

Inspirations



A love story

by Jennifer in Florida

Sixteen years ago, a young woman walked into a restaurant outside Atlanta, Georgia to interview for a job. What she didn't know was that her life was about to change. Inside sat a young man who was enamored of this woman and made it a quest to become part of her life.

It didn't take the two long to realize that they were meant to be together. They worked, played, and lived together. Being in the restaurant business, they lived the restaurant life, visiting the bar after hours and enjoying friends when they weren't working.

Then, they had a baby. She was the light of their lives. The young couple

resigned from the restaurant business, got married, and began a new life. With their new lifestyle came time to themselves, and cocktails to enjoy the evenings.

They brought another daughter into their hearts and home. With two beautiful daughters and a beautiful wife, the man was determined to succeed and provide for the family he cherished. He worked hard to climb the ladder of success and did so rather rapidly. He was good at his job and was determined to give his family everything he thought they deserved. With his hard work and corporate climb, came stress, and cocktails to unwind.

Many times over the years, the man saw what was happening and tried to stop. He attended several meetings, but thought he didn't fit in. He wasn't sleeping on street corners or blacking out, he hadn't lost his family or his job so he thought he could heal on his own. And he did — for a while.

When the man decided to start a business, they, like many others, thought it was the ticket. This now middle-aged man put his heart into the business. With his business came pressure to

perform, and with that pressure came more cocktails to keep going.

After three years, the business was still staggering, but he put no less heart into his work. Times were tight and tough, but they held on to each other and knew better days were coming. Along the way, they lost their first house to a computer error the mortgage company said they could do nothing about. With losing the

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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

house and feeling like you failed your family come more cocktails to keep the depression away.

The couple's love never faltered. Over cocktails and wine, they talked of better times, retirement, and what they'd do when the traveling was over. They laughed with their daughters, attended every school and sports function and stared into each other's eyes.

Then the man, now in his early 40s, started losing weight. His balance faltered, his memory dulled, and his stomach just wasn't right. Any of these things were common to many people with a lot of stress in their lives. All the while he maintained his career and love for his family — and continued to have cocktails.

On June 2, 2013 after days of denying something was wrong, the man and his beloved wife dropped their two daughters with a friend and went to the emergency room. They figured they would be home by dinner. The doctor wanted to admit the man to monitor him for the night. After they got the man settled, the woman picked up the girls and brought them to the hospital to say goodnight. Still believing he was in for only the night, they kissed him good night and left.

The next day, the gastroenterologist told the woman that her husband had alcohol hepatitis and that he would

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
Unsolicited material is most welcome!

SMART 101 – We want your input

Help us gear up for this year's program eye opener, SMART 101, presented by SMART Recovery President Dr. Tom Horvath. Your input is essential to make this part of the conference as meaningful as possible. Please take a few moments to tell us what you want to see in a "SMART 101" presentation. Visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SMART101> to share your ideas.

Lights! Camera! Action! – We want your videos

We're looking for short video clips — 15 seconds or less — to include in our conference eye opener. So grab your smartphone, camcorder, or other recording device and record a one-sentence clip telling the world what SMART Recovery is to you. Don't be shy and do be whimsical. Have fun with this. Email your video to smarteck@verizon.net by July 15.

probably only live four to six months. It couldn't possibly be true; he didn't drink THAT much. There were many people who drank more and were fine.

Then, one by one, his internal organs began to fail. For seven weeks, that man fought with all his might to stay alive. He didn't want to leave his family. When he could talk, he was adamant that he wasn't leaving. The doctors were awed by his determination. They started talking about rehabilitation centers that took dialysis patients.

Then he contracted pneumonia. The doctors said he had a 2 percent chance of living. Not a full life, just living. That meant dialysis and being hooked up to machines for the rest of his life. I knew that was not the life wanted, so I made the most difficult decision of my life.

On July 18, 2013, four days after he came down with pneumonia, I ended my husband's life. I lost the love of my life to the disease called alcoholism. I know that if he knew that what was happening to him was so severe, he would never have let it go that long. He thought he could control it.

Now, his beloved wife is a widow at age 45 and his daughters will grow up without their father.

If you think the outcome of this story couldn't happen to you or someone you love, please think again. I wish we had found SMART years ago. I think my husband would have done so much better than trying the traditional road. Although he tried several times, he never found his community. I feel that if I am able to help someone or a family member even the slightest, my husband will not have died in vain.

Thoughts on hope and change

by Mike MT Massey, SMART Recovery Facilitator

I was doing some research on addiction and behavior, and I was thinking about us, about myself, about how we can feel in our depths of despair and some of the processes we use in SMART to help ourselves.

I like SMART, it works well for me. We use techniques and statements to get us to realize that the three major upsets are ourselves, others, and life events, and that we make ourselves upset with these

things. And we use tools that we can use to believe we don't have to be upset about these things. And we say change our thinking, change our life. We say our beliefs can cause us harm or they can lead us to positive outcomes.

