



President's Letter

Predictions for SMART Recovery's Future

The basis of this column is a presentation I made in November 2009 during the SMART Recovery® Online FUNdraiser.

1) SMART Recovery's future is bright. However, that brightness will not fully shine for decades. Because we promote a radical new way to think about addiction and recovery, our growth will be frustratingly slow. It takes time and persistent work to shift the paradigm, even partially.

We are getting increasing publicity. Because so many media messages bombard us all, it takes many repetitions to get people's attention and make an impression on them. One upcoming

publicity "hook" will occur this summer, July 1-4, when AA celebrates its 75th anniversary at its 2010 International Convention in San Antonio, Texas. The fantasy outcome is that we get a cover story in a major publication about how SMART Recovery® and other support groups have considerably widened the outlook on recovery as presented by AA. Even if there were such a cover story, we'd need to persist in our efforts to gain wider acceptance.

2) We will transition to being a self-supporting organization, based on increasing our pass-the-hat donations, and increasing publication sales. Both large and small donations will continue to supplement this income. As Jonathan von Breton, Director of SMART Recovery® Online, educated us at our Annual Gathering in Chicago in October, we have a compelling message for our meeting participants. Although participants are receiving highly valuable and potentially life-saving information at no cost to them, it costs SMART Recovery® tens of thousands of dollars each year to support our facilitators and other volunteers.

Based on that observation, we can hope to invite our participants to endorse and share SMART Recovery's life-saving information both by word of mouth, and by contributing at each meeting. Donators will directly contribute to the well-being of everyone who needs addiction recovery, not just

(Continued on page 2)

Inside:

President's Letter

Predictions for SMART Recovery's Future 1
4-Point ProgramSM 1

SMART Progress

SMART Recovery® Annual Gathering, October 2009 3
SMART Recovery® Members Exceed 2009 Goals 4
SMART Recovery® Online Update 5
Authoritative Facilitator Training 6

ä

International Development

SMART Recovery® Australia Update 6
New SMART Recovery® Australia Website 7
SMART Recovery® Alberta Update 7
Articles are Welcome! 8

Book Review

REBT for People with Co-occurring Problems: Albert Ellis in the Wilds of Arizona 8
SMART Recovery® Ontario Update 8

SMART Ideas

All Life Is Sorrowful 9
Why Donate to SMART Recovery®? 10
Did You Know? 10
I "Heart" Yoga 11
Traveling to Des Moines? 12

People Power

"YES WE CAN" 13
from my friends" 13
John Eggers Receives Community Hero Award! 13
SMART Recovery® Participates in NAMI Walk 14
SMART Recovery® Hits the Street 14

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)

those who attend SMART Recovery®. When all individuals who attend 12-step meetings realize they have a choice, and choose to attend AA, it will help strengthen their recoveries.

3) SMART Recovery® will provide about one third of all addiction-related support group meetings, AA and other 12-step groups about one half, and other support groups the remainder. Based on pilot data I have seen from two programs, when individuals are fully informed of SMART Recovery® as an option in addition to AA, about half choose SMART Recovery®. Although we have grown slowly for our first 15 years, we should see a tipping point within a decade, after which growth will accelerate, finally reaching the level I have just predicted.

4) Not only our self-empowering recovery model, but also our participant/professional partnership, and our inclusion of non-recovering volunteers as meeting facilitators and in other positions, will transform how people think about addiction recovery. If SMART Recovery® is to continue to evolve as scientific findings about addiction and recovery evolve, it is essential that professionals be involved in SMART Recovery®. We are not a program written in the 1930s that remains unchanged. We are a living and developing approach.

Particularly as they become volunteers, participants report that what they learn from professionals enriches their lives. Professionals appreciate the opportunity for a meaningful way to work as volunteers and not worry about marketplace considerations. I imagine physicians who volunteer their services overseas have similar feelings. Having risen by degrees through the organization, participants now make up almost one half of the board of directors.

The involvement of non-recovering individuals in SMART Recovery® could do much more to reduce the stigma about addiction than other efforts currently in place. When non-recovering individuals can experience “addicts” and “alcoholics” as individuals and not as stereotypes, as individuals they have come to care about, and as individuals who point out the kinds of mistakes any human being can make, we will see more clearly that management of desires and impulses is a problem of all, not just of a few.

5) We need to continue preparing for rapid growth, or our future will be more complicated. We are increasing our capacity to train new volunteers. We will develop a system that will allow us to scale up to train hundreds or thousands of volunteers, rather than the dozens we now train every two months. During Tom Litwicki’s year as

president, he re-initiated the appointment of Regional Administrators. Some years previously, we had made similar appointments, but the positions were not successful. Apparently then it was too soon for us to have so much hierarchy. To prepare for growth, we would do well to develop these positions now.

6) SMART Recovery® is a leadership training and development organization. We want to collaborate with organizations that would promote volunteering as a facilitator to their memberships. We have started to talk about that with several organizations. If you have any to suggest, let me know. In one scenario for SMART Recovery®’s future, we become a major leadership development and training organization, by helping early career (non-recovering) adults learn how to manage a team meeting. In contemporary organizations, small teams are becoming increasingly important, but there are limited opportunities to learn how to manage small teams.

It is hard to know how much time it will take for these transformations of recovery and of society, but we can lead the way. I propose that we consider it a fitting challenge that our project may extend well beyond our lifetimes.

