

WHAT IS RECOVERY?: UNDERSTANDING CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY STAKEHOLDER EXPECTATIONS

by

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This study explored the expectations of stakeholders in substance abuse treatment services. These findings may help inform treatment, research, and policy development concerning substance abuse disorders. An exploratory qualitative approach was taken to minimize the effect of the model on outcomes. A cohort of 15 self-declared addicts in recovery were interviewed, using advertising in treatment centers and using a snowball method for additional respondents. Respondents were divided into either short-term or long-term recovery groups, each with different perspectives. The study design included an initial individual interview and follow-up interviews. Individual interviews were semistructured with open-ended questions to allow participants to provide the maximum amount of information. Data were entered into the computer journal, and analyzed reflexively after each interview. Relevant concepts, ideas, themes, and categories were identified and relationships explored. To improve trustworthiness, credibility, and plausibility, data were triangulated to improve accuracy and understanding. Recovery was found to be a process in which individuals empower themselves through development of their own values, self-discovery, self-determination, self-responsibility, and community membership. This recovery process is ongoing and based on preferred values that become habitual to each individual.

I would like to take a moment and dedicate this to the friends I have lost along the way. There are far too many to name without missing someone, so I won't try to name them. Their passing due to the problem of addiction saddens me greatly, even to this day, and their presence in my life is missed. I

hope that one day, the understanding of what it takes to recover from these dependencies will be known and the loss of bright and creative individuals will come to an end.