

A. Thomas Horvath, PhD, President

**Inspirations**



*Dear Readers: The content of this quarter's News & Views is as good as ever. However, you may note that there's a misplaced comma, a typo here or there, an en dash vs. an em dash, etc. This is because our amazing volunteer editor (since October 2012), Rosemary Hardin, was out of the country and unavailable to edit this issue. She is certainly missed. Enjoy the issue and forgive us for the less-than-usual editorial excellence. Christi and Shari*

**The one concept**

by Brian Ford

The most valuable concept to me is the way that SMART defines addictive behavior (“any behavior or activity that blocks or sabotages our long term goals”; does not encourage the use of labels like “alcoholic” or “addict”), because I think that this concept allows for a much more meaningful experience for a wider range of participants and a broader utility for the program.

I came to SMART Recovery® because I was denied access to the California State Bar by the Moral Character Committee, and I was seeking a way to establish that my history of alcohol abuse would not

compromise my competency to practice law. I was convicted of a DUI in 2007, and I was arrested in Texas in 2012 for possession of marijuana. At the time of my arrest in Texas, I had a passenger in my car who was drunk. In the process of applying for a moral character determination, my disclosure of these events triggered an intense review, and in the process I told the committee that I was a “recovered alcoholic” (on the advice of every lawyer I talked to) because prior to my DUI I abused alcohol, but I had since gained control of my life, and only drank socially. At the time, this was the only way I knew how to describe my history with alcohol. The Committee denied me, I suspect, because they did not believe me; saying that I was morally unfit to practice law. In the process of my appeal, I put together a recovery program, which included SMART, because at some point it had been determined that the only issue holding me up was that I “confessed to being an alcoholic, yet continued to drink.”

I only include the above history to give context to the importance of what this concept holds for me. It was through SMART's definition of addictive behavior that I was able to define my present problem with alcohol: My long-term goal was to be a lawyer, and my drinking was obstructing that goal.

**Inside:**

**Inspirations**

The one concept ..... 1

4-Point Program® ..... 1

**People Power**

Partnered recovery ..... 2

Kindle version of F&F handbook now available on Amazon ..... 2

SMART Recovery 2015 Annual Conference ..... 3

We're growing! 116 new volunteers recruited during Volunteer Month 2015! ..... 3

Call for nominations: The Joseph Gerstein special award for exemplary service to SMART Recovery ... 4

Ongoing SMART training: ..... 4

SMART Recovery® Board of Directors nomination information ..... 5

**SMART Ideas**

Heroes wanted! Celebrate freedom from addiction ... 6

Process for obtaining approved access to SMART Recovery research participants ..... 6

Blaming and condemning: they just don't work ..... 7

Being right or being useful ..... 8

**SMART Progress**

Recovery Month 2015 ..... 10

Events update ..... 10

Recreating addiction treatment in the 21st century ..... 10

SMART Recovery InsideOut™ program transforming lives in Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) service in England ..... 11

**President's Letter**

President's Letter: SMART Recovery establishes discussion meetings ..... 12

**International Development**

UK SMART Recovery® update ..... 14

SMART Recovery Alberta, Canada update ..... 15

SMART Recovery Australia® update ..... 15

SMART Recovery Republic of Ireland update ..... 16

**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.*

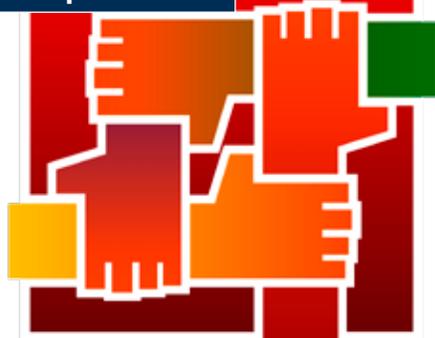
**The program offers specific tools and techniques for each of the program points:**

- Point #1:** Building and Maintaining Motivation
- Point #2:** Coping with Urges
- Point #3:** Managing Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviors
- Point #4:** Living a Balanced Life

Using that basic understanding, I was able to commit to complete sobriety (abstinence) overnight. I had very little to no issues with urges or cravings, but found the SMART tools to be incredibly helpful with the emotional turmoil (thoughts and feelings) of going through the moral character process, and learning to live a balanced life. I am, hopefully, almost through the process and will be admitted to practice some-time between May of this year and February of next (depending on how long the Bar takes to determine my recovery to be sufficient).

Anyway, in sum, it was this philosophical underpinning of SMART that I found to have the largest impact in my life, and it is the one concept that I would choose if I could only choose one to pass on.”

### People Power



### Partnered recovery

by Bill Abbott and Suzie Whalen Facilitators at McLean Hospital, Belmont, MA

We are facilitators for both regular SMART Recovery® meetings and a Family & Friends (F&F) meeting. One somewhat unusual feature of our SMART Recovery Family & Friends meeting is that it is paired with a regular SMART Recovery meeting at the same site and the same time, albeit in

different rooms. This has resulted in something remarkable happening.

About half of the people in either of the rooms have their counterpart in the other room – so that attendance has become sort of a family thing. The F&F group is a mixture of spouses whose spouse has a problem with addiction and parents whose child has a problem. The F&F and the recovery participants arrive together and they leave together – and perhaps they communicate better together. Some couples have even called it their “date night.”

Several weeks ago something even more remarkable occurred. During the check-in at the regular SMART Recovery meeting, a new participant related that his wife had been urging him to attend SMART Recovery for his drinking problem. Each week for a few weeks she encouraged him to attend while she attended the F&F meeting. On the third week he decided to attend the recovery meeting because his wife came home with such a different attitude toward him that he felt that SMART Recovery was a program he wanted to try. A second person, also relatively new, related a similar experience about how his wife had dramatically changed her behavior toward him after ONE Family & Friends meeting. Then two others shared that they had also observed similar changes in their husbands and wives.

So how did this happen?

The F&F meeting format is similar to the addiction recovery format. In addition, different topics are introduced such as self-care, positive communications, setting boundaries, and managing their own thoughts feelings and behavior. These topics are picked from the Family

& Friends handbook published by SMART Recovery.<sup>1</sup>

The SMART Recovery program’s principles and methods have been modified for the F&F group, utilizing SMART tools in conjunction with strategies from CRAFT (Community Reinforcement and Family Training, a program that has had remarkable success – an astounding 70%<sup>2</sup> – in helping families motivate the substance user to enter recovery.

With many F&F attendees we have seen impressive improvements in their attitudes and the quality of their own lives. They are learning and putting new coping strategies to work. In fact they are recovering from the addictive behavior of their loved one. As a result many of them are improving their relationship with their loved one and encouraging their recovery.