Tom Howath

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SMART Progress

SMART Recovery® Annual Gathering, October 2009

What Attending the SMART Recovery® Annual Gathering Meant to Me

by Moving_Forward, SMART Recovery® Online participant

I liked being a part of helping SMART Recovery® move forward overall during Saturday's venue. I learned about what's up with SMART Recovery®, and was involved in planning during the attendees brainstorming and feedback.

I enjoyed Jonathan von Breton's (JVB) "tool time" on Sunday morning. Reviewing the tools is always helpful and JVB's expertise is highly valued by me. JVB is the real deal and we, at SMART Recovery® on-line, are fortunate to have such a valuable resource.

I enjoyed meeting individuals I have known during my experience with SMART Recovery® on-line. Five of whom have become an integral part of my life as of this date.

I felt very affirmed that I am a bright, capable woman worthy of success.

I signed up to SMART Recovery® on-line June of 2009. And in a short time – I am moving forward with my life in many positive ways because of my involvement with SMART Recovery®!

Dear Shari, Jodi, Tom, Joe and all the others who worked so hard to pull together the recent gathering:

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! I've seldom met such a wonderful group

of intelligent people dedicated to helping others get their lives back. The gathering was fun, informative, and reasonably priced. I enjoyed myself very much. Thanks again,

Howard Pellett



Friday: Some participants started with a tour of Chicago Loop area. Later the group had a Wrigleyville dinner, and then played SMART Jeopardy, hosted by Alex Hammerbek!



Saturday: The morning kicked off with Icebreaker Bingo – all attendees had to mingle to find someone in the room who met the criteria on their Bingo card. It was a great way to start the day! Kudos to Jim from Australia, who was the happy winner!



A review of the four major strategic planning initiatives followed, including:

- Fundraising
- Increasing the number of available meetings
- Determining the need for changes to existing materials
- Website updates and revisions



During lunch, we heard a brief overview of the sponsor's programs. Thank you again, sponsors, including:



Following lunch, we reviewed the 2009 participant survey; got an update about our online activities; and enjoyed a Q&A period during which we reviewed some of the issues related to SMART Recovery®. After a wrap-up of the day's activities, attendees enjoyed dinner out,

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or pitched in toward a pizza dinner delivered to the hotel. Thanks to NYC Greg for arranging the pizza dinner! It was a fun and rewarding day!



Sunday:

Sunday morning's program was Tool Time, a review of the SMART Recovery® Tools in action, led by Jonathan von Breton. He reviewed and led

us in practicing each of the tools. The attendees loved learning and practicing the tools!

Evaluation forms were collected and goodbyes exchanged amongst newfound friends and SMART Recovery® colleagues.

We hope to see you all at the 2010 Annual Gathering on October 15-17, 2010 in San Diego, CA!!



SMART Recovery® Members Exceed 2009 Goals

It was my pleasure to serve as President of the Board of Directors in 2009. When

elected, SMART Recovery® Members and the Board of Directors directed me to

1. increase the availability of SMART Recovery® meetings,
2. increase member involvement in the organization, and
3. Balance the SMART Recovery® budget.

I am proud to report that through the efforts of our members, staff, and directors, we exceeded our expectations on the first two goals, while making significant progress toward a balanced budget.

During 2009, we started 208 new SMART Recovery® meetings. These numbers far exceeded our initial goal of 100 new meetings. Now we have at least 525 SMART Recovery® meetings worldwide. But we didn't start down this path just to grow meetings. Our real goal was to make meetings more available to those most in need of them, such as

people too poor to afford treatment, as well as people in institutions with no access to SMART

Recovery®. This

includes people incarcerated in the state of Washington, where Howard Pellet travels over 70 miles (and one ferry ride) per week to facilitate a prison meeting. And in England, where new SMART

Recovery® members volunteered to start community meetings to pass on the opportunity for change offered them by the dedicated volunteers and staff of SMART Recovery® U.K. In addition, we saw new meetings start in Australia, China, and Iran, the results of dedicated SMART Recovery® members worldwide.

Our second goal was to increase member involvement in the organization. When we started brainstorming solutions, a long-term board member informed me that in his opinion, "The majority of participants come to take, not give back. They relapse quickly, or they are focused on their own recovery, or they don't feel the level of personal authority necessary to lead a meeting." This was contradictory to my experience, and I am happy to report that SMART Recovery® members rejected this prediction. They started a grass roots action team called the New Meetings Team early in 2009. Through their recommendation, we added a button on the website homepage that encouraged potential members to start a new meeting in their community, and they did. This was by far the most effective method to start new meetings in recent years, significantly contributing to the 208 new meetings last year.

In my experience, I felt rewarded with an opportunity to travel to Phoenix, Arizona to provide coaching

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to incarcerated men who wanted to start their own SMART Recovery® Meetings. These men were empowered by corrections staff to facilitate their own meeting as peer helpers to other prisoners. Although they were new members, they came not only to take, but also to give back. In September, these efforts to increase member involvement culminated with the creation of Regional Member Representatives in the United States. These representatives are committed to coordinating local plans to start new SMART Recovery® meetings in their regions, and they have submitted written strategic plans for 2010. This is the beginning of a large peer-based movement within SMART Recovery®, and I am confident that in the coming years these representatives will increase their role in shaping the future of our organization.

