

A Phenomenological Study on  
Life Rebuilding of Drug  
Addicts: Recovery and Personal  
Growth

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Abstra This study examined the lives of drug addicts who were recovered from drug addiction by using phenomenological research method. It is useful socially and practically to understand about the rehabilitation and its process of substance abusers recovered from drug addiction. For this purpose, the participants were voluntarily consented five addicts claiming recovery who were diagnosed as intoxication or who participated in the recovery programs. Data were collected through one-on-one in-depth interviews for six months from September 2017. The study results were as follows. The substantial themes of recovery experience were "recovering touch with reality", "embracing the form of one's own existence", "reconstructing oneself in social relations", "self-love". Based on the study results and discussions, practical implications were suggested to help persons claiming recovery from substance abuse for their recovery and rehabilitation.

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# A Phenomenological Study on Life Rebuilding of Drug Addicts: Recovery and Personal Growth\*

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## I . Introduction

Drugs are a serious and destructive disease that brings on the fall of a nation as well as totally lowers the quality of lives of individuals and their family. One of the reasons why the Qing Dynasty, which was the strongest country in the East, submitted to the Western powers was the opium smoking tendency that was rampant all over the society. This historical lesson opens our eyes to the fact that fighting drugs is a social task to

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secure the growth engine for our society and guarantee peaceful lives of our people. Korea has been recognized as a drug-free nation for a long time, but, recently it became clear that the Korean society is no more a safe zone from drugs. The drug offenders coefficient in the Republic of Korea has already exceeded 20.<sup>1)</sup>

Among the factors that increase use of drugs are income polarization, continuous recession, and growth of the adult entertainment industry.<sup>2)</sup> As the Korean society is also in the same context, an urgent countermeasure is required. Some argue that a severe punishment policy is needed to fight drugs, but it is hard to guarantee the effects of such a policy. According to statistics of the Supreme Prosecutors' Office (2013), those who commit a crime related to narcotics have steadily been on the rise since 1990 until the standard date of statistics, with over 40% of re-offending rates. As the empirical statistical figures imply, fighting drugs must be in the same context as that of recovery of drug addicts.

Overseas studies on drugs have also escaped from a disease

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1) Supreme Prosecutors' Office, *Reports on Drugs and Crime*, Seoul, Korea. 2013. The drug offenders coefficient is the number of drug-related criminals per 100,000 persons. Normally, when it exceeds 20, spread of drugs is accelerated, making it harder to fight drugs through punishment and treatment.

2) Park, O.J. *A Study on Access to Drugs and Dependence Process*. Unpublished Master Dissertation. Sungkyunkwan University. 2002; Cho, S.N. "Drug addiction treatment and rehabilitation policy." *Mental Health Policy Forum*, 3, 3-20. 2009; Eversman, M. *Harm Reduction in Outpatient Drug-free Substance Abuse Treatment Setting*. New York State University at Albany. 2009; Acevedo, A. *Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Performance Measures for Outpatient Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Treatment*. Doctoral Dissertation. Brandeis University. 2012.

model, which intends to specify the pathological causes for drug addition, and moved to a recovery paradigm.<sup>3)</sup> Korean researchers also had in the past focused on identifying pathological and negative symptoms and causes for drug addicts and alcoholics<sup>4)</sup> and development and effectiveness of treatment programs<sup>5)</sup>, but have shifted in a direction to find a healing method from the experiences of recovery in drug addicts.<sup>6)</sup> This research tendency can be called very encouraging in forming a recovery approach of drug addicts.

It is important to reveal the mechanism of drug addiction and devise an effective program to prevent relapse. However, it is

