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President's Letter

SMART Recovery®: Evidence-Based or Science-Based?

SMART Recovery® is a science-based approach to addiction recovery. In time, we may also be evidence-based. This article will explain the difference between these concepts.

Many definitions of “evidence-based treatment” for any health or behavioral condition have been proposed. If you google “definitions of evidence based practice,” you will see many definitions. In this article, I will use a strict definition. A treatment is evidence-based if two or more randomized clinical trials (RCTs) show that the treatment is superior to a control

condition or comparable to a treatment with demonstrated efficacy.

Many health and behavioral health conditions do not have many or any evidence-based treatments associated with them. But many of them do. Conducting RCTs is expensive. Unless there is significant money to be made later, many potentially interesting studies are not conducted. Thus, there is bias in favor of studies of medications over studies of procedures. There is typically much more money to be made from selling a medication to millions of people (e.g., Prozac) than selling equipment or training to a few providers.

SMART Recovery® is not an evidence-based “treatment” for addictive behavior, given the definition I am using. Because there won't be any money to be made from SMART Recovery®, the RCT that would show SMART Recovery® comparable or superior to some other condition will likely be funded by a grant.

One obvious comparison would be to other support groups, particularly AA. I would be interested in seeing such a study. However, it would not get us very far. AA is not evidence-based either. (See Editor's Note, below.) Of course, you may have heard that “AA is the only thing that works.” This statement is folklore not science. AA

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The SMART Recovery® 4-Point ProgramSM

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)

has not been studied sufficiently to support this statement.

It may not be fundamentally important whether any support group is evidence-based. People vote with their feet. If they find the group helpful, they keep attending. We already have evidence to suggest that social support is valuable for dealing with almost any stress or change. We even have evidence to suggest what kinds of individuals might fit better with what kind of support. However, it may be a long time collecting sufficient evidence to reliably guide someone to the "right" support group. For now, we need "informational parity," otherwise known as informed consent. (Psychologists are required as part of ethical professional conduct to provide clients and would-be clients with informed consent regarding their treatment and alternative treatments.)

I coined the term, informational parity, several years ago. In early recovery, professionals should inform every individual about all available support groups and allowed to choose among them. Professionals are obliged to inform clients about the whole range of choices, such as attending different groups simultaneously, attending one then another, not attending any, etc.

Although not evidence-based, SMART Recovery® is science-based. The 4-Point ProgramSM itself is not science-based. It is, however, a good summary of the main tasks almost anyone seeking recovery needs to accomplish: stay motivated, cope with craving, identify and solve your other problems (which are likely to become

prominent if you stop your addictive behavior), and achieve good enough lifestyle balance to reduce the risk of relapse. Under these four tasks fall the SMART Recovery® Tools.

The Tools are methods and ideas taught in evidence-based treatment for addictive behavior. To be considered evidence-based we would need two studies showing how these already established Tools, when used in a SMART Recovery® meeting, are comparable to evidence-based treatment. I am willing to bet that when these studies are conducted, that is what we will find. I'm not willing to bet on when the studies will be conducted!

A recent study may help clarify these points. Dr. Kathleen Carroll and colleagues published, in the May 1, 2008 *American Journal of Psychiatry* an article titled "Computer-assisted delivery of cognitive-behavioral therapy for addiction: A randomized trial of CBT4CBT." Clients in the treatment condition had access to computer-based training (CBT) based on cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT). The study found that these clients, who got CBT4CBT, plus treatment-as-usual (TAU), did better than clients who got TAU alone. The authors conclude their abstract: "These data suggest that CBT4CBT is an effective adjunct to standard outpatient treatment for substance dependence and may provide an important means of making CBT, an empirically validated treatment, more broadly available." I interpret this statement to include the idea that maybe if the government gives providers the software maybe they will start offering something in addition to 12-step.

I mention this study primarily because of what the CBT4CBT included. Each of the six training modules included video of actors showing the not-so-good and better ways to handle the problem under discussion, with additional videotape vignettes available. They had government (NIDA) funding (think "big budget") but this project included actors, writers, re-takes, etc. (think "expensive"). To stay within budget they would obviously have had to limit the CBT4CBT to core concepts. Furthermore, how much time do you expect someone to sit at a computer, who is already doing TAU?

So what did they include? "The modules covered the following core concepts: 1) understanding and changing patterns of substance use, 2) coping with craving, 3) refusing offers of drugs and alcohol, 4) problem-solving skills, 5) identifying and changing thoughts about drugs and alcohol, and 6) improving decision-making skills." *Sounds like SMART Recovery® to me!*

Someday we may have studies that establish SMART Recovery® as evidence-based. In the meantime, there are now probably several hundred studies that show that what we teach in SMART Recovery® is taught in evidence-based addiction treatment. To read more, see the *Handbook of Alcoholism Treatment Approaches: Effective Alternatives* (edited by Hester & Miller), or NIDA's *Principles of Drug Addiction Treatment* (available for free at their website). We can proudly say that SMART Recovery® is science-based.

If CBT4CBT excites you, consider that SMART Recovery® will have its own web-based computer-based

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training program available soon. Announcements will be forthcoming.

Before we close, let's expand the concept of "science-based." Science is the refinement of common sense and "down-to-earth" observation. Science never loses these roots. SMART Recovery® is also based on common sense, and it is a down-to-earth approach to gaining control of oneself. Our ideas can be tested in daily life by anyone in recovery. It does not get any more evidence-based than that!

Editor's Note: Tom mentions two categories, evidence-based and not evidence-based, with the implication that the "not evidence-based" might someday become evidence based. And that is true in some cases. Because SMART Recovery® incorporates elements from most of the 18 evidence-based treatments identified by Hester and Miller, ours is one of those cases. However, there is a third category. There are approaches for which the preponderance of scientific evidence suggests they are not effective. Hester and Miller identified 30 such treatment modalities. From modality No. 1 through modality No. 48, Hester and Miller rank-ordered modalities with at least three scientifically credible studies, according to the weight of evidence regarding their effectiveness. Beginning with the 19th modality and extending to the 48th modality, there was more and more solid scientific evidence for ineffectiveness, if not harm. Deep in the demonstrated-as-ineffective zone were No. 38, "Treatment as usual," No. 39, Twelve Step Facilitation, and No. 40, Alcoholics Anonymous. Even more well demonstrated as ineffective were No. 45, confrontational counseling (Minnesota Disease Model), No. 47, general alcoholism counseling, and No. 48, worst of all, and most popular in America, "education (tapes, films, lectures).

Tom Howarth



SMART Progress

Annual Volunteer Gathering is scheduled!

Our 2nd annual volunteer gathering will be hosted at the Albert Ellis Institute in New York City on November 7th and 8th. Highlights include "Friday Night at the Movies"—an evening of fun hosted at the Albert Ellis Institute with archival video clips of Dr. Ellis in action. Saturday is set aside for volunteers to discuss growing meetings and what works, followed by some fundraising (pass the hat) discussions and practice. The afternoon includes special guest speaker, John de Miranda, Executive Director, National Association on Alcohol, Drugs and Disability and Board Member, Faces and Voices of Recovery. John will share a presentation on *The Disability of Addiction and Recovery: A Paradigm Shift*. Volunteers received information and a registration form via the quarterly Facilitators' & Advisors' Letter, but if you're a volunteer and didn't receive the information, contact Jodi at the Central Office or email her via jdayton@smartrecovery.org. We look forward to a fun and valuable time spent together.

