



### President's Letter

## Spring Resolutions: 100 Meetings Challenge

It is common practice in many cultures to offer resolutions on New Year's Eve, or relatively early in January. As for myself, years ago I stopped making these resolutions. This was after many promises to stop smoking, which I did do ten years ago, and many more promises to start exercising, which is a work in progress. However, I think it may be time for me to rethink New Year's resolutions. Anyone who knows me will recognize a tendency to procrastinate (this article was due two days ago), and my New Year's resolution has turned into a Spring resolution.

What is on the list this year? Stop eating deserts (not likely); start exercising (more likely); generate at least one new SMART

Recovery® meeting (slam dunk!). This is my Spring Resolution—to generate at least one new SMART Recovery® meeting in Tucson, Arizona, by the end of 2009. I will do this either by directly facilitating a new meeting, or even better, coaching someone else to facilitate a new meeting. Why am I sharing this with you? I want you to join me in this resolution.

### Volunteering Helps the Helper

I would like you to join me in this resolution for two reasons. The first is to strengthen your own long-term recovery, if applicable, and the second is to help others recover through SMART Recovery®'s methods. Many studies show that helping others results in increased recovery rates for the helper as well as the assisted person.<sup>1</sup> When I help others, I help myself. Volunteer work takes time and it does not pay in money. However, when I do a Cost-Benefit Analysis of volunteering, sometimes I reflect on the following quote from Henry David Thoreau's *Life Without Principle*.

*An efficient and valuable person does what they can, whether the community pay for it or not. The inefficient offer*

(Continued on page 2)

## IMPORTANT NOTICE!

To cut costs—printing, mail house, and postage—future issues of the *News & Views* will be available online in Portable Document Format, PDF, rather than printed and mailed. Fear not... *News & Views*, now in its 15th year, will be available via our website: [www.smartrecovery.org](http://www.smartrecovery.org). If you want e-mail notification that the latest issue is now available online, simply sign up by using the subscribe link below the *News & Views* issue in the left column of [www.smartrecovery.org](http://www.smartrecovery.org).

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## The SMART Recovery® 4-Point Program<sup>SM</sup>

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:** Enhancing and maintaining motivation to abstain
- Point #2:** Coping with urges
- Point #3:** Managing thoughts, feelings and behavior (problem-solving)
- Point #4:** Balancing momentary and enduring satisfactions (lifestyle balance)

their inefficiency to the highest bidder, and are forever expecting to be put into office. One would suppose that they were rarely disappointed.

Time—especially volunteer time—is worth more than money, and I prefer the renewed sense of purpose and direction that comes from volunteering. I believe you, too, prefer it.

### Why Only One Meeting?

In the past, my resolutions have tended toward the grandiose, which lessens the likelihood of sticking with it. I know I can start one new meeting, even if I facilitate the meeting myself. I urge you to consider a resolution you are confident you can accomplish. It's good to stretch ourselves a little, but overly lofty goals may lead to disappointment.

Another reason I am committing to one meeting is the fact that small efforts within a large group can result in dramatic change. For instance, as of this writing SMART Recovery® has approximately 450 meetings worldwide, including 278 meetings in United States. Although we currently do not have an easily accessible international list of facilitators, there are approximately 180 facilitators listed in the United States alone. If a hundred of these facilitators generated a new meeting this year, SMART Recovery® could see an almost 20 percent increase in meetings!

### Support for Starting Meetings

Starting a new meeting is not complicated. Over the last couple of years, many dedicated SMART Recovery® members have worked to develop diverse meeting formats. These include (1) the new Point Meetings, which focus on one of the four basic points of SMART Recovery®, which is a great way to learn the principles of SMART Recovery®; (2) Rational Discussion

Meetings, with a focus on recovery-related topics collected from the participants, and which new members can easily facilitate; and (3) Handbook Meetings, which use readings and exercises from the SMART Recovery® Handbook.

For information on specifics, see the "Growing SMART Recovery Meetings: Experimenting with Different Formats in NYC" article in this issue on pages 11-14.

SMART Recovery® members throughout the world are developing new materials. These include simplified Member Manuals (see SMART Recovery® U.K.), and simplified meeting agendas. The latter is due to Henry Steinberger, who has many years experience facilitating meetings in Madison, Wisconsin.

Another development is emerging facilitator support groups, such as the member-initiated *Fresh Start Monday*. The latter is a one-hour facilitator support meeting in the SMART Recovery® Online PalTalk voice room on the second Monday of each month at 8 PM Eastern Time. As well, distance training remains available for those wanting a more in depth introduction to SMART Recovery® Tools and Techniques. Also available is the SMARTCAL listserv, where facilitators can post questions and comments for feedback by other facilitators around the world.

### 100 Meetings Challenge

I conclude by setting a challenge to SMART Recovery® members to start at least 100 new meetings in 2009. I encourage you to join this commitment by sending me your Spring Resolution via e-mail to [tlitwicki@msn.com](mailto:tlitwicki@msn.com). List your name, location, contact information, and how many meetings you resolve to generate in 2009. In addition, please let me know how the SMART Recovery® Central Office

can help you reach this goal. I sincerely believe that everything we do in the SMART Recovery® Central Office, SMART Recovery® Online, and the SMART Recovery® Board of Directors in the U.S., Canada, Australia, and the U.K., aims to support what happens in your SMART Recovery® meeting. Meetings are what we do. With your commitment, we will do a lot more in 2009.

Best Regards,

Tom Litwicki

Tom Litwicki,  
President SMART Recovery®

<sup>1</sup>Cross, G. M., Morgan, C. W., Mooney, A. J., Martin, C. A. & Rafter, J. A. (1990).

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## Come One, Come All! Mark Your Calendar and Plan to Join Us for the Annual SMART Recovery® Gathering this Fall!

Are you a SMART Recovery® volunteer, meeting attendee, online participant, or someone wanting to learn more about SMART Recovery®? Everyone is invited to convene in Chicago on October 16-18, 2009 at the Holiday Inn Select O'Hare Hotel for a weekend of networking, learning, and idea sharing, to help to continue to promote our organization. The agenda follows below, and a registration form will soon be available on our website, [www.smartrecovery.org](http://www.smartrecovery.org). (Note: To keep things cost effective for all, Jodi will attempt to help find you a roommate, if sharing a guest room would be cost effective for you.)

So, mark your calendar, and begin planning to join us for a great time together!