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- 3) Ashcroft, J., Daniels, D.J., and Hart, S.V. *Toward a Drug and Crime Research Agenda for the 21st Century*. Washington DC: National Institute of Justice. 2003; McAweeney, J., Zuker, A., Fitzgerald, E., Puttler, I., and Wong, M. "Individual and partner predictors of recovery from alcohol-use disorder over a nine-year interval: findings from a community sample of alcoholic married men." *Journal of Studies Alcohol*. 66(2). 220-228. White, W. "The mobilization of community resources to support long-term addiction recovery." *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*. 26. 146-158. 2009.
- 4) Kim, Y.S. "The effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral approach for prevention of substance abuse." *Korean Journal of social Welfare*. 48. 243-270. 2002; Park, S. "Psychological characteristics of substance abusers." *Study on Counselling*. 5(4). 899-910. 2004.
- 5) Kim, Y.J. "A study on the effectiveness of short-term group activity program for relapse prevention of substance abusers." *Mental Health and Social Work*. 9. 25-53. 2000; Jang, J.K. "The development of relapse prevention program and its effectiveness." *Journal of Korea Home Management Association*. 27. 168-177. 2006.
- 6) Choi, E.M. *The Exploration of Recovery Experiences of Drug Addiction through NA Self-help Group*. Unpublished Master Dissertation. Pyongtaek University. 2011; Yoon, H. *A Study of the Recovery Dependence: Focused on Human Becoming Approach*. Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation. Sungkyunkwan University. Seoul, Korea. 2013; Paek, H., and Han, I. "The recovery experience of drug addicts in a community - The regeneration in the real world." *Mental Health and Social Work*, 42(2), 151-177. 2014.

also crucial to seek methods for drug addicts to step onto a path of recovery by investigating detailed contents and running the mechanism of a unique recovery process experienced by drug addicts. Thus, this study aims to investigate the recovery experiences of drug addicts in detail. That is, this study tries to find unique meaning and the essence of recovery experiences, which are distinguished from those of other addiction in different aspects. The subject for inquiry of this study is as follows: “What are the processes and details of recovery and personal growth for those recovering from drug addiction?”

## II. Literature Review

The recovery or elasticity model is a concept replacing the disease model, which dominated the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and means an individual's becoming a positive and developmental form of existence in his or her own individual situation.<sup>7)</sup> Though there is a great diversity of opinion on whether to view recovery as a result or a process, the

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7) Lee, A., and Lee, S. “Effects of horse riding program participation on resilience in middle-aged women with visual impairment.” *Journal of Rehabilitation Research*, 19(1). 321-344. 2015; Jacobson, N., and Greenley, D. “What is recovery? A conceptual model and explication.” *Psychiatric Services*. 52(4). 482-485. 2001; Dawson, S.A., Grant, B.F. Stinson, F.S. Chou, P.S., Huang, B. and Ruan, W.J.. “Recovery from DSM-IV alcohol dependent: United States, 2001-2002.” *Addiction*, 100(3). 281-292. 2005; Mancini, A. “Self-determination theory: A framework for the recovery paradigm.” *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment*. 14. 358-365. 2008.

principal agreement is being reached to view recovery as a process.<sup>8)</sup> Those who view recovery as a process are interested in the processes and steps of development of an individual in his or her subjective world.<sup>9)</sup> Thus, a qualitative approach is preferred to a quantified measuring method, and focus must be given on identifying dynamics along with details. Hence, though the disease model considers recurrence as a failure in intervention, the recovery model considers it as a condition of a new start, and sometimes inquire into another way.

Various factors have been discussed as those influencing recovery of drug addicts, including establishment of a stable self-image, building of a sense of fellowship with others recovering from drug addiction, healthy life, low stress, spirituality, and finding the meaning of life.<sup>10)</sup> Grant reported in a study on women recovering from drug addiction that though drug addiction makes self-image as well as spirituality collapse, the individuals who have entered

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8) Paek and Han, 2014; Kang, S.K., Kim, H.J., and Shin, S.N. "A qualitative case study on recovery and personal growth in Korean drug Addicts." *Journal of Social Service Research*. 44(3). 1-12. 2018.

9) Brown, S. *Treating the Alcoholic: A Development Model of Recovery*. New York: Wiley. 1985; Mancini, 2008.

