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*Chapter 5*

**BEATING THE SCENE:  
A RE-OFFENSE PREVENTION PROGRAM  
FOR DELINQUENTS SUFFERING  
FROM SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS**

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**ABSTRACT**

In this chapter, a re-offense prevention program is presented which specifically addresses the participant's social network composition. Beating the Scene, as the program is called, is a protocolized program that makes ample use of cognitive behavioral therapeutic techniques. This program has five main goals: 1: The creation of awareness of the negative influences of the participant's criminogenic peer group, 2: The enhancement of the participant's motivation to build up a prosocial network, 3: The design of a personalized and rewarding prosocial network, 4: The acquisition of the necessary social skills, and 5: The buddy-assisted introduction of participants into existing prosocial networks.

Beating the Scene can be used in both inpatient and outpatient settings. It can be added to a wide array of forensic treatment regimens for patients suffering from SUDs.

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## INTRODUCTION

Substance Use Disorders (SUDs) are known to be important contributing factors to the development and exacerbation of various types of antisocial and delinquent behavior. The treatment of patients who exhibit frequent antisocial behavior and suffer from these conditions is often experienced as challenging by therapists and usually produce very modest effects, if any at all.

One of the most important statistical predictors of criminal recidivism and of relapse to substance use in delinquents suffering from SUDs is having a social network predominantly consisting of people who also use alcohol and/or drugs, and who also engage in criminal activities (Beattie & Longabaugh, 1999; Berg & Huebner, 2011; Brewer et al., 1998; Dobkin et al., 2002; Ennet et al., 2006; Hipp et al., 2010; Marlatt & Witkiewitz, 2005; McIntosh & McKeganey, 2000; Pearson & Michell, 2000). Another important predictor is the experience of loneliness resulting from the absence of an adequate social support network (Levy, 2008; Rachlin, 2000; Skog, 2003; Tate et al., 2004). In order to reduce relapse and criminal recidivism rates in these patients, it is paramount to address their social network architecture. Interventions should be aimed at enabling these patients to abandon their criminogenic peer group and to build up a rewarding prosocial network.

In this chapter, a re-offense prevention program is presented which specifically addresses the patient's social network composition. Beating the Scene, as the program is called, is a protocolized program that makes ample use of cognitive behavioral therapeutic techniques. It aims at the development of a prosocial network by the participant through the achievement of the following five goals: 1: The creation of awareness of the negative influences of the participant's criminogenic peer group, 2: The enhancement of the participant's motivation to build up a prosocial network, 3: The design of a personalized and rewarding prosocial network, 4: The acquisition of the necessary social skills, and 5: The buddy-assisted introduction of participants into existing prosocial networks. The achievement of the first four goals can be regarded as a preparation phase of the building of a prosocial network. In order to achieve the fifth and final goal, what is learned in the preparation phase is put into practice and the participant's prosocial network is actually built.

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Beating the Scene can be used in both inpatient and outpatient settings. It can be added to a wide array of forensic treatment regimens for patients suffering from SUDs. Total abstinence is not a critical requirement for participation, but (at least some) motivation for positive change is.

## **PHASE 1, THE PREPARATION PHASE**

The first phase of the Beating the Scene program consists of a series of individual or group sessions in which nine steps are to be taken. These steps are:

1. The introduction of the participants into the program.
2. The creation of awareness of the influences of the participant's criminogenic peer group.
3. The enhancement of the ability to recognize prosocial people and to designate finding places of prosocial people.
4. The enhancement of motivation in the participant to develop a prosocial network by creating awareness of the advantages of being part of such a social network.
5. The design of a prosocial network that matches the participant's personality, needs, and preferences.
6. The exploration of the participant's own possibilities and skills to develop a rewarding prosocial network.
7. The acquisition of relevant social skills.
8. The preparation of the participant for the buddy-assisted part of the program.
9. Making a Prosocial Network Plan.

The sessions should be held at least once a week in order to reduce attrition.

The number of sessions needed to complete this phase of the program is not necessarily fixed. Rather, it deserves preference to thoroughly complete each step before moving on to the next one.

Group sessions should take place with a fixed group of participants in order for them to be able to work through all of the program's steps together and simultaneously.

