

Inspirations



Two Years Today

by john11, Message Board Volunteer

I wanted to write something, maybe something inspirational, for those who are struggling with their changes. Last year at his time there seemed to be more fireworks. My first year anniversary was a huge goal reached. It took so much work and personal change to get there and I was so proud and happy that I had achieved what I had perceived as impossible for so long.

Today there is still a part of me saying, “Two years clean and sober. Dude, that’s amazing. Well done.” The part of me that is amazed and proud this year is much smaller. I think it’s because

this last year has been more about equilibrium and I just take for granted today so many of the things I wanted on my original Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA).

Wow, this has me thinking. It seems that I will be the one who gets inspired by the process of writing this as it has been a while since I truly thought about where I was two+ years back.

Two years ago, I followed my habits to a much lower place than I swore I would ever allow. With no job, money, accommodation, self-esteem or hope, I booked myself into the same residential treatment I was in a year or two previously.

It’s good for me to remember the despair back then once in a while (lest we forget), but let’s skip ahead two years and list a few of the things I have to be grateful for:

- I am back with my wife and she greets me with a smile when I come home. I can be there for her and once in a while she tells me she is proud of me. Four things in those two sentences that are just natural for most of society but I had to work hard to earn them back.

- I rekindled a relationship with my parents and spent last Christmas with them.
- My word is good again. I am no longer afraid to promise or say I am going to do something.
- I scored pretty high on the SMART progress checklist circulated a while back.

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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

- I am OK being me. There is a level of personal comfort that I don't think I ever had, even before straying to the dark side.
- I can answer the door or phone without the sense of fear I had.
- I have assets. Not large, but some equity; it's a start.
- Payday no longer seems like it's a week and a half late, if you know what I mean.
- Urges? I'm pretty sure I could start one if I put some effort into it.
- I have no pseudo-friends whom I must be wary of.
- My playgrounds have changed: www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.1118042246986.13814.1704928087&l=0319a32137&type=1

Well, sorry folks, but I guess there will be no lightning bolt revelations here. You see the new me and the new beliefs have just become the norm. That thought in itself may be of comfort to some. I have heard many times in the past that given enough time and effort, sobriety and rational thought become second nature. I can thankfully say that I think I am 95 percent there. That's 95 percent with regard to sobriety. As for sane and rational, I'll leave that score for others to decide and just hope I never give them cause to reveal it.

What the heck will we learn tomorrow? It's a whole new bucket of monkeys.

Two Years Ago

by Olive, SMART Recovery® Online Chat Volunteer

Two years ago, checklist for going to the park:

- Had I had enough to drink to knock out the shakes?
- Was there alcohol where I was going?
- If not, what should I bring? How much? How could I hide it? How could I keep it cold?
- Go to the bathroom.
- Did I have enough cigarettes? Better bring a full pack.
- Go to the bathroom.
- Pack cell phone, book, cigarettes, two lighters. Better bring another pack of cigarettes.
- Go to the bathroom. Is there a bathroom at the park? If not, bring some toilet paper.
- Pack beer last, so it stays cold.

One year ago, checklist for going to the park:

- Fill water bottle.
- Make coffee in travel mug.
- Pack book, cell phone, towel.
- Do I have enough cigarettes? Better bring a full pack. Two lighters.

Today, going to the park:

- Towel
- Book
- Sunglasses
- Keys

This, to me, is freedom.

People Power



Introducing Our New Editor

Getting SMARTer every day

by Rosemary Almond, *News & Views* editor



If she walks like a duck, quacks occasionally, and goes by DuckWalk, she must be the new editor of *News & Views*.

Well, it's true. I'm very proud to be the new *News & Views* editor, although I wish I'd come into this position under different circumstances.

SMART has been an important part of my life for the past year. While I struggled with addictive behavior until 11 years ago, I came to SMART as a concerned significant other (CSO). I was thrilled to attend the first redesigned Friends and Family meeting last fall, and the next 11 meetings without fail. Facilitator Mom Rox rocked, and so did Twoputts.

I was so impressed with their sincere concern and empathy and patience, I decided to go through facilitator training, which I did in March with my partner.

If you've ever been through training, you know that the *Facilitator's Manual* (and the *Handbook*) is a little outdated. They are fabulous documents, they just need a 21st century makeover and facelift. So, my partner and I asked Shari in April if it was possible to re-write, update, and redesign the *Handbook* and *Facilitator's Manual*. Shortly after that, Shari and Tom Horvath asked me if I'd be interested in becoming the new *News & Views* editor. While sincerely flattered, it was a weighty request that I had to consider seriously.

A week later, I said yes.

Writing has always been my "first" language. I grew up, as many of us did, in a home where expressing emotions wasn't safe. Needing to express my feelings, I started keeping a journal when I was a pre-pre-teen. Journals were my emotional receptacles.

I've been a journalist/editor/designer for the past 25 years. I've owned two successful businesses (an arts and entertainment weekly and a marketing/desktop publishing biz), worked for newspapers, and was even a dental hygienist for several years.

Currently, I'm the public information officer (spokesperson) for an Oregon state agency.

When I went through recovery, I basically did it on my own with the help of an amazing therapist. My 4-year-old daughter was my motivation; I didn't want to pass my dysfunctional behavior on to her. She deserved so much more from a mom.

Entering a 12-step program never even entered my mind because of the higher power thing. How I would have benefited from the support and friendship of SMARTies. If I'd only known.

So, I'm here now, and so excited about this wonderful opportunity to use my skills for something I truly support and believe in. I'm so looking forward to working with *News & Views* team of dedicated contributors, and hope we can bring some of the more uncomfortable topics and addictions into the open where they belong.

If you're a reader, and would like to become a contributor, want to comment on anything you read in *News & Views*, or have an idea for a story or topic, please contact me, rosemaryalmond@gmail.com.

