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*Improving Drug Abuse Treatment for AIDS-Risk Reduction (DATAR)*.

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# Maintaining Your Recovery

## Participants will:

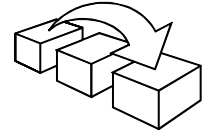
Understand the goals, rules, and content of the ***Straight Ahead*** workshop

Explore definitions of recovery

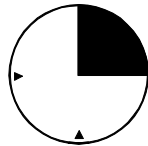
Share strategies for overcoming urges to use

Procedure Step	Segment Name	Time
1	Welcome	10 minutes
2	Overview of <b><i>Straight Ahead</i></b> : Goals, rules, structure	10 minutes
3	Group introductions	15 minutes
4	Open discussion: <b><i>What is Recovery?</i></b>	20 minutes
5	Break	10 minutes
6	Exercise: <b><i>Write It on the Wall</i></b>	20 minutes
7	Discussion: Maintaining recovery	15 minutes
8	Homework: Introduction to <b><i>Weekly Recovery Journal</i></b>	10 minutes
9	Closure and evaluation	10 minutes
<b>Session Length</b>		<b>2 hours (120 minutes)</b>

## Objectives



## Session Structure



## Group Leader Materials and Preparation



### ◆ **Materials:**

Flip chart, newsprint, or chalkboard  
Easel markers or chalk  
Paper and pencils for participants  
Crayons, colored pencils, or markers in assorted colors  
Pocket folders — one for each participant



### ◆ **Prepare before class:**

#### **GROUP GUIDELINES**

Use a sheet of flip chart paper to write out the guidelines as shown:  
(Guidelines discussed on pp. 5-6.)

#### **GROUP GUIDELINES**

**What is said here, stays here.**

**Show respect -- for each other and ourselves.**

**Participate -- be involved.**

**Share with others what has worked for you.**



#### **MOVING STRAIGHT AHEAD**

Use a sheet of flip chart paper to write out the key points on the ***Moving Straight Ahead*** handout as shown:  
(Handout shown on p. 17.)

#### **MOVING STRAIGHT AHEAD**

**Stop using all drugs.**

**Avoid people and situations that trigger urges!**

**Get support (a “partner” in recovery).**

**Form a self-image of yourself as a recovering person.**

**Plan your time and stay busy.**

**Keep coming to this group.**

◆ **Prepare before class (continued):**

**WRITE IT ON THE WALL**

Label four sheets of flip chart paper as shown below:  
(Exercise discussion begins on p. 9.)

(1)

People or situations that trigger urges to use

(2)

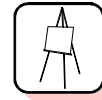
Thoughts or feelings that trigger urges to use

(3)

How do you overcome cravings? What works?

(4)

What do you like most about yourself when you don't use?



**ICONS**



**Icons** appear in this

narrow column of the page to draw your attention to where materials, preparations, and handouts are used in the sessions.

All icons are described in the section, "Special Notes and Symbols," pp. xi-xii.

◆ **Make copies:**

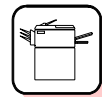
**What is Recovery?** handout (p. 16)

**Moving Straight Ahead** handout (p. 17)

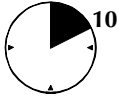
**Weekly Recovery Journal** (p. 18)

**Session One Evaluation** (pp. 19-20)

**Client Survey**/pretest (optional — pp. 185-187)



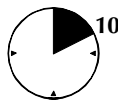
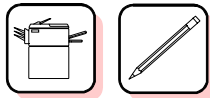
## Procedure Steps



### Step 1

#### Welcome

- ◆ **Welcome participants** as they arrive.
- ◆ **Administer the *Client Survey***/pretest (optional).
- ◆ **Introduce yourself by giving your name. Go around the room and ask participants to do the same.** If you are able to provide transportation assistance or child care during the ***Straight Ahead*** sessions, go over the details. Let participants know there will be a short break about halfway through each meeting.
- ◆ **Distribute pocket folders, and ask participants to use them to store their handouts and materials.** Suggest they bring their folders to each session.



