

**Inspirations**



**A life more ordinary**

by Marjin, SROL blogger

Many people share their stories of how they came to choose recovery — stories often sad, often familiar, but always hopeful. Mine is more characterized by bathos than pathos, but, nonetheless, I'll share my own story of hope.

My adult life has been one of extraordinary good fortune: some hard work, a great deal of luck, and the blessings of love from many people. A photograph of me would show a successful, healthy, and happy woman with wonderful children and a devoted

spouse. It would also show me pulling the languid shadow of alcohol.

There is no rock bottom moment to report. There are no car crashes, anguished tears of family members, or wells of sorrow. Instead there are moments of banal sadness, trivial to the world, but adding up to an inexorable sense of futility that made me choose recovery: telling my son that I would love to read a book with him, but “Let me get a glass of wine, and then we'll sit down together.” Telling my spouse a story about something that happened at work and hearing him reply, “Don't you remember? You told me that last night.” Trying to squeeze into a snug suit and having a breakfast of ibuprofen and coffee before heading to work. Waking up in the middle of the night and wondering, “Why am I doing this? Why did I do it again? Is there something wrong with me? Do I have a problem? Am I a bad person?” Resolving to improve only to rehash the same anxious, silent monologue the next night. Having dinner with friends, and

watching the level in the wine bottle go down, trying to pay attention to the conversation, but preoccupied by whether there is enough, whether we will order another, whether it will be noticed that I take the last from the bottle before anyone else gets to it. It culminates with an ordinary morning where I wake up,

**Inside:**

**Inspirations**

A life more ordinary . . . . . 1  
 4-Point Program® . . . . . 1  
 How my Recovery Community Organization and SMART helped me discover purpose . . . . . 2

**People Power**

English offenders take ownership of prison meetings . . . . . 4  
 Minneapolis-St. Paul SMART celebrates 1-1/2 year anniversary with growth . . . . . 5

**SMART Ideas**

April is SMART Recovery Volunteer Month — Volunteer scholarships available . . . . . 6  
 SROL welcomes teens . . . . . 6  
 Starts and finishes . . . . . 7  
 Help us improve the newsletter in 10 minutes or less . . . . . 8

**SMART Conference**

Annual Conference Proposal Submission Form . . . 9

**SMART Progress**

SROL message board version fabulous! . . . . . 12  
 SMART Recovery Online update . . . . . 12  
 Exciting online events continue to expand . . . 14

**President's Letter**

Authoritative Facilitating, Part 1 . . . . . 15

**Book Review**

Addressing addiction in health care providers . . 16  
 A tour of America's rehab programs . . . . . 17

**International Development**

Australia update . . . . . 18  
 Alberta update . . . . . 18

**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

turn to my spouse, and say, “I think I’m ready to quit drinking.”

Many stories include how much the person’s life has improved since they chose recovery. My story has no mended fences, no exciting new career, no newfound well of spiritual strength. But here’s what it has: the feeling of synchronicity when I am running in the park, and see a flock of birds traverse the sky above me. The sunlight on my daughter’s hair. The genuine smile and laughter that I can produce at work in the morning. Waking up in the middle of the night, inching closer to my beloved, and falling back asleep. The feeling that my life, my ordinary life, is rich and beautiful, and I am experiencing all of it.

My recovery story will never be worthy of a movie, or even a family legend. But it’s my story. And I will hold it tight to me like the fragile shard of sunlight that it is.

Thank you for reading.

## How my Recovery Community Organization and SMART helped me discover purpose

by Michael J. Graham, USARA Volunteer, SMART Recovery Meeting Facilitator, michael.graham@usara.us

My name is Michael Graham, I am in long-term recovery from meth abuse, and I am now a volunteer facilitator for a peer SMART Recovery group in Salt Lake City, Utah.

I was thrilled when Shari asked me to write an article about my journey to SMART Recovery for the newsletter. It was only a matter of minutes though until reality set in and I realized I have never done anything like this; to say I was terrified is the understatement of the year. But I realized that when I made my

commitment to recovery there would be many situations and activities that I would become involved with that may be a little out of my comfort zone, and voila, here I sit.

A little background might be helpful. My meth abuse started in 1972 when I was 14 years old. There were things that happened at a much earlier age that I am now convinced were critical in shaping my beliefs and behaviors while growing up.

When I was about 4 of 5 years old, my family and the others in the neighborhood would have weekend barbeques where, of course, the adults would drink beer. It was at these barbeques that I got my first buzz. My folks would let me sneak sips off their beers and it wasn’t long before the joke was, “Check out Mikey; he’s got a buzz going.” I would be running around, falling down, and getting all kinds of attention.

I know my folks didn’t mean any harm, but I have to ask myself, by allowing me to engage in this behavior, and by getting all the positive reinforcement, how did this influence my beliefs as I got older, not only about using alcohol but also using other substances like marijuana and methamphetamine?

Growing up, I was willing to try nearly anything that would give me a buzz, and the progression is what you would probably expect. After alcohol came tobacco, then marijuana, then LSD, then meth. And I had abuse issues right from the get-go because getting a buzz was the objective ... right?

I struggled through my 20s with problems in relationships and employment. In my 30s, my behavior led to the criminal justice system getting involved. By the age of 32, I was serving time in federal prison on drug and other charges.

It was at this time, while attending the new “pilot” drug abuse program at the prison in Tallahassee, Florida, that I was introduced to the concept of changing my behavior using cognitive behavioral practices and the use of tools taught in Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy by Albert Ellis. After a year in the program and successful completion, my counselor asked me to stay on as her peer counselor. Not long after that I was asked to participate in the prison’s community outreach program where I would go to local high schools and junior highs to speak to kids about substance abuse and incarceration.

This was without a doubt one of the most rewarding times of my life. Not only was I, for the first time in my life, giving something back, I also had a sense that I could finally retake control of my life.

I was released on parole in 1994 and returned to Salt Lake City, but to my utter dismay found that there was not one meeting or support group that used this approach to recovery. I felt like a ship adrift at sea. Unfortunately, as time and distance from my program grew, the closer I came to relapse, and six months later it happened.

For the next 12 years, my substance abuse cycle continued, in and out of treatment, in and out of jail, in and out of prison. I always kept the concepts of CBT and REBT in mind, but trying to apply the concepts and principles, with no outside support, was a daunting task.

In 2006, I was “on the run” again from my parole officer and my meth abuse was dictating my entire life when I said enough is enough! I turned myself in knowing I could not accept that lifestyle any longer. I finished serving my sentence and with the help of the Veterans Administration, walked out of

the prison doors and straight into a local treatment facility. This would be my first real step into long-term recovery, and my life was wonderful. I was working both a full-time job and a part-time job for the treatment center that I had gone through, and living on site. Living and working in a therapeutic environment was truly where I needed to be.

