

Cypress Lake Recovery Launches Wellbriety Trail, a One-of-a-Kind Healing Path Rooted in First American Tradition

This lakeside trail integrates 12-step recovery with Indigenous wisdom, offering clients a sacred space for reflection, community, and connection to the land.

WOODVILLE, TX, UNITED STATES, June 19, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Cypress Lake Recovery](#), a 30-bed residential addiction treatment center nestled on a 200-acre lakefront campus in the Piney Woods of East Texas, has launched a new Wellbriety Trail — a 3/4-mile nature path that weaves the 12 steps of recovery with the teachings and traditions of First American culture.

Located along the southeast corner of the property and following the west bank of the 16-acre lake, the trail features 12 stations — one for each step of the recovery journey. Each stop includes natural seating crafted from materials found on the property. Every sign bears the medicine wheel, a symbol of balance central to First American traditions. It is oriented to face one of the four cardinal directions, reflecting the significance of the number four in Indigenous culture — four seasons, four directions, and the balance of physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being.

"The Wellbriety Trail is an expression of something we believe deeply at Cypress Lake: that healing is not just clinical, it's connected," said Joani Burchett, Executive Director of Cypress Lake Recovery. "This trail gives our residents a quiet place to meet themselves where they are, surrounded by nature, grounded in the steps, and held by something much older and wiser than any of us."

The trail was designed and built by Chris Hill, CLR's Facilities Manager, who drew on his own First American heritage in its creation. His attention to the natural landscape is evident throughout



Step 2 represents Hope as you look across our 16-acre lake.

the trail — from the sacred circle at Stop 2 (representing Hope), where the group gathers for talking circles on a hilltop overlooking the property, to Stop 6 (representing Willingness) near the spillway, where water cascading over rocks creates a natural waterfall.

"Everything on this trail came from the land, and everything on it points back to the land," said Hill. "When you're standing at the spillway listening to the water, or sitting in the sacred circle looking out over the lake, you feel something shift. Recovery isn't just something that happens inside four walls."

The Wellbriety Trail is woven into CLR's programming. Residents participating in Wellbriety — one of four recovery pathways offered at CLR alongside 12-Step, and SMART Recovery — gather at the trail weekly for a guided group session that includes a walk, reflection at the sacred circle, and a talking circle. Clients also use the trail independently and with residential advisors, particularly during moments of struggle or as a daily meditative practice.

Smudge ceremonies using sage, cedar, and other earth medicines are also offered on the property, honoring the cleansing traditions of First American culture. Consistent with CLR's commitment to cultural sensitivity, these ceremonies are always optional and conducted with deep respect for the diversity of practices across different tribes and communities.

For Executive Director Joani Burchett, the trail carries personal significance. As a citizen of the Cherokee Nation, Burchett has found that reconnecting with her heritage has deepened her understanding of the healing work CLR does every day. She points to the values of balance, community, and connection to the natural world, as touchstones that have profoundly shaped both her leadership and CLR's care philosophy.

Looking ahead, CLR plans to expand Wellbriety programming to two group sessions per week and deepen the trail's clinical integration, allowing therapists to accompany clients on the path as part of individual treatment. The facility is committed to expanding culturally competent care that honors each client's background.

Cypress Lake Recovery is a 30-bed residential addiction treatment center located on a 200-acre lakefront campus in Woodville, Texas. CLR offers trauma-informed, evidence-based care for adults 18 and older, with a 3:1 staff-to-client ratio and multiple pathways to recovery, including



A beautiful place for meditation

12-Step, SMART Recovery, and Wellbriety. Experiential programming includes art therapy, music therapy, outdoor adventure therapy, kayaking, fishing, and the Wellbriety Trail. For more information, call 409-250-4307 or visit cypresslakerecovery.com.

Derek Gwaltney
T&R Recovery Group
[email us here](#)

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