The final goal was to balance the budget. For many years, SMART Recovery® has operated at a deficit, supporting operations through a generous one-time anonymous donation. However, it became apparent in 2008 that this money was going to run out, and previous efforts to increase meetings and members had not resulted in a member base that could support the financial needs of our Central Office. Our Executive Director, Shari Allwood, and her staff led our first call to action, which resulted in a fifty percent reduction in expenses. This included removal of non-SMART Recovery® literature in our library,

reduction in staff, changes in office space, and other cost-cutting measures. In addition, SMART Recovery® members met the call to increase donations by doubling group donations in 2009. These two efforts resulted in a minimal deficit for 2009, and even less expected for 2010, putting SMART Recovery® on a path toward financial independence.

So what's next for SMART Recovery®? What comes next is up to SMART Recovery® members, voiced through their representatives in the United States, and Directors and staff in countries throughout the world. Now, more than ever, the future of SMART Recovery® is in the hands of SMART Recovery® members. Although staff can provide support, and Directors can offer guidance, it is ultimately the members in the meetings, volunteering to help each other, who will really determine the future of SMART Recovery®. I look forward to what SMART Recovery® Members do next.

Sincerely

Thomas M. Litwicki

SMART Recovery® Online Update

by Jonathan von Breton, Director, SMART Recovery® Online

SMART Recovery® Online (SOL) just celebrated its 11th birthday. As always, we had a fabulous time. We had 10 guest speakers in PalTalk, one every hour from 8:00 AM EST-US until 4:00 PM. Bill White, MA, kicked off the celebration with a discussion about the history of addiction treatment and recovery in America. Michler Bishop, PhD, talked about addiction from the perspective of managing any long time behavioral health issue like diabetes or a heart condition. Reid Hester, PhD, discussed what works in addiction treatment. Anne Fletcher, MS., RD, told us about what she learned while writing her books, "Sober for Good" and "Thin for Life".

We heard about the possible future of SMART Recovery® from Tom Horvath, PhD. Julie Myers, PsyD, shared ideas about how to pass the hat most effectively. In order that family, friends and concerned others were not left out, Robert Meyers, PhD, told us about the

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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CRAFT approach. Tom Litwicki talked about gambling as an addiction. Of course, Emmett Velten, PhD, and I did our infamous ‘ask the pros’ hour during which we took on all REBT related questions. We also had an update about SMART Recovery® in Australia provided by Josette. An hour was also set aside to learn how to become an online volunteer, which Kalar hosted.

In addition to the incredible speaker line-up, we had our main FUNdraising event. We had 57, count them, 57 items up for auction. These items included autographed books by Tom Horvath, Anne Fletcher, Emmett Velten, and many others. There were treats from various parts of the world. Handcrafted items from many of our online participants were amazing. There was a wonderful bush hat—now mine—from Australia. (I waited until one minute before the close of bidding to put in my final, winning bid on that hat!) The bidding was fast, furious, and very competitive. It was also a lot of fun!

Former Board member Richard Bozian made a \$250.00 matching pledge challenge. Participants met and exceeded this challenge, bringing in over \$500.00.

This year’s birthday and FUNdraiser was a huge success in terms of fun and funds! SMART Recovery® made over \$3,700.00. And thanks to the FUNdraising committee, which did an outstanding job of putting the FUN in fundraising!

Authoritative Facilitator Training

As a facilitator, do you feel more challenged by (1) not having used/presented all the tools, or (2) not knowing how to handle difficult moments in your meeting? If managing your meeting is a challenge for you (and it is for many of us!), this interactive presentation is for

you. In it, you can learn perspectives on how to balance the need for control of the meeting, with the need to create an accepting environment in which participants will open up and meaningfully discuss themselves. If you achieve this balance (between an authoritarian approach, and a laissez-faire approach) you are being authoritative.

In Authoritative Facilitator Training, our discussion and role plays will include reviewing our personal histories of dealing with authority figures, our own experiences attempting to be authoritative for ourselves and on behalf of others, and ways to cope with the common challenges when facilitating SMART Recovery® meetings. These include AA bashers or advocates, moderation bashers or advocates, God bashers or advocates, monologuers, court-ordered and uninterested participants, as well as others.

The fourth Monday of each month starting on January 25, we will be offering this interactive class in PalTalk. Trainers will include Tom Horvath, Brett Saarela, and Lorie Hammerstrom. In addition, don’t forget Fresh Start Mondays on the second Monday of each month.

- January 11, 8 pm eastern time - Fresh Start Monday - password **fresh**
- January 25, 8 pm eastern time - Authoritative Facilitator Training - password **aft**



International Development

SMART Recovery® Australia Update

by Jim Villamor and Josette Freeman

SMART Recovery® Australia has received two government grants. The first grant was from Juvenile Justice. Currently, Juvenile Justice Centres run no CBT recovery programs for their inmates. Teen SMART Recovery® will begin in the Centres in the New Year. SMART Recovery® Australia will join

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forces with Teen/Youth services across New South Wales to provide community SMART Recovery® groups as a through-care model.