On October 10, 2008, I was diagnosed with throat cancer. One month later, while doing a PET scan in preparation for radiation therapy, the doctors found a spot in my abdomen. I underwent two months of radiation therapy for my throat cancer, and after recuperating for four months, a biopsy was done on the mass they had found; I was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Surgery followed 20 days later. After recuperating for a couple of months it became apparent that, due to my compromised physical health, I would no longer be able to perform my duties at work, and that meant I no longer had a place to live.

It was at this point I started looking at the statistics for pancreatic cancer survival, and, as irrational as it may sound, I convinced myself that I was going to be just another statistic and that I was dying. So, with that thought in mind, my last relapse was the biggest and worst of all.

Fast forward to November 1, 2011, and I'm again on probation for issues related to my meth abuse. I'm in the back seat of my probation officer's car on my way to jail, and I had a moment of clarity! It was not the cancer

or issues related to the treatment that were killing me; my behavior was killing me. It was my continued use of methamphetamine and the behavior related to that — and my continued use of tobacco — that was harming me. I came to the realization that if I continued, I would end up back in prison, and with the inferior health care there, it would probably kill me. So, the time for a change was now. RIGHT NOW!

I again went into treatment at my local Veterans Administration and successfully completed it in January 2012. I went home, but after only a couple of months of nothing going on due to my disability, I realized while laying on my couch watching Judge Judy that if I didn't get actively involved with my recovery, something very bad was going to happen.

I contacted the Utah Support Advocates for Recovery Awareness

(USARA), an organization for which I had volunteered before, and which is our local Recovery Community Organization, and asked if they needed a volunteer. Because I had volunteered there in the past, I was familiar with the program and knew they supported any pathway to recovery. That was appealing to me because I was already somewhat familiar with SMART Recovery, and because other approaches to recovery had not worked for me. The other approaches were all that had been available in Salt Lake City.

Volunteering there I started to develop a sense of value and purpose. I was doing something that was not only therapeutic but I could share my experiences with folks that came for help. The people who worked there welcomed me with open arms; after 40-plus years of meth abuse and incarceration, being welcomed by anyone was not something I was used to.

Not too long after starting at USARA, Executive Director Mary Jo McMillen and I were talking when SMART Recovery came up. I started going to SMART's website, SROL, and getting involved with the online groups and talking to folks in the chat room. I found SMART's "Get SMART FAST Distance Training." Mary Jo and I continued to discuss SMART, and she proposed that I do the Distance Training program. She offered to have USARA pay for my training. I jumped on this opportunity like a monkey on a cupcake!

The Get SMART FAST Distance Training was every-



**Practical Recovery**<sup>SM</sup>  
Self-empowering addiction treatment  
*It's not too late to be happy.*  
**practicalrecovery.com**  
**858-453-4777**  
La Jolla (San Diego), CA; PSY7732  
advertisement

thing I hoped it would be. The material was stuff I had become familiar with 20 years earlier in federal prison; I was so excited to have this approach to recovery in Salt Lake City. I was getting everything ready to start our first SMART peer-to-peer support group started, and Mary Jo made sure I had anything and everything I needed to get our meetings off the ground.

Having a local recovery community center with an individual like Mary Jo running it has been nothing less than a Godsend for me. Her knowledge and help has been absolutely invaluable to me. She provided a place for us to meet, and she has assisted me in so many other aspects to get these meetings started. But most importantly, her moral and emotional support truly have been the key to be able to do what I am doing.

We were shooting for a September start date for the SMART meeting, but on September 13 I was diagnosed with a grapefruit-sized abscess in my right lung and was admitted into the VA hospital in Salt Lake City. After a week, doctors told me I was going to a nursing home for three to four weeks, and that I would be on an antibiotic regimen for three to four months after that.

Enter Cheryl Graves. Cheryl and I went through Distance Training at the same time. She offered to get the SMART meeting going until I could return. Eight days after the first meeting was supposed to be held in September, Salt Lake City had another valuable pathway to recovery: SMART Recovery!

I am happy to report that Salt Lake City now has two weekly SMART meetings; we are getting a great response and great support in our community. I am also happy to report that for the first

time in decades, if not in my entire life, I have a sense of purpose, a sense of value, and I know that if I continue doing the same things I am doing now, I will be successful in my recovery.

I have had the support from so many wonderful people on this journey and I hope everyone involved knows how truly grateful I am. I would not be here without everyone's help.

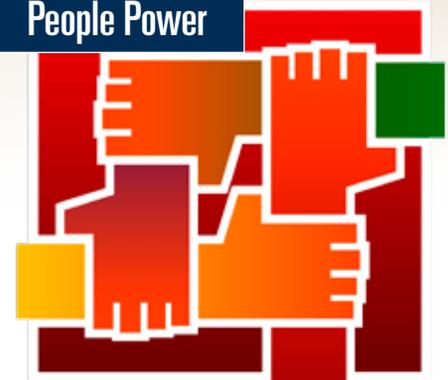
The message that I hope everyone will take to heart is that, whether we are in recovery or work in a volunteer or support role, our journey is important. For me, volunteer work has been a vital part of my recovery. It's not only personally rewarding but it keeps me involved with my recovery every day. I have a positive place to go every day — a safe and welcoming place that promotes recovery.

If you do not have a **Recovery Community Organization** in your community, please look into getting one started. If you do not have a SMART Recovery group in your community, please look into how you can get one started. These places and activities are invaluable to those who suffer from substance-use issues.

I assure you there is another person just like me looking for a place to get involved. Looking for a place to volunteer. Looking for a place to share their story and to help those who come behind us. Looking for a place where we can have a sense of purpose and a sense of value. Looking for a place that we can go to save our own lives.

I owe so much to so many who have been there to help on this journey we call recovery and I hope you all know and can feel my deepest and most heartfelt thanks.

## People Power



### English offenders take ownership of prison meetings

by Patrick Tuohy, Prison Officer Drug Worker, Her Majesty's Prison Hull, Yorkshire, England & SMART Meeting Facilitator

I am a prison officer working at her majesty's prison in Hull, which is in the county of Yorkshire in England. HMP Hull is a local prison which houses offenders who have been sent to prison by the courts.

We have a positive, forward-thinking management team who are always striving for new initiatives so as to give offenders every opportunity to address their behavior. This, in turn, leads to having a positive workforce that strives for the same results: Making sure that offenders have a chance to lead law-abiding lives when they get released from prison.

I have been a substance misuse practitioner (drug worker) for many years. I work with the COMPASS Offender recovery team within the prison. I deliver psychosocial group work aimed at addressing an offender's behaviour that is the result of their alcohol or drug addiction. This includes work around harm minimization.

I became a SMART Recovery facilitator four months ago. I attended many meetings in the community to gain experience. I hold SMART meetings within the prison once a week. These meetings go hand in hand with the

other psychosocial work we do with our offenders.

The feedback I get from the participants is very positive. They particularly like the informality of the meetings. They say it gives them ownership of their meetings; I merely facilitate. I must say that I am pleasantly surprised how open they are with each other. This is quite different from the psychosocial groups I deliver, although they do have their place on the offender's road to recovery and their quest for abstinence.

