

## President's Column

### January 1996

SMART Recovery<sup>®</sup> continues to evolve. We are now in our second year of operation under our new name, and our fourth year as a non-profit corporation. Our Board of Directors has worked together for five years, and some of our individual groups have a history that goes back eight years or longer.

In this column, I'll describe the major accomplishments of our first year as SMART Recovery<sup>®</sup>, and then look ahead to plans for the coming year. Our Newsletter, with this issue, begins its second year of publication. Our National Office, in Willoughby, Ohio, is also in its second year.

An application to servicemark the name SMART Recovery<sup>®</sup> was filed in mid-1995, and should be approved within several months. Our Internet discussion group has been operational since mid-1995. Donations of about \$30,000 were received during the calendar year 1995. We continue to operate about 200 groups around the country, and requests for information about starting new groups are continuing. We have received major recognition from various professional organizations. We are refining and expanding our publication list. Our organization includes dozens of individuals who have volunteered their efforts since the late 80's or early 90's and show no signs of stopping. In short, although we are relatively small, we are stable, and poised for growth.

Our future looks bright. At the November, 1995 Board of Directors meeting in Washington, D.C., the Board made further efforts to position the organization for increased visibility and growth. New publications were set into motion, a draft meeting outline was adopted, fundraising efforts were enhanced, mechanisms for improving the efficiency of communication throughout the organization were established, five new Board members were approved, a new committee (the Legal Committee) was established, plans for the election of an International Advisory Board were approved, and new officers were elected. Very fortunately for SMART<sup>®</sup>, outgoing President Joseph Gerstein, MD, has agreed to continue serving on our Executive Committee, and to remain very active on committees of the Board.

His new title is Past President. It is difficult to imagine how SMART<sup>®</sup> would have remained as stable as it has in the last year and a half without the ongoing efforts and leadership of Dr. Gerstein. Our officers for 1995 are: Philip Tate, Ph.D. (previously Secretary), Vice President; Michler Bishop, Ph.D., Secretary; Peter Bishop, continuing as Treasurer; and myself, President. The Executive Committee will also consist of Joseph Gerstein, MD, Past President, and Robert Sarmiento, Ph.D. Of particular interest to our local groups will be the planned development of a Members Manual, a Coordinator's manual and a Meeting Outline. These two manuals will be the only official publications of SMART Recovery<sup>®</sup>.

However, we will also develop a “bookstore” from which anyone may purchase books of interest to SMART<sup>®</sup> members, such as the Smart Recovery<sup>®</sup> Primer by William Knaus; Alcohol: How to Give It Up and Be Glad You Did, by Philip Tate, and other books.

The Meeting Outline is a first step towards creating a greater degree of similarity in meeting structure for our meetings throughout the country. This way you can attend a meeting in Boston, Orlando, or San Francisco, and have a general idea of what to expect. Of course, the content of our meetings will still be as diverse as the individuals who attend them.

We will be looking for input from all interested SMART Recovery<sup>®</sup> members as time goes by. Future newsletters will have more information as these projects unfold. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact the National Office.