### DRAFT AGENDA SMART Recovery® Annual Volunteer Gathering, October 16-18 2009 (Celebrating 15 Years!)

#### Friday, Oct. 16

10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. **Optional Tour of Chicago** with local resident Jeff Fredriksen from our video SMART Recovery® for Life – Participants will take the El train downtown and be shown the Windy city. We shall arrive in the heart of the “loop” and then the tour is open to the wishes of the participants. If shopping is your thing, the magnificent mile has got it all and is, well, magnificent. There are several wonderful museums including The Art Institute, Field Museum, The Planetarium and The Shedd Aquarium. As well, Millennium Park is one of Chicago’s newest attractions that borders the beautiful Chicago lakefront. So; people can go as a group or we can split up and then meet for an afternoon snack and do something together. It all depends on who participates, Jeff is prepared to be flexible and cater to those signing up – provided they are rational.

7:00 – 9:00 p.m. **Meet & Greet Welcoming Reception** – An opportunity to meet other SMART Recovery® volunteers and participants, along with experiencing a little magic, as performed by our own Jeffery Fredriksen. Includes Wrigleyville Dinner – chili, cole slaw, potato salad, chips, hot dogs, and dessert.

#### Saturday, Oct. 17

8:00 – 9:00 a.m. **Continental Breakfast & Registration**

9:00 – 9:30 a.m. **Icebreaker Bingo** – led by Brett Saarela

9:30 – 10:30 a.m. **SMART Recovery® Strategic Planning Discussion** (all are asked to share ideas – what’s worked, what hasn’t – and updates on the following 4 Strategic Plans which came about from the 2008 Participant Survey), specifically...

- Fundraising (hat passing/group donations, personal contributions, foundations)
- Increasing the # of available SMART Recovery® meetings

10:30 - 11:00 a.m. **Break**

11:00 a.m.–12:00 noon **Strategic Planning Discussion continued...**

- Determine the need for changes to existing materials
- Website revision

12:00 noon – 1:00 p.m. **Lunch**

1:00 – 2:00 p.m. **Review of 2009 SMART Recovery® Participant Survey** – where does it lead us?

2:00 – 2:30 p.m. **SMART Recovery® Online Update** – presented by volunteers and online participants.

2:30 – 3:00 p.m. **Break**

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3:00 – 4:45 p.m.	<p><b>Q&amp;A – a review of topics and questions as shared by volunteers and participants</b>, including...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteerism, as it relates to Point 4, especially the conundrum of encouraging people to move on with their lives once they master the skills to avoid a return to addictive behaviors versus sticking around to help so the organization can sustain and grow locally, nationally, and globally.</li> <li>• What brings people to SMART Recovery®? (i.e., powerlessness, labels of addiction, disease model, others?)</li> <li>• Long-Term Abstinence. Who achieves it? After how many attempts? How does the first year differ from the second? Or the fifth? Or the tenth?</li> <li>• To Tell or Not to Tell: Do we owe something to the larger community in terms of “giving back” by sharing our experience with the SMART Recovery® approach. How do we talk about our experience in recovery, while honoring our privacy and our dignity?</li> <li>• Medications: What works? What’s on the horizon?</li> <li>• How to Start a SMART Recovery® face-to-face meeting in your area.</li> <li>• Lifestyle Balance Approaches to Recovery: meditation, yoga, nutrition, massage, etc.</li> <li>• Withdrawal &amp; Its Symptoms – Is what people are going through “normal” (anxiety, sleeplessness, exercise, etc)?</li> <li>• Moderation! (The topic is raised on the message boards all the time.)</li> <li>• How SMART Recovery® can expand to attract and maintain the interest of younger people with addiction problems.</li> </ul>
4:45 – 5:00 p.m.	<b>Wrap-up</b> – a review of the day’s activities – highlights, next steps, etc.
Evening	<b>Dinner on Own</b> – Note: a meeting room at the hotel will be available for post dinner gathering/networking.

## Sunday, Oct. 18

8:00 – 9:00 a.m.	<b>Continental Breakfast</b>
9:00 – 10:30 a.m.	<p><b>Tool Time</b> – a review of the SMART Recovery® Tools in action. (Audience to pose the toughest situation for each tool that they’ve had to address)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Change Plan Worksheet</li> <li>- Cost/Benefit Analysis</li> <li>- ABCs of REBT for Urge Coping</li> <li>- Hierarchy of Values</li> <li>- DISARM (Destructive Images Self-talk Awareness and Refusal Method)</li> <li>- ABCs of REBT for Emotional Upsets</li> <li>- Brainstorming</li> <li>- Role-playing and Rehearsals</li> </ul>
10:30 – 11:00 a.m.	<b>Break</b>
11:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon	<b>Tool Time, continued</b>
12:00 noon	<b>Collection of Evaluation Forms &amp; Departure</b>

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## SMART Recovery® Online News

by Jonathan von Breton, Director, SMART Recovery® Online

Last fall, we surveyed the membership of SOL, using a website called Survey Monkey. One hundred and fifty-four (154) people took the survey. Overall, the people who took the survey were very happy with their SOL experience!

We found out that 95 percent of SOL members are white. Fifty-eight percent of them are women. Two age groups accounted for the vast majority of members. Thirty-seven percent were between 40 and 49, and 32 percent were between 50 and 59.

When asked about what they liked about the Message Board, members mentioned the following. It was available 24 hours/day, 7 days/week. The Message Board allowed for in-depth discussions of SMART Recovery® Tools and recovery-related issues. As well, many people talked about having a sense of community on the Message Board and getting social support there.

Members liked some of the same things about Chat as they did about the Message Board. The Chat Room is open all the time. Members used it for social support

and friendship. They also said Chat could be light-hearted and fun as well as serious.

The members surveyed had some nice things to say about the online meetings, too. They said the leaders (Facilitators) seem well trained and very professional. The other people at the meetings were supportive. Members also liked the fact they could participate from home. Interestingly, the majority, 67 percent, preferred text chat (typed) to voice chat.

One of the survey questions asked about SMART Recovery® Tools. Members taking the survey were asked to check off as many of Tools that they personally had used. Ninety-four percent said they used the Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA). The ABCs of REBT were the second most used tool at 77 percent. DISARM came in third with 51+ percent.

FUNdraising has been an ongoing effort at SOL. We have had two events since last fall's FUNdraiser. On New Year's Eve, we had a "New Year Around the World" FUNdraiser for SOL. It was hugely successful! This 18-hour chat-a-thon celebrated the New Year as it occurred in different parts of the world. It started at

5:30 AM EST (U.S.) so we could welcome the New Year in New Zealand at 6:00 AM. It ended the next morning with New Year's in Hawaii. Whenever possible, the hour was hosted by someone who lived in that time zone. This event was hugely popular and raised over \$2,000.00 for SMART Recovery®. Hammer spearheaded the activities, which volunteers entirely organized, rising magnificently to the occasion to fill in as "hosts" of event hours, and to assist with FUNdraising.

