



Life at the speed of sober

by green-in-michigan from the SMART Recovery blog

One of the things the SMART Recovery® community talks about is making changes in your life to sustain abstinence from your drug of choice or problem behavior. People share experiences such as creating new circles of friends, or even moving to new cities.

SMART talks about finding VACIs (Vitaly Absorbing Creative Interests). Many of us spent a lot of time planning — to use, using and then recovering from using. For many of us, our drug of choice was the focus of day-to-day life. Without it, many find themselves clear

headed with nothing planned for the evening and wondering what to do. As you build a new life, you re-engage old friends and pick old hobbies up. You also find new friends and new activities. These are all good signs of progress.

If you're like me you might find yourself very busy all the sudden. At some point, you threw yourself into your life that was dominated by your drug of choice. Now you've thrown yourself into a new life. There's family, work, friends, hobbies and keeping up with the general demands of day-to-day life, like paying the bills.

With increasing sobriety I noticed, among many things, just how damn busy real life can be. I found myself thinking, "How did I ever get all this stuff done when I was drunk so much?" Then I realized I didn't get ANYTHING done. Don't be surprised if you find yourself noticing the same thing.

Getting used to sober life can be a process of adjusting in a number of ways. A new life with many different demands on your time and energy is one of those

adjustments a lot of us have to make. I believe it's a positive sign that you're piecing together a new life.

In the same way you've developed skills for dealing with urges, keeping your motivation strong and navigating challenging situations, you might find you need to develop skills for managing your new life. Part of it might be honing

Inside:

Inspirations

Life at the speed of sober 1
4-Point Program® 1

People Power

1,000 meetings worldwide — and growing 2
SMART Recovery annual conference 2
Meetings for SMART facilitators 2
Webinars for SMART people 3
Recovery month "gets SMART" in Columbus, Ohio..... 4

SMART Ideas

A snake in the kitchen cupboard 4
Flexibility while thinking..... 5
Thank you and time out 6

SMART Progress

What SMART Family & Friends can do for all of us..... 8
Court outreach update 8
Overcoming Addictions: An effective, new web course for SMART Recovery..... 9
A tip o' the hat for passing the hat..... 10
SMART Recovery Online Update..... 11

President's Letter

Authoritative facilitating, part 3 12

Book Review

The Freedom to Recover — you are not powerless 13
Planting positive thoughts every day 13

International Development

SMART Recovery Alberta update 13

The SMART Recovery 4-Point Program®

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

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

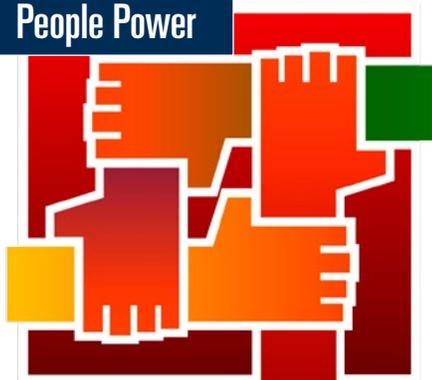
Our efforts are based on scientific knowledge and evolve as scientific knowledge evolves.

your organizational skills, starting with something simple like a to-do list (SROL facilitator job suggested a daily “it’s done” list as an interesting version of the to-do list).

Part of it may be simplifying your life and the demands on your time. I don’t have an easy answer to this; I’m still working on it myself. Like a lot of ideas in SMART, it is self-help and sometimes the most valuable things you learn often come in your personalized version. Keep at it; you’ll get it figured out.

In the meantime, welcome to life at the speed of sober.

People Power



1,000 meetings worldwide — and growing

We are pleased to announce our 1,000th SMART Recovery meeting is now underway!

On August 30, SMART’s 1,000th free self-help meeting got underway in Upland, California. Mike Massey, at the Inland Valley Recovery Center, is the facilitator.

“I became familiar with SMART Recovery after a two-week rehab program at Reunion House, which I was attending for treatment of my alcohol and pain pill abuse,” Mike said. “I’ve been free from my addictive

behavior since February 20, though I’d had many starts and stops through the years. I began participating in local and online meetings, and decided that it’s time for me to help others. I’m a good communicator and I like helping people.”

Mike took the July SMART Distance Facilitator Training, and says he feels “honored” to be offering a meeting in Upland.

In addition to a growing number of face-to-face community meetings, daily online meetings also are available. All are welcome to train as SMART meeting facilitators, including individuals who have struggled with addiction, treatment professionals and anyone with a desire to provide a helpful service to their community.

Come help us grow.