This is all true, but it's not always easy to grasp that our beliefs and subsequent actions are hurting ourselves. Other people and life can hurt us... and they do. It's ok to be upset about crummy stuff, it's how we deal with these upsets that is the key. If we use other people's actions and life's stuff, like I did with every little bump in the road, to get blasted, we will always have reasons to do that. And when we punish ourselves, has that ever changed the past, present, or future for the better?

SMART teaches us we can change our behaviors, thoughts, and feelings. I understand that many of us have difficulty with changing our thinking. The very thought that we can change our beliefs, which are our thoughts and feelings, can be hard to

accept. These thoughts are so deeply ingrained it can seem impossible to change how we feel and view things. But, we CAN change our beliefs.

I understand how difficult it can be to learn and accept that other people and life events don't make us drink, drug, gamble, overeat, or hurt ourselves. We hurt ourselves with things that make us feel better, at least for a little while. It's true that we believe that we have no better option to feel better, feel good, cope with stress, anger and sadness, or be reasonably happy than to drink or use.

That thought, that we have no better option, is not true. There are plenty of options, and there is hope for all of us. People do change and stop hurting themselves.

I have been in despair, I have given up on myself, I have not only been on my knees, I have been flat down on my face. I just thought eventually I would

die. I have been broken with no confidence whatsoever that I could stop. But I have stopped and changed. I did it.

I changed my thinking and changed myself. I have overcome severe drinking and drug use. Yes, SMART helped me and so did my family and my employer. But I changed myself by changing my thinking. I trained myself to believe there are better options, and I accepted that there are many better ways to live my life than being a drunken, drugged-out wreck.

And lastly, I accepted myself; I accepted that I am as worthy of happiness and hope and joy as anybody else. There never was a reason to punish myself the way I did for so long.

So, there is hope for all of us. We have the same power to have a good healthy life as the same power to destroy ourselves. We can all help ourselves and be well. And SMART has good tools and help for us.



2014
SMART Recovery
Annual Conference

September 26-28, 2014
National Geographic Society Headquarters
Washington, DC USA

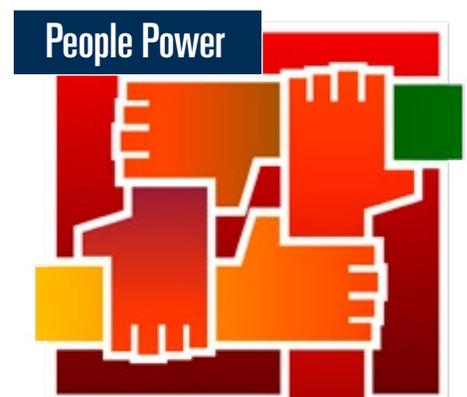
Exploring the Power of Choice

In the spirit of the National Geographic Society, whose headquarters will be the venue for this year's conference, we will explore the past, present, future and celebrate SMART Recovery's 20th anniversary.

www.smartrecovery.org

"Discover the Power of Choice"

Celebrating
20 Years
1994 - 2014



Exercise your power of choice by attending SMART's 2014 Annual Conference

Would you like a deeper connection to SMART Recovery? Interested in networking with other volunteers? Want to learn more about the science

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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.



This year's annual conference marks the 20th anniversary of the founding of SMART Recovery. We'll celebrate this milestone in the heart of Washington, DC, at the National Geographic Society's Grosvenor Auditorium. Located just blocks from the White House, the National Mall, scores of other attractions, and the subway, you will be perfectly positioned to enjoy the conference and the sights.

Most visitors say that late September is the ideal time to visit Washington. The weather is optimal, kids are back in school, and the dusk light gives an exceptional glow to the city. Ideal for photographers and other visitors. This will be an experience you won't want to miss.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Friday: We'll kick off this celebration event with an optional double-decker sightseeing bus tour of the nation's capital on Friday afternoon. That evening, we'll meet for dinner, which will be followed by time for meeting other conference goers and building your SMART international social network.

Saturday: On Saturday, our focus will be on "Exploring the Power of Choice." Presentations will include an overview of SMART, our international development, SMART's science-based tools, and the role of SMART Recovery in the rapidly changing field of addiction recovery where the value of alternative recovery approaches is becoming more apparent and more accepted.

The day's events will be capped with a 20th anniversary gala celebration after which conference goers will be free to explore the area's attractions and local eateries.

Sunday: Learn how to make the best use of the media to promote your SMART Recovery meetings and activities. Help determine next steps as SMART moves into its third decade of service. A discussion panel of "master facilitators" will round out the event.

New this year — Internet streaming of conference events: For those who can't attend the conference in person, we will be streaming the event live. Look for more information on the website as the date of the conference grows closer.

