

Inspirations



There comes a time

by Tom B., SMART Recovery® Meeting Participant

Editor's Note: Due to extreme liver failure, Tom became part of the Cleveland Clinic liver transplant program. Very recently, he was fortunate to receive a new liver along with an opportunity to enjoy a new life. Tom has been attending SMART Recovery® meetings for almost two years. He plans to continue attending.

How to start? I really don't know when it all spun out of control for me. By the time I was 16, I was drinking and smoking pot every day. I tried almost every illicit drug under the sun; it was

the early '70s. Vietnam, Nixon, Kent State, Woodstock, and my old man.

My dad was a drill instructor in the Marine Corps during the Korean War. I'm often asked if I had served in the military. I always reply, "Hell yeah. I think 16 years of boot camp makes me a vet." We never really got along until I had my own kids; then somehow, magically, it all made sense. When my dad died (basically from drinking) we were the best of friends and I miss him terribly; now that I need him the most he's not here. I think about him every day. Sometimes I can feel his presence looking down on me.

As I look back at the train wreck that is my life, I am amazed that I am still alive. Yet, here I am trying to make sense of it all, and trying to make some good come out of it all. I can't change the past, but I can try to help others avoid the mistakes I made. I can also convey my extreme gratitude to the family and friends of the organ donor, as well as my family and friends who are my support group. I thank all of you, from the

bottom of my heart, for the second chance you've given me. I pledge to you all that I'll get it right this time.

Special thanks to the donor and family, my wife (why she is still with me I'll never know), all of the good folks at the Cleveland Clinic who saved my life: Dr. Robert O'Shea; Dr. C. Winans; Annette Humberson, LSW; Tracy

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The SMART Recovery® 4-Point Program®

The SMART Recovery® (Self-Management And Recovery Training) program helps individuals gain independence from addictive behavior.

Our efforts are based on scientific knowledge and evolve as scientific knowledge evolves.

The program offers specific tools and techniques for each of the program points:

- Point #1:** Building and Maintaining Motivation
- Point #2:** Coping with Urges
- Point #3:** Managing Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviors
- Point #4:** Living a Balanced Life

Stinnet, LSW; and all involved with my care. Last, but certainly not least, Rod Allwood and all of the participants of SMART Recovery® who have helped me on my quest for sobriety. So much of the battle is a matter of maintaining a positive attitude and acquiring the right tools.

Having said all of that, THERE COMES A TIME when one must face his/her demons . . . that time is come for me. It has been a long, difficult battle, one in which failure is not an option. The battle rages on. I WILL prevail!

COMES A TIME

Comes a time
when you're driftin'
Comes a time
when you settle down
Comes a light
feelin's liftin'
Lift that baby
right up off the ground.

Oh, this old world
keeps spinning round
It's a wonder tall trees
ain't layin' down
There comes a time.

Comes a Time was written by Neil Young and is the title song of his 1978 album of the same name. Singer Nicolette Larson, who died in 1997 of liver failure, sang harmony vocals on that album. In 2009, at Nashville's Ryman Theater, Young dedicated the song to Nicolette. He was accompanied by Pegi Young, Emmylou Harris, and a band of many.

Three years: no marching bands but lots of acceptance, balance, and peace

by John11, SMART Recovery® Online Facilitator

Yes, today marks the start of my fourth year. I did not wake to a marching band or balloons or even feeling any different. While I am still not static or not changing, the shifts these days are more along the lines of subtle reinforcements of the helpful strategies I have adopted. Some of these are:

- Accepting others for who they are and appreciating them for that.
- Relishing diversity.
- Enjoying the natural benefits and good times that come my way.
- Extreme highs and marching bands are no longer required.
- Not suffering the lows that accompany the false highs.
- I am a different person altogether if judged by my ability to accept the world and what it may chuck my way, as well as my frustration-tolerance level.
- My views on self-worth.
- Keeping my actions in line with my values and enjoying the peace that comes from that.

These are a few that come to mind. As I said, the drastic changes were made in the first year and these days are more about seeing how the new beliefs are working, and developing the emotional attachment to the ones that were adopted on a trial or intellectual basis.

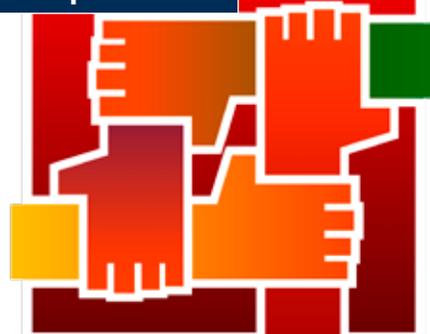
I expect some of you are thinking, "Blah, blah, blah, John. Are you telling us that there is nothing to look forward to after the first year or so?" NO! I am trying to say that life is more about

balance and honing the skills to cope in an appropriate manner.

Today, I am miles away from the mayhem of the past and have no desire to re-visit.

As always, wishing you all success with your goals.

People Power



Getting sober with just the Handbook, and other news from rural Colorado

by Jim Branscome, SMART Recovery® Facilitator, jbrnrx@hotmail.com

This Saturday will be the one-year anniversary of the Montrose, Colorado SMART Recovery® meeting. We dare guess it might be the largest rural SMART meeting and the only one on the remote western slope of Colorado.

We're at 6,000 feet in the San Juan Mountains; a 5-1/2 hour drive northeast to Denver and a 5-1/2 hour drive west to Salt Lake City, Utah.

So, a little update on what is happening with us:

Our meetings average 15 attendees during the summer; attendance has been as high as 23. A front-page story in the daily paper got us launched well, and the local drive-time radio does an interview with me once a month. Two people have

driven 45 miles to our meetings because they heard about us on the radio.