SMART Recovery® Online Update A Success Story

SOL continues to grow at an amazing rate. As Director, I try to post a 'Welcome' to each new person who posts in the Welcome to SMART Recovery® On-Line forum. My record is 10 'Welcomes' in one day. A few months ago, a member of SOL had asked for encouragement from others by sharing their

successes. This post responds to that request. The member who posted it gave us permission to print it. I take great pleasure in sharing that member's SOL success story.

~ Jonathan von Breton

Here's my success story. Not very dramatic for most to hear, but dramatic to me.

I have been sober for more than one year now. Since I quit drinking, I am at a place I have never been before—but it feels like home. This has been the most right decision I have ever made—not just to become a non-drinker, but also to participate in SMART Recovery®.

I look back and think about my first CBA. I hardly had a clue about what the costs and benefits were. I had no vision at that time about the real benefits I would realize. Quite frankly, I had never been out of the box I put myself in so many years ago long enough to know what life could be like if I just faced it squarely with confidence and hope. As I progressed through a one-year commitment, the costs of going back to drinking grew and grew as the quality of my life continued to improve. And the benefits of going back to drinking? They disappeared from my consciousness.

As I look at how my life is different today from a year ago, the list of differences is long. However, three very significant successes stand out for me:

1. I have achieved a balance in my life between work and my goals and interests. A year ago, I was routinely working long hours at the office, being very obsessive and stressed. Drinking was a way I used to cope with stress and frustration. I had practiced a lot at the negative coping strategy of "crash and burn" every evening. Giving this up was the first best thing I have ever done. Oh, I still work hard in a committed way, but I limit it to eight hours most workdays. After that, I close the office door behind me and walk toward the rest of my life. I no longer sacrifice my

health and my relationships for others' goals at work. Working in this new, smarter way, I'm still getting top performance reviews for.

2. I am engaged again in pursuing long-forgotten goals. I returned to school to complete work on a degree. This spring I will graduate! I was ready to give up this goal. And I am so proud that I didn't throw this away. I am making this happen by choosing to put down that bottle and start back to work. It has not been easy, but I have stayed with it, worked hard to jump through all the hoops, and now it is nearly done. Staying sober and achieving lifestyle balance helped me to do this.
3. I am positive about myself and life for the first time ever, which is a benefit I never expected. All my life I lived with fear. Fear of something. Fear of anything. Protected. I was a true worry-monger. If I wasn't worried about something, I would be worried I wasn't worried! I remember the day I lost the fear. It was about six months ago when I learned that fear brings

risk to you. It makes you feel weak and then you become weak. It is better to be confident in knowing I am in control of myself even if I can't always control life around me. I also remember the day I did my first real ABC that changed forever how I face problems: without becoming hysterical. Through the support from SMART Recovery®, I learned the power in being able to focus rationally when a problem arises. Now that is truly addictive! I will never go back to my previous drama-queen status of a year ago.

My original goal was to return to proudly living life according to my values. I had become a shell of a person, wearing a huge mask Today I feel authentic for the first time. I am walking what I believe to be the right path.

I am not saying life is perfect and I am not saying I am perfect now. But perfect is no longer necessary. That was a silly demand, and I've put it away for good. The real success for me is having confidence in the future. After years, the struggle with alcohol is behind me.

As I dare to look into the future, the path is not clear, but I am not afraid. What is ahead? In the past, I would have obsessively *needed* to plan every step, in order to avoid imperfection. Now I don't think that way, and my life feels tremendously open, fresh, and new. This is very exciting. It really is a new way of life based on how I think, how I feel, and how I act—right now.

All of those changes remain difficult for me to express or fully comprehend, but it feels like success. I could get used to it! I don't have to wait anymore for happiness. It is here.

SMART Recovery® Participation at the 33rd Annual Alabama School of Alcohol and Other Drug Studies (ASADS) Conference

In March of 2008, representatives from ASADS invited SMART Recovery® to participate in its 33rd annual Conference at the (Bear) Bryant Conference Center, and did we ever!

The ASADS conference planners invited Joe Gerstein and Barry Grant to

make the Plenary Session presentation, which they ably did, with the topic: "13 Years of SMART Recovery® in Communities & Corrections: from Boston to Bokhara; from Dallas to Danang". More than 300 people attended the Plenary Session.

Michler Bishop presented a full day Managing Addictions Workshop to 38 partici-

SMART Recovery® Program Tools & Techniques

The SMART Recovery® 4-Point ProgramSM 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 (Destructive Images Self-talk Awareness and Refusal Method)
- 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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pants. The Workshop was met with rave reviews – “Please bring Dr. Bishop back. This is one of the best classes I’ve ever had in eight years of attending. He is very knowledgeable.”



Joe Gerstein

Word must have gotten out about Michler’s outstanding presentation style. The next day when

Michler presented SMART Recovery® Therapy—A Program for Professionals Assisting Clients with Mental Health and Drug Issues, Joe Gerstein had to bring in extra chairs until it became standing room only! Almost 100 conference-goers jammed into the room for the SRT program. Comments following the Workshop included: “Excellent – great presenter and presentation”; “Very interesting! Instructor was extremely knowledgeable and friendly”; “Great rapport with audience, knows his stuff, good balance between lecture, role play, etc.”



Tom Litwicki

Also included at the event was a full day SMART Recovery® InsideOut™ Correctional

Facility Training Workshop. Barry Grant, Joe Gerstein, and Tom Litwicki ably led the presentation to 15 participants. Again, this event was successful, and one of the attendees stated: “I thoroughly enjoyed this course and found it beneficial to my needs – it met my expectations”.

Thanks to Joe, Barry, Michler, and Tom for doing such a great job of representing SMART Recovery®! And thanks to

ASADS for inviting SMART Recovery®’s participation!

Welcome to Our Newest Board Member!

SMART Recovery® announces with pleasure that Tony Wales has joined our Board of Directors. Tony is the new SMART Recovery® Australia representative. And we all thank Joe Gerstein for his willingness to the SMART Recovery® Australia Board of Directors. This will make for solid communications as our organizations continue to grow and be there for people throughout the world.



A bit of background about Tony... Anthony Norman Wales, FCA (Fellow Institute Chartered Accountants in Australia), FCIS (Fellow Institute Chartered Secretaries) is the Non-Executive Director of Computershare. After leaving college in 1962, Tony joined KPMG and spent 14 years with them. While there, he graduated as a Chartered Accountant, which in the USA is a CPA. Tony then formed a practice, sold it in 1981, and became involved in Computershare and several public-listed companies. Computershare’s board appointed him Executive (Finance) Director in 1990. In late 2001, Tony set aside his executive responsibilities. Since then, he has remained on the Computershare board. During his time as Finance Director, Tony helped the company expand from a small Australian provider of bureau services to one of Australia’s largest and most successful technology companies, with operations in many

countries. Tony had the principal role in negotiations for the Company’s major acquisitions in Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Ireland, South Africa, Hong Kong, America, and Canada. This fact is important to SMART Recovery®’s objective to reach people worldwide.