The second grant we received was through the Network of Alcohol and Other Drugs Agencies. (NADA) This grant will provide support for family and caregivers affected by someone with an alcohol or drug problem. In Australia, there are limited resources for family and caregivers. These groups will allow people to gain some skills and provide a forum for people to share their ideas and develop plans in their households. Currently, we have collaborated with the Sydney Clinic, which is a private hospital that provides alcohol and other drug treatment. Next year, we will pilot the BE SMART: Family and Caregiver Program at the Sydney Clinic.

Your beloved coordinators, Josette and Jim, are busy attending conferences and presenting at them. We just returned from Darwin where we presented at APSAD (The Australasian Professional Society on Alcohol and other Drugs) on the importance of building partnerships. Over the past few years, SMART Recovery® has collaborated with many services, which has helped us build greater credibility.

In November, we went to Adelaide in South Australia, where we conducted two information and training sessions. This will help us launch SMART Recovery® groups there. By year's end, we will have been to every state and territory in Australia.

In addition, SMART Recovery® has conducted monthly trainings at its Sydney office. These have been popular, with as many as 25 people attending.

We are also very excited about our new website. Visit www.smartrecovery-

australia.com.au and take a look. It has generated a lot of interest and business.

New SMART Recovery® Australia Website

SMART Recovery® Australia would appreciate any feedback on our new website at www.smartrecoveryaustralia.com.au. The easiest way to do this is to visit, go to "Contact Us," and fill out the available form. In due course, we will receive it. Any feedback will be appreciated!

SMART Recovery® Alberta Update

by Curtis Boudreau, President, SMART Recovery® Alberta

Hello to all fellow SMART Recovery® volunteers!

SMART Recovery® Alberta has continued to run smoothly since our last update.

We continue to present the SMART Recovery® Program regularly to five centres in Alberta. These presentations take place every eight weeks at Alberta Health Services, monthly at The Salvation Army Centre of Hope, biweekly at Lander Treatment Centre and Calgary Drop-in Centre, and weekly at the Renfrew Detox Centre. We hope to establish more of these regular presentations.

We have three weekly meetings facilitated by a wonderful group of facilitators. Mondays and Wednesdays, we teach how to use the tools, and on Saturdays we focus on the fourth point, Lifestyle Balance. We will continue to use this schedule, as it has proven to be effective at teaching the tools to new participants. As well, the Saturday meeting provides a forum for the regulars to share how they are using the tools to live clean and happy lives. It also

provides an opportunity for input, feedback, and support from peers and facilitators.

I continue to fill the Alberta SMART Recovery® President and Treasurer roles. This keeps me busy, and I enjoy the challenges and rewards of the continued operation and expansion of the SMART Recovery® Program in Alberta. I am pleased to have a new Vice President, Tamara Gorman. Not only is she dedicated to the continued health of SMART Recovery® Alberta, but also she is a great trainer of facilitators. Her presence will help remedy the lack of facilitators in Calgary. My future tasks include contacting those who are running meetings in British Columbia, as I am now the Regional Administrator, Western Canada. Expansion into other western provinces is on the long-term goal list.

SMART Recovery® Athabasca discontinued its meeting due to lack of attendance. While this is unfortunate, the gentleman who opened up Athabasca continues to stay involved in SMART Recovery® Alberta. He has agreed to mentor and coach any volunteers who want to learn the program and open up a meeting in Edmonton. There was interest shown by an addictions worker in Edmonton previously. She will help expand SMART Recovery® into Alberta's capital. Stay tuned.

The great news is that there is now a weekly meeting set up in Lethbridge. This meeting is well attended, and will continue to operate. With any luck, we will soon have multiple meetings facilitated each week in Lethbridge. As in Calgary, the main issue regarding expansion has been the number of facilitators who are willing and able to make ongoing commitments to weekly

meetings. There are currently two wonderful people running SMART Recovery® Lethbridge, and I am confident they will continue to do an amazing job.

That is all from Alberta for now! Stay tuned, as we will continue to deliver and expand the SMART Recovery® Program in Alberta.

SMART Recovery® Ontario Update

by Dawn Adamson, Facilitator & Volunteer Advisor

On October 22 and 23, the Integrated Forensic Program at the Royal Ottawa Health Care Group hosted a conference on Comprehensive Approaches to Forensic Rehabilitation. Over 100 conference delegates were introduced to evidence based strategies that have been effective in assisting clients to return to the community.

SMART Recovery® had solid representation throughout the conference. Plenary speakers included Linda Sobell, Tom Litwicki, Michler Bishop, Fraser Ross, and Barry Grant. All of the presentations stressed the importance of individual choice and empowerment in recovery. They also introduced SMART Recovery® as an organization that can support individuals during the stages of recovery.

SMART Recovery® had an information booth at the conference operated by local facilitator, Eldon White. Eldon received an award in appreciation of his work in helping SMART Recovery® expand in Ontario. Since then, Eldon has been invited to speak in Orillia, Ontario, about SMART Recovery®.

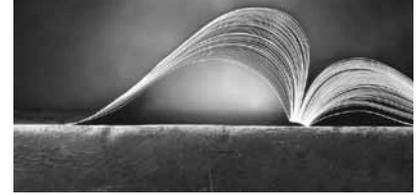
Since the conference, Dawn Adamson has been asked to speak about SMART Recovery® to over 100 social services employees of the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville. A group in Ottawa also invited to speak about SMART Recovery® and meeting facilitation.

In August, Dawn presented the SMART Recovery® Therapy Program to health services in Whitehorse, Yukon Territories, Canada.