10) Grant, J. "Rural women's stories of recovery from addiction." *Addiction Research and Theory*. 15(5). 521-541. 2007; Alexandre, B. L. "What does recovery mean to you? Lessons from the recovery experience for research and practice." *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment*. 33(3). 243-256. 2007; White, 2009; Best, D., Gow, J., Knox, T., Taylor, A., Groshkova, T., and White, W. "Mapping the recovery stories of drinkers and drug in glasgow: quality of life and its associations with measures of recovery capital." *Drug and Alcohol Review*. 31. 334-341. 2012; Acevedo, 2012.



the way for recovery establish a positive and stable self-image and keep the recovery by constantly checking it. Best et al. in a study on individuals recovering from drug and alcohol addiction suggested maintenance of healthy life and establishment of a sense of fellowship with friends as a factor of maintenance of recovery. His study especially laid stress on fellowship and cooperation with others recovering from addiction. This can be said to have accepted the viewpoint of Alcoholic Anonymous (A.A) and Narcotic Anonymous (N.A) models. Acevedo in a study on recovery of drug addicts and alcoholics proposed the importance of existential factors such as spirituality and finding the meaning of life. Acevedo viewed that recovery from addictive substances such as drugs and alcohol can settle the issue of addiction by facing one's own existence and recovering from the addiction, rather than by using a technical and instrumental method.

In recovery of drug addicts, the greatest stress is put on social support. Farrell et al.<sup>11)</sup> in a study on methamphetamine (philoapon) addicts said that family and social support helps recovery and its maintenance by relieving frustration of addicts and strengthening a positive way of thinking and initiative. Effects of the support are confirmed by a study of Rumpf et al.<sup>12)</sup> According to this

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11) Farrell, M., Marsden, J., Ali, R., and Ling, W. "Methamphetamine: drug use and psychoses becomes a major public health issue in the Asia Pacific region." *Addiction*. 97(7). 771-772. 2002.



study, friendly and positive support from people contributes to relieving a sense of isolation and stigma of those recovering from drug addiction and to recovery itself by improving the applicability of social resources.

The results of recovery accompany not a simple return to the previous status but growth without distinction of disorder between addiction.<sup>13)</sup> Alexandre also explains that though recovery is a boring process with risk of recurrence, in the process a drug addict can reconstruct his or her own life to set a new direction of life toward growth. Yoon in an experience study targeting those recovering from drug addiction who have entered a shelter reported that those recovering from drug addiction not only overcame the sense of stigma and desperation through community activities but also became a new responsible subject with an enhanced spirituality. Paek and Han<sup>14)</sup> in a study targeting those recovering from drug addiction who have received an order to attend a lecture or participated in a treatment program because of drug addiction said that those recovering from drug addiction entered a strange world when they were addicted to drugs, but experienced positive emotions and

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12) Rumpf, J., Bischof, G., and Hapke, U. "The role of family and partnership in recovery from alcohol dependence: comparison of individuals remitting without formal help and with and without formal help." *European Addiction Research*. 8. 122-127. 2002.

13) Choi, S., and Choi, Y. "The process of community integration on recovery of the person with psychiatric disabilities." *Journal of Rehabilitation Research*. 14(4). 225-255. 2012; Yoon, 2013; Alexandre, 2007.

14) Paek and Han, 2014.

learning after they had entered the way of recovery with improved communication abilities and self-control as a result.

From the previous studies up until now, recovery can be called not a formal escape from addiction but a process and result for deconstructing oneself on a developmental level to newly make oneself. Thus, this study intends to capture this point to focus on describing self-construal and planning of those recovering from drug addiction.

### III. Study Method

#### 1. Phenomenological Study

This study applies a phenomenological method to understand the meaning of research subjects' common experiences from their own voices rather than from theories. In other words, this study attempts to investigate what common experiences the subjects have, and what meanings they build up from the experiences based on a certain phenomenon. Focusing on this feature, this study aims at understanding recovery and its details of drug addicts. To reach this goal, this study explores what meanings they impose on their life by observing their daily experiences. Research subjects should have knowledge and experiences on the phenomenon that this study aims to investigate, and

should be able to effectively express their experiences.