SMART Recovery is proud to offer a limited number of scholarships to help defray lodging and registration expenses for those who would otherwise be unable to participate. For more information and to apply, visit www.surveymonkey.com/s/ScholarConf.

Early applications are encouraged; deadline for submission is August 1.

Visit www.smartrecovery.org/washdc2014/ for more information, including conference registration and hotel reservations.

Space is limited so register early!

The 2014 Annual Conference is sponsored, in part, by generous donations from:



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 2014 award.

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

Deadline for nominations is August 31, 2014. The award recipient will be announced at this year's SMART Annual Conference and 20th Anniversary Celebration at the National Geographic World Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

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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 2015.

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 24 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 20 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 3,000 SMART meetings. He has served continuously on the SMART Recovery Board of Directors.

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

Become a SMART Recovery Volunteer Mentor

An exciting new initiative is underway at SMART Recovery—the role of facilitator mentor. A SMART Recovery mentor is an individual who, by virtue of face-to-face facilitating experience, can serve as a resource for newly trained facilitators.

We realize that while starting a new group can be exciting, we also know that it can be challenging. Whether it's normal jitters at doing something new, a challenging participant, or initial low meeting attendance, we have found that having access to another experienced facilitator available to discuss issues can be helpful.

A committee will oversee the formation of a team of mentors and handle assigning mentors to new facilitators. Upon graduation from Distance Training, each graduate starting a new meeting will be given the option of being assigned a mentor. For now, we will be only offering mentors in areas that are not supported by a Regional Coordinator because one the RC's roles is to assist facilitators with starting new meetings. Of course, if a graduate would

like the additional support of a mentor, one will be assigned.

Mentors will be asked to communicate with their assigned facilitator at the 30-, 60-, and 90-day mark, and at any other time the facilitator needs assistance. Any continuation of the mentor/facilitator relationship beyond the initial 90 days is up to the facilitator and their mentor.

Mentors will eventually replace Volunteer Advisors; however, all existing Volunteer Advisors will retain their titles and duties.

We are constantly looking for ways to increase the support of our wonderful volunteers and we are hoping that the mentor project will be another successful means of support.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please email Patrick Garnett, patrickg1200@gmail.com.



Court outreach update: new video highlights SMART's efforts

by Dolores Cloward (Dee), Chair, Court Outreach Committee

The Court Outreach Committee was delighted to announce its new video in May, "For the Courts." We think this video presents a clear invitation and delineation of SMART's natural alignment with the courts' current efforts to focus on treating people with addic-

tion in meaningful ways, while showcasing a clear, strong overview of SMART for all.

It's available on SMART's Courts webpage, www.smartrecovery.org/courts and our YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/smartrecovery.

This project was the culmination of more than a year's worth of work. We are grateful for the help of many volunteers. It was 100 percent volunteer-produced, and we spent exactly \$0.

We are continually surprised at the amazing and varied talents in our community. Don Sheeley, M.D. practices emergency room medicine and is the wizard who has been putting together our podcasts for about a year. We had no idea he had such immense talent in the area of visuals, and he wove together the narration, his own contribution of music, and assembled many of the visuals from his own photography. Then he stitched it all together in concert with the committee. We think you'll agree that the result of his engagement was brilliant.

We hope that this will be a piece that can be used and reused in many different settings. We're happy to work with anyone who would like assistance in presenting it to the courts or in other venues. We also hope that the community will share vigorously wherever appropriate. As always, please feel free to contact us at courtoutreach@smartrecovery.org.



The science of kindness and change

by Kathy Lang, Family & Friends Facilitator

In their book, *Beyond Addiction – How Science and Kindness Help People Change*, senior staff members Jeffrey Foote, PhD, Carrie Wilkins, PhD, and Nicole Kosanke, PhD, from the Center for Motivation and Change in New York City, offer a message of hope and how-tos in this guide for families.

On May 17, SMART Recovery sponsored a webinar featuring one of the book's authors, Dr. Foote, which more than 80 people attended.

"Anyone seriously interested in understanding how families can help their loved ones while helping themselves needs to read *Beyond Addiction*," said Roxanne Allen, board member and advocate for SMART's Family & Friends, who fielded questions for Dr. Foote.

Addressing many questions from the audience, Dr. Foote dealt with critical issues of importance to families, including:

- The conversation of addiction needs to move from one of stigma and blame to a conversation based on science and kindness
- Families can learn skills and tools to influence the path of a loved one's addiction
- Research on the CRAFT approach, the model advocated in *Beyond Addiction* and used in SMART's Families & Friends program, shows a success rate that surpasses traditional addiction treatments

To learn more, listen to the podcast at www.smartrecovery.libsyn.com.

The book, *Beyond Addiction* is available on Amazon.

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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Dumb & dumber

by Hank Robb, PhD, ABPP

I'm fond of suggesting that anything humans can do, they can do foolishly and stupidly, and almost anything they can do foolishly and stupidly they can do even more foolishly and more stupidly; thus the title of this article.