Take care, SMARTies!
xoxoxox

Recovering from a Busy Recovery Month

by Hugh F. Delaney, SMART Recovery®
Regional Coordinator, Maryland

As a SMART facilitator, I find that the most difficult discussion of SMART's 4-Point Program® is the fourth point: Living a Balanced Life.

Google the phrase and see what comes up. Yes, you can find many activities to help you "live a balanced life," but some may lead you back into the communities you associated with while using.

September, however, provided a great opportunity to find people on the "recovery" path.

Why? Because September was National Recovery Month. For the past 21 years, Recovery Month—each September—promotes the philosophy that recovery in all forms is possible. The observance's focus is to laud those in recovery, just as we would those who are managing other health conditions such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and asthma.

Millions of Americans' lives have been transformed through recovery. Many recovery-related events celebrate these transformative accomplishments.

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Events include rallies, walks, motorcycle rides, seminars, and workshops, to name a few.

How can you find events in your area next September? The National Recovery Month website—www.recoverymonth.gov—lists events in your area and provides information about recovery. As I wrote this, there were 283 events listed for September. This year, I found 23 events within 50 miles of my home.

Next September, participate in Recovery Month events in your area. It's a great way to meet people traveling the path toward Living a Balanced Life. Invite your friends and family. Let everyone know that September is Recovery Month.

Volunteers Present SMART Recovery® Overview to State Treatment Staff

by Karen Amon and Victor Braatz

Karen Amon, Bay City SMART Recovery®, and Victor Braatz, Mid-Michigan SMART Recovery®, presented a 2-hour orientation in June to 25 clinicians from the state of Michigan's clinical treatment program. Karen and Victor were invited by the Michigan State Bar Lawyer's and Judge's Assistance Program to the meeting hosted in Lansing, Michigan.

Karen gave an overview of SMART materials, and led a question-and-answer period. There was so much discussion and positive feedback, Karen and Victor were invited to do another orientation in Detroit later this fall. Victor, who is also a holistic healthcare practitioner, was invited to the state bar's retreat in September. He did auricular acupuncture on the service staff from the Lansing office.

The Michigan State Bar recognizes the need for alternative self-help models and for offering more treatment options. The hope is that, as lawyers and judges learn more about SMART through the clinicians who treat them, SMART will get more recognition and resources to expand face-to-face groups.

One observation from this orientation is how well SMART fits into a Recovery Oriented System of Care (ROSC), a model the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) identified as best practice. SAMHSA is funding ROSC in locations across the United States. SAMHSA recognizes that there are many paths to recovery; we feel that with the introduction of the ROSC model, the future is bright for SMART.



It's a 'B,' Not a 'T'

by Hank Robb, PhD, ABPP

When I say, "Let's do an ABC," most folks who have been to even a few SMART meetings know that "A" stands for Activating Event; "B" for Belief; and "C" for Consequence. However, I often notice that folks sometimes talk about "disputing their irrational *thoughts*" rather than "disputing their irrational *beliefs*." There's a big difference.

The point of an ABC, (and "D"—Disputing, and "E"—new Effect), is to change the "B"—Beliefs, not "Ts"—thoughts. What you are or aren't thinking is never the problem. The problem is what you believe. Most people reading this column could think, "I'm a banana," all day long and be none the worse. Why? Because, they won't believe it. It might be annoying to think all day long, "I'm a banana," but it would get to be rather annoying to think anything over and over, including, "I'm nature's gift to the human race."

"D"—Disputing, isn't about changing your thoughts. It's about changing your beliefs. If you spend all day thinking, "I must have a drink," or "I must cut myself," or "I must smoke a cigarette," there won't be a problem as long as you don't *believe* those thoughts.

In fact, if you think, "I choose not to use" while believing, "I must use," you'll soon be doing whatever addictive behavior you decided to stop regardless of your efforts to think, "I choose not to use." Why? Because, changing your thoughts isn't changing your beliefs.

We're forced to use words to talk about anything, but the words aren't the thing we are talking about. I can say that I'm typing on a computer and the word "computer" isn't the thing I'm typing on. If I wanted to type on an old fashioned typewriter, I couldn't simply strike through the word "computer" and substitute "typewriter." I would have to make physical contact with a typewriter.

We use words to talk about our beliefs, but the words aren't the beliefs. Whether we say the words or just think them, they're still just words. If we don't believe them, they have no power.

We often use Disputes that show that certain beliefs aren't true, but we can also use Disputes that show certain beliefs "don't help." I may not be able to dispute that I believe I want a drink by showing myself it isn't true; maybe it is true. Nevertheless, I can show myself that repeating, "I want a drink," isn't going to help me live a better, balanced life, free from addiction. After all, the point of giving up an addiction is that it just doesn't fit with the big picture of the life you choose—even if the addiction seems to work in the little picture of the moment.

Dispute beliefs, not thoughts. There is no "T" in an ABC!

War and Peace or the Right Tool?

by Lorie "Hammer" Hammerstrom

We spend a lot of time and energy trying to determine who is right.

Much of that energy is spent because we want to feel OK about ourselves. We measure our opinions against others' opinions, then continue to assess "self-worth" and "other-worth" based on whose opinion we perceive is right and whose opinion we perceive is wrong.

Whole wars are fought over who is right and who is wrong. There is a Dr. Seuss book entitled *The Butter Battle Book* that highlights this very concept. People on one side of the wall butter the top side of their bread while people on the other side of the wall butter the bottom side of their bread. They have an entire war over who is right and who is wrong.

Have you ever stopped to pay attention to your need to be right?

Notice the times when you begin to feel or sound defensive. Are you

insisting that your opinion is correct or that your beliefs are better than someone else's beliefs? Can you allow others to hold their opinion even when it opposes yours?

And sometimes we don't even bother to argue our side. Sometimes we just make the other person wrong without even needing an opinion of our own. Because if you can prove that someone else is wrong, then you must be right.

