

HELPING OUT WITH ADDICTION



Stephanie Schaefer, Esther Jacobs and Chelsia Block offer free meetings where they help people tackle their addictive behaviors. The meetings are held in Roger Rook room 220.

STORY AND PHOTO BY ELIZABETH KESSEL

Smart Recovery is an anonymous, self-help and support group where everyone comes together to help identify what issues need to be addressed.

Esther Jacobs, a facilitator for Smart Recovery said, "Smart is an unique group, cause it's not just focused on alcohol and drugs; smart is helping you learn tools to behave more like you want to behave."

Smart Recovery is made for addictive behaviors but Stephanie Schaefer, the adviser of Smart Recovery here at Clackamas Community College, welcomes everybody who wants to learn good life skills.

Currently meetings are held each week on Tuesdays from 4-5:30 p.m. and on Wednesdays 2:30-4 p.m. You can find these meetings in Roger Rook room 220.

The groups consist normally of five people per meeting on Tuesdays and are accompanied by a mix of three

facilitators, Schaefer, Jacobs and Chelsia Block. The group tends to be smaller on Wednesdays, but Schaefer says even if one person shows up they will stay for them.

The meetings start off with a few minutes of meditation exercise, focusing on breathing, then it turns to the participants. The facilitators then ask them their nanies, along with identifying a struggle or challenge from the past accompanied by a success.

Meetings are lead by a structure of cognitive behavioral treatments, such as dialectical behavioral therapy. According to a member of Smart Recovery, DBT is what counselors use outside of Smart Recovery. In real life, they put DBT into practice whenever they can remember the skills.

There are four skills taught through DBT: mindfulness, distress tolerance,

interpersonal effectiveness and emotion regulation. It is very similar to what is covered in the meetings and slightly adjusted to what each person would like to address that day.

According to Block, "It could be anything from like substance use to self-harm behavior or gambling, sex, food just anything that can kind of be an addictive behavior for people."

So how did Smart Recovery begin at CCC? Schaefer said, "I used to facilitate Smart Recovery when I was an undergraduate at the Providence Portland location and I loved it and had done it for a while. A student saw me teaching one day and recognized me from that meeting. And the student approached me and said, 'Hey I think we should start a club,' and I said, 'Yeah let's bring smart to Oregon City.'"

"We spent a lot of time sitting together

"Anything from substance abuse to self harm behavior or gambling, sex, food, anything that can be an addictive behavior for people."

by ourselves waiting for people to show up to Smart meetings trying different days different times. It took about a year for us to get a regular following of people and then we found the Tuesday 4 p.m.-5:30 p.m. slot and that has been a solid slot for probably about a year and half now and yeah that's kind of how Smart started," said Schaefer.

Such a simple beginning has turned into an effective way to help students with or without addictive behavior. Smart Recovery is here to stay and is open for everyone, students and community members.

Addiction is something that affects a lot of college students and having an option available that is free is invaluable. Smart Recovery is based on therapeutic techniques and science; on campus it is an open, friendly and anonymous place for anyone to talk about their troubles.

Correction: A teaser on the cover of Issue 23 of The Clackamas Print was misleading; the Army Strong Community Center is closing in June, not the Veterans Center. The Print regrets the ambiguity.

ON THE COVER: A former Clackamas student relaxes at Opal Creek. Photo by Megan McCoy. Sasquatch illustration by Saige Keikkala. Cover design by Brandon Chorum.

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