



## The Irony of Addiction

**Irony** occurs when what actually happens is much different from or the opposite of what is expected

Simple, easy to understand basic examples of irony -

- *The teacher fails the test*
- *The firefighter's house burns down*
- *The health and fitness guru dies of cancer*

Some interesting true-life examples of irony -

- Duct tape should not be used for sealing ducts
- The most commonly stolen book is the Bible
- The inventor of the stop sign never actually learned how to drive
- The founder of Match.com, encouraged everyone he knew to join it, including his girlfriend. She eventually left him for a man she met on Match.com.
- For 35 years one CEO at Crayola crayons later admitted after retiring that he was colorblind
- Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone which changed the world, but he refused to keep one in his place of work because he feared it would distract him

On a much more serious note – Consider how their can be ***irony in substance use, addiction and recovery***

**As a group:** Review the following ironic statements that can be related to substance use, addiction and recovery. Not everyone may find these all to be true as everyone has their own unique beliefs and experiences. However, when you find that any of these applied in your own life and experiences, share this with the rest of the group if you are able

- Drugs and alcohol: What often can start out as the funniest, most relaxing and most enjoyable thing in the world does the most painful, stressful and destructive things to you later down the line
- In order to start to think straight first you may have to stop trusting your own thinking
- As it says in 12 Step Philosophy: You get sick of getting sick and tired of being tired
- You may have to give it up to get it all back
- In order to learn about who I really am I had to forget about who I thought I was
- What used to make me feel good, I had to use just not to feel bad
- In addiction you can go from thinking you know everything to realizing you know nothing
- It may take struggle and hard work to achieve serenity and peace
- Before you can start growing you may have to realize and recognize you have been withering away
- What you once used to escape becomes a prison
- I got high to feel free but ended up feeling trapped
- In order to learn how to love myself again, I had to learn that it was ok to be loved
- I couldn't really start feeling until I finally stopped numbing
- I had to stop lying to myself before I could be truly honest with others
- At first you may break but it ends up making you stronger

***Your own examples? – Can you think of any other ironic statements related to substance use, addiction or recovery?***



**Addiction, Insight and Experience** – Sometimes this involves learning that things are not how they seem to be. (Sadly, at times this may be learned the hard way) – Often how we think things will turn out are very different than expected early on when it comes to substance use and addiction

Group Discussion – Have you ever said any of the following statements to yourself in your past? If so, share how that turned out for you?

Have you ever said the following?	If you said it, how did it turn out for you?
<p><u>(Early, before changing)</u></p> <p>“I won’t ever lose control of how much I use”</p> <p>“There is no way I will ever mess with the hard stuff”</p> <p>“I can hide this, no one will ever find out I am getting high”</p> <p>“I’ll quit tomorrow”</p> <p>“I won’t ever let it get to the point where I will ever _____ (Fill in the blank)</p> <p><u>In treatment or recovery (During the change process)</u></p> <p>“Now that I have to stop using, I will just stop, no problem, I got this”</p> <p>“I can still hang with my old friends who get high and not get high myself”</p> <p>“I’ll just use around the days of drug tests so I don’t get caught”</p> <p>“I’ll just use a plan to avoid or fake the drug tests”</p> <p>“I will just set daily limits on how much I use and stick to it”</p> <p>“I’ll just use stuff that doesn’t show up on the tests”</p> <p>“I don’t need help; willpower is all I need”</p> <p>“I know what I need to do, I don’t have to listen to these so called “experts””</p> <p>“I can just lie and deny my way through this”</p> <p>“I don’t need to change anything. I’ll just stop for a while”</p>	

**Closing Discussion Questions:**

- ✚ **Out of all that was reviewed and discussed in this session – What stands out to you as some of the most important life lessons you have learned along the way?**
- ✚ **What are you doing (or planning on doing) in your life now to remain self-aware and positive so as to prevent yourself from returning to faulty thinking patterns that you may have had in the past?**