Of course, I'm using words loosely. "Stupid" actually means, "can't learn," and I don't believe anyone reading this column is really unable to learn. "Dumb" actually means "unable to speak," which is quite different from "unable to learn."

What I mean is that any human activity can be done shortsightedly. Perhaps another way you can say this is, "There are plenty of things that work in the moment but not in my life," and some more so than others. It is easy to recognize this reality in all four points of SMART Recovery.

Building motivation to change is about seeing that the trouble with a philosophy of eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die is that tomorrow comes and we aren't dead. We keep waking up. However much "fun" we had yesterday, is directly related to "un-fun costs" that show up later.

The value of a cost-benefit analysis is its emphasis on the fact that we have continued to wake up day after day after day and plan to continue doing so. Like making a hierarchy of values, it helps us get a fix on things that have "worked in the moment but not in my life" and, by doing so, provides motivation to change. Point 1—Building and Maintaining Motivation, helps us recognize that there is a point to changing what we have been doing.

Urge surfing can be viewed similarly. To a great extent, urges are a function of habits built by our past behavior. The more we have done X, in the presence of Y, the more we are inclined, or have an urge, to do X in the presence of Y. If we have a history of yelling at folks when things don't go our way, then when things don't go our way, it feels right to start yelling.

If you also have a history of drinking, shooting, snorting, or smoking after yelling at folks when things don't go your way, then that urge shows up, too. Sometimes, if only occasionally, people may actually give us our way when we yell, and in the moment, we might feel better and calm down after drinking, shooting, snorting, or smoking; however, to do things that work in our life, we may have to do something other than act on our urges.

"Ah! That's the answer," your mind may tell you.

"I'll just make sure I don't get the urge."

And how has that theory actually worked?

Far more effective is to learn that you can strongly feel like doing something and still not do it such as using a chemical fix to calm down. Even when we learn new habits, we never really forget the old ones. So, don't be surprised if an urge shows up that hasn't been around in awhile and, when it does, get right back on that "surf board."

Point 3—Managing Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviors, requires us to first determine what the point is of managing them. Certainly, addictive behavior will often manage thoughts and feelings, and maybe even some behavior. But does that sort of management really work for the

life you are interested in living, or does it only work for the moment?

You can't really answer that question until you take some time to consider what kind of Big-Picture-For-My-Life you want. Once you settle on that, then managing thoughts, feelings, and behaviors becomes much more doable because you can mindfully aim them at serving your life, rather than mindlessly serving only the moment.

Point 4—Living a Balanced Life, doesn't mean balancing good-sense actions with nonsense actions. It means recognizing that most people seek a variety of deeply fulfilling experiences in their lives rather than a single type. I'm a fly-fishing nut, but I wouldn't choose a life that only included fly-fishing. I'm a psychology nut, but I wouldn't choose a life that only included psychology. I'm not sure I would say I'm a family nut, but a life that lacked fulfilling family connections would not be one I would choose.

Balance is a way of coordinating the many aspects of life that I want to make important.

Here are a few examples of more foolishness and more stupidity. There's a difference between a lapse and a relapse. It may be foolish to have four drinks when you've chosen to abstain from alcohol. But, do you really have to have another four, eight, or 12? If you buy a bag of whatever and use half, do you have to finish it all? If you've already dropped \$100 at video poker, do you really have to head for the nearest ATM?

The answer, I hope, is self-evident. Dumb doesn't have to be followed by Dumber!

SMART idea: donate stocks, get a tax break

1. Are you planning to make a cash gift to SMART Recovery?
2. Do you have common stock that you have owned for longer than a year on which you have a gain?

If you answered yes to both of these questions, then consider transferring shares of stock to our new brokerage account. You'll receive credit for the value of the stock on the date of transfer and avoid paying capital gains tax. Consult your tax advisor to see if this option is right for you.

Information about the SMART brokerage account is provided upon request. Contact Executive Director Shari Allwood, 440-346-0048.



SMART Progress

FAST FORWARD — ongoing training

by Tim Fisk, FAST Forward Coordinator

FAST FORWARD is for facilitators and volunteers who have completed Distance Training and now want to hone their skills and knowledge so they can be more effective facilitators. It's delivered monthly on SMART Recovery Online, and has two components.

Advance Facilitator Training (AFT) is a meeting in which you can further your skills in managing group dynamics and handling difficult personalities. You can learn perspectives on how to balance the need for boundary setting with the need to create an accepting environment in which participants will open up. You'll get to hear how others deal with this balancing act, and what's worked for them. These monthly meetings are hosted online in the SMART Room by a team of seasoned facilitators, led by the president of SMART Recovery, Tom Horvath. They are held on the last Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m. ET (U.S.) and on the last Saturday at 3 p.m. ET (U.S.).