By allowing others to hold their opinions, even when they differ from yours, you free yourself up to find peace and tranquility in your life. You will always find people who disagree with your stand. You will always find people who want to argue with you. And there is nothing wrong with a healthy discussion. But when you have that *need* to be right—or to make the other person wrong—you set yourself up for frustration and anger.

It's just another "*should*." You should agree with me. And you are terrible if you don't.

Bringing Sexual Addiction Out of the Shadows

By Nussbaum

It was over a decade ago that I first faced the notion that I may have a sexual addiction. Years earlier, I suspected I had a problem but found many ways to rationalize my behavior—I didn't have the right partner, I had a strong drive, etc. When a family friend—a practicing psychologist—uttered, "You may have sexual addiction," I finally took notice.

But taking notice wasn't enough. Yes, I noticed, but my behavior continued unabated, which eventually led to the demise of my second marriage.

I've wrestled with my problem almost all my adult life. I've wrestled with recovery for the last 10 years. Now I'm settled into a healthy, intimate relationship with a woman who can relate to every quirky aspect of my past, so the story has a happy ending—probably the only real happy ending I've had in decades.

To put this in clinical and academic terms, sexual addiction sucks.

And I do prefer the term addiction to sexual maladaptive behavior (SMB) even though the latter may be more clinically accurate. Addiction does a better job of capturing the cycle of triggers: chase, relief, regret, rinse, and repeat.

WANTED: RECOVERY-RELATED BOOKS, ARTICLES

You may have noticed many changes happening in different areas of SMART Recovery®—and we're not done yet!

A new committee, the Document Update Team, is updating the SMART Recovery® Handbook and the Facilitator's Manual. As part of the process, they're looking for suggestions for an updated recommended reading list to include in the publications.

You may submit the names of up to five recovery-related references at www.surveymonkey.com/s/recommended_reading.

Please don't submit works already on the list.

You may submit your favorites until October 31.

It also conveys the sense of despair and hopelessness that many sufferers experience. I'm sure anyone who's struggled with some addiction or abnormal behavior feels the same way to some extent. But I think there is an aspect to sexual addiction that does separate it from others.

Our world has cultural dissonance around sex. Sex surrounds us 24 hours a day. Sex propels our species. We're hard wired for sex. We buy based on sexual images. Yet, we don't like to talk about it and when we engage in it, it's a private matter. In many ways, it's still culturally taboo to talk about it openly. And admitting that we are compulsive about it is tantamount to moral failure.

Admit that I'm a sexual addict? No way. The best piece of advice I got from a therapist specializing in sexual addiction was "don't disclose." When I didn't follow that advice, the costs were high: lost friends and excommunication. One close friend told me that her psychologist advised her to break off all communications with me. The very friend who first got me thinking about sexual addiction turned her back on me and severed all contact. She also strongly encouraged my second wife to divorce me.

A stigma accompanies the words "sexual addiction." For some, the words conjure up images of men and women—mostly men—running amok, out of control.

Hide your women, children, and sheep. Think I'm exaggerating? Several months ago, I was in the SMART online chat room. We started talking about SMB. When I confessed that my drug of choice was sex, one person quickly asked if I was "one of those perverts." Fortunately for me, the room's moderator and the other participants quickly jumped in.

On one hand, we've sexualized our society and brought it into primetime. We laugh at the strong sexual content in *Two and a Half Men*, *South Park*, and other shows. On the other hand, we condemn self-confessed sex addicts (I know, no labels. Think of it as literary shorthand.) as morally weak, devoid of self-control. Pity the politician or celebrity who's paid for their compulsions with their careers.

Is it any wonder that some refuse to see a problem or get help? It's fine to laugh about it, delight in others' exploits, even live vicariously at the sexual prowess of celebrities, but if we develop a problem with it, we're feeble. Doesn't that just make you want jump up and declare, "I'm a sex addict"?

When I started recovery about 10 years ago, I asked my therapist what percentage of the population shared my affliction. Back then, the best estimate was around 6 percent. Today, best estimates still hover around the 3-to-5-percent level; exact numbers are difficult to obtain because many people don't seek help (www.myaddiction.com/education/articles/sex_statistics.html).

Let's put this in perspective. Washington has more than 400 elected officials, so, statistically, there are between 12 and 20 elected sex addicts. We've recently uncovered two possible candidates so 10 to 18 are left. Over a quarter of men and women who have internet access at work report using it to access pornography. Because virtually every major organization I know monitors internet usage, this disturbing statistic clearly points the unnecessary risks people will take. Look around at work. Chances are that, at some point, every fourth person is surfing porn on the company's dime.

What about gender differences? I haven't studied this scientifically, but from my anecdotal experience, I would say that

sexual addiction is pretty well divided between the sexes.

The expression differs: Men find relief in brothels, massage parlors, streetwalkers, porn theaters, strip clubs, adult bookstores, and other fronts. Women find partners in bars, stores, work, and through the internet. They become sex workers—dominatrices, massage therapists, or escorts. I'm not suggesting that every woman who goes into these fields is sexually addicted, but it's easy for a woman to gravitate to those occupations if she is. Many women (and some men) express their addiction through serial relationships. Each successive lover the ultimate partner whose appeal quickly ebbs when the next true love appears.

Are compulsive relationships just dressed up sexual addiction?

If—no, when—you hear someone reveal in a SMART meeting, the chat room, or anywhere else, that sex is their DOC, don't recoil. Reach out, accept, and support them as you would any other sufferer looking for relief from their problems.



SMART Recovery® Appoints Volunteer Research Directors

We are pleased to announce that John Kelly, Ph.D., accepted a volunteer

position as SMART's research director, and Julie Yeterian is our new assistant research director.

They will maintain an updated summary of the scientific literature on SMART, consult with investigators who want to use SMART participants as research subjects, review SMART materials for consistency with scientific literature, and promote SMART in the scientific community.

