

**Building Relationships**  
**With the Faith Community & Those In Recovery**

Major John Stewart

Rev. Don Coombs, Ed.D.,  
 NCC, CCMHC, CAC, CCDP-D



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**Major John Stewart**

- Major John B Stewart III (R) was born July 21, 1954, in Hartford, CT. He now lives in Liverpool, NY, outside of Syracuse, with his wife, Major C. Anita Stewart, whom he married in 1993. Major Stewart graduated The Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Center of Springfield, MA, in 1990. After his conversion and subsequent completion of the program, Major Stewart felt the calling of God to full time ministry in The Salvation Army. He attended Nyack College in Nyack, NY, and was commissioned as a Salvation Army officer after completing Salvation Army Seminary College in 1996.
- Along with his wife, Major Stewart has been a pastor for The Salvation Army corps (churches) in Atlantic City, Newark, and Jersey City, NJ. He has also served as a corps officer in Syracuse, NY. In Boston, MA, Majors Stewart opened The New Life Worship and Community Center. While serving in these locations, Majors Stewart acted as Family Ministries Liaisons between the local corps and The Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Centers. In addition, Majors Stewart carried out their ministry at prisons and juvenile justice centers.



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**Rev. Don Coombs Ed.D.**

- Director of Program Development for The Salvation Army Adult Rehabilitation Centers in the Eastern Territory
- Bachelors in Religion, Masters of Education in Addiction Studies, Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Mental Health, and a Doctorate in Professional Counseling and Supervision
- National Certified Counselor and Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor
- Certified Addiction Counselor and Certified Co-occurring Disorders Professional – Diplomate
- Married with four adult children



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Three Questions We Will Discuss

1. How do we build healthy relationships with those who have an active substance use disorder and those who have no history of substance use?
2. How can we destigmatize substance use disorders in the context of a faith community?
3. What are the practical areas of growth a local faith community could apply?

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Three Questions We Will Discuss

1. How do we build healthy relationships with those who have an active substance use disorder and those who have no history of substance use?

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1. How do we build healthy relationships with those who have an active substance use disorder and those who have no history of substance use?



- Personal story & history
- Love care & relationship with Jesus

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1. How do we build healthy relationships with those who have an active substance use disorder and those who have no history of substance use?



- o Study Reality Therapy and build involvement on safe topics.
- o People do not care about how much you know until *they know how much you care.*
  - Alcohol – highest level of a carcinogen – category one
  - Marijuana 50-70% more carcinogenic hydrocarbons than tobacco; May double or triple the risk of head and neck cancers.
  - Opioids
  - DEA Drugs of Abuse – free PDF
- o *DNA of Relationships* by Gary Smalley; Benefits of family and individual therapy

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Three Questions We Will Discuss

2. How can we destigmatize substance use disorders in the context of a faith community?

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2. How can we destigmatize substance Use disorders in the context of a faith community?



- Ministerial Alliance -Addicted to sin
- Family & Compassionate Care are needed most.
- Do not stigmatize.

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2. How can we destigmatize substance Use disorders in the context of a faith community?



- We all have "struggles." The reason why substances of abuse deserve special attention is because of lethality and various other forms of harm (perception → reasoning → judgment).
- More than an addiction, *it is an affliction.*
  - Merriman Model: Disease, Disorder, and Dysfunction
  - 6 domains: Physical, mental, social, spiritual, occupational/education, relational.
- I am different in my approach. I do avoid using the term "self-medicating" and instead use "self-managing."

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Three Questions We Will Discuss

3. What are the practical areas of growth a local faith community could apply?

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3. What are the practical areas of growth a local faith community could apply?

- Relationships with likeminded believers
- Accountability partners
- Fellowship with mainstream church



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3. What are the practical areas of growth a local faith community could apply?



- Great opportunity to bless future generations.
- What other medical condition or psychiatric condition do you know that improves with just abstinence!
- Self-help Support Groups (AA, NA, CA, Celebrate Recovery, Al-Anon, etc.)

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Questions on the presentation?

Three topics we discussed were:

- Building healthy relationships
- Destigmatize substance use disorders in the context of a faith community
- Practical areas of growth

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