## 2. Participants and Procedures

The researcher for this study formed the group of study participants with a reputational case selection method. The reputational case selection method is to select study participants by requesting for and receiving introduction of study participants to and from those who have worked in a specific field or have a lot of experiences in the field. To achieve this purpose, a standard for selecting a case is necessary. The researcher formed the following standards for selecting study participants: First, those who abused drugs such as methamphetamine and other drugs specified by the Act on the Control of Narcotics, Etc. to be addicted; second, those for whom three years or longer have passed after they recovered from drug addiction; and third, those who have worked for an occupation proper for their situations and have displayed social activities after recovering from drug addiction. The researcher requested for introduction of study participants to a Protestant minister who is a welfare activist leading a drug addict recovery community to receive introduction of five study participants by snowball sampling, which is to receive introduction of a person and introduction of another person from that first person.

The researcher set the period after recovery from drug addiction to be three years because, according to previous studies, 90% or more of drug addicts experience recurrence within one year even after a therapeutic process<sup>15)</sup> and it was determined that a long time of 3 years was needed to examine the recovery process. As well, the study participants were selected from a limited boundary of those who have displayed occupational and social activities in order to explore a variety of social conditions influencing recovery.

<Table 1> Sociodemographic Information of Study Participants

Case	Sex	Age	Education	Duration of drug use	Occupation	Family
1	M	47	High school	9	Car repair shop	Wife, 2 sons, 1 daughter
2	F	39	High school	8	Operating drinking bar	Divorced daughter
3	M	51	College	11	Farming	Wife, 1 son, 1 daughter
4	M	39	College	5	Restaurant	Single
5	F	29	College	4	Hair stylist	Single

15) Laudet, A., Morgen, K., and White, W. "The role of social supports, spirituality, religiousness, life meaning and affiliation with 12 step fellowships in quality of life satisfaction among individuals in recovery from alcohol and drug problems." *Alcohol Treat Q.*, 24(1-2). 33-73. 2006.

### 3. Data Collecting and Analysis

The researcher collected data through an in-depth interview and composed data needed for the analysis. The researcher conducted an interview with each of the five study participants one by one for three sessions per study participant, for an hour and a half for each session. Before conducting the in-depth interview, the researcher once again explained the purpose and intent of this study, notified that the study participants could freely withdraw from this study, and obtained the consent for recording. Data were collected at the office and home of the study participants, a coffee shop the study participant prefers, or the like, where the study participants could feel comfortable.

The questions given to the study participants are as follows. First, what was your situation when you used drugs? Second, why did you decide to get off drugs and how was the process? Third, have you ever used drug again after you started getting off drugs? Fourth, how were your occupational and social activities after you got off drugs? Fifth, what impact did your experiences of drug addiction have on your occupational and social activities? Sixth, do you have an especially remembered incident or a hard experience in the process of drug addiction and recovery, and, if you do, what was it? Seventh, what reaction and attitude did close people to you show after you started

getting off drugs for recovering from drug addiction?

The specific data analysis procedure is as follows. In the first stage of the research process, the researcher carefully and repeatedly read the contents of interview which she took a note while interviewing the subjects, and drew lines where she considered importantly. In the second stage, the researcher selected meaningful statements related to drug addiction experiences and recorded them separately by comparing them to other subjects' statements. In the third stage, the researcher repeatedly read and check the original resources again to find out the meanings of the meaningful statements. In the fourth stage, the arranged meanings were classified and categorized by topic. In the fifth state, the set of topics were integrated to categorization. Finally, in the sixth stage, two professors who were experts in qualitative research reviewed the analysis results to check the validation, and checked if the results have consistency with individual subject's original statements.

#### 4. Ethical Issues and Credibility

Ethical approval was obtained from the institutional review board at the author's university. The researcher notified the study participants of the fact that the interview is for this study, checking if the study participants voluntarily participate, and did their best to guarantee the secrecy and

protect the study participants' privacy. As well, the researcher intended to minimize personal damage that may occur to the study participants. In addition, the researcher notified the study participants that they have the right to at any time withdraw from this study and to read the records on themselves whenever they want, intending to respond to their requests. Moreover, the researcher promised to abandon the recorded materials after transcribing them, and to handle the transcribed data as the study participants want after this study is finished.