### Kindle version of F&F handbook now available on Amazon

<http://tinyurl.com/fnfkindle> or search “SMART Recovery” on Amazon



<sup>1</sup> The SMART Recovery Family & Friends Handbook is available at [https://www.smartrecovery.org/SMARTStore/index.php?main\\_page=product\\_info&products\\_id=43](https://www.smartrecovery.org/SMARTStore/index.php?main_page=product_info&products_id=43)

<sup>2</sup> From the webpage <http://motivationandchange.com/outpatient-treatment/for-families/craft-overview/>

## SMART Recovery 2015 Annual Conference

Cincinnati Airport Marriott  
Hebron, KY  
September 18–20, 2015



Would you like to enrich your connections with SMART Recovery? Interested in networking with other volunteers? Want to learn more about the science behind SMART? Interested in SMART's plans for the future?

Whether you're a volunteer, a meeting participant, a clinician, or a friend of SMART Recovery, the Annual Conference is your chance to fully experience the energizing and inspiring annual gathering of this international community of people working to help others create positive change in their lives.

### LOCATION

This year's annual conference will be held in Cincinnati, OH. Cincinnati is a beautiful, bustling city filled with mid-western charm, and a revitalized downtown and waterfront area. It is known for its entrepreneurial and artistic talent — not to mention its chili and ice cream! And... it's located in Ohio, home state of SMART Recovery's Central Office.

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

#### Friday

The conference will begin on Friday afternoon with an optional sight-seeing tour of the city. Friday evening we will meet for a casual dinner at the hotel, followed by a screening of the new documentary "The Business of Recovery." The film's producer will be present for a Q&A session after the screening.

#### Saturday

Saturday's topics will include Mindfulness, SMART's international and domestic development, a demo of the upgraded website, Disputations with Hank Robb, PhD....and more.

The day's events will conclude with dinner and the presentation of the annual Joe Gerstein Award.

#### Sunday

Sunday morning's speakers will include Jonathan von Breton, CCMHC, David O. Saenz, PhD, and Tom Horvath, PhD. A discussion panel of "master facilitators" will round out the event.

### CONFERENCE AGENDA, REGISTRATION & HOTEL RESERVATIONS

The current agenda, complete conference registration and hotel reservation information is available online: <http://www.smartrecovery.org/cinci2015/>

**Space is limited, register early!  
Registration deadline is September 4th!**

### Articles are welcome!

If you have a story or information you would like to see published in **News & Views**, please submit it to Rosemary Hardin, Editor, [rosemaryalmond@gmail.com](mailto:rosemaryalmond@gmail.com). Unsolicited material is most welcome!

## We're growing! 116 new volunteers recruited during Volunteer Month 2015!

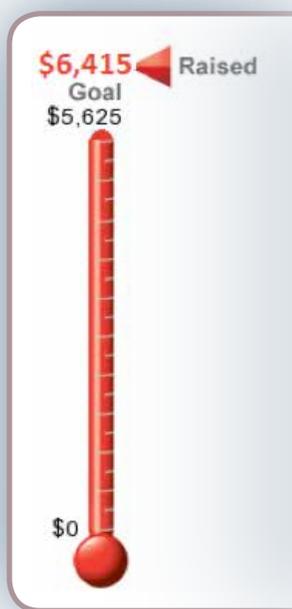
Each April, SMART Recovery Online celebrates Volunteer Month to recognize the efforts of our dedicated volunteers and encourage others to get involved.

We had a terrific response to Volunteer Month this year. 116 new volunteers stepped forward for training, which surpassed all expectations.

We are grateful for the many SMART Recovery volunteers who worked to get the word out about Volunteer Month, and to encourage and recruit new volunteers.

In addition to new facilitators for face-to-face meetings, our new volunteers will help with SMART Recovery Online meetings, message boards, and in the 24/7 chat room.

We are also grateful to our many supporters for their gifts during April. Thanks to two very special anonymous individuals who provided matching challenge donations, several SMART groups who expressed



their support with generous group gifts and many individual donors, we surpassed our goal of \$5,625 with total donations to the training scholarship fund of \$6,415.

## Call for nominations: The Joseph Gerstein special award for exemplary service to SMART Recovery

by Elaine Appel, Selection Committee member

*The Joseph Gerstein award selection committee is calling for nominations for the 2015 award.*

If you know someone who has shown extraordinary and exemplary service to SMART, please submit their name and reasons for selection here at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2015GersteinAward>.

Deadline for nominations is August 7, 2015. The award recipient will be announced at this year's SMART Annual Conference in Cincinnati, OH.

A candidate for this award will have remarkable attributes, such as:

- Long and continued service to SMART
- Significant contributions of time and talent
- Adding significantly to the science and evidence-base foundation that supports SMART's concepts and tools
- Championing new initiatives
- Working energetically and creatively to support SMART's activities

This year's recipient will receive a cash award of \$1,000, which is to be used at the discretion of the awardee to support activities related to SMART, such as travel for education and research. A brief report from the

awardee on how they used award will be made at the SMART annual meeting in 2016.

This special award was first announced and awarded at the 2012 SMART Conference. The first presentation of the award gave tribute and recognition to an individual who continuously for over 25 years has given extraordinary and exemplary service toward the growth and dissemination of the SMART program. The name of the award was that of the person who filled those criteria in every manner imaginable, SMART's founding president, Joe Gerstein. A brief description of Joe Gerstein's many contributions will serve as a framework for identifying a worthy candidate.

Joe is a retired physician who practiced internal medicine in the Boston area with a specialty in pain management. Out of concern for his numerous patients with addiction problems, especially to opiates, who were not getting help from 12-step programs, his interest in providing a science-based approach to recovery resulted in his being selected and serving as the founding president of SMART Recovery.

Over the past 21 years, Joe has worked tirelessly to further the growth and goals of SMART in the United States and abroad. He's responsible for SMART's tremendous growth in New England, and has facilitated more than 3,200 SMART meetings. He has served continuously on the SMART Recovery Board of Directors.

Please nominate someone you know has provided exemplary service to SMART!

## Ongoing SMART training: SMART MEETING MANAGEMENT

(Formerly Authoritative Facilitator Training)

The weekly SMART Meeting Management (SMM) occurs each Wednesday, 8:00 PM Eastern, in SMART Room #1 on SMART Recovery Online (SROL). No password is required.

All Facilitators, Hosts and Volunteers are welcome to attend.

Purpose: To advance your meeting management skills, including following meeting guidelines, how to "Do SMART Recovery", and how to create an accepting and non-judgmental environment.

An additional meeting occurs the last Saturday of each month, 3:00 pm Eastern.

Seminar leaders include SMART Recovery President, Tom Horvath, Bill (Mabb) Abbott, David (Dpowersdoc) Powers and others. Email questions to [smm@smartrecovery.org](mailto:smm@smartrecovery.org). To see all SMART Recovery events, visit the Online Meetings & Activities section of the SMART Recovery homepage at <http://www.smartrecovery.org>.