### Step 2

#### Overview: Goals, rules, and structure

- ◆ **Discuss the goals and purpose of the *Straight Ahead* workshops, using information from the following script:**

**SCRIPT:**  
Goals and Purpose of the ***Straight Ahead*** Workshops

The purpose of the ***Straight Ahead*** workshops is to help you make a commitment to long-term recovery. This is sometimes called the *maintenance* stage of recovery. Maintaining your recovery is likely to be one of the most difficult accomplishments of your life — and also one of the most rewarding. Each of you is to be commended for the strength and courage that has brought you to your present level of recovery.

***Straight Ahead*** is designed to help you expand your skills, confidence, and sources of support as you continue to work on maintaining recovery. The goal of ***Straight Ahead*** is to help you build a strong foundation for recovery. This includes improving relationships with family and friends, taking advantage of community recovery groups, setting goals, and making a life for yourself beyond the drug scene. Some of the issues we'll address include:

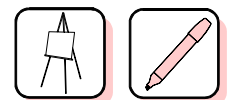
Getting along better with people  
 Dealing with stress, anger, and conflict  
 Maintaining a positive self-concept  
 Improving family relationships  
 Making plans and solving problems  
 Dealing with cravings and triggers  
 Taking credit for your successes  
 Getting involved in the recovering community

*Issues  
 addressed by  
**Straight  
 Ahead***

These are areas of daily living where all of us can use some help — so the philosophy of the group will be to help each other. We will share our experiences, offer support and understanding, and learn from each other.

In order to do this effectively, let's consider a few guidelines for how the groups will operate.

◆ **Introduce the Group Guidelines.** Use the flip chart outline of the main points as shown on page 2 to lead the discussion.



❖ **What is said here, stays here.**

We all need a safe place to talk about our feelings, concerns, and progress in recovery. Therefore, we will honor each person's confidentiality.

❖ **Show respect — for each other and ourselves.**

This would include listening to each other; not engaging in put-downs, threats, or hostility; and being supportive of each other.

❖ **Participate — be involved.**

Listen; contribute; share your thoughts and experiences; take part in the exercises and take home assignments.

❖ **Share with others what has worked for you.**

To help strengthen recovery it's important to stay focused on what works. If it works, do more of it. This group is a place to talk and share with others what you've found to be successful.

After briefly discussing each guideline and the reasons for it, **ask group members if they would like to add any additional guidelines.** If there is a consensus for an additional guideline, add it to the list. When the list is complete, secure closure by asking the group for an indication of approval (such as a show of hands or an informal voice vote). You may choose to bring the **Group Guidelines** list to future meetings for reference.

◆ **Invite general questions from participants about the goals or guidelines for the group.**

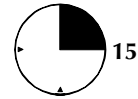
## Step 3

### Group introductions

◆ **After answering any questions about the *Straight Ahead* topics or program goals, go around the room and ask participants to introduce themselves.** Give each person about 2-3 minutes. Write the following questions on flip chart or chalkboard, and ask each person to answer them by way of their introduction:

- ❖ *Your name (or the name you like to use)*
- ❖ *How long in the program?*
- ❖ *Who's "special" in your life?*
- ❖ *What is one thing you do really well?*
- ❖ *Where do you want to be in your recovery six months from now?*

◆ **Introduce yourself by answering the same questions as the participants.** Skip the last question if it doesn't apply to you.

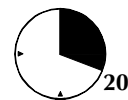


## Step 4

### Open discussion: What is Recovery?

◆ **Introduce the topic of recovery** by reminding participants that one goal of *Straight Ahead* is to improve skills for maintaining recovery, and to help them take advantage of the sources of support available from their families, friends, and the community.