See you in San Diego! SMART Recovery annual conference “Leading the Way in Innovation” October 11-13, 2013

We’re looking forward to a great conference in San Diego, “America’s Finest City.”

Professional addiction experts and SMART volunteers pack the agenda with activities and presentations for this international conference.

Recent innovations in the field of addiction recovery, tool training and the newest developments at SMART Recovery worldwide will be the focus of the weekend.

A highlight of the event will be a dinner celebration of the *2nd Annual SMART Recovery Community Awards Recognition Ceremony*. This event will be held at the San Diego Yacht Club and is being sponsored by AtoN Center.



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Meetings for SMART facilitators

by Bill Abbott, SMART Recovery Regional Coordinator, AFT Trainer

As SMART Recovery grows and new facilitators are trained, there are increasing opportunities for further learning and growth.

A great thing about SMART is that its volunteers are invaluable. SMART

wouldn't work without them. The whole thing is run by volunteers, with the exception of three people in the central office in Ohio.

I don't know about others, but I get more back than I give every time I facilitate a meeting or other session. That's not why I do it, but is a nice result. I also learn something almost every time, and I like that, too.

But I digress.

In addition to a facilitators' support forum on the SROL message boards, there are two online interactive meetings worthy of comment.

The first is Fresh Start. It's a SMART meeting for SMART volunteers. SMART Recovery President Tom Horvath runs the meeting. You may not have a meeting to attend other than your own, where it might be uncomfortable or inappropriate to go into your personal concerns. Even if you have meetings to attend, you may just appreciate participating in one in which everyone knows SMART Recovery well. I've attended some of these and they are generally excellent. They're held on the second Monday of each month at 8 p.m. U.S. Eastern Time.

The second is Advanced Facilitator Training (AFT). These are training sessions over and above what is offered in the Distance Training. The informative AFT sessions providing opportunities to discuss problems and issues that are inevitable in the facilitating experience, even for those with much experience.

The primary focus of these sessions is meeting management. Other meetings focus on how to use SMART's Tools. AFT is offered twice monthly on the last Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m. ET, and the last Saturday of each month at 3 p.m. ET.

In New England where I live, we've held face-to-face monthly training sessions for regional facilitators for years. The discussions are always lively and usually productive.

AFT is designed to do the same.

Hope to see you there!

In May, Cognitive Behavior Therapy co-founder Dr. Donald Meichenbaum, and Dr. Julie Myers talked about how assessment tools, such as the SMART Recovery Activities Scale can be helpful in maintaining sobriety. They provided an update to this tool to make it even more useful for us here at SMART.

Ed Garcia kicked off a new series in July called "Adventurous Living," which we'll turn into a regularly featured discussion, scheduled approximately every two months. His initial presentation was met with great enthusiasm.

Last and certainly not least, on Labor Day weekend, Hank Robb presented "ACT-ing SMART," in which he explored how Achievement and Commitment Therapy (ACT) may be helpful to our participants, and how it can fit with SMART's program. Attendance at our events has increased by more than 40 percent over last year. Our podcasts have been met with increased listenership and enthusiasm as well.

We look forward to an exciting schedule for the upcoming year. We may have a surprise or two before the end of this one. Watch for details on our message boards, the SMART Blog, Facebook and Twitter.

Webinars for SMART people

by Dee Cloward, SMART Event Coordinator

Our Special Event Webinars continue to feature great presenters and topics. Interest and attendance have been record setting.



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Recovery month “gets SMART” in Columbus, Ohio

On September 5th, a Rally for Recovery was hosted on the mall of the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus, Ohio. Donna Conley CEO of Ohio Citizen Advocates was the event organizer and was delighted

to have SMART Recovery participate, along with many other recovery groups, with a display table. Photos from the event follow.

SMART Ideas



Participants on the Statehouse steps

A snake in the kitchen cupboard

by AnniesOK, SROL Volunteer

Nothing like waking up, preparing for an early start with work half asleep. Cuppa made and washing the dishes, I thought I would clean down the benches. I open the sink cupboard to take out the spray and notice this brown thing coiled around the drainpipe.

At first, I didn't realize it was a snake. One learns that in Australia, you don't play with snakes unless you know it's the pet carpet snake. Even then, always with caution. Calmly, I



Left to right: Rod Allwood, Facilitator, Mentor, OH, Peter Crates, Facilitator, Columbus, Ohio, and Donna Conley, CEO of Ohio Citizen Advocates, at SMART's info table.



Rod sharing SMART with interested event participants.

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closed the cupboard door, realizing I wouldn't have time to deal with it until I got home from work. At least, if it were in the cupboard, I would know where it was.