To secure the rigor of this study, the researcher constituted the methods by selectively choosing a grounded theory method and other appropriate approaches among various suggestions by Lincoln and Guba.<sup>16)</sup> The researcher formed a colleague support group with one professor who has a practical experience of qualitative research (based on a grounded theory), one preventive medical practitioner, and two religious leaders. This colleague support group is expected to contribute on reducing the researcher's arbitrary decision based on their prejudices and securing the objectivity of the study.

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16) Lincoln, S., and Guba, C. *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage. 1985.



## V . Findings

This study was guided by the following research question: “What are the process and details of recovery and personal growth for those recovering from drug addiction?” After interviews with the five participants, the transcripts were reviewed numerous times. This provided four main themes and nine revealed themes. The main themes were “recovering touch with reality“, “embracing the form of one’s own existence” , “reconstructing oneself in social relations“, and “self-love” .

<Table 2> Main Themes and Revealed Themes

Main Themes	Revealed Themes
Recovering touch with reality	① Escaping from the fantasy of a great success and achieving small things in reality ② Developing a situational substitute technique to overcome desire ③ Starting from a low standing ④ Looking down to lower places and heading toward higher places ⑤ Independence to escape from dependence on drugs
Embracing the form of one’s own existence	① Being reborn as a responsible existence ② Revealing one’s self through forgiveness and reconciliation ③ Interpreting farming as a positive work to let life and the land live

Main Themes	Revealed Themes
	④ Being reborn as a flawless existence by accepting flawed existences ⑤ Actively developing oneself to escape from sense of guilt and self-pity
Reconstructing oneself in social relations	① Escaping from social isolation and extending the extension ② Practicing love by sharing one's own things ③ Sharing the experiences of overcoming and actively spreading them ④ Sharing the fruits of growth ⑤ Helping oneself through activities to take care of others ⑥ Concentrating on the projects to let people live
Self-love	① Escaping from self-pity ② Loving oneself through self-development ③ Severing the ties with the past and newly starting

## 1. Recovering Touch with Reality

Under the recovering touch with reality, the study participants were experiencing the followings: escaping from the fantasy of a great success and achieving small things in reality, developing a situational substitute technique to

overcome the desire, starting from a low standing, looking down to lower places and heading toward higher places, and independence to escape from dependence on drugs. These phenomenon were explained as experiences for newly constructing the study participants themselves in reality by discarding futile thoughts in the past and reckless greeds after escaping from drug addiction.

It can be interpreted that when the study participants were addicted to drugs, they were living not in the real world but in the world of fantasy. The study participants got off drugs thanks to different chances, and they had to face the cold reality, not a fantasy. In many cases, people may fail to adapt to the reality and fall into temptation of drugs again, but the study participants faced the reality and came to explore the causes for drug addiction. Study Participant 1 escaped from the fantasy of a great success, while Study Participant 2 constructed coping skills to overcome her desire and practiced them. Study Participant 5, like Study Participant 1, escaped from her distorted sense of superiority in the past and restarted as a hair stylist. In particular, Study Participant 4 recognized that the cause for his drug addiction was his dependent and lazy life habits and focused on growing his independence. Recovery of touch with reality enabled the study participants to accept their existences as they were.

## 2. Embracing the form of one' s own existence

Under the this main theme, the revealed themes constructed from the experiences of the study participants, which are being reborn as a responsible existence, revealing one' s existence through forgiveness and reconciliation, interpreting farming as a positive work to let life and the land live, being reborn as a flawless existence by accepting flawed existences, and actively developing oneself to escape from sense of guilt and self-pity, are interpreted as experiences where the study participants embraced the responsibilities given to them, positively interpreted their work, and established a new self-identity through forgiveness and reconciliation.

The study participants had continuously denied their social positions and status. Study Participant 1 always dreamed of making a fortune at one stroke, and Study Participant 2 was full of jealousy of and complex about rich women. Study Participant 3 had a severe sense of shame on his occupation of farming, and Study Participant 4 lived an idle life depending on his well-to-do parents. Study Participant 5 also had jealousy of her friends who entered a good university or a good company. The study participants constantly denied their present, which caused them to start using drugs and become drug addicts. The study participants came to look their issues in the face at the same time as

they recovered touch with reality.

