Multiple Pathways and Styles of Addiction Recovery

CCAR Multiple Pathways of Recovery Conference Keynote
May 2, 2016

Presentation Outline & References

William L. White, MA
Emeritus Senior Research Consultant
Chestnut Health Systems
bwhite@chestnut.org
www.williamwhitepapers.com

Self-Introduction

- Epiphany in Dallas
- Toward a Recovery Paradigm
  --From pathogenic orientation (focus on causes, course, & consequences of addiction) to salutogenic orientation (focus on recovery, health & capacities for resilience)
- Presentation Goal: Outline common pathways and styles of addiction recovery (drawn from scientific/historical literature and collective recovery experience)

Recovery Definition

- Remission versus recovery
- Consensus on 3 dimensions of recovery, e.g., Recovery from substance dependence is a voluntarily maintained lifestyle characterized by sobriety, personal health, and citizenship. (Betty Ford Institute Consensus Panel, 2007)

Remission/Recovery Prevalence

- Rates of SUD remission in major U.S. epidemiological studies range from 5.3% to 15.3%.
- Those rates produce a conservative estimate of the number of adults in remission from significant alcohol or drug problems in the United States at more than 25 million people, with a potential range of 25 to 40 million (not including those in remission from nicotine dependence alone). (See White 2012 monograph)
- Recovery prevalence via 3-part definition yet to be determined

Distinction between “Pathways to” and “Pathways of” Recovery

- Archetypal three-part recovery story style: “what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now”
- Pathways to focuses on varying forms of destruction and residual debris of active addiction” that set stage for recovery, e.g., “what we used to be like”
- Pathways of focuses on variations in the catalytic process of recovery initiation and the varieties of recovery experience over the long-term course of recovery
• Distinction between *recovering from* (pathogenic focus) and *recovering to* (salutogenic focus)

**Recovery from what?**
• Recovery has meaning only in the context of illness (condition that meets diagnostic criteria)
• Other terms apply to sub-clinical AOD problems, e.g., resolve, quit, control, manage

**Pathway and Style Differences across Populations**
• Age (e.g., adolescents and transition age youth, older adults)
• Gender
• Ethnicity, culture, and religion, e.g., concepts of *culturally-shaped addiction careers* and *cultural pathways of recovery*
• Sexual identity and orientation
• Co-occurring medical/psychiatric conditions
• Trauma (e.g., survivors of developmental trauma, war, historical trauma)  
  --Research on traumagenic factors and healing sanctuaries
• Concepts of *concurrent and serial recoveries*

**Recovery Rubrics**
• *Personal Recovery*
• *Family Recovery* (See Stephanie Brown Interview)  
  --Family Subsystems  
  --Vulnerability of family through stages of recovery (Brown’s “Trauma of Recovery”)  
  --Need for *supportive scaffolding* during early recovery  
  --Neglected constituency: “recovery” encompassing families grieving AOD-related loss of family member
• *Community Recovery*
• Parallel Processes across Personal/Family/Community Recovery
• Personal, family, and community *recovery capital*
• Recovery Resource Mapping across Pathways

**Changing Views on Role of Motivation in Recovery**
• Push forces (Pain) to Pull forces (Hope); not either/or but power of combinations
• Wide variations in “what happened” (turn-around) element of recovery story
• Push factors: Creating motivational fulcrums within family/community/culture
• Pull Factors: *Contagiousness of recovery & Role of Recovery Carriers*

**Temporal Frameworks of Recovery**
• *Stage-dependent Recovery*
  --Numerous stage models
• White: *Precovery, Recovery Initiation, Recovery Maintenance, Enhanced Quality of Personal/family life in long-term recovery, Efforts to Break Intergenerational Cycles of Addiction*  
  --Question of how staged change differs across diverse populations
• **Transformative Change (TC)**
  --Recovery as conversion experience (defining moment, peak experience, epiphany)
  forever cleaving one’s life into categories of “before” and “after”
  --Unplanned, positive, vivid, and permanent
  --TC experiences of recovery messiahs (e.g., Handsome Lake, Jerry McAuley, Bill Wilson, Malcolm X)

**Depth of Change in Recovery**
• 3 components of emerging recovery definitions in U.S. & U.K.: AOD problem resolution (as measured by clinical remission or sustained abstinence), enhanced global health/functioning, and positive change in person-community relationship
  --Researchers and HR advocates include moderated resolution of AOD problems within the recovery rubric, e.g., *moderated recovery* (sustained deceleration of AOD problems to subclinical levels)
• **Full Recovery** across 3 components
• **Partial Recovery**
  --Full achievement in one area but impairment continuing in other areas
  --Improvement but continuing impairment in one or more areas
• **Amplified Recovery** across 3 elements: Above-optimum levels of health and social contribution