Dr. Kelly is affiliated with Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) and Harvard Medical School. Ms. Yeterian works with Dr. Kelly at the Center for Addiction Medicine, MGH.

Get SMART FAST Distance Training News

by Jim (GJBXVI) Braastad, Volunteer Distance
Training Program Coordinator

It's been a year of change for SMART Recovery's Get SMART FAST Distance Training Program.

Shortly after announcing the program's new name at the first of the year, we began experiencing "growing pains," as our training sessions were filling up well before the scheduled cut-off date for registrations.

We were faced with a dilemma: While our training participants consistently gave high marks to the distance training program, we knew we couldn't keep up with increased demand for training using the existing format. More than once, individuals expressing a desire to start a SMART meeting were being told they had to wait up to three months before being able to attend a training session.

While these growing pains are a good thing for SMART, we knew we had to do something to keep up with demand. The Distance Training "team" began

exploring options, with the goal to increase the availability and flexibility of the training.

After a July test-run, we officially launched the new Get SMART FAST Program, using the online Moodle e-learning platform, in September. The new format allows training sessions to take place monthly instead of every other month.

"We believe this new training platform will meet the increasing demand for the training of our online and face-to-face meeting facilitators, and our online message board and chat volunteers well into the future," said Dr. Horvath.

Training participants will view all training materials—text, DVDs, PowerPoint, and video presentations—entirely online. After completing the study training on the Moodle site, participants attend two live meetings in the voice distance training room on SMART Recovery Online (SROL) message board. The first meeting is a role-play of a SMART meeting. The final meeting is a presentation and Q & A session with SMART President Tom Horvath.

In addition to the volunteers who participated in the test-run, access to the new training platform was provided to the participants of the final session using our old training format.

One training participant said, "I just now had a chance to take a peek and I am blown away! It is excellent! The format is very approachable and well organized ... I was immediately drawn in and engaged. I am envious of the opportunity your future students have with this new format..."

If you are interested in becoming a

SMART meeting facilitator, or assisting with any of our online activities, visit www.smartrecovery.org/facldtrain/index.htm for information.

Florida Judicial System Getting SMARTer Every Day

by Harriet Castle, Court Outreach Team Volunteer Member

This year has been an exciting time in Florida. The state's drug courts and Department of Corrections are starting to recognize other recovery options.

I am happy to report that within the 7th Judicial District, two out of four of its drug courts, in Volusia and Flagler counties, now recognize SMART as an option to AA/NA meetings. I look forward to the entire judicial district allowing choices in recovery.

Michael Jewell, the district's drug court manager, listened to the concerns of people in recovery who said they wanted to attend secular meetings—face-to-face or online—that can provide the courts with verification.

As of July 1, 2011, the language in Florida's Unified Probation Order no longer includes any specific references to AA/NA. The order instead refers to recovery meetings as "support groups." It also enables probation officers to allow support groups such as SMART. This shift is great news for those seeking choice in recovery options.

In May 2011, clinical counselor Mark Fitzpatrick led the 7th Judicial District's first SMART face-to-face meetings in St. Augustine. Mark also met with the drug court in August and we hope to see it recognize SMART as a recovery option. Mark said there is "powerful interest" in SMART in northeast Florida, and his face-to-face meetings continue to grow. He said some participants even drive

from other counties to attend SMART meetings. You can contact Mark at 904-797-5680.

I hope to see continued growth in the arena of choice for all people who suffer from addiction, and more flexibility of the judicial systems across the country to allow alternatives to AA/NA.

For more information about how SMART can help in your area, call 1-866-951-5357.

Volunteers Keep SROL Humming

by Jonathan von Breton, Director, SMART Recovery® Online

Ordinarily, this is where I talk about the spectacular fundraising and special events we do at SMART Recovery® Online (SROL). And fear not, I will later.

First, what I really want to talk about is the day-to-day work of SROL.

Every day, new people come to SROL hoping to overcome addiction. Every

day, volunteers greet these people on the message board and in the chat room. Every day, our volunteers answer questions, give information about SMART tools, and provide support. Every day, volunteers facilitate meetings. These volunteers also lead by example. They share their own struggles with addiction and their experience with SMART tools. It is this daily, somewhat mundane work that is truly spectacular. And it is what makes SMART so smart.

SROL administrators, also volunteers, do an outstanding job of keeping things running behind the scenes. They move out-of-place posts, create the monthly check-in threads, handle technical problems, and answer technical questions. They do all of this with little fanfare and no drama.

Thank you, every SROL volunteer, all for the work you put in every day to provide this valuable virtual home.

SROL's special events are spectacular. Our special event coordinator is Dee who does an outstanding job of recruiting guest speakers on a variety of topics: Ed Garcia did a workshop on the anatomy of emotions. Michael Edelstein gave a presentation on Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT), which is at the foundation of SMART. And Bill Knaus has conducted workshops on

procrastination. All of these were recorded as podcasts and are available on our website, <http://smartrecovery.libsyn.com/>.

April was SMART's Volunteer Month (that was Charlie the Webmaster's idea). It worked so well, we now have several new chat and message board volunteers and facilitators. In fact, we're *still* getting new volunteers from that effort.

Fall FUNdraising Day

The FUNdraising Committee is another group of hardworking volunteers. In fact, the members are working hard right now putting together this fall's FUNdraiser, which will be Saturday, November 5.

Our very own FUNdraising auction diva, Allie, is collecting all sorts of interesting items for our bidding pleasure. Volunteers and participants are donating fabulous auction items, including handcrafted jewelry, hand-painted travel mugs, bacon peanut brittle, autographed books, an autographed Yankees baseball, and more!

You can see the auction items at <http://bit.ly/og9mBb>.

Dee is organizing an exciting speaker line-up for the day. The event will be hosted in the SMART Room, which is a voice meeting room. If you have a microphone, you can speak, but you simply need speakers in order to hear, and can type questions or comments if you do not have a microphone.