We also had a Valentine's Day FUNdraiser. It was a rather last-minute idea, and to celebrate, we had two threads of the Message Board, "How Do I Love SMART Recovery®, Let Me Count The Ways" and "This Is Dedicated To.....". Anyone who posted on either of these threads was asked to donate \$10.00. We raised \$600.00+. Thank you to our SOL participants who opened their wallets and hearts for SMART Recovery®.

Let me remind you of two ways to give money to SMART Recovery® painlessly and indirectly.

- GoodShop will donate to SMART Recovery® if you designate it as your charity: <http://www.goodsearch.com/goodshop>

- GoodSearch does the same thing when you use to do web searches. Again, you have to designate SMART Recovery® as your charity: <http://www.goodsearch.com/>

Everything the SOL FUNdraising Committee accomplishes goes to and benefits all of

## SMART Recovery® Program Tools & Techniques

The SMART Recovery® 4-Point Program<sup>SM</sup> employs a variety of tools and techniques to help individuals gain independence from addictive behavior.

**These tools include:**

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

Participants are encouraged to learn how to use each tool and to practice the tools and techniques as they progress toward Point 4 of the program—achieving lifestyle balance and leading a fulfilling and healthy life.

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SMART Recovery®. Please support their efforts by passing the hat at face-to-face meetings and by encouraging everyone to use GoodShop & GoodSearch. So far, GoodShop & GoodSearch has brought in about \$103.00!

### How San Diego Has Grown Meetings

As presented by Julie Myers, at the SMART Recovery® 2008 annual gathering in New York

#### 1. Create a sense of community amongst attendees, facilitators, and administration

- Solicit feedback and input from all
- Communicate frequently
- Have relatively open access to Facilitators, Regional Coordinator, and Volunteer Advisor
- Everyone posts information about each meeting to all facilitators. The Regional Coordinator or Advisor responds to each posting.
- Training - Quarterly facilitator meeting, where training, resources, and support are offered
- Resources - Books, posters, Facilitator Training kit are kept on-hand for purchase
- Find a home base. (Tom Horvath's office provides a home for San Diego)
- Perks - Yearly dinners, parties, etc. for facilitators; freebies offered when available, for example, tickets, *News & Views*, community training

#### 2. Recruit more facilitators

- Join a local volunteer organization that will refer facilitators
- Facilitators recruit facilitators
- Create a sense that anyone can facilitate (we disconnect the meeting from the facilitators name)

- Call on those in the meeting to co-facilitate or play more minor roles (e.g., hat passing, opening statement)
- Establish minimum requirements to facilitate - Give attendees an information sheet about how to be a facilitator. Create a list of simple steps and direct them to the Regional Coordinator for more information.
- Have those interested find a facilitator to act as a mentor.
- Encourage participation in the SMART Recovery® bi-monthly distance training
- Have a goal of more facilitators than meetings - This helps to reduce crises brought on by burnout or last minute cancellations. Our goal is to have 2-3 times the number of facilitators, as there are meetings. Encourage co-facilitation, rotating facilitators, substitutes

#### 3. Advertise

- Everyone keeps his or her eyes and ears open for free meeting space, promotion, etc.
- Schedule information is readily available - Provide a schedule on voicemail, website, mail; keep schedule updated, especially with Central Office; mail or e-mail schedules to relevant parties, e.g., courts, treatment centers
- Have someone available to answer people's questions from the community
- Create a pamphlet describing SMART Recovery® and local services
- Public Relations outreach - e.g., Suboxone reps, Toastmasters, the military, other self-help groups



### International Development

#### Update on SMART Recovery® Iran

Fariborz Arbasi continues to share the good news about SMART Recovery® at every opportunity. He presented a stress management workshop for managers of Emam Reza Hospital (the biggest hospital in west and northwest of Iran), where he introduced SMART Recovery® to managers and physicians. He also introduced SMART Recovery® to nurses and shared the SMART Recovery® "Who We Are" DVD to acquaint them with the SMART Recovery® program, as shown in the photos below.



#### SMART Recovery® Australia Update

Greetings from Australia! 2009 has already been quite productive for SMART Recovery® Australia.

Josette and Jim recently returned from the VAADA (Victoria Alcohol and Drug Association) Conference where they conducted a workshop for 45 health professionals and individuals from the community. These workshop participants were interested in knowing more about SMART Recovery® and how to start SMART Recovery® groups in their communities in Victoria. VAADA is the key organization representing Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) services in Victoria. It provides leadership, representation, advocacy, and information to both AOD and non-AOD-related sectors. We hope to get another four or five groups up and running in the next couple of months.

At the end of March, Jim and Josette will be launching SMART Recovery® in the state of Western Australia. SMART Recovery® is working with Western Australia Network Alcohol and Drug Agencies, the Aboriginal Alcohol and Drug Service, and the Western Australia Government Drug Office. These three organizations are willing to assist SMART Recovery® by providing a training facility and promotion throughout the state. We think this will spark interest and help us network in Perth and surrounding towns. Western Australia is also interested in getting SMART Recovery® in their jails. Thus, we continue to work with the Department of Corrective Services to assist with this process.

Josette spent two days in Canberra, and she worked with the Ted Noff's Foundation, which currently operates Teen SMART Recovery® and is interested in starting another group in their rehabilitation centre. She also met with Directions, which is the main non-profit agency in Canberra for treatment of problems from Alcohol and Other Drugs. They have started SMART Recovery®, and Josette provided additional training and focused on program integrity to ensure their groups are running according to the principles of SMART Recovery®.

Jim and Josette also trained eight workers from Moving Forward, which is a program run through the Multicultural Family Centre in New South Wales. This is a big step for SMART Recovery® in Australia. The Moving Forward program is the main Multicultural Centre and plans to start SMART Recovery® groups targeting ethnic groups that do not usually access alternative self-help programs.

Joe Gerstein came to Australia in March and plans to work with Turning Point—the main Drug and Alcohol service in Victoria. He will conduct additional training in SMART Recovery® for facilitators.

A Rotary group asked Josette to present information on SMART Recovery® at one of its meetings. There was a good turnout, with 25 people there to learn about our approach to recovery.

## SMART Recovery® in China

Karen Gabe is an American who teaches peer counseling and psychology courses at Nanjing University in Nanjing, China. Nanjing University is ranked among the top five universities in China, and the students who take her classes have excellent English skills. Since 2007, Karen has provided her students with the SMART Recovery® Handbook as part of the peer counseling course curriculum.

One of Karen's students, Li Feihan, has volunteered to translate the SMART Recovery® Handbook into Mandarin Chinese—and SMART Recovery® has gratefully accepted their offer! Below are some photos of Karen's enthusiastic students.



Students who began the program in the fall of 2007



Fall 2008 sophomores

## RESOLUTIONS UNLIMITED

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Karen reports that if any SMART Recovery® participants ever have business in China, the SMART Recovery® contingent welcomes you to visit us here at Nanjing University! And if you ever have the chance to visit, you will be able to communicate directly with the students.



