

ESSENTIAL RECOVERY: GRACE & TRUST

BUILDING BLOCKS OF EARLY RECOVERY



WITH EXERCISES FROM "REGAINING TRUST" APPENDED
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DANIEL L. SMITH

MA ABD LCSW CCGC NCGCII CISD SAP EIEIO

CLINICAL SUPERVISOR,

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PROBLEM
GAMBLING, INC.

314 265 2440 EMAIL GORRILLA8M@AOL.COM

GRACE & TRUST; objectives:



- How to help clients rebuild trust in relationships, significant others, self & a higher power
- Examine the meaning of trust, its loss & reclamation, as a shared spiritual path
- Experience grace in trusting encounters & a better understanding of 12 step living
- survey self- & clinical assessment / treatment planning skills

Rebuilding ... **TRUST** ... and **TRUST IN RECOVERY**



- What are the essentials of each?
- Are we all on the same page?
- What is the role of the attending care giver?
- What is the time frame, but more importantly the stage of readiness to act

Essentials



- “essential” = “indispensable”
- What is essential to recovery from addiction is essential to recovery from problem drinking, drugging, sexing, eating, gambling
- BUT
- what we assume about comorbid disorders, suicide, family dynamics etc re addiction is nothing compared to what we need to know about the gambler & gambling addiction

Essentials of Trust in Most Addictions



- Trust mentioned ?
 - Only 3x in first 164 pages of Alcoholics Anonymous
- Even in The Spirituality of Imperfection, only **once**: Such a home...where we can live with our imperfections, & others' also, exists only "jointly withing self and within some group of trusted others." (Kurtz, Spirituality of Imperfection, 232)
- Grace mentioned? (1x)


We need to know... what gambling means to the person

- From Dr. Custer (Brecksville Gambling Program, VA Hosp) & later, Rob Hunter (Charter Hospitals)
- “This Kentucky Derby, whatever it is--a race, an emotion, a turbulence, an explosion--is one of the most beautiful and violent and satisfying things I have ever experienced.” -- John Steinbeck
- **This... feeling ... is a trust in the rush... (client)**

We need to know what the person's *addicted behavior* is like...

- "it's like I have a shotgun in my mouth and my finger on the trigger... and I like the taste of gun metal." Robert Downey, Jr., on his cocaine addiction
- "I'd walk through hell in a gasoline suit to play baseball." Pete Rose, on baseball and gambling [My Prison Without Bars](#)


We need to know what recovery must look like... some essentials



Some sort of a discipline that enables:

- Establishment of some trust from or to someone or something greater than self
- One's own on-going self-reflective inventory, house cleaning, and commitment to change
- A life of service to others, specifically those still suffering, without rescuing, victimizing, or falling victim

Translates to issues of trust each & every step of the way



- Steps 1,2,3
- Steps 4,5,6,7,8,9
- Steps 10,11,12

Finding Your Way-- and your client's Way : Seeking wholeness, finding wholeness

- ***Implications of the Way : TAO***
- stuck in the same ol box: rectilinear
- delta change: relapse triangle or spiritual growth?
- circle = connectedness, reciprocity, support, cycles of wholeness

Ok, a little Buddha & Jung



- “The Life of Man is a dubious experiment. It is a tremendous phenomenon only in numerical terms. Individually, it is so fleeting, so insufficient, that it is a miracle that anything can exist and develop at all.” Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections, 1961)
- Most of us recall: “Life is full of pain.” & “Pain comes from attachment.” **BUT**

Siddhartha (*path to center*) or Steppenwolfe (*path to torment*)?

- Truth about suffering is that it exists. Life is suffering. Birth, aging, & dying is suffering."
- "Our reaching into the world of dreams, our desire to fulfill what cannot be fulfilled is what brings us suffering."
- Only when we have broken the mirrors of illusion can we end our suffering."
- A spiritual path (e.g. "The Noble Eight Fold Path") can help break us of our habit of suffering." *Italics mine*

Noble Eight fold Path:

- understanding (knowledge, not unreasonable belief)
- thoughts (renounce sense pleasure, kind not ill, harmlessness not cruelty)
- speech (no falsehood, stealing, slandering, harsh, or frivolous talk)
- action (self control, respectful, no killing, stealing, unchastity)
- livelihood (avoid weapons, slaughter, slavery, intoxicants, poisons)
- effort (discard & prevent evil, promote & develop good)
- mindfulness (of mind, body, feeling, mentality, others)
- concentration (calm)

The right what?



- Right understanding, thought, speech is a dedication to truth...
- Right action, livelihood, effort require cessation of lying & dishonesty... and being responsible for not only the past but for MY recovery program...
- Right mindfulness & concentration require boundaries & serenity...

Significant Questions of Trust

- Can I trust her yet??? nearly meaningless for the gambling addict.(mentioned 3x in AA, not once in GA's Yellow Combo Book)
- More significant, more cross-addiction conscious, are questions of Truth (11x) , Being or Belief (41x), or G*d (at least 50x)...
- The four questions (from Don Juan DeMarco) :
 - What is sacred?
 - Of what is the spirit made?
 - What is worth living for?
 - What is worth dying for?

The Significant Answers...



- Love
- Forgiveness
- Prayer

Love knows no religion



- Honesty
- Unselfishness
- Purity of Motive
- **Love**
- Courage
- Patience
- Tolerance
- Humility

Forgiveness knows no religion



- Cannot be “demanded, commanded, or required” of ourselves or others
- We “can only be forgiven if we are willing, first to forgive”
- How to become willing?
- All traditions point to prayer:
 - when will becomes willingness
 - when effort becomes openness (Kurtz, Spirituality of Imperfection, 217)

Prayer knows no religion



- Heals the disconnection from divinity
- Heals brokenness, both personal and community
- Heals unforgiveness
- such healing prayer requires the faith that G*d hears & responds

Faith knows no religion



- As Kurtz points out ISLAM literally means submission, & Muslims are called to prayer 5 times daily
- Faith that Step 2 works allows a “new experiencing of self” removing self as victim & unforgiving & therefore unforgiveable
- Shame & blame fall away as we embrace who we are, take responsibility for what we’ve done.