During the day, I thought about the snake often. How would I get rid of it? How did it get in? Through the screenless window? Perhaps it slithered through an open front door? It didn't really bother me that it was in the house, or in the cupboard, but it certainly made me think.

I thought about how many people fear snakes, because they can, in fact, be a real danger. I thought about the snake representing a potential relapse. I began to think about that often.

Do I have any openings in my life, where I am in danger of potential relapse? Areas in which a snake/relapse can unexpectedly slither?

I began to think about the a relapse just "appearing," and it made me think of something a friend said about how a simple thing such as changing sleep patterns can affect moods, even cause depression. For me, depression can have an end result of potential relapse because depression so strongly affects my thinking.

It is so easy, when I am imbalanced, vulnerable, dealing with stress, to let that "snake" slide in unnoticed.

Awareness is the key. Being aware of the places where the snake might slither in and doing what you can to prevent it; but, most of all, not fearing it if it does appear.

When confronted by a snake, the worst thing you can do is to attack; a slow and steady response is far better. I think using the SMART Tools has

helped me not only deal with my addictions, but deal with my life situations with slow, steady, nonreactive responses.

I am grateful that I can do that today!

Flexibility while thinking

by **Hank Robb, Ph.D., ABPP**

I'd like to offer this management rule: "Firm but fair, and flexible but not flabby." It makes a pretty good self-management rule, as well. In this column, I'll focus on flexibility.

It would be nice if, while standing, my palms would touch the floor when I bend over. I can't even come close. But the flexibility I bring forward is psychological rather than physical. In SMART Recovery we often consider flexibility to be something to apply to our thinking, and that is useful.

Consider the thought, "This is awful and I can't stand it." Commonly in a SMART meeting, we might suggest that we could act with more flexibility by changing that thought to, "This is bad, though it could be worse, and I don't like it, though I can stand things I don't like." That change would be an example of "thinking more flexibly." I agree such a change in thinking might be really helpful and we might call such a change, "flexible IN your thinking." I suggest a slightly

different kind of flexibility. We might call it, "flexible WHILE you're thinking."

This kind of flexibility might be best understood when considering how we might act with regard to what other people are saying to us. Suppose I have chosen to abstain from alcohol. Having made that choice, suppose further that someone says, "Have a drink!" and pushes one toward me. I could say, "No, thank you," rather than "OK," and then go on with my life. I also could say, "Thanks," take the drink, set it down some place and go on with my life. We might say that in the first case, I am flexible with my talking, I don't have to say "yes," but in the second case, we might say that I am flexible while talking. To say it another way, talk doesn't have to run the show.

Now, suppose we put inside your skin a version of the conversation that took place outside your skin. Let's again consider the thought, "This is awful and

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I can't stand it." Being flexible while you're thinking that thought would be similar to saying "thanks" and then just doing something else.

Do I have to act in quite upset ways while thinking, "This is awful and I can't stand it"? It might be easier in the moment to resist upset if I changed my thought to, "This is bad, though it could be worse. I don't like it but I can stand things I don't like." Though I didn't change my thought, I could change the way I behave while having that thought, just like I said "thanks" to the offer of the drink, and then didn't drink it.

Psychologist Steve Hayes, who was instrumental in starting Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, often tells individuals to respond to thoughts with, "Thank your mind for that thought." This is just a clever way of noting that we can remain flexible with our hands, arms, feet and mouth in the presence of our thoughts.

Another way we might say this is that we don't have to do what our thoughts "say" even if our thoughts "say" we do! We don't have to do what they say. Yes, we could work at changing them. And we also could work at being flexible in what we do, even without changing them.

Urge surfing works this way. Rather than being flexible while thoughts are around, we are flexible in our behavior while certain bodily sensations are around. We do feel like acting in a certain way. Yes, we really do feel that way. And yet, we don't have to act the way we are feeling. We can act one way while feeling another. We can, in a certain way, thank our body for those sensations and then choose the way we act when those sensations are present. This is another way of exercising "the power of choice." We can "surf the urge" rather than trying to change the urge.

Similarly, we can "surf our thoughts." We can develop the flexibility to have a thought and act in a way that isn't what the thought is telling us. We don't have to have a different thought. We just don't go along with the thought we have.

We could "surf our images" as well. How about the image of a frosty glass of cold beer. Well, "Thanks, Mind, for that image!" And, I go right on living my life as I choose even while the image is around. If this sounds a lot like DISARM — Destructive Imagery and Self-talk Awareness and Refusal Method — I think that's because they're similar.