Fall 2008 juniors



A SMART Recovery® orientation session is offered to freshmen, sophomores, and juniors on the Pukou campus. The peer counselors are organized into committees/teams to present various counseling-related topics to the wider student body. The young woman presenting, Wang Lu, is the chairperson for the SMART team of peer counselors this year.

## Book Review



## Book Review

by Lorie Hammerstrom, Online Volunteer

*The Complete Idiot's Guide to Changing Old Habits for Good*, by G. Alan Marlatt and Deborah Romaine, is well worth your investment in time and money. Despite my

having used the SMART Recovery® tools and concepts to recover from alcohol abuse four years ago and then moving on to teaching the tools to others at SMART Recovery®, I was amazed at how much more there was for me to learn from this book about how habits are formed and how we can learn to end unhelpful behaviors.

If you are someone seeking a deeper understanding of the biology and psychology behind habits, you will love this book. It isn't overly technical, yet does help you to understand the biochemistry of habits and addiction and the way these repetitious types of behaviors become established in our brains.

Marlatt and Romaine present a wealth of information about common difficulties encountered when attempting to change old habits. They explain the concepts of "PAWS" and "PIG" and the "Stages of Change" as well as why it is so hard for our friends and family to believe us when we say, "I'll never do that again!"

The authors propose that one reason changing habits can be challenging is because they occur as part of our normal everyday life, that is, we keep bumping up against them regularly, almost on schedule. Also discussed are various methods people use to overcome these challenges and successfully transform unhelpful repetitive behaviors or stop them altogether. And what about those who can't seem to stay stopped? Marlatt and Romaine counsel patient persistence, "Because the more times you try, the more likely you'll hit the quit that sticks".

Support can be a very important and helpful part of the process for those making life changes. What kind of support will be most helpful? Perhaps you are someone who is trying to understand how to best support a loved one who is struggling to change a destructive habit. Marlatt and Romaine address these issues as well as propose ways to deal with children who have developed bad habits. Included is a 10-question quiz that can help guide you

toward which type of support system might work best.

My favorite part of the book was the section discussing anger and resentment. In *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Changing Old Habits for Good*, the authors explain the brain chemistry behind anger, why it happens, how to deal with your own anger, and how to diffuse anger in others. Also covered in the book are ways of recognizing and dealing with stress, depression and anxiety, all of which can create a danger of relapse to former unhelpful behavior.

For those of you who have changed an old habit for good, you will be reminded of the courage that it took to make that change in your life. For those just beginning this journey, this book will provide answers to many questions and offer guidance and understanding along the way.

## SMART Ideas



## How the San Diego SMART Recovery® Groups Collect and Generate Donations

by Julie Myers, San Diego SMART Recovery® Facilitator and Regional Coordinator

*Editor's note: In 2008, the local San Diego SMART Recovery® groups collected \$5,589.80 from Passing The Hat. Wow! That's magnificent! And...they shared ALL of their collections with the Central Office. Here's Julie's overview of how they reached that milestone. Thank you, San Diego!*



**1. Make money**

- Create a close-knit community of facilitators, who know they are working for a greater cause.
- Encourage, thank, and cajole... remind facilitators that they are valuable, ask them to share their hat-passing secrets, thank them for their donations, and remind them to turn in the money. Especially thank those who make a concerted effort to collect donations.
- Grow the number of meetings, which creates a sense of excitement.

**2. Save money**

- Create a spare and focused meeting.
- Keep expenses low. We provide only schedules, brochures, and a beginner's packet.
- Find free meeting space, e.g., coffee houses, treatment centers, hospitals, churches, schools.
- Find a generous benefactor to provide copying, phone service, etc.

**3. Collect money centrally**

- Collect money systematically and centrally to minimize forgetting to turn money in.
- Turn donations in monthly to one person (reminded via e-mail or phone).
- Make it easy...
- Allow facilitators to turn in cash, check, or change, by mail or in person.
- Checks may be written to SMART Recovery® or to collector.

- At first, we provided pre-addressed envelopes to formulate a habit.
- Record and publish the collection totals. We use a simple spread-sheet.
- Credit each facilitator for the money.
- We write one check, but each facilitator is acknowledged for the money he or she turns in.
- The SMART Recovery® Central Office thanks all facilitators and publishes their names in the *Facilitator's & Advisor's Letter*.

**Howard County Library System Carries SMART Recovery® Publications!**

Hugh Delaney, volunteer facilitator in Columbia, Maryland, recently contacted his local Howard County Library System with a recommendation that they carry SMART Recovery® publications. The outcome? The

library system ordered six SMART Recovery® Handbooks, six Teen Handbooks, four Facilitator's Manuals, and six copies of the SMART Recovery® DVDs.

How did Hugh do it? We decided to ask, and Hugh said, "Most people would think that it took an enormous amount of persuasion. It didn't. I relied upon a sales skill as simple as just 'asking.' After searching the library's electronic catalogue, I mentioned to the circulation manager that they stocked 12 books on addictive behavior and all were AA- related. "Would you stock materials on alternatives to AA?" I told her about new SMART Recovery® group in Columbia and gave her my SMART Recovery® tri-fold along with an order form.

Within two days, she got the approval to order the SMART Recovery® materials. (Don't I wish the County would act that fast on other matters?) The bottom line here is that the success of our mission to get the word out only takes a little effort of asking for help. Now, trying to get them to

announce the arrival of the SMART Recovery® materials on their website might take a little more effort—to be continued....

**Getting Perspective & Unmasking Monsters**

by Hank Robb, PhD, ABPP (with attribution this article may be copied and used as a handout)

There's a popular exercise making the rounds these days. You put your hands over your eyes and, from that perspective, try to answer this question, "What do hands look like?" Of course, you have had plenty of experience with hands, so you already know what hands look like. However, the point of the exercise is recognizing that when you are, literally, very



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close to something you cannot see it clearly. Only when you move your hands away from your eyes are you able to see your hands clearly; and a couple of inches isn't far enough. At that distance, things are no longer completely black, but they are still a bit fuzzy. You still don't have "the right perspective" to see your hands clearly.

This exercise is a nice metaphor to illustrate that just as you often have to put a little physical distance between you and an object to see it clearly, you often have to put a little psychological distance between you and your thoughts, images and bodily sensations in order to "see" them clearly.

As you are reading this column, you make yourself think this thought, "I absolutely **MUST** have a drink!" (or do anything else). If you then ask this question, "Who is thinking that thought?" you will, most likely think another thought, "me." And the word "me" is no more the thing doing the thinking than the words "my hand" are your actual hand. **YOU** are a person who has thoughts, who has images, and who has sensations. Thoughts, images, and sensations are things that you **HAVE**, not things that you **ARE**. However, you cannot "see" this without "the right perspective."