Tool Training & Support is a monthly interactive presentation put on by SMART tools experts. Presenters discuss scientific concepts behind the tools, and skills we can use to enhance our meetings. There is a different presenter each month. These online meetings are held in the SMART Room on the first Saturday of each month, 5 p.m. ET (U.S.).

We're currently reviewing the topics and presenters for next year with the goal of expanding FAST FORWARD frequency to twice a month. We're looking for new topics and presenters, with specific focus on the SMART tools and different ways we can use them in meetings.

Please email your suggestions to Tim Fisk (OzTim), smartrecoverytim@live.com.

Webinars: New technology makes them even better

by Dolores Cloward (Dee), Special Events Coordinator

Our Special Events webinars have gotten off to a roaring start for 2014. Our first one was with Dr. Michael Edelstein who presented "How to Overcome Addiction in One Lesson."

The conversation was lively and spontaneous, thanks to the upgrade of our presentation room venue, a GotoMeeting product. Attendees can chat with each other and ask questions of the presenter via the host. Dr. Edelstein provided an excellent overview of REBT and the ABCs, as well as a thoughtful point of view on what it takes to quit. This has become our most-viewed podcast, and we look forward to increasing our audience and reach with these events.

Dr. Jeffrey Foote, co-author of the new book *Beyond Addiction*, and co-founder of the Center for Motivation and Change, spoke in May on "How Science and Kindness Help People Change." This well-attended webinar featured our own Roxanne Allen, who is largely responsible for revitalizing the Family & Friends segment of SMART. Dr. Foote's presentation was informative and inclusive.

Podcasts of both webinars are available at www.smartrecovery.libsyn.com.

We are looking forward to hosting Ann Hull, Hull Institute on Eating Disorders, and Dr. Chris Tuell, Lindner Center of HOPE, in a joint presentation in July. Dr. Tuell will focus on gambling disorders.

"April is Volunteer Month!" yields outstanding results

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

The response to Volunteer Month was phenomenal this year. Eighty-four new volunteers stepped forward for training, which surpassed all expectations. Donations to the training scholarship fund brought in \$3,925, which blew our goal of \$2,700 out of the water.

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.

Thank you, SMART Recovery volunteers and supporters for making Volunteer Month such an outstanding success.

Overcoming Addictions: a web app for SMART Recovery

by Reid Hester, PhD

My clinical research staff and I developed Overcoming Addictions. www.overcomingaddictions.net with funding from the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), an Institute of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The randomized clinical trial found that using the web app and participating in SMART Recovery meetings significantly increased users' abstinence and significantly reduced their alcohol-related problems.

A copy of the paper published in the *Journal of Medical Internet Research* last summer is available at www.jmir.org/2013/7/e134.

Given its effectiveness, we went "live" with the web app last fall. Since then, it has helped more than 250 people recover from their heavy drinking or drug misuse. And income from the subscriptions have enabled us to make substantial contributions to SMART Recovery that, in turn, help support its efforts to help others.

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

"I liked the website, especially the

embedded videos and mindfulness exercises. I'm a visual learner and those features were really helpful to me." T.P.
"I loved the course... Overcoming Addictions was very helpful to me in making the changes I wanted to make." J.B.



President's Letter

Celebrating 20 years of empowerment

by Tom Horvath, President, SMART Recovery

Annual conferences are energizing. Many volunteers attend year after year. Attendance can deepen your connections within SMART Recovery, and increase your understanding of the astonishing range of services and activities within this organization. You will return home with new plans, new energy, and new connections.

On pages 3 and 4 of this newsletter there's information about the Annual Conference and 20th anniversary celebration that will be held September 26–28 in the National Geographic building in Washington, DC. Because this newsletter is the last issue that might persuade you to attend, I will attempt to do so.

Annual conferences give you a new perspective, from several sources. My favorite source is the international visitors. They are applying SMART Recovery in non-US and non-English speaking countries. SMART Recovery is

in the process of learning what is "core" SMART Recovery, and what can be modified in different cultural contexts. These international volunteers and staff are at the forefront of these discoveries.

The conference also is an opportunity to meet individuals who work in different parts of the organization (e.g., if you are an online facilitator, you might not know any face-to-face facilitators. If you are a facilitator, you may not know about the other volunteer positions). The conference also is filled with a range of carefully selected presentations, sure to give you new ideas.

Annual conferences can provide you with a deeper connection to why you volunteer for SMART Recovery. Are you honoring the memory of someone you lost? Are you fulfilling a promise you made to yourself or someone else? Are you learning about recovery to enhance your recovery? Do you love making a difference in the lives of others? Are you proud to be bringing choice in your recovery to your community?

SMART Recovery is an organization, but I think of it also as a social movement, akin to a civil rights movement. Civil rights movements can take decades to be successful (that's our experience, too). We champion the rights of individuals who want to recover in a self-empowering way. How can you stay connected to the movement, even if you feel isolated from it at times? Attend the annual conference!

