

Support Group  
by  
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INT. SUPPORT GROUP - DAY

The room is bare and grey. A group of 10 tattily dressed ADULTS of all ages and both sexes including a muffin carrying JAMES sit on chairs in a circle. He sits immediately on the left of COUNSELOR (40). The latter is smartly dressed and has a kind face. JAMES bites his muffin.

COUNSELOR

Hello group! Welcome to the first part of the addiction support program! As you may know, I was once an addict myself and I have turned my life around!

Everyone claps and says 'Hello counselor!'

COUNSELOR

To start things off, let's hear all your names and the reasons you're here as we go around the circle! Mine's Barry! Let's go right to left.

HANK

Hank, here. I've been an alcoholic for 20 years.

JAMES

Noob.

COUNSELOR

I'm sorry?

JAMES

Is that all?

COUNSELOR

All the people here have the exact same right to be here as you.

HANK

Here here.

JAMES

Oh yeah? My own mother bought me chocolates when I was only five years old! Not only that, I was given them on my birthday of all times!

COUNSELOR

What do you mean?

JAMES

What do I mean? I mean if my mum really cared, she'd have bought me those nunchucks I was interested in. How are you supposed to defend yourself with sweets? I have a warped view of looking at the world because of the way I was raised.

COUNSELOR

How do you defend yourself? Are you speaking from experience?

JAMES

Yep. It was a football riot. They were carrying baseball bats, all I had was some Dairy Milk. I mean your mum is supposed to be trustworthy, right? Absolutely not, I found out the hard way. A complete disaster obviously. And if alcohol is so bad, why is it legal?

JAMES finishes his muffin, teary eyed.

COUNSELOR

Chocolate is legal too, James.

JAMES

Then why do I have to import it from Belgium?

COUNSELOR

All of it?

JAMES

Some of it.

COUNSELOR

Is Belgian chocolate more addictive than regular chocolate?

JAMES

Yeah!

COUNSELOR

I see. Anywho, let's welcome our next guest!

SPONG

I'm Spong. I turned to drugs the moment I realised my parents gave me a silly name. That's when I was five.

JAMES

I get you, man. My parents called me James Ian Zack Ziegler. I only found out what it meant a few months ago, and I'm still not over it. What really hurt was all the trouble they went to giving me my name. My mum's surname was Peterson, and my dad's was Smith.

JAMES takes a bar of chocolate from his pocket.

JAMES

Dammit, it's melted.

ANDY

I'm Andy and I'm a drug user.

JAMES opens the wrapper anyway and takes a bite.

HANNAH

I'm Hannah and I'm a drug addict.

JAMES'S face lights up.

JAMES

That's a palindrome right?

HANNAH

Sure is!

JAMES

Yeah, well at least some of the people here have real problems.

HANNAH

I'm sorry?

JAMES

You don't know how lucky you are.

COUNSELOR

James!

JAMES

I once said I wanted to be called Hannah, then I realised what I said. I got attacked again, and all I had was a Yorkie.

SPUD

I'm Spud. I have to eat five potatoes every day.

JAMES

Sorry Spud, that's too bad. But I eat hash browns in packs of around 15. They're mini hash browns, but all in all it's still a lot. If I don't get the 15, I eat another muffin.

SPUD smiles warmly as JAMES takes another bite.

JAMES

And if I don't eat the muffin, I start a fight. But not with nunchucks, no no, my mother couldn't do that for me, I start a fight with Toblerone or a Bounty.

JULIE

I'm Julie and I'm addicted to drugs.

JAMES finishes the chocolate.

KEEMA NAN

I'm Keema Nan and I'm addicted to joyriding, graffitiing and palindromes.

JAMES

Yet Hannah thinks she has a problem.

KEEMA NAN

Exactly.

JAMES

12321, 1221, 12344321, it's a hell that never ends. But for Hannah to get her fix, all she has to do is be Hannah.

DAN

I'm here because I turned to alcoholism because of James.

JAMES

Hi, Dan.

DAN

Don't look at me.

BEN

I'm Ben. I'm here because James gave me a muffin and I can't stop eating them.

JAMES

I didn't know you'd get addicted, did I? You know why I gave you the muffin?

BEN

Why?

JAMES

Because it was well past its sell by date. I thought it would be horrible.

BEN

Oh ok. You're a good man.

JAMES

We may seem like we have similar addictions Ben, but I clearly have a better sense of taste.

