

# **Hawak Kamay: Coping Experiences of Drug Rehabilitees**

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## **Abstract**

This qualitative study was conducted using descriptive phenomenology design in acquiring and analyzing data about the coping experiences of the rehabilitees. Eleven participants were selected however only four signed the consent, the fifth participant refused to appear during the interview, the others were not able to sign in because they refused to be part of the study. Data were gathered primarily through a face-to-face interview and also in verifying the data. These were then analyzed using the Deikermann and Ironside (1998) the 7-Stage Hermeneutical Process. Analysis of their experiences in coping with their addiction revealed six (6) significant themes.

## **Summary of Findings**

The identified stages namely: (1) before rehabilitation or the realization phase, (2) During rehabilitation, and (3) After rehabilitation or the coping phase. Along with the identified stages or categories, there were themes and sub-themes.

To comprehend on the picture of what does addiction is Before Rehabilitation was included, it talked about the events prior to the participant's life upon surrendering to the authorities. Derived from their stories the main theme of this category entitled "Turning Point: Moments of reality. It entails that in every change there has to be realization that would occur in order to know when and what to change. Furthermore, in drug addiction there is 360 degrees of turning point that still there is place for repentance and improvement through valuing self-worth and family, and actuated by the fear of death.



After the participants surrendered themselves to the authorities, they went for rehabilitation. During Rehabilitation describes how the participant's dealt with the circumstances of their bad practice, which also in this category the significance of the support system is seen in dealing with participant's transformation. The main theme of this category are "Sharing as life reflection" and "Guidance and motivation in dealing with problems", that describes how the participants combat their problem through sharing their experiences to their co-rehabilitees during the process of acceptance and willingness to change. First theme was then sub divided into two sub-themes: (1) Resisting temptation and (2) Valuing self and Family. (1) Resisting temptation implies that they had felt temptation due to some stimuli that reinforces the urge to take. However, sharing experiences or sharing stories contributes in overcoming the temptation. (2) Valuing self and Family pertains to the participant's responsible parenthood ahead, that they accepted the challenge of transformation into better person for their duties as a father, son and a partner. Nevertheless, guidance and motivation imparted in the participant's behaviour in dealing with the obstacles they had met halfway.

As the focus of the study, coping experiences obviously employ the suffering of the participants as they graduated from the rehabilitation that they called "renewed" individual, on how they cope to continue the process of transformation. Derived with this category were three themes "Hawak-Kamay": A journey together, Realization: Spirituality in coping and Recovery: Bringing back 'Life' Better. "Hawak-Kamay": A journey together is on gaining strength towards someone, which are the participant's support systems. It subdivided into two sub-themes: (1) Family resilience, which is the most important social grouping to whom the participant held unto, (2) Peer: A sense of solidarity that played the role as an imperative supportive feature in shaping the participant's self-esteem and self-evaluation. Next, Realization: Spirituality in coping, it describes the participant's belief on God's power in changing their life. Last theme is on Recovery the bringing back 'Life' better that entails about the participants recreational activities after rehabilitation phase. It has two sub themes; (1) Shunning conflict and relapse it discussed the participants behavior on how to avoid or resolve conflicts at hand to further prevent relapse middling in their recovery. (2) Shepherd: Bearer of purity and inspiration emphasizes the constant recovery as possibly evidenced by the participant willingness and their goal to participate in



spreading the news of greater change. These participant's as the shepherd of the next generation.

Thereon, we adopted the 'Hawak-Kamay' as a title of the study as it greatly encompasses the totality of the data gathered to reinforce the impact of the different support systems in bringing back the participant's sanity. That in rehabilitation there were multiple stages, that the greatest source of strength of a man is his family.

## **Conclusions**

This study begins with the lived experiences of the former drug addicts after rehabilitation specifically on their coping mechanism, the researchers came across the turning points of their lives based on their stories. We thereby concluded that in coping there are necessary stepping stone to follow, these are:

1. The findings reflect that effectiveness of coping always starts within the family. Spirituality is also noticed to contribute much in transformation process. As the participant's claimed that they always put God in everything they do, and this thinking somehow is a prevention technique. To value yourself and family, one must learn how to resist the temptation from drug addiction.
2. The coping strategies found to be effective were "work and sports". Family and peers helped the participant's to change dramatically. The participant's yearning for strong and enduring relationships used to meet life challenges. Lastly, the highlight of this study as coping is involving in mentoring as mentorship, the golden practice in recovery.

## **Recommendations**

Considering the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations and some of the suggestions that were drawn from the participant's statement are hereby proposed

1. Further discussion on spirituality still it should be given a separate phase or timeline, since according to one of the social workers spirituality is discussed in the first phase however it is not enough because this supposedly the most crucial amongst all. During rehabilitation, activities like sports must be given attention as participants would claim that sports specifically



basketball physically helps them to divert their attention and therein camaraderie begins to develop. It is a sense of belongingness.

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