

FIVE WAYS TO CHANGE


Introduction
Five Ways to Change




Welcome Dear Friend To RECOVERY Through
CHANGE,

You will already have come to appreciate the truly
wonderful adventure upon which you are now
embarked: the adventure of SOBRIETY.


You have already begun that adventure!




By participating in this RECOVERY Program, being treated for your chemical dependency (or another addictive disease or life—style disorder), you are actively demonstrating to yourself and others — including your family, friends, employers — that you are willing and able to CHANGE.



Being "willing and able" to CHANGE, does NOT mean that you necessarily feel good about getting clean and sober, or that your thinking, which is of course controlled by your addiction,...




...is telling you that SOBRIETY and RECOVERY are good things. We understand that your thoughts and your feelings are strongly opposed to you getting clean and sober.




But even though your feelings and your thinking are strongly against yourself, it is still possible for you to get clean and sober - despite yourself and your addiction - by what you DO!


You CHANGE according to what you DO!




So, if some small part of you is able to recognize that you need to CHANGE, to get clean and sober and RECOVER from your disease — your problem – of chemical dependency, you might ask the question: "How am I going to CHANGE while I'm here in this setting, in this Chemical Dependency RECOVERY Program?"




In brief reply to your important question, here in this
RECOVERY program and process, WE HELP EACH
OTHER TO CHANGE.




In this "recovery community" which we all have created here - patients, family, friends, nurses, doctors, therapists, volunteers, alumni, or other specialists – we help each other to CHANGE, to get into RECOVERY.




WE HELP EACH OTHER TO CHANGE. That statement is not theory. Here in this program of treatment, change and recovery, we help each other to change in very specific and concrete ways.




To begin with, we do not criticize one another. The last thing we need when we lack self confidence and a sense of wholeness is to be driven to doubt ourselves even more.




So we cheerfully create a positive, therapeutic, "recovery community" where we each feel safe to grow and to change, to practice NEW BEHAVIORS, new ways to talking to other people, new ways of DOING, feeling, and thinking.



There are five important ways in which we help each other to CHANGE here in this program of RECOVERY from chemical dependency (or other addictive diseases and life-style disorders):



In this RISKY program of RECOVERY, people learn and experience CHANGE by being listened to, touched, validated, supported, and offered alternatives.



So while participating in this RECOVERY program, attending sessions, and interacting with others, including other recovering persons, therapists, and everyone in our community, you will see that we do a lot of listening, touching, validating, supporting, and offering of alternatives.

Five Ways to Change

1. LISTENING:

Listening means actively listening. Many of us hear but few of us listen. We listen to the other person here in this program. We attend to the total person - to the tone, inflections, and modulations of voice, to facial expressions, to gestures-, to body posture, and to other nuances of communication.

We practice listening here.

2. TOUCHING:

Virtually all of us are skin-starved. Touch—starved. We have need of non-sexual, non-threatening, physical contact with other men and women. So here in this RECOVERY program, we practice a lost of simple physical touching...

2. TOUCHING: (con't)

...like hugs, back rubs, circling of hugs, and other exercises that express friendship and affection, and which also touch the spirit. Practice non-threatening TOUCHING, as an important NEW BEHAVIOR of your CHANGING.

3. VALADATION:

Validation (positive acceptance) by others helps encourage self—validation (self-acceptance, or self esteem. "The Velveteen Rabbit," a selection from children's literature with an important adult message for addicts...

3. VALADATION: (con't)

... illustrates beautifully the concept of being "real," of being unconditionally accepted when you are just plain you, without pretending anything, or without holding back anything about your anger or fear or guilt or confusion.

3. VALADATION: (con't)

So in RECOVERY we practice validating ourselves and others, by saying positive things to one another.

For example, "I respect you for . . ." or, "I admire you because . . ." or, "I appreciate your quality of . . ." or, "I like . . ." or, "I cherish . . ." or, "Thank you for . . ."

3. VALADATION: (con't)

We practice those kinds of validations by writing lots of fuzzies, and by actually saying those kinds of things directly to one another.

Practice.

4. SUPPORTING:

We support one another here. We say to you and to each other, "I won't give up on you." We all know that you have been afraid, that you have feared rejection, even though you may have pretended you were unafraid and that you didn't care whether you were rejected or not.

4. SUPPORTING: (con't)


But here in this program of RECOVERY we don't have to pretend. We do help each other. "I will support you – unconditionally." "You can lean on me." "We will support you. As a group, together we have the power." You have tried it alone, and failed. But you will succeed here. We practice SUPPORTING one another here.

5. ALTERNATIVES:

Being in this RECOVERY process, you have already chosen the master ALTERNATIVE. You have chosen sobriety over drunkenness. Freedom over the slavery of addiction.


5. ALTERNATIVES: (con't)

Self-respect over "pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization." A manageable life over one of unmanageability. You have chosen health over sickness. Happiness and joy over misery and depression.



Every day you have the opportunity to practice freely choosing positive alternatives over negative ones in your thinking and feelings and behavior. You can choose to seek recovery by what you DO, by what you practice.
Participate.

Practice learning to change by risking NEW BEHAVIORS. Practice at the program sessions and twelve-step meetings. Practice while talking to others each day. Practice the qualities of Honesty, Open mindedness, and Willingness -H.O.W., to the Best of your ability.



In this RECOVERY program you are encouraged to practice choosing positive, healthy ALTERNATIVES in you THINKING, FEELINGS, and most importantly, in what you DO!

So dear friend, join us in this program of RISK, CHANGE, and RECOVERY.



Practice LISTENING, TOUCHING, VALIDATING,
SUPPORTING, and choosing positive, healthy
ALTERNATIVES.

If you DO these things you will RECOVER!

With love and respect to you,

The Fellowship of Recovery