

# ABOUT RECOVERY AND RELAPSE!

*Fall seven times, stand up eight...Japanese proverb*

## WHAT TO KNOW!

- ❖ People basically use drugs or alcohol to escape, relax, or reward themselves and can develop “chemical thinking” which reinforces their use
- ❖ Recovery is a commitment to changing one’s life in order to not be dependent upon drugs and alcohol to achieve relaxation and fulfillment
- ❖ Recovery is not just not using, but involves additional social and health aspects
- ❖ Recovery has been defined as a voluntarily maintained lifestyle characterized by sobriety, personal health and citizenship
  - ❖ **sobriety** refers to abstinence from alcohol and drugs
  - ❖ **personal health** refers to improved quality of physical and psychological life
  - ❖ **citizenship** refers to living with regard and respect for others and includes such concepts as giving back to the community
- ❖ A key element in recovery is the voluntary willingness and acceptance of certain behaviors that constitute recovery
- ❖ In recovery, addiction is seen as a disease and not a moral failing or lack of willpower
- ❖ In recovery, addiction cannot be cured but can be managed by a healthy lifestyle
- ❖ Relapse is a return to the use of substances after a period of non-use
- ❖ Relapse starts weeks or even months before the actual physical relapse and can be a three step process:
  - ❖ **Emotional relapse** where one is not thinking of using but behaviors and feelings, such as anxiety, anger, isolation, not going to meetings, etc. lead to use
  - ❖ **Mental relapse** where thinking about using becomes predominant and includes lying, idealizing past use, hanging out with old friends in old places
  - ❖ **Physical relapse** includes the actual use of drugs or alcohol
- ❖ Relapse occurs frequently during recovery and is an opportunity to learn from mistakes and change the direction of recovery
- ❖ To achieve recovery, avoid situations of **HALT**: being **H**ungry, **A**ngry, **L**onely or **T**ired
- ❖ The recovery movement believes that you recover by creating a new life rather than by just stopping your use
- ❖ In recovery, it is critical to be honest with oneself and also others
- ❖ 12 step groups are a important resource for recovery although not the only one
- ❖ 12 step groups have been shown to be very effective and occur all over the world
- ❖ 12 step meetings help one see that addiction affects everybody, help break through denial, help one get support from others, and help one to see that recovery is possible

## WHAT TO DO!

- ❖ To start recovery, make a voluntary and conscious commitment to change
- ❖ Get support through 12 step programs, sober friends, and other recovery programs
- ❖ Make relaxation part of your life through meditation, yoga, deep breathing, etc.
- ❖ Build a sober life to include community service, new friends, new hobbies, and goals
- ❖ Avoid old friends, old places where you used, and old things associated with your use
- ❖ If you go to 12 step meetings, become active, be committed, use the support of others, find a sponsor, work the steps, and give back to the community
- ❖ Seek professional help if you have difficulty beginning recovery or to resolve mental health issues that may impair your recovery

## WE CAN HELP!

Call us at **954 755-2885** or email us at [\*\*DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com\*\*](mailto:DrKimmel@KimmelPsychology.com)

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