Tony continues his active involvement with Computershare. His knowledge and skills gained in Australian and international markets are tremendously valuable. Tony is currently Chairman of the Remuneration Committee and is a member of the Risk and Audit Committee and the Nomination Committee of Computershare. He lives in Sydney.

In May of 2007, we approached Tony to provide funding for SMART Recovery® AU, because its original grant funding was depleted. After discussions with principals at St. Vincent’s Hospital (who had primarily been responsible for the growth and development of SMART Recovery® throughout Australia), it was determined that SMART Recovery® would be best standing on its own two feet. Tony agreed to fund the organization, and proceeded to establish SMART Recovery® Australia as a not-for-profit, tax-deductible charity in Australia. Once he accomplished that, St. Vincent’s transferred SMART Recovery®’s administration to the new SMART Recovery® Australia non-profit, and the latter has flourished. You may already know about this, having had the pleasure of reading “Down Under” updates in each issue of the *News & Views* via Jim and Josette, SMART Recovery® Australia’s intrepid staff members.

Tony’s background and experience will be highly beneficial to SMART Recovery® worldwide. Welcome, Tony!

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International Development

SMART Recovery® Australia— Update

Editor's Note: SMART Recovery® Australia is fired up, big time. Keep up the fantastic work, guys. Once you take over the continent, come help us in North America.

Achievements:

- Josette attended the Alcohol Tobacco and other Drugs Council of Tasmania meeting, displayed a SMART Recovery® poster, and arranged for placing 150 SMART Recovery® brochures in each registrant's packet of conference materials.
- Josette invited all attendees to our Information and Training session for Hobart and Launceston. To date we have 28 people registered from Hobart and 15 from Launceston
- We did three information and training sessions at the Fitzroy Library in Melbourne and one session in Bendigo
- Monthly meetings with Lesley Sampson from Corrections
- Presentation for med students at Sydney University
- Did a SMART Recovery® training at Guthrie House, which is a residential halfway house for women involved in the criminal justice system. The program is typically three months long and provides the following services: residential accommodation for women with children, 24hr support and supervision, social work services including

case management; drug and alcohol assessment and counselling; individual and group counselling; living skills training; information and education sessions; recreational outings; court reports; and reports for DOCS case conferences and assistance with appropriate post-discharge accommodation.

- Did a SMART Recovery® training at the Cardinal Freeman Centre, which offers medium-term supported accommodation to homeless men with drug and alcohol problems. The staff emphasizes case management and developing living skills.
- Josette did a SMART Recovery® presentation at Villawood, which is a community housing development
- Newsletter sent to all facilitators
- Ordered 5000 brochures

Projects:

- SMART Recovery® Training DVD's from USA
- Online training for facilitators (USA) May and July
- Facilitators Meeting, May 10th, 10-1:00 pm
- Jim is conducting additional training in Melbourne, May 17 and 19, with Turning Point.
- Dr Rod McQueen, a drug and alcohol specialist, is the new physician at Bourke. He is keen to support SMART Recovery® and work with Lynette Bullen.
- Lynette Bullen, Project Officer, Lyndon House, detoxification unit, and Michael Thompson from Orange, are travelling throughout NSW and are promoting SMART Recovery®. They would like to provide training to members of the Indigenous Community. This is scheduled tentatively for July in Broken Hill.
- AERF: Jim reports that government funding may be available for each state to launch SMART Recovery®.

Tasmania

- Josette and Jim travelled in May to Tasmania to provide SMART Recovery® training. Thirty-five people participated at Hobart and 22 participated at Launceston.

Future Plans: We will participate in:

- Drug Action Week in June, and are open to ideas about what to do.
- APSAD, the Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and other Drugs, November 2008 in Sydney
- Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association, ATCA, Bryon Bay, September 2008. Visit www.atca.com.au. Josette and Jim will submit an abstract.
- SMART Recovery® USA, annual meeting, November 2008, New York City
- International Summit on Addiction, Melbourne, July 10-12, 2008. The Summit is an opportunity for people in the field to learn more about treating addictions. Josette and Jim will be there and will make sure all attendees have SMART Recovery® brochures.
- The Counsellors and Psychotherapist Association of NSW, Inc. (CAPA), has request that SMART Recovery® present at its conference in September.

Future Groups:

We have many requests and opportunities for establishing SMART Recovery® meetings. In Armidale, Robert Sterling wants Josette and Jim to conduct training for CDAT. The Rendu Youth Service provides detoxed young men a residential program through the St. Vincent De Paul Society, in three separate locations. In Wagga Wagga (*Editor: If we can have Walla Walla, they can have Wagga Wagga*), Tony Madden, a psychologist, wants to start a group. The same is true in Paramatta, where Dianne Aboud of

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CDAT (Community Drug Action Team) wants to establish a group, and in Richmond/Windsor, Frances Chung wants to start a group.

In Victoria, Turning Point, Melbourne, wants to set up two groups. One is at the Stimulant Treatment Program, and one is a crystal meth community group.

Message of Recovery

by Curtis Boudreau, SMART Recovery® Calgary

I was asked to discuss what I am doing to bring the SMART Recovery® program to people who seek an alternative to 12-step recovery. Many people who are looking for recovery options feel bummed out that the Anonymous programs are the only thing they can find. While 12-step is there for people who like that approach, not all of us view ourselves as permanently powerless.

I think people need to self-manage their recovery. We are all looking for a way to change our lives for the better when we first find the SMART Recovery® Program. I see the SMART Recovery® Program as a way to fit my recovery “tool box” with the tools that I need not only to continue to be abstinent, but to recover from addiction. My message is, “If it is healthful, and it is keeping you clean, keep doing it.”

The problem most people have is that they have no idea how to get clean in the first place, let alone stay that way. Every eight weeks I have the privilege of introducing the SMART Recovery® Program to people recovering in Calgary through AADAC’s Relapse Prevention program. AADAC is for adults in Alberta, Canada, who have alcohol, drug, or gambling problems. The Relapse Prevention course runs on an ongoing rotation of eight sessions. Week eight is “Community Resources” and

that is where I get a chance to plant the SMART Recovery® seed in the minds of those looking to recover from addiction.

The session starts by reading the introduction, which I have compiled from various other introductions from SMART Recovery®’s history. Before proceeding, I let the participants know that the SMART Recovery® Program is a huge program with a ton to learn. I want to convey the fact that this is an amazing program while at the same time this program requires the three P’s—Practice, Persistence, and Patience.

Next, I discuss the basis for SMART Recovery®, REBT, and how thinking changes your emotions, which directly influence your behaviour. So, to change your behaviour, back it up to your emotions first, and ultimately start with changing your thinking if you want to change how you act.

After that, I discuss each of the four points that are essential to SMART Recovery®: Building & Maintaining Motivation, Dealing with Urges, Problem Solving, and finally Lifestyle Balance. As I go over each of the points, I explain what each is about and let people at the meeting know that they can tackle each of these points with specific tools.

After the four points, I start by introducing each of the tools listed 1-5. In Calgary, we rotate through the tools using four sessions that encompass all five tools.

First of course is the Cost Benefit Analysis, where I do a quick CBA and explain the goal is to show how short-term benefit results in long-term pain; and how a little work in the short-term can equal long-term happiness.