◆ **Write "recovery from drug addiction" on flip chart or chalkboard and ask participants to help you brainstorm a list of meanings for the phrase.** Prompt as needed. For example: "When we say someone has recovered from addiction, what do we mean? What all is involved?" List responses. Sug-





**What is Recovery?**  
Discussion  
Points



**SCRIPT:**  
Summarizing  
**What is Recovery?**

gest and add items, as needed, to assure that the following ideas are included:

- ❖ Not using — no matter what!
- ❖ Change attitudes about drugs and drug users.
- ❖ Spend more time with people who don't use.
- ❖ Get involved: job, school, hobby, pastime.
- ❖ Find a drug free support network.
- ❖ Resolve anger, guilt, frustration about past drug use.
- ❖ Do what works to help you avoid cravings.
- ❖ Find new, enjoyable social activities without drugs.
- ❖ Ask for support when you need it.
- ❖ Learn new skills and be open to new ideas.

◆ **Distribute handout *What is Recovery?* for participants to review.**

◆ **Summarize using information from the following script.** Allow further discussion and comment as needed.

**There is more to recovery than quitting drug use.**

However, you cannot begin to work on recovery until you have quit using. Abstinence or cessation of drug use is the foundation of recovery, and for many people it's the easiest step. **Staying** quit is much more difficult. Staying quit involves making changes in your attitudes, in your family and social relationships, and in your responses to feelings and life events. These changes are the ones that give you the strength and the skills to maintain your recovery. And maintaining recovery is the key.

**As you move ahead in recovery, it's important to tell family members and friends about your needs as you make changes.** Often, family members and friends believe that once the recovering person has quit using, then he or she is "fixed." Talk with your

family and friends who support your recovery efforts and help them understand about the complexity of recovery. Al-Anon or Families Anonymous groups may be especially helpful for those needing support and education about recovery issues. You'll also benefit from setting limits ("drawing the line") with family and friends who don't support your recovery or who continue to use drugs themselves.

**Ultimately, you're responsible for your own recovery — no one else.** Help, support, and advice are all important, but you're the one who puts the wheels in motion. Give yourself credit for each tiny step you take in the right direction. You're responsible for your successes and for continuing to figure out what will work best to help you maintain recovery.

## Step 5

### Break

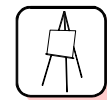
- ◆ **Allow a 10 minute break.**



## Step 6

### Exercise: *Write It on the Wall*

- ◆ **During the break, prepare for the *Write It on the Wall* exercise by hanging the four sheets of flip chart paper or newsprint around the room which have been labeled as shown on page 3.**
- ◆ **Welcome the group back from break,** and explain that the remainder of the session will focus on a key issue in recovery: What works for overcoming urges to use?





◆ **Distribute crayons, markers, or colored pencils for the *Write It on the Wall* exercise.** Tell participants that the exercise is designed to open up discussion about what leads to cravings and what works to beat cravings.

◆ **Read each of the posted topics aloud. Instruct participants to walk around and “write on the walls,” using their markers to answer the questions or write about their experiences. Let them know they can write more than one item on each sheet.** Explain that the **only rule** is their answers must be based on honest personal experiences, thoughts and feelings. Encourage them to read what others have written as they move from sheet to sheet. Let them know they can begin at any sheet, and move around the room in the order they prefer. Allow about 5-10 minutes for the exercise. Encourage people to go back around and read new items as they are added to the lists.

### ***Processing the exercise***



◆ **Process the exercise by discussing the material generated on each of the sheets.** Use some of the following questions to process each point. Use flip chart or chalkboard to list and consolidate answers:

#### ***Point #1***

❖ **People or situations that trigger your urges to use**

### **Discussion Questions**

What’s the best way to deal with people who trigger urges to use? What’s worked in your life?

Think about people who help you **not** to use — what’s different about them? How can you spend more time with them?

What works to get out of situations that trigger urges?

What situations help you **not** to use?

❖ **Thoughts and feelings that trigger your urges to use**

What do thoughts about using “sound” like?

What’s been successful for you in “talking back” to those thoughts?

What feelings or emotions make you vulnerable to using?

What has worked for you in handling difficult feelings?

**Point #2**

**Discussion Questions**

❖ **How do you overcome cravings? What works?**

How did you figure out what works for you to overcome cravings?

How do you reward yourself when you’re able to deal with cravings?

