

Recovery Support Matching

The positive effects of peer-based recovery support groups rise in tandem with dose (the number of meetings attended)(Humphreys, Moos, & Cohen, 1997) and intensity of participation (e.g., applying concepts to daily problem solving, reading recovery literature, sober socializing, service work) (Montgomery, Miller, & Tonigan, 1995). But these positive findings are offset by weak relationships between treatment institutions and local mutual aid groups (White & Hagen, 2005), passive rather than assertive linkage to such groups by addiction professionals (Forman, 2002), and high (approximately 40%) dropout rates from such groups in the first year for adults (Kelly and Moos, 2003) and adolescents (Kelly, Myers, & Brown, 2001). Matching individuals to particular groups and linking individuals to particular persons and meetings can enhance this affiliation process.

The checklist on the following page offers a quick way to assess needs and preferences of particular clients that can help in this matching process. The scales which follow it provide a way to evaluate a client's intensity of participation in a face-to-face recovery support group program.

References

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Recovery Support Matching Checklist

Which of the following are important to you in selecting a recovery support group?
(Check all that apply) I prefer to be with other people who:

- have experience with my primary drug
- are the same gender
- are close to my age
- share my ethnic/cultural background
- share my views on religion, spirituality or secularity
- share my sexual orientation
- smoke tobacco
- do not smoke tobacco
- have tolerant attitudes toward mental illness
- have tolerant attitudes toward medications prescribed for addiction or mental illness
- have prior experience in the criminal justice system
- do not have prior experience in the criminal justice system
- have approximately the same income level
- have had very severe alcohol/drug problems
- have had mild to moderate alcohol/drug problems
- share my goal of complete abstinence
- share my goal of moderated use

Source: Adapted from White, W. & Kurtz, E. (2006). *Linking Addiction Treatment and Communities of Recovery: A Primer for Addiction Counselors and Recovery Coaches*. Pittsburgh, PA: IRETA/NeATTC