

Recovery in Thailand

Simon Mott

In Thailand the struggle to establish recovery networks, such as mutual aid support groups continues. Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) arrived decades ago however mainly attended by expats. Unfortunately the Thai's have not signed up to the 12 step programs as willingly as westerners do. Whether it is the private culture, saving face or stigma, not to embarrass the family, its been long overdue, relapse rates are very high with no ongoing support.

In recent times more and more private western treatment centres are opening in the Kingdom. Health tourism has long been popular in Thailand but now western addicts and alcoholics are finding their way there for lower cost treatment and recovery.

Thailand does have a domestic treatment system throughout the country. The government rehabs use the old style TC model, (Therapeutic Community https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Therapeutic_community) and are taking on western methods such as sentencing offenders to stints in Rehab instead of jail.

Amongst the expats and people receiving help are some good people who have made it their business the help out establish a recovery network in Thailand. Also Hope Rehab in Chonburi has started a charitable arm, Hope foundation <http://www.hope-rehab-center-thailand.com/hope-rehab-center-thailand-foundation> . Simon Mott the founder explains they work together with the ministry of health to train the government rehab staff on aftercare and setting up mutual aid groups such as NA and AA groups within the treatment system, thereby prepping the newly recovered addicts for a recovery lifestyle. This is a commonly used technique in the west.

Simon also points out that Mindfulness and meditation is very much part of the Hope treatment modal however strangely has not been incorporated into government rehabs programs in Thailand. He says maybe they feel it is a sacred practice best left to the Monks. There are a couple of old style traditional Temple rehab programs that do of course use medication and Buddhism as a form of recovery.