There is another kind of flexibility that is important when it comes to being

flexible WHILE you're thinking, imaging or feeling. I'll call this flexibility "refusing to indulge" a thought even while you are having it. Let's go back to that frosty glass of cold beer. It's one thing to have that image and another thing to "indulge" it. You could imagine the sound of beer pouring, make yourself feel the cold, damp handle, and on and on. Or, rather than indulging the image, you could just have it. Just like you can have an urge without going into how great it would be if you just give in, you can have thoughts and images without indulging them.

With a little practice you might just be able to, psychologically, get your palms flat on the floor.

Thank you and time out

by Matt Robert, SMART Recovery Facilitator

One of the features that makes SMART attractive to people is its open discussion format. In an open discussion meeting, one can get the benefit of the opinions from everyone in the room, get feedback from different perspectives, and share the wisdom and resources of the entire group.

But open discussion can have a down side as well. There can be interruptions, errant topics introduced, clock hogs



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(time monopolizers) and floor bullies (turn monopolizers). Even the lively, subchaotic pandemonium when the discussion gets charged and engaging can be a potential downside in some settings. A skilled group facilitator can manage all of these situations.

However, there are some areas that cannot easily be managed, even by the most experienced group facilitator. For example, let's say a participant has had hard day and is feeling emotionally overwrought. That person really wants to participate, in spite of feeling fragile, for the catharsis of sharing their experience with the group. But they don't feel that they can handle the onslaught of "good advice" and free-floating feedback, which often follows emotional sharing. They would be "safe" in an AA meeting because no one would comment on or respond to their share because of AA's "no crosstalk" convention.

The rule prohibits group members from interrupting, stating opinions about another person's share or having conversations while another is sharing. The rule protects people and makes them feel safe, particularly in the early days of recovery. They can be sure that they won't be judged, reprimanded or lectured. Of course, the down side is that you lose the opportunity for open discussion.

So is there a way for SMART to have the best of both worlds? Is it possible, given SMART's commitment to open discussion, for us to have the benefits of sharing our views, opinions and experience and provide a place that is sensitive

to the different emotional states that can pop up in recovery at any time? It might be that SMART's foundational concepts of self-management and dealing with difficult thoughts and feelings can be useful here.

In a few New England meetings, we have started a sort of experiment to see if we can get the best of both worlds. We have introduced a gesture, the well-

The basic use of the "Thanks but I Need Some Time Out" signal is the situation described above, when someone wants to check in, but feels they can't handle any further input.

known "Time Out" T-shape hand gesture, so group members can manage their feelings if they are stressed and overwhelmed in a group discussion.

When a participant feels like it's all they can do to get themselves to the meeting and check in, they can use this signal, after their share, to indicate that they would *rather not get feedback* at that moment. We introduce it as "THANK YOU, but I need some TIME OUT."

No verbal explanation is required when a group member uses the time out signal. This signal isn't a snub, a rebuke or a personal affront. It's the emotional equivalent to signaling you can't talk because your mouth is full. The participant needs space and needs to be supported in that. It also lets the

facilitator know if they need to redirect the group.

The only device currently used by SMART for not engaging is the "Pass" option—when someone doesn't feel up to sharing. The example I've just given is for use when someone is just barely beyond using the "pass" option. The basic use of the "Thanks but I Need Some Time Out" signal is the situation described above, when someone wants to check in, but feels they can't handle any further input.

Another use may arise in the middle of a fully engaged discussion, when many people try to give advice or counsel. As we all know, this can be overwhelming and can trigger feelings of being reprimanded, judged or criticized.

SMART's principle of "self-management" and its focus on monitoring one's feelings fits right in here. If a participant starts to feel that they cannot handle the input, they can simply put up the T-sign. They're using their ability to monitor their feelings and manage their situation within the discussion—real-time practicing of the Tools in context.

This hand signal also could be useful to facilitators. It's not always possible to tell when a person who has shared something difficult is feeling overwhelmed by the feedback they get. If the facilitator perceives that one of the group members is coming close to browbeating or preaching, the impulse to stop the discussion is strong; however, facilitators can't always tell if the original speaker wants to shut down the interaction. With the hand signal, the original

speaker can neutrally ask that the “advice” stop.

When we let others in with the right communication, sometimes the benefits are large and the energy is palpable.



SMART Progress

What SMART Family & Friends can do for all of us

by Kathy Lang, Family & Friends (F&F) participant and future F&F Facilitator

SMART Recovery’s Family & Friends program helps those who have loved ones with addictive behaviors.

