



## MUCH MORE

empowering men through peer-group activities

Skills for social and working life for the middle-aged men with past addiction problems.

## Insights that counteract relapse and which together build a meaningful everyday life.

### Health

For one of the participants, health has been the most important. He often work-out and is careful to eat healthy. He describes that his current good health provides added value in relation to being affected by drugs.

### Small things that provide meaningfulness in everyday life

We find that the participants in the group can describe small things that give meaning to everyday life. This insight among the participants is something we generally did not expect or thought about. Many of the other participants agree that you experience / appreciate little things that you did not during the dependent period. One of the participants said that when he drinks a cup of coffee in the morning, he is now enjoying the moment. Previously, the morning coffee meant nothing to him.

### Differences

We have also had discussions about insights of differences. A man describes that at one point at the end of his addiction he reflected his extremely bad health. He further explains that it struck him an incredibly big difference to his health at that time compared to what was before and at the beginning of his drug addiction career. He can today make his own comparative analysis where he weighs his good health against the kick that the drugs give. Where the feeling of well-being as a good health means considering the sense of well-being that the rush gives.

### The bottom is reached:

The insight into what catastrophic consequences the use of drugs / addictions is a constant recurring theme. A man who had 30 years of alcohol addiction behind him said he was always at home and drank in his loneliness. Towards the end of the abuse period, he started going out to the pub and thought it was fun to drink with others. At the last moment he drank, he invited a couple from the pub to his home to an after party. He became very drunk and the guests called for ambulance. When the staff found him in the apartment they called Polis and the man was taken care of. He had to spend the night in the corpse and when he arrived at the apartment the following morning, the guests had stolen valuables in the apartment and stolen his car. For him this was the "drop that caused the cup to flow over".

Another of the participants describes how the limit for reaching the bottom is constantly intercepted. The fact that he lost his job was not enough, that he later lost his family was not enough to be detained and sentenced for crimes committed in drunkenness was also not enough. Instead of a prison sentence, he ended up in a treatment home where he underwent a six-week treatment and then in a subsequent program where he lived and stayed for a year and a half. He states that the long treatment time was what made him later to maintain his sobriety. During the treatment he got work and also got back his family. During treatment he realized that there is no limit to how far he is prepared to sink. This insight that there is no bottom for him is helping

### **Personal Relationships:**

At the times we have talked about relapse with our participants, they describe the feelings of emptiness and loneliness that lead to drug use. The need to get rid of this feeling is so strong that they are prepared to do anything. They know that if they start drinking or taking drugs, the feeling disappears. They can describe different events that lead to relapse. For example, they are sitting alone on the train on their way home from a treatment or being referred to an empty apartment or just the knowledge about this. Here the participants describe that this could be counteracted by the fact that during the treatment period they were helped to arrange it so that they did not move to an apartment without having access to close contacts, that they had a job / activity to come to and the other family members have participated in planning during the treatment period.

### **The lack of networking**

Some participants have described that they lack contact with the family and have no friend they trust. Almost all of the participants state that, on the basis of their dependence, they feel a sense of loneliness and emptiness. This group has a double vulnerability. Secondly, they have a sense of emptiness, and they actually have loneliness. One of the participants describes in various ways how incredibly important his treatment contact is.

### **Professional treatment:**

Other participants with similar vulnerabilities have described how crucial the professional's response has been. If a client feels that the professional is not truthful, credible and sincere and does not care about his clients, then this loses his motivation to try to make a change. Persons who serve a prison sentence state that a prerequisite for being in prison stays is to learn to see a difference in the income you can count on and so-called "fake players". They bring this ability when leaving the prison. If they meet a professional, it takes between 30 seconds and one minute before they decide if that person is a "fake player" or a person who can be trusted. If there is a fake player opposite them, they deliver the answer to the questions they know - or think they know that the other wants them to answer. The therapists are satisfied with the answers and think they have had a very rewarding conversation while the client believes the therapist is an idiot who does not understand anything. A prerequisite for a successful treatment result is that the client is familiar with the therapist. Confidence builds over time and what determines if the client will feel the confidence of the therapist is that this is sincere and conveys a feeling to the client that he / she cares and wants the client well.

### **To help others**

On the question of "creating a meaningful everyday life," many respond to the fact that they want to be helpful to others who are in the same situation they have previously been in.

