



Facilitator Quick-Start Manual

*A “Quick-Start” introduction to SMART Recovery®
for NEW Volunteers and a refresher for those who
are already SMART Recovery® Volunteers*

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Welcome to SMART Recovery[®]

Welcome and thank you for your interest and taking the time to become a SMART Recovery[®] Volunteer. After reading the contents of this manual, you will feel comfortably knowledgeable about SMART Recovery[®] and confident that you can not only facilitate meetings, but also promote and share the SMART Recovery[®] program with others.

SMART Recovery[®] is an organization of volunteers dedicated to helping people gain independence from harmful addictive behaviors through our safe, friendly mutual support meetings, our science-based and secular SMART Recovery 4-Point Program[®] and our principles and tools, all of which are proven to help people overcome their addictive behavior.

The following page will lay out the basics for you. Feel free to copy and share it with anyone who wants to learn about SMART Recovery[®], as it answers the question: *“What is SMART Recovery[®]?”* and *“What do I need to know in order to facilitate a SMART Recovery[®] meeting?”*

You can also leave this as a single-page summary document with those you speak with while spreading word of SMART Recovery[®].

What is SMART Recovery[®]?

SMART Recovery[®] is:

- **A not-for-profit, 501(c)3 educational organization** that is mainly supported by tax deductible donations. We could not survive without the generosity of those who volunteer to host meetings, pass the hat, send in contributions received from their meetings on a regular basis or click the “Donate” button on our web site.
- **An organization compromised almost entirely of volunteers**, which includes the Board of Directors, who contribute both time and money. As a volunteer meeting Facilitator, you form the backbone of this organization.
- **An organization offering our program in many forms and places**, through our meetings (both face-to-face and online) in not only the United States, but in other countries around the world as well. The **SMART Recovery[®] Handbook** is currently available in several languages.
- **The leading self-empowering support group in addiction recovery**. Our participants learn tools for recovery based on the latest scientific research drawn from outcome research on addiction treatments and observational studies of “natural recovery” and participate in a worldwide community that includes free, self-empowering, science-based mutual help groups.
- **A program that helps people recover from all types of addictive behaviors**, including: alcoholism, drug abuse, drug addiction, substance abuse, alcohol abuse, gambling addiction, cocaine addiction, and addiction to other substances and activities.
- **A secular program** without spiritual or religious requirements; we neither encourage nor discourage religious or spiritual beliefs, but religious or spiritual proselytizing has no place within our program. SMART Recovery[®] is entirely separate from the 12-Step or “Anonymous” programs.
- **Able to serve as either a primary or a supplemental recovery program**, so everyone is welcome! It is up to each individual to determine whether our program and its meetings will serve as their only self-help and mutual-support group or as a supplement to professional treatment or other recovery programs.

SMART Recovery[®] meetings (both face-to-face and online) provide:

- **Mutual support**. Our meetings allow people to find and to give social support to those in the group who wish to change (or who are considering changing) harmful habits and improving their lives.
- **For the discussion and exchange of useful information** and the dispelling of misinformation. Our meetings allow the introduction of proven and practical tools and techniques for change. People appreciate the opportunity to participate in our open discussions and return for additional discussion and exchange.
- **Modeling and acceptance**. Our meetings allow participants to meet both models of change and success along with other people who share their problems, concerns and successes. In this way, our meetings provide hope by example and the realization that people are not alone in their struggles with addictions or addictive behaviors.

Who Can Become a SMART Recovery[®] Volunteer?

SMART Recovery[®] volunteers are the backbone of this organization. They are as diverse as the people who come to our meetings and to our SMART Recovery[®] Online (SROL) website forums seeking help. Most volunteers help by setting up and facilitating SMART Recovery[®] meetings in their locality.

Some volunteers with more experience or professional training serve as Volunteer Advisors to those who facilitate the meetings. The members of the Board of Directors are also volunteers and welcome those who feel most qualified and committed to consider making an application to become a Board member. For now, we will just concentrate on learning how to get started as a meeting Facilitator.

Based on common knowledge of other mutual support groups, you might have imagined that to help people with addictive behaviors, you would have to be “recovered” yourself or be some sort of addiction professional. So let us start by clearing away such roadblocks that do not exist in SMART Recovery[®].

What is NOT Required

To become a volunteer Facilitator it is not necessary to have previously had an addiction, be in recovery or be a mental health professional.

If you have recovered from an addiction, then you need to feel reasonably secure in your recovery. It is not necessary that you recovered using SMART Recovery[®]; it is only important that you believe there are many different valid pathways to recovery.

What is Suggested

Whatever your history, it is suggested that you sit in on some SMART Recovery[®] meetings or view the training video demonstrations of a SMART meeting. But please note that there are many fine Facilitators have not had those opportunities and have successfully started meetings on their own and then sought additional training (which is provided on an ongoing and regular basis) to maintain our high standards of quality for our meetings.

What is Required

- You have a desire to help others use the SMART Recovery[®] approach.
- You recognize the value of the SMART Recovery[®] approach and are committed to it.
- You acquire familiarity with the program, its philosophy and the organization (as presented in this manual).
- You subscribe fully to our Principles and Code of Conduct for Facilitators and other SMART Recovery[®] volunteers.
- You complete our online “Get SMART Fast” Distance Training Program
- You register as a volunteer with SMART Recovery[®] using the registration form (in [Appendix B](#)) at the end of this manual and send it to the Central Office.

The SMART Recovery 4-Point Program[®]

1. Building and Maintaining Motivation
2. Coping with Urges
3. Managing Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviors
4. Living a Balanced Life

The SMART Recovery[®] Tools

The tools for change, with their presentation instructions, are introduced and discussed later in this manual. These SMART “tools” are also found in a self-help format in “*The SMART Recovery[®] Handbook*”, which are available for purchase at most SMART Recovery[®] meetings or on the web at our [SMART Recovery[®] Online Bookstore](#).

The Program in Summary: Science, Secularity & Sobriety

SCIENCE - The SMART Recovery[®] program originates in science. It adopts methods shown to work relatively better in rigorous research. An international panel of experts has reviewed the entire program. Unlike traditionally based programs that do not change to reflect new discoveries, our program changes along with ongoing research.

SECULARITY - The SMART Recovery[®] program does not require acceptance of any religious or spiritual beliefs; nor does it require rejecting them. The program is secular and independent of religion and spirituality. We leave those areas up to each individual, as they are not part of the SMART Recovery[®] program. We clearly do not proselytize either spiritual beliefs or anti-theistic philosophies within the program or meetings. Humanists, secular and religious all recognize and honor our work.

SOBRIETY - The SMART Recovery[®] program is an **abstinence-based** program concerning alcohol, drugs and most other addictive activities. Some activities, like eating and shopping, do not lend themselves to total abstinence, so those with such addictive behaviors must be definite about the aspect of the problem behavior from which they will abstain. We are not claiming that abstinence is the only way, but we have found that with commitment and the practice of our program, abstinence can be a safer, easier and more effective goal.

In summary

SMART Recovery[®] combines the friendly mutual support of the local meetings, online meetings, and online message board and chat with the goals of its 4-Point Program[®] and the principles and science-based tools for achieving them.

The Science Basis of SMART Recovery[®]

The “SMART” in SMART Recovery[®] stands for **S**elf-**M**anagement **A**nd **R**ecovery **T**raining. We are not claiming that our way is “smarter” than other approaches to overcoming addictive behaviors; but we have evidence that supports the program goals and tools we suggest. So choosing SMART Recovery[®] may very well be a “smart” decision.

The question you will likely hear most often: “*Does it work?*” When someone asks if the SMART Recovery[®] program works, it is like asking a doctor “*Does medicine work when you give it?*” You can truthfully say, “**YES!**” We cannot say everything we suggest works for every person with an addictive behavior any more than a doctor can guarantee that every medication and vaccine will work the same way for every person. Nothing works for everyone; but giving people a choice and honest information allows them to find what works for them. Doctors suggest people take the prescribed medicine, use common sense and take good care of their health. Similarly, we suggest people use the tools properly and consistently as they work towards overcoming their addictive behavior. We do not claim that ours is the only path to recovery; no single recovery method or program can truthfully make that claim.

No one performs tests on every doctor to see whether a medicine works when delivered by that doctor; the medicine is tested- not the doctor, nurse or pharmacist who delivers it. Like the doctor’s medicine, the tools and principles SMART Recovery[®] suggests and share in its program have been tested and found more likely to work than other popular (but less effective) tools and principles. We can say that our program (its suggested goals, tools, principles and methods) has been adapted from the best outcome research of addiction treatment. Thus, there is strong evidence from research that our methods are those most likely to work for most people. Though this may not be as emotionally engaging as personal testimonials and anecdotes, it is much stronger evidence than typically found for the methods employed in other mutual-support recovery groups.

If someone remains unconvinced and skeptical, you can refer them (or anyone else who is interested) to a sophisticated summary of this research, titled [“What Works”](#), in which 48 treatment methods are rank-ordered. Further, a panel of world-renowned experts in the field of addictions - our International Advisory Council - have reviewed and approved our program.

Empirically Supported or Evidence-based Practice?

In line with recent newspaper and magazine articles concerned with using better methods in the treatment of addictions, we can assure both the public and treatment professionals that our methods are drawn from and coincide with the “Evidence-Based Practices” often cited in those articles: “Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy” (CBT) and “Motivational Interviewing.” For instance, we have adopted from Motivational Enhancement Therapy and Motivational Interviewing the principle of taking a **non-confrontational** stance. Personal exploration and “consciousness-raising” has been found to occur when people recover on their own, so we encourage this at meetings and between meetings. Similarly, we allow people to draw their own conclusions rather than taking a confrontational stance. We may share what worked for

us, but we let others make their own decisions. Our “*ABC’s of Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT)*” is an easily taught and applied form of CBT. Most of these articles and the “*What Works*” summary (cited above) include medications that can help people cope with cravings, so it should be noted that SMART Recovery[®] has taken a clear and published position supporting the use of medications to help with cravings, to deter drinking and to treat co-occurring emotional disorders when prescribed by appropriate licensed professionals.