Based on the REBT therapeutic model and SMART Recovery Tools, F&F includes an active online message board forum, a 13-week curriculum-based program that is available twice weekly online and in face-to-face meetings in eight U.S. cities.

The newly published F&F Handbook uses SMART Recovery

Tools and CRAFT (Community Reinforcement Approach and Family Training) strategies to support families and friends.

While the focus of the program is on providing participants with strategies and tools that they can use to improve their lives, it is sometimes overlooked that the F&F program can benefit all of us in the SMART Recovery community:

Facilitators of recovery meetings: Have you ever felt grateful that a family member brought their loved one to your meeting then struggled with how to help the loved one — and other participants — feel free to speak honestly in the presence of their family member? How often have you heard a participant complain that the actions of a family member are making recovery more difficult?

Recovery group participants: Do you sometimes feel that your family and friends don’t have a clue about what you’re going through? That they are on your back and make it difficult to maintain your motivation to change?

All of us win when we suggest that family and friends connect to SMART Recovery. The intent of all F&F support

is to improve the relationship between the participants and their loved ones.

F&F resources provide opportunities to:

- learn how to improve communication,
- set and respect appropriate emotional boundaries, and
- consider the issues of trust and forgiveness.

Ultimately, the efforts of family and friends to make changes can go a long way toward creating hope, developing concrete skills and supporting their loved one’s efforts to overcome addiction.

We can help even more by offering face-to-face Family & Friends meetings in your community. Consider starting a SMART F&F meeting in your area. We think you’ll like the results!

Court outreach update

by Dee Cloward, Chair, Court Outreach Committee

We have not had an update on the courts in some time, but that’s not because we haven’t been busy. Our committee now consists of Claire Saenz, attorney and member of the SMART board of directors ;

SMART Recovery® 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 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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Doug Hanshaw, regional coordinator and a Colorado Drug Court coordinator; Bill Greer, knowledgeable in the public policy arena in Washington, D.C.; and me.

We are grateful to Joe Gerstein for his continuing role as advisor. In addition, we have been making good use of help from volunteers on projects big and small.

Here are some of our current projects:

- This summer, we launched a module in conjunction with the SMART Facilitator Training Committee, in which all trainees in the FAST Distance Training program are asked to contact a court in their area to get feedback and to build local awareness of SMART. We're using the information they gather to populate our SMART Court Acceptance Database.
- We acquired a free, robust tracking and customer relationship management (CRM) software tool for capturing and managing all related data, which will help with active contact management, collaboration and future data analysis.
- We initiated our Chicago outreach pilot in conjunction with local volunteers and Regional Coordinator Patrick Garnett, and hope to gauge interest, existing awareness and possibilities for expansion efforts in Chicago.
- We put together an introduction packet of materials for use in speaking to or corresponding with the courts. It will soon be available on the SMART Courts and Legal webpage.
- We will have a professionally designed video specifically for the courts that will highlight how

SMART can be of help to the courts. This is a donation of time and professional expertise by a dear friend of SMART who is an expert in digital learning. We anticipate its release this month!

We also have been the recipients of some excellent news this past month. The National Association of Drug Court Professionals has recognized SMART Recovery, along with AA, as an example of peer support in its new best practices document. In addition, a new court case in California has strongly reaffirmed that in the 9th District, mandating a program of support that includes solely a religious option is not acceptable, and that forcing someone with a religious objection into such a program warrants compensatory damage. This is not the law of the land yet, but it is becoming a practical "fact" of law and a guiding precedent.

We continue to evaluate how we can best help SMART grow in this area. We look forward to working with our regional coordinators, local volunteers and other interested parties to spread the word. We welcome your questions, and requests for materials and assistance in speaking with the courts.

And, we can always use volunteers! Please contact us at courtoutreach@smartrecovery.org.

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!

Overcoming Addictions: An effective, new web course for SMART Recovery

by Reid K. Hester, Ph.D., Director, Research Division, Behavior Therapy Associates, LLC

I am feeling all kinds of freedom that I had not experienced in the past. I feel like I am growing and stretching and learning. There has been a lot of internal progress, and I am so grateful for my time at SMART Recovery. SMART Recovery Online really is a home base for me—my touchstone. Community meetings have been beneficial to me, as well. I have had some good long lapses, but I have always stayed in touch online. And I've had some darn good successes, too—I'm now 2+ years sober and continuing to grow. [Dee, SMART Volunteer]

Although there have been many success stories during the 19-year history of SMART Recovery, new scientific evidence supports its effectiveness in helping people achieve and maintain abstinence.

Overcoming Addictions (OA, www.overcomingaddictions.net) is the web app we developed for SMART Recovery. It is based on SMART's protocol.

In our federally funded randomized clinical trial, we recruited 189 drinkers who were new to SMART Recovery. (And we thank the many meeting facilitators who helped us with recruitment!) We then randomly assigned them to one of three conditions:

1. OA alone,
2. OA + attending meetings, or
3. Attending meetings only.

We interviewed many others to verify the participant's self-report at baseline and follow-up.

We assessed the percent of days each participant was abstinent and the amount of alcohol/drug consequences in the three months before enrollment in the study, and again at three and six month follow-ups. After three months, participants in all groups nearly doubled their percentage of days abstinent (from 44 to 72 percent), and significantly reduced their negative alcohol/drug consequences. There were no significant differences between groups. Gains were essentially maintained at the six-month follow-up. These results are clinically significant as well as being statistically significant.

The initial report of the clinical trial has just been published online at the open access *Journal of Medical Internet Research* (www.jmir.org/2013/7/e134/; doi:10.2196/jmir.2565).

The Overcoming Addictions App is now available via the SMART Recovery website www.smartrecovery.org or directly at www.overcomingaddictions.net. The app is subscription based and a portion of the proceeds are donated to SMART Recovery. So help yourself and, in doing so, help others. Subscribe today!

"Overcoming Addictions was very helpful. I like how it built on itself as it went along. I also liked the tone of the language on the site. It felt very understanding and non-judgmental." M.D.

"I loved the course. The online meetings didn't work for me and Overcoming Addictions was very helpful to me in making the changes I wanted to make." J.B.

A tip o' the hat for passing the hat

The following meetings contributed a portion of their hat-passing donations (January – June) to support the SMART Recovery's mission, growth, and well being.

LOCATION	MEETING FACILITATOR
Arizona	
Chandler/Phoenix	Chris Debo
Phoenix	Erik Ketcherside
Phoenix	Brad Stacey
California	
Alameda	Dennis Dickey
Irvine	Brian Whitley
San Diego area	Alvaro Martinez-Fonts & Brooke Levis
San Diego area	John Allcock
San Diego area	Brooke Levis
San Diego area	Paul Pearah
San Diego area	Gigi Tills
San Diego area	Richard Zimmerman
San Diego area	Tom Horvath
San Diego area	Melinda Lassman
San Francisco	Brad Lyman
Silicon Valley	All Facilitators
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Miami Beach	Kevin Woodard
Port St. Lucie	Kacie Best
Sarasota	Darryl Mizer
Illinois	
Chicago	Patrick Garnett
Peoria	Michael Shear
Indiana	
Indianapolis	Patrick Kelly
Massachusetts	
Bedford	Tom Larkin
All MA groups	Joe Gerstein
Maryland	
Frederick / Gaithersburg	Ken Brown
Silver Springs	Hugh Delaney
Towson	George Bowden
Michigan	
Marquette	Mary Ritter
Port Huron	Matthew Hortop
Minnesota	
Twin Cities	Mark Hansen

LOCATION	MEETING FACILITATOR
Montana	
Miles City	Susan Mattocks
North Carolina	
Asheville	Trent Codd
Carrboro	John Boren
Chapel Hill	Mark Todd
Durham	Alex Millholland & Murray McNiel
New Jersey	
Whippany	Glenn Aloisio
Nevada	
Reno	Ronald Henderson
New York	
Deer Park	Drew Dittrich
Hauppauge	Tony Publiese
New York City Groups	Ellen Fox
Rego Park & Queens	Michael Abbate
Syosset	Kenny Golyzniak
Ohio	
Akron	Robert Mocas
Mentor	Rod Allwood
Mentor	Dan Burke
Oregon	
Portland	Shad Alexander
Portland	Hank Robb
Pennsylvania	
Camp Hill	Holly Hartman & Dennis Dougherty
South Carolina	
Greenville	Jim Fivecoat
Texas	
Carrollton	Mary Bittle
Fort Worth	Russell Elleven
Houston	Joseph Vargas
Utah	
Salt Lake City	Michael Graham
Virginia	
Alexandria	Jim Rives
Washington	
Bellevue/Seattle	Richard Sirota
Anacortes/Everett	Howard Pellett
Monroe Correctional	Howard Pellett
Twin Rivers	Howard Pellett
Tacoma	Mark Nichols
Wisconsin	
Madison	Henry Steinberger
Wausau	Chris Wilke

SMART Recovery Online Update

More being served plus auction and FUNdraising fun

SMART Recovery Online services continue to increase in number of participants served – we’re now averaging over 1,600 registrants each month! (Those who register have access to the online meetings, message boards, and our 24/7 chat room.)

Over 30 online meetings are available each week. Over 7,700 message board posts are made each month. And our 24/7 chat room continues to serve an ever-increasing number of participants! We have a multitude of dedicated online volunteers for each of the three service areas and we welcome your participation – including volunteering when you feel stable in your recovery.

And ... it’s that time! **The Annual SMART Fall FUNdraiser and Auction** will be held on October 26th through November 2nd. (Bidding will begin on 10/26.) Items include:

- Original paintings by talented online participants
- Autographed copies of books Vera Bradley purse
- Mr. Hammer’s Woot Box Handmade cards by Sam29
- Patricia Locke bracelet and earrings
- Ornaments and pendants
- And much more!

For a list of this year’s items, visit <http://s7.photobucket.com/user/ljoha...iser%20Auction>. Bidding will begin on Saturday, October 26th at 8:00 AM Eastern, and end at 7:00 PM Eastern on Saturday, November 2nd. If you’ve not already done so, sign up for the message boards via www.smartrecovery.org to participate.

As an added benefit of the FUNdraiser, we have a terrific lineup of **free** speakers on November 2nd, including:

9:00 AM EST – Jonathan von Breton – Random Rational Ruminations

10:00 AM EST – Michael Edelstein – Self-Esteem and Addictions - Hosted by Richard

11:00 AM EST – Anne Fletcher – Discussion of new book *Inside Rehab* – Hosted by Plowman

12:00 Noon EST – Rolf Ankerman – Discussion of the book *The Freedom To Recover* - Hosted by Rod A

2:00 PM EST – Hank Robb - Is There Really ANYONE Who Wants to Live Life Mindlessly? - Hosted by GJBXVI

3:00 PM EST – Bob Meyers - Why CRAFT (Community Reinforcement Approach and Family Training) Works - Hosted by Twoputts

Join in the FUN! Bid on auction items, make a donation, and listen to the terrific lineup of speakers! We'll look forward to seeing you in November!



President's Letter

Authoritative facilitating, part 3

In Part 3, we focus on the final two elements of the basic SMART Recovery meeting:

1. Pass the hat, pass the brochure
2. Checkout

In Part 4, we'll focus on enforcing basic meeting rules and staying out of dead zones.

Pass the hat, pass the brochure

When it's time to end the discussion, a simple announcement may suffice: "It's time to move onto the next section of our meeting, pass the hat and pass the brochure. Thank you for your contributions to this discussion."

If several people still seem eager to speak, you might say: "We have time for (one, two) additional speakers before we begin the next section of our meeting. If you still have something to say about this topic you can use some of your checkout time."

"Now it's time to pass the hat. There is no charge for this meeting. Even though SMART Recovery doesn't charge for its meetings or most of its other services, we still incur substantial expenses to provide the infrastructure that makes these meetings possible. Any donation you can make is greatly appreciated. If you think SMART Recovery has made a difference in your life, help us grow and reach out to others who still do not have SMART Recovery available to them."

As the hat is going around, you have time to make additional announcements: "I have copies of the SMART Recovery Handbook, 3rd edition, for sale for \$10. This new edition—the book came out in spring 2013—is a substantial re-write of the previous edition. It's an excellent resource, even if you already own a previous edition. Nothing substantial about SMART Recovery has been changed in it, but it presents the tools and exercises in a very straightforward and accessible manner. Meetings are an excellent time to learn about others. That learning is often highly valuable for recovery. However, studying the Handbook is for many the

best way to learn about the tools themselves. We highly recommend it.

"I'm also passing around a copy of one of our brochures. Someone you know needs to see this brochure, either because that individual could benefit from attending meetings, or because that individual is a professional. So, I'm appointing you an Ambassador for SMART Recovery. Help tell the world about us. Everyone seeking recovery benefits when they know they have choices about how to recover.

"I'd also like to remind you that our website, smartrecovery.org, has an enormous amount of free information on it, plus many DVDs or books you may find useful, in addition to the Handbook, which you can purchase there if you don't purchase it tonight.

"Also available on the website is the SMART Recovery web course, which became available in September 2013. This is a more expensive option than the Handbook, but may be perfect for some participants because of its interactive nature and complete privacy."

There may be other announcements: A local website, a local event, a current scientific study we are recruiting subjects for, etc.

Checkout

"Thanks for your contributions. We appreciate them. It's time to checkout. We'll start to my (right, left). Please tell us, or say pass if you wish, what was most meaningful to you during this meeting: Meaningful, useful, helpful, interesting. The checkout is also your opportunity to thank another participant for something he or she said."