## MONTHLY "FRESH START" VOLUNTEER MEETINGS

"Fresh Start" meetings take place monthly on the 2nd Monday of the month from 8:00-9:00 PM Eastern in the SMART Room of SMART Online, password: Please contact Jodi at [information@smartrecovery.org](mailto:information@smartrecovery.org) for the password.

All SMART Recovery Facilitators, Hosts and Volunteers are invited to attend.

Purpose: To provide support for Facilitators and Volunteers who may or may not have another support system in

place; it is a time to discuss your own personal issues and life struggles in a safe and supportive environment.

The Fresh Start leader is SMART President, Tom Horvath, with others filling in on occasion as helpful.

### **HOW TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE ONGOING TRAINING PROGRAMS...**

The SMART Room is one of SMART's online meeting rooms. Please note you will need to register, then login with your SROL user name and password to access the meeting room. It may be accessed from the "SMART Chat & Online Meetings" menu tab on the SROL Message Board.

*We look forward to your participation!*

## **SMART Recovery® Board of Directors nomination information**

Listed below are the Job Requirements, Nomination Process, and Term of Office for the SMART Recovery Board of Directors (BOD) nominations. A link to the online form is included next to line item number one under Nomination Process. All nominations are due by Saturday, August 1st, 2015. Please feel free to contact the Central Office if you have questions.

Our organization is overseen by this BOD who volunteer their time to uphold the purpose, vision, and mission of SMART Recovery for those who benefit from the support of SMART Recovery.

### **Job Requirements:**

1. Members of the SMART Recovery Board of Directors are expected to be knowledgeable about and involved with SMART Recovery activities.
2. Participation in quarterly Board Meetings (via GoToMeeting) and participation in the Annual Fall Board Meeting (in person). Costs associated with travel to and from the Fall Board meeting are paid by the member. Attendance is required at all meetings.
3. Board Members are called upon to review, discuss and make decisions relevant to organization-wide SMART Recovery policies and issues. For example, Board meetings are not intended to provide a forum for discussion of local outreach efforts, but to determine how the national organization and Central Office can better support the efforts of the organization as a whole. "Big picture" thinking.
4. Members are expected to volunteer for committee activities, and to spend time outside of the Board meetings to help to increase the visibility and awareness of SMART Recovery, as well as to assist with fundraising efforts.
5. Members of the Board are expected, in the normal course of conducting Board business, to offer their skill/services to SMART Recovery for free. Any Board member performing remunerated work in connection with SMART Recovery requires authorization by the President or by the Executive Committee of the Board.
6. Members of the Board of Directors are requested to "Give or Get" \$1,000 annually to help meet the financial needs of the organization. (A structure is in place to ensure that this does not create a financial burden on the individual Board Member.)
7. Ability to communicate electronically is required, as much of the communication outside of the Board Meeting takes place via email.

### **Nomination Process:**

1. A Nomination Form needs to be completed for each individual being nominated via the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2015BoardNomination>
2. Three letters of support are to accompany the Nomination Form.
3. Forms are to be submitted to the SMART Recovery Central Office on or before August 1st, 2015.
4. Once the Nomination Form is received at the Central Office, a copy of the Form and support letters will be distributed to members of the Executive Committee for review.
5. Executive Committee members will "meet" via email to review candidates and to make recommendations for approval at the Fall Board of Directors Meeting.
6. The Board of Directors will consider and approve selected candidates at the Fall Meeting.
7. Following the Fall Board Meeting, nominees will be advised of the outcome of their nomination.

### **Term of Office:**

1. New Directors will be elected to the Board of Directors each year and will hold office for a term of two years.
2. The term of office for each member of the Board will begin on the 30th of December of the year elected, and will end on the 29th of December two years following.
3. Members may be considered for re-election.



## SMART Ideas

### Heroes wanted! Celebrate freedom from addiction

Join us in celebrating *freedom from addiction* during *Freedom Fortnight*, beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>.



### It's as easy as 1-2-3:

#### 1 Speak Up for Freedom of Choice!

Share your story in our online forum. Inspire others to action by telling your story of freedom from addiction with SMART Recovery!

#### 2 Support Freedom from Addiction!

SMART Recovery Online relies on the financial support of heroes like you! Help protect the support base of the thousands of people who come to SMART Recovery Online weekly, seeking support and freedom from addiction!

#### 3 Volunteer – Online or in Your Local Community!

Take the charge and help others in the fight against addiction! We rely on trained volunteers to provide a vital support base for those struggling with addiction by offering weekly meet-

ings. Be a hero and help others in the fight against addiction!

### Join the ranks of SMART's recovery superheroes!

Click <http://www.smartrecovery.org/freedom/> and be a HERO!

### Process for obtaining approved access to SMART Recovery research participants

SMART Recovery is committed to supporting research about:

1. Addictive behavior,
2. Recovery from problematic addictive behavior, and
3. The SMART Recovery program.

In recent years, the interest in investigating SMART Recovery participants has increased substantially. In an effort to balance support for quality research while not impeding the involvement of participants in SMART Recovery, we have begun a pre-approval process for all studies that seek to have approved access to SMART Recovery participants.

Effective May 1, 2015, the SMART Recovery research approval process is:

1. Review the reference list below.
2. Submit the following documents to the SMART Recovery Central Office via [sallwood@smartrecovery.org](mailto:sallwood@smartrecovery.org) for forwarding to SMART Recovery Research Directors, John F. Kelly, PhD, and Julie Yeterian:
  - A 1-2 page proposal of the background, significance, and specific aims of the project. Highlighting how the proposed work adds to existing knowledge.
  - A list of investigators on the proposed project and their qualifications and affiliations



John Kelly, PhD shown on left

3. Once pre-approval is obtained from SMART Recovery, submit your proposal through your institution for IRB approval.
4. Submit your final proposal, to include the IRB approval, to the Research Director

**Note:** Researchers who wish to study SMART Recovery participants by other means (such as advertising, or obtaining follow-up information from individuals discharged from treatment) remain free to use these means.

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## Blaming and condemning: they just don't work

by Hank Robb, PhD, ABPP

The point of this article is that we would all be wise to give up blaming and condemning ourselves, others and the world in general simply because blaming and condemning does not get rid of anything we call “bad” or produce anything we call “good.” In short, blaming and condemning just “doesn’t work” and, on that basis alone, we can give it up.