The Guiding Principles of SMART Recovery[®]

1. **Recovery through Self-Empowerment.** Our purpose is to help participants gain independence from any form of addictive behavior. We believe that individuals seeking recovery should be fully informed about the range of recovery options and free to choose among them. Our program encourages participants to take full responsibility for their personal recovery. Our meetings educate and support their capacity to regulate their own behavior.
2. **Mutual Help.** As participants progress in recovery, their focus can shift to enjoying the activities of a healthy, fulfilling and productive life, which includes the satisfaction of assisting new participants in SMART Recovery[®].
3. **Volunteer Management.** SMART Recovery[®] is operated almost entirely by volunteers, which includes the Board of Directors and the meeting Facilitators. Facilitators may have recovered through SMART Recovery[®] or be qualified individuals who are not “in recovery”.
4. **Acceptance.** SMART Recovery[®] participants are welcome to discuss addictive behavior with any substance or activity. SMART Recovery[®] encourages participation by persons of any race, color, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity. We do not tolerate harassment of any kind in our meetings.
5. **Participant Support.** Our meetings and online services are offered free of charge. Donations are requested and encouraged. We are funded primarily through personal contributions and literature sales. We accept funding from other sources if receiving such funds does not interfere with our purpose.
6. **Evidence-Based Practice.** SMART Recovery[®] uses evidence-based cognitive behavioral and non-confrontational motivational enhancement techniques. The components of the SMART Recovery[®] program continue to evolve as scientific knowledge evolves. Our meetings focus on the application of these techniques, as guided by our 4-Point Program[®]:
 - 1) Building and Maintaining Motivation
 - 2) Coping with Urges
 - 3) Managing Thoughts, Feelings, and Behaviors
 - 4) Living a Balanced Life

7. **Collaboration.** Some participants may choose to augment their SMART Recovery[®] experience with professional therapy, medications, or other support groups. All of these options are supported by SMART Recovery[®]. Treatment professionals may volunteer to facilitate meetings. An organization or institution may employ someone to facilitate a meeting and pay that individual. Professionals are encouraged to incorporate SMART Recovery[®] into their professional work. In such instances—whether delivered in groups or individually—the use of the SMART Recovery[®] program is the sole responsibility of the professional offering it.
8. **International Presence.** SMART Recovery[®] is an international organization. We support local volunteers so that our meetings can be made available in every country. We also support national health services and professionals so that SMART Recovery[®] can be available in every country.

SMART Recovery[®] - Diverse and International

In line with our “International Presence” principle, SMART Recovery[®] is currently available in some form around the world. See our ["Meeting List"](#) for the latest meetings in many countries.

Our vision is “Think SMART Worldwide” so we actively work with and support individuals desiring to bring SMART Recovery[®] to their state or country. Following from our “Acceptance” principle, we clearly support diversity.

- **Diversity:** SMART Recovery[®] encourages participation by persons of any race, color, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity. We do not tolerate harassment of any kind in our meetings.

PLEASE NOTE: SMART Recovery[®] neither promotes nor disparages religion or spirituality, regarding those as personal choices or beliefs. Because this area is sometimes contentious, it should also be noted that we do not regard spirituality as an essential ingredient in recovery or any other health related problem. This is still sometimes being asserted despite growing research showing that it is NOT essential and that, for some people, it may be harmful or at least unnecessarily complicating.

Languages: In support of our international and inclusive presence, we are thankful to the volunteers who have provided translations allowing us to offer some Spanish web pages. The *SMART Recovery[®] Handbook* (2nd Edition) is currently available in:

- English (*American vernacular*)*
- Spanish
- Mandarin Chinese
- Portuguese
- German
- Danish
- Farsi

* 3rd Edition now available

Additionally, there are English versions of the Handbook that have been modified for British and Australian vernaculars. Some locally revised versions in other languages (*Russian, Estonian, Vietnamese, and Chinese*) are also available.

We are continually striving to make our Handbook available in additional languages as well. Anyone interested in translating *The SMART Recovery[®] Handbook* into other languages are encouraged and welcome to contact the Central Office.

Rehabilitation Centers and Prisons: SMART Recovery[®] was first introduced into the Federal Prison System at Danbury Prison in 1996 and a similar program has since been introduced into all Federal prisons. Other prison and rehabilitation systems using the SMART Recovery[®] program include those of Scotland, Sweden, Australia, and Vietnam. Additionally, SMART Recovery[®] collaborated with Inflexxion to obtain a \$1 million grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), which produced the **InsideOut[®]** program for use within correctional facilities. The program consists of facilitator training manuals and videos, as well as male and female-focused workbooks and videos.

General Principles of SMART Recovery[®] Meetings

- 1. SMART Recovery[®] meetings are confidential.** We make it clear that what is said at the meeting that is of a personal nature (e.g. who was there, what they said) is **NOT** repeated outside the meetings. Also, avoid discussing people who are not present.
- 2. SMART Recovery[®] meetings are friendly and non-confrontational.** Facilitators are there to make the meeting run smoothly and keep the discussion focused on recovery.
- 3. SMART Recovery[®] meetings are an opportunity to share and apply ideas and tools.** When they teach, they learn... and there is more participation in the learning. It is generally more effective if different individuals attending the meeting share the SMART Recovery[®] ideas and tools, rather than only the Facilitator.
- 4. The Facilitators' main mission is to "FACILITATE" the meeting, meaning:**
 - a) Keeping the meeting moving forward without anyone dominating the proceedings;
 - b) Keeping the discussions on the topic of how to end an addictive behavior;
 - c) Keeping the focus on the near present - no "drunk-o-logues" or past war stories;
 - d) Providing the structure found in our suggested meeting outline; and
 - e) Providing everyone a chance to participate, if they desire to do so.
- 5. Facilitators are NOT primarily there to "teach" the program.** Lecturing often leads to boredom or passive reception. Research shows that passively listening to lectures, films and other media are the least effective ways to change behavior. Active participation in our discussions and learning through sharing with peers is more engaging, relative, memorable and more likely to lead to continued attendance and real behavior change.
- 6. Facilitators are definitely NOT there to do therapy.** Even if you are a mental health or addiction treatment professional, this is not the purpose of our meetings. Our meetings are **NOT** free therapy. Rather they are mutual-support, encouragement, empowerment and personal sharing through what is often lively discussions.

7. There is NEVER a charge for a SMART Recovery[®] meeting! If money is charged or if the group is part of a therapy program offered at a treatment facility for which there was payment, then it is not a SMART Recovery[®] meeting. As a non-profit organization, we need to make it clear that **THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR OUR MEETINGS**. We therefore ask that whenever there is a fee for service involved with a group, even though based on the SMART Recovery[®] program it not be referred to as a SMART Recovery[®] meeting.

Our volunteer Board of Directors (and all others who support SMART Recovery[®]) hopes that SMART Recovery[®] becomes a standard part of treatment programs. They are pleased and thankful when the SMART Recovery[®] principles, tools and techniques are adopted for use in therapy, just as the ideas and “steps” from other programs have been brought into treatment. However, confusing our no-cost recovery meetings with fee-based treatment can endanger our non-profit status.

Donations support our organization, program and its meetings!

Donations to SMART Recovery[®]

SMART Recovery[®] has expenses and cannot survive or grow without donations. Donations pay for our web site, and so the web listing of our meetings and our invaluable web presence. Our site also allows us to arrange and provide your training and offer both the free downloadable materials and items for sale at our [SMART Online Bookstore](#). Donations also pay the rent for our office (*nothing fancy - it is a small, two room office located in Mentor, Ohio - not a large city skyscraper*) and a modest salary (*without benefits*) for our Executive Director and part-time assistants. However, even a bare bones operation like ours has business expenses, filings, fees, accounting and other day-to-day operating costs.

For this reason, we explain our local and national needs, then confidently request and gratefully accept donations when we pass the hat at each meeting, just before the final check out. Also, inform meeting participants they can make donations on the SMART Recovery[®] web page, just as the SMART Recovery[®] Online Facilitators remind their meeting participants.

We therefore ask that each meeting site contribute what it can to the Central Office after paying the group’s local expenses (copying of posters, fliers, and handouts; the fee or donation to the provider of the meetings space, if appropriate; your training materials and outlay for a supply of *The SMART Recovery[®] Handbook*, and so forth). Check with the SMART Recovery[®] website to determine the current suggested monthly group donation.

If you don’t feel comfortable passing the hat, this is a great opportunity for you to model *accepting discomfort and performing the correct behavior despite discomfort*, just as people with addictive behaviors often have to do if they are going to recover. There are plenty of handouts and emotionally moving explanations to help you solicit donations from the meeting participants.

Here are more reasons why most participants are quite happy to donate weekly and why you should regularly ask for donations:

You may find it helpful and comforting to realize that:

- People value the group and its program more when they contribute to it;
- People giving up a harmful addiction may benefit greatly from our meetings;
- You too are donating - giving of your time, energy, travel expense and talents.

You might also want to keep in mind, and remind the group, that:

- Some people are saving huge amounts of money by quitting an addiction;
- Some people think they regained their dignity or self-respect; that's priceless;
- Some people may save their jobs, health or relationships, and that is priceless.

Again, please note that donations are tax deductible, but if donors want to take their tax deduction, they should donate directly to SMART Recovery[®] via the web site or the Central Office with a check or credit card so they can receive a written acknowledgement of their donation as required by the IRS.

How to Facilitate SMART Recovery[®] Meetings

Having read these pages, you now have a good basic knowledge and background of the SMART Recovery[®] organization. Now turn to the most important activity volunteers can perform - Starting and Facilitating SMART Recovery[®] Meetings.

Some readers of this guide may have already started meetings or are planning to facilitate meetings that already exist. As a result, they are reading this to improve their facilitation knowledge and skills for those meetings. If that is your situation, read on. If you do not yet have a local meeting to facilitate, you might continue here and learn more, OR you can choose to go to the [Starting a SMART Recovery[®] Meeting](#) section on page 31.

What Happens at a SMART Recovery[®] Meeting?

Meetings usually run 90 minutes, although there is a 60-minute version. A basic meeting outline is available on our web site or in *The SMART Recovery[®] Handbook*. Following is a basic outline of a SMART Recovery[®] meeting:

1. Welcome and Opening Statement. A short welcome and introduction typically begins the meeting. The Facilitator or anyone else may read it. Some groups only read it when there are new attendees present.

Many groups have a free handout, which they give to new attendees. These can include the outline, a suggested readings list, and some of the basic tools and ideas. Participants are encouraged to take it home to read, learn more and practice. This also avoids their reading it at the meeting and being distracted from the actual meeting process. Furthermore, reading for oneself can be more self-empowering and efficacious than answering numerous questions a new attendee may have and keeps the Facilitator from doing a "SMART-o-logue."

A “SMART-o-logue” is similar to a “drunk-o-logue” in that they can both be repetitious and boring. SMART Recovery[®] meetings focus on the near present - last week and next week- not on what one did in the distant past. As a general principle from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), focusing on the present is usually more useful.

2. Check-in. During the “check-in” period, people take turns making brief introductions (preferably using “people first language” rather than labels) and sharing with the group how they have been coping since their last meeting or what has brought them if this is their first meeting.

3. Agenda Setting. Next, an agenda of topics is set based on comments made during the check-in (or held-over from the last meeting) and anything else attendees might suggest.

4. Work Time. This is the working portion of the meeting; it is usually an open discussion and addresses the various topics on the agenda. Here is where SMART Recovery[®] meetings prove to be a good place to meet and chat with people who share a common goal. Many Facilitators also make exercises and worksheets available for attendees to try out with the group and to take home and work on during the week. These usually focus on one of our suggested “tools” when it fits in with the discussion.

