should work together building up the community not attacking "undesired" members.

## Why Del Norte? The Principle of Separation

Onesimus House Gospel Rescue Mission is located in the remote mountains of San Luis Valley, Southwest Colorado at the 8300 foot elevation. Like the psalmist speaking of Jerusalem in Psalm 125:2, Del Norte is surrounded by mountains. Gospel Rescue Missions are a necessary part of any large city, but when Jesus required rest and communion He went to the mountains to pray.

Separation is a biblical principle. God calls Christians to be set-apart from the world; to be “in the world” but not “of the world.” One effective principle of recovery from addiction calls the slave of sin to separate from the source of addiction and her workers (playmates and friends). Jesus tells us that if our right hand makes us stumble, we should cut it off and throw it from us. For it is better for us to lose one of the parts of our body, than for our whole body to go into hell.

Jesus did not separate just to “get away”. He went with the purpose of praying and fellowshiping with His Father. This is what happens at the O.House (as it is affectionately called by residents). Disciples at the O.House spend time each day in the Word and praying. They spend time each day serving through volunteer work. They learn how to abide in the True Vine and He lovingly prunes them so that they will bear fruit, much fruit (Jn 15). Like Jesus, they come to the “temple” (Cornerstone Community Church) and learn in group recovery meetings.

As in the first century church, the disciples contribute to the needs of the body. Any income earned through volunteer efforts is brought into the church and used as anyone has need.

These principles are not intuitive for the “natural” man or the “slave” coming out of the Kingdom of Darkness. Once learned and appropriated into their life, they walk in faith and victory. They are not trying to avoid their addictions through “will-power” because they have been transformed through the renewing of their mind.

## Program Cost To The Resident

**Program Fee** - Recovery Program Residents agree to pay \$3100 for the first 6 months. Thereafter, only weekly rent will be expected. However, most residents come in homeless and unemployed. After they have reached a point of healing, they seek work and attempt to pay what they can towards their program fee from their paychecks. This is a difficult proposition in an area with some of the highest poverty and unemployment in the state of Colorado.

**Rent** - After the initial 90-120 days, Recovery Residents are expected to work and pay rent of \$45/week. (includes utilities except phone). Rent is considered to be earned if

and while working in the Job Corp or Community Service.

## **Employment & Education**

- Residents are expected to begin Community Service work upon intake.
- Residents are expected to work in the Job Corp for up to 90-120 days on a volunteer basis.
- Residents are expected to search for work and hold down regular employment after graduation of Level 2.
- We will make sure there are rides to the Work Force in Monte Vista. We will see that residents who obtain a job are driven to work (if needed) for the first paycheck period.

*Unless exempted by Manager, Residents shall participate in:*

- The Job Corp - until other employment is found.
- Vocational Training classes offered through CCS.
- Education and Life Skills classes offered through CCS.

CCS Job Corp program estimates it has created or obtained employment for more than 30 people. We have helped many with transportation needs. It became a necessary component of helping the indigent. Most people the program serves do not have driver's licenses, a vehicle or insurance, and are unemployed. Yet, they are required to be at court ordered classes and travel out of Del Norte to obtain a job.

## **Staff**

Since Onesimus House is a faith-based restoration program based on sin and personal responsibility it requires biblically educated Christian leaders. The program is more about recovery through knowing God and His ways of health; and is less about secular clinical psychology and world based counseling. God has given man all that he needs to know about living a healthy and useful life. Onesimus means "useful".

The staff of the Onesimus House serve at modest rates of compensation. The Resident Manager stipend is \$800 per month and the Resident Assistant stipend is \$180 per month. The Pastor Director receives only a \$500 per month stipend and the bookkeeper \$300 per month. The Job Corp Director earns approximately \$800 per month. (We also receive much help from volunteers in the community and a working relationship with health and social service professionals.)

For these two reasons above, we do not employ Certified Addictions Counselors and have not sought out State Approved Provider Status.

It is the belief of the Program that staff who have come out of the addictions lifestyle make the best counselors and mentors. Therefore, we also consider that a relevant job qualification.