Just as there is a "physical you," namely "your body" and the bodily sensations that come along with it, there is also a "mental you," namely your thoughts and images—the "talk" and "pictures" "inside your head." In addition, there is also what we might call a "psychological you"—the one who "hears" thoughts and "sees" images and "feels" sensations and, in some important sense, isn't those thoughts, images and sensations. The one who has a body and, in some important sense, isn't his/her body. We might say the psychological you is the place from which you can put your thoughts, images and sensations in "the right perspective."

As you are reading this column, think this thought, "I **MUST** keep my hands below my ears" and also I'd like you to put one hand on top of your head. If you went along with my request, who was the one who complied? Was it "your body?" Or "your mind?" Or was it that "psychological you" who "has a body" and chose to move it regardless of what was going on "in your mind"? Experiencing your thoughts, images, and sensations "from a distance" is "putting them in perspective"—seeing them as different from the "psychological you" who "has them."

However, that isn't the whole story. With a little practice, thoughts, images, and sensations can be experienced as simply what they are—as thoughts, images, and sensations rather than what they sometimes seem to be—monsters we have to "fight."

Consider this thought, "I absolutely **MUST** have a drink!" You could identify that thought as "irrational" and dispute it by showing yourself that just because you want something does not prove you absolutely **MUST** have it. Therefore, just because you want a drink, or anything else, does not mean you absolutely **MUST** have what you want. By disputing this thought, you take away its power by showing yourself that the thought is "not true."

But let's look closer. Whether "true" or "false," "I absolutely **MUST** have a drink" is not a monster that can control what you do with your hands, arms, feet, and mouth. "I absolutely **MUST** have a drink" is nothing more, or less, than a thought. Though it seems to be a monster with which you must do battle if you are not to act as it dictates, in fact, you could simply look past the illusion and see "I absolutely **MUST** have a drink" for what it really is—nothing more, or less, than a thought.

Take the thought, "I really, really, really want a drink" (or to engage in any other behavior)! There is nothing "irrational"

about that thought. And the bodily sensations that come along with it. They might be really, really, really strong! And the images that come along with that emphatic thought and strong sensations could be really, really, really attractive. The thoughts could be so emphatic and the sensations so strong and the images so attractive that it seems like they can "make" you do things with your hands, arms, feet, and mouth. They become **MONSTERS!**

But look more closely. They are only thoughts, images, and sensations that **SEEM** to be monsters. Just "watch" them awhile as what they are, rather than as the monsters they seem to be, and, in a few moments, you will likely be having other thoughts, other images, and other sensations. You might say that you are "unmasking monsters" rather than fighting with them. And, very often, the harder you "fight," the harder they "fight back." The more you treat thoughts, images and sensations as if they **WERE** monsters, the more monster-like they become. On the other hand, with a little practice, you can unmask them rather than fight with them. You can notice them as what they are rather than what they seem to be.

So, to sum up, the first move is to "get some perspective." Your thoughts, images, and sensations are something you **HAVE**, not something you **ARE**. The second move is to notice the illusion of monsters rather than be taken in by it. Your thoughts, images, and sensations are nothing more, or less, than that—thoughts, images and sensations. They may do one heck of an "I-am-a-monster" act, but it's still an act! Rather than fight them, unmask them! By making these two moves, you will not only be able to "see clearly" the distinction between **YOU** and your experiences, you won't have to be taken in by the illusion of monsters that we all sometimes experience. Instead, you can "see it" as the illusion it truly is.

## Ideas for Fundraising on the Local Level

by CJ Gueldner, Facilitator, Dayton, Nevada

Having recently completed the SMART Recovery® distance training program, I plan to include SMART Recovery® as a funding recipient of current and future local fundraising endeavors. Here's a recent example of a fundraiser I am doing for a Farmers Market. A portion of the proceeds are earmarked for SMART Recovery®.

A friend of mine is the innkeeper at an Inn in Shelter Cove, CA. We are doing a raffle for my local farmers market. I am having raffle tickets printed even as I write! I plan to donate a portion of the proceeds from the raffle to my local SMART Recovery® account as part of my annual contributions that I make to non-profits in my area. I also sponsor the Fernley/Wadsworth Lions Club, a local Girl Scout troop, and a host of other non-profit venues in my regional area. This year I also plan to donate "scholarships" for CPR training and babysitting classes that our local fire department conducts. We have 1,000 tickets to sell!

Participants can win a two-night stay for two, right on the beach at the Inn in Shelter Cove, California. Raffle tickets are \$5.00 per ticket or purchase five tickets for \$20.00. You do not need to be present to win. Winner will be announced at 5:00 p.m. on May 30, 2009 at the Fernley Multi-Cultural Festival. Winner will also be notified in writing. The last day to purchase raffle tickets via mail order will be May 15, 2009.

Other SMART Recovery® volunteers may like to consider raising funds locally with a fundraiser of this nature! You don't need to know anyone to do this either. The best way to handle this is to contact a local innkeeper to a B&B or a place of vacation

interest. We are paying for one night and the innkeeper donated the 2nd night. Your costs will end up being the price of printing your raffle tickets plus one night at the hotel/B&B.

## Growing SMART Recovery® Meetings: Experimenting with Different Formats in NYC

by Brett Saarela, SMART Recovery® NYC

Last summer, SMART Recovery® NYC faced a crisis. We had to cancel two of our six weekly meetings because we didn't have enough trained facilitators. The same problem affects other locales and contributes to the difficulty of growing meetings. We had developed a local training approach for potential facilitators involving shadowing and co-hosting, but the process could take several months and each year it resulted in just a handful of trained facilitators.

Our local Board discussed what to do, and we decided we needed a simpler meeting format, one that did not require extensive training for facilitators. From these discussions, we developed three new meeting formats, while continuing to offer "Standard Meetings." We liked the Standard Meetings because the latter offered the richness of using the tools and techniques as facilitated by a skilled and seasoned facilitator.

By offering a wider range of meeting formats, we can meet the needs of participants and can grow. We have also started a "team approach" to the meetings to develop groups that are more cohesive and to share the responsibility for a particular meeting among several volunteers. Via an anonymous listserv, we send our participants a weekly e-mail summary of the meeting schedule. It includes descriptions of the meeting formats.

## Three New Meeting Formats

1. The Point Meeting focuses each week in turn on one point of the 4-Point Program<sup>SM</sup> of SMART Recovery®, and the cycle repeats monthly. The facilitator has an exercise prepared that relates to that meeting's Point. This meeting is ideal for newcomers who want a systematic overview of the entire program. Another benefit of this format is that it ensures attention to Point 4, Lifestyle Balance. Standard meetings often ignored Lifestyle Balance because of the more immediate needs of participants related to Points 1 and 2—Motivation Enhancement and Urge Coping. If a pressing issue arises during Check-In unrelated to that meeting's scheduled Point, the facilitator has the flexibility to devote some portion of the meeting to addressing that problem.

