

**Four Circles Recovery Center
Horse Shoe, NC**

**Four Circles Introduces Adventure
Activities**

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Wilderness therapy and drug and alcohol treatment just got a little more interesting, thanks to Four Circles Recovery Center in North Carolina.

The innovative substance abuse treatment program for young adults recently introduced a series of adventure activities as a regular component of its wilderness-based recovery program. In addition to week-long wilderness expeditions and 12-step programming at base camp, clients at Four Circles will now enjoy rock climbing, fly fishing, and other adventure trips every six weeks. These trips are not only a fun recreational outlet for the young men and women in treatment, but also serve an important therapeutic purpose.

"Adventure activities like rock climbing and fly fishing give our clients more opportunities for peak experiences, which have proven to aid in recovery from drug or alcohol abuse," says Heather Schnoebelen, MA, LPC, the Clinical Director at Four Circles.

"We've achieved great success with our ropes course, sweat lodge, and solo experiences, so we decided to incorporate even more of these confidence- and skills-building experiences into treatment."

Both rock climbing and fly fishing are activities that help young adults in recovery stay mindful of the present moment rather than worrying about the things they did in the past, or what may happen in the future. Schnoebelen, who is an avid rock climber in her free time, finds that she is 100 percent present with herself, the rock, and what's going on around her while she's climbing.

The rock climbing and fly fishing outings are rich with metaphor, giving staff and therapists at Four Circles new opportunities to explore the issues underlying each client's substance abuse.

"When you're up on the side of a rock wall, looking at a 50-foot climb, it can bring out a person's fears, trust issues, and behavior patterns very quickly," explains Schnoebelen. "Some clients may express fears of failure or a lack of trust in their equipment, the staff, or the professional guides; others may refuse to climb at all. Whatever issues arise, these experiences have immense therapeutic value as we process the emotions and work to overcome the obstacles that have hindered their progress in the past."

Located near Asheville, North Carolina, Four Circles is an ideal place to enjoy adventure in the great outdoors. With multiple climbing areas within two hours of the Four Circles campus and a number of nearby streams and ponds, the adventure curriculum is an incredible way to connect with the natural world - a connection that is an obvious complement to a wilderness therapy program. Being in nature is meditative and relaxing.