

Intro to SMART Recovery

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SMART Recovery (SMART) is a science-based program to help people manage their recovery from any type of addictive behavior. This includes addictive behavior with substances such as alcohol, nicotine or drugs, or compulsive behaviors such as gambling, sex, eating, shopping, self-harming and so on. SMART stands for 'Self Management And Recovery Training'.

SMART began in 1994 in the United States. It has grown into a worldwide network of self-help meetings, both face-to-face and online, where participants can get help from others in recovery. SMART operates as a non-profit organization in many countries including the United States, the UK, Canada and Australia.

There is no single approach to recovery that is right for everyone. Research into various recovery methods and therapies suggests that mutual aid can help recovery and so can treatment – a combination of the two is probably even better for many people.

SMART Recovery helps participants decide whether they have a problem, builds up their motivation to change and offers a set of proven tools and techniques to support recovery. This is the SMART Recovery 4-point program:

- Building and maintaining motivation
- Coping with urges
- Managing thoughts, feelings and behaviors
- Living a balanced life

People can stay with SMART as long as they wish. There is no requirement to make a lifetime commitment to the program, just to their recovery and leading a healthier life.

Many people find that continuing to participate in SMART after they have recovered helps them avoid lapses or relapses. Some will volunteer to train as facilitators and set up further meetings. Others simply continue to attend meetings and share their experiences with others.

Within SMART, labels are not thought to help with recovery and are avoided. People are not called 'addicts', 'alcoholics', 'druggies', 'overeaters', 'sex addicts' or other disparaging label within meetings.

SMART Recovery will not be able to help with every kind of problem and participants are encouraged to seek professional help when needed.

SMART Resources

The SMART handbook can be purchased at <https://shop.smartrecovery.org/product/books/smart-recovery-handbook-3rd-edition/> for \$12. It's an excellent resource for those interested in trying out SMART, and worth its weight in gold!

Many of the SMART worksheets can be downloaded here: <http://smartrecoverybc.com/index.php/resources/tool-chest-and-homework.html>

GYE also hosts a closed SMART recovery phone conference for men. Since it's just a pilot there are limited openings. If you really want to join, you can write to me at info@guardyoureyes.org.

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