Two attendees completed SMART Recovery®'s facilitator training. We hope to get others certified so we can expand the meetings to other counties.

Demand for SMART Recovery® is growing. The probation chief for the region has asked if SMART could do a meeting for the newly launched teen drug court here. "Welcome Home Montrose," a project to attract disabled Iraq and Afghanistan war veterans to live here, has asked us to serve as their support program.

The criminal justice system, parole, probation, and jail work release, in addition to counselors and the regional mental health center, provide a lot of support. Doug Hanshaw, the drug court coordinator for our seven counties, and our SMART Recovery® Colorado regional representative, has been a big help with these organizations' involvement.

Doug and I serve on the treatment committee of the county-wide Coalition for a Drug-Free Montrose. It provides us with funds to give free or discounted Handbooks to those in the criminal justice system. The sheriff helps fund the coalition with jail fees, some of which also go to provide counseling and medication for offenders.

We have been very fortunate with supportive physicians. About a year before starting the SMART Recovery® meeting, I purchased 50 copies of *The Cure for Alcoholism*, a book about the Sinclair Method (using medication to interfere with the desire to drink), and distributed them to all the doctors and mental health counselors in the area. This eventually led to the creation of a Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) Program through the mental health community. A psychiatrist

who recently moved here from Maine is an expert in MAT. He developed a protocol that psychiatrists in our seven western counties now use. Physicians prescribe Naltrexone, Campral, and Suboxone, and keep SMART Recovery® brochures in their offices.

There may be good news coming on another front from community corrections. We send all those sentenced to this program to the Front Slope far away from the local community. Efforts to find a building here have been stymied for a few years by community opposition, but we may now have a building available on our justice center grounds that can accommodate up to 70 people. We won't have a detox center there initially. Our only detox centers are local jails or the emergency room.

This is solid AA country. Many AA and NA people regularly attend our meetings and give good word-of-mouth marketing for us. In addition, some progressive approaches to recovery are being tried here. The mountains attract exceptional professionals who make a lifestyle decision to be here. Frontline criminal justice professionals see that the old treatment system hasn't worked well and are open to new ideas. Also, Colorado state officials are open to trying new approaches that

have shown good results; however—no surprise—budget constraints are limiting what they can provide.

Success story times two

Tonight, a 66-year-old woman came to our meeting who I had not seen since last fall. She got sober in AA but had never been able to quit smoking, which was seriously affecting her health. She attended our meetings for a month or so. She reported tonight that she has not smoked since last September.

She was so impressed with SMART that she bought an extra Handbook and mailed it to her sister in Texas, who suffers from alcoholism, but as an atheist, had refused to have anything to do with AA. She read the Handbook and got sober in February. At five days into her recovery, she went into DTs, was hospitalized, and put on a medication that helps with with-



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drawal. She has not had a drink since. No meetings, only the Handbook.

What led me to SMART was that, even though I was 30-years sober in AA, I rarely saw anyone succeed.

Where Drinking Got Me

by Worfratdown, SMART Recovery® Message Board Participant

if i were a man, that could shed tears, i would but not just for, the years i spent *destroying all about me, that was good* creating hell and havoc disdain and chaos dismembering love, so to speak biting every hand that tried to feed me defecating on every heart that bled for me laughing in the face of love turning my back and walking away back to my lair of loneliness back to my Gollum-like despair back to my stench and unworthiness
but i would also shed tears because i have been given another chance



SMART Ideas

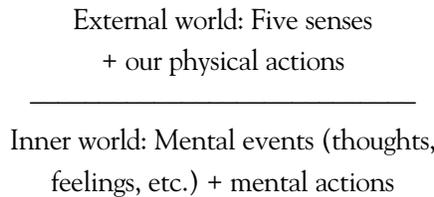
The Matrix (better than the movie)

by Hank Robb, PhD, ABPP

In this article, I describe a tool developed by Kevin Polk, PhD, and his colleague, Jerold Hambricht, PhD, at the Veteran's Hospital in Togus, Maine. The tool can help a person identify whether their thoughts, images, and

actions are moving them toward or away from what they choose to make important in their life.

The Matrix is formed by two lines that cross. The horizontal line divides the events of our inner world (thoughts, feelings, images, memories, etc.,) from the external world experienced through our five senses: touch, sight, smell, taste, and hearing. Along with our senses are physical actions we take in the external world. The actions we add to the mental events in our inner world can change a thought or an image. So the discrimination provided by the first line looks like this:



If you're having trouble understanding the difference, this might help: A person in one of Kevin's groups said he didn't understand the difference between the two. Kevin asked him to *imagine* what it would be like to lick the sole of his shoe. What would it feel like on his tongue? How would it smell and taste? What would the sole look like and what sound would his tongue make as it licked the sole of his shoe?

The participant formed that mental image and said he'd gotten a good sense of what it was like to "mentally" lick the sole of his shoe. Then Kevin invited him to *actually* take off his shoe, lick the sole, and report what the experience looked, smelled, sounded, tasted, and felt like. Even with his shoe still on his foot, the participant immediately understood the difference!

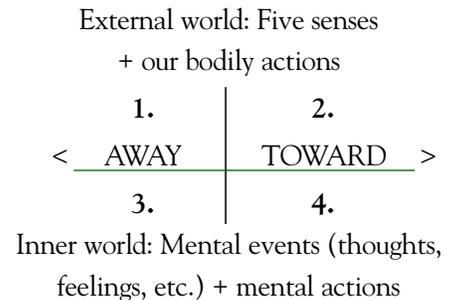
The vertical line divides actions that move you toward what you want to make important in your life from actions that move you away from what

you want to make important. The farther right from this line, the more toward what you would choose to make important. The farther to the left, the farther away you are from what you would choose to make important. This discrimination looks like this:



If you put the two lines together, you can plot whether any experience—internal or external—moves you toward or away from what you want to make important in your life.

