

This article looks at how African American women live in cities in America, and how their lives are affected by poverty, racism, and sexism. Authors spoke to women who had lived in a recovery housing to understand more about their experiences. Four major themes came up during these interviews: knowledge about and awareness of addiction, importance of social support and support groups, peace of mind that resulted from a new lifestyle, and desire to maintain recovery. Many women did not realize before they started the program that the ways in which they used drugs meant that they had an addiction. Social support and support groups such as AA, NA, and AODA helped the women to stay in recovery, which helped them to feel less stress. Many women wanted to stay in recovery, not only for themselves but also their children. These themes are important to consider when we think about helping women and African Americans with recovery. Recovery services must shift from concentrating on serving men and treating illness to serving people more fairly and in a more organized way. To create social change in recovery, programs must think about the social and behavioral reasons why people use substances, including underlying structural inequalities that come from things like racism, sexism, and classism.