2. Each week the Handbook Meeting uses a tool or reading from the SMART Recovery® Handbook. Each participant is encouraged to bring (and buy) his or her own Handbook, but extra copies are available for newcomers. The facilitator can pre-select the exercise or after the Check-In can suggest one that seems appropriate. One benefit of this new format has been an increase in Handbook sales as participants get a chance to peruse the material during the meeting. Homework can also be suggested for the following week.

3. The Rational Discussion Meeting uses a scripted format to reduce the pressure on the meeting facilitator, in this case called the "Host." This format's design makes the meetings more truly peer-led with the idea that any regular participant could act as Host by following the script and encouraging a discussion of SMART Recovery® principles. The major benefit of this format has been the expansion of local meetings. Several participants initiated a Friday night Rational Discussion Meeting. It has been a success, and a second meeting is in the works. Another positive aspect

of this format is that it encourages newer participants to feel comfortable in a volunteer and leadership role as “Hosts” as they continue to refine their knowledge and skills in the program. Some participants miss the emphasis on tools and the didactic approach of the more traditional formats. However, the script’s design encourages participants to incorporate relevant tools. As well, participants can attend Standard Meetings.

### **“Rational Discussion Meeting” Script**

#### Welcome and Introduction

Welcome. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am the host for tonight’s SMART Recovery® meeting. SMART stands for Self-Management And Recovery Training. Our meetings can vary in format but all focus on how to abstain from any type of addictive behavior. The format of tonight’s meeting will be a “Rational Discussion.” (*You may hand out copies of “Ground Rules/Meeting Outline” to each participant.*)

Do we have anyone attending for the first time? (*If no one new, skip to next paragraph.*) If so, I have a “Welcome Packet” with a meeting outline and ground rules so you will know what to expect. The handout also includes a current meeting schedule and explains some of our basic concepts and tools.

Please turn off any cell phones or pagers at this time.

Would someone like to volunteer to read our opening statement? (*Hand the following page to a participant or read it yourself.*)

#### Opening Statement

SMART Recovery® is a science-based program offering practical tools, self-empowering skills, and group support. We believe people can learn to change their behavior by changing their thinking. We focus on four main points important for recovery, including:

1. Building and maintaining motivation to abstain from addictive behavior,
2. Coping with urges and cravings,
3. Learning to problem-solve by managing thoughts, feelings and behaviors, and
4. Learning how to balance life’s long- and short-term pleasures and satisfactions.

Our meetings last for 90 minutes and are open to anyone. No one is required to participate. If you are under the influence, you are welcome to stay, but we ask that you only observe the meeting.

SMART Recovery® is free. We pass the hat at the end of the meeting only to meet our expenses.

We are a self-help, peer-support group, not professional therapy. The host’s job is to facilitate a rational discussion by making sure everyone has a chance to participate. Please be respectful to everyone in the room, and please remember the meetings are confidential.

#### Check-Ins

We will begin with a brief Check-In. Would someone volunteer to be timekeeper and alert us if a Check-In goes over four minutes? That way everyone gets a turn and we will have time for discussion afterwards.

Please start by telling us your name. If you’ve been here before, give a brief update on how you used SMART Recovery® in the past week. You may like to share a recent success or mention anything coming up that causes you concern regarding your recovery. If you’re new, tell us a little about your background, why you’re here, and how you heard about SMART Recovery®. You may pass during the Check-In if you choose. If you want feedback from the group on an issue, please let us know and we will add it to our agenda.

After Check-Ins, we will select a few items for an open Rational Discussion. Some of you may have particular ways to

apply SMART Recovery® tools or concepts to the issues raised, and we can help each other with our challenges.

Finally, we will pass the hat and Check-Out with those who wish to share brief concluding remarks.

Now we’ll start Check-Ins. Anyone may go first.

#### Agenda Setting

From what you heard during the Check-Ins, please suggest what you would like the group to discuss. We can select a few topics related to recovery. If you encountered a challenging event during the week or anticipate something in the coming week, let us know if you’d like time for discussion. (*If no issues or topics turn up after about two minutes, which rarely happens, you may suggest a topic or use handout to stimulate discussion.*)

#### Rational Discussion

OK. It sounds like we have a few items on the agenda to discuss. Let’s quickly review the guiding principles for a Rational Discussion and then the divide up the remaining time to allow a few minutes for each topic.

Would someone like to volunteer to read the Guiding Principles? (*Hand the following page to a participant or read it yourself.*)

(NOTE to HOST: *It is not necessary to comment on everything that is said. Try to keep the conversation on SMART Recovery® points, tools and applications so experienced participants can share their knowledge and skills with newer folks. Think “friendly recovery” rather than “SMART Recovery®.”*)

#### Guiding Principles

Our discussions have several guiding principles:

1. SMART Recovery®’s foundation is reason and scientific knowledge.

2. We demonstrate respect for each other even when we disagree.
3. SMART Recovery® views addictive behavior primarily as a bad habit rather than a disease.
4. We discourage the use of labels like alcoholic and addict because we perceive that everyone has some degree of addictive behavior, and labels often do more harm than good.
5. We believe in taking primary responsibility for our own behavior and allow others to do the same.

### Pass the Hat

(20 minutes before the end of the meeting, Pass the Hat)

I'm going to pass the hat for donations to meet our expenses. Funds go toward keeping SMART Recovery® alive and functioning, so please give what you can. (Begin Check-Outs while the hat is passed.)

### Check-Outs

It's time to Check-Out. Let's go around the circle again so we can hear what was especially meaningful or useful for each of us about this meeting or what actions we plan to take in the next week. Please allow time so that everyone who wants to gets a chance to speak.

### Closing

#### **5 minutes before the end of the group**

It's time to end the formal meeting, so would someone like to volunteer to read the closing statement? (Hand the following page to a participant or read it yourself and collect copies of the "Ground Rules/ Meeting Outline," if distributed.)

### Closing Statement

SMART Recovery® meetings are an opportunity to learn and practice new techniques. If you are struggling with urges or if you relapse, come to a meeting and discuss what happened. We try to help you learn how to prevent more relapses by managing your

urges. It takes time to learn to deal with the hassles of everyday life without relying on addictive behaviors and to take responsibility for your behavior and emotional life.

Be patient with yourself, but be persistent.

You may want to consider helping to keep SMART Recovery® available to others. Many people have found that getting more involved with SMART Recovery® by facilitating meetings or working behind the scenes has enhanced their commitment to recovery, led to a more balanced life-style, and sometimes even been fun. If this sounds interesting, speak to any host about ways to volunteer.

