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Professor Goldberg

Narcotics Anonymous Review & Reaction

At seven thirty on this cold Monday night, a room within a church is filled to capacity with recovering addicts. This particular NA meeting is about sixty people strong and seating is limited. The meeting is chaired by a member at a table in the front of the room. That person opens up the meeting followed by introducing the speaker to share his experience/story on a particular topic or step. The speaker shares for twenty minutes give or take, and the meeting is then opened up for sharing. This is when the people from the group get a chance to share their feelings/views on anything they wish to talk about. Each person sharing from the floor has a three to four minute time limit, so that everyone gets a chance to share. The meeting is anywhere from an hour to two and a half hours, depending on what group and meeting one attends. At the end of the meeting everyone forms a circle and says the serenity prayer together, "God ;grant me the serenity to accept the thing I cannot change, the courage to change the thing I can, and the wisdom to know the difference". Being that I am a recovering addict myself, it is easy for me to do an extra credit assignment on something I love. Every single person at this meeting tonight all have something in common, we all suffer from

the disease of addiction. This simple similarity is exactly what brings us together and creates a special bond within us. Every one of us attends narcotics anonymous meetings with the same intentions, to address our disease of addiction and learn how to live clean. Since taking your class, I have discovered a direct correlation between the Behavior Modification Process and Narcotics Anonymous. In Narcotics Anonymous, We have developed a method of Changing our thoughts, behaviors, actions in a variety of different ways, one of which is living life a day at a time. For example the target behavior in in narcotics anonymous is to stop using drugs. Step two we learn to document our current behavior with the help of a sponsor and support group to point out exactly what it is we are doing wrong. The way we control discriminative stimuli is by taking a simple suggestion, Avoiding people places and things. If we are not around drugs, or around people who do drugs, or places where people do drugs our chances of using drugs are significantly reduced. We learn to break response chains by calling our sponsor when we have an urge to use drugs. We learn to pick up the phone and talk to a fellow addict before we go pick up drugs. We learn to play the tape and talk it out with compared to in the past just acting on impulse and using. In Narcotics Anonymous We have a key tag system, representing clean time. 30,60,90days, six month, nine months, one year, eighteen months followed by

multiple years. This is an example of Managing consequent stimuli, we feel proud, empowered and a sense of accomplishment as we continue to collect key tags representing our clean time. Once you have one year clean, you have an opportunity to have an anniversary, a meeting celebrating your milestone in recovery. Your friends and family all come to support and celebrate for you. This is clearly an example of managing consequent stimuli by rewarding success. We use social support at all different times in our recovery. From when we attended our first meeting and had 1 day clean, to having months or years clean we build friendships and relationships with people from narcotics anonymous and Help one another stay clean a day at a time. By maintaining constant contact with one another, we all have a better chance of staying clean. "What we can't do alone we can do together". And finally we monitor and record progress in a variety of ways. We continue to maintain abstinent from drugs and alcohol, collect key tags and celebrate our milestones in recovery. We resolve our legal issues, we learn to grow and be responsible, and our friends and family slowly but surely come back into our lives. We begin to focus on making a better life for ourselves, attend college, get careers and make a better life for ourselves. Narcotics Anonymous meeting simple put save lives and I am forever grateful for self-help fellowships.