If you doubt the claim that blaming and condemning just doesn't work, simply consult your experience. When did blaming and condemning either yourself, others and the world actually make things better or, at least, not as bad? Some might answer that after blaming and condemning they stopped doing things that sometimes, or even often, worked in the little picture of the moment but rarely, if ever, worked in the Big Picture of what they would choose to have their lives be about. However, just because A comes before B does not mean A causes B. Where I live, the local evening news comes on television before the national news. However, just because the local news precedes the national news does not mean that the first is somehow causing the second to occur. In fact, a third factor is the cause of the order of these events, namely local television programmers.

My observation is that, when it comes to blame and condemnation, the main “change” individuals typically make is to get away from whoever is doing the

blaming and condemning and to get away as quickly as possible! Admittedly, when it comes to blaming and condemning yourself, such “escape efforts” are not so easy.

Alternatively, when it comes to change that is more than mere escape, individuals act as follows: they stop doing the old behavior and start doing some new behavior. Why? Because the old

## SMART Recovery® Tools & Techniques

SMART's 4-Point Program® uses many tools and techniques that may help you gain independence from addictive behavior.

**These tools include:**

- Change Plan Worksheet
- Cost-Benefit Analysis
- ABCs of REBT for urge coping
- ABCs of REBT for emotional upsets
- DISARM (Destructive Images Self-talk Awareness and Refusal Method)
- Brainstorming
- Role-playing and Rehearsing
- Hierarchy of Values

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

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behavior simply didn't work very well in the Big Picture of their life; and, since they didn't immediately die after doing the behavior, they had to deal with the eventual "fall out" of their earlier actions. In short, they changed because they had finally had enough of these undesired outcomes. Yes, blame and condemnation may have preceded the change but blame and condemnation were not really the cause of the change.

The actual cause of substantial change was an individual making the CHOICE to have different consequences, which, of course, requires different actions at an earlier time. As the saying goes, doing the same thing over and over and predicting different consequences is the definition of insanity. Rather than function as the cause of change, blame and condemnation frequently serves as an alternative to change. After all, you are a rotten, no good, bum who did that impossibly awful behavior that you must never have allowed yourself to do in the first place! Add more condemning and blaming if this wasn't enough. What chance of ever changing does such a person with such a history have of ever actually changing? Seem like none.

Spend your time disputing claims like those above and you, might, indeed, be able to see they are not true. But how much quicker is it to keep your "eyes on the prize" of what works and what doesn't? While you could work and work and work to prove to yourself that claims like those above are untrue, you, alternatively, could simply notice that the whole process of blaming and condemning just doesn't work when it comes to achieving anything you are actually interested in achieving. For no

point other than the non-workability of blaming and condemning, you could put that behavior aside and focus on behavior that actually moves you toward the kind of life you are truly interested in living.

Why do individuals so often continue blaming and condemning even when nothing gets better by repeatedly pulling the trigger on this double-barreled blast? Unfortunately, we seem to have a cultural rule that goes something like this, "When someone, or some thing, is responsible for a bad outcome, then the correct thing to do is blame and condemn." We could directly examine that rule, as I have been suggesting here, see that the rule does not, in fact, work and then do something else. Instead, we often uncritically accept the rule and then go looking for proof of non-responsibility. And so the litany begins. "My brain chemistry is responsible." "My bad habits are responsible." "The bad things that happened to me in the past are responsible." "My genetic predisposition is responsible." "My disease is responsible." "My emotional upset is responsible." "The emotional upset of others is responsible." And on and on and on!

Might there be at least some truth in each of these claims? Yes, there might be. But the possibility of that truth does not, I would suggest, explain the tenacity with which people desperately pursue, and tightly hold on to, claims like these. Rather, having uncritically accepted that blaming and condemning is the correct response to anyone who acts badly, these sorts of the-devil-made-me-do-it claims become the only way available for an individual to get out of the path of yet another muzzle blast of blame and

condemnation. The power of choice provides an alternative.

We can, in fact, CHOOSE to look for the cultural rules we live with even though these rules easily go unnoticed. Having CHOSEN to raise our awareness about these rules, we can CHOOSE to examine the workability of any particular rule we become aware of. Finally, we can CHOOSE to abandon rules that don't work, focus on finding actions that do work for the Big Picture of our lives and diligently engage in these actions. The power of choice means we can let go of blaming and condemning for no reason other than it is part of a cultural rule that doesn't work for us. Hopefully, these words encourage the reader to make that choice.

## Being right or being useful

by Don Sheeley, 2015

Feeling that we want to "be right" is a human trait. After all, it worked well for many thousands of years. If I know where the danger is, I certainly want to share that with people I care about. So "being right", and doing so forcefully, is born of inherited tendencies for survival. It's human.

Sometimes we are "right" for a while, in that our actions are in alignment with what is most important to us, and then we find a new, different way to proceed. When new information arises, it can become apparent that a very different approach can better help us move toward those things which are important.

For example, after World War II and the Great Depression, a boom of babies and families made supplying America with food imperative, and folks looked to the resources available. Wheat, corn, cattle, and chickens

were sourced and expanded over the decades. That worked well for a long time. Now, 60 years later, America is reassessing a diet based on grain and animals, and we have new ways of thinking about what is the best nutrition. Some conclude that the alignment between the older diet, and our long term goals, has changed. So we can change our diet, which was “quite right” back then, and move on to a new approach which still addresses the same long-term goals we had 60 years ago, taking good care of our people.

If the topic of nutrition arises in a group, I can notice my thoughts and behaviors, and notice whether I am trying to “be right,” and/or whether I am acting in a way that moves toward long-term goals.

The ACT Matrix offers a graphical way to notice and reflect on our thoughts and behaviors, and is another tool to help us spend our time and energy wisely, in the service of things that are really important; you may have listed these in your Hierarchy of Values exercise.

Since life is energy and movement, the Matrix uses movement as its paradigm, and the “movement” can be thoughts or behavior, to keep it simple. Moving to the right of the Matrix is movement in the direction of what is important to us, our values. Moving to the left is movement not toward our values, but rather movement for some other reason, whether away from something or ‘spinning our wheels,’ ruminating, worrying, arguing, “being right,” or “getting hooked or stuck.” Some behaviors could be split, part moving to the right and part moving to the left, but many behaviors display

themselves pretty clearly in one direction or another, when you notice them.

Above the line are behaviors, or things outside our skin. Below the line are things ‘inside our skin’ or internal experiences, thoughts, plans, evaluations, thinking through consequences, worrying, ruminating, etc. You can notice your thoughts and behaviors and locate them on the Matrix, and this can be helpful in deciding whether repeating or continuing that thought or behavior is something aligned with who or what is important to you, your long-term values.

So going back to the topic of nutrition, we can reflect on our responses to a nutrition discussion using the Matrix as a guide. If we focus on which diet is right, and argue about it, that is thought and behavior on the left side of the ACT Matrix. We can end up “feeling right” but how much of that effort of thought and behavior helped us reach what is important to us, which is good nutrition for those we care about? If we focus on and talk about what is good for the most people, we may speak very differently. This could be “behavior in the right upper quadrant of the Matrix.”