Starting in the upper left section, number each of the four sections. This will help you identify if your actions were internal or external, and toward or away.



- Actions in section 1 are bodily actions that take you away from what's important (doing your addictive behavior)
- Actions in section 2 are bodily actions that take you toward what's important (spending time connecting, or trying to connect, with family)
- Actions in section 3 are mental events that take you away from what's important (indulging the thought, "It won't hurt if I just bet on one horse race.")
- Actions in section 4 are mental events that move you toward what's important (feeling sorrow / regret about not keeping important promise)

"Where am I in all this?" you might ask. You are right where the two lines meet.

You had the thought, you took the action, you felt the feeling, you said the words.

The Matrix doesn't really tell you what's "right or wrong." Instead it helps orient anyone who uses it to the difference between what's going on inside or outside their skin, and whether that is moving them toward or away from what they want to make important in life. So, feeling angry with your mate or boss or a family member is most likely to be in section 3. On the other hand, if you have been not noticing your feelings, then recognizing that you are, indeed, angry, might be in section 4 because once you recognize a feeling, you have a better opportunity to choose how you act even while you are feeling that way.

Some actions end up in more than one section. Say you'd like to move toward friendship with someone and they ask you to go drinking. If you say "yes," it may move you toward friendship with that person but away from the relationship you'd like to have with your family or your work.

Now comes the importance of Point 4 in SMART Recovery®, Living a Balanced Life. How are you going to balance your life? To move toward family and work, you have to say "no" to this action that would move you toward friendship with this particular individual. What you make most important is up to you. No one else is making the choice. This Matrix approach can help make your choices clearer.

One thing you may soon notice when working with the Matrix is that what you do with your hands, arms, feet, and mouth are a lot more "controllable" than thoughts, feelings, memories—anything in sections 3 and 4. The good news is that even if you are thinking of or feeling like engaging in your addictive behavior (likely section 3), you can still pick what

you do with your hands, arms, feet, and mouth and move toward what you want to make important, section 2.

As they say, "The proof of the pudding is in the eating." So, actually give the Matrix a try, either as part of a meeting or on your own, and see if it proves useful or not!

The science behind donating time and money

by Jilana, June 2012 Distance Training Graduate

As a psychology major, I approach the question, "Why donate?" from a scientific viewpoint: What does research tell us about how to encourage donor behavior? I found this information:

The most frequently reported motivations for making donations are:

- feeling compassion for those in need (90 percent),
- wanting to help a cause in which the donor personally believes (86 percent), and
- wanting to contribute to the community (80 percent).

People who donate also give when an organization has benefitted them (62 percent).

So, given this information, I want to remind participants of the power of SMART Recovery® as an international organization that provides support and meetings in more than 10 countries. For every person who participates in SMART, there are two-sided benefits of their attendance: SMART's tools and concepts help them, and their personal experiences and contributions to the meetings help others.

SMART is only able to do what it does because of contributions of time and money. Anyone who is able to give

some money and take a brochure to pass along furthers SMART's outreach and mission. Comparing a donation of time and money to the cost of a drink is compelling; it's easy for people to do that sort of mental comparison (think of a cost benefit analysis): 1.5 hours and a few bucks spent in a bar vs. at a SMART meeting.

Idaho: moving SMART forward in the community

by John Nickerson, *Raftmaster_48@msn.com*

Hello from beautiful downtown Boise, Idaho. Fifteen years ago, I sobered up using Rational Recovery and a couple of year ago started meetings in the prison system. About a year ago, I changed the program over to SMART Recovery®. I have been spreading the program around as much as I can.

Things here in Idaho are really taking off. On invitation, I presented SMART Recovery® to the Coalition for a Drug Free Idaho in June and they seemed very impressed. They asked me to join the coalition and to sit on the board for a "tweet/text-a-thon."

Last month, the coalition wrote a public service announcement to raise awareness about Recovery Month in September. The PSA will air on KQFC radio throughout September. Our intention is to spread the message that:

- behavioral health is essential to overall health
- prevention works
- treatment is effective, and people can and do recover.

The coalition will refer calls to me that result from the PSA. If you want to hear the PSA, please e-mail me.

Don't miss out on ongoing training and support events!

All times are Eastern Time.