All participants receive a workbook which contains relevant information for each step of the program and assignments to complete either within the

session or at home. This workbook serves as a guide that leads the participant through the first phase of the program. In the next paragraphs of this chapter, directions are given as to how to compose such a workbook. It is chosen not to present a fixed or compulsory format for this workbook in order to give therapists the freedom to adjust the workbook to the specific characteristics and needs of the group of patients that is treated.

### **THE PROSOCIAL NETWORK WORKBOOK**

The Prosocial Network Workbook should contain relevant information for the participants to read and discuss in preparation for or during the sessions. This information is easily found on the internet and in the available literature on the subject of interpersonal relations and social interaction. It is important to rewrite this information in such a form that it becomes easily readable and comprehensible for the patients who participate in the program. Cultural aspects should also be taken into account when writing the text of the workbook since accepted and unacceptable forms of social interaction vary from culture to culture.

The workbook is composed of nine chapters, each corresponding to each of the nine steps of the first phase of the program. Every chapter, or step, is divided in three parts:

- A. A synopsis of the theme that will be discussed and worked with.
- B. One or more assignments to complete during the session.
- C. Homework assignments that will be discussed at the beginning of the next session.

Extra relevant information can be offered in appendices at the end of the workbook.

Finally, it is always advisable to give the workbook an attractive cover and to print it in color and on good quality paper. Professional-looking material is often taken more seriously and is usually less often lost or forgotten.

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## STEP 1: INTRODUCTION

### A: Synopsis

In the first session of the program, the participant is introduced to the therapists, to his or her fellow participants, and to the program itself. The way this is done depends on the culture and customs of the participants and on the preferences of the therapists. The important thing is to create a positive group environment in which mutual acceptance, support, and collaboration is possible.

When introducing the participants to the program, the following elements are important:

1. Highlighting the main goal of the program.
2. Informing the participants about how the program works and about what is expected of the participants.

#### *1: Highlighting the Main Goal of the Program*

First of all, it should be explained to the participants that having friends or acquaintances who are involved in substance use and/or in criminal activities is a strong predictor of their own relapse in substance use and of their own criminal recidivism. In order to reduce the risk of relapse and re-offending, it is therefore paramount to reform one's social network. The achievement of this reform is the main goal of the program. While explaining this, it is useful to give concrete examples of how people can be influenced by others and of how they can be persuaded to do things they don't really want to do and often regret afterwards.

Secondly, it is important for the participants to get a clear understanding of what prosocial and antisocial people are. Therefore, both types of people should be defined as to their main characteristics. A helpful tool for creating a consensus among the participants on these definitions is letting them add, delete or change statements in Table 1.

#### *2: Informing the Participants about How the Program Works and about What Is Expected of the Participants*

In this part of the session, the complete program is explained step by step. The techniques that are used are also discussed. It is important to stress that

the first phase of the program serves as a theoretical preparation for the second phase, in which the actual building of a prosocial network will take place.

An active participation during the sessions is expected from all participants. They must also be informed about the basic rules of participation, preferably in writing. These rules relate to attendance, punctuality, safety, mutual respect, sobriety during sessions, and confidentiality.

## **B: Assignment**

### ***Reflection on the Program by the Participants by Discussing Their Goals, Thoughts, Feelings and Hesitations about Building up a Prosocial Network***

The last part of the first session is spent by the participants discussing the information they have received and their personal motivations and hesitations about reforming their social network. The purpose of this discussion is to enhance the motivation of the participants.

**Table 1.**

Prosocial people (people who are good for me)...	Antisocial people (people who are bad for me, "toxic" friendships)...
Don't do drugs*	Do drugs
Don't <i>abuse</i> alcohol*	Abuse alcohol
Don't do crime*	Do crime
Help others	Think only about themselves
Make something of their lives	Waste their lives
Are an asset to their community	Parasitize on their community
Respect others and their opinions	Don't care about others/like to hurt others
Are interested in sharing with others	Are interested in taking from others
Are trustworthy	Can't be trusted
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....
.....	.....

\* These statements cannot be changed or deleted.

The therapists are encouraged to make use of motivational interviewing techniques as described by Miller and Rollnick (2002). This is not only the case in the course of this assignment, but also throughout the whole program.

At the end of the discussion, the participants are asked to write down their main conclusions in their workbooks.