JAMES picks some Ferrero Rocher from his trousers.

JAMES

This is the special stuff...

COUNSELOR

Ok, that's everybody introduced. The next part of the meeting is all about coping mechanisms. Does anyone here have some good strategies they'd like to share?

JAMES

Eat more muffins!

COUNSELOR

Coping strategies on how to avoid your addictions?

JAMES

Give them to Ben!

COUNSELOR

Strategies that are best for everyone?

JAMES

Go to the gym?

COUNSELOR

Right! Yes, go to the gym. Fantastic!

JAMES

Do you know the address of my local gym?

COUNSELOR

No...

JAMES

121 Tree Road.

KEEMA NAN

Oh no!

COUNSELOR

Distract yourself Keema Nan!

KEEMA NAN

The number's so beautiful!

JAMES

So good.

JAMES eats some chocolate casually.

COUNSELOR

Go to another gym.

JAMES

All the gyms I know sell muffins.

HANNAH

The one I go to sells drugs.

COUNSELOR

No, you definitely want to stop going to that one...

JAMES

There are so many other chocolates at my gym, too.

COUNSELOR

I don't care! Just go for a run!

KEEMA NAN

I've graffitied palindromes everywhere.

COUNSELOR

YOGA! Do yoga! In a place you haven't vandalised!

JAMES

If I see people doing yoga, I have a panic attack and start crying...

COUNSELOR

Why?

JAMES  
It's too healthy. Not chocolatey  
enough.

JAMES finishes the chocolate.

COUNSELOR  
Going to the gym isn't healthy?

JAMES  
No, I just stand around eating  
omelettes. The gym do great  
omelettes. I still go there  
technically speaking, though.

The door opens. The DOMINANT EGG bounces up and down towards  
JAMES. The EGG then sits on JAMES'S lap.

DOMINANT EGG  
Hello! Dominant Egg here! Missed  
anything good?

COUNSELOR  
James was just talking about eating  
eggs...

JAMES  
Ha. Good one.

DOMINANT EGG  
James does NOT eat eggs!

DAN  
He does at least a little bit...

JAMES  
So do you!

DOMINANT EGG  
So? What do you mean so? You both do?

BEN  
Errr...

DOMINANT EGG  
You monsters! I thought you were  
coming here for harmless reasons!  
Maybe eating too much chocolate!

JAMES sheds a tear.

JAMES  
That's true! I wouldn't call it  
HARMLESS it's a disease, but that's  
why I'm here...



DOMINANT EGG  
 ... And all this time you've been  
 murdering birds!

COUNSELOR  
 Eating murdered birds...

JAMES  
 Not quite as bad...

DOMINANT EGG  
 YES IT IS!

COUNSELOR  
 Would you like to explain why you're  
 here, egg?

DOMINANT EGG  
 Screw you!

COUNSELOR  
 Please do. We're all fascinated.

DOMINANT EGG  
 My parents were addicted to seeds and  
 I worry I will have the same  
 problems.

COUNSELOR  
 Stay away from seeds maybe?

DOMINANT EGG  
 Yeah, maybe. James?

JAMES  
 Ye...

As JAMES opens his mouth to speak, the DOMINANT EGG flies  
 into it. Everyone watches in horror.

HANNAH  
 He chocking him! He's choking him!

JAMES falls to the floor and goes blue. The COUNSELOR does  
 CPR and the EGG flies out of JAMES'S mouth. He then bounces  
 away and leaves the room. JAMES sits back down.

JAMES  
 All better now.

HANK  
 Is that really what sugar addiction  
 does to people?

JAMES  
What do you mean?

HANK  
You're a loon.

COUNSELOR  
People need to be warned ASAP.

JAMES  
Told you.

SPUD  
You want another muffin James? I can  
get you one. No questions asked.

COUNSELOR  
No!

SPONG  
Now that I know how bad muffins of  
all things can be, maybe I'll stay  
off drugs for good.

ANDY  
That's a good point actually.

Everyone mumbles in agreement.

COUNSELOR  
Really???

HANNAH  
Yeah!

COUNSELOR  
Oh. Good. Meeting over then?

HANNAH  
I guess.

DAN  
Huh.

BEN  
Wasn't expecting that.

DAN  
Me neither.

BEN  
That ended very suddenly. And in a  
positive way, too.

Right... COUNSELOR

Bye. BEN