

# **Top 5 SMART Tools to Integrate into Peer-Based Recovery Supports**

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# About Me

- in and out of hospitals for 16 years for severe mental illnesses
  - diagnosed with Autism, Schizophrenia, Bipolar disorder and PTSD
- graduated with a Masters degree in Biomedical Engineering in 2013
- currently volunteer for 15+ organizations and work part time
  - volunteer as a peer intern for Prevention Links (over 3 years)
  - SMART facilitator for over 2 years
  - worked as a SMART Successful Life Skills facilitator in 2025

# Objectives

- name 3-5 SMART tools and understand how to integrate the tools into both group and individual (one on one) settings
- think of more ways to incorporate these tools into one-on-one sessions and group sessions
- learn different methods, especially discussion questions, to help facilitate better discussions in 4 Point meetings

# How I conduct my SMART meetings

- DISCUSSION, DISCUSSION, DISCUSSION

  - 3 ways to participate in the discussion

- not only about fellowship, but also about understanding others and the tools

- "I can teach you all the tools, but YOU need to implement them"

- USE AVAILABLE RESOURCES!!!!

What is your favorite method to use in your group meetings?

# Motivational Interviewing (specifically with peers)

## **-OARS**

- Open questions, affirmations, reflective listening, and summary reflections
- using open ended questions is necessary in group/peer settings
- used more in one on one meetings but still use often in group meetings

# Empathy Map

- important for both GROUP and INDIVIDUAL structures
- saying, thinking, doing, and feeling
- Group→ help peers be empathic of others
- Individual→ make sure peers know you are empathic of them

Can you think of a time in which being empathetic towards your peers made a difference? Why do you think being empathetic is so important?

# Self Disclosure

Group→ I don't really share much about myself

- want the group to focus on themselves

Individual→ a bit of self-disclosure so my peers know I am at least trying to understand them

- make sure it is not about YOU, it's about the PEERS

Do you believe it is easier or better to share your lived experience in a group or individual setting? Why?

# SMART TOOL #1: ABC

A- activating event

B- belief

C- consequence

Start with C → go back to A

There also is a D and E but we will talk about that later

# SMART TOOL #1: ABC

A- activating event

B- belief

C- consequence

## **EXAMPLE:**

**C- My anxiety is through the roof.**

**A- Why?.... Because I haven't heard from a friend in over a week and a half.**

**B- I believe that my friend is angry with me or I did something wrong.**

# SMART TOOL #1: ABC

## GROUP:

- get some examples from the group
- ask some other questions

## INDIVIDUAL:

- work through a few situations one on one
- have the peer fill out a worksheet and maybe some during the week

# SMART TOOL #1: ABC

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

### Activating Event

- What happened before I had the urge?

### Belief

- Did I make any assumptions?
- Was my belief based on facts or feelings?
- Can I interpret the situation differently?

### Consequence

- Were my thoughts helpful? Did they affect my behavior? If so, how?

## SMART TOOL #1: ABC

What are some other ways that you can think of or have you done in your group and one-on-one peer sessions to work through the ABC tool?

# SMART TOOL #2: DUBs (Disputing Unhelpful Beliefs)

-FAVORITE TOOL

-educate everyone on what are called “Cognitive Distortions”

-important to recognize “inner critic”/negative self talk

-notice how to recognize negative thoughts and change them

# SMART TOOL #2: DUBs (Disputing Unhelpful Beliefs)

- "second half" of ABC tool (D & E)

-D- disputing unhelpful belief

-E- effective new belief (helpful belief)

-help participants recognize their unhelpful beliefs and move forward with more helpful beliefs

## SMART TOOL #2: DUBs (Disputing Unhelpful Beliefs)

-Working on the example from the ABC tool...

UNHELPFUL BELIEF: I am a burden to everyone. I bother everyone. My friend is angry with me. We are not friends anymore.

HELPFUL BELIEF: My friend is probably just busy. I don't always get back to my friends all the time. It's ok if I don't hear from my friend in a few days or even a week or so.

## SMART TOOL #2: DUBs (Disputing Unhelpful Beliefs)

-GROUP→ educate on the negative thoughts and then discuss examples of the thoughts and how to change them

-INDIVIDUAL→ focus on each of the bad thoughts that come up and work one on one to change each thought to be more positive

# SMART TOOL #2: DUBs (Disputing Unhelpful Beliefs)

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- If my friend was thinking the same way, what would I say to them?
- Am I saying extreme words like “never” or “always”?
- What is the worst situation that could happen? If that happened, how could I cope with it?
- What is a better way to think about this situation or belief?

## SMART TOOL #2: DUBs (Disputing Unhelpful Beliefs)

What are some other ways that you can think of or have you done in your group and one-on-one peer sessions to work through the DUBs tool?

