



Does the *Life Without A Crutch* training program work?

Attitudinal surveys of inmates, conducted at four penal institutions, reveal statistically significant changes in inmates' mind-set and perceptions after completing the *Life Without a Crutch Program*. Attitudinal assessment fell into three broad categories, including: the ability to recognize and actively change personal problems, temptations to consume alcohol, and opinions of drug use. Attitudinal change in inmates occurred across all three of these dimensions.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- After completion of the program, there was a 20% increase in the number of inmates who felt that they were *working hard* to make changes in their lives. 54% indicated that they were *doing something* about the problem that had been bothering them.
- The influence of alcohol on offenders' decisions was also noticeably reduced. For example, there was a 10% decrease in the number of offenders who claimed that drinking made them feel *more relaxed* and *less tense*.
- The *temptation* to drink was also significantly lower after the completion of the program. Only 35% of offenders believed they would be very or extremely tempted to drink when others around them are drinking, as compared to 47% at the inception of the program.
- The acceptability of using *drugs to relieve tension* strongly applied to 38% of the offenders at the beginning of the program. At the completion of the program, only 29% strongly believed that drugs would alleviate tension.
- In initial surveys, 30% of offenders indicated that they were extremely confident that they could *resist using drugs* when they were *anxious* or *stressed*. After completing the program, the proportion increased to 43%.
- Offenders' beliefs that they could *resist situations* and *people* that reminded them of their *drug use/habits* were also stronger after participating in the program. Before starting the *Life Without A Crutch Program* 44% of respondents expressed extreme confidence in their ability to resist such situations and individuals, whereas after completing the program 68% reported that they were extremely confident in their ability to resist situations and people linked to drug use.

* N differs by module. The study included 5 modules. A number of cases were dropped due to incomplete surveys. Minimum N=138. Maximum N=187

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***The Life Without a Crutch attitudinal survey is the sole property of the University of Rhode Island (©1998). Other sources for the survey design include:

-McConaughy, E.N., Prochaska, J.O., & Velicer, W.F. (1983). Stages of change in psychotherapy: Measurement and sample profiles. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice*, 20, 368-375.

-McConaughy, E.A., DiClemente, C.C., Prochaska, J.O., & Velicer, W.F. (1989). Stages of change in psychotherapy: A follow-up report. *Psychotherapy*, 26, 494-503.1989

-Maddock, J.E., Laforge, R.G. & Rossi, J.S. Short Form of a Situational Temptation Scale for Heavy Episodic Drinking. *Journal of Substance Abuse*, 2000;11(3):281-288.

The decisional balance scale came from the work of: Migneault, J. P., Velicer W. F., Prochaska, J. O., and Stevenson J. F. Decisional balance for immoderate drinking in college students. *Subst. Use Misuse*. 34(10): 1325-1346, 1999.

-Maddock, J. E. Development and validation of decisional balance and processes of change inventories for heavy, episodic drinking. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University Of Rhode Island, 1997.