The SMART meetings always get a good discussion going. The members give each other advice and are not afraid to tell each other what they think if someone is struggling or has a negative attitude. I always make sure that no one feels uncomfortable or under pressure. I let it flow because I think that if a user is reliving his experiences, it is far better than me giving advice. They tend to notice more. That is the beauty of SMART meetings.

I get a lot of feedback about the SMART tools that I often use. They particularly like working on a Cost-Benefit Analysis. Sessions in which I use an ABC always go down well, especially when we discuss rational/irrational beliefs. It's not until you give them an alternative to their irrational thoughts / beliefs that they realize just how damaging they are. More often than not examples of rational beliefs come from fellow members. This helps them understand that they can think in a positive way, which, I think, surprises even them.

The SMART meetings are very popular and we may have to offer two a week just so I can keep up with demand.

I am hoping to have a couple of our participants trained up to be mentors so they can facilitate their own meetings.

## Minneapolis-St. Paul SMART celebrates 1-1/2 year anniversary with growth

by Mark Hansen, SMART Facilitator smarttwincities@aol.com

In Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, SMART Twin Cities celebrated its 18-month anniversary on March 12. This is a milestone as no open SMART meeting has survived this long in the Twin Cities.

Since SMART's inception in 1994, I had hoped that an open SMART group



would start in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area (also known as the Twin Cities).

After attending graduate school in 1980, I was introduced informally in 1982 to Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). These two programs radically changed the way I thought and how I felt about the world. Over time, however, I began to lose my REBT/CBT skills because I didn't know anyone locally who spoke the language.

When I did an REBT search many years ago, I discovered SMART and realized that I could join and be with people who do speak the language. I came to discover that open face-to-face SMART meetings had not

been able to gain a foothold in the Twin Cities for any length of time. The speculation was that 12-step programs, the Minnesota Model and Hazelden's dominance in the area had an impact on SMART's survival.

In March 2010, I took the SMART Recovery facilitator training. Shortly after, someone here started an open group that lasted for nine months.

Knowing at least four people who were left out in the cold, I started facilitating a SMART Twin Cities meeting on November 20, 2010 with those four

people. I have one flyer in one library but almost all of our leads come from SMART's website. We had a core group of about 10 people, some of whom graduated and some have become veterans.

Our average meeting has about 10 to 12 attendees; once we had 16 attendees. We have been blessed that two of

our members, Doug and Ellie, completed their facilitator training in February. They take turns teaching a Tool Training Lecture a half hour before the regular meeting, and help me out with the meetings. I hope they will spread their wings and facilitate two more SMART groups in the Twin Cities. Maybe then we can market SMART to some of the area treatment centers so that SMART Recovery becomes a household name. We have four or five other members interested in taking the facilitator training. We also had four graduate students from Hazelden attend our meetings after Jim Braastad spoke at a Hazelden forum on "Alternatives to AA."



We celebrated our 1-year anniversary last fall with a barbecue picnic at a park. Twelve people helped us celebrate.

It has been very rewarding to share the REBT/CBT tools of the SMART program and help others grow.



### SMART Ideas

## April is SMART Recovery Volunteer Month — Volunteer scholarships available

Each April, SMART celebrates Volunteer Month as a way to not only recognize the efforts of our many dedicated volunteers, but also to encourage others to help meet the demand to bring SMART Recovery to those in need and to share in the rewarding experience of volunteering.

Again this year, through the generous donation of an anonymous supporter of SMART Recovery, there are volunteer training scholarships available during April to help those who qualify for financial assistance to become SMART volunteers.

Scholarships are available to people who'd like to become face-to-face and online facilitators, and also message board, chat, and other volunteers.

Applications for the scholarships will be accepted through April 30. If you've considered becoming a SMART volunteer, now may be your best time to get trained, get involved, and experience the rewards of helping others. We encourage you to apply.

If your application is approved, and you successfully complete the training and submit your Volunteer Registration Form, which contains your meeting information, you will receive a Meeting Starter Kit (a \$45 value) consisting of four DVDs, a SMART Recovery® Handbook, and a SMART Recovery hat to use when "passing the hat" at your meeting. The SMART Recovery Facilitator's Manual is available as a free downloadable PDF when you register for training.



**April  
is  
Volunteer  
Month**

See if you qualify  
for a Volunteer  
Training Grant!

### Matching donation

This year, we are seeking to raise \$780 — \$10 for each of our 78 online volunteers and technical assistants. And we have a donor who is willing to match \$780 in donations! Help SMART continue to grow by providing a donation in April. If you attend a face-to-face meeting, feel free to make a donation in honor of your local facilitator — visit our [donate page](#).

If you're interested in volunteering for our online community, read the [volunteer descriptions and requirements](#) for these positions before you apply; additional

training may be required for some online volunteer positions.

We value the dedication and contributions that our face-to-face (F2F) meeting facilitators provide. More F2F meetings are needed throughout the US. Facilitators may distribute the flyer to meeting participants to encourage them to start SMART meetings in your community.

As always, a big thanks to our valued SMART Recovery volunteers!

## SROL welcomes teens

by Olive, Online Teen Meeting Facilitator and Chair,  
SROL Teen and Youth Team

SMART Recovery Online is proud to announce the debut of a new program for teens and young adults, as well as an updated teen handbook.

Originally developed by a grant from the Community Coalition for Teens in Greenfield, Massachusetts, then expanded through a grant from Juvenile Justice in Australia, the Teen and Youth Handbook takes the young reader through SMART's 4-Point Program and tools in a way that teens can relate to with appealing graphics and contemporary design.

The new SROL Teen and Youth Program consists of message board discussion forums and a weekly online meeting on Sundays at 8 p.m. Eastern Time (U.S.). Both address the challenges teens in recovery face. SMART Recovery tools and resources provide practical, actionable steps for teens dealing with any sort of maladaptive behavior.

Trained volunteers and peer support provide a safe environment for young people to talk about issues, share ideas and strategies, and encourage each other through recovery. We are very excited to be offering SMART to young people through this new venue.

If you know a teen suffering from substance or behavioral addiction, please refer them to SROL.

You can buy the Teen and Youth Handbook from the SMART Recovery bookstore.

## Starts and finishes

by Hank Robb, Ph.D., ABPP

Each of us gets ready for our day in roughly similar ways: washing our face, brushing our teeth, getting dressed and combing our hair, or, if you're like me, shaving your head! The point is we have a set of activities to prepare for the day ahead. Well, I can assure you that during any given day you are going to deal with plenty of thoughts, images and bodily sensations that just show up without invitation. And, you can get ready for them just like you get ready for the day in other ways.

The thing about your bodily sensations is that they often suggest you do something about them. Maybe doing something is wise but, perhaps, just benignly neglecting a particular bodily sensation would be the wisest way to deal with it. By wise I mean what works best in the big picture of your

life and not just the little picture of the moment.

Said another way, you don't HAVE to scratch an itch just because that itch showed up; sometimes, it would be better to just let it be. Thoughts and images are often accompanied by invitations to go traveling to some other time or place. If you accept these invitations, you are no longer psychologically where you are physically. And, you aren't likely to do as well with what is right in front of you if you are psychologically some place else.

