

For information about starting a group or locating a meeting in your area contact:

Dual Recovery Anonymous

World Services Central Office
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DRA Web Site - <http://draonline.org>

A dual disorder occurs when an individual is affected by both chemical dependency and an emotional or psychiatric illness. Both chemical dependency and emotional or psychiatric illness may affect an individual physically, psychologically socially, and spiritually.

There is no single type of dual disorder. The reason is, that there are numerous forms of psychiatric illness. There are also many patterns of alcohol or drug abuse. As a result, a variety of different forms of dual or multiple disorders are possible.

DRA recognizes that psychiatric medications are used for the purpose of managing psychiatric symptoms and are not taken for the purpose of achieving a "high". Therefore, the use of psychiatric medications is not considered to be the same as relapse.

DRA is a non-professional self help organization. It would be inappropriate for DRA to give advice or recommendations to our members regarding the use of psychiatric medications or other forms of treatment.

DRA respects and supports the right of each member to work with the professionals of their choice to develop healthy recovery plans that will best meet their personal recovery needs.

DRA welcomes men and women who have experienced a dual disorder regardless of their chemical dependency or psychiatric history or their level of abilities. We recognize that we are men and women whose lives have been affected by different types of "no-fault" illnesses whose symptoms can disrupt our ability to function and relate to others effectively.

An individual is in dual recovery when they are actively following a program that focuses on their recovery needs for both their chemical dependency and their psychiatric illness.

Common Feelings and Experiences

Acceptance is a process rather than an event. It does take time for an individual to recognize and to accept that they have developed a dual disorder. It also takes time for them to identify and actively begin to follow a program for dual recovery.

Many people begin the process of recovery following a crisis. They may have experienced an episode of severe psychiatric symptoms. They may have experienced problems and consequences as a result of their alcohol or drug use. At that point, they may want relief from their symptoms, problems, and consequences.

Gradually, they begin to recognize the symptoms of their two illnesses. They begin to understand how the two illnesses have affected their lives. With that understanding, they begin to look at themselves in a new way. They begin to see that they are good people who have been affected by two serious "no-fault" illnesses.

As people gain an acceptance of their dual illness, they begin to view dual recovery in a different way. They are able to let go of the attitude that dual recovery is something that is being forced on them. They begin to want more from dual recovery than relief from symptoms, problems, and consequences.

As people begin to work a program of dual recovery they soon recognize that it offers a practical way of life. Three words that characterize dual recovery are:

Hope, Cope, Heal

Hope: Believable hope gradually begins to develop. As they work their program of recovery and attend meetings they meet other people who have shared similar experiences. They begin to recognize that recovery from a dual disorder is possible and that they can improve their quality of life.

Cope: New coping skills begin to develop in dual recovery. They begin to recognize that they may not find a cure for their dual disorder. However, they can learn how to use new coping skills to maintain their recovery and to minimize the risk of relapse. They can learn new ways of coping with their psychiatric illness in a healthy and constructive way as they practice their steps and use the support they find in meetings.

Heal: People in dual recovery can begin to experience the process of personal healing. A dual disorder can gradually take a toll on an individual's self-image and self-esteem. Repeated experiences of psychiatric symptoms and ongoing problems and consequences can leave a person with the feeling that they will never be normal again. Dual recovery offers an opportunity to heal and rebuild the self-image that may have become blurred or distorted. It also offers an opportunity to heal and mend the relationships that may have become harmed.



Welcome to Dual Recovery Anonymous

DRA is an independent, non-profit, non-professional self-help organization. DRA was established to help men and women who experience a dual disorder. A dual disorder occurs when an individual is affected by both chemical dependency and an emotional or psychiatric illness.

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 a dual disorder. The DRA program is based on the principles of the Twelve Steps and the personal experiences of men and women in dual recovery. There are only two requirements for membership:

- A desire to stop using alcohol and other intoxicating drugs.
- A desire to manage our emotional or psychiatric illness in a healthy and constructive way.

There are no charges, dues, or fees for DRA membership. Newcomers do not need a referral from a professional service provider.

Preamble

DRA is an independent, 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 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.

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. We do share a common bond as men and women who are affected by different types of "no-fault" illnesses whose symptoms can disrupt our 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 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!!!!

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.

The Twelve Steps of Dual Recovery Anonymous*

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.

*Adapted from the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous® 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 Traditions of Dual Recovery Anonymous

1. The primary purpose of D.R.A. is to carry the message of recovery to men and women who experience a dual disorder.
2. D.R.A. 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.
3. We welcome men and women of all personal beliefs; our program is one of personal freedom and choice.
4. Our groups and service work are guided by the principles of the 12 Steps of D.R.A.
5. Each group is independent, to better meet the recovery needs of our members. We are sensitive to the well being and unity of other groups and to D.R.A. as a whole.
6. To maintain our primary purpose, we avoid all outside distractions. We need not become involved in financial entanglements, lend the D.R.A. name for outside activities and issues, or become drawn into public controversy.
7. Every DRA group ought to be self-supporting.
8. D.R.A. is a volunteer, self-help organization. To carry out our service work, we may employ special workers, form committees and coordinate projects.
9. Our individual dual recovery depends on D.R.A. unity. We carry the message through our personal recovery and our service work.
10. D.R.A. is a non-professional program. We do not provide chemical dependency, mental health or other social services. D.R.A. has no opinion regarding the appropriate use of medications or other methods of managing our symptoms.
11. In D.R.A. we share an equal partnership in dual recovery. Our traditions and service work help us maintain the integrity of our program, to provide for others and to enhance the unity of D.R.A. as a whole.
12. Personal anonymity is the right of every D.R.A. member. We practice anonymity at the level of public media.

Sometimes, just talking with
another person helps.
Please don't be afraid to ask for help.