### **C: Homework**

For homework, the participants are asked to reflect on the conclusions of the previous session and to write down in their workbooks their personal motives for completing the program and for reforming their social networks.

## **STEP 2: THE CREATION OF AWARENESS OF THE INFLUENCES OF THE PARTICIPANT'S CRIMINOGENIC PEER GROUP**

### **A: Synopsis**

In this step of the program, the participants are made aware of the influences of their present social network on their thoughts, opinions, attitudes, emotions, substance use, and (general and criminal) behavior. An important tool for the creation of this awareness is the sociogram. A sociogram is a graphic representation of social links that a person has. It is a graph drawing that plots the structure of interpersonal relations in a group situation. Sociograms were developed by Jacob L. Moreno (1934) to analyze choices or preferences within a group. They can diagram the structure and patterns of group interactions. A sociogram can be drawn on the basis of many different criteria: Social relations, channels of influence, lines of communication, etc. There are many types of sociograms (Russel & Cohn, 2015). It is up to the therapists to choose which type of sociogram is used. Whatever type of sociogram is chosen, the sociogram should at least depict:

- Which persons form part of the participant's present social network;
- How close these persons are to the participant relative to the other persons that figure on the sociogram;
- The nature and quality of the relationships that are depicted;

- The kind of influence these persons (or clusters of persons) have on the participant.

In the first session of this step, the sociogram is explained to the participants.

### **B: Assignment**

The participants are asked to draw their own sociograms.

The sociogram of each participant is then discussed and the following questions are answered:

1. How does your present social network influence your thoughts and opinions?
2. How does your present social network influence your emotions?
3. How does your present social network influence your use of alcohol and/or drugs?
4. How does your present social network influence your criminal behavior?
5. Which persons or groups of persons influence you the most and in what way?
6. Which persons or groups of persons are good for you and which are bad or “toxic” for you?
7. If your social network would stay unchanged for the next ten years, what would your life be like?
8. If your social network would stay unchanged for the next ten years, what would you be like?
9. What would you like to change about your social network?

The answers to these questions and other relevant observations are written down in the workbook.

### **C: Homework**

For homework, the participants are asked to reflect on their sociograms and to write down in their workbooks any relevant thoughts they may have concerning their social networks. They may adjust or completely redraw their

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sociograms when deemed appropriate. This homework will be discussed at the beginning of the next session.

### **STEP 3: THE ENHANCEMENT OF THE ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE PROSOCIAL PEOPLE AND TO DESIGNATE FINDING PLACES OF PROSOCIAL PEOPLE**

#### **A: Synopsis**

In this step, there are two key questions:

1. Who are these prosocial people?
2. Where can I find these people?

The answers to these questions will vary from person to person and from culture to culture. However, there are some universal characteristics of prosocial people that can be used as starting points for seeking the answers to these questions.

- Prosocial people are neither superheroes nor saints. They are not perfect and they do make mistakes from time to time just like everybody else.
- Prosocial people are not (necessarily) dull and square. There are all kinds of prosocial people. They may be modern or traditional, conformist or critical towards society. They may have many different personal styles and walks of life. Prosocial people are very diverse; they do not meet a fixed description.
- Prosocial people care about others. They are empathic. They respect others and their opinions. They help people who need help. They like sharing what they have with others. They are careful about not betraying your trust.
- Prosocial people make something positive of their lives. They do not abuse alcohol or drugs. They are not involved in crime or injustice. They strive to be meaningful to others and to themselves.

After discussing the two questions, the next assignments are given:

**B: Assignments*****Assignment 1***

The participants are asked to make a list of five prosocial people they know. Behind each name they write:

- Why this person is prosocial;
- What this person does in life;
- A description of his/her personality and lifestyle;
- Whether or not the participant would like to become friends with this person, and why this is so.

When the participants have completed their lists, they will discuss what kind of prosocial people they would prefer to get acquainted with. All new insights, conclusions and advices are written down in the workbook.

***Assignment 2***

According to the so-called “Law of Attraction,” like attracts like. This means that prosocial people often tend to come together in certain places. This goes not only for the fact that they are prosocial, they also tend to group together in places where they can share things they have a passion for, like their taste in music, their faith, their hobby, their favorite sport, etc. These places are the designated finding places of prosocial people. These finding places will differ from one participant to another since different people have different preferences.