### From start...

I'd suggest devoting about 10 minutes to this activity, though some people spend more time. You need a place to be for about 10 minutes that is sufficiently quiet; a lot of noise makes the task more difficult. During that time, just notice your bodily sensations, thoughts and images as they show up. You are not trying to notice something in particular like your breathing. You are just trying to be present with whatever sticks out most in your awareness; whatever you are most conscious of in any given moment. Sitting usually works best, and you can do it on a bus or a subway, if there isn't too much racket. It's not so great to do

while driving because you need to pay attention to the road!

With regard to your bodily sensations, your job is simply to notice them as nothing more than bodily sensations and benignly neglect them. By that I mean that you can have an itch and not scratch. You can be present with any bodily sensation and not make efforts to fix or change it. Basically, you'll be developing your ability to surf an urge rather than give in to it. Why practice this? Because during the day you are going to have plenty of bodily sensations, it is more useful to choose how you respond to them rather than just react. This activity helps you develop the power to choose.

With regard to thoughts and images, your job is to notice the invitations to go traveling with them to some other place or time. Instead, remain psychologically in this moment and in this place. When thoughts and images are nothing more or less than thoughts and images, you don't HAVE to take a ride with them even if they are very insistent that you do.

Said another way, the thoughts and images come and go but you don't go with them. You CHOOSE to psychologically stay where you are. Why

advertisement



*"The Life Process Program is the most advanced addiction-prevention program available in the U.S. today"*

— Stanton Peele, PhD, JD

### *Help yourself or a loved one.*

*The Life Process Program<sup>®</sup> is an 8-week residential Life skills / cognitive behavior training program that offers an alternative to 12-step drug rehab and alcoholism treatment programs.*



**Call toll free  
888-778-5833**

Published by the Alcohol & Drug Abuse Self-Help Network, Inc. dba SMART Recovery<sup>®</sup>

7304 Mentor Avenue, Suite F, Mentor, OH 44060 • Phone: 440/951-5357 • Fax: 440/951-5358 • E-mail: [information@smartrecovery.org](mailto:information@smartrecovery.org) • [www.smartrecovery.org](http://www.smartrecovery.org)

practice this? Because, life is right here, right now. If you have gone psychologically traveling to some other place or time, you are not as likely to do as well with what is right here, right now. Additionally, if during your 10 minutes you find that you have gone psychologically traveling you can CHOOSE to immediately return to the present moment — the one you're actually living in. Just by the way, most people find they frequently do go psychologically traveling with a thought or image and have to bring themselves back to here and now several times within a 10-minute period. Practice will make better but it isn't likely to make perfect.

### ...to finish

The suggestion for the end of the day requires a notebook and something with which to write. Shortly before going to bed, write down your answer to this question, "What did I do today that was actually worth my time?" Notice, this question isn't about whether the activity was fun or asking if you liked it or wanted to do it. The question is about activities that were worth your time. For example, doing your homework for school or changing a baby's diaper. Neither of those activities was likely to have been fun or something you liked but both were likely to have been worth your time when you looked back on them.

Write down your answers! Why? Because if you have a written record, you will be able to look back over it, and by doing so, you will, over time, generate a list of activities that your experience has shown to actually have been worth doing. It won't be a list of things someone told you would be worth your time or SHOULD be worth your time. It will be a list that your experience has shown you to be worth your time. If, after three or four weeks, you don't have much of a list, then add this question, "What would I be willing to do tomorrow that I don't usually do?"

If you do what you write down, then you will have one new activity that you can consider to be worth your time. It's important that the activity is something you'll do willingly. If you do it grudgingly, you probably won't include it as something that is worth your time.

These two activities will help you prepare for your day and evaluate how you spent your time so you can better decide how to spend the next day.

Together, the two exercises take about 20 minutes. Try them for a month. By then, you'll likely know if they are worth your time!

## Help us improve the newsletter in 10 minutes or less

In our quest to make News & Views valuable, enjoyable, and interesting, we're asking for your feedback.

Please take this survey.

There are 10 questions about the newsletter and it should take about 10 minutes to complete.

The survey will be open through July 31st so don't delay.

*Thank you for your participation!*

## 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 (**D**estructive **I**mages **S**elf-talk **A**wareness and **R**efusal **M**ethod)
- Brainstorming
- Role-playing and Rehearsing
- Hierarchy of Values

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

Published by the Alcohol & Drug Abuse Self-Help Network, Inc. dba SMART Recovery®

7304 Mentor Avenue, Suite F, Mentor, OH 44060 • Phone: 440/951-5357 • Fax: 440/951-5358 • E-mail: [information@smartrecovery.org](mailto:information@smartrecovery.org) • [www.smartrecovery.org](http://www.smartrecovery.org)

### SMART Recovery® 7th annual conference: "See you in San Diego"

October 11–13, 2013 ♦ Humphrey's Half Moon Inn, San Diego

This year's annual conference will be held at Humphrey's Half Moon Inn in San Diego, "America's Finest City." Those who attended the 2010 conference gave this location great reviews and we're looking forward to a productive 2013 conference, packed with inspiration, information, and fun. The planning committee has been busy working on the details for months.

#### Call for presentations

Would you like to be a presenter at the conference? Do you have a topic of interest to share with the SMART community? The conference committee must hear from you by May 15. Please use the Annual Conference Proposal Submission Form following this article to submit your topic.

#### Lights! Camera! Action!

The conference team is asking SMART participants who are interested in sharing their experiences with SMART to submit short videos of their stories. These submissions will be edited into a montage to be used at the conference.

Grab your smartphone, camcorder, or other recording device and record a short — 3-5 minute — video about how SMART has had an impact on your life. Here are some content ideas:

**General participants:** How did you learn about SMART? How did you get started? What struggles did you have? If you tried other recovery programs, how was SMART different for you? When did it come together for you? How long were you actively working your recovery? Where are you in your recovery now?

**Professionals:** How did you learn about SMART? How did you get started? What concerns did you have about the organization or its approach? How do you use SMART in your practice? What have been your most satisfying moments in using SMART with a client?

Please send completed recordings to Lorie: [ljohammer@gmail.com](mailto:ljohammer@gmail.com). (If the file is too large to send via e-mail, Lorie will share options with you.)

#### Optional excursions

On October 11 we'll tour local sites or visit the USS Midway in the San Diego harbor. More information and an online registration form will be available soon and updates will be provided in the July issue of the *News & Views*.

#### ANNUAL CONFERENCE PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORM

#### Instructions

1. Submissions open to the SMART Recovery community of volunteers (online, face-to-face, behind the scenes, committee members, international, BOD, etc.)
2. Accepting brief presentations only (5 to 15 minutes each, so we can include as many perspectives as possible) for presentation on Saturday, October 12.

