

BACKGROUND

- ❖ Twelve-step participation, both during and after formal treatment, is useful in sustaining recovery.¹
- ❖ Most 12-step research has been conducted in the context of treatment evaluation, using relatively short term follow-up periods.
- ❖ Thus we know little about long-term patterns of 12-step utilization or about their effectiveness, especially among persons formerly dependent on illicit drugs.
- ❖ Moreover, little information is available on patterns and effectiveness of involvement with 12-step related activities – e.g., working the steps, sponsoring others; most research bears on meeting attendance.
- ❖ This is important as persons in long-term remission may continue to engage in these activities while decreasing meeting attendance.

STUDY OBJECTIVES, DESIGN AND HYPOTHESES

Using repeated measures, we examine:

- ❖ Patterns of 12-step affiliation (attendance and involvement) over three years.
- ❖ Role of individual characteristics and motivation for abstinence as predictors of these patterns.
- ❖ The role of 12-step affiliation patterns on sustained recovery.

OVERVIEW OF METHOD AND PROCEDURES

- ❖ A five-year NIDA-funded study being in New York City.
- ❖ Longitudinal examination of factors associated with stable recovery.
- ❖ Voluntary participation based on informed consent.
- ❖ Semi-structured interviews.
- ❖ Media-recruited cohort in remission from one month to 10+ years.
- ❖ Prospective cohort (N=354), re-interviewed one- and two-years later (F1 and F2) - 89% of surviving cohort.
- ❖ Participants receive \$30 for baseline interview (BL), \$40 at one-year follow-up and \$50 at two-year follow-up.
- ❖ This study bears on the 275 individuals who provided data at all three assessment points (81% of surviving cohort).

MEASURES

- ❖ 12-step attendance: Attendance at AA or NA meetings over three years (i.e., during the years preceding baseline, F1 and F2 – attended in all three years: yes/no).
- ❖ 12-step involvement: Engagement in 12-step suggested activities over three years (see above): Having a sponsor; sponsoring someone; considering oneself a member of AA or NA; having a home group; working the steps; doing service; having contact with 12-step fellowship members outside of meetings; reading 12-step or recovery literature outside of meetings; and socializing with 12-step members outside of meetings (engaged in activities in all 3 years: yes/no).
- ❖ Baseline predictors of sustained 12-step attendance and involvement over three years: age, gender, race, addiction severity,² baseline length of recovery and baseline commitment to abstinence.³
- ❖ Sustained remission: No use of alcohol or illicit drugs from baseline to F2 interview (i.e., over two years).

ANALYSES

- ❖ Logistic regressions, to examine the role of 12-step attendance and involvement patterns on sustained recovery, with baseline length of recovery entered in the first step; analyses conducted on the total sample and by baseline recovery stage.
- ❖ Bivariate analyses (cross-tabs and one-way ANOVAS) to examine the role of background and baseline commitment to abstinence as predictors of sustained 12-step affiliation over three years

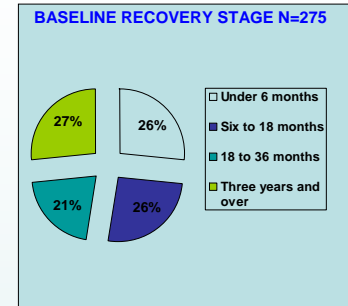
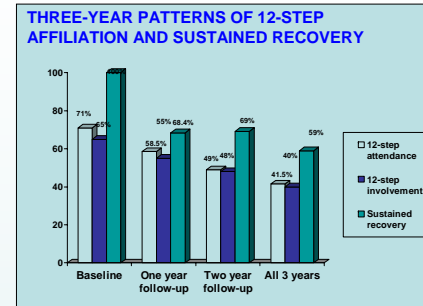
BASELINE CHARACTERISTICS (N=275)	
Men	53.6%
Age (mean, SD)	43 (7.8)
Race/ethnicity	
African American	64%
Caucasian	15.5%
Mixed/other	21.5%
Hispanic origin	18%
Employed full/part-time	41.3%
Primary income	
Job on/off the books	34.5%
Govt. assistance	60%
Other legitimate income	5.5%
HIV+ (of 96.7% tested)	24.3%
Hep C (of 85% tested)	30.8%
Psychiatric disorder (ever)	40%

Generally Long and Severe History of Polystubstance Use		
Years regular use of alcohol	Mean= 17.4	St. Dev= 10.6
Years regular use of drugs	Mean= 18.7	St. Dev= 12.0
Dependence Severity ²	Mean= 11.6	St. Dev= 2.4
Time since last used at baseline (median)....		
Alcohol (median)	14 months (range = .1 to 528)96.5	
Illicit drugs (median)	14 months (range = 1.231)61.6	

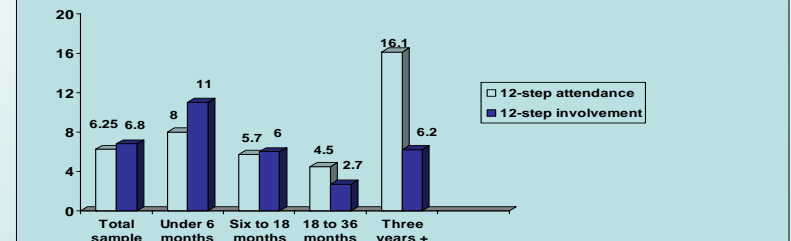
Substances Used		
	Ever %	Primary Problem %
Crack	87.3	59.4
Heroin	65.6	18.2
Cocaine	93.1	9.1
Alcohol	98.9	8.4
Other	96.5	4.8

Baseline Predictors of Sustained 12-Step Affiliation at F2

- Greater lifetime addiction severity, being female, African-American, and greater baseline level of commitment to abstinence predicted significantly greater likelihood (p<.05) of sustained 12-step attendance.
- ❖ These domains and older age, also predicted significantly greater likelihood of sustained 12-step involvement.
 - ❖ Being in recovery under 6 months at baseline was negatively associated with sustained 12-step attendance and involvement.



Role of continuous 12-step attendance and involvement over 3 years on sustained recovery Total sample and baseline recovery stages a,b



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

- ❖ Twelve-attendance and involvement decreased over time in this formerly poly-substance dependent inner city cohort.
- ❖ Sustained 12-step attendance and involvement significantly increases the odds of sustained recovery.
- ❖ Commitment to abstinence at baseline was a critical predictor of sustained 12-step participation while being in early recovery negatively predicted sustained participation.
- ❖ Taken together, these findings suggest that clinicians can significantly enhance the likelihood of sustained post-treatment recovery by emphasizing the need for committing to total and permanent abstinence and by fostering stable affiliation with 12-step fellowships.

REFERENCES

1. Fiorentine, R. (1999) After drug treatment: Are 12-step programs effective in maintaining abstinence? *American Journal of Drug Alcohol Abuse*, 25: 93-116.
2. Sheehan, D., Lecrubier, Y., Harnett-Sheehan, K., Amorim, P., Janavs, J., & Weiller, E. et al., (1998) The Mini International Neuropsychiatric Interview (M.I.N.I.): The Development and Validation of a Structured Diagnostic Psychiatric Interview. *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 59, 22-33.
3. Morgenstern J, & McCrady BS. (1993) Cognitive Processes and Change in Disease-Model Treatment. In: McCrady, B. and Miller, W. R. (Eds) *Research on Alcoholics Anonymous, Opportunities and Alternatives*, pp.153-166.

FOOTNOTES

- a All analyses controlling for baseline duration of recovery
b Bars represent odds ratio of sustained recovery from baseline to F2, all p <.05