Dawn and colleagues, Ken Laprade and Linda Bellinger, presented a poster on the SMART Recovery® Therapy Program evaluation at the annual research day sponsored by the Institute of Mental Health Research in Ottawa on December 4, 2009. Dawn will present a paper on the SMART Recovery® Therapy Program as it is utilized in Brockville at the GAINS conference to be held in Florida in March 2010.

Dawn and colleagues have submitted an abstract on the Forensic Rehabilitation Program offered at Brockville Mental Health Centre, which includes the SMART Recovery® Therapy Program, to the International Association of Forensic Mental Health Services conference to be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada in May 2010.

Book Review



REBT for People with Co-occurring Problems: Albert Ellis in the Wilds of Arizona

by Emmett Velten and Patricia E. Penn; Foreword by Albert Ellis, Published by Professional Resource Press, Sarasota, FL, to be released 2010

Reviewed by Tom Horvath

Perhaps you think Albert Ellis's *REBT* (Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy) involves the mindless but forceful repetition of a few simple concepts. This book should change your mind. *REBT*, presented by Velten and Penn as *RAPT* (Rational Assessment and Personalized Treatment), is capable of deeply responding to the complexities and nuances of life.

Just as medical illustrations can be a better teaching tool than actual photos, the authors constructed session "transcripts" are an excellent tool for teaching the subtleties of *REBT*, particularly as applied to individuals with serious and combined substance and mental health problems. The transcripts (all in Albert Ellis's voice) are interspersed with highly helpful explanations of what is happening in the sessions and how it is being responded to.

The book is set as an imaginary visit to Arizona. Ellis visits several treatment settings and conducts ten demonstration sessions. These sessions illustrate how

Articles are Welcome!

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

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Ellis would work with a broad range of problems. The initial sessions are with the professionals themselves. Ellis asks them to consider how they could apply *REBT* to their own lives, and how their own lives are not fundamentally different from the lives of the clients they work with.

After working with a counselor depressed about not losing weight, and three counselors experiencing burnout, Ellis works with a methamphetamine user with psychotic symptoms, a woman with drinking problems diagnosed with DID (dissociative identity disorder), a methadone client not getting “take home” doses of methadone because of pot use, a man with a history of alcohol and LSD use now diagnosed with schizophrenia who is frustrated because people do not believe he has microchips installed in him, another counselor working in a prison feeling stuck in his job, and an alcohol-using man diagnosed as having rapid cycling bipolar disorder and placed on a locked psychiatric unit.

There are also didactic presentations on counselor burnout, the realities and language of “dual diagnosis” and “co-morbidity” (leading to the conclusion that “co-occurring problems” is the most sensible term), the best practices for dealing with co-occurring problems, the principles of RAPT, responding to seemingly hopeless and unmotivated clients, and SMART Recovery®. There is even a “radio interview” of Ellis as he addresses a popular audience about *REBT*.

This book is ideally suited for professionals in the public treatment system, on either side of the substance abuse/mental health divide the authors hope to help end. Because of the rich clinical wisdom throughout this book, even experienced *REBT* practitioners are likely to admire and learn from it. Those who knew Ellis personally will re-experience him on these pages.

As noteworthy as the clinical wisdom is the humor. Ellis has a well-deserved reputation as a humorist, and Velten and Penn carry on this tradition. Their humor will be especially meaningful to public treatment system professionals, whose world is well understood by Velten and Penn. However, I suspect just about all readers will come away from this book as I did, laughing with my clients and with myself. To laugh and learn simultaneously, what a treat!



SMART Ideas

All Life Is Sorrowful

by Hank Robb, PhD, ABPP

(“Recognizing one’s error and feeling bad and wanting to correct it can be a GREAT motivator!”)

“All life is sorrowful.” Those familiar with Buddhism will likely recognize this as the First Noble Truth. The Second Noble Truth tells us why, because we don’t always get what we want. Well, the Rolling Stones said, “You don’t always get what you want,” and if the Rolling Stones and the Buddhists can agree on something, I’d call that pretty good cross validation because they aren’t agreeing on sex, drugs, and rock and roll!¹

Well, so what? Well, think about it a minute. Let’s say we were a committee appointed to make a world for humans to live in and I said, “Hey, I’ve got a great idea! Let’s make a world where humans have desires and they go unfulfilled. And—wait, wait—a world where they desire *not* to have certain experiences and they have them!” What would my beloved fellow committee members think? Yes, they would think I was nuts! And yet, that’s just the world we are living in. It gets worse.

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Whenever you tell someone, “no,” they feel the sorrow that comes from having their desires go unfulfilled. But to live the life YOU are interested in, you can’t always say, “yes” to others or pretty soon you’ll be living the life THEY want you to live and not the one you’re interested in. And it gets even worse. Why? Because if you are a caring human being, and mostly I find folks are, then when you bring sorrow into the lives of others, you feel pain for having done so. And, once again, if you don’t bring pain into the lives of others by sometimes telling them “no” you won’t be living the life YOU are interested in.

There’s more worse-ness where those came from. Why? Because sometimes you want things in the Big Picture of your life that are not very pleasant when pursued in the little picture of your life which is the “this moment” that each of us is living in. That’s right. To live the life you’re actually interested in you, sometimes, have to say, “NO!” to yourself. Now what the heck kind of world is that? I don’t know, but I think it’s pretty clear that it’s the one we inhabit. So what’s to be done about it?

