



## **Getting Over the Hump**

This exercise is primarily for people who have been dealing with a substance use issue for an extended period. It is well known that setbacks and relapse is a concern that many individuals have to struggle with before getting better. If you have found yourself to ever be in that situation then this discussion is for you. However, even if you are new at this you can still benefit by learning from some of the experiences of others.

### ***Part 1 - What You've Been Through***

Before starting this brief opening discussion, keep in mind one thing: This is not a contest to try to compare who has been through the most. You do not need to get into explicit detail (war stories) - ***Please keep this in mind when sharing***

#### **Discuss:**

Depending upon the size of the group, go around the room one at a time speaking for 2-5 minutes about your history of dealing with substance use as an issue in your life. Some things each person can include:

- ❖ About **how long** have you been dealing with substances as a problem in your life?
- ❖ What has been your **treatment history** (rehab, outpatient programs, 12 step meetings, etc.?) Don't list each one, just generally speak about the number of programs that you have been in.
- ❖ Generally review any serious **consequences** of substance use (jails, overdose, homelessness, damaged relationships, loss of job, etc.)

### ***Part 2 – Learning from Past Success***

Some people love drawing, some people don't like it. Some people are good at it and others not so good. Regardless of your feelings and skill level with regard to drawing, please participate in the following drawing activity. This is not an art contest so it doesn't matter how good you are but rather the idea is to open up your mind on this topic. Drawing can help do that

#### **Draw**

On a separate piece of paper, or the back of this one start by thinking about a time in the past when you were doing really well with regard to progress with your substance use issues. Draw yourself at that time and think about some of the following points:

- ❖ **How old** were you at that time?
- ❖ **What was going on with your life at that time?** (For example, were you working or in school? Were you in a relationship? What were you doing to stay busy and out of any trouble at that time in your life?)
- ❖ **What was helping you at that time?** (For example were you in a program, on medication, going to meetings, involved in a hobby, etc.?)



When everyone is done take some time to talk about your drawings. Include:

- ❖ How were you feeling at that time in your life... and how do you feel talking about it now?
- ❖ What was motivating you then... and what can motivate you now?
- ❖ What can you take out of that past positive experience that you can use today?

**Part 3 - Looking Forward:**

Even though it is good to learn from the past, it is important not to get stuck there, so now discuss what needs to be done moving forward to finally get over the hump and sustain positive changes on a long term basis

- ❖ **Being honest with yourself, what do you think that it is finally going to take for you to be where you truly want to be with your substance use issue for the long term?**
- ❖ **What have you not yet tried yet that may be the difference maker for you? What might be holding you back from trying something new and different this time?**
- ❖ **What is realistically within your reach that you can do now to get over the hump and stay focused and motivated for good this time?**

Circle some of the following concepts below that stand out as meaningful and relevant to you, then discuss how the words you chose apply to your plan for long term success:

Self-Awareness

Motivation

Drive

Perseverance

Courage

Humility

Wisdom

Hope

Passion

Resiliency

(Add your own?) \_\_\_\_\_

Patience

Connection

Responsibility

Focus

Confidence

Support

Positivity

Integrity

Discipline

Maturity

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*Only I can change my life, no one can do it for me – Carol Burnett*