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:

