Multiple Pathways of Recovery

Chris Budnick, MSW, LCSW, LCAS, CCS
Rather shall we reflect that the roads to recovery are many; that any story or theory of recovery from one who has trod the highway is bound to contain much truth.

Bill Wilson
September 1944
The Grapevine
History of AOD Studies

- The study of alcohol and other drugs (AOD) has gone through various stages where different aspects of AOD problems were the focus of public and professional debate and research.
  - Pathology paradigm
  - Intervention paradigm
  - Recovery paradigm
Origins of a Recovery Paradigm

- 1998 – William L. White and Searcy W.
Recovery Paradigm

Focus on:

- The prevalence and patterns of long-term recovery from AOD problems
- Exploring the growing varieties of pathways and styles through which people are resolving serious and persistent AOD problems
- At-risk individuals, families and communities who have avoided the development of severe AOD problems
What is recovery?
Shifts in Recovery Definitions

- The definition of recovery has shifted from a focus on what has been deleted from one’s life:
  - alcohol and other drugs, legal problems, hospitalizations etc...

- To a focus on what has been added to one’s life:
  - the achievement of health and happiness, restored relationships etc...
Proposed Definition

- Betty Ford Institute (2007)
  - A panel of interested researchers, treatment providers, recovery advocates, and policy makers was convened to develop an initial definition of recovery as a starting point for better communication, research and public understanding.
Working Definition of Recovery

- Recovery from substance dependence is a voluntarily maintained lifestyle characterized by:
  - Sobriety (Recovery)
  - Personal Health
  - Citizenship
Definitions

- **Voluntary**
  - A key element of recovery is the willing and voluntary pursuit of behaviors that constitute recovery

- **Maintained lifestyle**
  - Reflects recognition that recovery is more than just a state of being at a moment in time but that it is also not necessarily a permanent state
Sobriety

- Sobriety (recovery) refers to abstinence from alcohol and all other non-prescribed drugs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recovery Type</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early recovery</td>
<td>1 – 11 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustained recovery</td>
<td>1 – 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stable recovery</td>
<td>5 years or more</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Personal Health

- Personal health refers to:
  - A state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being
  - Not merely absence of disease
Citizenship

- Citizenship refers to:
  - Effort and commitment to improving one’s community.
  - It is captured in the traditional recovery terms “giving back” or “service work”
Citizenship

- Can citizenship also refer to:
  - Removal of obstacles and barriers to full participation in society
  - Education, employment, civic engagement
Further Definitions

- Recovery is the process through which severe alcohol and other drug problems are resolved along with the development of:
  - Physical, emotional, spiritual, relational and occupational health (White & Kurtz, 2005)
Further Definitions

- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) defines recovery as:
  - “A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential.”
Driving this Paradigm Shift

1. A loss of recovery focus through professionalization

2. Science-based conceptualizations of addiction as a chronic disorder (Hser et al., 1997; McLellan et al., 2000; Dennis & Scott, 2007)

3. Accumulation of systems performance data on limitations of acute care (AC) model of addiction treatment (White, 2008)
Pre-recovery engagement (Recovery Priming)

Recovery initiation & engagement

Quality of life

Long-term recovery maintenance
Initiating and Sustaining Recovery

- Increasing evidence that people can and do achieve stable recovery:
  - 58% (Sheedy and Whitmer, 2009)
  - 58% - 60% (Dennis and Scott, 2007)
  - 50% (White, 2012)
Initiating and Sustaining Recovery

- Substance use disorders have different causes and different solutions
Initiating and Sustaining Recovery

- Problem severity

Mild — Moderate — Severe
Initiating and Sustaining Recovery

- Problem complexity
  - Addiction
  - Addiction + Mental Illness
  - Addiction + Mental Illness – Housing – Social Supports
Initiating and Sustaining Recovery