You can notice how you feel when you are actively engaged in behavior that is “moving away” from something, or “moving toward” something. I know I feel constricted, tight, and tense when “moving away.” But when “moving toward” something important that I value, I feel open, warm, and embracing. After some practice, you can flip this utility, and if you feel narrow and tight and uncomfortable, ask yourself, “So where am I on the Matrix right now?” When I feel that way, I usually find myself in the lower left quadrant. Just

noticing what I’ve been doing helps me step back, remember I have a choice, and move on to doing something that is really important to me.

The Matrix can help us do a Cost Benefit Analysis on our own thoughts, ruminations, and beliefs. For example, we might get stuck or slowed down in making progress because we think “I just have to figure this thing out, then I can do what I need to do” or “I really need to get rid of these thoughts of drinking/using/doing, and then I can really do what is important for me.” Thoughts are useful for rational evaluation and planning, but if they become ruminations and reasons for not taking rational action for your long-term healthy self, it may be time to ask yourself how useful it is to keep recycling an old thought, or whether some thoughts actually prevent you from doing what is good for you in the long run. Sometimes we can ask, “If I didn’t have this thought/worry/weakness/label, what would I do then?” Then we have the choice to realize our thoughts are just thoughts and mental proposals, and they don’t control our hands, feet, brain, mouth, or wallet. Studies show you will not be able to get rid of unhelpful thoughts even if you want to, but you can label them, as we do in the DISARM Tool, as the voice of an annoying salesman or the local “Bad News Radio Station” to help you accept them while you step back and take some helpful action for yourself. Using these methods, we can prevent thoughts and feelings from becoming “reasons” or “commands” to take action in our lives, unless we choose that in our long-term interest.

Notice, don’t judge. Step back. Breathe. Where are your feet? Feel them. Make a choice. Take Action.



## SMART Progress

### Recovery Month 2015

Each September, tens of thousands of prevention, treatment, and recovery programs and facilities around the country celebrate National Recovery Month. They speak about the gains made by those in recovery and share their success stories with their neighbors, friends, and colleagues. In doing so, everyone helps to increase awareness and furthers a greater understanding about mental and substance use disorders. Since these successes often go unnoticed by the broader population, Recovery Month provides a vehicle for everyone to celebrate these accomplishments. The observance reinforces the positive message that behavioral health is essential to overall health, prevention works, treatment is effective, and people can and do recover.

SMART Recovery encourages the participation of Recovery Month in your local cities, groups, or neighborhoods. If your SMART Recovery group participates in a local Recovery Month activity to raise awareness about addiction recovery, we would welcome stories and pictures about your celebration to include in the winter edition of *News & Views*. Please submit stories and pictures of your events – big or small! Celebrations can be walks, picnics, dinners, or even motorcycle rides. (See page 4 of the Winter 2015 *News & Views* for ideas – <http://www.smartrecovery.org/resources/library/>

[Newsletters/Newsletters/winter-2015-news-and-views.pdf.](#)) Get creative!

Visit the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration website for a free toolkit of ideas, sample letters, and much more! <http://www.recovery-month.gov/toolkit>

### Events update

by Dolores Cloward (Dee), Special Events Coordinator

We were thrilled to have Dr. Stanton Peele rejoin us on May 16 for *Recreating Addiction Treatment for the 21st Century*. Please see Dr. Horvath's wonderful summary in the article below.

We were also pleased to have had Dr. Michael Edelstein on *Cognitive Tools for Fighting Addiction and Beyond*. He discussed using the tools and principles taught at SMART across many issues and in everyday life. Enjoy our podcast of the interview from June 20th, 2015 at <http://www.smartrecovery.libsyn.com>.

Dr. Michael R. Edelstein, a licensed clinical psychologist with over 30 years' experience, has a private practice in San Francisco. He achieved fame as the author of *Three Minute Therapy: Change Your Thinking, Change Your Life*, with David Ramsay Steele, a self-help book for overcoming common emotional and behavioral problems. More recently, he published *Stage Fright* (2009), with Mick Berry, *Therapy Breakthrough: Why Some Psychotherapies Work Better Than Others* (2013), with Richard Kujoth and David Ramsay Steele, and *Rational Drinking: How to Live Happily With or Without Alcohol* (2013) with Will Ross: Amazon SMART Link. Dr. Edelstein is a long-standing SMART Recovery Volunteer. Visit his website at [www.threeminutetherapy.com](http://www.threeminutetherapy.com).

Additionally, Dr. Bill Knaus will be joining us on Saturday, August 15, 2015, to talk about Anxiety. Please look for

more information and the link to register on our SMART Events Page: [www.smartrecovery.org/events](http://www.smartrecovery.org/events) in late July.

### Recreating addiction treatment in the 21st century

A special event webinar podcast from SMART Recovery®

by Tom Horvath, PhD, President, SMART Recovery

I had the pleasure of interviewing Dr. Stanton Peele on May 16, 2015. The wide-ranging conversation focused on three primary themes: Commitment, Choice and Change. Dr. Peele reviewed the history of our approaches to addiction and treatment, emphasizing the last third of the 20th century. He noted that the 21st century, particularly the last 3-5 years, has seen a substantial increase in recognition that there are multiple pathways to recovery (a point he has made throughout his career). An overarching consideration about recovery and change in general, is that commitment to change is strongest when it is the result of a choice freely made and consistent with personal life goals.

Dr. Peele emphasized the rapidity at which change is now taking place. This level of change supports a higher level of flexibility in recovery options in the US than we have ever seen. Although the issue has not disappeared, we can foresee a time when most people are not forced into adopting a one-size-fits-all approach based on the 12 steps and the disease model. This traditional approach will quite likely remain available and helpful to many, however, as one of many options.

SMART Recovery (with its slogan "Discover the Power of Choice") has been a proponent of personal choice in recovery throughout its 20-year history. SMART suggests that we choose to drink or use drugs, and that this use is not an accident or an inevitability. SMART wholeheartedly agrees that

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people have the capacity to change. We focus on giving people strong tools to help them make desired changes in order to lead meaningful and purposeful lives without problematic addictive behavior.

The discussion included some surprising and provocative questions and responses about the definitions of “addiction,” “recovery,” and “abstinence.” Dr. Peele also spoke about moderation, harm reduction and relapse, and the importance of recognizing progress even when people are not perfectly achieving their goals, as is the case in most areas of our lives.