Here's the schedule so far (subject to change). All times are Eastern Daylight Time, USA.

- 8 a.m. **Bill White** – The Changing Culture of Recovery in America
- 9 a.m. **Michael Edelstein** – REBT Discussion
- 10 a.m. **Jonathan von Breton** – An



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- Insider's Guide to the ABC's
- 11 a.m. **Henry Steinberger** – Acceptance: The ABCs of REBT, Version 2.0
- Noon **Bill Knaus** – Procrastination
- 1 p.m. **Joe Gerstein** – Hierarchy of Values and the Time Matrix CBA
- 2 p.m. **Anne Fletcher** – Many Routes to Recovery. She'll also talk about her new book on addiction rehab centers
- 3 p.m. **Steve Gumbley** – Being a Face in Voice of Recovery
- 4 p.m. **Bob Meyers** – CRAFT and Trust Issues in the Recovery Process
- 5 p.m. **Hank Robb** – Being Where You Are and Doing What's Important

Join the speakers and the auction to show your support. All funds raised are used to keep SMART Online growing and thriving. Contributions are tax deductible and you'll receive a thank you and an "official" letter for tax deduction purposes at the end of the year.

Fabulous Speakers Captured in Growing Podcast Library

by Dolores "Dee" Cloward, Special Events Coordinator

We are delighted with the hugely positive response to the special events we hosted at SMART Recovery Online (SROL) over the spring and summer. Highly knowledgeable and credentialed professionals spoke about many thought-provoking topics and areas, all with a common base of Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT).

Here are some of the highlights:

Ed Garcia, CSW, presented two fabulous sessions in his series on *The*

Anatomy of Emotions. He presented *Anger & Fear in May* and finished the series in August with *Guilt & Depression, and Building Emotional Muscle*. His unique slant on REBT and style of engaging the audience is fantastic. He has quickly become a highly popular speaker at SMART.

Dr. Michael Edelstein spoke about REBT and the Three-Minute Therapy approach he developed. Attendees reported a lot of benefit from hearing Dr. Edelstein's concise thoughts about various challenges with plain language. His theme of hard work and effort to achieve the results we want is direct and to the point.

Bill Knaus, Ed.D., presented a successful mini-workshop on procrastination in July. He combined materials from his books *End Procrastination Now* and *The Procrastination Workbook* with new material to create an abbreviated version of the professional workshops he offers around the country. This is the first-ever event of this kind. Dr. Knaus also created an e-book just for SMART: *Beat Procrastination Now!* This little booklet is filled with clear, vivid explanations, and practical suggestions for addressing procrastination.

We're creating a PowerPoint version of the workshop. Dr. Knaus mentioned SMART many times in his weekly *Psychology Today* blog. We are immensely grateful for his enormous contributions to SMART and his willingness to freely share his knowledge and energy with us.

In the last issue of *News & Views*, I wrote about our podcasts that we had just started producing. I reported that we had 900 downloads as of mid-May. We're now up to nearly 6,000! We are extremely lucky to have a highly skilled

audio/IT consultant creating these for us. Many volunteers help with these efforts. The support from all directions has been incredible.

All of the events mentioned above are available in our rapidly growing SMART podcast library, www.smartrecovery.libsyn.com.

Special events are slowing down a little through the fall so that we can concentrate on the conference in Baltimore, October 6 and 7.

Mark your calendars: SROL's Annual Fall FUNdraiser will be Saturday, November 5. We have an incredible lineup of speakers for the entire day. This is a DO NOT miss event. We'll post more information on the SMART website and SROL message boards. I am tickled that we have many speakers who are sharing their time and wisdom with us.

If you have comments or suggestions, or just want to help, please contact me, cloward@gmail.com. Help us create what is most helpful and intriguing to you.

Two New Publications Available from SMART Recovery®

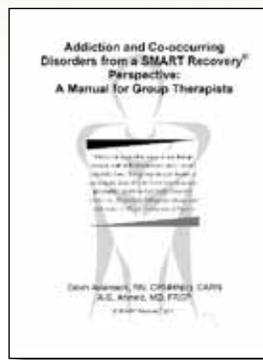
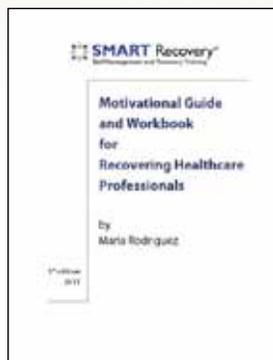
The expectation in healthcare is that providers are immune to personal drug or alcohol problems. Intolerance among professionals contributes to denial. Until a drug or alcohol problem is obvious, the impaired professional is more likely than nonhealthcare professionals to avoid seeking help.

To meet the needs of healthcare professionals, SMART announces a new publication, written by Maria Elsa Rodriguez, DNP, ACNS-BC. Maria has worked as an acute care adult health nurse for 21 years and as a nurse educator for eight years. She found it a paradox that healthcare professionals in recovery

lack resources that are specifically focused to their needs. With this observation, she developed this new workbook.

In 2008, 10 million persons age 12 years or older reported driving under the influence of illicit drugs during the prior year. Among those millions who daily abuse drugs or alcohol, thousands are physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals. The resulting drug or alcohol impairment can have devastating effects on their patients who trust healthcare providers to be focused and conscientious. Healthcare professionals have a unique ability to respond to medical challenges and pressures on behalf of others. This workbook helps healthcare professionals apply that care to themselves.

Some of the topics include the prevalence of addiction in healthcare providers (physicians, nurses, psychologists, pharmacists, and dentists); the brain, drugs, and motivation; an over-



view of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy; the Transtheoretical Model of Change; and information on the history of narcotic and alcohol use in the United States. Many interactive activities are included throughout the workbook.