- Recovery capital
  - Internal and external resources that can be mobilized to initiate and sustain long-term addiction recovery (Granfield and Cloud, 1999).
Initiating and Sustaining Recovery

Best & Laudet, 2010
Pathways of Recovery

- This describes various ways people enter recovery
  - Solo (natural) recovery
  - Peer-assisted
  - Treatment-assisted
Pathways of Recovery

- Solo (natural) recovery
  - Most common pathway
  - Often occurs without adopting a recovery identity
National Recovery Survey

- 54% Do not self-identify as in recovery
- 46% Self-identify as in recovery
Pathways of Recovery

- Peer-assisted
  - Expanding type and prevalence of:
    - Religious, spiritual, and secular mutual aid groups
    - Recovery supports
    - Population specific supports
Mutual Aid Recovery Pathways

Religious
- Celebrate Recovery

Spiritual
- 12-Step Fellowships
- Refuge Recovery

Secular
- LifeRing Secular Recovery
- Secular Organization for Sobriety
- SMART Recovery
- Women for Sobriety
Pathways of Recovery

- Recovery Supports
  - Recovery coaches
  - Recovery community centers
  - Fitness (i.e. Oak City Recovery Run Club, Fit2Recover)
  - Yoga (i.e. Y12SR)
Pathways of Recovery

- Population Specific Supports
  - Ben’s Friends (Restaurant/hospitality)
  - Collegiate Recovery Programs
  - Recovery High Schools (i.e. Emerald School of Excellence, Wake Monarch Academy)
  - Lawyer Assistant Programs
  - Alternative Peer Groups (Adolescents)
  - Caduceus (Healthcare professionals)
Pathways of Recovery

- Treatment-assisted (clinical populations)
  - Higher personal vulnerability (e.g., family history, lower age of onset, victimization)
  - Higher severity (acuity & chronicity)
  - Higher rates of co-morbidity
  - Greater personal and environmental obstacles to recovery
  - Lower recovery capital (personal assets / family and social supports)
National Recovery Survey

- Kelly et al. (2017) – Recovery Research Institute

- Largest national survey of the prevalence and pathways of recovery in the U.S.

- Probability-based survey of non-institutionalized, adult, U.S. population, estimating:
  - Prevalence of AOD problem resolution
  - Lifetime use of assisted v. unassisted resolution pathways
  - Correlates of assisted pathway resolution
National Recovery Survey

- 25,229 (64%) of a U.S. population pool of 39,809 adults over 18 responded to the survey

- Asked “Did you use to have a problem with alcohol or drugs but no longer do?”
  - 9.1% of those surveyed answered “yes.”
  - Previous estimates range from 5.3% to 15.3%
National Recovery Survey

- Respondents who had resolved an AOD problem tended to be:
  - Male (60%);
  - Aged 25 – 49 years of age (45%);
  - Non-Hispanic White (61%);
  - Employed (47%)
  - Living with family or relatives (46%)
**National Recovery Survey**

- Problem resolution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of recovery</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>0 – 5 years</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 – 15 years</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15+ years</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
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</table>
National Recovery Survey

- 54% report an “assisted pathway”
  - Mutual aid (45%);
  - Treatment (27.6%);
  - Recovery support services (21.8%);

- Assisted pathway correlates:
  - ↑ problem severity (i.e. low-age of onset, polysubstance use)
  - Mental health diagnosis
  - Criminal history (especially drug court history)
Role of the Profession

- For those with greater problem severity/complexity and lower recovery capital:
  - Upon engaging in treatment you will receive 5 years of ongoing recovery supports and recovery check-ups
  - How well does this describe the standard care of individuals with substance use disorders in your community?
Bill White – Atlanta 2009

- Being there for people
Community/Cultural Recovery

- Can recovery involve a transformation of entire communities?
  - Alkali Lake story
  - White Bison – “Wellbriety”
forest metaphor, concept of treating the community
Concluding Thought

- There are many pathways to recovery and ALL are cause for celebration
References


References


References