Even if attendance in person is not feasible, this year we have the option of online attendance. Stop in for all or some of the time, at no charge (donations requested). If online attendance goes well, we hope to offer it in future years.

Whether online or face-to-face, I hope to see you Washington!

Tom Horvath

Book Review



20 samples from a psychology pioneer

Albert Ellis Revisited, edited by Jon Carlson and William Knaus. New York: Routledge, 2014.

Reviewed by Rabbi David Powers, PhD, SMART Recovery Online Facilitator

I first walked Albert Ellis' path to mental health about two decades ago. I was referred to Roger, a therapist trained in Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT), developed by Dr. Ellis as Rational Therapy in 1958. Reading my first of his books, *How to Keep People from Pushing Your Buttons* (Ellis and Walter Lange, 1994), on Roger's recommendation, became an "Aha!" moment. During our initial session, Roger had said, "David, you're awfulizing," to which I replied, "Roger, you're making up words." Yet I drove straight to Borders and read the book by day's end. I was eagerly back in Roger's office a few days later, and, week after week, back again for insight and growth, thanks to Ellis' teachings.

I found it difficult not to read the most recent compilation of his work, *Albert Ellis Revisited*, which is 20 essays from his career. Each is introduced by a follower or student, some academics, many practicing therapists. Ellis' prose is consistently alive and accessible to lay readers unfamiliar with the jargon of psychotherapy. Editors Carlson and Knaus give us samples of his thought from the "Theoretical Foundations" of REBT (the name of the book's first section), to applications of therapeutic

tools, and a look at special issues, "Should Some People Be Labelled Mentally Ill?" for example. Only a few chapters have principally intramural material for practitioners (I counted four out of 20—others might find fewer or more), but mostly the anthology appeals to anyone who cares about psychology, especially someone interested in the roots of SMART Recovery.

The work includes a paper by Ellis, "The Future of Cognitive Behavior and Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy," (Ellis, 1997) in which the author mentions briefly and modestly his contribution to our organization. Two of the contributors of introductory essays (Knaus and Joseph Gerstein) also discuss the role of REBT in SMART, and there is an explanatory essay by Edward Garcia, also familiar to the SMART family.

SMART readers might especially value "Expanding the ABCs of Rational Emotive Therapy" (Ellis, 1985), introduced by Will Ross, a publisher of REBT materials. Between Ross and Ellis, we gain clear and deep understanding of the ABC model, perhaps our most fundamental SMART tool. The model lays out the relationship of an activating event, A (something happens, maybe your spouse yells at you) to a consequence, C (maybe you get angry), usually an emotional state, possibly also a related behavior. Ordinarily, one might blame the C on the A, the anger on the yelling spouse, but Ellis tells us that, "According to RE [B]T theory, people have almost innumerable Beliefs (Bs)...about their Activating events (As); and these Bs...directly...exert strong influences on their cognitive, emotional, and behavioral consequences (Cs)." Rarely does the activating event bring the consequence. Mostly, that consequence comes by the mediation of a belief, B. In other words, your spouse yelling at you did not make you sad or angry. You became agitated

because you believe, perhaps, something unhelpful like, "my spouse must always treat me with respect and kindness."

Revisited holds, of course, many more treasures for SMART readers. For those seeking scholarly tools or deeper insight, the book is filled with references and endnotes, and a complete index. It offers 20 fine opportunities for any of our participants, lay and professional alike, to grow SMARTer.

Sunny sobriety

365 Ways to Have Fun Sober, by Lisa M. Hann

Reviewed by Leslie Waite, SMART Facilitator

In *How to Have Fun in Recovery*, Lisa Hann walked us through several of her suggestions addressing how a person new to recovery can approach the pitfalls of having too much newfound time on their hands and avoid boredom. In order to have fun in your recovery, Hann says, you need to keep "a positive attitude, have confidence in yourself, and be willing to try new things."

In her follow-up book, *365 Ways to Have Fun Sober*, Hann provides us with some "new things" to try by taking us through a calendar year, a day at a time, and challenging us with something to do each day to stave off boredom while maintaining our sobriety. Her activities are sometimes whimsical and remind us that joy can be found in simple things, like the instructions to "climb a tree," "sing in the shower," and "masturbate." Sometimes they remind us to be self-aware, mindful, and "in the moment," as she previously detailed in *How to Have Fun in Recovery*, by directing us to "watch the sunrise," or "start a hand-written daily journal."

In *How to Have Fun in Recovery*, Hann identifies our new-found need to discover our "true you," which she describes as the "you that is what comes out when you're living a healthy, sober lifestyle." In *365 Ways*, Hann identifies

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some activities that explore our new identity in recovery and challenge us to find new things to do to test our limits, such as “get a haircut in a new style,” or “train for a marathon with the ‘Couch to 5K’ program.”