I personally find the checkout the most interesting part of the meeting. Often participants who have been nearly or entirely quiet say some amazing things.

When checkout is complete, you can end the meeting simply: "Thanks for attending and participating tonight. I'll see you next week (or, our facilitator next week will be X)."

Although some meetings are better than others, I find almost meetings to be an uplifting experience. I believe most participants do, too.

Tom Howath

Book Review



The Freedom to Recover — you are not powerless

by Rolf Ankermann, 166 pages, published by Intuitive Action LLC (February 19, 2013); available in paperback or Kindle through Amazon. Reviewed by Rod Allwood, Facilitator, Mentor, Ohio

This is a book with which those who support the principles of CBT, REBT and the SMART Recovery 4-Point Program® will readily identify. *The Freedom to Recover* is a motivational guide for those with addictive behavior who have yet to establish a recovery plan or simply desire to make changes in their addictive lifestyle; however, those well into their recovery also will find it to be enlightening as they glean helpful comments and well-founded observations from its pages.

The Freedom to Recover will be especially helpful for those who have had negative experiences with 12-step programs — AA or recovery organizations that promote only AA — and are unsure of alternative solutions. The book is divided into two parts: "Exposing AA's Myths and Faulty Logic" and "Fulfilling Life's Potential through Evolved Thinking and Free-Will."

While not an autobiography, *The Freedom to Recover* is somewhat autobiographical in nature so readers don't feel "preached to," but rather as though they're along for the ride as the author describes in layman's terms how he put an end to his addictive behavior.

Ankermann isn't a therapist or a licensed drug or alcohol counselor; he is simply a man whose discontent with life resulted in his all-encompassing drinking. After two extensive rehab stints, hospital out-patient services, psychotherapy, hundreds of AA meetings, and many relapses along the way, Rolf learned that the ability to overcome addictive behavior can be attained by anyone with the courage to forgive their past, accept their present and embrace their future.

As Ankermann writes, "To choose sobriety is to choose life ... You are NOT powerless! Evolve, recover and set yourself free. I did it and so can you."

Planting positive thoughts every day

Reviewed by Richard Zimmerman, SMART Recovery Facilitator, San Diego, California

Seeds of Sobriety, by Liz Purcell 396 pages, published by Outskirts Press (October 17, 2006), paperback, available at Amazon.

Seeds of Sobriety, by Liz Purcell, is designed to be read daily, one page per calendar day, each day bringing a different aspect of sobriety and the challenges it brings. Liz's precept is to simply prioritize your sobriety, and what better way than to take a moment of your day and read one page, think about

what you've read and get on with it!

For me, after reading the entire book, I placed it on my nightstand and every morning I read the day's story again. Like an athlete would warm up before a meet, or a musician practices the scales, this book can help you to create a positive mindset, a foundation for a sober day.

I like that each page is anchored with an affirmation to not drink or use. The author suggests writing it down or repeating it as you look in a mirror.

Plant some "Seeds of Sobriety" in your life, every day; you'll enjoy the harvest!



International Development

SMART Recovery Alberta update

by Curtis Boudreau, SMART Recovery Alberta

Hello again from Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Wow, another quarterly update! Where did the last three months go?

Quick update: I got my leg out of the air cast, but way too early. I ended up using a cane until July. I look forward to the day my leg is healed enough for physical therapy.

There is now a video out presenting SMART Recovery and some of what we offer. The link is: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X-YyOfhf8Rs>, or you can Google Curtis Boudreau on You Tube.

We now have five weekly meetings in Calgary; the Friday meeting at the Victory Foundation is running smoothly. Attendance is still light, but

the meeting seems to be gaining traction as the word gets out that the Friday meeting is on again.

Tuesday meetings in Cochrane will be up and running in the fall. That will be our sixth weekly meeting in and around Calgary.

It has now been more than six months since our application to become a Registered Canadian Charity was submitted. The timeframe was estimated to be six months — or longer. The government really emphasizes the “or longer part,” of course! They haven’t been back for more info, and the accountant has let me know that is a positive sign.

I’m hopeful that we can have all of the legal wrangling done soon so we can get on the United Way’s approved list of charities before the next tax season starts.

More than eight years ago I had a dream, and now, thanks to SMART Recovery, I am living that dream! I just hope that I can continue to be of service to all of you and the recovery world in general. Your support has been wonderful and has been the fuel that has kept me forward looking and positive in not only the good times, but the trying ones as well.

“Life keeps happening even when we get sober – the thing is, we can handle it better with a clear mind.”

— Josie Girl, Online Meeting Helper

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

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