5. Pass the Hat. Requesting donations and passing the hat.

6. Summarizing, Homework and Closing. This is a final go-around or “check-out” to end the meeting as people reflect on the meeting and commit to activities for the week ahead.

We encourage people to share not only their emotional support and encouragement, but also new ways of dealing with addictive behavior they have gleaned from our materials and how they have applied what has been learned to their own recovery. The Facilitator may briefly offer some new information about the SMART Recovery[®] program and tools, or offer an engaging exercise, but the best meetings happen when we Facilitators do not dominate but rather allow and encourage every attendee to participate.

More Facilitator Basics

About participation: Meeting attendees are welcome to join in and participate or they may just choose to listen in. While dozing off/snoring or being disruptive (if it ever occurred) would be a problem, observing a meeting is more than listening to a lecture and the experience can be helpful.

Observational learning: Take a moment and reflect on what one can learn by observing and listening in on a meeting. We encourage everyone to participate by making sure all attendees have opportunities to speak, but we do not demand participation. Just by observing, they can learn that change is possible, which gives them hope and they can learn what others do to achieve their success.

Our non-confrontational approach: People who have been mandated or required to attend (by courts, probation, corrections or a spouse) are often surprised to find that we do not confront, threaten or argue. This is unusual because most treatment programs emphasize denial and the need for confrontation. Reviewing a history of confrontation in the treatment

of addictions [Bill Miller & Bill White] makes it clear that confrontation is based on some false premises. Research [William R. Miller] reveals that confrontation is actually the **CAUSE** rather than the cure for denial and resistance. Because we are not forcing them to do something they do not want to do, they are free to choose for themselves. After hearing from others who are working towards change, who have problems they can relate to and have some successes to share, those passive observers often become both active participants and regular attendees- even after mandated attendance and monitoring ends.

Attendance Verification Letters: For those whose attendance is being monitored or who have legal problems in which proof of attendance will be helpful, we provide an official verification of attendance letter on SMART Recovery[®] stationary, which the Facilitator signs and dates, rather than an attendance card. Our letter provides space for the attendee to explain what they did and what they learned at the meeting, providing their monitor with information which helps project the SMART Recovery[®] program to society's officials.

With “Self-help”, the Facilitator does not have to be an “expert”

Most volunteers are new to facilitating a meeting and not experts! No matter where you are, your willingness to volunteer to start and/or host a basic SMART Recovery[®] meeting helps immensely. Just following the meeting outline and perhaps reading lines from a suggested script can result in some of the best and most well attended meetings.

“SMART Recovery[®] meetings are informal and seem to run themselves.” This is something many of our Facilitators say. The meeting Facilitator's role is mainly to steer the group along, make sure the central topic is *how to abstain from addictive substances or behaviors*, and allowing everyone to have equal opportunity to express their views.

(Author's Note: As a student-researcher, I witnessed a daylong sensitivity training marathon run by a “host-facilitator” whose primary task was to turn on and turn off the recorded group instructions, and then just participate in the discussions. In the research that followed, we found the ‘host’ received the highest ratings and that the group perceived him to be a wonderful group facilitator.)

Handouts and *The SMART Recovery[®] Handbook* allow new participants to take some of the SMART Recovery[®] program with them to read at home. This allows the meeting to be dedicated to discussion and freeing the Facilitator from teaching. This means that as a SMART Recovery[®] Facilitator, you do not have to be an expert on addictions and recovery or even on SMART Recovery[®] itself.

By allowing participants to find their own answers, we support self-efficacy. Independent reading and allowing people to help themselves and one-another, increases the attendees' confidence in their own abilities, their self-efficacy. This is what we mean by empowerment. Further, confidence in real efficacy is not a danger sign (a pink cloud) as taught in the mythology of some recovery groups. Research has shown that confidence based on strong intentions, commitment, and skill is a predictor of long-term success.

Avoiding the Expert Trap

Experienced Facilitators who have some expertise are encouraged to refrain from acting as experts who have all of the answers. If you have the talent, focus on facilitating the discussion amongst the participants. Let the participants hear themselves answering their own and one-another's questions.

People tend to believe what they hear themselves saying. This is a regularly found principle of social psychology. Your most difficult task may be not to speak too much. In the words of psychologist F. Michler Bishop: *"I know I'm facilitating a good meeting when I can feel my top lip with my bottom lip."*

Open-ended questions can elicit useful responses. If you must participate, you can challenge your skills by coming up with open-ended questions (questions that cannot be answered with a single word like "yes" or "no"). Such questions can elicit multiple answers from the group or elicit statements of continued and growing commitment to new behaviors, and better ways of handling old problems.

Typical Problems Faced by Facilitators- Some DO's, DON'Ts and MAYBE's

- 1. The overly talkative, chatty, garrulous talker who monopolizes meeting time:**
 - **Do:** Work out in your own mind (perhaps using an ABC analysis) your beliefs that keep you from limiting long talkers.
 - **Don't:** Think you are being disrespectful or that you'll hurt the feelings of long talkers.
 - **Do:** Develop your own set of useful remarks. Examples: "I'm sorry but we're running short on time, and we need to move on" OR "Let me stop you here and see if the group has some reaction to what you've been saying."
- 2. The talker who speaks about topics that have no relevance to his/her recovery:**
 - **Do:** Put yourself through an ABC procedure similar to the one as listed above. Figure out what keeps you from interrupting and asking respectfully that the person keep on track.
 - **Do:** Develop your own repertoire for respectful interrupting. For example, you might ask, "I'm not sure I understand how this relates to your recovery."
 - **Do:** Announce in advance the personal "update": "Now let's have each person talk about what went on in their week, as it relates to their recovery."
- 3. How can you get newcomers to return and not disappear after one meeting?**
 - **Do:** Give them a handout explaining SMART Recovery[®].
 - **Do:** Ask the newcomer what he/she thought about the meeting after the meeting.
- 4. How can you blend new people struggling with urges and later stage people working on a balanced lifestyle in the same meeting?**
 - **Do:** Individualize. Leave time to focus on the 4th point. It can help the newcomer.
 - **Do:** Allow the later-stage people to share and help the newcomer

- **Do:** If necessary, explain that people are at different places in their recovery.
- **Don't:** Assume that all alcohol/drug abusers are the same.

5. How do you deal with a person who wishes to try moderation - not abstinence? What do you do if this person has serious problems from alcohol?

- **Do:** Respect his/her right to try moderation and offer appropriate information.
- **Don't:** Make him/her feel unwelcome or kick him/her out of the group.
- **Do:** Be assured that moderation programs help people who are not appropriate for moderation to discover this early on.
- **Do:** Let him/her know that SMART Recovery[®] meetings focus on abstaining and a period of abstinence is often a first step in the best moderation programs.
- **Don't:** Allow him/her to upset or distract other attendees with details of their current 'controlled' or moderate drinking or a pros/cons discussion of moderation.
- **Do:** Offer to do a cost-benefit analysis on the pros and cons of abstinence.
- **Do:** Have faith that he/she has a right to try moderation. It might work; if it does not, he/she can then work towards abstinence with even more conviction.

6. What if spouses, parents, etc. want to attend meetings with the person who has the addictive problems?

- **Don't:** Tell them that they absolutely can't attend the meetings.
- **Do:** Explain to them why it might prevent their son/husband/etc. from speaking freely to the group and thereby limit the benefit they can get out of the meeting.
- **Do:** Tell them to feel free to come to the meeting once.
- **Do:** Tell them about the SMART Recovery Online (SROL) Family & Friends support meetings and the "Concerned Significant Others" forum available on the Message Board on our website. You can also suggest the book "*Get Your Loved One Sober*" by Meyers and Wolfe.

7. How do you contact members of the group when you need to (the room is changing, the meeting place will be closed, you need a substitute Facilitator, etc.)?

- **Maybe:** After explaining the need, pass around a signup sheet for participants to write their names and telephone numbers. Emphasize that signing is strictly voluntary and the information will be strictly confidential.
- **Don't:** Give anyone's personal information or telephone number to anyone else unless you clear it with the person first.

8. Should participants be restricted from or encouraged to exchange phone numbers?

- **Do:** Tell the participants that they are free, as responsible adults, to exchange phone numbers if they choose and to say "no" if they so desire not to do so.
- **Don't:** Assume this is similar to arranging an AA sponsor who might be helpful or might become autocratic and dictatorial. Telephone friends are just that, mutual friends, empowered to help one another as equals if they choose to, but not responsible for anyone's recovery but their own.

How We Differ from Other Recovery Groups

SMART Recovery[®] differs from other recovery programs in the following ways:

- It does not rely on a higher power or religious belief;
- It does not use a sponsor or buddy system;
- It does not use labels such as alcoholic or addict; and
- It does not dwell on the past; the only role the past plays is in learning from it.

Furthermore, SMART Recovery[®] is not a life-long program. It is our hope that our members will gain the skills necessary to meet the demands of everyday life substance free and without resorting to previous undesired behaviors.

We do, however encourage members to remain with SMART Recovery[®] to share their experiences with others who are new to the groups and to consider becoming meeting Facilitators. SMART Recovery[®] groups can play an important part in helping people build up skills and habits that they can use for many years and ensuring that they stay on their personal road to permanent recovery.

What It Means To Be A “Mutual Support” Group

SMART Recovery[®] group meetings provide mutual support. It may be helpful to understand better what that means. Such groups provide a safe environment where experiences can be shared and group members are allowed and encouraged to help themselves. According to Keith Humphreys’ book, *“Circles of Recovery: Self help Organizations for Addictions”* (Cambridge Press), the key elements of a mutual aid organizations and meeting are:

- Members have shared problem or status
- Self Directed Leadership
- Valuation of experiential knowledge
- Norm of reciprocal helping
- Lack of fees
- Voluntary association
- Inclusion of some personal change goals

SMART Recovery[®] Position on Medications


SMART Recovery[®] has no objection to those attending our meetings taking medications such as Antabuse, Acamprosate (Campral), or Naltrexone, or participating in Suboxone or Methadone maintenance therapy or taking any other psychoactive medication prescribed by appropriate licensed medical professionals.

The issue to consider with treatment procedures, including medications is effectiveness in treating the addiction, treating the co-occurring disorders which are more likely present than not, reducing harm and improving the overall quality of life versus the risks of adverse side effects.

To suggest that taking medications is equivalent to a substance related disorder is clearly unhelpful and unethical. We regard spreading such misinformation is a sad misuse of any recovery movement, meeting or program and we are particularly concerned about the danger some people may face when they stopping taking a needed medication in response to such irresponsible and dangerous statements.

The SMART Recovery[®] Tools for Change

Following are the SMART Recovery[®] tools for change, along with their presentation instructions. These SMART “tools” are also found in a self-help format in “*The SMART Recovery[®] Handbook*”, which are available for purchase at most SMART Recovery[®] meetings or on the web at our [SMART Recovery[®] Online Bookstore](#).