# SMART TOOL #3: CBA analysis

- probably the most utilized tool

- pros and cons of using and not using

- long term vs. short term

- at first, may be difficult to quit because there are things that the participant enjoys, but in the long term, there are more positive benefits

# SMART TOOL #3: CBA analysis

<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Pros</b>	<b>Cons</b>
<b>USING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-helps me to relax</li><li>-makes socializing easier</li><li>-helps lower anxiety</li><li>-have fun in the moment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-worse financial situation</li><li>-don't sleep well</li><li>-hangovers</li><li>-blackouts</li><li>-have regrets</li><li>-relationship issues</li><li>-loss in productivity</li></ul>
<b>NOT USING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-able to save up money</li><li>-improves sleep</li><li>-makes me proud of myself</li><li>-no hangovers</li><li>-better health</li><li>-improves relationships</li><li>-clearer mind</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-have to deal with urges</li><li>-may feel left out in social situations</li><li>-have to actually cope with things (especially difficult ones)</li><li>-have to use coping skills</li></ul>

# SMART TOOL #3: CBA analysis

Group→ great discussion about pros/cons

- multiple points of view (great discussion)
- I like to present the SMART video

Individual→ maybe watch the videos on the website

- give homework

# SMART TOOL #3: CBA analysis

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Which is more important to me? Long term benefits or short term relief, like numbing?
- How does my behavior affect my life, including my relationships and health?
- What could I do now to help me create more balance in my life?

## SMART TOOL #3: CBA analysis

How do you already teach the CBA tool in your meetings? Would you like to share with us what kind of format you use?

# SMART Tool #4: Change Plan

- change want to make
- how important to me
- how confident I am
- reasons for the change
- steps I can take
- support system
- how do I know if working
- what can interfere with changing

# SMART Tool #4: Change Plan

## CHANGE I WANT TO MAKE

I want to stop drinking alcohol after work on weekdays.

## HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO ME

This is incredibly important to me... an 8 out of 10

## HOW CONFIDENT I AM THAT I CAN MAKE THE CHANGE

It is going to be extremely hard but I am motivated... about a 6 out of 10

# SMART Tool #4: Change Plan

## REASONS FOR CHANGE

- I feel tired and unproductive the next day
- It's affecting my health
- I want to be more present with my family
- I want to feel more in control of my life

# SMART Tool #4: Change Plan

## STEPS I CAN TAKE

- Go straight home instead of stopping at the bar
- Replace drinking with another activity (gym, walking, video games)
- Keep non-alcoholic drinks at home
- Avoid triggers like certain coworkers who invite me out
- Use urge coping skills (delay, distract, remind myself of goals)

# SMART Tool #4: Change Plan

WHO IS IN MY SUPPORT SYSTEM THAT CAN HELP

- A supportive friend I can text
- A family member
- SMART Recovery meetings (online or in-person)

# SMART Tool #4: Change Plan

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY PLAN IS WORKING?

- I don't drink Monday–Friday
- I feel better in the mornings
- Improved mood and energy
- Saving money

# SMART Tool #4: Change Plan

WHAT CAN INTERFERE WITH MY PLAN?

- Stress after work
- Social pressure from coworkers
- Strong cravings
- Boredom in the evening

# SMART Tool #4: Change Plan

Group→ a bit hard to go over the Change Plan but can introduce it so they can work on it by themselves

Individual→ much easier to go over

- build accountability with the peer
- maybe look at a WRAP plan

# SMART Tool #4: Change Plan

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What is the most important change that I want to make right now? Why?
- Do I know if I am motivated enough to make this change? Why or why not?
- What can I do if the change does not happen or not in the way I wanted it to?

## SMART Tool #4: Change Plan

Why do you think it is important to make a Change Plan? Have you ever worked with participants using this tool?

# SMART Tool #5: Unconditional Acceptance

-3 TYPES

-Self

-Life

-Other

-Forgiveness, not focusing on the wrong

-Yes, we all made mistakes, our lives can be challenging and others have wronged us BUT we can accept everything in order to move forward

# SMART Tool #5: Unconditional Acceptance

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

### SELF

-When, where and how do I tend to be most judgmental towards myself?

-What is the difference between saying “I did something wrong” versus “I am a failure”?

-Do I really think being judgmental towards myself is helpful?

-Am I as critical of my friends as I am of myself?

# SMART Tool #5: Unconditional Acceptance

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### LIFE

- Are there obstacles in my life that I struggle to accept?
- How do I stop saying “I should...” in certain situations in my life?
- Is there a difference between approving my difficulties in life and accepting them?
- How can I learn to use coping skills to cope with difficult situations in life?

# SMART Tool #5: Unconditional Acceptance

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### OTHER

- If there are people in my life who I have difficulty accepting, who are they and do I think I can work towards accepting them?
- Do I have unrealistic expectations of others?
- Can I accept someone in my life without approving some things that they do or have done?
- Can I think from the other person's point of view?

# SMART Tool #5: Unconditional Acceptance

- GREAT for both group and one on one structures
- Group→ great discussion (especially a blog post)
  - something that a lot of people struggle with
  - focus especially on after a relapse/lapse/setback
  - watch videos (USA, ULA, UOA)
- Individual→ discuss how the peer can be kinder to themselves
  - ideas (positive affirmations, VACIs)

## SMART Tool #5: Unconditional Acceptance

Why do you think it is so important to tell our participants about accepting themselves, their lives and others?

# Some other Takeaways

## **Family and Friends**

**Successful Life Skills-** a 12-week program designed to help change behaviors, especially in correctional settings

## OVERVIEW

What is the biggest takeaway you have from this session? Are you going to change how you work with peers and participants?

**QUESTIONS??????**