



Be SMART: Family and Carers Program

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November 4th 2010



Why develop a program for Family and Carers?

- Perceived need in the community for support for people living with or caring for a person with addictive behaviours. Lack of services.
- Working on telephone lines at ADIS – large percentage of calls from those in a close relationship with relatives or friends of those with addictive behaviours either feeling that they are not coping or wanting to help the other person.
- Group program seen as having the advantage of breaking down stigma, reducing isolation and building support.



Aims of the Be SMART program

- Assist participants to develop more effective strategies for coping with the challenging behaviour of the addicted person.
- Help participants to shift the focus from trying to change or “fix” the other person to putting their energy into making their own life richer and more meaningful.
- Decrease isolation and stigma by putting people in touch with others in a similar situation
- Increase participants’ well being through sharing of ideas and support.



How was it developed?

- Based on the SMART Recovery model
- CBT (large body of evidence for its effectiveness)
- Self Management – accepting what you can't change and focusing on developing skills to change what you can (ie - own responses, developing a full and meaningful life despite the difficulties of living with an addicted other)
- Developing and maintaining the motivation to change (invites participants to look at the costs/benefits of remaining the same vs making a change)



- Coping with urges (to control, try to fix or enable the addicted other)
- Problem solving (thoughts , feelings and behaviour, using the ABCs of CBT)
- Finding a lifestyle balance (shifting focus away from addicted other to parts of life that may be neglected)
- However slightly different from SMART Recovery, in that it is a structured 8 week program.
- Facilitator would be professional rather than peer
- At present in draft format awaiting trial and evaluation



What does the program cover?

- The program invites participants to focus on their own lives and their responses to the other person.
- Invites participants to explore their own behaviour in relation to the addicted other. How well has it been working? What has worked and what hasn't.
- Invites participants to let go of the struggle and focus on their own lives and leading a meaningful life, despite the difficulties of living with the other person.



Session topics:

- 1. Finding the motivation to change
- 2. Self care and self rewards
- 3. Introduction to the ABCs of CBT
- 4. Assertive Communication skills
- 5. Safety and support
- 6. Problem solving
- 7. Coping with lapses
- 8. Goal setting



Where would it be used?

- As a program for family and carers in detoxes, rehabs, drug and alcohol counselling services

Who would facilitate?

- Rather than being a peer- run program, this program has been designed to be run by professionals.



Where are we up to?

- First draft of facilitators and participants manual written.
- Evaluation measures developed – using a combination of quantitative and qualitative measures – pre and post DASS and semi-structured pre and post interviews
- Sydney Clinic partnership



CONTACT DETAILS

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