

## S.M.A.R.T. - Self-Management and Recovery Training

### Freedom of Choice - The S.M.A.R.T. Recovery Alternative

S.M.A.R.T. is a nationwide network of over 200 free self-help groups for substance abusers based on Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy, not the twelve-step approach. This is significant because there has been a virtual monopoly of the twelve-step approach in substance abuse treatment. While this method has helped many people, it is not necessarily right for everyone. This monopoly is particularly troublesome in light of the frequent involvement of substance abusers in the legal system. Now there is a scientific alternative to the twelve-step approach - S.M.A.R.T. Recovery. In S.M.A.R.T., one's spirituality, or lack thereof is left a personal matter that doesn't necessarily have to be an issue in recovery, although it certainly can be if that is important to a person. S.M.A.R.T. helps people learn how to gain power over themselves, so they can achieve permanent abstinence and be able to cope reasonably effectively with life without using intoxicants. We believe S.M.A.R.T. can be helpful to many people, but no one program is right for everyone, including S.M.A.R.T. Thus, we advocate free choice and encourage the development of many alternative modes of treatment, like Moderation Management.

#### What is Smart Recovery?

Smart is a free self-help program for recovery from chemical dependency. Groups meet once or twice weekly, led by a lay coordinator. Most also have a volunteer advisor, who is a mental health professional.

#### How is Smart different?

Smart is a scientific approach, not a twelve-step program. It is based on modern cognitive/behavioral methods, particularly Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT). We think a person's religious or spiritual convictions are a personal matter that can be helpful, but are not essential to recovery. Smart teaches people practical, proven self-management and recovery skills.

#### Does Smart work?

Yes, if you are willing to help yourself. Recovery takes determination, time and work, but the tools offered in Smart. Recovery can help you make your efforts more productive. These methods have not only been proven to be effective, but also produce results quickly. That means being recovered, not in prolonged recovering.

What's it like?

Smart Recovery groups are small, allowing for cross-talk, discussion and practice of many specific methods. The focus is on learning how to increase your motivation to quit, handling urges without acting on them, developing new ways of coping with problems and creating a healthy, positive lifestyle

Can I use socially?

We believe a permanent abstinence decision is the most rational, easiest, hassle-free solution. With the right tools and skills, most people can quit and make it stick, without life-long struggle or substitute dependency on the group. However, we view sobriety as a personal choice and relapse as a learning opportunity.

Is Smart something new?

The idea that we largely cause our own feelings and behavior was known to ancient Greek philosophers. In 1955, Dr. Albert Ellis used this idea as the founding principle of Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy. Much research and clinical experience since then has proven the effectiveness of REBT. Smart. brings these powerful psychological principles and practices to a self-help group format.

How can I learn more?

The best way is to go to a few meetings and see for yourself!

We also recommend "When AA Doesn't Work: Rational Steps to Quitting Alcohol", by Albert Ellis

"Alcohol: How to Give It Up and Be Glad You Did", by Philip Tate

"Addiction, Change and Choice: The New View of Alcoholism", by Vince Fox, and

"The Small Book: Rational Recovery from Alcoholism" by Jack Trimpey.

How much does it cost?

Smart is free. Your time and effort are the only costs, although we do pass the hat to cover expenses.

*SMART Recovery<sup>®</sup> is: Self Management And Recovery Training*