#### "Sharing Our Experiences"

Presentations may be about past milestones or achievements, present-day initiatives, or future plans. Suggested topics include: models or strategies for growth of meetings; positive results with outreach, marketing, court systems, fundraising, volunteerism, training, social media; research projects; innovations on meeting format or tools; recent developments in areas of the organization, such as the blog, Family & Friends, etc. Creativity and new ideas welcome!

3. Individual, team, or group presentations welcome.
4. Live demonstrations or interactive presentations welcome.
5. Please complete all information on this form.
6. DEADLINE is May 15, 2013.
7. Accepted presenters will be informed via e-mail by June 15, 2013.
8. E-mail this completed form to Olive, Submissions Coordinator, [mmmhatch@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mmmhatch@sbcglobal.net).

*\*\*Please be advised that your name and other contact information may be printed in the conference brochure or distributed on other mediums (i.e. *News & Views*, SMARTCAL) for promotional purposes unless you explicitly inform the Conference Committee you wish to keep some or all of your personal information confidential.\*\**

## Application

Presentation title: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of presentation, maximum 125 words (*This may be edited for use in conference material*):

\_\_\_\_\_

Audio-Visual needs: (*options: Easel, VCR/monitor, LCD Projector for PowerPoint*)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Lead presenter name:** \_\_\_\_\_

(*to receive all correspondence*)

Affiliation(s) with SMART: (*e.g. Message Board volunteer, member of Materials Review Committee*):

\_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been volunteering with SMART Recovery? \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Affiliation (*optional—your employer or professional credentials*):

\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing  
address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*\*Please be advised that your name and other contact information may be printed in the conference brochure or distributed on other mediums (i.e. **News & Views**, SMARTCAL) for promotional purposes unless you explicitly inform the Conference Committee you wish to keep some or all of your personal information confidential.\*\**

If more than one presenter, list all others, their affiliations with SMART and their contact information. (Other presenters on your team may be SMART participants or trainees, and do not have to be active volunteers):

**2nd presenter name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation(s) with SMART: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been volunteering with SMART Recovery? \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Affiliation (*optional—employer or professional credentials*): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**3rd presenter name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation(s) with SMART: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been volunteering with SMART Recovery? \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Affiliation (*optional—employer or professional credentials*): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**4th presenter name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation(s) with SMART: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been volunteering with SMART Recovery? \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Affiliation (*optional—employer or professional credentials*): \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional information, if needed: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*\*Please be advised that your name and other contact information may be printed in the conference brochure or distributed on other mediums (i.e. **News & Views**, SMARTCAL) for promotional purposes unless you explicitly inform the Conference Committee you wish to keep some or all of your personal information confidential.\*\**



## SMART Progress

### SROL message board version fabulous!

by Moderator\_Quellcrist,  
SROL Volunteer

The SMART Recovery Online message board has recently undergone a major upgrade. In addition to a fantastic new look, it has several new



features that make using the site and navigating around it easier than ever.

If you've been on the message board, you know that it is a supportive 24/7 place to talk about your recovery journey, learn how to apply SMART tools to your life, use your experiences to help others, and share the benefits of your new life abstaining from maladaptive behaviors of all kinds.

As a member of the SROL community, you also have access to daily online peer support meetings, and a vibrant and supportive chat room. Online meetings function much the same as face-to-face meetings, and you can find everything from supportive listeners to a little R&R to real camaraderie in the chat room.

#### New features

**Streamlined registration:** If you have not checked out the message board, registration is easy. You will be asked a few questions over two screens, and for a

username and password. Think carefully before choosing a username because this will be the name you are known by on the message board, in the chat room, and in meetings for as long as you are a member. We recommend that you consider not using your real name if anonymity is important.

**Mobile access:** One of the most requested features has been the ability to access SROL with mobile devices —smart-phones and tablets. Most mobile devices can view and use the full site from their web browsers. The message board will recognize that you're on a mobile device and load the appropriate mobile skin, which makes it easier to navigate the site on a smaller screen. If you want to see the site as it appears on your computer, scroll to the bottom of your mobile screen and click on "Full Site."

**Forum Runner app:** As an alternative to viewing the board using your mobile device's browser, try the Forum Runner app, which is available through the App Store or GooglePlay for \$1.99. The app can be used to view other forums, as well. In Forum Runner, search for "SMART Recovery" to find our message board.

**123 Flash Chat app for text meetings and chat:** As the not-so-old saying goes, "There's an app for that," and that includes accessing meetings and the chat room. The free 123 Flash Chat app allows Android users to attend voice and text meetings. Although the voice option is not yet available for iOS, Apple users may still attend text meetings and the chat room.

**Personal blogs:** Message board participants can now set up personal blogs to share their thoughts and experiences about their recovery journey. Blogs can be set to either public — viewable to all of SROL — or private, which is viewable only by people you choose. You also can set your blog to be completely private — no one can see it

and you may use it as an online journal.

**FAQs:** Thanks to the dedicated efforts of our tech volunteers, especially Richard, the new updated message board is faster and easier to use than ever but if you do have questions, you can view a list of common questions by clicking on FAQ on the forum navigation bar.

Research shows that addiction recovery is facilitated by social support, such as the support provided by SROL. Whether you're looking for information about SMART's tools, meetings, a social chat, or an engaging, thoughtful exchange of ideas and experiences on a message board forum, or would like to set up a personal blog, SROL can meet your needs.

### SMART Recovery Online update

by Jonathan von Breton, SROL

I thought long and hard about writing this column. It wasn't easy and I have mixed thoughts and feelings about it.

This is my last column as director of SMART Recovery Online. March 31 is my last day in that role. Executive Director Shari Allwood and I agree this is best for all concerned.

I started as SROL director in January 2006. That was seven years ago. SROL was a very different place then. It was tumultuous. Some volunteers spent more time competing for power than helping the people who came here. Every decision was argued to death and people routinely brought things to the president of SMART Recovery if a decision didn't go their way. I was hired to establish online order out of chaos.

When I was hired, the task was simple. Basically, I was to end the squabbling and infighting on SROL. As you can imagine, the volunteers who were used to running SROL weren't happy to find a "director" in charge. I was called many names. It wasn't everyone, but it was a vocal few who wouldn't let up.

Published by the Alcohol & Drug Abuse Self-Help Network, Inc. dba SMART Recovery®

7304 Mentor Avenue, Suite F, Mentor, OH 44060 • Phone: 440/951-5357 • Fax: 440/951-5358 • E-mail: [information@smartrecovery.org](mailto:information@smartrecovery.org) • [www.smartrecovery.org](http://www.smartrecovery.org)

This went on for two years and ended when about seven people agreed to leave the organization.

Since then, I have tried to encourage a culture of volunteers with a focus on helping people while growing in their own recovery. I established a Leadership Committee with liaisons from each volunteer group: chat, message board, and facilitators. The two technical administrators, the executive director, and a member of the Board of Directors also sit on that committee.

SROL has grown hugely during this time. When I started greeting people in the Welcome Forum on the message board, I posted about 25 greetings per month. In December 2012, I posted 155 greetings. In January, I posted 243 greetings to new participants. And those were just the new people who introduced themselves on the message board.

