Recovery in the 21st Century

The first scientific investigation of an online, recovery-specific social network site for individuals with substance use disorder: A survey of participants on InTheRooms.com.

**Introduction**

InTheRooms.com is a social network site (e.g., Facebook and Instagram) that caters to individuals with current or past substance use disorder. Freely available 24/7 via web & smartphone platforms, it provides recovery resources such as:

- Live online video meetings (e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous)
- Audio recording database of speakers in long-term recovery
- Recovery-based discussion boards
- Daily meditation prompts
- Dynamic locator for face-to-face meetings

The study surveyed 123 current site users who participate for their own current or past substance use problem.

**Participants**

Amount of Time Abstinent

Average participant = 7 years of abstinence

Most commonly endorsed primary substances were:

- 65% ALCOHOL
- 18% OPIOIDS
- 12% STIMULANTS

**Engagement**

The average user logged onto the site for 30 minutes a day, several days per week.

**Most Popular Site Resources**

- Daily Meditation Prompts
- Live Online Video Meetings
- Discussion Boards
- Face-to-Face Meeting Locator

**Perceived Benefits**

1. Enhances motivation for abstinence/recovery
2. Increases confidence to stay abstinent/in recovery (self-efficacy)
3. Decreases cravings to drink/use drugs
4. Helps users feel better about being a person in recovery

**Implications**

Findings show recovery-specific social network sites hold promise as modern recovery support services, & warrant rigorous scientific investigation. Future studies should test whether these digital recovery resources help improve substance use & other recovery outcomes over time:

- As an addition to substance use disorder treatment
- As part of a continuing care (“aftercare”) plan
- Outside of treatment settings (“self-management”)