Many of the participants often recur to talk about the importance of early retirement by the community to prevent later in life to end up in drug addiction. Some believe that preventive measures introduced after the adolescents have reached adolescence are ineffective. Preventive work must start earlier, even already on day care centres.

### **Happiness**

When you feel happy and glorious, the hunger after drugs strikes back at you. Thoughts like “now I can handle it because now I am strong and care free. I am invulnerable, like Superman” appears.

## **What conditions must be reached for a group treatment to be possible?**

### **The insight that the drug adds to myself - and those I love boundless pains**

One important component that reinforces addiction and prevents you from getting sober is shame of things that you have done towards yourself and people you love. Some of the ideas that appeared was that different defences unconsciously makes you deceive yourself by putting the problems outside yourself, or blame it on circumstances or various other prevarications. Maybe you must turn it off, otherwise you would feel certain that you would emotionally die. Is like you get used to feel pain and the drug helps you to” push it down” until you finally don’t have any other choice than to proceed drinking.

### **What treatments are missing?**

Self-help group that helps participants structure their week, such as attending all meetings with Social Services, seeking work, completing treatments, and maintaining routine routines.

Another type of self-help group that the participants think might be helpful to them is to start with common recreational activities. If you are having trouble with this, you can help a professional who has a menu of recreational activities, for example to play chess, go to theatre or go boxing.

## **Training for professionals**

Feedback from the training for professionals at the outpatient non institutional treatment at social services in Gävle on 28/2 2019

An education day of social services in Gävle, working with the target group people with addiction problems.

The arrangement is that two people from the Stickkan Johan and Torgny who works on the Stickkan and Margaretha who work as Leg psychotherapeutic, tutors and trainers are in the training day

Today's approach is based on themes that the men in the target group (See the agenda).

During the day the professional partners has been active with questions and reflections They also have gathered in reflection groups and then reported in large group

**Target group:** Middle-aged men with previously addicted problems. 25 Men in Gävle That meet For a year

**Group activities:**

Group meetings for one year.

We met in the evenings because several of the participants have work.

The calls lasted for two hours with a coffee break in the middle. The target audience has chosen theme for calls

Rules were formulated for These group calls. Not to interrupt each other, not to threaten with words or glances, everyone has the right to their own opinion. Do not commit SuicID as long as you participate in the project. The group gave Johan and Torgny Mandate to upstand these rules  
All interviewed individually before joining the group

The target group has also invited lecturers from outside. See annex.

**Basic ideas from the professionals from the outpatient staff from the social services:**

We will learn from the target group and not vice versa. Our focus was their description of their reality. What they considered important to maintain their sobriety and create a meaningful everyday life.

**Result:**

1 target Group Description

2 How the addiction care treatment looks connected to the target groups perspective and what thoughts this evokes in the professionals.

2 What's missing both based on the target group, but also in the society.

We go through the different themes and immersed ourselves in these:

\* Health On several levels mentally, physically

- \* KASAM sense of context. Salutogenic attitude
- \* Existential questions That is linked to being a man with unresolved questions such as death, Free will, loneliness
- \* Shame. The function of shame in a person's life.
- \* What is a professional approach (Based on the target group and professional)

During the day, all 17 professionals were very active with reflections and questions.

One of the managers had a Conversation with all staff-participants and they had said that they were satisfied with both form and content.

We who held the day also received continuous feedback.

Those that emerged from the reporting of the conversation that were taken in smaller groups were:

They appreciated to hear about the project based on the men's stories. They were able to problematize around their own work, but it also made hope and gave insights.

Inmates were given the opportunity to discuss what it meant to meet the target group based on being professional and be honest and genuine as the target group called for.

They told each other both positive feedback and shortcomings in there work.

It was appreciated to have time for reflection.

Our approach contributed to an open atmosphere that made the conversations personal and important to all professional That makes an important and difficult work all day.

We ended the day with a Ted Talk by Johann Hari who talked about drug abuse from a completely different perspective than the prevailing one. This raised completely new questions

## Information about the project:

Programme Priority: P4 Skilled and socially inclusive region

Programme Specific Objective: 4.1. More people benefiting from stronger Central Baltic communities

Sub-programme: Central Baltic

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