When SROL started, it hosted two weekly meetings. When I became director, it had about 19. At last count, SROL hosts 27 meetings.

In 2006, we might have had six to eight people in the chat room at any one time. Now it's not unusual to have as many as 25.

Major discipline issues, problems with and between registrants, flame wars, and other issues were a weekly, if not daily occurrence when I was hired. Today, they are extremely rare. That is surprising given that we have more people using SROL than ever before. One would think that the number of incidents would go up based on sheer volume. But it has gone down dramatically.

The volunteers in all areas of SROL now get excellent formal training. It used to be all on-the-job training. Most of the credit for their training goes to Jim B.

I like to think that I had a lot to do with the growth of SROL and its culture shift to a far friendlier place.

SROL's needs have changed dramatically, and I can no longer meet those needs.

SROL does not support itself financially and never has. The main organization, SMART, funds SROL. When we have a major, successful online fundraiser, we bring in maybe \$3,000+. That's great until you realize that covers a little more than one month of expenses. So, fundraising is now a huge priority. I am not at all good at fundraising and I know that. However, SMART will save a considerable amount of money by ending the generous fee they paid me in the role of director of SROL.

SMART Recovery and SROL seem to have hit critical mass. They are growing exponentially now. Whereas we used to get a few hundred new registrants every month, we now get more than 1,000. We are getting a lot more court-ordered attendees, and most of our meetings are full. SROL also is setting up an online teen program. All of these require someone who is good at strategic planning. I'm not.

I accomplished a lot for SROL and I'm proud of it. But it needs a different kind of leadership than I can provide. I plan to continue to volunteer; however, it's best my time as director ends.

I have made too many good friends to even try to list them all here. There are too many outstanding volunteers, past and present, to thank individually as well. Please know I'm grateful to and appreciate you all.

I do want to thank the members of the Leadership Committee for all their hard work and support:

**Shari Allwood** — executive director of SMART Recovery

**Hammer** — board of directors member

**Richard** — chief technical administrator

**Yesterdaywas (YW)** — technical administrator

**Kalar** — online facilitators liaison

**Kelly** — chat room volunteers liaison

**Jim** — message board volunteers liaison (outgoing)

**LMR** — message board volunteers liaison (new)

I learned a huge amount during my time as SROL director. Chief among these are:

1. Don't take anything personally. It usually has nothing to do with you.
2. Don't take anything personally especially if it really is meant personally.
3. No matter how carefully you consider an issue, someone will not like the decision.
4. What is fair to one person is not fair to another.

I hope you will continue to support SROL. Donate money if you can. Volunteer if you have the time.

**A note from Executive Director Shari Allwood:** I've had the pleasure of knowing Jonathan for the almost 19 years SMART has been in service. And, like SROL, I have personally benefited from his friendship and the services he has provided to the organization.

As JV mentioned, it was a bit of a rocky start when he rode into town as the "new sheriff" in a formerly lawless town. Interestingly, SMART's online activities weren't the only online addiction-oriented services to have rough starts (colleagues at other recovery support groups shared similar stories), but

Jonathan's assistance in a paid position helped get things settled and productive. His creation of the Leadership Committee enables SROL to run amazingly smoothly with the constant care of the liaisons and volunteers.

SROL faces some challenges — funding, as well as ensuring there are enough trained volunteers to accommodate the ever-growing participation in online meetings, in the chat room, and on the message boards — but there are lots of things to look forward to and address as SMART and SROL continue to grow. With SROL volunteer input, we'll be determining how best to meet the existing and future challenges. In the meantime, SROL is a much better place based on the volunteer assistance Jonathan provided over the years, combined with his role as a contractor to SROL.

Jonathan has many gifts and talents, including counseling (in Rhode Island); training — anyone who ever attended a conference with Jonathan and Emmett Velten's training duo, or Jonathan alone, can attest to his skill as a trainer — and his passion to ensure that REBT and SMART tools are available to individuals is always evident in all that he does.

Thank you, Jonathan, for your many years of service to SMART. We look forward to your continued assistance to SROL and the organization.

## Exciting online events continue to expand

by Dee Cloward, Special Events Coordinator

Since the last issue of the *News & Views*, Dr. Bill Knaus joined us in late December to present *13 Tips for 2013*. He is a polished, engaging speaker with a wealth of knowledge. It was a nice counterpoint to the more traditional — and traditionally unsuccessful — New Year's

Resolution approach, and we enjoyed finishing out the year with his talk.

We also had the good fortune to participate in the release of Anne Fletcher's new book *Inside Rehab*, as one of the national venues in which she chose to speak upon the book's release. We hosted "An Hour with Anne Fletcher" in late February, which was highly successful. Anne's earlier best-seller, *Sober for Good*, is often noted by participants as a life-changing work and one that led them indirectly to SMART. This event had record attendance, and we couldn't have been more pleased.

And, we just heard from SMART President Tom Horvath about one of SMART's foundational principles, unconditional acceptance of self, others, and the world around us was titled "Acceptance is ... Embracing Reality." I can't think of a better person to delve into this in a clear approachable way than Dr. Horvath. This was the topic of choice, voted on by the SROL community.

We'll be bringing other events with speakers familiar and new. Drs. Julie Myers and Donald Meichenbaum will join us in May; Ed Garcia will be back;



and Dr. Hank Robb will be joining us early this summer, too. Events are announced via our website, message boards, Facebook, Twitter, and our blog.

If you have missed any of our live events, you can still hear them on

podcast, which you can find in the podcast library. You can listen to the podcasts online or download them to your computer or mobile device. You also can find all of our podcasts on iTunes. Search for SMART Recovery in the free section.

We are enjoying a new venue for our interactive SMART events called GoToWebinar. This website allows anyone to attend our presentations for free from any PC, smartphone, or tablet that has an internet connection. GoToWebinar will help us broaden our reach to the general public.

## We couldn't do it without our volunteers

There are some really great people who are involved with SMART's events, without whom the presentations and podcasts wouldn't happen.

**Ben** has been dedicated to our podcast area almost since its inception. He puts all our podcasts together, makes sure we have the best sound possible, often records, slices and dices, writes the copy, creates the podcast intros, and manages the podcast site for us. He's been doing this for well over a year and our podcasts would not exist without him.

**Suzy** has undertaken numerous demanding artistic endeavors for SMART. She is the artist and designer for our wonderful video series with Dr. Bill Knaus, bringing his work to life with her artwork, photographs, slides, and animations, as well as putting each of them together — painstaking work and what a beautiful result! She also has designed several of the banners we use at events. Most recently she did the artwork for Dr. Horvath's discussion on Unconditional Self-acceptance (USA) and is actively involved in many exciting local SMART endeavors in the Boston

area, including its website and presentations. Oh, and she is a facilitator too. She is an amazing talent!

Don puts together nearly all of the music for our video series and has just created — composed and performed — some wonderful new music just for SMART use. You will hear a piece of his beautiful new music beginning with our 2013 podcasts.

