



## The Trench: A Metaphor for Recovery and Positive Change – Video Discussion

Imagine yourself at the bottom of a deep, dark trench. The air feels heavy, and the walls around you rise steep and jagged, as if designed to keep you trapped. Above, the sunlight glows with warmth and promise—a life of peace, freedom, and fulfillment. But from where you stand, the climb looks daunting. The walls are slippery, and every attempt upward feels like it could lead to a fall.

And yet, others have made it out. You've seen them start from where you are, finding footholds, steadying themselves, and inching toward the light. Some move quickly; others take their time. Many stumble and slide back, only to pick themselves up and keep on climbing. Each time someone rises higher, you feel a spark of hope. That whisper of possibility that says: "If they can do it, maybe I can too."

This hope is more than just encouragement—it's a guide. Watching others climb shows us what's possible and reveals the steps they've taken. We notice how they navigate the toughest sections, where they find their strongest grips, and how they persevere through setbacks. Their journey isn't flawless, but it's real and attainable. It shows all of us that progress, however challenging and unpredictable at times, is 100% achievable for anyone who puts their mind to it and does not give up.

Recovery and positive change are not only just about reaching our goals; it's also defined by what we gain along the way. Each small victory—grasping a solid hold, overcoming fear, asking for help—builds strength and resilience for the rest of the journey forward and upward. When we finally emerge into the light, we see the world with fresh eyes. We carry the lessons of our own individual climb out of the trench, which makes us ready to guide others who may be still at or near the bottom, showing them that the trench is not forever and there is absolutely a way out for all of us. We just need to trust that we can succeed and then keep on climbing, without letup.

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### Video Introduction: Cameron and Rachel's Journey

The trench is a powerful metaphor for recovery. It captures the struggle but also illuminates the hope and strength that grow with every step. As you prepare to watch the following video on Cameron and Rachel's stories, keep this image in mind. Their journeys, like others who have made progress, offer guidance and inspiration. Both Cameron and Rachel started at the bottom of their own "trenches." Through sustained effort, support, and determination, they climbed toward the light. Their stories remind us that recovery isn't just a dream—it's a reachable reality. Please watch the video below and as a group discuss the questions that follow

Click to View: [Inspiring Recovery Stories: Cameron & Rachel's Journey](#)



*"Every climb begins with a single grip, and a consistent pull upward, and then with each step forward, the light gets closer."*



## **Video Discussion Questions**

### **Identifying:**

1. How do you connect with Cameron and Rachel's stories and what hope does seeing other people's positive examples provide?

### **Building Your Support Network**

1. Rachel highlighted the importance of support. Who are the "helpers" in your life, and how can you lean on them more effectively?
2. If you feel alone or stuck in a "trench", what steps can you take (or are you taking) to build a supportive community who can help you "climb"?

### **Personal Growth and Resilience**

1. Cameron emphasized accountability and routine. What helps you to remain accountable?
2. Some people can serve to slow down our "climb" by holding us back. You don't need to name specific names, but are there people you need to avoid in order to be successful in your own journey?
3. Rachel found strength in gratitude and self-kindness. How do you (or can you) practice gratitude and self-compassion in your personal journey?
4. Cameron brought up an interesting concept of "getting out of his own way" which involved him coming to terms with trusting others and cooperating with what was expected of him instead of looking for ways to "beat the system". What does "getting out of your own way" look like in your own situation?
5. Both Cameron and Rachel faced setbacks on their journey (which is not uncommon). What specific strategies can help you regain your footing when you feel like you may be struggling or starting to slide backward? How can others know when you may be losing your "grip"?



## Long-Term Vision and Finding Your Purpose

1. The change process involves more than just working on substance related issues. Long term recovery involves making life changes and achieving goals in other important life areas such as employment/education, family, mental health, etc. Both Cameron and Rachel were helped by employment goals, for example, as Cameron became a Project Manager and Rachel a Certified Recovery Coach. With this in mind, what are some life goals you are working on above and beyond just managing substance use?
2. What will your life look like when you are successfully climbing and making progress (or if you are successful now what is your life like)? If you were to be a guest on a video interview like this in the future, what are some things you would want to highlight in your own journey and personal successes?
3. What small actions are you taking today for building that life and what do you need to start doing even more of today and going forward?
4. Both Cameron and Rachel now use their journeys to inspire others as they both are involved with a peer recovery program. How can sharing your story contribute to your own healing?
5. If you needed to encourage someone just starting their journey, what would you say?

## Closing the Session

The climb out of the trench may feel overwhelming, but each step you take—no matter how small—brings you closer to the life you envision. As Cameron, Rachel and so many others who have not given up have shown, recovery is possible, and the view from the top is worth it. Stay committed, trust your support system, and remember: you are not alone in this journey. Together, we climb.