An important theme related to choice that we discussed is the labeling of self or others as “addict” or “alcoholic.” Such self-labeling has been found to discourage change. This is a central point in Dr. Peele’s most recent book with Ilse Thompson, *Recover! Stop Thinking Like an Addict*. He believes that one of the most powerful forces for change lies in cultivating mindful awareness to encourage and support peoples’ inherent abilities. “Mindfulness” has been shown to produce the most remarkable effects, matching those found with use of powerful therapeutic drugs.

I delineated, in some detail, SMART’s own stance on these issues. SMART supports abstinence for those who have chosen it. Meeting discussions focus on tools, most drawn from CBT, as well as motivational interviewing, for abstaining and for improving one’s life. Our meetings and message boards focus on stopping because, overwhelmingly, this is what people coming to SMART are seeking help with. This will continue to be our mission.

Perhaps the most striking theme of the conversation was Dr. Peele’s personal

TO: *The SMART Community*

FROM: *The Court Outreach Team*

*Please be invited ...*

The Courts Team would like to ask for your help!

We’d like to hear your experiences in working with the courts and correctional institutions. Please contact us:

<http://www.smartrecovery.org/Misc/contactx.php>.

*P.S. Ask us about volunteering, too!*

commitment to the concept of personal self-determination (choice) in living life. He closed by emphasizing that treatment providers and support groups of the future will do well to adopt a focus on broad measures of success. Read more about Dr. Peele’s views on his website.

The event podcast was featured in *The Fix*.

### **SMART Recovery InsideOut™ program transforming lives in Her Majesty’s Prison (HMP) service in England**

by Paul Dodds and Gareth Bishop, Discipline Officers (with testimonials from inmates)

*Editor’s Note: When we learned of two units within HMP Service in England that are significantly benefiting from the use of SMART Recovery’s InsideOut™ program, we invited Paul and Gareth to provide information for our worldwide News & Views readership. We are pleased to share about the two facilities*

*using InsideOut™, as well as several testimonials from those benefiting from the program.*

#### **The Facilities:**

**W.P.D.T.S. unit overview:** Prisoners on the unit are Category A or B status. A purpose built unit which forms part of the offender personality disorder pathway. The service is designed for high risk offenders whose complex personality needs are linked to their offending behavior.

**Frankland category A P.I.P.E unit overview:** P.I.P.E. stands for Psychologically Informed Planned Environment. Prisoners who are Category A status and have completed offending behavioral programs can volunteer to come to the unit to evidence consolidation of skills. The unit is designed to provide individuals with six months to two years to live and engage within a safe and supportive environment where the staff group are trained to support the development of

those who live there. P.I.P.E. units are designed to have a particular focus on the environment and actively recognizing the importance and quality of relationships and interactions. The aim is to maximise ordinary situations to provide individuals with the opportunity to develop and become confident in building and maintaining relationships and a sense of community through the use of skills acquired from programs/ interventions.

### Discipline officers' experience:

As Discipline Officers working within the substance misuse team, we heard about UK SMART Recovery via links with outside agencies and obviously became intrigued by the positive feedback given about SMART Recovery groups and a prison adapted course; InsideOut™. Scepticism was an initial thought shared, but after researching the facts, as a group we envisaged the benefits this could provide the category A or B prisoners we work with in our designated areas. Completing the facilitator's course provided us with skills and motivation to start this program with prisoners who have deemed to have or have had issues within the area of substance misuse. Our motivation and belief that InsideOut™ is a unique program allowing those in our care to continue to gain recovery capital and to enhance and consolidate their skills, is matched by the motivation and contributions by those completing the program. InsideOut™ commenced on the P.I.P.E. unit 23rd January 2015 and on the W.P.D.T.S. unit 14th April 2015.

### InsideOut™ Program users' quotes:

*"The SMART Recovery InsideOut™ Program has provided me the opportunity to revisit coping strategies and psychotherapeutic tools for dealing with old belief*

*systems and old patterns of behavior that continue to make their presence felt and remind me that old patterns of behaviors ("go to settings") exist. The body and mind continue to rely upon these "go to settings" until new neural pathways are furrowed in the mind giving us new information that make our new belief systems. SMART InsideOut™ has shown me new ways of reinforcing new behaviors and belief systems, encouraging me and reigniting my desire to continue on this path of self-transformation."*

*"SMART Recovery provides me with an excellent opportunity to show consolidation from previous offence-based courses completed. However, unlike previous courses which are facilitator led, SMART Recovery is led by the participants within the guidelines provided. It is also set out in a way that is easy to follow and because we do not use labels such as addict the sessions flow in a productive, informative and relaxed manner, without the fear of being judged. Overall for me, I have really enjoyed the program and will definitely benefit from completing it. From all the courses provided within the high-security estate this is one of the best courses available."*

*"I have been taking part in the SMART Recovery InsideOut™ program for several weeks. My addictive behavior was substance misuse and although I have already been substance free for a number of years, I have found the program valuable as it has helped remind me of the reasons I want to be substance free. It has also been valuable as a booster to the other*

*drug courses that I have already completed, as the course has helped me revisit and study skills that I had learned before, but had forgotten or become rusty. The thing I like most about the SMART program is the way it is run as a discussion, unlike other courses I have done which felt more like a classroom situation. Because of this I feel comfortable to speak when I have something to say, and if I have nothing to say then I do not feel like I have been pressured, which has been the case in other courses."*

**Editor's Note:** We will look forward to additional good reports from Paul and Gareth and the inmates being served by the program. Contact the UK Central Office or the US Central Office for additional information or to purchase InsideOut™.



### President's Letter

## President's Letter: SMART Recovery establishes discussion meetings

by Tom Horvath, SMART president

SMART Recovery is establishing a new type of meeting in the US, the SMART Recovery discussion meeting, hosted by a trained host. The discussion meeting will exist in addition to the standard SMART Recovery meeting facilitated by a trained facilitator.

The discussion meeting will have almost the same agenda as a SMART

Recovery meeting: Welcome, Check-in, Discussion, Pass the Hat, and Checkout. The primary agenda item missing is "Agenda Setting." Instead of creating an agenda (by asking if a participant has an issue to discuss) the host will introduce around-the-circle exercises based on SMART tools.

For instance, at the conclusion of the Check-in, the host might state: "Thanks for that Check-in. Let's begin with an exercise based on the SMART Recovery tool Change Plan Worksheet. What could you do *tomorrow* to advance your recovery or your life? What could you do *today* to increase the chances of following through tomorrow?"

Or the exercise might be: "Let's do an exercise based on the SMART Recovery tool Roleplay. You are about to say *one sentence*. You need to tell someone something. Don't tell us who it is, or the story behind the sentence. Just tell us the *one sentence*, with expression. "

Many different exercises have been created for hosts. With experience hosts will also be able to create their own exercises.