 <p>THE TOOL:</p>	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Change Plan Worksheet</h2>						
<p>EFFECTIVELY USED FOR WHICH OF THE 4 POINTS?</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building Motivation <input type="checkbox"/> Coping with Urges <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving <input type="checkbox"/> Lifestyle Balance </p>							
<p>EQUIPMENT REQUIRED: Distribute a copy of this sheet to group members to help them to document their personal change plan.</p>							
<p>1. The changes I want to make are:</p> <p>2. The most important reasons why I want to make these changes are:</p> <p>3. The steps I plan to take in changing are:</p> <p>4. The ways other people can help me are:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"><u>Person</u></td> <td style="width: 50%; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"><u>Possible ways to help me</u></td> </tr> </table> <p>5. I will know that my plan is working if:</p> <p>6. Some things that could interfere with my plans are:</p> <p>7. How important is it that you make this change:</p> <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: left; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"><u>Not at all Important</u></td> <td style="text-align: right; border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"><u>Most Important</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8</td> <td style="text-align: center; padding: 5px;">9 10</td> </tr> </table> <p>8. How confident are you that you can make this change?</p>		<u>Person</u>	<u>Possible ways to help me</u>	<u>Not at all Important</u>	<u>Most Important</u>	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	9 10
<u>Person</u>	<u>Possible ways to help me</u>						
<u>Not at all Important</u>	<u>Most Important</u>						
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	9 10						

Acknowledgement: Thanks to team member Dr. Henry Steinberger



THE TOOL:

Cost/Benefit Analysis

EFFECTIVELY USED FOR WHICH OF THE 4 POINTS?

Building Motivation
 Coping with Urges
 Problem Solving
 Lifestyle Balance

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED: Flipchart/Markers or Blackboard & Chalk

WHAT IT IS: A method for exploring the short-term vs. long-term benefits associated with continuing or discontinuing the behavior.

WHEN IT IS USED: (Common question or statement that may prompt using this tool)

Whenever a member seems to be wavering in his/her motivation to alter his/her behavior. Typical comments to prompt the use of this tool might include:

“Why bother to quit using...it’s too hard.” Or “What’s the use, I’m just going to relapse anyway.”

EXAMPLE OF ITS USE IN A SMART RECOVERY[®] MEETING:

When a member makes it clear that they he/she is having difficulty maintaining motivation, it’s often useful to work with the individual to help him or her explore the positive and negative consequences (the costs and the benefits). The group can work together to help the person document 1) the benefits of engaging in an addictive behavior pattern and, 2) the benefits of **not** doing so.

Some view this process as a “Time Effects” analysis because it is the effects over time that people don’t like, while others prefer to refer to it as a “Risk/Reward” analysis. Regardless, the idea is to get the individual to seriously consider the “Costs” and “Benefits” related to his/her behavior.

A Facilitator may wish to start with the question: “Let’s assume that you decide to drink (use, gamble, engage in unsafe sex, etc.), what will be the positive effects in 1 to 2 minutes?” (Group members often provide the negative effects, despite the question!) It’s appropriate to start with the positive effects because that is why they continue to decide to drink, use, etc.

Then ask: “What will be the positive effects in two hours assuming you continue to drink?”

Then inquire: “What will happen in 24 hours? in two days? in two years? in twenty years?”

Then, continue by asking about the negative effects:

(Note: It’s useful to have a member or the Facilitator document the responses. You can use a folded piece of paper, putting the positive effects on one side and the negative effects on the other, or place two columns on a flipchart, marking one “positive” and the other “negative”.)

Ask: “Let’s assume that you decide not to drink (or gamble, use, etc.), what will be the positive effects of that decision in 1-2 minutes? 2 hours? the next day? etc. Then ask what will be the negative effects of not drinking?”

You may wish to change the time spans depending on the individual’s circumstance. That is, sometimes ask regarding 1-2 minutes? 2 hours? 6 hours? the next morning? the next week?

Note that age has an impact on the answers. Young people know that bonding with friends is an important and healthy part of growing up. So getting drunk with your buddies has positive effects over time (i.e., a young person may indicate “having fun with friends” as a benefit of continued use.) But, of course, if he/she overdoes it, he/she may experience very negative (perhaps even lethal) effects over time.

Someone may not be able to come up with the positive effects of not drinking or using in 1-2 minutes. The answer: You get the opportunity to practice standing the discomfort and of learning how to resist urges. Likewise, the negative effects in 1-2 minutes are that you lose these opportunities AND you reinforce the belief: I have to have what I want when I want it. WAH!

Acknowledgement: Thanks to team member Michler Bishop

Cost Benefit Analysis Decision Making Worksheet

The substance/activity to consider is: _____ Date: _____


Using or doing

<p><u>Advantages</u> <i>(benefits and rewards)</i></p> 	<p><u>Disadvantages</u> <i>(costs and risks)</i></p>
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NOT using or NOT doing

<p><u>Advantages</u> <i>(benefits and rewards)</i></p> 	<p><u>Disadvantages</u> <i>(costs and risks)</i></p>
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Label each item either short term or long term

 <p>THE TOOL:</p>	<h2 style="margin: 0;">ABCs of REBT #1 (Urge Coping)</h2>
<p>EFFECTIVELY USED FOR WHICH OF THE 4 POINTS?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Building Motivation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coping with Urges <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving <input type="checkbox"/> Lifestyle Balance </p>	
<p>EQUIPMENT REQUIRED: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flipchart/Markers or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blackboard & Chalk</p>	
<p>WHAT IT IS: A method to reduce or eliminate the emotional upsets which fuel urges to use.</p>	
<p>WHEN IT IS USED: (Common question or statement that may prompt using this tool)</p> <p>To analyze a lapse/relapse - "<i>What made me do it?</i>" and to develop coping statements for anticipated lapse/relapse - "<i>How will I handle the situation?</i>"</p> <p>This is a good tool to use whenever a member gets upset at urges and/or gives in to urges.</p>	
<p>EXAMPLE OF ITS USE IN A SMART RECOVERY[®] MEETING:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>ABC's of COPING WITH URGES</u></p> <p>When you relapse, the question to ask is not "What made me do that", but rather, "How did I talk myself into it?" When you get upset at an urge, then lapse or relapse, it is not the urge (A) that causes your relapse (C). It is your beliefs (B), your irrational self-talk. Four common beliefs (self-talk) which can lead you to an emotional disturbance and a relapse are listed under the B's below.</p> <p>A = Activating event or Adversity: URGE TO USE.</p> <p>B = Beliefs or IRRATIONAL SELF-TALK ABOUT URGES.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>This urge is UNBEARABLE. I CAN'T STAND IT!</i> 2. <i>This powerful urge MAKES ME USE!</i> 3. <i>This urge WON'T GO AWAY UNTIL I USE!</i> 4. <i>This urge is DRIVING ME CRAZY!</i> <p>C = Emotional and Behavioral Consequences of your thoughts about urges such as discomfort anxiety and GREATER URGES.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Disputing Irrational Beliefs</u></p> <p>You may effectively help yourself with low frustration tolerance and anxiety about urges when you DISPUTE your irrational Beliefs and then forcefully replace them with Rational alternatives. The following page contains some examples of DISPUTES and Rational alternatives.</p>	

Dispute: *Where is the evidence this urge is unbearable and I can't stand it?*

Answer: There is no evidence. There is evidence the urge is hard to bear, but not impossible, and there is evidence I don't like it. But, because I am standing, I CAN stand it.

Rational alternative: I don't like urges, but I CAN STAND them.

Dispute: *Is there any evidence that an urge makes me use?*

Answer: No. There is none. The urge makes life unpleasant, but it doesn't force me to do anything.

Rational alternative: Nothing makes me use! I can decide not to!

Dispute: *Is there any evidence this urge absolutely will not go away until I use?*

Answer: No there isn't. It may take a long while to go away if I don't use, but nothing says it has to remain if I do not use.

Rational alternative: Urges are time limited. This urge will go away whether I decide to use or not!

Dispute: *Where is the evidence this urge is driving me crazy?*

Answer: There is none. I may drive myself crazy about the urge, but the urge doesn't do it to me. I can choose not to be disturbed about this urge.

Rational alternative: I do not have to go crazy about this urge. I will remain sane while I live through it.

Other types of thoughts we use to talk ourselves into remaining addicted, and suggested rational alternatives:

SELF DOWNING

irrational belief (IB) Other "strong and competent" people have what it takes to change, but not a worthless "no-good-nick" like me.

rational belief (RB) Competent traits such as self-control are not something one "has." Such skills are developed through practice. I can strive to change my behavior for the right reason -- to enjoy my life, rather than for the wrong reason -- to prove my "worth."

LOW FRUSTRATION TOLERANCE (SELF-PITY)

(IB) It's *too hard* to change.

(RB) Yes, it is hard to change, but not *too hard*. As a matter of fact, it is much harder NOT to change.

(IB) It *shouldn't* be this hard. There *must* be an easy way.

(RB) It is about as hard as it "should" be. There is no magic solution, and there is seldom gain without pain in this world.

(IB) I *can't* do what I don't feel like doing.

(RB) JUST DO IT! I didn't feel like getting out of bed today, but did it anyway. Does anybody go to the dentist because they "feel like it?"


(IB) It's *not fair* that I have this problem!

(RB) Perhaps many things are not "fair," but we had best accept that they ARE.

(IB) I *shouldn't have to* quit!

(RB) You don't have to. But you might more fully realize that you want to and then choose to act upon this desire.