Second is the DISARM tool. I tell them some facts about what an urge/craving really is, and that they are natural. I also leave them with two techniques to get to their next meeting clean: Stop Thought, and Don’t Deny It. It is amazing how saying, “I’m really being triggered right now,” and accepting the feeling takes away half of its power immediately, compared with the denial, “I am not having an urge/craving.” The Stop Thought is just focusing 100% on a huge red stop sign, and putting all of your energy into thinking about nothing but **STOP!**

Third, I go over the A, B, C, D, and E of the ABCs. I do a couple of quick short ABCs with the group to show how to realize that nothing happens that can make them relapse or use. It all comes down to their personal beliefs about a specific Activating Event leads to Consequential emotions, leading to action.

Next, I review the test of rational thinking: Is it getting me towards my goals? Is there evidence to support that thought? Am I flexible in this way of thinking?

The fourth session we have in Calgary is the one on Unconditional Self-Acceptance (USA), and Unconditional Other-Acceptance (UOA). I think this session is the hardest one to teach. It does not have specific steps to get you there, like the other tools. Instead, it consists of theory and examples of things you can say to help you change your thinking about yourself and about other people. I wrap up the USA, UOA bit by stating, “By practicing USA and UOA effectively, you take away the power for anyone to make you feel anything ever again!” The success in USA and UOA comes from practicing them, and I’m not sure that any human will ever

master them. Once again, Practice, Persistence, and Patience.

I wrap up the session by fielding any questions and thanking attendees for their time. The feeling I get from helping other people learn life-changing strategies and techniques is so amazing that it energizes me for the eight weeks until the next session.

"The feeling I get from helping other people learn life-changing strategies and techniques is so amazing that it energizes me for the eight weeks until the next session."

This is a ton of information, and I really hope overwhelms them. My goal while introducing the program is not to teach it in one night, but instead to show them that this program requires effort and will take time to learn. But most of all, I let them know to give themselves full credit and that there is a way to recover that allows them to finally look in the mirror for a solution.

I hope this article can help readers who want to share SMART Recovery® with people and programs seeking effective ways to stop addictions and keep them stopped. At this point, SMART Recovery® has helped me manage myself more effectively and live clean and sober for almost three years!

Editor's Note: I like the idea of telling people it's a ton of information and they will be overwhelmed. This strikes me as hopeful, truthful, and astutely motivating—there's much more to evidence-based self-help than, "Just keep coming back, it works," and much more to the human capacity for self-management than one day at a time, forever.

SMART Ideas



"Spiritual Change," A Possible, If Not Intended, Outcome

by Hank Robb, PhD, ABPP

What in the world is "spiritual change" doing in an issue of *News & Views*? Well I will tell you. Twelve Step programs are, by definition, "spiritual fellowships." The aim of the program is spiritual transformation. This is why abstaining is the start, but far from the finish. The term "dry drunk" simply means someone who has stopped using his or her favorite taffy but has not achieved spiritual transformation. They have not effectively "worked their program" to remove their "character defects."

SMART Recovery® aims to help those who choose to abstain from their addictive behavior. Once this is achieved, the program has "worked." Helping those who wish to abstain is all that was ever intended. I suspect, however, more than that often results.

With a single line, "Demandingness will land you less that what you really want," Albert Ellis summed up the major downfall of "murbating" about anything, including, "I MUST have my favorite taffy!" But look at the side benefit. When a person really goes to work at saying "no" to every invitation to demand this or that, people around him or her begin to experience a person rather different from before. He or she is more than a "non-addictive" version of their previous self. By giving permission, if not approval, for the world to be as it is, was, or may be, an individual

soon becomes a rather different kind of person. And, I don't think it is too far off to say, "more spiritual." That was not the goal, but it may be a side effect.

How about person-rating? There are no "stars." There are no "worms." Even if an individual's behavior is quite star-like or worm-like, that individual remains a member of the human family and "just like me" from beginning to end. Imagine meeting someone who no matter what you did, and how much that person approved or disapproved of what you did or didn't do, he or she continued to regard you as fundamentally no different from himself or herself. I don't think it's too far off to describe such a relationship with our fellow humans as "more spiritual" than regarding some humans as "more worthy" to be members of the human family than others. It was not the goal, but it may be a side effect.

The same for moving one's frustration tolerance from low to high. "I CAN stand things I don't like even when I intensely dislike them." A person may develop that ability first with regard to urges to engage in addictive behavior. Suppose he or she goes on to develop it with regard to the behavior of children and siblings and bosses and parents, and mates and umpires, as well as long waits and poor weather or working conditions even as they work to change the latter and bring an umbrella for the former. That too sounds pretty "spiritual" to me. While that kind of increased "spirituality" was not the intention, it may still prove to be an outcome.

How about awfulizing? Learning to put things in a perspective bigger than the moment can be useful when judging how bad it is to go without one's favorite addictive behavior. "Going without my favorite addictive behavior may be bad, but still it isn't awful," can be quite useful when sticking with the choice to abstain from that addictive behavior. What happens, however, when the same idea begins to spread to the behavior of one's parent-in-law, or boss, or the umpire in your kid's

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baseball game? If you give up awfulizing, you just are not the kind of person you were before and quite likely to be thought of as “more spiritual.”

Without ever intending to help anyone become more “spiritual,” and only intending to help people who choose to abstain from addictive behavior succeed in giving long-held beliefs of demandingness, person-rating, frustration intolerance, and awfulizing, SMART Recovery® ends up with people who, having passed through its groups, became more “spiritual” than they were when they entered.

Editor's Note: Germane is Velten, E. (1996), The rationality of Alcoholics Anonymous and the spirituality of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy. Journal of Humanistic Education and Development, 35, 105-116. REBT and AA both see a philosophical shift as the most profound, aka spiritual, level of change.

Nutrition is an Important First Step of Recovery

by Carolyn Reuben, L.Ac., Executive Director, Community Addiction Recovery Association, Sacramento, California

Nutrition is the Cinderella of drug treatment, working in the shadows unseen and unappreciated. Yet nutrition can contribute significantly to successful recovery. In treatment facilities featuring nutritional supplements, staff often feel amazed at how quickly patients respond. For them, nutrition is the missing partner for success.

People with many kinds of drug problem seek help at Recovery Systems in Mill Valley, California. The easiest to benefit from proper nutrition and supplements seem to be those addicted to methamphetamine. Program director Julia Ross claims, “Intervention for meth is relatively simple. We only need the amino

acid L-tyrosine and a multivitamin/mineral capsule and within fifteen minutes we can see the results.” Ross adds that people addicted to marijuana or alcohol typically require more amino acids, vitamins, and minerals, to start to feel better.

Ross details the useful connection between supplements and addiction recovery in her books, *The Diet Cure* and *The Mood Cure*. *Amino acids*, she explains, are fragments of protein. Some 22 amino acids compose our various animal and plant-based proteins, but only five seem relevant to addiction treatment. They include L-tyrosine, L-tryptophan, DL-phenylalanine, GABA, and L-glutamine.

In this article, let us focus on nutritional interventions in the treatment of methamphetamine abuse. L-tyrosine is the amino acid the human body uses to create dopamine. Dopamine is a major reward chemical, one associated with our feelings of well-being. It is associated with mood brightening and ability to focus one's attention.