Well first, give up “it’s awful” and “I can’t stand” living in a world like this. It’s just not the world we would have preferred and if you really couldn’t stand it you’d already be dead! Give up, “The world MUST not be this way” and don’t bother to add all the good reasons it shouldn’t. If the world actually ran on human reason, it wouldn’t be the world we are living in. Demanding-ness really does land you less than what you really want. Give up your efforts to “become good” so you “won’t be bad.” You were born a human being and you’re going to die a human being and there’s NO CHANCE of being anything else. Make peace with it!

And after you’ve made peace, another way to say, “accepted,” the world as it is, then what? I suggest have as much fun as you can! This is the PARTY. It will be over soon enough. All LIFE is sorrowful! Now, let’s have a ball!

¹ Editor’s Note: If the Buddhists wise up, they will agree, which also is known as the Third Noble Truth.

Why Donate to SMART Recovery®?

Listed below are approximate costs of some addictive activities and the prices that might occur, or have occurred, from participation in addictive behaviors. Take a quick look!

Consider the following...Is the cost of the behavior you are working on at SMART Recovery® listed below? If not, take a guess at what one occurrence with that behavior might cost you!

- Pack of Cigarettes: \$6-\$8
- Bottle of Jack Daniels: \$20
- Line of cocaine: \$30
- 3 rocks of crack: \$40
- One drug counseling session: \$100
- One psychotherapy session: \$150
- Car accident: \$500
- DWI costs fines, legal fees, loss of license: \$1000+
- Health costs avoided—health saved: \$2000
- Divorce court: \$2000
- 5-day hospital detoxification: \$5000
- Custody of children: priceless

Your SMART Recovery® Donation
????????

SMART Recovery® self help groups are provided free of charge to all participants. There is no fee required to participate and share in the benefits

of any of our groups. No one should feel forced to contribute—not everyone can afford to donate. But—we ask that you consider:

- The trained, skilled, and dedicated VOLUNTEER facilitators (who give of their time and energy and receive NO compensation—except the satisfaction of their volunteer work)
- The costs of maintaining, updating, and improving our web site and meeting list
- The costs of keeping our program, handbook and methods current with the latest scientific research
- The cost of our continuing outreach to prison populations (where there is little choice of addiction recovery self-help and support groups other than the 12-step programs); and
- The administrative costs of operating our worldwide program.

Then PLEASE consider donating some of what you have saved or will save by your stopping harmful addictive behaviors. Donate to help keep our program going as we pass the hat!

On behalf of all of us who have already benefited, as well as those who will benefit from the program in the future, thank you!

Did You Know?

SMART Recovery® San Diego meetings continue to provide all of their collective hat-passing revenues to the Central Office. That means each month, they are forwarding between \$600 and \$700 from their 11 weekly meetings! How do they do it?

Well, first they are fortunate to have the support of Volunteer Advisor, Tom Horvath, who covers the cost of copies, and provides meeting space at his office.

Then, they are blessed to have Julie Myers, who helps to coordinate the local efforts.

Julie advises: “We make money, we save money, we gather the money centrally, and then we share it all with the Central Office. Our facilitators are a close-knit group of volunteers, whom I encourage, thank, and cajole to improve our hat-passing skills. We meet regularly to keep inspired and enthused, and we work well together as a team. Our meetings are spare and focused; all meetings take place in free meeting space.

“Most important, our meeting attendees are generous! They understand that their donations are part of a larger cause. We send our donations to the Central Office each month, and each Facilitator receives credit for his/her efforts. I maintain a simple chart (sample below) that helps to track each of our collections. We share successful hat-passing ideas and inspire one another to do our best each week when passing the hat.”

Facilitator	Jan	Feb	March
Bill	\$54	\$36	\$52
James	\$49	\$42	\$30
Laurie	\$46.74	\$45.50	\$51
Maria	\$29	\$30	\$74

When asked, “Are there secrets to success when passing the hat?” Dylan Barmmer, La Jolla, CA Facilitator, responded as follows:

“Recently, the Central Office asked if one of us would be willing to share our ‘secrets to success,’ and I agreed to do so...even though I’m not really sure I have any ‘secrets’ (I am a pretty open guy, after all).

“In my case, I try to run a very open, collaborative, and fun meeting. I try to get all of the attendees involved and feeling as if they are an important part of the meeting and the organization (because they are). When it comes time for passing the hat, I don’t actually use a hat, I just ask people to put their donation on the table. I remind them that support of the Central Office, with less than two full-time employees, is crucial to the stability and growth of the organization. I suggest that they be as generous as they can afford to be, and guess what? They are.

“So perhaps the ‘secret’ is simply making it clear to the members that the opportunity to give and to support the organization as a whole—to keep it available to people in need—is what provides the strong outpouring of camaraderie amongst the members helps, and we are fortunate to have a strong little group of regulars.

“So, don’t be shy when it comes to asking for donations. It helps the members feel like they are giving back. And we all know how good that can feel!”

On behalf of all those who benefit from the SMART Recovery® program, thank you, San Diego, for your ongoing support of the Central Office! We believe you’ll be an inspiration to all of our facilitators to enhance their hat-passing skills!

