



Selected Papers of William L. White

www.williamwhitepapers.com

Collected papers, interviews, video presentations, photos, and archival documents on the history of addiction treatment and recovery in America.

Citation: White, W. (2011) Posted at www.williamwhitepapers.com

Culture of Addiction Enmeshment Scale

William L. White

Emeritus Senior Research Consultant
Chestnut Health Systems
bwhite@chestnut.org

White (1996) has described three patterns in which people with AOD problems relate to a larger culture of addiction. Clients with acultural styles of addiction initiate and sustain their addiction without significant involvement with others who are addicted. Clients with bicultural styles of addiction are involved in the culture of addiction, but maintain relationships and activities in the civilian world as well. Clients with culturally enmeshed styles of addiction relate almost exclusively within the culture of addiction and may have minimal abilities to function outside that culture. The importance of understanding the style of each client is that those with more enmeshed styles of addiction require treatment of greater intensity and duration and may require sustained alteration of their physical environment to initiate and sustain a recovery process.

The questionnaire on the following page is a means of assessing degree of involvement in the drug culture based on interviews with the client and family collaterals.

Reference: White, W. (1996). *Pathways from the culture of addiction to the culture of*

recovery: A travel guide for addiction professionals (2nd ed.). Center City, MN: Hazelden.

Culture of Addiction Enmeshment Scale

The following questions are intended to assess a client's degree of involvement in the culture of addiction.

YES NO 1. Do most of your leisure activities involve alcohol/drug use?

YES NO 2. Have you procured alcohol/drugs from more than five locations in the past 3 months?

YES NO 3. Do most of your friends consume alcohol/drugs in the same frequency and quantity as you do?

YES NO 4. Are there others with whom you regularly share alcohol and drugs?

YES NO 5. Have you stopped seeing friends who don't use alcohol/drugs the way you do?

YES NO 6. Do you own alcohol/drug related paraphernalia? (e.g., contrivances for use, brand symbols, etc.)?

YES NO 7. Have you been involved in criminal activity related to your alcohol/drug use (other than possession) or have close friends who have?

YES NO 8. Do you feel that through your association with others that you know a great deal about alcohol/drugs?

YES NO 9. When you are with your friends, do you find yourselves telling "war stories" about your alcohol/drug escapades?

YES NO 10. Do you feel your identity and whole lifestyle have changed as a result of your alcohol/drug use?

Collateral Interview Questions

YES NO 1. Does _____ (client) spend considerable time with other alcohol/drug users?

YES NO 2. Has _____ become more and more detached from family and friends who don't drink/use drugs?

YES NO 3. Have you seen dramatic changes in _____'s language, values, appearance, and eating/sleeping habits as a result of his/her drug use?

YES NO 4. Do you feel _____, through his/her association with other users, is changing into someone you no longer know?

YES NO 5. Do you feel there are other alcohol/drug users who are a particularly bad influence on _____?