The events team looks forward to continuing to bring you helpful and enlightening topics and speakers. We invite you to provide us with feedback about our events. E-mail us at [information@smartrecovery.org](mailto:information@smartrecovery.org).



### President's Letter

## Authoritative Facilitating, Part 1

Consider what would be required to answer “yes” to each of the following questions: Could you pass a second grade math test? Could you teach second grade math to someone? Could you teach second grade math to a classroom of second graders?

These questions point to the differences between knowing a subject, teaching it one-on-one, and teaching it in a classroom where learning may not be the highest immediate priority for all students.

So it is in SMART Recovery meetings. If you're a facilitator you probably know SMART Recovery well enough to explain it to someone. But how well do you manage the meeting? In my experi-

ence, most facilitators need more work on their meeting management skills than on their SMART knowledge.

In the Distance Training program that new facilitators now take, we are making an increasing effort to focus on meeting management skills. The focus of a SMART Recovery meeting is to “Do SMART Recovery.” Although one might very briefly talk about SMART, or contrast it with other programs, the primary emphasis in a meeting should be action: Do SMART Recovery.

One does SMART Recovery in a meeting in three ways:

1. Follow the agenda,
2. Enforce basic rules, and
3. Stay out of dead zones.

The rest of this column focuses on the first two elements of the meeting agenda. Later columns will complete these topics.

### Follow the agenda: Welcome and check-in

When it is time to start the meeting, sit up fully straight, speak in a clear and loud voice, and act like you are firmly — but not overbearingly — in charge of this meeting. Because you are! You are aiming to be authoritative, which is a mean between authoritarian — overbearing, controlling, harsh — and laissez-faire, French for “anything goes.”

You do not need to change your personality to be authoritative. You may do it in your own style. If you think you don't have “authoritative” within you, think of some times in your life when you have been fully authoritative, perhaps even on behalf of someone else. Recall such a moment just before you start the meeting. As a facilitator, you are authorized to facilitate a meeting in a certain manner, on behalf of SMART Recovery. You are not the message but the messenger. Be proud of what you do, and know that when meetings are run in the manner we teach, they will be of maximum benefit to participants.

Do you recall being in a classroom, perhaps in grade school, when the substitute teacher could not control the class? Probably you did not learn very much that day. Think of yourself as a teacher, a referee, or a police officer. When you do your job well, you enable others to do what they came to do.

“Good evening. This is SMART Recovery. My name is Tom. I'll be the meeting facilitator tonight. Tonight's meeting will last (60, 90) minutes. SMART Recovery supports individuals who have chosen to abstain from any substance or activity addiction, or are considering abstinence. This meeting is open to anyone (some of our meetings are for regular participants only). There are a few guidelines to be aware of. No one is required to participate. I will go around the circle at least twice. When I get to you, just say pass or wave your hand, if you prefer not to say anything. This is a confidential meeting. What is said here stays here. This is no charge for this meeting. Later I will pass the hat for donations, which are gratefully accepted. This is a discussion meeting. If you go on for too long I may interrupt you to move the discussion on. This is YOUR meeting, so if something is happening you are puzzled by or don't like, please say so.”

Some facilitators like to give a very brief introduction to SMART Recovery at this point. This is acceptable, but keep in mind: Do SMART Recovery rather than talk about it.

“After this brief introduction we'll go around the circle for a check-in. Please tell us, if you wish, what you'd like us to know, perhaps why you are here or what has happened with you recently. After the check-in we will set an agenda. I'll first ask if someone has an issue to discuss. If not, I will introduce a discussion topic. The primary portion of our meeting will be the discussion. Then I'll pass the hat, and make announcements. Finally, we will have a checkout. We'll go around the

circle again. Tell us what was most meaningful to you in this meeting. It would also be your chance to thank someone who made an impact on you."

"Let's begin to my (right, left). Remember, say pass if you wish. What would you like us to know?"

You may wish to choose as the first person someone you know will set a good example for check-in, and they may not be the person to your right or left. You also may let participants go in the order they wish. However, leaving the decision to them raises the tension in the room so it may be more suitable for a group that is well established and its participants know each other well.

Your style should balance being friendly with being business-like. Smile at each participant and perhaps offer supportive comments such as, "Glad you could make it; nice to see you again; I'm glad you found us; perhaps we can talk more about that issue in the discussion; I'm sorry to hear about your loss," etc.

Although learning the SMART tools is crucial, they often can be learned on one's own. What can happen only in a meeting — or in online interactions — is hearing others, with similar experiences, share their hearts and minds.

When you "Do SMART Recovery" you increase the likelihood that meeting participants will feel safe enough and supported enough by you, and by the meeting, that they indeed open their hearts and minds. When they do, you will have the magical moments that make SMART meetings the wonderful and healing experiences they can be.

*Tom Howath*

## Book Review



### Addressing addiction in health care providers

*SMART Recovery Motivational Guide and Workbook for Recovering Healthcare Professionals*, 2011; by Maria Elsa Rodriguez, DNP, ACNS-BC

Reviewed by Pamela Ruppel, NP

The *Motivational Guide and Workbook* is a much needed and hard-to-find handbook specific to the unique issues health care professionals face in recovery.

The problems identified by Dr. Rodriguez that contribute to the misuse of alcohol and controlled medications were definitely the ones that I have seen in my years of helping recovering health care professionals. Each profession within the health care community has its own subclasses. These are identified in the book along with the contributing factors for each profession. I have never read a compilation of research findings as thorough as this one. I think she has really hit the nail on the head with identifying stressors unique to each profession.

Health care providers are no different from the general population when it comes to brain-reward pathways and other biological factors that contribute to misuse of addictive substances. There is a general thought that, "They should know better, they

know what happens to those people." Dr. Rodriguez explains that this contributes to impaired professional's avoidance of seeking help.

She also explains that, even though these professionals "rely on their ability to rationally assess and make appropriate decisions in the care of their patients," that is not so when they are the patients.

She identifies boredom as more of a lack of motivation, not a lack of things to do. This is something I very much agree with. This and anxiety seem to be the main contributing factors to the use of addictive substances by health care professionals that I have treated over the years. The workbook has a lot of activities to assist the person as they work through these things. I haven't seen a lot of focus on these activities before, but agree it is an important facet of helping the health care professional recover and maintain sobriety.

This handbook made me question some of my profession's time-honored techniques: Should we be monitoring the amount of exhaled opiates and anesthetic gases used in the OR? Should we be preparing our health care workers for the potential consequences of exposure to the controlled and potentially addictive chemicals they will encounter? Should we have mandatory screening for addiction before educating and hiring health care professionals? What about including in classroom education the risks of handling these hazards?

I thought this handbook was excellent for anyone, not just for health care professionals, and wish I had read it in my master's studies.

You can buy the book at the SMART Recovery bookstore.

## A tour of America's rehab programs

*Inside Rehab: The Surprising Truth about Addiction Treatment — and How to Get Help that Works* (Viking, 2013) by Anne M. Fletcher

Reviewed by Henry Steinberger, Ph.D.