I “Heart” Yoga

by Dylan Barmmer

“In hell, you sink to the level of your lack of love. In heaven, you rise to the level of your fullness of love.” – From the

film “Waking Life”

For as long as I can remember, I have battled anxiety and/or depression. I was the sensitive, creative, clever, curious, crazy kid, and as an adult, I’ve had to cope with things that I always used to run from or ignore or dream or laugh away.

There are many gifts in this kind of makeup. I have always been an “old soul,” capable of depth of feeling and emotion, aware of my surroundings, with a reservoir of love, creativity, energy, and loyalty. I’ve always felt driven.

Of course, the downside can be rough. With great joy can come great pain. Being “stuck” on something or someone hurtful, for example. “It’s tough when you care,” as they say.

And driving too hard, fast, or far can leave you stranded and out of gas. Or, worse, flipped upside down in a ditch.

At some point, sadness and frustration became my constant companions. I started to internalize those wounds, setbacks, and not-what-I-expected occurrences. And when I learned in college that pouring alcohol on those wounds really numbed them out quite nicely, things really got ugly.

At my most depressed and drunk, I didn’t want to live. At my most manic and hammered, I acted crazily, and have no idea how I survived, but I’m glad I did. This kind of destructive experiment went on through my twenties, with varying degrees of intensity and audacity. Thankfully, one Sunday in January 2007, I woke up (barely) and decided to stop charging headfirst into hell and start blazing a new path. There would be no booze on that path, but I had no idea what else there WOULD be. Or how I would stick with it when The Wild

Things started jumping out of the thickets. I felt broken. Lost. Angry. Terrified. And very, very sad.

I was in Hell.

I found yoga. It has allowed me to hold my ground. Even when things start to get muddy again.

When I turned 35 last Friday, I took the day off work and treated myself to an extended restorative yoga class at my favorite studio here in the Yoga Mecca of Encinitas, CA. Amazing teacher. Amazing setting, students, and energy. During the second half, it really hit me just how far I've come over the past few years...and how much of my growth has come directly from developing and deepening my yoga practice since I first stumbled into a class at my gym in the fall of 2007.

At one point, I was lying there on my back, propped up in a prolonged heart opener, wide open, so relaxed, so happy. Tears started to trickle down my face. Now, it doesn't take too much for me to cry. However, these were good tears, of joy and happiness. I was so thankful to be alive. So thankful to have found a peaceful, healthy, beautiful outlet for all my energy and passion and love.

I decided to go deeper.

Last night marked the seventh time I've practiced yoga in the past 10 days. Nothing too crazy, mind you. Just three beautiful styles of classes with three beautiful teachers who emphasize the mental and spiritual components of yoga as much as the physical. In one of those classes, I even got to hear a poem I wrote played as a song.

I can try to tell you how powerful it has all been.

My internal calmness and clarity feel greatly enhanced. I've been smiling and making deeper eye contact more. I have been patient and kind with everyone, even strangers on the street (and for the most part, with myself). I've been flashing the peace sign and saying "peace" more. I have been eating more consciously. I've been feeling connected and "in the flow." I have obsessed and worried less and risked and loved more. I have given without expecting to get in return (a concept called "seva" in yogic philosophy). I've responded more and reacted less.

My mind is more at ease. My heart is more open. My body is more limber, flexible, and powerful.

I'm still driven. But my foot is off the accelerator. Moreover, I see the road better than ever.

Yoga loosely translates to "union", and that is what I have experienced. Mind, body, and soul are humming along at pretty close to the same frequency.

I have also made connections with more and more amazing, deep, brave, unique, and interesting people—people who focus more on what we have in common instead of what divides us. People who believe in loving themselves and others profoundly.

I wrote this to try to process and feel what I've experienced. I also wrote it with the intention that it might help or inspire someone who happens to read it (and need it). I know my yoga practice has helped and inspired me so much the past few years. It is a great teacher. A great metaphor for life. A natural remedy for anxiety, depression, and other mental and emotional blockages. A tool for maintaining sobriety. A way to meet cool, open-minded people. It will not solve all

your problems or "fix" everything in your life, but it will equip you with some tools you need to survive and thrive.

I am so thankful to have yoga in my life, whether once a week or seven times in ten days.

Oh, and guess what? I wrote this in September, which was National Yoga Month. Many studios offered free classes to celebrate. If you feel curious about yoga, find out more at www.yogamonth.org.

Traveling to Des Moines?

If you do, on your way to and from the airport, you will notice St. Gregory Retreat Center's sign proudly proclaiming SMART Recovery® meetings. St. Gregory Retreat Center offers SMART Recovery® meetings, plus they work with their clients to start meetings in their hometown when they graduate! It's a wonderful partnership, and we're grateful to St. Gregory Retreat Center for helping to spread the good news about SMART Recovery®!



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People Power



“YES WE CAN” ... “With a little help from my friends”

by Tom McIntosh, Service Manager, Addaction Ayrshire

It may already be passé to quote President Obama, but “Yes we can” still resonates for those of us who are trying to marry the values and principles of SMART Recovery®, of empowerment and of personal responsibility, with what our US colleagues would call “socialised medicine.”