Lastly, in keeping with her final point in *How to Have Fun in Recovery*, Hann includes in her daily suggestions some activities that remind us of the importance in placing our recovery first. Some, like “check out some Recovery Month events near you by visiting RecoveryMonth.gov and searching for happenings in your area” and “make lists of all the things you hate about addiction and all the things you love about recovery” serve an immediate and practical purpose.

365 Ways to Have Fun Sober is a wonderful companion piece to *How to Have Fun in Recovery*. One wonderful thing about it is that you don’t have to wait until January 1 to start having fun in your recovery.

To order your copy, visit <http://goo.gl/ADMKYX>.

And, speaking of *How to Have Fun in Recovery*...

Discovering fun

How to Have Fun in Recovery, by Lisa M. Hann
Reviewed by Leslie Waite, SMART Facilitator

The first step toward recovery is to stop using. A lot of people reach this point only when they *have to*; when using has caused significant stress in important areas of life: failed relationships, declining health, loss of housing, and financial or legal problems. Already discouraged by these consequences of using, few people experience early recovery as enjoyable.

In *How to Have Fun in Recovery*, Lisa Hann tackles these beliefs and provides a roadmap to making recovery fun. The first step, Hann says, is to be realistic when setting expectations for your new life in recovery, especially in early recovery, when the symptoms of post-acute withdrawal syndrome (PAWS) are felt. While not impossible, few people report having “fun” while experiencing the erratic sleeping, stress, muddled thoughts, a rollercoaster of emotions, and faulty memory that accompany PAWS. Hann says most people can expect these symptoms to dissipate after about two years, and it’s usually about that time when they find they must redefine “fun.”

Self-confidence, Hann identifies, is a key element to an enjoyable recovery, and a person new to recovery usually has very little of it. The first step, Hann says, is to forgive yourself and realize that you are not defined by your past behaviors. To forgive means to stop judging yourself harshly and comparing yourself to others, and instead, focus on the positive things you’ve accomplished, like entering recovery.

Once self-confidence is high, fun will start to happen on its own. Hann suggests seeking out sober communities. Within them you can find friends who “can relate to you the best and who can help you the most in early recovery.” When in social situations, Hann recommends paying attention to people having fun – they can give you hints about how they can have fun. Also important is maintaining self-awareness, which Hann says will help keep you mindful in social settings and aware of fun as it happens.

While learning how to have fun in recovery is important, the skills outlined in Hann’s book also carry over into other

areas of life. By building confidence and awareness, previously stressful responsibilities become easier, and the work and progress involved in recovery become part of the “fun.”

To order your copy, visit <http://goo.gl/pviHjY>.



International Development

SMART Recovery Alberta update: Growing in all directions

by Curtis Boudreau, Executive Director, SMART Recovery Alberta

Hello to the SMART World from Calgary!

I’m pretty excited as I write this update for the *News & Views*. In May, I celebrated nine years clean! I credit the solid foundation SMART has given me to not just survive, but also thrive, in my first nine years of recovery.

Alberta is doing well, and we even have three more cities about to be actively running meetings. Tammie started up Airdrie on June 9, 2014. Trevor, in Red Deer, is actively securing a venue and about to start a meeting. Trish is signed up in Medicine Hat to get their meetings back up and running. Airdrie and Red Deer have never had SMART meetings, and the demand has been there for quite some time, so a big thank you goes out to the two wonderful folks about to provide meetings, as well as to Trish who remains an important part of our team.

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Tim in Edmonton now has a couple of more individuals helping out and would like to open up a second meeting. The current meeting is doing so well that many of their meetings have to split in half to accommodate everyone. Tim has been with us for quite a while, so a huge thank you to him, as he is doing a stellar job.

Calgary is having our best year, not only in attendance, but also in Handbook sales and collections as well. Friday night has slowed, but we're not worried as new participants are always coming in the doors and we anticipated hosting a meeting on a new day of the week would take a while to gain traction. We are now running five meetings each week. We currently have five active facilitators, which makes for good diversity at our meetings.

It looks like our incorporation and charitable status is going to take a little longer than anticipated. Chris, our treasurer, is now on the task and we expect the incorporation to happen in June or July.

More and more cities in Canada are having people sign up for the facilitator training, as SMART has really started to gain nationwide acceptance as a valid program of recovery. I feel great being part of a program that is innovative and ground breaking in the addiction field worldwide.

I look forward to bringing more and more great news to the SMART world from up here in Western Canada.

SMART Recovery UK Update

by Richard Phillips, Director, SMART Recovery UK

Online meetings: Our online meetings are going from strength to strength. We added three new meetings this year; average attendance at each meeting has doubled in a year. We now have seven meetings per week online with additional fortnightly facilitator support meetings.

Big thanks for this achievement to our web team, a group of SMART volunteers who coordinate and facilitate these meetings; hans, beeper, deirdre, lawrence, leighp, and eddacker (their usernames on the UK community). They are now gathering and supporting a wider team of online facilitators, helpers, and greeters that are making a big difference to people visiting us online.