Acknowledgments: Alcohol: How To Give It Up And Be Glad You Did by Philip Tate; When AA Doesn't Work for You: Rational Steps to Quitting Alcohol by Albert Ellis and Emmett Velten. Thank you Team Members: Nick Rajacic, Joe Milon, Phil Tate, Michler Bishop

 THE TOOL:	<h2 style="margin: 0;">ABCs of REBT #2 (Emotional Upsets)</h2>
<p>EFFECTIVELY USED FOR WHICH OF THE 4 POINTS?</p> <p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building Motivation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coping with Urges <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lifestyle Balance </p>	
<p>EQUIPMENT REQUIRED: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flipchart/Markers or <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Blackboard & Chalk</p>	
<p>WHAT IT IS: A method to eliminate or greatly reduce all emotional upsets with which we destroy our happiness and sabotage our recovery.</p>	
<p>WHEN IT IS USED: (Common question or statement that may prompt using this tool)</p> <p>When members become upset regarding frustrations and failures at any point in recovery. Common questions or statements which prompt the use of this tool:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"> "I can't quit. I'm a failure! What's wrong with me?" "I've been clean and sober for some time and nothing is working out." "What's the use? I'm still miserable/angry/depressed/anxious." </p>	
<p>EXAMPLE OF ITS USE IN A SMART RECOVERY[®] MEETING:</p> <p><u>ABCs of Emotional Upsets and Disputing Irrational Beliefs</u> <i>Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT)</i> can contribute to our overall mental and emotional well being. Also, learning and using REBT can help us prevent everyday upsets from leading to lapse/relapse urges. Two specific techniques that we find helpful are the ABCs and Disputing Irrational Beliefs. The ABCs allow us to discover our irrational thinking which contributes to emotional upsets. Disputing helps us eliminate our irrational thinking so we can both feel better and do better. In SMART Recovery[®] we teach that we feel the way we think; it's not unpleasant events that disturb us, it's the way we think of them. By changing our thinking, we change how we feel. First, the ABCs:</p> <p>A. "A" represents the event or adversity which we normally assume is the cause of our emotional upsets.</p> <p>B. "B" represents the real cause: our beliefs, perceptions, ideas and cognitions about the real or imagined adversity, "A."</p> <p>C. "C" represents the consequences of our distorted perceptions: emotional distress and self-defeating behaviors.</p> <p><i>When doing the ABCs, it can help to know that most irrational beliefs fall into three categories: (1) Beliefs about yourself. For example, I must do well or else I'm no good; (2) Beliefs about others. For instance, others must treat me nicely and kindly and just the way I want or else they are no good, and, (3) Beliefs about life in general. For instance, the world must make it easy for me to get what I want and must create circumstances so things always go my way or else it's a lousy rotten world. These three kinds of beliefs create the three main emotional upsets of (1) anxiety/guilt/shame, (2) anger/hostility/rage, and (3) depression. They also create demand-ingness, whining, condemnation and damnation of ourselves and others, and exaggeration beyond the bounds of reality.</i></p>	

Unpleasant emotions are unavoidable, and can even be motivating and helpful. But we humans have the natural ability to escalate unpleasant feelings to the level of emotional upset, which easily defeats us. In REBT, we are not trying to eliminate all unpleasant emotions, just those that hinder us. Disputing allows us to eliminate irrational thinking that contributes to our disturbed emotions. Then we may remain reasonably sad or concerned so we can be more effective at dealing with difficult situations. To accomplish this we:

D. Dispute the irrational "Bs". Learn to recognize the inaccurate beliefs and distortions of reality which we use to defeat ourselves and needlessly make ourselves miserable.

E. Exchange effective, more accurate, rational self-statements for our dysfunctional beliefs.

Example: How to eliminate or greatly reduce irrational thinking and emotional upsets.

A (adversity): I have been unable to consistently control my substance use.

iB (irrational beliefs # 1 & 2): I MUST control my use! (demandingness) It's HORRIBLE that I cannot completely control my behavior! (exaggeration) I NEED the approval of my friends. (demandingness) NOBODY likes a tea-totaler. So if I, quit I'll lose ALL my friends. (exaggeration/ all-or-nothing thinking)

C (consequences, both emotional and behavioral): Anxiety, depression, and continued failure.

D (dispute): Is there any evidence that I MUST control my use? Where's the evidence it's HORRIBLE to fail at quitting? Can I prove that NOBODY likes a tea-totaler? Is there any evidence that I'll lose ALL my friends?

E (effective new philosophy): There is no evidence I must do anything well. I want to do well, but I do not have to. It's just not human to do well all the time, and I am very human. There is no evidence it's HORRIBLE to fail. It's bad, but not HORRIBLE. There's no evidence that NOBODY likes a tea-totaler and that I'll lose ALL my friends. Some people won't like me, and I may lose some friends, but probably not all of them.

E (effective new emotions and behaviors): Anxiety is eliminated or greatly reduced leaving the emotion of concern. Depression is reduced leaving sadness or regret. Failure is diminished, leaving greater success. I will look for new friends if I lose my old ones.

D (dispute): What good can happen to me if I get rid of my beliefs?

E (effective new philosophy/emotions/behaviors): If I eliminate my beliefs, I will feel better. I will accept myself better even though I am having problems. I can quit with a more realistic view of what will happen. I won't think of quitting as a HORRIBLE experience. It will be easier to quit. I can learn to accept myself even with my shortcomings. I can be reasonably happy even though I have imperfections. I will try to enjoy myself instead of trying to prove my "worth."

D (dispute): What bad things can happen if I keep my belief?

E (effective new philosophy/emotions/behaviors): If I keep my beliefs, I will feel miserable. I will stay anxious, depressed, and self-hating. There is a good chance I will continue to fail to quit. I may never eliminate my addiction. I may continue to feel worthless.

A (adversity): Anxiety about life's events such as job, family, and relationship difficulties.

iB (irrational beliefs): I MUST not be anxious. (demandingness) I CAN'T STAND it. (exaggeration) I'll NEVER get rid of it. (all-or-nothing thinking)


C (consequent emotions and behaviors): Anxiety and depression about my initial anxiety that greatly worsens my misery. I stay anxious and depressed much longer.

D (dispute): Where is the evidence I MUST not be anxious? Prove that I CAN'T STAND this stress. Where's the evidence I'll NEVER get rid of my stress?

E (effective new philosophy): There is no evidence I MUST not be anxious. I'm human, so I can easily make myself anxious. I can't prove that I CAN'T STAND my stress. I don't like it, but I am standing it right now, so I CAN stand it. It's possible that I will not get rid of my stress, but there is no evidence that I absolutely NEVER will do it.

E (effective new emotions/behaviors): Anxiety and depression about feeling anxious become more helpful emotions of concern and disappointment. New hope for change and a realization that it's possible to diminish the initial anxiety by Disputing the irrational beliefs that creates it. Renewed ability to dispute initial irrational thinking.

Acknowledgments: [Alcohol: How To Give It Up And Be Glad You Did](#) by Philip Tate; [When AA Doesn't Work for You: Rational Steps to Quitting Alcohol](#) by Albert Ellis and Emmett Velten. Thank you Team Members: Nick Rajacic, Joe Milon, Phil Tate

 <p>THE TOOL:</p>	<h2 style="margin: 0;">DISARM</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">Destructive Images and Self-talk Awareness & Refusal Method</p>
<p>EFFECTIVELY USED FOR WHICH OF THE SMART RECOVERY[®] FOUR POINTS?</p> <p> <input type="checkbox"/> Building Motivation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Coping with Urges <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solving <input type="checkbox"/> Lifestyle Balance </p>	
<p>EQUIPMENT REQUIRED: None</p>	
<p>WHAT IT IS: DISARM is a tool which exposes the self-talk and images which tell us to use as lies, excuses, and rationalizations. It challenges those urge-producing thoughts at every opportunity, shooting them down like a gunslinger or reducing them to the point of absurdity. All humans, not just humans with substance abuse problems, have thoughts, urges, or other impulses, which, if followed, would harm their long-term interests. Realizing the power of what we think/believe about our strong urges to use and changing distorted thinking is crucial to success. Indeed, the trouble with a philosophy of “Eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die” is that tomorrow comes and we aren’t dead!</p> <p>So, we are wise to first make ourselves aware of our destructive self-talk (thinking that is contrary to our long-term interests) and then refuse to go along with it. While we cannot <i>will</i> ourselves not to have certain thoughts or feelings, including strong urges, we can learn how to recognize that there are actually thoughts driving our urges and how to refuse to go along with them. We can learn to DISARM them. Then we can walk away from the situation or get ourselves involved with something other than focusing on our urge to use.</p>	
<p>WHEN IT IS USED: (Common question or statement that may prompt using this tool)</p> <p>When a member of your group indicates that he/she has been having strong urges -- whether or not he/she given in to them.</p>	
<p>EXAMPLE OF ITS USE IN A SMART RECOVERY[®] MEETING:</p> <p>Ask the group member to ask and answer the following questions. (Note: these questions are valid for all group members if/as they experience a strong urge).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Question: Do I have to give in to the urge because it is intense and hard to resist? Answer: <i>No, I don't have to give in. Because the urge is strong, it would be easy to give in, but I don't HAVE TO. I have had urges that I did not give in to, therefore it must be possible to resist.</i> 2. Question: Will it be awful to deny myself by not giving into the urge? Answer: <i>No, it won't be awful. It may be quite unpleasant, but unpleasant is not awful, it's just unpleasant. If I don't give in to the urge, it will get weaker and come less frequently. If I do give in, the urge will stay strong, be harder to resist next time and show up more frequently.</i> 	

3. **Question:** Is it really unbearable not to give into this urge?
Answer: *I don't like the way it feels to deny my urge, but since it doesn't kill me not to give in, I can keep on resisting. (Remember, individuals drinking large amounts of alcohol may need to go to a detox center when they first stop because the sudden end of alcohol really could be injurious.)*
4. **Question:** Am I somehow entitled to be able to give up using without strong urges to go back to using?
Answer: *No! I don't have a note from God, my mother, SMART Recovery[®] group members or anyone else which entitles me not to have strong urges to use. It may be unpleasant to resist some of my urges, but no one gave me a "get out of unpleasantness free" card.*

The DISARM method allows the individual experiencing the craving to carefully and rationally answer a few key questions. The results will help the individual to understand that the urge truly can be overcome, and that as success is experienced, the urges will be less strong and will occur less frequently.

DISARMING the "ENEMY"

Some people find it helpful to use a technique to dissociate yourself from the voice inside each of us which says, "It's a good idea to do something self-destructive." It is a game you can play with yourself which might help you to: a) identify the specific thoughts which, if followed, would lead to using when you have already decided that, in the long term, this choice is not for you, and b) steadfastly refuse to go along with this thinking no matter how attractive it might seem. Instead of talking yourself into lapsing you can develop powerful countering and coping statements. To do this, it may help to invent and personify an "enemy" who lives in your mind, and whose only purpose is to get you to use. The Enemy (your alter ego) knows you well, and can change form to take advantage of your weakest moments. Name your enemy (i.e., salesman, gangster, diplomat, bad cop). When urges come, ask yourself, "What is s/he telling me now? How is s/he trying to trick me?" When thoughts are identified:

1. Without debate, **ATTACK** the enemy with powerful counter statements: "Nice try, jerk. You can't fool me!" You can be as aggressive or profane as your nature allows with the Enemy - after all, s/he is trying to screw up your life.
2. Then quickly **FOCUS** on some other thoughts, images, or activities which are consistent with what you want in the long run and inconsistent with what the Enemy is saying. The Enemy then loses his power and fades away.

Later on, you can submit the Enemy's tricks to an ABC analysis in order to dispute them. You usually discover irrational themes and patterns to the thoughts and arguments the Enemy throws at you. While coping statements alone will often work, it is important not to omit disputing. If your coping statements aren't working, it is because you don't believe them as strongly as you believe the Enemy. Through disputing we can develop powerful coping statements you fully believe for use in the future. Through actually resisting the Enemy's suggestions, you become increasingly better at doing so.

Acknowledgments: Faust, Mephistopheles, and Jekyll and Hyde. Thanks also to Team Members Nick Rajacic, Hank Robb, Joe Gerstein, and Mike Werner.