DATE	TIME	PRESENTER	TOPIC
2012			
Saturday, October 6	3 PM	Rod Allwood	Conflict Resolution
Monday, October 8	8 PM	Horvath/Bandita	Fresh Start
Saturday October 27	3 PM	Horvath/Saarela/Hammer	Advanced Facilitator & Volunteer Training
Saturday, November 3	All Day	Multi	FALL FUNDRAISER
Monday November 12	8 PM	Horvath/Bandita	Fresh Start
Saturday December 1	3 PM	Henry Steinberger	ABCs
Monday December 10	8 PM	Horvath/Bandita	Fresh Start
Saturday December 8	3 PM	Horvath/Saarela/Hammer	Advanced Facilitator & Volunteer Training
2013			
Tuesday, January 1	All Day	Multi	NEW YEAR'S FUNDRAISER
Saturday January 5	3 PM	Shari Allwood	Worst Case Scenario Role Play
Monday January 14	8 PM	Horvath/Bandita	Fresh Start
Saturday January 26	3 PM	Horvath/Saarela/Hammer	Advanced Facilitator & Volunteer Training
Saturday February 2	3 PM	Charlie	OARS
Monday February 11	8 PM	Horvath/Bandita	Fresh Start
Saturday February 23	3 PM	Horvath/Saarela/Hammer	Advanced Facilitator & Volunteer Training
Saturday March 2	3 PM	Richard	Goals and Values
Monday March 11	8 PM	Horvath/Bandita	Fresh Start
Saturday March 30	3 PM	Horvath/Saarela/Hammer	Advanced Facilitator & Volunteer Training
Saturday April 6	3 PM	David Saenz/Hammer	Neural Pathways
Monday April 8	8 PM	Horvath/Bandita	Fresh Start
Saturday April 27	3 PM	Horvath/Saarela/Hammer	Advanced Facilitator & Volunteer Training
Saturday May 4	3 PM	Richard	Message Board Tips and Tricks
Monday May 13	8 PM	Horvath/Bandita	Fresh Start
Saturday May 18	3 PM	Horvath/Saarela/Hammer	Advanced Facilitator & Volunteer Training
Saturday June 8	3 PM	Hammer/GJBXVI	How to Ask the Hard Questions
Monday June 10	8 PM	Horvath/Bandita	Fresh Start
Saturday June 29	3 PM	Horvath/Saarela/Hammer	Advanced Facilitator & Volunteer Training
Thursday, July 4	All Day	Multi	INDEPENDENCE DAY FUNDRAISER
Monday July 8	8 PM	Horvath/Bandita	Fresh Start
Saturday July 27	3 PM	Horvath/Saarela/Hammer	Advanced Facilitator & Volunteer Training
Saturday August 3	3 PM	Joe Gerstein	Hierarchy of Values/DISARM
Monday August 12	8 PM	Horvath/Bandita	Fresh Start
Saturday August 31	3 PM	Horvath/Saarela/Hammer	Advanced Facilitator & Volunteer Training

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SMART Recovery® Online: the funnest FUNdraiser ever

by Jonathan von Breton, Director, SMART Recovery® Online

Here it is, fall again. That means it's time for the funnest SROL event of the year. That's right. It's time for the annual FUNdraiser! This will be our 14th anniversary!

SMART Recovery® Online (SROL), started 14 years ago November. No one knows for sure when the message board first went up. The best guess was sometime in summer 1998. We held the first online meeting on October 16, 1998. Message board traffic started to pick up around that time too. There were originally six people!

This year's celebration will be Saturday, November 3. There will be our traditional auction. Items you can bid on include one-of-a-kind craft items made and donated by our many talented participants. There also will be many autographed books. The ever-popular

Watch for our new discussion in
The Art of Living Series
with
Ed Garcia, CSW

Faith and Reason: Adversaries or Partners?

Coming in October!

Visit Ed's prior *Art of Living Series* recordings and other guest speakers on our podcast page: smartrecovery.libsyn.com/



Ed Garcia

The Art of Living

"Mr. Hammer's Woot Box" will be on the auction block. You can bid on cat toys and even on products honoring bacon. There will be many items from the land down under donated by SMART Recovery AU®. There will even be a CD of recovery songs recorded by one of SROL's participants. You can find the whole slideshow of auction items at <http://goo.gl/y1hj0>.

Along with the auction, we have a thrilling line-up of speakers in the online SMART Recovery® voice meeting room.

All times are Eastern Time:

10 a.m. Dr. Henry Steinberger, Six Deep Slow Breaths: Using Mindfulness as an Anchor for Accepting Negative Emotions, Thoughts, Urges and Cravings

Dr. Steinberger is a licensed psychologist and a clinical supervisor in REBT. He is one of the original people involved in the founding of SMART Recovery® and has actively supported SMART from the beginning. In addition to REBT, Henry is greatly interested in ACT and mindfulness. He is the author of the second edition SMART Recovery® Handbook available in our bookstore.

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11 a.m. Dr. Michael Edelstein, *Three Minute Therapy*

Dr. Edelstein is a licensed psychologist and a clinical supervisor in REBT. He is one of the original people involved in the founding of SMART Recovery® and has actively supported SMART from the beginning. Mike is the author of the bestselling book, *Three Minute Therapy*. An autographed copy of his book will be up for auction!

1 p.m. Dr. Bill Knaus, *Addiction and Depression*

Dr. Knaus is a licensed clinical psychologist and former psychology professor. He completed training at The Institute for Advanced Study in Rational Emotive Psychotherapy. Bill then became one of the original directors of post-doctoral training in rational emotive behavioral therapy. He wrote one of the original SMART Recovery® self-help books, *Primer for Quitting Alcohol*. Bill wrote the first self-help books on procrastination. *Overcoming Procrastination* was the first procrastination self-help book and he co-authored it with Albert Ellis. Dr. Knaus has been actively involved with SMART Recovery® since its inception. His latest book is *The Cognitive Behavioral Workbook for Depression* (Second Edition). An autographed copy is available at the auction!

2 p.m. Dr. Robert Meyers, *Community Reinforcement Approach and Family Training (CRAFT)*

Dr. Meyers is an internationally known speaker and trainer who has delivered trainings throughout the United States and in 12 countries. Bob has trained therapists from six of the world's seven continents. He has published more than 100 scientific articles or chapters, and co-authored five books and one manual on addiction treatment, including *Get Your Loved One Sober: Alternatives to Nagging, Pleading and Threatening* and *Motivating Substance Abusers to Enter Treatment: Working with Family Members*.

The CRAFT approach that Bob developed is a major component of SMART's Family & Friends meetings. We'll auction off an autographed copy of *Get Your Loved One Sober!*

3 p.m. Dr. Hank Robb, *The Matrix— a tool to help notice when you are moving toward what you want to make important in life and when you are moving away from it*

Dr. Robb has a PhD in counseling psychology. He is an REBT supervisor for the Albert Ellis Institute and an editorial board member of the *Journal of*

Rational-Emotive and Cognitive-Behavior Therapy. Hank holds a Certificate of Proficiency in the treatment of alcohol and other psychoactive substance use disorders from the American Psychological Association's College of Professional Psychology. Hank was a founding board member of SMART Recovery®.