The study participants had an experience to accept their existences as they were, which led to an experience of being reborn as a responsible subject for Study Participant 1. Study Participant 2 also came to forgive her husband and herself, and Study Participant 3 came to form a new meaning of his occupation which he used to consider as base. The study participants came to have sense of responsibility, positive thinking, and independence by not denying but accepting the form of their social existences. With this chance, they could escape from their own isolated worlds to reenter into the society.

### 3. Reconstructing oneself in social relations

The revealed themes constructed from individual cases of the study participants, which are escaping from social isolation and extending the extension, sharing one's own things to practice love, sharing one's own experiences of overcoming and actively spreading them, sharing the fruits of growth, helping oneself by taking care of others, and concentrating on the projects to let people live, are interpreted as experiences where the study participants reconstructed their new identity in social relations escaping from the level of themselves and their families, and are composed as a common theme of 'reconstructing oneself in

social relations.'

When the study participants were addicted to drugs, they had only themselves who were selfish. They disregarded their parents and families, and forgot that they were social existences. The study participants later accepted their forms of existence as they were, and came to have a sense of responsibility for their parents and families and continue to develop themselves in social relations by sharing what they owned and practiced love for their neighbors. These cases are found in volunteer activities by Study Participant 5, activities to take care of the elderly by Study Participant 3, volunteer activities in the local community by Study Participant 1, and sharing his operating profits with his employees by Study Participant 4. Study Participant 2 is not displaying clear volunteer activities, but she is found to be planning to be a missionary and perform volunteer activities. This kind of reconstruction of themselves made the study participants recognize that they were precious existences, leading to their self-love.

#### 4. Self Love

The revealed themes described in the experiences of the study participants, which are escaping from self-pity, loving oneself through self-development, and severing ties with the past and newly starting, are interpreted as experiences of

taking care of and loving themselves, which had been ignored and abandoned, and are composed as a common theme of 'self-love.'

Drug addiction is a way to abuse oneself and to kill oneself at the same time. In addition, drug addiction made their spirits as well as bodies ill. In this situation, no self-love could exist. The study participants can be said to have finally made self-love. They have also recognized that loving themselves was the only way to permanently escape from the addiction. For Study Participant 2, this self-love served as a chance to escape from the self-pity that she was a useless, mean existence, and for Study Participant 3, it appeared as a specific form of self-development. Though Study Participants 1 and 4 did not clearly described self-love, it can be said to have appeared in their actions to escape from dependence and laziness and go down to lower places to embrace a vision. This kind of self-love can be called the final result and compensation of recovery.

## V. Conclusion and Discussion

The study participants fell into temptation of drugs to escape from reality, pursue an extreme pleasure, have a distorted sense of superiority, and escape from sense of contempt in their own unique situations. They accepted



these as a way of their lives and could not help living as drug addicts for a long time. The study participants also had a variety of processes and wills to escape from drug addiction and get off drugs. However, there appeared a kind of tendency in the recovery processes of the study participants. They first recovered touch with reality, leading to experiences to accept their forms of existence as they were. As well, the study participants reconstructed social relations by escaping their closed worlds as drug addicts. In these relations, they reconstructed themselves while performing altruistic activities. In addition, these processes led to a compensation on a level of existence, which is formation of self-love.

The four main themes proposed in the study results can be called a growth process of the study participants and, at the same time, a compensation for recovery. These study results and conclusion agree with overseas previous studies that concluded that recovery from drug addiction is not processes and results of simply getting off drugs but those of reconstructing the form of one's developmental existence to head toward growth.<sup>17)</sup> However, there are many risk factors in the way toward growth. Drug addiction has a recurrence rate of 80-90% within one year<sup>18)</sup> and recovery is a long, lonely process. Social support is found to

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17) Jacobson and Greenley, 2001; Dawson et al., 2005; Mancini, 2008.

18) Laudet et al., 2006,

have the most positive impact on this process.<sup>19)</sup>

In this study, social support is also found to have contributed much to recovery and maintenance of recovery of the study participants. Study Participant 1 served as the family head and son in his social relations with his family and as a responsible member in his local community. In this process, he experienced social support naturally. Study Participants 2 and 4 developed themselves through the religious life, and, this process naturally accompanied support from religious people. As well, Study Participant 3 served as the head of his village to take care of the elderly, which enabled him to naturally experience social support as a compensation for that.