Rebuilding Essential Trust



Learn how to get to the place where you...

- Don't have to rethink what you know
- Don't doubt your words or actions
- Don't bother with feedback
- Expose what you know to be true
- Honor self just the way you are
- Respect others and their right to make their own choices - and mistakes!

(Re?)building a normal life

(step two) **To reduce stress, to be serene:**



- **Be impeccable with your word:** divinity, power, magic of a word can transform lives: Say only what you mean; make agreements that have no limitations or critical judgments.
- **Make no assumptions:** have courage to ask what others means or wants; refuse to blame others or yourself.
- **Take nothing personally:** it is the illusion of personal importance that causes us to think whatever happens is because of us.
- **Do your best:** avoid self condemnation & frustration by doing our best under any circumstances, whether fresh or creative or tired or grumpy. (Don Miguel Ruiz, The Four Agreements)

The Power of a Word



- “in the beginning was the **word**” in most all cosmologies
- positive or negative
- vehicle & tenor of any metaphorical statement
- word/talk/influence :: self/others/about
- impeccable: flawless, WOW!

The Power of an Assumption



- Destroys communication
- Misleads and creates power differentials
- Takes courage to clarify
- Interactive listening? Questions to clarify, verify, request additional information
- relationship dynamic: to learn or to protect (Paul & Paul, Do I Have To Give Up Me To Be Loved By You)

The Power of Self



- Self Importance versus Self Efficacy
- absolute chaos in relationship as presented (presenting problems?)
- therapist is also a “Self” in this fray
 - questions, transference, stages of change
 - let’s talk about your self, and your health

Trust in Self



- Primary basis for trust is membership in a community
- An allowance for novelty and new experience while in recovery may create anxiety. Oh well.
- Warmth, self confidence, experienced based practices >>self acceptance (Barry & Connolly, The Practice of Spiritual Direction, 1982)

The Power of Acceptance



- Accept the Good days and Bad days
- “Acceptance is the Key,” a principle lacking voice in some 12 step rooms
- Steps 1-2-3: Admit-Accept-Surrender
- “pray with disbelief but pray with sincerity” (Came to Believe)

Time and Trust



- “Again, nothing changed overnight. But as time passed, I have acquired a blind and yes, childlike faith that, by accepting a God I don’t understand and the program of AA just as it is written, I can maintain my sobriety one day at a time”.
- Not much like this is available as bibliotherapeutic advice in GA...
- Suspend criticism, analysis, opinion, judgment... instead to listen and hear. (Came to Believe)

Grace! Believe Virginia! Believe!



- Believe that all things conspire harmoniously for life to grow
- All is relative and interrelated
- All happens for the greater good
- Balance the sacredness of grace with a little irreverence (Heyokah)

Love versus Fear

Or TO LEARN VERSUS TO PROTECT (Paul)

■ LOVE

- no expectations
- no obligations
- respects self & other
- patient
- no pity
- detached
- kind

Ruiz, Beyond Fear

■ FEAR

- many expectations
- obligation > resistance
> guilt
- respects no one
- impatient
- pity & esp. self pity
- attachments & dread of letting go
- too self-involved to be kind

Trust as a Spiritual Dimension



**“GOD IS FLY FISHING AND I AM THE
LINE SNAKING OUT, THROWN CLEAR →
SENT INTO THE KINGDOM TO CATCH
ANOTHER.**

AM I DREAMING? BEING DREAMT?

(Megan McKenna, Marrow of Mystery)

“The only real question of worth



is whether or not the universe is a friendly place.” (Albert Einstein)

- Are you the line? Are you the life line to your clients?
- Are you the one who responds, shows the way, lights the lamp, or are you in the dark too?

Exercises from REGAINING TRUST

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- “Trust” is a reliance or a faith in someone or something, or a (?) monopolistic combination according to Mr. Webster.
- “Trust” is mentioned three times only (on page 68, 80, 98) in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. In Gamblers’ Anonymous literature, there are fewer reference: zero.
- The word does not appear at all in the infamous Yellow Book; its equivalent (“by having faith in – and following” the GA program is found one time only on page 9.)

One might suspect that the issue of trust in any recovery program is HUGE and little guidance on it.

- 1. What do you think about trust as an issue in your life (no incorrect answers please)?
- 2. What do you know from experience about trust in your life?.
- 3. What proof do you have that you are correct about issues of trust in your life?
- 4. What injunctions (“don’t” or “can’t” or “won’t” statements do you continue to hold onto?
- 5. What mandates (“Must do” statements) might influence how you trust or how you are trusted?

Exercises continued



- 6. Think of someone you do trust. What do you like / dislike about this person?
- 7. What are the characteristics you look for in finally trusting someone?
- 8. Think of someone you distrust. If you once trusted this person, why? What happened? What is this relationship like now?
- 9. Think of someone who has lost trust in you. How did you know this? How do you intend on getting trust back?

Thanks for taking the time and effort today!



Daniel L. Smith NCGC

Ravenswood Institute Gardens & Retreat Center

P.O. Box 29504

St. Louis MO 63126-8504

email gorrilla8m@aol.com

email Dan@ccgcceu.com

website: www.ccgcceu.com

314 265 2440 anytime