5 p.m. Dr. Tom Horvath, *How could I explain my addictive behavior to others?*

Dr. Horvath, psychologist, is founder and president of Practical Recovery, a self-empowering addiction treatment system in San Diego. He has been president of SMART Recovery® for more than a decade. He is the author of *Sex, Drugs, Gambling & Chocolate: A Workbook for Overcoming Addictions*. An autographed copy will be available at the auction!

6 p.m. Jonathan von Breton, LCMHC, LCDP, *Ask the Expert*

I'm a licensed mental health counselor and a licensed chemical dependency professional. I'm also a supervisor in REBT. I have a lot of exper-

SMART Recovery® Program Tools & Techniques

SMART's 4-Point Program® uses many tools and techniques that may help you gain independence from addictive behavior.

These tools include:

- Change Plan Worksheet
- Cost/Benefit Analysis
- ABCs of REBT (Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy) for Urge Coping
- ABCs of REBT for Emotional Upsets
- DISARM (**D**estructive **I**mages **S**elf-talk **A**wareness and **R**efusal **M**ethod)
- Brainstorming
- Role-playing and Rehearsing
- Hierarchy of Values

We encourage you to learn how to use each tool and to practice the tools and techniques to help you progress toward Point 4: Living a Balanced Life.

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rience using REBT in my personal and professional life. Like the other presenters, I've been involved with SMART Recovery® from the beginning, and I've been the director of SROL since January 2006. Unlike the others, however, I haven't written any books, but I am a voracious reader!

U.S. court outreach update

by Dolores Cloward (Dee), SMART Recovery® Court Outreach Team

I am excited to announce that we have a simple new system to identify and send introductory SMART Recovery® e-mails to courts in the United States.

Some of the goals of this effort are to:

- increase the court system's awareness of SMART Recovery®, thereby increasing SMART's presence in the court systems,
- increase local meeting attendance by partnering with the courts, and
- make information about SMART readily available to judges, lawmakers, and grass-roots advocates such as probation officers using flyers, brochures, local meeting information, etc.

We believe SMART Recovery® has a natural alliance with the courts in its evidence-based, religion-neutral approach. We have been working to build a structure that will support nationwide outreach starting with the court systems. We put this into place as a pilot program, and I hope to see it grow into something that will allow us to easily distribute information to the courts of which they may not be aware. In addition, the pilot will provide us with data and insight on the reach and openness of the courts in accepting SMART for mandated types of treatment that we can use to better inform and target our outreach efforts.

I think we can accomplish much if we approach efforts like this slowly and systematically so that they can grow into rich sources of information, and provide practical communication and timely help for our incredible facilitators.

We are grateful for the advice and support of Executive Director Shari Allwood; Board of Directors Secretary Joe Gerstein; Claire Saenz, board member and attorney; SMART Recovery® President Tom Horvath; and my fellow volunteer, IPlowman, also a dedicated message board volunteer.

Please contact us by e-mail at smartcourtsus@gmail.com, to find out more about our outreach efforts, or if you can donate time to help us. We need research and clerical help!



President's Letter

Handling facilitator slips and relapses

The following guidelines refer to face-to-face meetings. Online facilitators have different guidelines. For the purposes of this article, a slip is a small relapse and a relapse is a big slip. For slips, the timeframe is usually hours to days; for a relapse, weeks to months. The magnitude of the problems that occur during the return to using also influence which term might be used. Major problems in a short timeframe might better be termed a relapse.

A fundamental requirement of all facilitators is not attempting to facilitate a meeting while under the influence of

substances. Violating this requirement normally results in someone being removed from the facilitator role. Unfortunately, in a locality where there is only one meeting, and no one to take over the meeting, such a removal means no more meeting in that locality.

Otherwise, there is no firm policy about how to respond to slips and relapses. The general guideline, of course, is that we want facilitators without addiction problems. If they are in recovery, that means we want them to be abstinent. If they have never needed recovery then we also want them not to misuse substances or activities. Slips and relapses are handled on a situation-by-situation basis. Situations can be quite different. The three areas of concern are the meeting and its participants, the facilitator, and responding in a balanced manner to be responsible and maintain the reputation of SMART Recovery®.

With respect to the meeting and its participants

To what extent have the meeting or meetings been affected?

With respect to the facilitator

- How substantial is the slip or relapse?
- How long has it lasted?
- Did the facilitator self-report (to the central office or their regional coordinator) that using has resumed? (an e-mail or phone call is sufficient)
- Is the using ongoing or (apparently) over?

With respect to acting responsibly as an organization

- Are we balancing concern for meetings, the facilitator, and the organization?
- Are we enforcing standards while also being compassionate?
- Are we insisting on truthfulness while not over-reacting to what we learn?

- In any situation we want to act in a manner that protects participants, but also supports the facilitator to get back on track. People can slip or relapse in any approach to recovery. We should not be shocked that even facilitators slip or relapse on occasion.