In the previous assignment, the participants have determined what kind of prosocial people they would prefer to get to know and be friends with. In this assignment they are asked to make a list of places where these prosocial people are often present. Usually, good places to find all kinds of prosocial people are places where volunteer work is done.

Behind each finding place on the list, the participant writes down whether or not he/she would feel comfortable to go there and why this is so.

The list of finding places is then discussed and additional finding places are suggested. Again, all new insights, conclusions, and advices are written down in the workbook.

**C: Homework**

In this step, the homework consists of the critical reflection on the assignments completed during the sessions.

**STEP 4: THE ENHANCEMENT OF MOTIVATION IN  
THE PARTICIPANT TO DEVELOP A PROSOCIAL NETWORK  
BY CREATING AWARENESS OF THE ADVANTAGES OF  
BEING PART OF SUCH A SOCIAL NETWORK**

**A: Synopsis**

During the first session of this step, it is explained again to the participants that one of the most important protective factors against relapse and criminal recidivism is being part of a prosocial network. The characteristics of prosocial people as they were defined in steps 1 and 3 are recapitulated. It is also explained that people suffering from an addiction who have a criminal history, once having developed a prosocial network, are more successful in:

- Controlling their addiction,
- Staying out of trouble with the law,
- Work and income,
- Friendships and intimate relationships,
- Finding purpose in life,
- Developing new skills and interests,
- Attaining a higher quality of life in general.

**B: Assignments*****Assignment 1***

In the first assignment of this step, the participants discuss their ideas about what their lives would be like if they would be part of a prosocial network.

During this discussion, the following questions are answered:

1. How would my life be different from what it is now?
2. Would I still be abusing substances? Why or why not?
3. Would I still be committing crimes? Why or why not?
4. Would I be happier? Why or why not?
5. What would I be doing in life/with my life?
6. Would I be richer/wealthier?

Of course, other relevant questions can be added to this list.

The participants will write down their answers in their workbooks.

### *Assignment 2*

In the second assignment of this step, the participants are given the following list of statements that are typical of prosocial persons:

- I think it is important to help other people.
- I like to solve conflicts without hurting others.
- I like to tell the truth, even when this is not easy.
- I like to take part in activities that make my living environment/neighborhood a better place to live in.
- I am sensitive to the problems and needs of others.
- I respect other people, no matter who they are.
- I respect other people's views and opinions, even if they are opposite to (or very different from) those of my own.
- I know the difference between assertiveness and aggression and I definitely prefer assertiveness.

If desired, other such statements can be added to this list.

The participants then discuss these statements and answer the following questions:

1. Which of these statements appeal to you? Why?
2. Which of these statements don't appeal to you? Why?
3. What is respect? How do you define it? Are there other definitions of the word "respect"?
4. In which ways could you help other people? Which skills do you have or would you like to acquire?

5. In which ways could you contribute to the improvement of your living environment/neighborhood? Which skills do you have or would you like to acquire?

The participants will write their answers to these questions in their workbooks.

### ***Assignment 3***

In this assignment, the participants are provided with a balance sheet in which they take stock of their reasons for and against reforming their social network. When the balance sheets are completed, the participants discuss all the pros and contras. Concluding this assignment, every participant takes a decision about whether or not to reform his or her social network. Participants who have reached a firm conclusion not to reform their social network will leave the program.

### **C: Homework**

In this step, the homework consists of the critical reflection on the assignments completed during the sessions.

## **STEP 5: THE DESIGN OF A PROSOCIAL NETWORK THAT MATCHES THE PARTICIPANT'S PERSONALITY, NEEDS, AND PREFERENCES**

### **A: Synopsis**

In this step, the participants design their ideal prosocial network. This is done by:

1. Determining which persons should be excluded from the participant's present social network,
2. Determining which persons should be included in the participant's future social network, and
3. Determining which persons should stay in the participant's social network. It should also be determined in what way the participant's

relationship to these persons should change in order to enhance the participant's quality of life and to reduce the risk of relapse and re-offending.

## **B: Assignments**

### ***Assignment 1***

In this assignment, the participants take the sociogram they have drawn in step 2 and make the following changes:

1. The individuals who should be excluded from the participant's social network are marked with a red circle. The reasons why these individuals should be parted with are written down next to the sociogram.
2. The individuals about whom there is doubt whether or not they should be excluded from the participant's social network are marked with a yellow circle. The reasons for this doubt are written down next to the sociogram.
3. The individuals who should stay in the participant's social network are marked with a green circle. The reasons why these individuals should stay are written down next to the sociogram.