When you take the amino acid L-tyrosine, the body produces more dopamine. As well, it appears to help build more dopamine receptor sites and contribute to system-wide alertness. Because L-tyrosine appears to act as a stimulant, many people find it better to take it before breakfast.

Even if you cannot afford nutritional supplements, you can start nutritional therapy with a pro-recovery diet of whole grains, raw and lightly steamed vegetables, and raw fruits, and lean meats and fish (including canned sardines, herring, tuna, and salmon). Steer clear of fried, breaded, and sweetened foods; white-flour bakery products; and sugar. Read labels and go for naturally colorful foods. Add a multivi-

tamin/mineral to that, as well as L-tyrosine, and you may find recovery less a struggle.

Decades of research by university professors in schools, jails, and prisons across the United States, Britain, and the Netherlands have indicated that nutritious food, as well as nutritional supplements, can affect addictive behavior. One researcher, Stephen Schoenthaler, PhD, a professor of criminal justice and sociology at California State University Stanislaus, concluded in 1999 that minimal investment in a multivitamin/mineral seemed to prove cost effective in management of inmates in the California Department of Corrections. Considering the current economic turn-down, to say nothing of the focus on cost-cutting by state legislatures, the relatively inexpensive option of healthful nutrition can—we hope—come out of the shadows as an attractive part of self-management and recovery training.

Carolyn Reuben, L.Ac. is a licensed acupuncturist and detox specialist, author of four self-help books including Cleansing the Body, Mind, and Spirit, and is Executive Director of Community Addiction Recovery Association, headquartered in Sacramento.

Addictive Gambling Behavior

by Tom Larkin

Addictive gambling behaviors, like other bad habits, fall on a continuum from mild (at risk gamblers), moderate (problem gamblers) to severe (pathological gamblers). According to the National Gambling Impact Study Commission (1999), more than 30% of active gamblers show some level of addictive gambling problem. Four percent are pathological gamblers, 9% are problem gamblers, and about 18% are at risk gamblers.

SMART Recovery® self-help meetings support efforts to abstain from addictive

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behaviors by helping people strengthen motivation to change; cope with urges; manage thoughts, behaviors and feelings; and develop a healthier balanced lifestyle. These purposes apply to addictive gambling behaviors as well as to alcohol and other drugs.

The self-defeating use of alcohol and other drugs is why most people attend SMART Recovery® meetings. For many participants, however, money management and gambling problems complicate their recovery. Payday is often a relapse cue.

SMART Recovery®'s approach to addiction and its use of Albert Ellis' Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) are applicable to addictive gambling. The latter, like other addictions, reflects an interaction among irrational beliefs, unhealthy feelings, and self-defeating actions.

About 30% of people with alcohol and drug problems have gambling problems, and about 50% of people with gambling problems have problems with alcohol and other drugs. Among incarcerated people, some 40% have shown some level of problem gambling.

REBT suggests beginning with the secondary problem, usually the alcohol or drug problem. Problem gamblers who are problem drinkers are likely to find it difficult to abstain from gambling. However, in SMART Recovery® meetings, group members set their own goals. This simple fact is part of the power of motivational interviewing and REBT—and of SMART Recovery®. If the person with several problems chooses one over the other to reveal or focus on in meetings, so be it. "Letting" people chose for themselves is profoundly respectful. Our tools are applicable to difficulties we may never know the person has. As well, people who bring up and work on one issue in meetings can

generalize their learning to problems they do not bring up. Also, information gained in research on the Stages of Change shows that people may actively work on one problem, but not even contemplate work on some other problem others may view them as having. It can be a big mistake to insist that they "must" see themselves as we might see them.

I have had several people in my SMART Recovery® groups identify gambling as a major problem. Here are some suggested applications of SMART to self-defeating gambling behaviors. The first few techniques raise consciousness and assist people at the lower levels on the Stages of Change. (Pre-contemplation and Contemplation). Other techniques help maintain abstinence and prevent relapse.

1. *A Hierarchy of Values.* You ask the group to brainstorm the question, "What are the highest values in your life?" The list usually includes family, health (physical and mental), work, children, friends, self-respect, education, financial security, spirituality, contentment, trust, responsible behaviors, and so on. You follow with a discussion of how gambling effects those values. Another twist I have used with gamblers is to have the group brainstorm a list of those things in life that are "...more important than money." The goal is to create cognitive dissonance and shift from short- to long-term thinking.
2. *Cost-Benefit Analysis of Gambling.* Most SMART Recovery® Facilitators have applied this tool to illustrate the benefits and costs of using, or not using, alcohol and other drugs. It creates a means for discussing short-term vs. long-term thinking, and it is effective when applied to gambling. It also strengthens motivational

thinking and helps create cognitive dissonance.

3. *Change Plans.* Completing the Change Plan Worksheet at a meeting, or as homework, focuses attention on preparation for changing gambling behaviors. It requires people to think about short- and long-term goals, the support, and the cues that may affect goal attainment.
4. *The ABCs.* A—Activating Event, such as the urge to Gamble; B—Irrational Beliefs about A, such as, "If I win, I am a winner. I cannot stand being a loser. I have nothing left to lose." C—Consequences of A combined with B, such as relapse or continuation of self-defeating gambling behaviors. D—Dispute Irrational Beliefs, such as by asking, "Is the belief true, demanding, exaggerated or all or nothing thinking?" E—Effective Feelings, such as rational ways of evaluating and controlling urges, and feeling more confident about ability to abstain from gambling.
Gambling behaviors, boredom or discomfort anxiety, can also be used as the Activating Event. A lapse or relapse in gambling behavior is C. This approach creates the opportunity to examine the distorted beliefs leading to the problematic consequences of gambling.
5. *Practice Coping Self-Statements.* "I can stand the urge to gamble." "I resent being exploited by the gambling industry." "I am worth the same, win, lose, or draw. I can decide not to gamble." "Life's goal is to enjoy myself, not prove myself." "Gambling can make things worse." "Contentment, mental and physical health, friendships, self worth, and

acting responsibly are not directly linked to how much money I have in my pocket.” “I am happier, long term, when I do not gamble.” “I accept myself, but not my self-defeating gambling behaviors.”

6. *Relapse Prevention Tools.* Go to SMART Recovery® meetings; keep a journal and read it daily; acknowledge gambling problems, frequently, to self and others; acquire absorbing interests and healthful habits to replace gambling habits; accept financial reality—gambling usually makes financial problems worse; self-acceptance exercises, such as discussing and writing about the fact that gambling does not make people better or worse in terms of human worth; accept others—put down behaviors not people; focus on the long term pleasures of not gambling; study the laws of probability—they make the gambling industry wealthy; do not let a lapse become a relapse—set a goal, rewrite my plan, and start again; rehearse responses to high risk situations.

An interesting method is to collect quotes about gambling. Here are a few: “Life is not a matter of holding good cards, but of playing a poor hand well,” Robert Louis Stevenson. “I have seen the smiling of fortune beguiling. I have felt its favors and found it decay,” Flowers of the Forest-A Scottish Folk Song from about 1650. “Who is rich? He who is content with his fate,” Rabbi Steinberg. “Addiction is almost always symptomatic of other problems,” Tom Horvath. “The gambling industry is a wolf among sheep.” Earl Grinols. “Greed, like the love of comfort, is a kind of fear,” Cyril Connolly. “The thing about the rat race is that even if you win, you’re still a rat,” Lily Tomlin. “Money is in some respects like fire. It is

an excellent servant, but a terrible master” P.T. Barnum.