I'm a slow reader and 400 pages seemed daunting, but contrary to one reviewer's comment I read, I found *Inside Rehab* a page-turner.

Anne Fletcher's new book covers the topics stated in the subtitle as comprehensively as a textbook but with the zest of a pre-eminent journalist. Reading this book motivates a desire to share it with others, especially the families of people with addictions, employee assistance program (EAP) staff, and the legal personnel who pressure, mandate, and sanction people, often indiscriminately, into rehabilitation programs.

By interviewing many people in the rehab industry we not only learn about what really goes on in them, we discover why most prove to be so ineffective.

We in SMART Recovery already know that one size does not fit all and have felt the challenge of finding science-based programs. Yet many of us, knowing the problems people face, especially for people with addictions and their panicked loved ones, would still face an information shortage if called upon to advise others about what to look for, what is available and, what is to be avoided, in the hunt for help.

For them, this book is crammed with practical advice. Anne suggests all the questions an enlightened consumer should ask. She provides the answers that professionals in this area ought to provide, even though many don't or can't. She visited rehabs — in-patient and out-patient — around the country, spoken to the leading experts —

academic researchers and those who run programs — and interviewed those who have been through the rehab mill, sometimes over and over despite repeated failures.

Using examples from rehab attendees and facts from experts, she builds the case for using evidence-based practices, ending the hegemony of AA. She argues for the individualization and skill that requires one-on-one counseling by mental health professionals rather than the endless stream of groups too often “led” by unqualified staff filling time — lectures, movies, and general conversation — all proven to be the least effective approaches.

Even more gripping are the stories of people who have been coerced, exploited, misinformed, and mistreated. Teens are particularly vulnerable as they are cast into brutal tough love programs, as was previously exposed in a book by our friend Maia Szalavitz, *Help at Any Cost: How the Troubled-Teen Industry Cons Parents and Hurts Kids*. Similarly, Anne Fletcher's current exposé reveals the many down sides created by the rehab industrial complex.

She exposes the gross indifference most rehabs have toward mental health issues. She blows up the all too common and false myth that once one is clean and sober the emotional issues will evaporate. Indeed, this may be one of the most important of the many reasons rehabs, more often than not, fail. The evidence suggests that more mental health professionals should be involved in addiction treatment on a one-to-one basis.

Anne also addresses the costs in not just monetary units, but time, energy, and hope wasted. She makes it clear that for the cost, often around \$1,000 per day, one could buy all of the rehab

features on their own — but better. For that, she writes, one could have a nice motel room, a gym membership, daily one-on-one counseling with licensed mental health professionals, and well-led manual driven skills groups teaching methods that have been tested and shown to work. She clearly shows that more expensive rarely means better. In fact, some publicly funded programs for the poor provide a wider option of services, including helping clients with education, employment, parenting, mental health, as well as how to stay clean and sober, doing a better job than many of the most prestigious rehabs.

She shares horror stories about people who are forced, sometimes by courts, into programs based on AA or outright religious indoctrination, despite the judicial rulings against such practices. She also provides information on diversity in addiction treatment, including a list of all of the science-based and secular mutual support groups including SMART. Not surprisingly, she cites rehab administrators who wouldn't send anyone to SMART and seem proud to know nothing about the program. She also names and describes the best and worst approaches to treatment and warns that many rehabs falsely advertise that they offer evidence-based treatments.

Though she does not provide a list of programs she supports, she certainly provides the reader with some good leads on programs and people to consult. I don't know that every reader will have the assertiveness to ask the questions and seek out the information, but *Inside Rehab* provides a good start. Anyone interested in helping people with addictions needs to read this book.



## International Development

### Australia update

by Jim Villamor

SMART AU had a quiet summer with both coordinators off on holidays. We are gearing up for a busy 2013 with a lot of facilitator trainings scheduled throughout the year.

In March, SMART AU will be holding “in-house” two-day facilitator trainings in Sydney at training rooms owned by the city of Sydney. With discounted rates and support from the Sydney City Council, SMART will offer monthly training throughout the year.

Trainings scheduled outside Sydney until June 2013 include: Adelaide, South Australia, Melbourne, Victoria, Nowra, New South Wales, Canberra, ACT, and Brisbane, Queensland.

I am delighted that SMART AU will present at the Drug and Alcohol Nurses of Australasia Inc. (DANA), which is themed “Close to Home.” This theme was chosen to capture the hopes and dreams for the future of addiction nursing and mental health nursing. Australasian Mental Health and Addiction Nursing Conference — Auckland, New Zealand, June 19-21, 2013.

We now have 10 SMART Recovery groups run inside the jails in NSW and one at the prerelease unit in Juvenile Justice, NSW. The

Department of Corrective Services is committed to having more of its staff trained as facilitators to run more groups inside the jails.

### Alberta update

by Curtis Boudreau, SMART Recovery® Alberta

Hello to the SMART world from Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Wow, another quarter complete. The first two months of 2013 have been amazing! We average about seven newcomers to each meeting. In January and February, we sold 63 Handbooks, which is quite a jump from our 2012 average of 22 Handbooks per month. I hope we can keep up this pace for the rest of the year.

I discontinued the weekly presentation at the Alpha House Detox and picked up the bi-weekly presentation at the Alberta Health Service’s Intensive Day Program, which started in March.

My highlight presentation for the quarter was to the Calgary Remand Centre. I spoke to about 15 gentlemen who may be released in the near future and were looking for community support programs as an option to or in conjunction with 12-step. The Remand Centre is going to buy Handbooks for \$20, and charge the inmates \$10. The Remand Centre will then donate the \$10 back to SMART, for a total of \$30 in revenue per book! This was a surprise, as I was only expecting the \$20 per book, but Tammy from the Centre wanted to donate all revenues to SMART. I will probably be presenting to the gentleman at the Centre quarterly, as new releases are scheduled.

The meeting at the Victory Foundation is temporarily on hold. Our facilitator quit his job, didn’t call me, and took all of the materials that

the Foundation had purchased. Good news is that volunteer Tina has offered to take the training and restart the meeting in the next couple of months. When the Victory meeting is up and running, we’ll be back to hosting meetings every day but Sundays and Tuesdays.

Our incorporation and charitable donation status forms were supposed to be filed in the last quarter of 2012, but were not because of staff illnesses and miscommunication. The good news is that the papers are all now filed, and I expect to have everything incorporated and have a charitable donation number by the end of the summer.

***“The words ‘I am’ are potent words; be careful what you hitch them to. The thing you’re claiming has a way of reaching back and claiming you.”***

**— A. L. Kitselman**

### 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](mailto:rosemaryalmond@gmail.com). Unsolicited material is most welcome!

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

©2013 ADASHN, Inc., 7304 Mentor Avenue, Suite F, Mentor, OH 44060, all rights reserved.  
All statements regarding self-help in this newsletter are the views of the author and are not an official endorsement of the Alcohol & Drug Abuse Self-Help Network, Inc.