THE TOOL:

BRAINSTORMING

EFFECTIVELY USED FOR WHICH OF THE SMART RECOVERY[®] FOUR POINTS?

Building Motivation Coping with Urges Problem Solving Lifestyle Balance

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED: Post-it Notes or Flip chart/Markers or Blackboard & Chalk

WHAT IT IS: Brainstorming is an excellent process often used by many groups (both SMART Recovery[®] groups and other corporations and organizations) who wish to seek fresh solutions to problems.

WHEN IT IS USED: (Common question or statement that may prompt using this tool)

When a member of the group has a particularly challenging problem – one for which there isn't an obvious answer. This problem or situation may fall within any of the four points of the SMART Recovery[®] program.

EXAMPLE OF ITS USE IN A SMART RECOVERY[®] MEETING:

The idea behind brainstorming is to encourage thinking – thinking which should include the notion that *no suggestion is too wild or unwanted*. And... there is to be *no criticism of any suggestion*, regardless of its perceived lack of merit. Suggest to individuals that they plug their minds into a light bulb socket – to go beyond common thinking.

When the challenging problem has arisen, and when all participants are seated and comfortable, the process is explained which includes the following:

1. There's a designated leader (the Facilitator can fill this role).
2. The leader identifies the problem for the group's consideration.
3. The leader goes around the room asking each participant to share an idea (regardless of how wild it is, or how "out of the bounds of normal thinking" it may sound – encourage creative thinking – remember, people thought the Wright Brothers were crazy).
4. Each participant may provide an idea or pass.
5. The leader writes down each idea (post-it notes are great, but a chalkboard or flip chart will do).
6. No one may comment or criticize any idea which is shared. (It's fun to have wadded paper handy – if someone criticizes your idea, you may carefully launch the wad their way.)
7. Continue to go around the room until no additional ideas surface.
8. The leader reads through the list, and if anyone needs clarification on the idea, it is provided at this time.

This process is designed to be fun, and to encourage creative thinking!

Once all of the process steps are accomplished, you will likely have a number of ideas documented. It's useful to take an additional step, referred to as "affinity analysis" to help the individual leave the meeting with some ideas to put into play to overcome the problem or situation. Here's how affinity analysis works:

1. The Facilitator reviews all of the ideas and clarifies the idea, if necessary.
2. Usually the ideas will fall within some major themes or issues. Group commonly-themed ideas together. (This is where post-it notes come in handy...you can stick the common post-it notes together, but if you used a flip chart or blackboard, you can write down headings and place common ideas beneath the heading.)
3. Creative thinking continues to be encouraged – you may find that Betty and John disagree into which category the idea fits. If no agreement is reached, duplicate the idea in both categories.
4. Once everyone agrees with the categories and corresponding ideas, you may wish to ask the group to identify the area that they collectively believe will be most useful to the individual – a starting point that he/she may use when leaving the meeting to overcome the problem or situation.

Remember, the results of brainstorming are dependent upon the individuals gathered and their frame of mind. Two separate groups would likely come up with two sets of unique results. There is no "right" or "wrong" set of recommended solutions/grouping of ideas.

Note: Post-it notes work well with small groups, where individuals can gather around and see the ideas of the other participants. The advantage is that participants can build on each other's ideas.

Acknowledgments: Thank you Team Member Bob Long



THE TOOL:

ROLE PLAY/REHEARSAL

EFFECTIVELY USED FOR WHICH OF THE 4 POINTS?

- Building Motivation
 Coping with Urges
 Problem Solving
 Lifestyle Balance

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED: None

WHAT IT IS: Role Playing is a way by practicing (through simulation) a new behavior in place of an unwanted behavior.

WHEN IT IS USED: (Common question or statement that may prompt using this tool)

When a person feels anxious that they may be in a situation where his or her new desired behaviors may be challenged.

EXAMPLE OF ITS USE IN A SMART RECOVERY[®] MEETING:

Imagine a person who is quitting the use of alcohol and has been invited to a wedding reception where alcohol will be served. Our "person" is anxious for any one of a number of reasons that he/she might be tempted to use.

In this situation we will create a script that will loosely simulate the situation and practice the new behavior dialogue we wish to learn. This scenario involves two people; our participant and another person.

ROLE PLAYING SCENARIO #1:

Companion: "Would you like some champagne?"

Participant: (looks at questioner, makes eye contact, uses name, smiles, and says: "I would like something to drink but something non-alcoholic please. Do they have 7-Up or juice of some kind? Maybe iced tea?" (See below for TIP.)

Sometimes a problem arises because in situations where there is alcohol and one is offered a drink, we are in the habit of thinking of something that has alcohol in it and -- under pressure -- can't think of anything that doesn't have alcohol.

TIP: Be ready! If the choice is a "drink", practice saying ten or twelve different drinks that are alcohol free, such as: lemonade, iced tea, Pepsi, 7-Up, ginger ale, coffee, tea, chocolate milk, orange juice, fruit juice, anything non-alcoholic, water (exotic - with ice and a twist), mineral water, with a twist – very exotic.

ROLE PLAYING SCENARIO #2:

Here our non-user (NU) arrives at the wedding reception alone. He/she must walk into an unfamiliar situation and participate. In the past there has been something in his/her hand -- a drink, a cigarette, etc. There is a need to do what other people are doing. Holding a book might work, or putting their hands in their (own) pockets. If there is a waiter cruising with drinks, the dialog might go something like this:

Waiter: "Champagne?"

NU: (Looks at nametag or if there is no tag, asks the waiter their name and repeats the previously mentioned dialog.)

To practice the role playing:

- 1) Break the whole group into pairs.
- 2) The leader first models the desired behavior of both roles.
- 3) All the pairs practice, each person playing both the role of the participant and the role of the waiter/companion. All people in the group participate (to avoid the "goldfish bowl" performance effect). It is better to have the pairs all play through the cycle (one cycle is where each person has played both roles) at least twice - three times is even better. Pairs can monitor their proficiency by the fluency of their own responses.

Try to set aside another time later during the meeting to practice this a second time. This practice is brief and should be easy to do.

If there's time it might be a good idea to briefly practice the skit at the next meeting.

* * * * *

Note from the author: We've used this a few times in our meetings, and each time our participants were VERY PLEASED with their new skills, and they felt more confident in their ability to face other situations where they might be tempted.

Acknowledgments: Thank you Team Member Bob Long



THE TOOL:

Unconditional Self-Acceptance

EFFECTIVELY USED FOR WHICH OF THE 4 POINTS?

Building Motivation
 Coping with Urges
 Problem Solving
 Lifestyle Balance

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED: None

USA Today - by Nick Rajacic, MSW

I accept myself because I'm alive and have the capacity to enjoy my existence. I am not my behavior. I can rate my traits and my behavior, but it is impossible to accurately and honestly rate something as complex as my self. My self consists of innumerable traits; no single one is all important unless I decide that it is. Exaggerating the importance of any one trait will cause me more grief than it will help me.

I strive for achievement only to enhance the enjoyment of my existence, not to prove my worth.

Failing at any task cannot make me a failure. I can choose to accept myself even if I am unwilling or unable to change my character defects, because there is no law of the universe that says I can't.

My approval of myself cannot come from pandering to any external source or bowing to any external authority. My self-acceptance can only come from me, and I am free to choose it at any time.

USA Everyday - by Henry Steinberger, Ph.D.

The myth of variable self-worth is based on a self-rating scheme that differs from person to person, but in all cases it involves choosing arbitrary traits or attributes to rate, because NO set of attributes exists that would universally and perpetually define intrinsic or self worth. An attribute or set of attributes would cover only relative extrinsic worth (worth compared to some arbitrary standard) or worth in relation to others and their goals (e.g., Do they accept me?).

Can you rate red as good or bad? Only in relationship to some goal, but not universally. You can say it is more or less red, that red is good or bad for some purpose, or that one likes or dislikes red, but never honestly that red is inherently good or bad. By way of analogy, a person—their self, essence, or being—can never be accurately and honestly rated, though it may be done regularly much to the person's detriment. Refuse to rate yourself and save yourself from the emotional disturbances and behavioral traps that come with the self-rating game.

The self-esteem game. Many if not most people put others down in order to prove that others rate no better, or worse, than they themselves do and so they build themselves up in this comparative rating scheme. The antidote would be unconditional other acceptance. Practicing UOA can be good practice for maintaining better USA.

Starting a SMART Recovery[®] Meeting

Step 1: Learn about SMART Recovery[®]

Having read this far in this manual, or even having skimmed it, you already know more about SMART Recovery[®] than most people do. As a Facilitator, you are not responsible to know all of the answers, even about SMART Recovery[®]. Perhaps you have read *The SMART Recovery[®] Handbook*, explored our web page or viewed some of our DVD's. Although you might like to learn even more, to further boost your confidence and increase your motivation, and there is lots of SMART Recovery[®] literature to review, **do not get discouraged**. You do not need to read it all or even most of it.

Perhaps the best source of program information is *The SMART Recovery[®] Handbook*. But if you are a slow reader, or 90 pages seems daunting, remember that you do not have to memorize the material, you can always refer back to it, there is no examination to pass, and your familiarity with the program will grow after your group gets going.

Focus on getting your meeting up and running! Once your meeting is going, you will start meeting others who may want to have SMART Recovery[®] meetings.

Again, you do NOT have to become an expert on recovery or support groups, or even on SMART Recovery[®]. Most of the people attending the meeting can probably read the Handbook and the web site as well as you can. They will appreciate getting together with others and having a discussion much more than a lesson with a know-it-all.

As a Facilitator (and that word was chosen carefully) you are not there to lead, to teach, to run the show, to diagnosis, to do therapy, to do it all, to know everything about everything, or to burn yourself out. You are there to facilitate a meeting, which means to make it possible to have a meeting and then make it easy to get through a meeting. You are there to launch the meeting and, like cop directing traffic, see that the discussion goes forward with everyone getting a turn if they want it.

TIP: The best Facilitators often do the least! Once you have people meeting, you may choose to do little more than prompt the group along the meeting outline by reading from a script; and we supply some suggested scripts.

Are you waiting until you “feel” confident? Do not put the cart before the horse. Please remember that the best way to build the confidence for doing something is to do that thing despite your lack of confidence.

Step 2: Find a meeting location

Make sure it is available on a weekly basis over time. To have a weekly meeting, you will need a meeting place that is available at the same time each week. While that seems obvious, you need to check with the provider of that location regarding booking it in advance for a definite length of time. Some providers will not promise more than a few months and require that you ask for an extension periodically. If this is so, then you had better put an early “reminder” on your calendar so you are the first to request a renewal for your site for each booking period. Experience shows us that most meetings become both well-known and welcome fixtures at their meeting sites and continue indefinitely without a problem.

What makes a good meeting location?

WARNING: We strongly recommend that you not hold a meeting in a private home. Meetings are open to individuals who you might not want in your home or might not want to have your address. It is essential that you maintain your privacy and security.