Addaction is the UK’s largest addiction-related charity, providing free drug and alcohol treatment and rehabilitation service to over 27,000 people per year from facilities and services across the UK. Funding for these services is from various sources, including grants, contracted services from the national health service and local authority, and our own fundraising. In 2006, we were commissioned to pilot SMART Recovery® in Ayrshire Scotland. Copies of our pilot report are still available.

The three questions, which the pilot was designed to answer, were what is SMART Recovery®? Does it work? And if it works, how can we make it work within the UK’s commissioning and service structure? I’ve no need to go over questions one and two. The pilot was a huge success. We have established SMART Recovery® meetings linked to our services in Glasgow, Ayrshire, The Borders, Birmingham, Crewe, and Lancashire. Either staff or peers facilitate the meetings.

It is with regard to the third question that we need “a little help from our friends.” Addaction is in the process of a “rollout” of SMART Recovery® across our services using the model developed during the pilot.

In this model, people receive referrals from various sources, including hospitals, criminal justice, and social workers. Together with the service user, Addaction develops an Individual Recovery Plan covering psychosocial needs as well as needs directly related to alcohol or drug use. This is followed by a period of individual SMART Recovery® Therapy support lasting on average about 16 weeks. Once they have learned the “tools,” practiced them with the help of a worker on real life issues, and have begun to take responsibility for their dependency, the consumers seek out a SMART Recovery® meeting at which they can continue their recovery.

Social inclusion is a key issue for Addaction with 27,000 diverse consumers, and we would like our SMART Recovery® meetings to be as effective as possible. When considering issues around diversity and identity, we should be aware of health (mental and physical), ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, and age.

This is where we need a little help from our friends, if I may tip my hat to the Beatles. We would like to draw on your experience of providing SMART Recovery® across the US and indeed the world to help us meet the needs of our potential SMART Recovery® members. If you have attracted and retained specific groups, we would like to hear from you, if you have developed or created SMART Recovery® tools to meet specific needs we would like to hear from you.

We would like to hear from you if you can help in any way to ensure that the greatest number of people can benefit to the greatest extent from SMART Recovery®. Please contact me at t.mcintosh@addaction.org.uk.

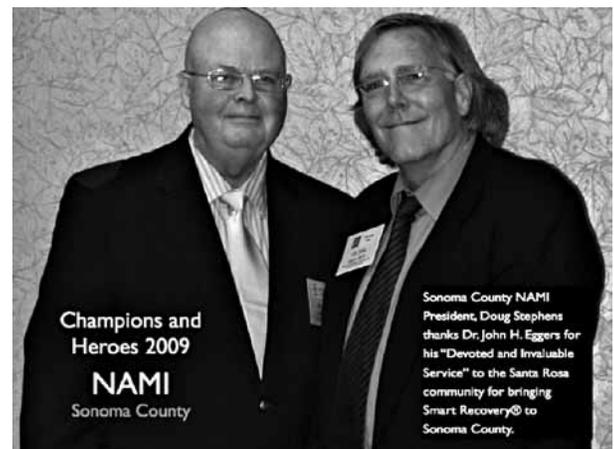
John Eggers Receives Community Hero Award!

John shared with Jodi and Shari at the Central Office...

“As you know, NAMI Sonoma has been a big supporter of SMART Recovery®. On a recent past Saturday evening at the 2009 Champions and Heroes Dinner, held in Santa Rosa at the Hyatt Vineyard Creek Hotel, NAMI acknowledged those in the local community who make a difference in the field of mental health. With over four hundred attendees, including the Mayor of Santa Rosa, the Chief of Police, and numerous dignitaries, it was quite the gala event. To my surprise, NAMI chose me as a local Community Hero for bringing SMART Recovery® to Sonoma County. We host meetings Tuesday and Thursday Evenings at 7 p.m. They are held in NAMI’s classroom in Santa Rosa.”

Congratulations, John!

Editor’s Note: This is as close to an engraved invitation as we are likely ever to get. NAMI has a large, effective network throughout the country. With



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this award, the welcome mat is out for collaboration between NAMI and SMART Recovery®. Please contact John at jeggers@me.com for more information.

SMART Recovery® Participates in NAMI Walk

On September 26, friends of the new SMART Recovery® meeting in Mentor, Ohio participated in the local NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) fundraising walk. SMART Recovery ball caps and “Ask Me About SMART Recovery®” pins were proudly worn. This photo was taken prior to the torrential rains that joined us throughout the entire walk, but it was a great way to get the word out about a new meeting in the community!



SMART Recovery® Hits the Street

by Christopher Wilke, Facilitator, Wausau, Wisconsin

On Thursday evening, October 22, the Wausau, Wisconsin, SMART Recovery® group attended the Treatment Instead of Prison (TIP) Forum held in Wausau. We set up a booth with the help of group members, which allowed us to promote the SMART Recovery® Program. During the Forum, we passed out literature, answered questions, and mingled with the public.

It was very satisfying to hear Forum attendees mention that they had heard of SMART Recovery® and the positive things it has brought to the Wausau Community. SMART Recovery® is very active with TIP, because we believe that SMART Recovery® has a lot to

offer for recovery and rehabilitation, where sometimes incarceration is not always the best method of reform.

Overall, it was a great evening that allowed us to inform and communicate with the public as well as bond as a group. The time and money spent on the booth was one of the best investments we have made as a SMART® Recovery® group.



Robert Brown (back left); Christopher Wilke (back row, second from left); Mark Fisher (far right)

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

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