This new version of the sociogram is then discussed. Special attention is given to the individuals inside the participants' social networks about whom doubt exists whether or not they should be excluded. By considering all pros and contras, the participants finally decide on whether or not to exclude these individuals from their social networks.

### ***Assignment 2***

In the second assignment of this step, the participants are encouraged to fantasize about their future prosocial network and about what type of persons would make part of it. After a free discussion about the desired characteristics of future prosocial friends, each participant makes an inventory of one's own preferred characteristics which is written down in the workbook. After this, fictional characters are invented that possess these characteristics. These characters are named and provided with a fictional life story, a description of occupations and favorite pastimes, a list of places they frequent, etc. It is also allowed to include existing persons into this fantasy who are known to possess

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the desired characteristics. Finally, a new sociogram is drawn in the workbook in which these fictional characters and real people, together with the already existing prosocial relationships, are placed according to the preferences of the participant. This sociogram is then discussed as to its hypothetical effects on the participant's future life and as to the degree of attainability of such a social network. Adjustments to the sociogram are then made if necessary. The final version of this sociogram could be regarded as the participant's "ideal sociogram."

### ***Assignment 3***

In this assignment, the participants are encouraged to reflect about what they should do in order to improve their relationships with significant prosocial others in their present social network. First of all, the participants make a list of the people inside their present social network who have a positive influence on them. After this, they write down behind the name of each person what the current status of the relationship is and which problems are to be solved within these relationships. The possible solutions to these problems are then discussed, as well as the concrete actions each participant should undertake in order to bring improvement to their positive relationships. All conclusions and advices that result from this discussion are written down by the participant in his or her workbook.

## **C: Homework**

In this step, the homework consists of the critical reflection on the assignments completed during the sessions.

## **STEP 6: THE EXPLORATION OF THE PARTICIPANT'S OWN POSSIBILITIES AND SKILLS TO DEVELOP A REWARDING PROSOCIAL NETWORK**

### **A: Synopsis**

In this step, the participants will explore their already existing possibilities, capabilities, and skills to develop a prosocial network.

It is crucial in this step to make the participants focus on whatever possibilities, capabilities, and skills they have and not to dwell on any of their perceived shortcomings. Motivating the participants by enhancing their self-esteem is the main goal of this step. An improved self-esteem is important for the participants in order to gain confidence of the fact that they can be accepted in circles of prosocial people.

### **B: Assignment**

The participants are asked to write down their strong points in the following areas:

- Character and personality;
- Practical and occupational skills;
- Social skills;
- Other fields of competence.

These strong points will be discussed as to how they can be used for the development of a prosocial network. All conclusions and advices that result from this discussion are written down by the participant in his or her workbook.

### **C: Homework**

In this step, the homework consists of the critical reflection on the notes that were taken during the sessions.

## **STEP 7: THE ACQUISITION OF RELEVANT SOCIAL SKILLS**

### **A: Synopsis**

In this step, the participants will inventory the social skills they lack in order to develop a prosocial network successfully as well as the possibilities that are available to them to enhance these skills. In most cases, this will involve taking part in a social skills training. All participants will receive

information about what a social skills training is and where they can find such a training.

### **B: Assignment**

The participants are asked to write down their weak points in the area of social skills. These weak points will be discussed as to how they can be turned into strong points as much as possible. All conclusions and advices that result from this discussion are written down by the participant in his or her workbook.

### **C: Homework**

In this step, the homework consists of the critical reflection on the notes that were taken during the sessions and the careful consideration of whether or not to take part in a social skills training.

## **STEP 8: THE PREPARATION OF THE PARTICIPANT FOR THE BUDDY-ASSISTED PART OF THE PROGRAM**

### **A: Synopsis**

In this step, the participants are prepared for the second phase of the program in which they will start building up a prosocial network with the help of a buddy. This buddy is a volunteer who has been trained to adequately assist the participants to fulfill the goals of this program. The buddy will *not* become one of the participant's new prosocial friends. He or she will only encourage the participant and facilitate his or her efforts for the period of one year. The role of the buddy is to motivate and to accompany the participant while visiting the designated finding places and making contact with prosocial people. After this one-year period, the participant is considered to be able to maintain and expand his or her prosocial network without the assistance of a trained volunteer.