Addiction and Co-occurring Disorders from a SMART Recovery® Perspective: A Manual for Group Therapists

This 282-page manual is co-authored by Dawn Adamson, RN, CPMHN(c), CARN, and A.G. Ahmed, MD, FRCP, both of whom have extensive backgrounds working with individuals with mental health and addiction issues.

The manual was developed in the forensic unit at Brockville Mental Health Centre, a division of the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group.

“A significant percentage of individuals within the forensic service have drug-related problems, either as the principal diagnosis or as a co-morbid condition,” said co-author Dawn Adamson. “This program and manual aim to engage the individual in the recovery process, increase individual insight, motivate, and sustain change through education and skill development.”

She said the program has been adapted and delivered in a community setting to individuals with co-occurring mental disorders.

The program incorporates the Integrative Model of Change (Prochaska and DiClemente, 1984), Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) (Ellis, 1991), and Solution Focused Therapy (DeShazer, 1991).

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 (Destructive Images Self-talk Awareness and Refusal Method)
- 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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The program's three main objectives are:

1. This nonjudgmental approach engages the individual in a therapeutic relationship and motivates change through education. It focuses on the relationships between drug use, mental disorders, offending behavior, self-defeating behaviors, and the process of change.
2. Facilitate sustained cognitive and behavioral changes using REBT and Solution Focused Therapy. The individual receives ongoing motivational support while learning specific strategies to achieve and maintain abstinence.
3. Encourage individuals to seek ongoing support and provide an introduction to the SMART program and tools.

"This is an accessible, easy-to-use therapy manual with helpful exercises and a strong scientific base. The group therapy format is particularly desirable for front-line treatment programs," said Barbara McCrady, director of the Center on Alcoholism, Substance Abuse and Addictions, University of New Mexico.

Each session includes discussion, exercises or role-plays, discussion questions, and self-help homework.

Chapter topics include: Getting

Articles are Welcome!

If you have a story or information you would like to see published in the *News & Views*, please feel free to submit a copy to

Rosemary Almond, Editor,
via e-mail: rosemaryalmond@gmail.com.
Unsolicited material is most welcome!

Started/Motivated (4 sessions); Changing Your Beliefs (8 sessions); Coping with Cravings (10 sessions); Following Through (9 sessions); and 8 optional sessions addressing drug facts, definitions, relationship between drug use, mental disorder and offending behavior.

Both publications are available at the SMART Online bookstore, www.smartrecovery.org.

Workbook: 80 pages, \$12.99, © 2011.

Manual: 282 pages, \$49.99, ©2011.



President's Letter

Volunteering for and with SMART Recovery®

Activities can often be divided into two components:

1. the task, and
2. the associated maintenance.

We own cars to transport ourselves, and we need to maintain them to accomplish this. An army has soldiers who engage in combat, and a far larger number of individuals who support those soldiers—food, supplies, transportation, medical care, repairs, etc.

The primary task of SMART is to provide donations-requested, science-based, self-empowering support groups and related services to individuals desiring to abstain from any addictive activity or substance. SMART's secondary task is supporting choice in

recovery. To accomplish these tasks there is a lot of maintenance, including updating the website, providing initial facilitator training and ongoing training and support, reviewing and updating publications, hosting an annual conference, publicizing our activities, interfacing with other organizations, publishing a newsletter, and so forth.

Even if you think of yourself as a facilitator only who's not involved in maintenance tasks, you still engage in them. For example, you might order SMART Recovery® Handbooks so participants can buy them from you; make copies of local meeting lists and of meeting handouts; send in monthly donations, contact referral sources, and post flyers about meetings, to name a few.

One purpose of this column is to remind us that to accomplish our purpose, we need not slight either the task or the associated maintenance. It is easy to overlook the maintenance functions. We occasionally hear that a business or organization has "deferred maintenance" while it focuses on tasks, perhaps to maximize profit. But we never hear about "deferred task!"

In the title of this column I mention both "volunteering for" (maintenance) and "volunteering with" (task) to emphasize that the "volunteering for" functions are just as important as the task functions. Meetings would cease to function if the background activities listed in the second paragraph did not occur. To express this distinction in another way, an organization is only as good as its admin staff. The mechanic is just as important as the driver (think race cars), even if the driver may get more glory.

I hope that everyone who volunteers with and for SMART feels a deep connection with the purpose of this

organization, even if their sometimes-mundane maintenance tasks seem removed from interactions with participants. We function as a team. Facilitators are closest to feeling the deep satisfaction that can arise from observing the moment-to-moment changes in meeting participants as participants grasp the implications of a cost-benefit analysis or realize a new “B” (a new way of interpreting a situation) that reduces emotional pain.

And even though facilitators are closest to the scene, all of us make it happen!

Book Review



REBT Guide Useful in Meetings or On Your Own

by Ana Stella Troncoso

Dr. Pamela D. Garcy's book, *The REBT Super-Activity Guide: 52 Weeks of REBT*, promises “success strategies to help you shift out of unhealthy emotions and into action,” and it largely delivers.

To apply the exercises from the workbook in several settings, I used the book both as a resource for techniques that could be introduced during SMART meetings, and as a tool for things I could do on my own, at home, in a less formal setting.

While the book's intended audience is wide, it may be overwhelming for someone trying to do this type of therapeutic work on their own. I think the individual who already has a strong base in the concepts of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) may appreciate this book the most. Someone who is receiving some type of formal guidance as they learn about the REBT approach will also probably get the most benefit from the book.

The book is thoughtfully organized. Dr. Garcy mentions that it can be read in order or by skipping around. Because I was often looking for strategies that fit a particular situation, I skipped around, using the table of contents as my primary roadmap. The table of contents is a resource in and of itself; I frequently found myself scanning it just to get a quick REBT primer.

Each of the 52 weeks is given its own chapter, and though each chapter is two to four pages long, they are packed with information. The format presents an overview of the topic, then provides an approach to the topic from an REBT perspective. Dr. Garcy often references Dr. Ellis in this section. At the end of each chapter, she presents one or more action steps to illustrate the concepts she introduced.

