



DUAL RECOVERY ANONYMOUS MEETING FORMAT



DUAL RECOVERY ANONYMOUS is a Twelve Step self-help program for individuals who experience both chemical dependency and an emotional or psychiatric illness. Men and women who currently use psychiatric medications under a doctor's care, or who have done so in the past, are welcome to participate.

OPENING

Welcome to the _____ meeting of Dual Recovery Anonymous. This meeting is open to DRA members and to other individuals who are concerned about their personal recovery. My name is _____, and I am in dual recovery. Will you join me for a moment of silence, followed by the Serenity Prayer?

God grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.

Would anyone like to read the Preamble?

PREAMBLE

DRA is an independent, nonprofit, self-help organization. Our goal is to help men and women who experience a dual illness: We are chemically dependent and we are also affected by an emotional or psychiatric illness. Both illnesses affect us in all areas of our lives: physically, psychologically, socially, and spiritually.

The primary purpose of DRA is to help one another achieve dual recovery, to prevent relapse, and to carry the message of recovery to others who experience dual disorders.

DRA has two requirements for membership: a desire to stop using alcohol and other intoxicating drugs, and a desire to manage our emotional or psychiatric illness in a healthy and constructive way.

DRA is a nonprofessional self-help program. There must always be a clear boundary separating the work of DRA from the work of chemical dependency and mental health professionals. The DRA fellowship has no opinion on matters of diagnosis, treatment, medication, or other issues related to the health-care professions.

The DRA fellowship is not affiliated with any other self-help organization or Twelve Step program. DRA has no opinion on the way other groups address the problems of dual disorders and dual recovery. We do not criticize the efforts of others.

The DRA Central Service Office will offer support to others who wish to start DRA meetings and who wish to work with other groups to carry the message.

Thank you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Are there any announcements at this time?

INTRODUCTIONS

Shall we take this time to introduce ourselves?

Some of us are comfortable using the following introduction: My name is [first name, last initial] and I am in dual recovery. But there is no official introduction. Feel free to find a way of introducing yourself that you are comfortable with.

Would anyone like to read “Accepting Differences”?

ACCEPTING DIFFERENCES

Newcomers and visitors may ask, Can a DRA program help me even with the type of symptoms that I have? Such feelings are not uncommon. We need to help newcomers recognize that a variety of symptoms are possible with a dual illness. There is no single type of dual disorder.

Our chemical problems also vary. For example:

- ◆ One man used alcohol, while another used many different drugs.
- ◆ One woman got high daily, while another got high only once a month.
- ◆ Some of us have been in treatment programs several times for our chemical dependency, while others have received outpatient care while living at home.
- ◆ Some of us have been clean and sober for a long time, while others have yet to become abstinent.

We have found that this is also true when we consider the symptoms of our specific psychiatric illness and worry that they will set us apart from others. For example:

- ◆ Some of us use prescription medications to control our symptoms, while others have symptoms that need no medication.
- ◆ Some of us have struggled for many years with our psychiatric illness, while others have just begun to experience the onset of symptoms.
- ◆ Some of us have experienced changes in our ability to perceive reality clearly and have experienced hallucinations, whether they come in the form of hearing voices or seeing visions.
- ◆ Some of us have felt increased energy or have experienced changes in our ability to think and make judgments. We may have also found that our thoughts sometimes race and seem to go out of control.
- ◆ Some of us have felt a loss of energy, a loss of enjoyment of life, and have perceived life from a negative perspective. Perhaps our sleeping patterns and appetite have changed as well. We may have become suicidal. We may find that we have difficulties with our thoughts and concentration.

These lists are far from complete, but they point to a common bond: both men and women are affected by different types of no-fault illnesses whose symptoms can disrupt the ability to function and relate to others effectively.

Some of us feared that we were becoming hopelessly impaired. We came to believe that we would never be “normal” again. Many of us have experienced great shame and guilt. We believed that our emotional or psychiatric illness and chemical dependency were our fault. Some of us have become secretive. We tried to keep our drinking and drug use a secret, and later some of us felt a need to keep our recovery and Steps a secret. We also felt our psychiatric illness must be kept secret, especially if our recovery program included prescription medication.

We seemed to run out of ways to protect our feelings and self-esteem, and to protect ourselves from the attitudes of those around us. Many of us gradually went into a closet of denial. If there are any among us who have felt as though they were living in that closet, we welcome you. We want you to know that the fear, isolation, and secrecy no longer need be a part of your life.

Would someone like to read “Getting Started in Dual Recovery”?

GETTING STARTED IN DUAL RECOVERY

The DRA approach to dual recovery is based on a simple set of ideas and Steps. They are suggestions for recovery rather than a set of rules. They encourage us to find our own personal recovery, the one that is most meaningful. They are meant to support those of us who wish to bring a spiritual dimension to our dual recovery.

The DRA program is worked on a day-by-day basis. Here are the suggestions for dual recovery:

- ◆ Today, I will be free of alcohol and other intoxicating drugs.
- ◆ Today, I will follow a healthy plan to manage my emotional or psychiatric illness.
- ◆ Today, I will practice the Twelve Steps.

1. We admitted we were powerless over our dual illness of chemical dependency and emotional or psychiatric illness - that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Higher Power of our understanding could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of our Higher Power, to help us to rebuild our lives in a positive and caring way.
4. Made a searching and fearless personal inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to our Higher Power, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our liabilities and our assets.
6. Were entirely ready to have our Higher Power remove all our liabilities.
7. Humbly asked our Higher Power to remove these liabilities and to help us to strengthen our assets for recovery.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when wrong promptly admitted it, while continuing to recognize our progress in dual recovery.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with our Higher Power, praying only for knowledge of our Higher Power's will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others who experience dual disorders and to practice these principles in all our affairs.*

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

This is a closed meeting where we can discuss the Steps and matters of personal recovery. Everyone will have an opportunity to share as we go around the table. If you do not wish to share, simply say "Pass."

CLOSING

Tradition Seven reminds us that every DRA group is fully self-supporting. As we close, a basket will be passed All donations are used for our literature and other group expenses.

Tradition Twelve reminds us of our need for anonymity. We ask that you do not repeat the names of anyone who has attended this meeting or talk about what has been shared Only by exercising this tradition can DRA provide a setting where we can feel safe to share in a way that will help our dual recovery.

If you know someone who might find help from the DRA program, feel free to bring them to a DRA meeting. However, please bring them only if they express a personal interest. Recovery is always a matter of personal choice. We can do our best when we carry the message and practice the program.

Would all who care to join me in the "Serenity Prayer"?

God grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.



*The Twelve Steps of AA are reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps does not mean that AA has reviewed or approved the contents of this publication, nor that AA agrees with the views expressed herein. AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism only – use of the Twelve Steps in connection with programs and activities that are patterned after AA, but that address other problems, does not imply otherwise. THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS * 1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol that our lives had become unmanageable. 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him. 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all. 9. Made direct amends to such people where ever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. 10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it. 11. Sought thorough prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.