As examined above, social support did not occur when the study participants did nothing in an isolated situation, but occurred simultaneously when they actively led their lives. It is necessary to let those recovering from drug addiction start active social activities and acquire support.

Based on the study results and discussions, the proposals for construction of a supportive service system for recovery of drug addicts are as follows. First, it is necessary to form and practice a program on existence to enable them to reflect on their lives. Currently, most recovery programs

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19) Hwang, B., and Park, Y. "The analysis on the causal model physically disabled women's social support, social integration and quality of life." *Journal of Rehabilitation Research*. 14(3). 299~324. 2010; Farrell et al, 2002; Rumpf et al, 2002; Alexandre, 2007.

focus on recognition. However, it is clear that the subject of recognition is people. It is thought that a program on existence, which can specify, signify, and develop one's life, is more important than a system of thinking. A program on existence must be specified not by ideas but by actions. As examined in this study, volunteer activities and sharing one's own things with others are the most ultimate and realistic practice of existence. It can be also considered to form a volunteer activities program focusing on those recovering or intending to recover from drug addiction.

Second, it is essential to develop and provide practical coping skills to fit the situational characteristics and structure of individuals. In case of recovery programs, more approaches are made as a general coping program based on the criminal characteristics of drug addicts rather than characteristics of each individual. However, these kinds of programs cannot be applied to real life since they are extremely ideological and abstract. As obviously shown in the case of Study Participant 2, the coping skills must be proper to personal situations. Study Participant 2 continues to recover from drug addiction even though she is running her own amusement and drinking establishment, which can be extremely exposed to the risk of recurrence. The reason why is thought to be the fact that she constructed her own coping skills proper for her own situations. In order to construct and teach coping skills for each individual, it is

necessary to strengthen programs for each individual, rather than programs for groups, and accumulate more studies on the coping skills.

Third, proposed is a way to use those recovering from drug addiction as semi-professionals for prevention and treatment of drug abuse. The recovery experiences of those recovering from drug addiction must be shared with the society and spread. As well, in this process, they can use social resources and receive support. As examined in the study results, social support was more activated when the study participants continuously got closer to the society and their neighbors. These kinds of programs will be able to improve the self-regard of those recovering from drug addiction and acquire social support. In addition, their experiences can serve as a role model for drug addicts and a good lesson to other people. As clarified in the previous studies, recovery is a way to go not alone but together with others recovering from drug addiction, drug addicts, and the general public.<sup>20)</sup> The social solidarity and mutual support can serve as a chance to promote awareness on drug addiction and make known the possibility of recovery.

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20) White, 2009; Best et al., 2012.

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## 약물중독자들의 삶의 재구축에 대한 현상학적 연구: 회복과 개인의 성장

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본 연구는 마약중독에서 탈출하여 회복의 길을 걷고 있는 회복자에 대해 약물 중독 및 회복 경험을 바탕으로 이들의 생활을 살펴보고, 약물중독자들의 고유한 경험을 현상학적 연구방법을 이용하여 분석하였다. 연구에는 의료적으로 약물중독 진단을 받았거나 단약 생활을 유지하고 있는 약물중독 회복자 5명이 참여하였다. 자료 수집은 2017년 9월부터 6개월 동안 진행되었고, 일대일 심층면담을 통해 수집되었다. Giorgi(2004)의 현상학 연구방법으로 접근하여 분석한 결과는 다음과 같다. 약물중독자 회복경험의 본질적 주제는 "현실과의 만남," "실존양식 떠안기," "사회적 관계 속에서의 자기 재구성," "자기애"로 나타났다. 이와 같은 경험들을 근거로 약물중독자들의 회복에 있어서의 어려움과 사회구조적 문제들을 논의하였고, 회복과 재화에 기여할 수 있는 실천차원에서의 제언을 하였다.

**주제분류 :** 사회복지, 현상학

**주제어 :** 물질중독과 사회문제, 회복패러다임, 개인의 성장,  
현상학적 연구