**Organizing Frameworks of Addiction Recovery**
• Secular (SE)
• Spiritual (SP)
• Religious (RE)
• Mirroring of frameworks in U.S. Recovery Mutual Aid Organizations
  SE: e.g., Women for Sobriety, Secular Organizations for Sobriety, SMART Recovery, LifeRing Secular Recovery, Moderation Management
  SP: e.g., AA, NA, and other 12-Step Fellowships; Wellbriety Movement
  RE: e.g., Alcoholics Victorious, Celebrate Recovery, Millati Islami, Buddhist Recovery Network
• **Dual Citizenship** in recovery
  --Co-attendance across recovery fellowships
  --Varieties within recovery fellowships, e.g., from Back to Basics to Quad A and AA Agnostica within AA
• Potential for a *secular spirituality*
• Potential for changes in orientation across stages of recovery

**Commonly Shared Elements of Recovery Spirituality** (from Kurtz & White, 2014)
• Within (Intrapersonal)
• Between (Interpersonal)
• Beyond (Transpersonal)
• Kurtz’s 6 Dimensions of Recovery Spirituality
  --Release
  --Gratitude
--Humility
--Tolerance
--Forgiveness
--Being-at-Home

Pathways of Recovery Assistance

- Natural Recovery Initiation and Maintenance
- Peer-assisted Recovery Initiation and Maintenance
  --Recovery mutual aid organizations
  --New recovery support institutions
  --New recovery support roles
- Professionally-Assisted Initiation and Maintenance
  --Non-specialty help
  --Specialized addiction treatment
  --Medication-assisted treatment/recovery (Subcategories can legitimize but also create recovery status hierarchies)
- Trends in Face-to-Face and Virtual Recovery Support
  --Expansion of Virtual communities of recovery
  --New Technologies of Recovery Support (SMART Phones and beyond)
  --Trend Projections

Relational Styles in Recovery

--Acultural
--Bicultural
--Culturally enmeshed
--Changes in styles across stages of recovery

Identity Patterns in Recovery

- Neutral Identity (Remission without recovery identity)
- Positive Identity (Recovery central part of personal identity)
- Negative Identity (Recovery Identity Closeted in shame)

Multiple Pathways/Styles: Implications for Addiction Treatment

- From addiction treatment experts to students of recovery
- Extending intrapersonal models of addiction/treatment/recovery to ecological models that include larger community and cultural interventions
- From “acute care” or “palliative care” models of service to models of sustained recovery management (RM) nested in larger recovery-oriented systems of care (ROSC), with “system” being, not the treatment system” but a larger mobilization of recovery supports within the community/culture
- From packaged “programs” to highly individualized service planning and delivery processes
- Emphasis on expansion of service menus and “philosophy of choice”
- Expansion of the service delivery team, e.g., inclusion of indigenous healers
- Post-treatment recovery checkups for at least 5 years (5-year recovery durability data)
Multiple Pathways of Recovery within the New Recovery Advocacy Movement

- “There are multiple pathways of recovery—and ALL are cause for celebration.”
- “Recovery by any means necessary under any circumstances.”
- From isolated and competing organizations to a larger embracing identity (people seeking and in long-term recovery) and an “ecumenical culture of recovery” that embraces and yet transcends these organizational identities
- CCAR’s “You are in recovery if you say you are.”
- Becoming culturally informed, fluent, competent, and connected across pathways/communities of recovery
- Forging recovery space (recovery landscapes) within local communities

Closing

- Recognition of multiple pathways of recovery will require that we address any potential “hardening of the categories” across the spectrum of addiction treatment and recovery support services
- Authenticity of recovery representation must include recovery pathway and style diversity
- We must all become students of recovery: stance of humility and learning from the experience of those we serve.
- The understanding of long-term recovery and its many pathways and styles constitutes the new frontier within the alcohol and other drug problems arena.
- I wish each of you godspeed on your journey into that future.

Brief Bibliography (See 2015 Recovery Bibliography at www.williamwhitepapers.com)


See Interviews/papers from key figures in secular, spiritual and religious recovery support groups at [http://www.williamwhitepapers.com/recovery_mutual_aid_history/](http://www.williamwhitepapers.com/recovery_mutual_aid_history/)