



The Thirty-Fourth Annual Conference
Proudly sponsored by the
Houston Chapter
Texas Association of Addiction Professionals
September 20 - 23, 2007
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**PRE-CONFERENCE:
PATRICK CARNES**

of Pine Grove Behavioral Health and Addiction Services
You cannot miss this exciting and motivating Keynote Presenter!
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Pharmacotherapy: Integrating New Tools into Practice.
This will discuss pharmacotherapy in a way that challenges ideas and
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alcohol dependence and addiction, show scientific evidence of the claim that
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overcoming treatment obstacles, strategies to match patients with therapies,
and planning that motivates patients in treatment.

For Registration information,
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setting with a family willing to do anything.

The third man has burned every bridge with family and friends. No one awaits his return. While in treatment he was given a few phone numbers. By a twist of fate the only option that materialized was a structured halfway house. Within days the director of the house reminds the man that he came to them for help and insists that he take immediate action in a 12-step program. As a rule of the house each resident must take part in book studies and/or speaking engagements at various treatment centers, jails, or hospitals.

It is important that we understand that all three men had the very best of intentions upon entering treatment. The unfortunate truth is that self-knowledge will never suffice, without action the real alcoholic/addict will never remain permanently sober. Even when an alcoholic is able to abstain for a prolonged period of time, when his/her life becomes difficult the alcoholic will always return to the one thing that makes their life bearable. The drugs and alcohol is their only solution for coping with this type of pain or stress. Although many medications address the physical craving nothing but a new solution can alleviate this particular mental twist. This is where so many fail believing that neither treatment nor a 12-step program will ever help them. Their future is grave unless a new solution is found and action is taken at once.

Returning to our man at the structured halfway house. He is painfully aware that if he takes a drink that he will be removed from the facility and it could be the fear of his own lack of control that motivates him at first. In a short time he finds himself tagging along with his new acquaintances. They explain this whole "new solution" thing to men and women who are at the end of their ropes and feel hopeless. In the corner he sees the young man who returned to his family's home. The young man is in worse shape than ever and believes that his place on this earth is to suffer. A mere second passes as the younger man recognizes the man in front of him from treatment. He had been positive that

his chances of recovery were far better than the third man who had nowhere to go. He had been sure that his family and money would save him. What he now could clearly see was that the third man with nothing had the answer. Our younger man immediately asked what it was that he was doing to stay sober and if he would help him. Over the next few weeks the two men worked together and in no time the younger man was tagging along looking for someone who he could work with.

Two years have passed as they have found many alcoholics to work with and have not had a drink despite a personal tragedy as the younger man's mother passed away. He did not mask his pain with a drink, he reached out to work with another.

Our first man was not so fortunate, after his wife divorced him and his career was forever lost, he took his own life.

This is a life or death struggle. We cannot afford to waste time with blame; the truth is that it is not the fault of treatment centers or any 12-step program. This problem is widespread and at epidemic proportions.

As people in the "helping" industry or family members of those gravely affected, it is our obligation to point these men and women in a direction of structure and required actions. Whether an intensive IOP followed up by a 12-step program of action (not just meetings) or a structured transitional living program; it is imperative that the alcoholic is held accountable and learns to stand on their own two feet. Isolation, resentment, and self-pity are as dangerous as the drink itself.

We have found through experience that making life too easy always fails when dealing with real alcoholics and drug addicts. We want to save them until we learn that we are not helping them, in fact we are helping them kill themselves and prolonging their misery.

If you are using slogans like "90 meetings in 90 days" or "Meeting makers make it" please stop. It is imperative that we send them where a solution can be found. This would be a 12-step group that actually studies the literature and carries the message of hope. If you are a loving family member who is trying to cushion every blow, I beg of you to stop, for you are not helping. As long as you are there to help them you are cheating them out of any real consequences and possibly the very thing that will save their life. If you are the addict or alcoholic and you fail to take action and replace your solution, you will never find what you are looking for.

Scott Wisenbaker works with alcoholics and addicts includes speaking engagements whenever possible as well as weekly commitments to various treatment centers, jails, and hospitals. The Jefferson County Juvenile Detention Center in Lakewood, Colorado and The Green Villa Treatment Center in Greenville, Texas. Scott can be reached by e-mail at www.solutionsofnorthtexas.com

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Adolescent Health and Development	4-8 hrs
Dual Diagnosis	6 hrs
Domestic Violence and Substance Abuse	6 hrs
Basic Pharmacology and Substance Abuse Behaviors	3-9 hrs
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The Institute of Chemical Dependency Studies

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