Some examples of chapter titles include:

- Is this a Preference or a Demand?
- Setting Anti-Mustubatory Goals
- What Can You Change?
- How Can I Dispute That?
- Anti-Awfulizing Exercises
- Accepting Ambiguity and Uncertainty
- Anti-Procrastination

The very first activity I used from the book came from Chapter 8, “Why Whining Isn't Good for You.” It includes one exercise broken down into several action steps. First, you're asked to make a list of 10 things you whine about. Next, you're asked to write down something that you tell yourself about each of those things. Next, you review your original list, and write down what you *could* be telling yourself if you adopt a “NO WHINING” policy. Finally, you create a list of five reasons you don't want to whine anymore and why, instead, you're going to start solving your problems.

This was a great activity to do in a meeting because it enabled us to brainstorm and to laugh at some over-the-top suggestions. I was pleased at how it helped to bring a room of relative strangers together, and I was delighted with the participants' reactions. They were engaged and genuinely stimulated.

The second activity I used in a SMART meeting also came from Chapter 8, although I used it in a different context. In this chapter, Dr. Garcy tells the reader “Whining is debilitating. Whining shuts you down. Whining blinds you from looking at what you can control...” I wrote these sentences on our whiteboard, only I replaced the word “whining” with the word “worry.” This was an effective starting point for a discussion about anxiety.

Another chapter that I found particularly helpful in a SMART meeting was Chapter 13, “Understanding Some of the IBs (irrational beliefs) of Unhealthy Anger.” This chapter draws a parallel between being drunk and being angry, which was a useful analogy to lead into a conversation about anger and some of its effects. Three action steps are included in

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this chapter, one of which asks the reader to “identify all the demands behind your anger” by writing down their beliefs and underlining the “shoulds, musts, have tos, ought tos, need tos” they’re allowing themselves to believe. Again, this brainstorming exercise kept the group’s energy high and teased out some of the demands participants had been making in their lives.

Finally, Chapter 35 had a strong impact on me, “Working on Acceptance of the Self.” Dr. Garcy tells the reader to

“...think of someone that you love unconditionally. It could be a friend, a relative, a baby, or an animal.... Pretend this special someone made a mistake of some kind. List 10 things that you would say in order to express your unconditional love....Now...say them to yourself out loud.”

I often use a suggestion similar to this one when I sense that someone is feeling great shame or guilt, and is looking for a way to forgive themselves, or simply when they would benefit by being kind to themselves. However, until I read Dr. Garcy’s book, I’d never had a tool that allowed me to demonstrate this idea in a tangible way, nor had I ever taken the time to do this for myself. Since then, it’s an exercise I turn to weekly, with excellent results.

I’m grateful that I had the opportunity to read Dr. Garcy’s book and share my experiences with a new audience. The *Activity Guide* will be a resource for any facilitators looking for tools they can use in a group to increase crowd participation and stimulate brainstorming sessions. Participants can then do the action steps on their own to reinforce the skills they’re learning in group or with their counselors.

I highly recommend *The REBT Super-Activity Guide*.



International Development

Australia Update

by Jim Villamor, Coordinator, SMART Recovery AU®

SMART Recovery® Indigenous Project

For the past two years, SMART has been looking for an indigenous consultant to help us develop a more culturally sensitive facilitator training. Our goal is to educate indigenous communities about SMART and to create more indigenous-specific SMART groups throughout Australia.

In July, we formed a working relationship with Cathy Cooper. She has a master’s degree in community health and years of experience working with indigenous people in Sydney and rural areas of NSW. Cathy is indigenous and has a professional and personal experience with addiction. She believes SMART is applicable to indigenous communities and important in reconnecting people to their families and communities. This plays a big part in reclaiming their culture, which in turn supports them.

Cathy will start by helping us pilot facilitator training in Alice Springs, Northern Territory. The Grog Mob and

the Bush Mob invited SMART to conduct a two-day facilitator training in September. The Grog Mob is an alcohol and other drug treatment program that helps Aboriginal people with alcohol and drug addictions.

The Bush Mob runs programs for young people at risk of being disengaged and marginalized in their home or communities. They may be subject to substance abuse, violence, unsafe living environments, and disempowerment. The Bush Mob takes kids to the desert to reconnect with their culture. The aim to incorporate SMART during these experiences.

Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Workshop

In July, Josette attended the Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Workshop hosted by the Network of Alcohol and Drug Agencies (NADA) with Felicity (Flic) Ryan, a Wadi Wadi and Wamba Wamba woman who is an accredited trainer specializing in the development and delivery of training, including cultural awareness and competency, Aboriginal health and employment, and child protection.

The workshop will help SMART better understand Aboriginal cultures, nations and protocols, and family and kinship systems. It also covered discussions on discrimination, myths and stereotypes, and strategies on how to work with Aboriginal people to develop culturally appropriate programs and services.

SMART Media Project

SMART has been working with Kevagne Kalisch since 2006 on our first media project. Kevagne has been involved with SMART for the past six years as a participant and most recently as a volunteer. Kevagne brings a wealth

of knowledge, enthusiasm, and compassion to this project. He has experience in public relations and has assisted SMART over the past six weeks to receive testimonials from SMART participants on the benefits of attending SMART meetings and working the SMART program. You can read some of the testimonials at www.smartrecoveryaustralia.com.au.

SMART's Vietnamese Project

The Drug and Alcohol Multicultural Education Centre (DAMEC), a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization funded by NSW Health received funding from the Network of Alcohol and Other Drugs Agencies (NADA) to develop the SMART Vietnamese Project. Its goal is to produce a Vietnamese language specific, culturally appropriate version of the SMART program, and to pilot this with Corrective Services clients.

Currently, SMART sits on the advisory board for this project. We advise on project and evaluation strategies and support DAMEC in project implementation. SMART and DAMEC hope to develop other language-appropriate versions of SMART if this project is successful.

SMART Recovery® Volunteer Program

SMART joined forces with Volunteers Australia in July to recruit volunteers interested in facilitating SMART groups and supporting SMART on various projects. Some of these projects include the Be SMART: Family and Carer's Program; media; ongoing networking; in-services; and training. So far, more than 50 people have expressed interest.

As a result, SMART Recovery AU® will conduct its first Volunteer Training in September, and again in November and December.

SMART AU and juvenile justice, NSW

To prepare drug and alcohol workers, counsellors, and psychologists for the introduction of SMART into their centres in 2012, SMART Recovery AU® will conduct two information sessions in September and October.

Drug court, NSW, and SMART AU

Drug courts are specialist courts that deal with offenders who are dependent on drugs. They emerged as a result of growing disenchantment with the ability of traditional criminal justice approaches to provide long-term solutions to the cycle of drug use and crime. Drug courts help drug-dependent offenders overcome their drug dependence and criminal lifestyle.

This objective is to divert drug-dependent persons who have been charged with criminal offences, into programs designed to eliminate, or at least reduce, dependency on drugs. Reducing a person's dependency on drugs should reduce the person's need to resort to criminal activity, and should also increase the person's ability to function as a law-abiding citizen.

Drug court, NSW has recently adopted SMART as one of its diversion programs for offenders.

Facilitator Training Sessions Booked Through End of 2011

SMART Recovery AU® facilitator trainings are booked until the end of 2011. We've had an overwhelming number of training requests, which will take us to many places over the next three months, including Newcastle, NSW, Brisbane, Queensland, Bateman's Bay, NSW, Hobart, Tasmania, Gundagai, and NSW, to name a few.

SMART's UK Footprint Keeps Growing

by Richard and Carol, SMART Recovery UK® Office

The last few months have seen huge progress, with all the work in putting together the partnership model and training platform finally bearing fruit.

There are currently 89 SMART meetings in the UK, which is an increase of 150 percent over 2010. We think we'll maintain this pace as more people come through facilitator training and partners encourage the formation of more peer-led meetings.

The growth of the partnership scheme has exceeded expectations. Our target was for 100 sites by September; we've now got more than 200. The four largest treatment providers in the UK are in partnership with us and agree to encourage their service users to engage with SMART and set up meetings.

We welcome Jardine Simpson to the team. Jardine is our regional coordinator. She'll support and kick-start SMART across a large area of Scotland where there were no SMART meetings. We received funding that enables us to keep Jardine for one year.

Since January, 500 people have enrolled in our online training course. Roughly half are in recovery and half are professionals who want to learn about recovery. So far, 109 people have completed the 20-hour training.

Our national profile is still rising. A steady stream of conference and speaking requests are coming through. There's interest in what we're doing at national policy level. This helps get the message out and raise SMART's UK profile even more.

Success Stories from a SMART Country

by Curtis Boudreau, Facilitator & Regional Administrator for Western Canada

Hello from Alberta!

It sure is great to report more success from up here in Canada.

Our meeting attendance has been solid, averaging between about 25 to 35 participants at each meeting. The word is getting out about what SMART does and what it offers. We get two to eight newcomers each meeting. One meeting recently we had 20 newcomers!

Tim in Edmonton reports they average 12 to 14 people each meeting. He says things are a-ok up there. A meeting should also be starting soon in Lethbridge.

Facilitator training will start soon in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; Red Deer, Alberta; and Winnipeg, Manitoba. Maddalena in Montreal, Quebec tells me her meeting is now up and running.

Treatment centres and the psychological community are recognizing that we bring a breath of fresh air to the addiction world. My psychologist is well known in the community of addiction treatment providers. He told me recently that the word is out about us, and that we can solidly say we've been accepted. I've been getting the word out for the past five years; the effort seems to be paying dividends.

Child Protection Services accepts SMART as a valid recovery model. People are not only rebuilding their lives

with SMART, but now they're getting their children back, too. WOW!

The Provincial Probation System contacted me in June to do a presentation on SMART. As a result, it basically accepts SMART as a valid option for those who have mandatory addiction meeting attendance requirements for their probation or parole. A new attendee showed me his probation letter; the officer wrote "SMART Recovery® X 2 per week," as his obligation.

One of the reasons we're seeing so much success is that five years ago, I basically stopped fighting to change people's thinking about SMART. I started practicing "Unconditional Other Acceptance" (UOA). I let people know we are in no way competing with 12-step programs. When we compete for the addiction "business," people can fall through the cracks and end up dead.

I recognized that the 12 steps do work for a lot of people, and that they don't work for everybody. I believe that in order to be accepted, I should practice acceptance. When people have the wrong idea about SMART, I don't argue with them. Instead, I calmly say that I'm sorry they have the wrong idea about us, and why don't they come down to one of our meetings and check out what we are all about. By being kind and considerate, people see that I actually have recovery, and want to see how I got it. The old adage "kill them with kindness" seems to be what has worked for me.

One of the most important things I focus on when selling our program is the

self-management aspect of SMART. What works for one person may not work for the next, or even the next. We are four points and five tools that can be added to any existing program, and if the individual doesn't currently have a program, ours can stand on its own two feet. When a person is working the 12 steps, they are developing a relationship with a higher power. When working the SMART program, people are developing a relationship with themselves, and can finally look in the mirror for a solution. Both paths lead to the individual getting their head to the pillow clean for another day, which is success as far as I am concerned.

I'm the Narcotics Anonymous Activities Committee chair, and certainly don't want to compete with myself. I just let people know that the two programs aren't like apples and oranges; more like apples and giraffes. What one would get from a 12-step meeting is nothing like what they get from a SMART meeting. I wouldn't want to "cookie cutter" my recovery on anybody.

I love that SMART teaches us to "own" our program of recovery, because when you own something, you take pretty good care of it.

Chat at ya' next quarter.

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

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