

Recovery Panel Questions

1. What finally motivated you to ask for help or make a change (can you describe your “moment of clarity”?) How did you ask for help? Did you seek it or was it offered to you?
2. What services in the community did you utilize to start your recovery?
3. If you have had previous relapses, what were some of the contributing factors?
 - *FOLLOW UP:* What do you typically say to people after they relapse?
 - *FOLLOW UP 2:* What are the most common pitfalls or contributing factors you’ve seen that lead people back into the process of relapse?
4. What recovery path speaks most to you and why? Did you try anything before that didn’t work?
 - *FOLLOW UP:* Even though you’ve chosen your preferred pathway of recovery, are there aspects of other programs you wish were more integrated into your preferred recovery course (for example, I attend SMART recovery but wish there was more fellowship like in CR or 12-step, or I attend N.A. and wish we were more open about MAT?, or I love A.A. but don’t like how we sometimes make addicts feel unwelcome, etc.).
5. What are some of the things you typically say to a newcomer to offer them hope?
6. How would you define spirituality in simple terms and what is your opinion of the role spirituality plays in recovery?
7. What are some of the misconceptions about recovery, or examples of unhelpful or misleading advice that may come from either treatment centers, counselors/professionals, or within the recovery community, and doesn’t reconcile with (the literature in your program of choice or) your own experiences?

8. When you were starting your recovery journey, what are same things you would have wanted substance use and/or mental health professionals to know?
9. Is it true in your experience that 'nothing insures immunity from (relapse) as much as intensive work with other alcoholics/addicts'?'
 - *FOLLOW UP:* What are your thoughts on the importance of service and giving back as a way maintain and grow in recovery? (ref p. 89)
 - *FOLLOW UP:* What are your views on the role of peer support in recovery? Can we do this thing on our own or is it much easier when somebody who has been through it themselves suggests a program of action that worked for them?
10. Can consequences alone (or external factors, including human power) keep a person in recovery long-term?
11. Even though you've chosen this pathway of recovery, are there ways you're trying to integrate the thinking or traditions of other pathways of recovery (i.e. other programs)?
12. How is relapse viewed from your perspective or that of your preferred recovery program of action? (i.e. it's just a slip, need to start over, it's embraced as a part of recovery (i.e. a 'reoccurrence'), it's considered a sign someone's program is lacking, etc.).
 - *FOLLOW UP:* How is relapse or sober time defined in the realm of mental health recovery?
 - *FOLLOW UP:* Is relapse really a part of recovery?
13. In your opinion, is there room for concepts like harm reduction or moderation management in recovery, or do you think this is a dangerous and slippery slope that just gives people the justification to replace their DOC with something more accepted by society (e.g. a daily IV heroin user who smokes marijuana instead; an alcoholic takes a prescribed benzodiazepine to help with anxiety, etc.)?