Efforts to balance guidelines and compassion have resulted in these kinds of actions

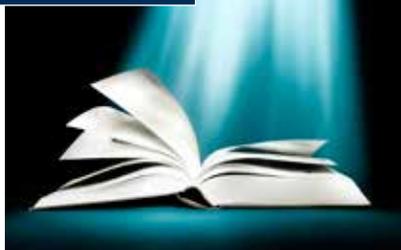
1. The facilitator steps down for a period and attends meetings in other locations, including online, to get back on track. There is a monthly online support meeting just for facilitators, which I facilitate. All facilitators, even those not struggling with recovery maintenance, are welcome.
2. The facilitator is not reporting the relapse, but it becomes apparent to other volunteers, who report the situation to the central office. Either Shari Allwood or I get in touch with the facilitator for a discussion. The results of this discussion can range from the previous option, to removal as a facilitator.
3. The facilitator continues to abstain from the drug of choice (e.g., cocaine) but has now developed a new problem (e.g., alcohol). The situation might be handled as described in #2.
4. The facilitator makes comments in the meeting to suggest that they are using between meetings. Although our facilitators are not expected to be perfect, this kind of comment suggests a serious lack of judgment, because participants will naturally look to the facilitator as an example of how to recover. Because participants may be dramatically misled about how SMART Recovery® might

help, this situation usually results in temporary or permanent removal from the meeting.

Some of the most difficult challenges that Executive Director Shari Allwood, regional coordinators, local leaders, and I face are addressing these situations. Fortunately, other volunteers familiar with a particular situation have often been invaluable in suggesting actions that balance enforcing guidelines and being compassionate. These situations will not go away. However, we will continue to endeavor to provide a balanced response to each situation.

Tom Howath

Book Review



Warning: this book may be habit forming

The Power of Habit:

Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business

by Charles Duhigg

Reviewed by Rich Dowling, MA, LPC, MAC, SMART Recovery® Volunteer Advisor and founder-owner of The Thought Exchange: Center for Personal Achievement

“Habits can be changed if we understand how they work,” so writes Charles Duhigg, author of *The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business* (Random House, 2012).

Even though I have considerable personal and professional experience

addressing habits, I realized how much I did not know about habits after reading this book. The author presents his case for the power of habits with examples of habit change, including the experience of a depressed, lonely, cigarette-smoking individual who creates a healthier, happier, more satisfying life for herself by initially focusing on one issue—smoking. Duhigg identifies this habit as “The Keystone Habit.” He also describes the change in habits of a culture that encouraged a behavioral shift from one of violence to peace.

The author presents the main body of the book in three parts. “The Habits of Individuals,” introduces the reader to what he calls “The Habit Loop”: Cue-Routine-Reward. It’s a rather simple description of habit development and change process, applicable to habits in general. Think circle here; first an individual is attracted to a particular idea, acts on it, experiences a reward, responds again to the cue, repeats the behavior, experiences the reward, continues to repeat the cycle until they begin to crave the reward and a habit is born, for better or for worse, good habit vs. bad habit. The examples he presents demonstrate how “habituated” humans are, explaining this can be a very good thing and how we can be encouraged to develop good habits, such as using a product like toothpaste to clean our teeth, or change the losing habits of football team to winning habits. In chapter 2, “The Craving Brain,” scientific research with rats, monkeys, and human beings supports, in rather dramatic and compelling ways, “The Habit Loop” and its effectiveness in creating and changing habits.

The good news is, the author states: “Habits aren’t destiny; they can be ignored, changed or replaced.” Key to this transformation from negative to positive habit is “The Golden Rule of Habit Change,” as using the same cue,

providing the same reward, but changing the routine. For example, Duhigg offers the example of an addict seeking relief from emotional distress (cue) exchanging their consumption of alcohol (routine) for attending AA meetings, therapy, or other “alternate routines.”

To individuals familiar with SMART Recovery®, some of what the author offers may sound like he is preaching to the choir, but it becomes clear Duhigg offers additional information that can be useful in understanding habits in general.

In part two, “The Habits of Successful Organizations,” and part three, “The Habits of Societies,” the author takes habit to a whole different level. He explains, through the principles of The Habit Loop and The Keystone Habit, how Alcoa Aluminum became a profitable company and how the civil rights movement succeeded.

In the final chapter, “The Neurology of Free Will” he shows that humans do have a choice when it comes to developing habits and gaining independence from them. In addition, we learn how corporations market to individuals by tracking their habits. Duhigg describes how one woman went from being a bored housewife and mother to compulsive gambler with the casino industry encouraging her by tracking her gambling habits.

Large retail companies, such as Target, use the same techniques, he writes. Have you ever received an e-mail from a store advertising specific merchandise in which you’re interested? While you may have thought it was coincidence, Duhigg points out that retailers track your buying habits with such tenacity they can predict when a woman is likely pregnant and target her with ads for baby

items. He illustrates this with an example of a 16-year-old girl. When her father saw ads for the baby items his daughter was getting, he confronted the store manager asking if they were encouraging teen girls to become pregnant, stating emphatically that would not happen to his daughter. The manager apologized for sending the ads. A short while later, the father apologized to the store manager when he learned his daughter was in fact pregnant.

In conclusion, I offer one final quote from *The Power of Habit*: “Transforming a habit isn’t necessarily easy or quick. It isn’t always simple but it is possible. And now we understand how.” I have to agree; I now have a better understanding of habits. And, if you choose to read or listen to *The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business*, there is a good chance you will too.

The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business is available as an eBook, in hardcover and paperback, and on audio.

The Wisdom to Know the Difference: An Acceptance & Commitment Therapy Workbook for Overcoming Substance Abuse

by Kelly Wilson, PhD, and Troy Dufrene.

Reviewed by Don Sheeley, MD, SMART Recovery® Facilitator, Saratoga Springs, New York

Learning about Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) this summer, and using this workbook in particular, helped me deepen my recovery and broaden the foundation of safety and health that I am looking for in sobriety. In *The Wisdom to Know the Difference: An Acceptance & Commitment Therapy Workbook for Overcoming Substance Abuse* (New Harbinger Publications, Inc., 2012), Kelly Wilson opens himself up to the

reader using his own experiences as engaging illustrations of the pain of addiction, but also as opportunities for personal growth.

After the first chapter, which helps the reader consider whether abstinence will be their goal, Wilson uses the next six chapters to explore ACT (pronounced as a word), emphasizing the dynamic behavior called for by this model.

The chapter goals are, in my words: being able to choose to be still in the present moment rather than reacting to life in our patterns and automatic behaviors; learning to be more psychologically flexible, rather than rigid, predetermined, or stuck; beginning to identify the permanent “You,” able to accept the emotions that create richness in life. The authors remind us why it’s important to learn to not take our “self-stories” too seriously. Self-stories include our self-talk, self-image, and our internal beliefs. The book prompts us to be the authors of our lives rather than passive readers, and to travel our values highway, getting back on without hesitation if we veer off.

Even though the title of the book is a line from the *Serenity Prayer*, adopted by 12-step programs, the book works well with SMART Recovery® concepts. The first chapter on whether to choose an abstinent path correlates well with our Cost Benefit Analysis. The authors cite examples that show how most people who tried moderation did not continue to moderate. They either stopped entirely or moved into the heavy-drinking category. Kelly makes some good points about things I see in my face-to-face group, such as a lapse after someone has used an alternate drug that was not their drug of choice. The authors note that automatic behaviors are inhibited less under such circumstances.

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The chapter on being in the moment introduces both cognitive and behavioral ways to learn how to be present in life. The authors ask us to reconsider our ruminations about our past, and our worries about the future as preoccupations that we may have habitually used to avoid the “Now” of our lives. They also suggest practicing six breaths, slow and deep, to return to your life in this moment.

In the chapter on psychological flexibility, Wilson and DuFrene uncover some of our self-labeling traps, such as the myth of self-esteeming. They write, “. . . psychological flexibility. This is a fancy phrase that basically means the ability to do whatever you choose to do, whenever you choose to do it, without being limited in your choices by what’s going on in your head.” This is an extraordinarily powerful, dynamic statement, implying that we will be mindful enough to distance ourselves from our thoughts and realize our thoughts and feelings are not us, but just things that come and go in us. I know that sounds obvious to SMARTies, but in my face-to-face group and in SMART Recovery® chat rooms, participants commonly describe getting caught in a squirrel-cage of thoughts about their drug of choice, and that they cannot get out. “I can’t stop these urges,” “I am anxious all day,” are common statements from people who suffer from addictive behavior. ACT calls this melding of oneself with one’s thoughts and feelings “fusion.” One goal of ACT is “defusion,” or separating oneself from the thought and stepping back from the feeling. In this vein, it is healthier and ACT-consistent to say, “I am experiencing anxiety,” rather than “I am anxious.” Defusion is an important skill and useful in recovery.

Wilson and DuFrene ask readers to begin to practice looking at themselves and their world in new ways, from different points of view, to be flexible enough to pursue personal goals and values with the vigor that will increase life’s breadth and depth. They introduce some interesting exercises, such as imagining a photo of yourself as a youngster, and imagining yourself in that youngster, then writing a letter of compassion to your younger self, who really still lives inside you.

With recovery comes the opportunity to experience a broad range of emotions. The chapter on acceptance helps the reader work on increasing their ability to allow good, sad, and painful things to exist in their life without trying to avoid or expel them.

The sixth point is, in my words, driving on your values highway: Actively steering your life along in the direction you have thoughtfully chosen, according to your Hierarchy of Values. A major point here is, if you get off for any reason—a lapse, for example—don’t torture yourself with judgmental statements. Drive to the next on ramp and get back on your values highway. ACT’s point is that you will best live your life if you are psychologically flexible and exert your dynamic energy in the direction you have chosen. This chapter is much more powerful after doing the prior exercises because they will loosen and focus your thinking energies.

ACT and this workbook are helping me gain a much stronger sense of freedom in recovery, a sense that I can deal with my mind and have a lot of influence over my future. ACT overlays modern science on much older systems

such as Buddhism’s concepts of self and one’s path.

Obviously, the title reminds one of 12-step programs. Out of 170 pages, 30 are devoted to the 12-step process, and how ACT and 12-step can be related. In my opinion, this was unnecessary, especially because ACT emphasizes how much influence we can exert over our lives. However, I was around 12-step long enough to learn to take what I can use and leave the rest, and that’s what I did.

The Wisdom to Know the Difference: An Acceptance & Commitment Therapy Workbook for Overcoming Substance Abuse is available as an eBook and in paperback.



International Development

SMART Recovery AU®

SMART Recovery® and the indigenous community

Josette met with Owen Craigie, a former National Rugby League (NRL) player, who we trained at Mission Australia to discuss ways to get SMART Recovery® groups running in Indigenous Services in NSW. Mission Australia is a community-service organization that has been transforming the lives of Australians in need for more than 150 years. Today, we provide more than 550 community and employment services that help more than 300,000 Australians a year.

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Owen works for the Mission Australia Gambling Program in Newcastle and is happy to work with us on marketing SMART Recovery® to other aboriginal services and communities. Owen adopted SMART into Gambling Services by offering a weekly SMART meeting. He also plans to take SMART to other aboriginal communities in NSW where there are few services. Josette is also working with the NRL to see how SMART can partner with it to offer groups for players having problems with addiction.

Conferences and presentations

National Indigenous Drug & Alcohol Committee (NIDAC): Josette and Indigenous Consultant Cathy Cooper presented on what has worked and not worked in the implementation of indigenous SMART Recovery® groups in New South Wales in June. As the leading voice in indigenous alcohol and other drug policy, NIDAC aims to reduce alcohol and drug problems in indigenous communities nationally.