A few final notes: If you want to get a weekly e-mail with the meeting schedule and upcoming changes, give your e-mail address to the host or send an e-mail to: [info@smartrecoverynyc.org](mailto:info@smartrecoverynyc.org)

Also, we sell a SMART Recovery® Handbook for \$10 that is well worth the price.

We hope that you have felt supported, accepted and, most of all, welcome. Thanks for coming!

### **Ground Rules for SMART Recovery® Meetings** (revised for NYC from work by Robert F. Sarmiento, PhD, and Henry Steinberger, PhD)

1. Use of alcohol or drugs is a personal matter, so you are welcome to attend regardless of whether you are currently using or not. If your behavior is disruptive for any reason, you may be asked to leave. However, no one will shame you or try to pressure you into quitting. In coming to the group, participants agree to be responsible only for their own behavior and to allow others to make their own decisions.
2. All participants agree to confidentiality for all that is said and done at meetings. It is not permissible to tell anyone outside the group who attended or what

was said in any way that would identify the individual. Violation of confidentiality is grounds for being barred from attendance.

3. Participants are encouraged to take primary responsibility for their own recovery. Thus, there is no sponsorship or buddy system. It is helpful to actively participate in meetings, but not required. What you do during the week in your daily life is much more important than what happens in the meeting. Practicing what you have learned on a daily basis is usually the best way to overcome your addictive behavior. "Homework" assignments may help you develop competence at self-management and recovery.
4. Socializing between members is seen as a private matter between individuals.
5. Relapse is seen as a chance for practicing your new skills, not something to be ashamed about. Instead of downing yourself or using your relapse as an excuse to give up, use it to observe how you got yourself to relapse, what the triggers were, and what thoughts led you to act against your better judgment. Write down an ABC analysis and bring it to the next meeting for discussion.
6. If you think someone in the group is having a serious problem like severe depression, suicidal thoughts, incoherence, or "flipping out," contact the group's advisor immediately. The advisor is a mental health professional who has volunteered to be a resource to the group.
7. Attendance is free, but donating time and money keep the organization alive.

### **MEETING OUTLINE: "Rational Discussion"** (90 min. total)

1. **Welcome and Opening Statement:** Read by host or volunteer. (5 min.)
2. **Check-In/Successes:** What's happening related to your recovery? (5-20 min.)

- 3. Agenda Setting:** Based on the Check-In an agenda is set. (5 min.)
- 4. Rational Discussion:** This is working time to focus on issues/challenges. (30-45 min.)
- 5. Pass the Hat:** SMART Recovery® is a 501(c)(3) educational not-for-profit. (2 minutes)
- 6. Check-Out:** What was most meaningful about this meeting? What SMART Recovery® tool can you use this week? (15 min.)
- 7. Closing Statement:** Read by host or volunteer (5 min.)

### People Power



## My First Meeting Facilitation

by John M., SMART Recovery NYC®

I was tempted to glance backwards to confirm I had indeed left a trail of footprints in the snow leading back to the Albert Ellis Institute. I had just facilitated my first SMART Recovery® meeting, and it felt like I was walking on air. My mind was trying to process a flood of thoughts, and somehow make sense of this high I was feeling. As I approached the entrance to the 6 train, it became clear: I had been shown a power that had changed my life, and I was now able to share that discovery with others who were trying to change theirs.

SMART Recovery® entered my life, as is often the case, during a time of crisis. Attempts at short-term sobriety and

controlled drinking were becoming more difficult and less successful. Each promise of “never again” was forgotten within days, and each return to drinking was having escalating repercussions. The effects of my addictive behavior on my marriage, my home, my job, my health and ultimately my freedom were clear. Yet I still wasn’t sure I could stop my behavior, even if I wanted to—and I wasn’t even sure that I did want to!

The SMART Recovery® tools were what spoke to me first. Doing a two-pager on the “Benefits of Continuing” section of the CBA made me realize why “just stop drinking” had failed me in the past: I wasn’t addressing the reasons why I was drinking in the first place.

This led to learning about the 4-Point Program<sup>SM</sup> and other aspects of SMART Recovery®. They weren’t presented in any particular order or in full depth all at once, but every meeting added a little more insight into them. Each exercise and discussion provided immediate benefit and deeper understanding.

I didn’t get or agree with everything that was said, and some of it didn’t apply to me directly, but I gradually built a strong connection to what SMART Recovery® taught and how it was taught. There was no hard sell. There was no insurmountable obstacle to overcome. There was nothing I “must” do. There was just a group of people with the same problems we all face, and a set of well-tested tools they were using to work on these problems.

As I transitioned between the “stop drinking” and “start living” phases of my recovery, I realized that a key word in the SMART acronym (Self Management And Recovery Training) is the smallest one: AND. Without it, the program is just about self-assisted addiction recovery. With it, Self Management takes on a much wider scope: it can help with all aspects of your life. This kept SMART Recovery® a vital part of my life even after abstinence was no longer a daily struggle.

The Tuesday night Point meetings at the Albert Ellis Institute were now ingrained in my weekly routine. As the weeks went by, two things struck me. The first was the dedication of the facilitators. The regularly-assigned facilitators, Brett and Eric, were clearly committed to making it to the meetings no matter how difficult or inconvenient that was. And if they weren’t available, someone else always pitched in to cover. That made me think: where would I be now if no facilitator had shown up during my first SMART Recovery® meeting?

The other thing that impressed me was the quality of the contributions made by the other meeting participants. Whether someone had one day of sobriety or many years with SMART Recovery®, and even if they had different addictions than mine, there was always something that I could learn from them. Old-timers gave practical advice, and showed me the obstacles I would face and benefits I could reap through commitment to my recovery.

But even people at their first meeting had years of experience with addiction, which gave them the ability to immediately help the other participants even as they were getting their first introduction to the SMART Recovery® tools and techniques. Seeing them go through the same struggles and thought processes I did was a reminder of how far I had come. But I was also becoming excited for them, because I saw that they now had the opportunity to discover the life-altering benefits of SMART Recovery®. These realizations gave me the confidence to increase my own participation in the group discussions.

After one meeting, Eric told me he liked what I had said and suggested I think about facilitating. I was thrilled at the idea, but also apprehensive. It had only recently passed my previous record of three months of sobriety, and I still had only a basic understanding of the SMART Recovery® tools, so I didn’t feel qualified to lead meetings myself. But he assured me that with a little training I would do just fine.

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I shadowed Eric for a few meetings and he explained all the ins and outs of facilitating. Seeing his style and technique in action was informative and inspiring. Brett, the other Tuesday facilitator, is also the New York Training Coordinator, and I was getting top-notch advice and encouragement co-hosting with her as well.