At the conclusion of going around the circle (participants may pass if they wish) the host asks: "Did anything come up that you would like to discuss?" The ensuing discussion might take up the remaining time, or another exercise can be introduced. The exercises end when it is time to Pass the Hat.

"Pass the Brochure" may occur, or may be substituted for by passing out a host's handout at the beginning of the meeting. This handout has a summary of meeting guidelines, the 4-Point Program<sup>®</sup> and the Tools and contact information. The primary purpose of the handout is to summarize SMART Recovery for new participants. The handout can be used

as a brochure outside the meeting, eliminating the need to Pass the Brochure.

The expected advantage of offering discussion meetings is a more rapid increase in the availability of meetings. Discussion meetings will require fewer decisions on the part of the host (as compared to the number and complexity of the decisions potentially facing a facilitator). The host training requires significantly less time. The meeting structure runs the meeting more than the decisions of the host. Everything the host needs to say is included in the meeting script, which can simply be read to the meeting. More participants are expected to volunteer to host, given that hosting is less demanding than facilitating. All hosts will be encouraged to continue on to complete facilitator training, raising the \$75 fee from their pass the hat contributions if necessary.

The host's efforts will center on keeping the discussion within SMART meeting guidelines (including no lengthy statements, no advice and no off-topic discussions), and introducing suitable around-the-circle exercises. The exercises can help participants learn the tools by actively engaging with them and by hearing other participants engage with them. These around-the-circle exercises have been used for approximately two years around the US, and appear to generate a high level of meeting engagement by participants and a satisfactory level of learning about the tools.

Free host training will be offered from the website and be available at any time. Hosts will be supported by a mentor, the weekly SMART Meeting Management meeting online (also open to facilitators), and collection of feedback about each meeting. In addition to discussion meetings SMART's future may also

include tool trainings, Handbook trainings and speaker meetings. These types of meetings will require a facilitator rather than a host.

To introduce discussion meeting participants to other aspects of SMART Recovery, the following "Pass the Hat" statement is included in the script:

Thanks for this discussion. There are several free ways to learn more about SMART Recovery. You can attend more meetings (including online meetings), read the website, or participate online in the chat room or the message board. You can also purchase the Handbook for \$10, or sign up for the Overcoming Addictions web app on the home page, [smartrecovery.org](http://smartrecovery.org). As we learn more about SMART Recovery, we will have more helpful meetings.

We're passing the hat for donations. Any donations you make are greatly appreciated. With your contributions, we can reach everyone who needs to know about SMART Recovery. Because you can also think of SMART as Save Money at Recovery Training, maybe you'll be willing to give us a portion of the money you are saving!

SMART Recovery needs more meetings. Tonight's meeting is a Discussion meeting. We offer training on how to host a Discussion meeting and how to facilitate other kinds of meetings. Research suggests that the greatest benefit from SMART Recovery comes from leading meetings. We strongly recommend you become a host or facilitator. You'll be glad you did.

Notice the language of the final paragraph. This language introduces a greater level of encouragement to volunteer than SMART has previously used. Please consider using this language whenever you pass the hat in any type of meeting.

All current facilitators are encouraged to view the host training when it becomes available online. No registration will be required. You will find that around-the-circle exercises are an excellent addition to the techniques you already use for leading a meeting, especially at those times when participants appear to have no issues to volunteer for the agenda.

*Tom Howath*



## International Development

### UK SMART Recovery® update

*Editor's Note: Don't miss the exciting InsideOut™ news from the UK in the SMART Progress section on page 11 of this issue.*

#### A Walk in the Park

by Dan Murphy, Volunteer UK Training Co-ordinator and Meeting Database Administrator

I have been asked to contribute this article to highlight recent milestones achieved by UK SMART Recovery:

### SMART Recovery meetings

I have processed over 1,000 SMART Recovery Meeting Registrations resulting in a database of over 400 records available to all by accessing the UK website (<http://www.smartrecovery.org.uk/>) and separate records of 124 meetings accessible only to service users of Treatment Providers and others (this includes Prisons and rehab facilities).

That is an astonishing 500+ meetings from a very low base figure in 2008; the majority of meetings then were professionally led and there were fewer than a dozen peer led meetings in the community (now 200+).

The number of meetings continues to grow rapidly (91 new meetings during 2014) and, from now, will include Family & Friends where we are looking for a rapid expansion of these meetings following the successful pilot phase (2014) and subsequent evaluation (early 2015).

### SMART Recovery Online Facilitator training

One of the differences between SMART Recovery and most other approaches to mutual aid is the need for the meeting Facilitators to be trained.

The first registration for SMART Recovery online Facilitator training was made in November 2010 and since that date, occurring on a daily basis (literally 24/7!), there have been over 8,000 registered trainees (enrollment is usually made within 12 hours). Trainees need to meet the following criteria:

- Be a resident in the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland),
- Be in Recovery and/or,
- Be a staff member/Champion of a UK SMART Partner organisation

We have over 2,300 Facilitators who have successfully completed the online training. The training course is provided

in two parts and uses a variety of learning materials. Materials include over 15 videos (mostly 5 to 15 minutes long), reading material, exercises and a quiz after each section to reinforce the learning. Most of the learning can be structured to the trainee's own timetable.

**Part 1**, 'Getting SMART' provides a thorough introduction to SMART Recovery, including key underlying theory and most of the key tools. The course is designed to train Facilitators and Champions, though it might also be useful to meeting participants who want to simply deepen their understanding. This course is expected to take roughly 8-10 hours to complete.

**Part 2**, 'SMART Facilitator' builds on the first course and focuses specifically on the process of facilitating the meeting. With additional videos (stepping through a meeting) and reading materials, this course is aimed specifically at people who want to be Facilitators or Champions. This course is also expected to take roughly 8-10 hours to complete.

The courses have proved immensely popular with students both for the depth and variety of content and enjoyment! Many comment on the speed of grading (normally no more than 12 hours) and also welcome the detail of tutor comments on their assignments.

With the introduction of Family & Friends, we added an additional segment of training. This short course runs through the SMART Recovery Family & Friends content to help meeting Facilitators understand the programme. You must hold a Certificate of Completion as a SMART Facilitator before accessing this training.

In the short period since we have been running with Family & Friends, there have been 36 registered for Family & Friends training, with 22 graduations.

## The future

We are currently working towards auto grading for the Getting SMART segment of the training and we worked with US colleagues to compile multiple-choice questions based on current training material. Implementation of auto grading will be made in the near future.

We want to continue working with current and potential Partners to increase the number and quality of Family & Friends meetings.

## Away day for staff and board in Manchester

Members of the Board of Directors and staff of the newly formed UK SMART Recovery enjoyed an "Away Day" in Manchester in order to meet one another, share ideas and inspirations, and discuss plans to continue the growth of the SMART programme and services throughout the UK.