We suggest finding a site that is:

1. **Free** of charge or very nearly free. (If a good meeting space is provided by an organization that is a non-profit, it may be worthwhile for the group to provide a yearly donation to that provider to maintain a positive relationship.)
2. **Safe.** A location not in a high crime area and preferably, non-smoking.
3. **Convenient and accessible.** Both for you as well as other meeting attendees. (Near public transportation and parking; easy to find; handicapped accessible.)

TIP: Because it can take months for a new meeting to have a regular following, the volunteer Facilitator’s convenience is an important factor in choosing a location and meeting time. Clearly, starting a meeting is a relatively long-term commitment (e.g., 6-12 months) and it is much easier to make this commitment if the location is only a few minutes away, and the time is convenient.

4. **Private.** The meeting space should be private, preferably with a closable door, in order to maintain confidentiality.
5. **Large enough.** The area should be large enough to accommodate a meeting of 20 or more people (as the number attending may surge on some occasions).
6. **Clean and comfortable.** While attractive is nice, it is not required.
7. **Unlocked** during your meeting time or with keys to get in and lock up.

Where to look for a meeting site?

TIP: A less than ideal meeting place may suffice, at least to get started.

You might consider:

1. “Community Rooms” (Neighborhood organizations, other non-profits)
2. Public and government buildings, libraries, hospitals and treatment centers
3. Businesses that have conference rooms, like corporations or book stores
4. Hospitals and rehabilitation centers
5. “Humanist” (American Humanist Assoc.) and other secular organizations like unions or fraternal organizations may have meeting sites
6. Houses of worship (denominations like Unitarian-Universalists and other progressives may be more open to supporting our science-based program)
7. Any place that already hosts 12-Step meetings

(Please let the Central Office know of any suggestions we may have missed that work for you.)

How to approach the management and ask for use of a meeting space:

1. **Make a list of organizations that might have a meeting place** and be prepared to call as many as necessary. You might consult the phone book, the web, the local United Way and others who might help you put together your list.
2. **Have a day, a time and an earliest starting date in mind.** Know when you (and anyone else who may be facilitating meetings with you) can regularly be available to facilitate a meeting. REMEMBER, you need a place that you can use weekly at the same time - indefinitely if possible - or for long periods (yearly?).
3. **Seek a place that is convenient for you.** As it may take some time before your group gets going, and you might be sitting alone (reading about SMART Recovery[®]) for the first few meetings, you can help yourself stay committed and motivated by making sure that the meeting place is not aversively inconvenient for you.
4. **Call and say:** *“I am starting a SMART Recovery[®] meeting and am seeking a place in which to hold a meeting. Do you have a meeting space we could use that would seat anywhere from 12 to 20 people? We hold our meetings weekly and they run for 90 minutes.”* (See [Appendix C](#))
5. **Try to arrange a face-to-face meeting with the person in charge** so you can answer their questions. It is more difficult to turn someone down in person than on the phone and your appearance may overcome some negative stereotypes of people with addictions or who help people with addictive behaviors.
6. **When asked about SMART Recovery[®], be prepared to explain:** *“We are volunteers facilitating meetings that help people get free from harmful addictions with mutual support and our science based program. We do not charge for meetings, so we cannot usually pay for the space, though once established, we may be able to contribute out of our locally collected donations.”*

7. **Be sure to provide or send a short written explanation or brochures** about SMART Recovery[®] and the SMART Recovery 4-Point Program[®].
8. **Be able and willing to explain the need for SMART Recovery[®]** to one or more people: *“One size does not fit all. Some people use our meetings and tools to supplement their 12-Step meetings and others need an alternative to the 12-Step program. We serve them all. Our program is abstinence oriented, free of charge, supports personal responsibility and teaches self-management skills.”*
9. **Be patient.** Very often, permission is needed to be obtained from a committee of the host organization, but keep calling and seeking other potential sites. **Do not stop looking while one group considers your request.** You need to keep looking until you find a meeting place.
10. **If you get a negative response,** ask if they could recommend another location.
11. **Make it understood that the meeting will be open to the community** on a drop-in, no prior screening basis, just like AA, and that this has never been a problem. Assure the host organization that our meetings are facilitated by responsible volunteers familiar with our program who will see that the meetings run smoothly and people get out on time.
12. **Assure them that SMART Recovery[®] has held meetings around the world** and that they have helped many people and saved many lives.
13. **Suggest that they can learn more about SMART Recovery[®] at our web site.**

Notes

Step 3: Publicize your meetings

1. **Decide on a start date** to put on your early announcements.
2. **Decide on a phone number and outgoing message.**

It is usually easiest and by far less expensive to use an already existing phone number. What is ideal is a line on an answering machine or an extension on a voice mail service. Many answering machines will allow you to assign a separate box with its own message for SMART Recovery[®]. Perhaps the office where you work will give you a separate extension for SMART Recovery[®].

If you choose to pay for a dedicated phone number, you might consider listing it in the yellow pages under appropriate categories (*Hint: look where AA is listed*). In the white pages, consider listing under both SMART Recovery[®] and “Smart Recovery[®],” if acronyms are listed at the beginning of each letter section in your phone book. Someone who does not know that SMART Recovery[®] is an acronym will look for Smart and not find it unless a second listing has been established. Once again, make note that this is for a non-profit and ask about special rates.

See [Appendix D](#) for a suggested outgoing message for an answering machine, but feel free to tailor it toward the specific needs of your local area and messaging options.

3. **Prepare flyers, brochures and announcements.**

Suggested flier and brochure designs in which you can cut, paste and add your local information and creative touch are available to download from our web site.

Frame an announcement of a few lines to place in newspapers and a public service announcement that you, or an announcer, can read on the radio. These can be downloaded from the web site as well.

4. **Distribute the information as broadly as possible.**

- a) Did you complete the Registration Form ([Appendix B](#)) register as a volunteer Facilitator and list your group with SMART Central Office? This may very well be your best resource for publicizing your meeting. The organization puts in a lot of effort to attract people to our web site... do not let this resource go to waste.
- b) Run off posters announcing your meeting and put them up where ever you can: poster kiosks, community bulletin boards; that is, wherever it is legal. Ask in stores where you see poster in the windows or on boards if you can add yours. It is good to bring along pushpins, tape, and a staple gun when you go out on this task.
- c) Call your local newspapers, free entertainment papers, community or neighborhood papers, etc. and ask about posting a free community calendar announcement
- d) Speak to the features editor or the science and health editor of local newspapers about doing a story on SMART Recovery[®] and the new local meeting.

- e) After their relatives and friends, most people then seek help with addictions from their doctors and clergy. Try leaving a few brochures with doctors, health clinics, rehabilitation centers, and houses of worship, and ask meeting attendees to give a few to their doctors and clergy.
- f) Call the local radio stations, plug in: "your city, state" and "radio stations" to Google or any other search engine to get a listing. Ask them to please run a public service announcement regarding your meeting (be prepared to send them the written copy including a blurb about SMART Recovery[®], the time and place of the meeting, and if not yet running, a start date).
- g) Try the same with local TV stations. Some stations can use a printed announcement that they can put on the screen with or without a voice over.
- h) You might call up and arrange to speak to as many local civic organizations as you have time for (senior centers, the department of health and social services, groups trying to stop parental violence, fraternal organizations, "church" groups, professional organizations (counselors, psychologists, doctors, lawyers, "employee assistance professionals", ...).
- i) See that one or more copies of *The SMART Recovery[®] Handbook* are available from your local library. If not, request that they buy one (Author: Henry Steinberger, Publisher: Alcohol & Drug Abuse Self-Help Network, Inc. d.b.a. SMART Recovery[®]; 7304 Mentor Avenue, Suite F; Mentor, OH 44060; www.smartrecovery.org; ISBN: 0-615-13135-2). If you are turned down, see if they carry the book: *Alcoholics Anonymous* by Bill Wilson (The Big Book). If they do have it, make them aware of the inconsistency and ask once again. Offer to donate a copy.
- j) List SMART Recovery[®] with any "help-lines" your city or helping agencies offer in your locale (211, United Way, First Call for Help, The Mayor's Office, etc.). You may have to do some research to find them all.
- k) List SMART Recovery[®] on your local Craig's List and any other free cyber listings you can find. (Let the Central Office know about these, as we'd like to expand this suggestion with details.)
- l) Put out a request for volunteers where available on the web sites and agencies found for (j) and (k) above. This leads us to the next, optional but suggested steps.

OPTIONAL STEP:

Recruiting Co-Facilitators

While nobody plans to get “burned-out”, be indisposed with an illness, or called away for an emergency, it **DOES** happen! In addition, don’t forget about vacations!

The best way to guarantee that your meeting survives, no matter what may happen, is to recruit as many Co-Facilitators as you can. It’s not easy, so you had best start early. You might look for potential new Facilitators:

1. Among the people attending your meetings (when they are ready and secure in their “recovery”);
2. Your friends if they have similar interests;
3. Professionals (this is a great experience for anyone who works with people or who wants to work with people; and it establishes good will in the community),
4. College students in fields related to this (counseling, social work, psychology, etc; noting that this can be a great learning experience and looks good on a resume).

NOTES

OPTIONAL STEP:

Free Handouts

While not absolutely required, people do like to go home with something in hand to help them immediately engage in the program. Such handouts are available from the Central Office or the SMART Recovery[®] website. People can download these free samples of our methods (found in more detail in *The SMART Recovery[®] Handbook*), but it may be well worth running off copies to give to newcomers attending your SMART Recovery[®] meeting for the first time. A useful handout, and the opportunity to speak, may enhance the rate at which people return to the meeting following their first experience.

The handout also helps sell *The SMART Recovery[®] Handbook*, brings people to the SMART Recovery[®] website with its chat, message board and SROL - SMART Recovery[®] Online - meeting opportunities, and further promotes donations.

Please add this (or something like it) on all of your handouts:

Please remember to support SMART Recovery[®] by visiting our web site and locating the "Support us" link, by giving a donation when we pass the hat or by calling the SMART Recovery[®] Central Office.

OPTIONAL STEP:

Finding a Volunteer Advisor

The Central Office can help you find a Volunteer Advisor, either in your locality (perhaps your state or region) or in cyberspace via email. Your advisor's job will be to encourage you and answer any questions you might have about the SMART Recovery[®] program, facilitating meetings and operating your local organization during start-up and as it continues.

The Volunteer Advisor is typically a person who has some experience in setting up SMART Recovery[®] meetings and a sound understanding of the program. As you network in your community, you may be able to identify potential candidates to become your local Volunteer Advisor.

It is hoped that you will take the initiative and responsibility to form a relationship with your Advisor. Check in with your Volunteer Advisor as needed so that he/she can help you or at least be aware of what is happening.

