

## A consistent place for recovery community

News By [James Steindler](#) Published Sep. 7, 2022

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*Daniel Benavent (left) with fellow board member Kim Reil. “As a mental health and substance use therapist, The Meeting Place is critical for my practice and clients,” said Reil. “It’s a gift to be able to send people to a single, reliable location for meetings, resources and fellowship. I’m grateful every day!” Photo by James Steindler*

Oftentimes, people may assume they have to fight their personal battles alone, but that doesn’t have to be the case. The Meeting Place (TMP) in Carbondale brings people together to confront addiction, in its many forms.

TMP was founded in 2010 and became a nonprofit in 2015. It’s been nestled on Cowen Drive, beneath the Mountain Temp Services office, since its inception.

Daniel Benavent has been with TMP since 2019 and is currently the chair of the board. He moved to the Valley from the Big Apple. “One of the things that brought me here is the robust recovery community,” he shared.

Before TMP came into the fold, many group meetings in the Valley would be held wherever and whenever affordable space was available — often in churches — where meetings might be squeezed in late at night or during the wee-hours of the morning.

“[TMP] came out of that desire to have a consistent, reliable place; and also to be able to house meetings that might be very small,” he explained, noting that to reserve space in a community building would often come with a fee that may not be practical for a group of three or four people.

Over the years, TMP has hosted a variety of meetings, from Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous to Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). However, “We’re not affiliated with AA, but just provide the space for them,” Benavent clarified.

“Even within the context of AA meetings, there’s a huge variety of meeting styles and formats,” he continued. “Some of which are great for 20-year-old kids at Jaywalker and some for senior citizens who have been sober since the ‘70s.”

TMP provides space for alternative group models as well, such as SMART (Self Management and Recovery Training) meetings — held on Sundays — or Refuge Recovery, which incorporates meditation and mindfulness.

People bring forth ideas for types of meetings and give them a whirl. Some end up with few attendees, but may be a model that works wonders for those few participants.

After a prolonged period with little participation, the Heroin Anonymous (HA) meetings are wrapping up. Reportedly, there are no HA meetings on the Western Slope. “There’s one in Denver and another in Colorado Springs, but there’s nothing west of that,” Benavent stated. He noted that methamphetamine and fentanyl use seems to be more prevalent in the region.

High Rockies Harm Reduction provides naran (an overdose reversal drug) for TMP to distribute, and the supply goes rather quickly. “The amount of people that take advantage of it is amazing to me,” Benavent said.

The pandemic prompted TMP to get hooked up to the cyber world which enabled it to have an even broader reach, and continue to be there for regular attendees when they couldn’t make it in-person.

“Sunday mornings we probably have 80 people in-person and then a whole other contingent joining us online to participate,” said Benavent. Furthermore, people can come in and use the internet to attend a virtual meeting sourced from anywhere in the world. There is a combination lock on the door so regulars can access the space 24/7 in support of their recovery needs.

## **Fundraiser**

TMP is in the midst of its third annual fundraiser which is scheduled to wrap up on Sept. 15. The goal is to raise \$10,000.

TMP's budget is about \$25,000 a year and "probably \$20,000 of it goes directly to rent," stated Benavent. The rest mostly goes toward maintenance of the space. TMP recently renewed its lease for three more years. "We plan to be around for a long time," he assured.

"We are run entirely by the board, some volunteers and the meetings themselves, so there's really no administrative overhead to what we do," he continued. "So, when people give to us, it's literally keeping the doors open."

For more information about TMP and its meetings, or to donate, visit [www.meetingplacecarbondale.org](http://www.meetingplacecarbondale.org)

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