In sum, addictive behaviors are dynamic and rarely independent problems. Gambling correlates with many other self-defeating feelings and behaviors, especially alcohol and other drug abuse, but also with smoking, overeating, depression, anxiety, anger, compulsive shopping, prostitution, junk food, shoplifting, work inefficiency, ineffective parenting, suicide attempts, fraud, bankruptcy, embezzlement, credit card abuse, and a variety of petty and serious criminal behaviors.

Abstinence is strengthened by disputing irrational beliefs, such as, “My self-worth is measured by money” and replacing them with a more realistic, less exaggerated, accepting belief system.

Tom Larkin is a Licensed Psychologist and a SMART Recovery® Facilitator.



An Aussie Adventure in the States

by Tez, SMART Recovery® Online Volunteer

When I found SMART Recovery® Online, it was my first experience with either a recovery site or an online message board. I posted a “hello” in the Welcome Forum then logged off in fright. Logging back in hours later, imagine my surprise that people had replied—somehow it hadn’t occurred to me that anyone would.

I was no longer alone.

Each day I posted a little more—about small achievements, and setbacks, and life in general. We talked about the tools that worked for us, discussed urges, and made plans. What I didn’t count on though, was the friendships I would make from this group of cyber buddies. I started thinking about one day visiting the States, and meeting some of these people “for real.” Hubby had long dreamt of a “trip of a lifetime” to America, but I was a little more nervous.

Fast forward to March 2008.

After a few serious ABCs, some awfulizing and quite a bit of drama queening on my behalf, we are at the airport and boarding the plane. Another 23 hours later, via Auckland (New Zealand) and LAX, we land in New York. It is midnight. From the back of the cab driving into Manhattan, I see the Chrysler Building—we’re really here!

We hardly sleep the first night, between excitement and just plain being terrified. I picture a globe of the world in my head and realize just how far away New York is from home. As soon as it’s light we head out, stopping at the nearest diner – The Flame Restaurant—9th Avenue and 58th Street. This is our first experience of the many differences between America and Australia. Our coffees arrive, black, with teaspoons in. A bowl of little “Half and Halves” are slid across the table. Where do we put the teaspoon? What is “Half and Half”? How do we just get plain milk? How much do we tip? What do we do with the tip? Do I want a “smere” with my bagel? What are lox? Did we order those potatoes?

I hurry back to the hotel room to quiz my SOL friends online. Yes, there is normal milk, but cream is considered the “normal” in America. We put the teaspoons on the table—the waiter will clean up after. We also leave the tip on the table. Phew, OK, we’re locals now....

It’s freezing cold—and summer’s not even over! I studiously look up the

temperature each morning, and write out a conversion into my little notebook that I take everywhere. I go as low as 32 Fahrenheit... that's zero degrees in our language (Celsius). Surely, it won't get any colder than that will it? Ummm, yes! After two days of complaining, I receive a private message from Mistral – another SOL Volunteer. Macys has a sale on. Buy a coat before you freeze to death! In fact, the sale was so good I bought two.

After eight days in New York, we get a cab to Penn Station, receiving a much-abridged and one-sided view of American political history from the cabbie on the way. In what I'm sure was pure fluke (if there's a system at Penn Station we couldn't work it out), we find ourselves and our luggage on the Aceler Express headed to Boston—phew! We meet Hammer, a long time SOL Volunteer, the next morning in our hotel foyer. Hammer and I are a little worried we won't recognize each other. What we didn't count on was that the hotel was host to a world-renowned Anime Convention. Anime, I soon learn, is computer-generated animation, and has a cult following within a certain 20-something crowd, all dressed as their favourite characters. Hammer and I were the only “normals” there.

We meet JvB (Director, SMART Recovery® Online) and BVD—don't ask!—Kelly (Online Volunteer) for lunch. Being tourists, and being in Boston, of course we have to go to Cheers. BVD orders Boston Baked Beans for us to try. We've never tried baked beans with sausage and molasses before – in a mug! Hubby gets some strange looks when he suggests we'd normally eat baked beans on toast. I order chili - that didn't come on toast either. Hubby orders Clam Chowder – possibly the best thing either of us has ever tasted.

We head to Chicago on the overnight train. At dinner, we share a table with a mother and daughter in route to Texas. I ordered a quesadillas, pronouncing it “qwessadillas” much to the amusement of the young lady. She wanted to call her brother on her cell phone so he could listen to “that funny language you speak.”

We spend the first day in Chicago in Oak Park touring Frank Lloyd Wright's home, studio, and neighbourhood. This was one of the highlights of our trip—amazing! We meet up with two more SMARTies for dinner—Richard (Admin of SOL), Dan (Volunteer Facilitator) and Dan's partner. After dinner, Richard drove us back into the city. This was the first time I get to experience the very weird sensation of sitting in the driver's seat without either a steering wheel or pedals. Just as I'm getting used to this, Richard hands me the road map to help navigate to our hotel. I don't remember the last time Hubby was so amused!

Another train journey and next stop Minneapolis to meet Sugar_Locks. Sugar and I started at SMART Recovery® Online about the same time, and meeting Sugar and her family after nearly two years of knowing each other online is another highlight of our trip. Besides spending an entire day at the Mall of America or “The Greatest Mall in the Greatest State in the Greatest Country in the World” as Sugar informs us, the other highlight would have to be the discovery of the last major food group—deep-fried mozzarella. How did we ever survive without this melted, fried, blend of delicious nothingness?

Flying to Vegas, the next week is spent on a whirlwind driving discovery of Arizona (Grand Canyon), Utah (Monument Valley), Colorado (Durango), and New Mexico (Santa Fe).

Last stop on our way home is Los Angeles. We stay in a lovely little community called Hermosa Beach and meet up with two more SMARTies—Sandcrab_Margarita and Sam29. Sam and I have already met in Melbourne so we are old friends. Sandcrab and I joined SMART Recovery® Online within a month or so of each other, and it's lovely to meet him in person and put a face to the name.

So, I sit here back home at my computer playing with my Guggenheim Snow Dome. Thank you SOL, for widening my world more than I ever imagined.

My Recovery Journey from Newcomer to Facilitator

by Charlie Cardoza (a.k.a. cazodrac)

My recovery journey began in November of 2006. Having made the decision that abstinence was my best course to regain some semblance of sanity; I entered therapy and began attending twelve-step meetings. I had yet to discover SMART Recovery®.

I respect the 12-step organizations. They seem to help a number of people, but I wasn't one of them. While attending the meetings, I felt like a fish out of water—unable to breathe, unable to stay alive and grow. Powerless and unmanageable? No. The God of MY understanding created me with the power to take control and responsibility for my life. My job was to figure out how.

A few months later, I watched the HBO documentary, *ADDICTION*. It was so well done, that I purchased the DVD box set and the companion text. In the appendix of this book was a list of recovery organizations; among them I found SMART Recovery®!

A trip to www.smartrecovery.org revealed terms, thoughts and ideas that were practical, commonsensical, and...