SOME local advisors are willing to take on some administrative duties (*e.g. responding to voice mail messages, going out on speaking engagements, covering a meeting when others can't*), while others will just answer questions about dealing with difficult acting people and technical questions, for instance, questions about addiction and its treatment.

Expenses and Record Keeping

Plan to keep your start up costs within a range that you can afford to absorb. You may later reimburse yourself for these expenses from the group's donations, though if you can afford it you might choose to consider it, along with your time, a donation to a great cause.

If you will be taking it off on your taxes or you plan to reimburse yourself the outlay from the group's donations, then it is important to start keeping records even before your group starts meeting.

Donations. Passing the hat for donations is essential for most groups. After you start meeting, be sure to pass the hat confidently. Provide a brief explanation of the group's expenses like copying, mailing, appreciation to the organization lending you the meeting place, and especially to the support of the SMART Recovery[®] Central Office and web site. The national organization not only supports your group, it also helps start other groups. Making SMART Recovery[®] more available is not only a compassionate and altruistic thing to do, but it also makes your group more appealing. We have found that as SMART Recovery[®] becomes better known and perceived as more widely available, those who make referrals become more willing to refer people to SMART Recovery[®]. It is helpful to mention that no fee is charged, but the cost of a single drink, or pack of cigarettes, if not the cost of an evening "using" might be the size of donation to consider.

Keeping a ledger is important. Be sure to keep a record of income, including donations collected and money received for the sale of *The SMART Recovery[®] Handbook*. Also keep track of all group expenses, including money sent to the Central Office, donated or paid (if required) to the people providing the meeting space, copying and other incidental expenses, key making, your initial training materials, and the purchase of handbooks to be sold.

Tax deductibility of donations. Individual donations (though not the groups' collected donations) can currently be considered as an itemized deduction on one's taxes, but a receipt is required. We do not have the time at meetings to make out receipts for every dollar donated, but if someone wishes to make a donation and receive a receipt acceptable to the IRS, they can do so on line at our web site or by sending a check to the Central Office. Please make checks payable to **SMART Recovery[®]** or **The Alcohol and Drug Abuse Self-Help Network, Inc.** and include the donor's contact information for the receipt.

Mileage expenses. You can claim a deduction on your personal income tax for the mileage you drive related to your volunteer work, but then you must keep records of that too.

IMPORTANT: Do not construe the forgoing as tax advice from a professional. Consult a tax professional or the IRS as needed for the current rules and how they apply to you.

Appendix A

The Code of Conduct for SMART Recovery® Volunteers

Although the following principles and behavioral guidelines for ethical conduct by SMART Recovery® Volunteers may seem obvious, we state them here to reflect without doubt what is expected.

We have deep and abiding trust in those who have done so much for SMART Recovery®. We have put these principles and guidelines in writing so that any reader can see the level of ethics and efficacy that is expected and found in our Volunteers.

Principles of being a SMART Recovery® Volunteer

- **Promote Independence from Addictive Behavior:** *We promote gaining independence from addictive behavior based on the principles and concepts of SMART Recovery®.*
- **Serve as a Community Resource:** *We make SMART Recovery® available to our local neighborhoods and serve as a resource for our communities.*
- **Respect the Dignity and Worth of the Person:** *We strive to treat each meeting participant with care and respect, mindful of individual differences and cultural and ethnic diversity.*
- **Act with Integrity:** *We strive to act honestly and responsibly and to conduct ourselves in a manner consonant with the goals and principles of SMART Recovery®.*

Behavioral Guidelines

- **Honor our Commitments:** In our capacity as Facilitators, we are responsible for conducting meetings consistent with the principles and concepts of SMART Recovery®. This includes striving to maintain focused discussions and to balance opportunities for individual participation with the needs of the group. We will endeavor to hold all meetings as scheduled. In other volunteer roles, we take our commitments seriously, understanding our roles are critical in the support of the overall functions of the SMART Recovery® organization.
- **Support Self-Determination of Participants:** We respect and promote the right of participants to socially responsible self-determination and assist them in their efforts to identify and clarify their goals regarding addictive behavior within the context of SMART Recovery®. Where a participant's goals are outside the scope of SMART Recovery®, we encourage them to seek more appropriate options.

- **Pursue Knowledge and Competence:** All volunteers are expected to learn about the concepts of SMART Recovery.[®] Facilitators apply these concepts in meetings and function as leaders within a peer-group, self-help setting to help foster a group process that encourages learning and development in gaining and maintaining independence from addictive behaviors.
- **Support Social Diversity:** We strive to actively understand and respect issues of social diversity, including race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital/partner status, political belief, religion, and mental or physical ability.
- **Protect Confidentiality:** We respect and promote confidentiality and the participants' right to privacy at all times, both in and out of meetings, including all verbal, written, and electronic communications. A Volunteer should not solicit or disclose private information about a participant that is unrelated to the focus of SMART Recovery[®] or that may put a participant at risk. If a participant appears to be at risk of imminent harm to self or others, a Volunteer may contact the local SMART Recovery[®] Volunteer Advisor, the local crisis intervention agency, or the local police/medical/mental health authority. If required by local law, we may be required to report to local authorities regarding disclosures relating to child or elder abuse.
- **Avoid Conflicts of Interest:** Under no circumstances should we exploit a participant relationship or meeting to further personal, religious, political, or business interests. We should strive to be alert to and avoid conflicts of interest.
- **Avoid Engaging in Harassment:** Under no circumstances should we engage in any form of verbal, emotional, or physical harassment. Under no circumstances should we seek to exploit a participant relationship for sexual activity or engage in sexual harassment of participants, including sexual advances, sexual solicitations, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.
- **Work Together:** We strive to work cooperatively with other members the SMART Recovery[®] organization. We strive to acknowledge the positive contributions of other programs aimed at gaining independence from addictive behavior.
- **Provide Accurate Representation:** We make clear distinctions between statements made as a private individual and those made as representatives of SMART Recovery[®]. We represent ourselves as knowledgeable only within the scope of our experience.
- **Seek Solutions:** In the event that a Volunteer or Volunteer Advisor has an ethical lapse or an addictive behavior relapse, appropriate members of the SMART Recovery[®] organization will be contacted to determine an appropriate course of action.

Appendix B

VOLUNTEER & NEW MEETING REGISTRATION FORM

(Please type your information directly into this form and save a copy prior to emailing.)

This information is collected to provide the Central Office with your volunteer status and meeting information, which will be added to the volunteer database to ensure you receive the periodic mailings sent to volunteers. Your personal information will not be shared with anyone-it is strictly for our records.

I am a *(check all that apply)*:

SMART Recovery Face-to-Face: Meeting Facilitator Alternate/Substitute Facilitator
Volunteer Advisor Treatment Professional using SMART Recovery with clients

SMART Recovery Online (SROL): Meeting Facilitator Meeting Helper
 Message Board or Chat Volunteer SROL Username: _____

I completed/will be completing the required Distance Training Program: (MM/YY) _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____ Postal Code: _____ Country: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Yes! Subscribe me to SMARTCAL, the email listserv for all SMART Recovery volunteers. SMARTCAL is the primary method of communication between volunteers, the Board of Directors, updates from the Central Office, etc. and is a place to pose questions regarding any meeting, organizational, or other issues.

Your Face-to-Face meeting information *(as you wish it to be listed on the website)*:

This is: A new SMART Recovery Meeting An existing SMART Recovery Meeting

This meeting is: Open to the public Closed for patients/clients only

Facilitator's Name(s): _____

Facilitator phone number(s): _____

Email Address: _____

Starting Date: _____ Meeting day: _____ Time: _____

Meeting Location: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Please save and email a copy of the completed form to: vrf@smartrecovery.org

Revised: December 2013

NOTE: Our quarterly newsletter, **News & Views**, is available online via the SMART Recovery[®] website.

Appendix C

Suggested Script for Seeking a Meeting Place

NOTE: STOP using this script when they say “YES” and move on to arranging a time to meet with them to work out the details (the time and space, learning their conditions; e.g. no smoking, will you will be responsible to lock up, where can you leave a folder with your SMART Recovery[®] handouts, books and materials, etc.).

When making initial contact with a possible location, you might say:

“I am interested in starting a SMART Recovery[®] meeting and I am calling to find out if you have any meeting space available ...” (pause; usual question is: What’s SMART?)

“SMART Recovery[®] is a mutual aid group for individuals desiring to abstain from addictive behavior. It is abstinence oriented and free of charge. It teaches increasing self control using methods drawn from treatment and recovery research”.

IF it seems appropriate, that is - this is not a church or spiritually oriented group and they ask how it’s different from AA you might add, *“SMART Recovery[®] offers a program based on science rather than faith in a higher power and so does not require any religious or spiritual beliefs.”*

“May I give/send you information about SMART Recovery[®] for you to review?”

“When would be a convenient time for me to follow up?”

If they say **“NO”**, you might say:

“I’m sorry that you have no space available. Could you recommend another possible location?”

In addition, to open meetings (which any interested individual may attend), you may also discover opportunities to lead closed meetings or help an agency run their own closed meetings. A closed meeting is generally hosted by an institution, for its own members (e.g., a prison, a hospital, a homeless shelter). These same institutions may also allow open meetings.

Appendix D

Suggested Script for Your Telephone Message

Hello, this is _____, volunteer to your local SMART Recovery[®] group. This message may answer most of your questions about our local meetings and program.

If you have other questions and want a call back, please wait until the end and, after the tone, leave your name and phone number and if you require confidentiality how you want me to contact you.

The **SMART** in **SMART Recovery**[®] stands for “Self-Management And Recovery Training”. Our program is based on science, research findings and reason. Spirituality, religion and higher powers are not part of our program. Such beliefs, or lack of such beliefs, are entirely up to you. Some people prefer these meetings and this program as their alternative, and other people attend our meetings and use our tools as a useful supplement to the spiritually oriented meetings they also attend.

Our volunteer Facilitator(s) offer(s) weekly 90 minute self-help meeting(s). Like our meetings around the world, there is no charge, though donations are requested and gratefully accepted. Our drop-in meetings require no prior registration and are non-smoking.

Our _____ meeting begins at _____ the address is: _____.
(place) (time)

----- *(Repeat the above format for additional meetings)* -----

The SMART Recovery[®] program is also available on the web at www.smartrecovery.org (that’s www dot smartrecovery without a space; dot O-R-G). There, you can find online meetings in both text and chat formats, our Message Board, informal chat and support, free downloadable SMART Recovery[®] self-help materials, the SMART Recovery[®] Online store selling *The SMART Recovery[®] Handbook*, which is available in several languages (*including Spanish and Portuguese*).

Though there is no charge for our meetings, your donations keep our office and web site running, helping us reach people seeking our program, and allowing us to continue recruiting and training more volunteers who start and facilitate our meetings.

If you have further questions, after the tone, please leave your name, your phone number spoken slowly so I can write it down, and any questions you have so I can prepare the answers and I will call you back as soon as possible. Thank you for your interest and have a nice day.