I got to meet the other NYC facilitators during meetings and at our monthly Facilitator Council meetings. They were a diverse group but all were equally skilled and committed to promoting SMART Recovery®. I was also impressed with the Online Meeting facilitators, and their ability to juggle simultaneous conversations and work on the front lines with people in crisis. This was a group of people I could be proud to be associated with.

I continued to study the *Handbook* and other materials on my own, but I took one passage from our meeting's Opening Statement to heart: ***We are a self-help, peer-support group—not professional therapy.*** I didn't need to be an expert. It was OK if I didn't have all the answers. We're all learning as we go. Commitment was what was needed most. The rest would follow.

My first meeting as a facilitator came unexpectedly. There was a snowstorm that night and, since I work a short distance from the Albert Ellis Institute, I figured I would get there early and set up in case the facilitator had difficulty getting in. Of course Brett made it in on time, but when she saw me setting up she said, "Keep going. You run the meeting, and I'll be sitting here if you need any help."

The panic didn't set in until after the check-in, when I wondered how I was going to fill up the whole remaining hour. The answer was soon clear: I didn't have to; the participants would. I suggested topics following from the check-ins, and led an

exercise at the board, but it was clear that in a peer-support group it's the folks in the seats who are providing the real content of the meeting. That's when I truly understood the meaning of the term "facilitator."

When the meeting was over and Brett and the other regulars were congratulating me, some of the first-time attendees said how much they had gotten out of the meeting, and that they didn't realize it was my first one. I was finally giving back a little of what SMART Recovery® had given me, and it felt GREAT!

I'm in the Tuesday meeting rotation now, and with each meeting I'm learning more and becoming more confident and comfortable with facilitating. Brett has recently joined the SMART Recovery® Board of Directors (congrats, Brett!), so I'm glad I can help free up her time and energy for her new responsibilities. I still have a lot to learn, but that's half the fun!

Considering how much we pay for the necessities and luxuries of our "modern" existence, it's incredible that something as life-altering as SMART Recovery® is FREE! And given the current economic situation, the need for it is greater than ever. That's why it's a pleasure and a privilege to help keep SMART Recovery® available to others.

Facilitating is fun, rewarding, and a lot easier than you think. Looking back, it's a very natural progression from first meeting to first facilitation. If you've ever considered trying it yourself, there's no reason to hold back—jump on in!

## Jury Duty

as posted by Dylan Barmmer to his fellow facilitators in San Diego

This week, I had the chance to serve as a juror—and in fact, ended up serving as the jury foreman.

Today, I used some of the skills I've learned administering CBAs at SMART Recovery® meetings to help us deliberate and reach a verdict that I believe was fair, rational, and well considered. There was no doubt that my budding skills as a facilitator helped me serve ably in this difficult role.

Throughout the course of the trial, I felt an overwhelming sense of relief and pride in being on THIS side of the legal system...quite the departure from where I found myself during the height (depth?) of my drinking days. And it felt like a welcome change from where I believe I would have found myself once again (if not planted six feet under), had I not been able to stop and stay stopped.

I also believe this experience provided me with more compassion and patience for those DUI folks whom we often encounter and work with.

I firmly believe that what we are doing is helping save people's lives. Or at least keep them out of prison and set the table for more enriching lives.

I thank and honor all of you for your involvement in SMART Recovery®.

And I cannot tell you how humbled and proud (contradictory, yes) I am to play a small role.

May neither Doom nor Gloom cast a shadow upon your day.

## Articles are Welcome!

If you have a story or information you would like to see published in the *News & Views*, please feel free to submit a copy to Emmett Velten, Editor, via e-mail: [ev\\_verb@msn.com](mailto:ev_verb@msn.com). Unsolicited material is most welcome!

## Groundwork

*Editor's Note: In each forthcoming issue of SMART Recovery® News & Views, we will include a "Groundwork" article. These articles will reflect results from small, recommended assignments for our members and volunteers. The assignments will aim to promote personal and/or organizational growth. Here's the first Groundwork exercise...*

Tell one person you trust, who does not already know, that you are connected to SMART Recovery®. Explain that one of the foundations of the program is identifying and acting on enduring satisfactions. "Each one of us is asking one person what you view as your most enduring satisfaction. I'll report this information, anonymously, to my group, so we can discuss it."

Groups are then welcome to share what was learned in group discussion for inclusion in the next issue of the *News & Views*. Send the information via e-mail to Shari Allwood at the e-mail address noted below.

All should please feel welcome to suggest future Groundwork ideas by sending an e-mail to Shari Allwood, [sallwood@smartrecovery.org](mailto:sallwood@smartrecovery.org).

Happy groundwork!



## Beyond the Walls *Working SMART Out From Within*

by Barry A. Grant

SMART Recovery® is alive and well in New Jersey through Community Educational Centers Logan Hall. As a Unit Manager, I am training all of my Senior Counselors as well as Unit Counselors to facilitate meetings, in addition to incorporating the principles of SMART Recovery® into their own lives.

The population residing in Logan Hall is Parole Violators, Union County Jail inmates, and federal parolees, who await bail or trial, or who participate in the Work Release/Education Development component of the program. The capacity licensed by law and New Jersey Code is 600. The total resident population housed at one time in this facility can range up to 570. These numbers calculate a caseload for each counselor of 30 to 32. The overall facility ratio is six residents to every one staff member. The number of residents to whom to provide services is already high—and getting higher.

Large caseloads, high staff turnover, and residents with issues of entitlement serve as

major sources of stress in these Senior Counselors. Job descriptions are clear, but staff ratios are inadequate to meet the treatment goals. The Unit Managers manage to juggle the tasks, but there could be more focused and effective treatment if there were more staff. Unfortunately, this scenario is common in the human service field, but fortunately, this is where SMART Recovery® comes into play effectively.

Having spent a substantial period of time "Inside the Walls" and now participating in social policy/social planning "Beyond the Walls," I can say that stress is the largest contributing factor in job burnout and in inmate/resident unwillingness to change. A one-liner that I often offer to my staff is, "You can't work it in someone else if you're not working it in yourself." Why is this so apt? Because effective change begins within. SMART Recovery®'s "it is what it is" approach to problem-solving and goal attainment appears to derive some of its effectiveness from the fact that all humans are much more alike than different. This allows empathy and optimism. Moreover, it builds morale and enhances motivation for change—for both the staff and inmate/resident population. In short, it confirms the realistic concept of empowerment through rationally determining the management of oneself as opposed to relinquishing oneself over to something or someone else.

### Positively Speaking:

One of the more outstanding points in life's lessons is that we can perceive our preferences accurately. Trouble stems from misperceiving our preferences as "needs."

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

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