The assistance of a buddy in the second phase of the program is essential because most participants will experience high levels of discomfort when

making their first steps into finding places of prosocial people. Without the support of a buddy, attrition can be expected to be high in this phase of the program.

A more detailed description of the recruitment, the role, and the training of the buddy is found further on in this chapter, in the paragraphs that describe phase two of this program.

### **B: Assignment**

The participants are asked to discuss the following topics:

- How can a buddy help you to go to finding places of prosocial people?
- How can a buddy help you to make contact with prosocial people?
- How can a buddy help you to maintain a new prosocial friendship for at least one year?

All conclusions and advices that result from this discussion are written down in the participant's workbook.

### **C: Homework**

In this step, the homework consists of the critical reflection on the notes that were taken during the sessions.

## **STEP 9: MAKING A PROSOCIAL NETWORK PLAN**

### **A: Synopsis**

In this last step of phase one, the participants will make their Prosocial Network Plan. This is a plan in which is determined:

1. Which ten finding places the participants will visit (together with their buddy). These finding places are written down in order of difficulty: the easiest first and the most difficult last. Each participant decides in

which order the finding places will be visited. A participant will move from one finding place to the next when at least one new prosocial acquaintance is made.

2. What the participants will do once they are at the finding place in order to meet prosocial people and get into contact with them, and how their buddy can help them to achieve this. Also a plan B is made in case plan A fails.
3. What the participants will do in order to develop (at least some of) these new acquaintances into durable friendships.
4. How the participants can check whether the new acquaintances are indeed prosocial. Also is determined how to end the relationship with newly met people that prove to be antisocial or “toxic.”

The Prosocial Network Plan is the fundament of the second phase of the program. It serves as a “mission plan” for the first year of the development of the participant’s prosocial network.

### **B: Assignment**

Each participant draws up his or her own personal Prosocial Network Plan. The early versions of it are discussed and adjusted if necessary until a final version is formulated. The final version should be both realizable and agreeable to the participant. The final version of the Prosocial Network Plan is written down in the workbook.

### **C: Homework**

In this step, the homework consists of the critical reflection on the Prosocial Network Plan until a final version is drafted.

## **PHASE 2, PUTTING THEORY INTO PRACTICE**

### **The Buddy**

Building up a prosocial network on one’s own is simply too big a task for most participants. Therefore, each participant will carry out his or her

Prosocial Network Plan with the assistance and support of a buddy. As stated earlier, this buddy will stay with the participant for a period of one year. The buddy's role is:

- To accompany the participant to the finding places of prosocial people;
- To encourage the participant to carry out the planned actions at the finding places;
- To coach the participant while making contact with prosocial people;
- To support, motivate, and encourage the participant when he or she is being unsuccessful;
- To prevent postponement of action and attrition of the participant;
- To support, motivate, and encourage the participant not to resume contact with old criminogenic or "toxic" friends;
- To report the participant's progress to the therapists.

Not just anybody can become a buddy in this program. The buddy should:

- Be 25 years or older;
- Have an ample amount of social skills;
- Be assertive and steadfast;
- Not be involved in criminal or antisocial activities;
- Not have any problems with substances or gambling;
- Not have any (significant) psychological problems;
- Not be a fellow participant;
- Be a good match with the participant;
- Have a prosocial network himself/herself;
- Be a good motivator.

Usually, good places to recruit buddies are religious organizations (like churches, mosques, synagogues, The Salvation Army, etc.), and other organizations that have an idealistic and altruistic foundation (like environmental organizations, equal rights groups, volunteer organizations that support disadvantaged people, etc.). In many countries, there are numerous already existing buddy projects. Some of them may be willing to contribute to this program by recruiting specially selected buddies.

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## **Preparation of the Buddy**

Before entering the program, the buddy needs to be thoroughly informed about the program and its goals, and about the characteristics of its participants. The buddy must be made conscious of the fact that the person he or she will be helping to build up a prosocial network has a criminal history and a substance abuse problem. Therefore, each candidate should follow a preparation course in which the following topics are discussed:

- The characteristics of people suffering from SUDs;
- The characteristics of addicted delinquents;
- The influences and effects of an antisocial and a prosocial network;
- How the program works;
- The role of the buddy: what the buddy does and must not do;
- Personal safety issues which may arise from the relation with the participant.