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well...smart. I discovered concepts that spoke of self-management, motivation to abstain, urge coping, problem solving, life-style balance, and unconditional self-acceptance. The site, in addition to the *SMART Recovery® Handbook* that I purchased online, presented tools such as Cost-Benefit Analysis, the Audit, DISARM, the ABCs of REBT, and coping statements. These enabled me to put SMART's concepts into practice while playing the cards life dealt me. SMART Recovery® also confirmed one of my core beliefs: I do have the power to control my actions.

From a SMART Recovery® perspective, I was fortunate to live in Massachusetts, because there were seventeen face-to-face public meetings here. Some states have none.

Living in Taunton, the closest meeting to me was in Plymouth, nearly a twenty-five mile drive. I gladly made the trip, attending meetings there as well as in Newton, just outside of Boston. Combining these with online meetings, found on the SMART Recovery® website, my recovery path soon gained solid footing. My coping strategies were improving because my thinking was improving. By the end of 2007, for the first time feeling comfortable in my own skin, I decided it was time to take my recovery to the next level.

I decided the time had come to remedy the lack of SMART Recovery® meetings in the Taunton area—or for that matter, anywhere in southeastern Massachusetts or Rhode Island. A main reason my recovery journey was staying on smoother roads was SMART Recovery® teachings and meetings. I volunteered to become a meeting facilitator, both to give something back and to reinforce my motivation to stay on the right path.

SMART Recovery® was conducting a facilitator training session in January of 2008. It was to run four consecutive Wednesday nights, approximately two hours in duration. The meeting facilitator training is via the internet, using the Evoice program. Participants, using headsets or a microphone and speakers, can talk and hear each other during the training. SMART Recovery® also uses Evoice for several of their online meetings.

On Wednesday evening, January 9, 2008, in the “Evoice Café,” more than 20 would-be facilitators from all over the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom gathered for the first of four training sessions. This meeting, facilitated by SMART Recovery® President Tom Horvath, covered an introduction and overview of SR, the four-points of SR, basics of REBT and ABC's. Subsequent training included stages of change, CBA, role playing, brainstorming, the meeting outline, and how to start-up a SMART Recovery® meeting. Homework involved viewing four DVDs on what SMART Recovery® is, conducting basic and advanced meetings, and discussions on the four-point recovery program. Reading the *Facilitator's Manual and the Handbook* was also part of the curriculum.

The trainers suggested that to find a meeting place, we should contact a local hospital, medical center, or treatment facility. Many SMART Recovery® face-to-face meetings take place in such locations and these facilities are often hospitable to our gatherings. Therefore, the logical place for me to start was Morton Hospital and Medical Center here in Taunton. I contacted the hospital administrator's office and the person I spoke to had heard of SMART Recovery® and said our meeting would be welcome at the facility at no cost.

Contacting the SMART Recovery® Central Office in Ohio, I notified them of the new meeting and they posted it on our website's meeting directory. I had a notice of the meeting published in the local newspaper. This was free of charge as it was public service advertising. Finally, I contacted several addiction treatment facilities in the area announcing the meeting and providing information about SMART Recovery®.

The eighteenth meeting in Massachusetts was assigned a small conference room that holds about fifteen people and, three weeks after completing facilitator training, I was “ready” to facilitate my first meeting. To say that I was nervous would have been an under-statement. I brought some reading material to the first meeting fearing that, in the early stages, I would be the lone attendee. So far, this has not been the case. In the three months we've been gathering, I've had from one to ten participants. When welcoming a new person to our meeting, I inquire as to where they heard about SMART Recovery®. It has been an equal mix of the website and treatment center referral.

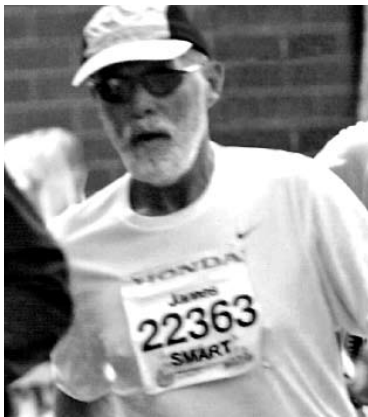
In a perfect world, basic facilitator training would be done face-to-face. Due to the international nature of SMART Recovery®, with meetings starting up all over the planet, I realize that this is impractical. Using the internet with the Evoice program is the next best thing. Here in Massachusetts, facilitators and other interested parties gather in Cambridge once a month to share ideas and support each other as we continue to share the SMART Recovery® philosophy. I hope other geographic groupings of meetings do something similar. If not, it may be a something to consider. This regular networking provides the facilitator with a place to discuss and brainstorm issues that may come up at individual meetings.

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Everything mentioned, SMART Recovery® meeting attendance, online facilitator training, and monthly regional meetings have been an integral part in my learning how to be an effective facilitator. Where the rubber meets the road, however, is actually doing it. I am certainly no expert in SMART Recovery®, but I have become much more knowledgeable in the last three months.

What works for me is that I do not purport to be a professional in the field of addictive behavior. I advise newcomers that I know a few things about SMART Recovery®, but not all things. Anyone attending our meeting has the opportunity to share with other participants their successes and tribulations in recovery. I regularly remind members that the meeting belongs to them and we can all help each other learn. We must be doing something right as people keep coming back. My recovery journey continues...



Talk about SMART ideas! James, a San Diego SMART Recovery® Facilitator not only competed in, but finished the Los Angeles Marathon. And, note in the photo that James was promoting “SMART” on his runner’s bib. Congratulations and way to go, James!



You’ve come a Long Way, Barry!

by Shari Allwood, SMART Recovery® Central Office

“My choices—some good, but many bad, were my choices. It is a culmination of my choices that made me who I am now, and who I will become in the future.” (Excerpt From *Inside the Walls* column, by Barry Grant, July 2000 *News & Views*)

One of the most rewarding experiences working with SMART Recovery® is having the opportunity to witness changed lives. I asked Barry if I might have the honor of writing his *From Beyond the Walls* column for this summer issue, and he kindly consented.

To the best of my memory (with help from a few dusty old files and records), the story begins back in 1997. I received a letter from Barry indicating that he appreciated and enjoyed Michael DeLeon’s *From Inside the Walls* articles in the *News & Views*. Rich Dowling (at the time Rich was a member of the SMART Recovery® Board of Directors) had brought SMART Recovery® information to the New Jersey correctional facility in which Barry was residing. Barry would regale me with how much his life was changing as he was learning how to change his thinking, his beliefs, and therefore, his behaviors. Barry was exuberant—he was fired up for SMART! Later in 1997, he contacted the Central Office indicating a desire to start a SMART Recovery® meeting in his facility, which he shortly thereafter accomplished.

In July of 2000, Michael DeLeon, orig-

inal author of the *From Inside the Walls* column, was released and began writing a new column for our newsletter—*From Beyond the Walls*. Because of Barry’s generous offer to continue that column, readers who had enjoyed *From Inside the Walls* were not left high and dry.

For several years, Barry’s *Inside the Walls* columns inspired many newsletter readers in various correctional facilities (as had Michael DeLeon’s previously), and gave them hope. It’s always been evident that Barry has a way with words. It was also obvious that Barry liked volunteering his time and talent through his columns. By way of the articles, as well as ongoing letters and communications, I continued to enjoy observing his growth.