Two years ago we set a goal of 400 weekly SMART Recovery meetings within three years. We are pleased to announce that we have achieved this a full year ahead of target. Numbers are not everything, so we need to keep working together on building the network, making sure meetings are good

quality, and improving the materials. But, making SMART Recovery available to more people is important.

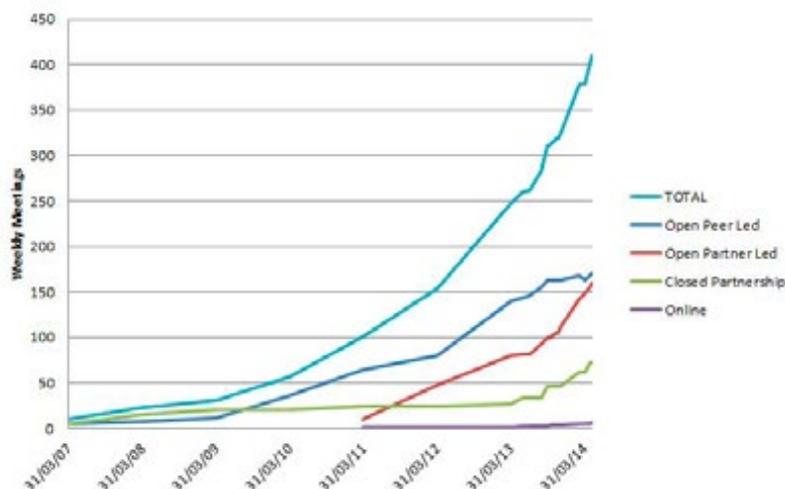
The 406 meetings include 178 that are open peer-led meetings; the rest are partnership meetings. A priority over the next year will be to help more "champion"-led meetings become or spawn peer-led meetings; this is happening, though partners are signing up so fast there will be more champion-than peer-led meetings for at least the next couple of years. One thing is sure, the more people are introduced to SMART Recovery, the more peers will be interested in starting meetings.

So, a huge thanks to all the peer facilitators, volunteers, champions and partners who helped us hit another milestone. Next stop, 500!

Welcome Leigh—National Coordinator for Wales

The network of volunteers supporting SMART Recovery is growing quickly and is the heart of the organisation's activities. The National Coordinator posts in Scotland (Jardine) and England (Steve) complement and support the volunteers, though have been hugely

over-stretched at a time when interest in SMART Recovery is going through the roof. After a recent recruitment, we are thrilled to welcome Leigh Proctor as National Coordinator for Wales. Leigh had already done a fantastic job as a volunteer regional coordinator in Wales though will now be



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able to dedicate her considerable passion and skills full time (click the picture for her wonderful story.)



Our recruitment for a National Coordinator for the North of England is underway; it's a little delayed but we expect to complete it in the next month.

Transforming rehabilitation with SMART Recovery

More than a decade ago, a group work-programme-based on SMART Recovery called Inside Out was developed for prisons in the United States.

Last year, we rewrote this for the UK and have now sent this to the 60 prisons that are already involved with SMART Recovery; several have started running the groups, and feedback so far is excellent. It trains participants in the tools and methods of SMART Recovery so they can make best use of meetings in the prison or after release.

Thousands of people with addiction problems pass through the criminal justice system each year, and this is a huge opportunity to introduce them to

SMART Recovery. Probation services in England are currently being retendered and we will be looking for ways to make sure that many more people are introduced to SMART Recovery as they pass through these services. Our new Inside Out programme will be a big part of this. If you see a SMART Recovery stall at a conference, drop by and take a look at the manuals; we are hoping to make some of the content more widely available.

Evidence and choice for mutual aid

SMART Recovery UK has worked hard to get the message out that there are many paths to recovery and that choice in mutual aid really does matter.

We have been working, alongside the fellowships, to help Public Health England develop its "Facilitating Access to Mutual Aid" strategy. This will help addiction treatment services get better at linking service users with mutual aid, including



SMART Recovery.

We recently presented at a wonderful conference run by the Higher Power Project, based at the University of Chester. Although this appears unlikely terrain for SMART Recovery, we felt welcomed to this thought provoking celebration of the many

paths of mutual aid. Around the country we increasingly find that belief in the need for choice is now the norm and the barriers between different recovery communities are finally breaking down. Long may this continue!

You might also be interested in a review of the Evidence for Mutual Aid in the UK, produced by Richard, with input from William White, John Kelly, and Keith Humphreys. The document explains the evidence for mutual aid generally, but includes discussion of SMART Recovery.

"Annual conferences are energizing. Annual conferences give you a new perspective, from several sources. Whether online or face to face, I hope to see you in Washington!"

— Tom Horvath, President, SMART Recovery

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

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