It is only after having followed this preparation course that the candidate will decide whether or not to proceed with becoming a buddy.

## **Safety of the Buddy**

Being the buddy of an addicted person who has a criminal history brings about personal safety issues. Therefore, a tailor-made safety plan is drawn up for each participant-buddy combination. This plan includes:

1. An inventory of the signals that can be regarded as precursors of situations of unsafety for the buddy.
2. A description of what the buddy should and should not do when these signals are observed;
3. Who to call for assistance when these signals are observed.

The buddy will always have his or her mobile phone at hand while undertaking activities with the participant.

The buddy's activities within the program will be discontinued in whatever case his or her personal safety is compromised by the participant.

### **Matching the Buddy with the Participant**

Once the buddies are prepared for their role and activities, the therapists will match them to the participants with whom they believe they will form the best combination. Matching factors to take into consideration are age, sex, cultural background, tastes, preferences, dressing style, but especially character.

The therapists will introduce the participant to the buddy and organize three meetings of an hour in which the participant and the buddy can get to know each other and can determine whether or not they can form a good team together. If the participant and the buddy both agree to proceed together, they will. If at least one of them has doubts after these three meetings, the match is off and the buddy and the participant will be matched with someone else.

When a match is made, another meeting will be organized in which the participant's Prosocial Network Plan is discussed, as well as the buddy's personal safety plan. They will both sign a contract which states that:

1. In case of crises of calamities of any kind, the participant *will not* call upon the buddy for help. Rather, the participant will call upon professional caregivers for help and assistance.
2. The buddy will *never* lend or give any money or goods to the participant. The participant will *never* ask the buddy for money or goods.
3. The participant will *never* enter or come near the buddy's home while participating in the program. The participant will always respect the buddy's privacy. The participant will never ask the buddy for shelter. When shelter is needed, the participant will turn to professional care providers.
4. The participant and the buddy will not engage in any kind of sexual activity with each other for the duration of the program.
5. The buddy will *never* be under the influence of *any* substance while in the presence of the participant.
6. The buddy will *never* supply the participant with *any* addictive substance.
7. The buddy will *never* undertake *any* unlawful activity together with the participant.
8. The participant will *never* introduce the buddy to members of his or her criminogenic social network. The participant and the buddy will

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never go to places where these people are present. The buddy will never associate with these people.

9. Both participant and buddy will abide by the Prosocial Network Plan and the buddy's personal safety plan. Any changes to any of the plans should be discussed with, and approved by the therapists first.
10. Both participant and buddy will contact one the therapists at least once a week and report truthfully on the progress, mishaps, and any other facts that can be reasonably considered as relevant.

Breaching this contract will usually mean the termination of the program for both participant and buddy.

### **The Participant-Buddy-Therapist Triangle**

It is essential that the participant, the buddy and the therapist work closely together during the course of the program. The "triangle" will meet at least once a week to discuss progress, problems, and solutions to problems. Once every six weeks, the Prosocial Network Plan is evaluated and adjusted if necessary. The therapist provides coaching to both participant and buddy.

### **Ending the Program**

The program ends when:

- The goals of the program are reached.
- The buddy's personal safety or well-being is compromised by the participant or by the program.
- The program proves to be counterproductive for the participant in any way.
- The contract between the participant and the buddy has been breached.

## CONCLUSION

Since a number of years, Beating the Scene is successfully used by several forensic treatment clinics in the Netherlands. It has a high degree of acceptance in both participants and health care professionals. Although empirical research as to its efficacy is still due to take place, a clear consensus exists among the professionals who work with this intervention that it significantly contributes to the prevention of criminal recidivism and relapse to substance use. Most participants report that this intervention has helped them to attain a better quality of life, not only in terms of the acquisition of new meaningful relationships, but also in terms of the finding of purpose in their lives.

The intervention as described here can be used “as is,” or it can be modified to be compatible with different cultures, subcultures and personal situations and characteristics. It can also be used in non-forensic treatment centers with patients who do not display any form of criminal behavior. For this purpose, all elements that are related to delinquency can simply be omitted.

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