February of 2001 was a big turning point for Barry. Our newsletter happily announced that Barry Grant was graduating *From Inside the Walls*, but would now provide the *From Beyond the Walls* column. Barry was free, and he set out with the SMART Recovery® toolkit inside his head and heart. He was intent on creating a balanced lifestyle that would include healthy choices for himself and his loved ones. Iron bars may not necessarily a prison make, but he did not intend ever to return to inside the walls.

When it came to a career choice, Barry chose to begin working for organizations that served previous offenders. Some may wonder, “Why would you ever want a job that would require you to carry on the memory of prior bad choices in life?” I’ve never asked Barry, but my guess is that he felt he had learned so much, could empathize, and could help others to regain their lives—the “give back” concept. (If I am guessing wrong, Barry can correct me in the fall issue!) He began as a Case Manager/Outreach Worker for Offender Aid and Restoration of Essex County,

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New Jersey. He is currently the Director of Work Release and Educational Development for Community Education Centers, in Newark, New Jersey, where some of his duties include developing policies related to work release and education, and developing and coordinating plans of action for successful community reintegration. He is also an REBT Staff Trainer.

Barry has received recognition for his community re-entry efforts on the federal, state, and local levels. On the federal level, his work has been recognized by former First Lady, now Senator, Hillary Rodham Clinton, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy. On the state level, Barry has a seat on two Judiciary Policy review Committees in the state of New Jersey. In 2006, Barry was nominated as a member of the SMART Recovery® Board of Directors. With unanimous consent, the Board accepted and welcomed him. He is a founding member of Books Behind Bars and Beyond, and is an international facilitator of Self-Empowerment through Natural Recovery. The American Correctional

Association recently published Barry's article: Broadening Treatment Alternatives for Ever-Broadening Needs.

You will see on Page 4 of this issue, that Barry and Joe Gerstein shared the stage when presenting SMART Recovery® information to the plenary session during the April ASADS Annual Meeting. In addition, Barry's international speaking engagements have taken him to Paris, London, Glasgow, Inverness, Aberdeen, Brussels, and Algiers. Barry continues to share the good news of how SMART Recovery® changed his life with anyone who is willing to listen!

However, the real reason I requested that Barry allow me to write his column for this issue is because of what I consider a truly major accomplishment. Barry recently received his Master of Human Services degree from Lincoln University. He sent me a copy of his diploma, along with his graduation photo, which I am happy to share with our readers. I confess that my heart swelled with pride, and my eyes filled with tears at this latest achievement.

I'd like to take you back to Barry's quote at the beginning of this article. I would say that in the eight years since Barry wrote those words, the choices Barry has made have indeed allowed him to develop into an incredibly gifted and service-oriented individual, of whom we can collectively be immensely proud.



Editor's Note: Hear! Hear! One of the many satisfactions of editing our newsletter is reminders that Barry is there—there for us. He is a solid rock of strength in our family. But let's also remember that SMART Recovery® was there for him. Why? Because we have collectively and individually pushed our, er, anatomies, to reach everyone we can. We "must" continue and expand our efforts. That means that when I get up at 4:15 a.m. to work on our newsletter, like today, and reflect on why we're doing this, it's worth it so many times over.

The Challenge of Fundraising and a Matching Challenge from the Editor

by Emmett Velten, PhD

The fall issue of our *News & Views* will focus on fundraising. We are seeking articles and ideas about passing the hat, getting funds from local charities, finding donors and even angels, and telling each other how valuable SMART Recovery® has been, and continues to be, to you. Our continued growth requires money. I listen to the classical music and the jazz stations here in Phoenix. They are non-profits; they have fundraising drives; and they point out very, very firmly that if they are important to you, then help them stay on the air by sending in contributions.

SMART Recovery® needs money to stay on the air and to continue to reach people in need—and continue to keep this family united, strong, and flourishing. We maintain

a bookstore of SMART Recovery® and other publications, we publish the *News & Views* and Facilitator's and Advisor's Letter, we offer a thriving online environment for those who don't have local meetings – and many who use both local and online services. We offer distance facilitator training to help train new facilitators to help expand the number of meetings available worldwide. We provide an annual volunteer gathering, and we speak at events to help spread the news (both of which are reported in this issue). We offer these and other services via a small staff (the equivalent of 2 full-time employees) who serve our volunteers and those who seek help via the program. I believe that we merit financial support.

After about a decade, your beloved editor finally tuned in to the fact that *not too many* SMART Recovery® meetings are providing their \$10 a month to the Central Office. **So, I issue this challenge.** Each meeting that sends in a ten spot for the first time — Shari and Jodi will know who you are — I will match it. If it's your first time, followed then by the next month's contribution, and even three in a row, I'll match you, up to a total of \$600 for new groups sending their monthly donation.

How's that for starters?

Stay tuned for the next issue, and do please share stories for the issue via email to Shari and to me: sallwood@smartrecovery.org, ev.verb@gmail.com.

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3-Minute REBT

Joy and Happiness Happen Now

by Philip Tate, PhD

Author of *Alcohol: How To Give It Up
and Be Glad You Did*,
1996, See Sharp Press, Tucson, AZ.

The secret of happiness? *Do now what you enjoy.* Happiness is finding ourselves completely absorbed in an activity that we prefer more than others. We're involved with something outside us. We focus on our actions and our environment. We lose awareness of ourselves. Time ceases.

Why do we live so rarely with joyous moments? Because we think, we have emotions, and we act according to our thoughts and emotions more than to our reality.

For instance, we begin doing something, then we think that it's *too hard*, when it isn't, or that we *have to* do well when we don't, and that our actions must meet with the approval of others, and we feel anxious and depressed. Then, we move on to something easier and less pleasing.

Other people try to influence us and we allow them to succeed. Marketers present their opinions (as products) about what we *need* and *cannot live without*. In the media, we see depictions of lifestyles from wealthy and glamorous to a "cool" street life. In addition, groups with causes want us to join them and to think as they do. Our present thoughts after listening to them lead us to seek their interests instead of our own.

We have thoughts of *who I am* that impede us by filtering, limiting, and excluding possibilities. Our families of origin and others may have treated us with neglect, from which we believe, "I'm the kind of person who doesn't deserve anything better." Or, we may have addicted ourselves and labeled ourselves accordingly by thinking, "I'm an alcoholic." Self-labeling and typecasting leads us to focus more on the shadow of our past than on the freedom of what we do. You don't have to define yourself, do you? Isn't it better to involve ourselves in life instead of history?

Some of our thoughts reflect our experiences. We generate other thoughts. These include absolutistic *shoulds*, *oughts*, *musts*, and *have to's*.

Do we have to make thoughts a part of our lives? Do we have to think them? Cannot each of us simply have thoughtless awareness of our life as it presents itself and as we act in it?

To live joyously, live with full awareness of all that exists in your personal domain. Concentrate, focus, clear your mind of thought, and do as you see fit.

REMINDER – See Dr. Velten's The Challenge of Fundraising and a Matching Challenge from the Editor on Page 15. We are seeking stories for our fall fundraising-oriented issue of the *News & Views*. We welcome stories from individuals regarding why you donate to SMART Recovery®, as well as stories from Facilitators who have been successful at passing the hat at your local meetings. (And a reminder that stories from our volunteers, meeting and online participants are always welcome!)

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