Standing left to right: Carol Hammond, Central Office Manager; Robin Davidson, Board Chair; Steve Crawley, Sr. National Coordinator, England; Brett Saarela, Board Member; Dan Murphy, Training Coordinator. Seated: Diana Mitchell, Central Office; Leigh Proctor, National Coordinator, Wales. (Not in photo: Marcantonio Spada, Dave Roberts, and Claire Saenz, Board Members.)

## SMART Recovery Alberta, Canada update

by Curtis Boudreau, Executive Director, SMART Recovery Alberta

Hello again to the world of SMART from Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Wow! We're half way through another year already!

We're going strong here in Alberta. 2015 is extending our streak of strong year

over year growth since 2005, when I arrived at SMART Recovery in Calgary. 10 years ago we had only 3 meetings in Alberta. There were about 4 or 6 people in attendance for a Monday/Wednesday meeting, and about 8-10 people for a Saturday meeting. Today we have 5 open meetings, and 2 closed meetings in Calgary.

Other cities that are offering SMART meetings in Alberta include Edmonton – with 2, Red Deer and Airdrie – with 1 in each. The total for Alberta is now 11 meetings, with solid attendance at each. Red Deer, Airdrie, and Edmonton have about 15-18 people attend each meeting. In Calgary, attendance is skyrocketing. Monday has seen as many as 55 people for our Tool Training meeting, with about 30 people on an average Monday. Wednesday has about 25-30 people, Thursday about 20-30, Friday about 10-15, and Saturday varies from the low 20's to mid-30's.

Our main issue continues to be finding individuals willing to take the training and start meetings. We have made a concerted effort to promote SMART Meeting facilitation, and the future definite looks bright. I would like to thank Tammie and her crew in Airdrie, Tim and Gwendolyn in Edmonton, Trevor and Amanda in Red Deer, plus our 5 facilitators taking care of one location in Calgary that hosts 5 meetings – Scott, Rex, Jay, Michaelle, and myself, and the 5 facilitators taking care of the 2 meetings at The Mustard Seed – Caitlyn, Kelli, Kelly, Kevin, and Maria.

SMART Recovery is planting solid roots in Alberta, and continues to be viewed by addiction professionals and those in recovery as a very solid option, even a go-to program for those wanting to abstain from addictive behaviours. An amazing change in perception and culture for the addiction community in Alberta!

I would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to SMART Recovery for saving my life back in 2005. Thanks to this wonderful program, I just celebrated 10 years clean on May 20, 2015!

I look forward to our next quarterly update in September!

## SMART Recovery Australia® update

by Ryan McLaughlin, Executive Director, SMART Recovery Australia

The last 12 months has seen increases in SMART Recovery groups in South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia. The exciting development is the partnership that SMART Recovery Australia has established with Palmerston Association Inc. in Western Australia.



Palmerston Association has established nine

SMART Recovery groups in the southern metropolitan and southwest regional region of Western Australia. They have also started a BeSMART (Family & Friends program). Palmerston Association has become a model provider in that they have embraced the ideology of identifying and nurturing peer facilitators alongside of professionals.

This period has seen a 46% increase in SMART Recovery facilitator training in Australia - 230 trained across 32 trainings compared to 157 people being trained in 2013-14. Currently all facilitator training in Australia is face-to-face.

The SRAU team has been implementing the recommendations from the independent training review. As of July 2015, there will be an online pre-training component, more role-play activities in the face-to-face training, and all the training materials and promotional material freshened.

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Joseette Freeman, National Program Coordinator, with trainees from Palmerston Association Inc.

The SMART Recovery Australia Research Advisory Committee has made several achievements, including having a symposium at the at the 2014 Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and other Drug conference, as well as an oral presentation at the Australian & New Zealand Addiction Conference in May 2015. Professor Amanda Baker, Professor Frank Deane and Dr. Peter Kelly from the Research Advisory Committee had their 'Group Cohesion and Between Session Homework Activities Predict Self-Reported Cognitive – Behavioural Skill Use Amongst Participants of SMART Recovery Groups' article published in the international journal, *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*: [http://www.journalofsubstanceabuse-treatment.com/article/S0740-5472\(14\)00219-0/abstract](http://www.journalofsubstanceabuse-treatment.com/article/S0740-5472(14)00219-0/abstract)

A systematic review of all research literature featuring SMART Recovery from around the globe is currently being done at the University of Newcastle, in conjunction with the Research Advisory Committee.

This month saw the staff and Board of SMART Recovery Australia get together for the annual review and plan-

ning day. The review was of the first year into the Strategic Direction 2014 - 2019. The team was asked to individually reflect on the achievements over the last 12 months, which have included:

- Increased professionalism
- Recruitment of the Board of Directors
- Building Online capacity
- A new product in training that positions SRAU to deliver itself as an essential player
- Updating the product offering and pricing
- Growth in awareness of SRAU brand
- The benefit and important relationship forged with Western Australia Alcohol and Other Drugs powerhouse – Palmerston Association Inc.

### SMART Recovery Republic of Ireland update

by Vivienne O'Brien, Bray Community Addiction Team

Greetings from Ireland at this very exciting time in the development of SMART Recovery!

At the end of 2014, Bray Community Addiction Team secured funding from the National Addiction Training Programme (NATP) and the Horizon Fund, to roll out a Pilot of SMART Recovery in Ireland. There have been major developments over the past six months, the main ones being: a) the development of online and face to face training – the online being generously contributed to us by SMART in the

USA, and our trainers being trained by Jonathon von Breton; b) the establishment of a National Steering Group to guide this process; c) the piloting of the training in February 2015 which gave us much interesting feedback and pointed us to where we needed to refine the training; and d) the retention of a researcher, Brian Harvey, who will be involved in the pilot throughout the duration of the project and who will report on the process and outcomes of same, thereby informing future growth of SMART Recovery. In addition we are looking forward to our new Development Worker, Deirdre Fitzpatrick, taking up post in June and she will support services taking part in the pilot and support the pilot itself.

The purpose of the pilot is to train front-line workers to establish meetings and then to hand them over to peers within a timeframe. The pilot seeks to establish 25 new meetings across Ireland over a twelve-month period. Expressions of interest for inclusion in the pilot were issued to addiction services in April, and we now have over 30 organisations wishing to participate across the Greater Dublin area, the South East (Wexford, Waterford, Tipperary, Carlow, Kilkenny), Cork city and Galway. We are currently meeting with those services to see how best we can support them in establishing SMART in their community and we are discussing local plans and training schedules. The feedback is overwhelmingly positive and there is a great sense of anticipation and excitement that Ireland will be able to offer choice in peer support at long last!

The next year should prove a very exciting and an important time in the growth of SMART Recovery in Ireland.

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

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