Australian Therapeutic Communities Association: Josette attended the ATCA Conference in August in Tasmania. ATCA advances the therapeutic community model in Australasia through advocacy, research, capacity building, and networking. The theme of the conference was “Stigma and Other Barriers to Treatment,” which addressed the social psychological and physical barriers to treatment for many people. Josette’s presentation was on the barriers and stigmas ex-inmates face by attending SMART Recovery® meetings, and in reintegrating and transitioning back into communities.

Recent and upcoming facilitator training

- Nowra, NSW- South Coast Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation, August
- Narrabri, NSW-Narrabri Family Crisis Centre & Centacare New England North West, August
- In-house, September, October, November, and December
- Corowa, NSW-Drug and Alcohol, HealthOne, October
- Melbourne Victoria-Turning Point, Moreland Hall, October

New SMART groups formed in 2012

- NSW Batemans Bay
- NSW Griffith
- NSW Broadmeadow
- NSW Fairfield
- NSW Mona Vale
- NSW Camperdown
- NSW Nowra
- NSW Nowra (aboriginal group)
- NSW Newcastle West-Aboriginal Yarn Circle
- NSW Newcastle West
- NSW Lismore
- NSW Weston (teens)
- NSW Nambucca Heads
- NSW Parramatta (closed group)
- NSW Maitland (youth)
- NSW Ballina
- NSW Wagga
- NSW Orange
- Qld Kirra
- Qld Hervey Bay
- Qld Maryborough
- ACT Phillip
- ACT Garran
- ACT Oakes Estate
- VIC Pakenham

Total: 25 new groups

Teen/youth groups

- **Youth Off The Street (YOTS)** will keep running a teen/youth SMART meeting after the pilot project is completed. The plan is to run another pilot later this year.
- **Oasis** started a six-week pilot in August.
- **Twenty10** started a six-week pilot in August that Richard co-facilitates. If successful, Twenty10 will run an ongoing meeting.
- **Centre for Addiction Medicine,** Nepean Hospital, has been running a SMART meeting since June.
- **High Street Youth Centre,** Harris Park, is holding SMART meetings through mid September.
- **Holyoake.** We are in discussions with them about running a teen/youth group.
- **Juvenile Justice.** The volunteer facilitator pulled out for personal reasons so we’re looking for a replacement.
- **Headspace.** We are in discussions with them about starting a pilot meeting.

Each pilot group will measure participants’ behavioral changes while attending SMART meetings. We’ll also measure their understanding of SMART’s principles and tools.

Evaluation grant

SMART Recovery AU® received a \$5,000 grant under the Community Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Research Seeding Grants Program. The grant will fund the study of SMART participants’ understanding and use of cognitive behavioral strategies to help facilitate their recovery. The study also will be used to describe SMART

meeting client populations and predictors of client engagement in SMART meetings.

Alberta update: SMART Recovery® going where it's never gone before

by Curtis Boudreau, SMART Recovery Alberta®, Canada

Hello to all of my fellow SMARTies around the world.

It's been six months since we've checked in and a whole lot of great things are happening up here. New meetings are springing up in provinces that have never had face-to-face SMART Recovery® meetings—Saskatchewan and New Brunswick. Ontario and Alberta provinces continue to expand and create meetings.

I had a big dream when I was in my first year of recovery. I was attending my first SMART meetings and thought, "What a wonderful program. Wouldn't it be cool if we had a SMART office here in Alberta, and I was able to help out people battling addiction for a living?" As I entered my second year of recovery, I started running SMART meetings in Calgary, and began knocking on doors to expand the awareness of SMART to our recovery community. It was tough going early on, but I persevered and kept my nose to the grindstone, and we have grown continuously over the past six years.

My psychologist, Dr. Jon Amundson, is an authority on addiction in Alberta, and has been a big supporter of my goals and our program. Near the middle of 2011, I went in for my scheduled appointment, and he gave me a high five, and said, "Congratulations, I just came back from a seminar/convention for Western Canada's psychological community, and they were talking about you and the SMART Recovery® program!"

Our meetings are attracting anywhere from three to eight newcomers per meeting. While this is great, what is better is that the professional community and our provincial parole system direct about 70 percent of our newcomers to our meetings. Early on, most of the newcomers were a direct result of my presentations at various centres in Calgary.

At our downtown location we continue to run four meetings a week. The Berkana House, which is a halfway house for women, hosts a well-attended SMART Recovery® meeting every week. There also is a monthly meeting hosted at a correctional centre in Calgary. On hold is a weekly meeting to be hosted at the Bedford House, which is a halfway house for men.

I'll wrap up with the best news yet. At the end of August, I am proud to let everyone know that the paperwork is done, and the application has been submitted to

have SMART Recovery Alberta® become a registered charity in Canada! The process will take a few months for the charitable organization status, but the incorporation should be finalized no later than the beginning of October.

I am now into my eighth year of recovery, and my dream from day one is coming true! SMART Recovery® continues to be the foundation for my recovery, and I am proud to be 87 months clean. I'm counting the months until 120, which is 10 years. Then I'll move to years. So, I'm well past two-thirds of the way to my next medium-term goal. What is amazing is that the days started to fly by, then the weeks, and now even the months just seem to fly by.

I just love selling hope to those who are beginning their recovery process, and smiling for a living isn't too bad either. Recovery isn't always a bed of roses, but thanks to SMART Recovery®, the good days far outweigh the "learning days."

Articles are welcome!

If you have a story or information you would like to see published in *News & Views*, please submit it to Rosemary Almond, Editor, rosemaryalmond@gmail.com. Unsolicited material is most welcome!

"Life itself is the only proper binge."

—Julia Child

SMART Recovery® relies on volunteer labor and donations. Please be generous with your time and money!

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