**Point #3**

**Discussion Questions**

❖ **What do you like most about yourself when you don’t use?**

What do your family/friends notice that’s different about you when you’re **not** using?

What do you do differently when you’re **not** using?

**Point #4**

**Discussion Questions**

**SCRIPT:**  
*Summarizing the  
Write It on the  
Wall exercise*

◆ **Summarize the exercise by discussing the key points from the following script:**

Most people in recovery have a sort of “early warning system” that can alert them when the risk for “slipping” or using is high. Learning to listen for this “warning” system takes practice because the **cues** are often very subtle.

Your early warning system may be sounding if you notice one or more of the following changes:

- ❖ **Changes in thoughts or attitudes about recovery** — For example, not caring about recovery efforts; thinking that drugs are deserved because you've been so “good” lately; or thinking you can control your use.
- ❖ **Changes in feelings** — For example, noticing greater than usual feelings of depression, anger, anxiety, guilt, or frustration.
- ❖ **Changes in how you act** — For example, fighting or arguing a lot; finding excuses to visit places or people associated with drugs; not attending group or counseling sessions.

These changes may or may not apply to you. However, anytime you notice changes in how you are thinking, feeling, and acting with regards to your commitment to recovery — it could be a warning that a “slip” is on the way.

The best advice for avoiding “slips” is to become **aware** of your own personal “warning” system, and then pay attention to what **works for you** in dealing with cravings and urges to use. It's also helpful to share this information with others.

## Step 7

### Discussion: Maintaining recovery

◆ Distribute handout *Moving Straight Ahead*, and use a flip chart outline of the key points as shown on page 2 to review issues related to maintaining recovery.

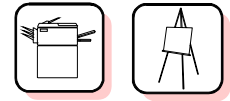
**Include some of the following points in your discussion:**

How you go about maintaining your recovery is your choice. Certainly it's a good idea to keep doing what works and to try again things that have worked in the past — even if they only worked for a little while. Give yourself credit for your successes — even the little bitty ones!

Here are some additional recommendations from experts in the recovery field:

**Stop using all drugs. Don't be around drugs.** You already know this, but it's worth repeating again. Don't hang out with so-called "recreational" users. Don't deal, hold someone's stash, or help someone score. Stay away from all drugs. This includes cocaine, speed, other opiates, and pot. The only exception is methadone or other prescription drugs you need. You will be better off if you also avoid alcohol. If you don't choose to do this, at least limit your alcohol use to no more than two drinks (beers, glasses of wine) per day and avoid drinking every day.

**Avoid people and situations that trigger your desire to use.** People and situations that trigger craving will vary from one person to the next. Learn to focus on what works for you in avoiding risky situations. If it's worked in the past — even just a little bit — then it's worth trying again. On the other hand, if what you've tried hasn't worked — then do something different.



**DISCUSSION  
POINTS:  
*Moving  
Straight  
Ahead***

**DISCUSSION  
POINTS:  
Moving  
Straight  
Ahead**  
(continued)

**Ask a non-using family member or a close friend to be your “partner” in recovery.** Recognize your need for another person to call on when you need help. It’s in your best interest to tell someone about your recovery, your program, and your plans for the future. Ask for help and emotional support as you move to establish a solid recovery. Involvement in NA or AA groups can provide you with a sponsor who may be willing to provide you with emotional support and counsel when you are feeling shaky, have urges to use, or just need to talk things out. Within your family, your social network, or through a 12-step program, find a sober, drug-free “partner” for recovery.

**Begin to form a self-image of yourself as a recovering person.** One way to begin this process is to find new friends and acquaintances who don’t use drugs. If you keep running with the same old drug using crowd, you increase your chances of setbacks. Work to shed the image of yourself as a drug user, righteous dope fiend, junkie, or hustler. Many people find involvement in AA, NA, or other recovery-based groups helps them begin to develop a new sense of identity and purpose. Ultimately, you are who you think you are. Begin, in small and large ways, to think of yourself differently.

**Plan your time and stay busy.** Find things you enjoy doing. Make and carry out plans to get involved in something you really like, or something that makes you feel better about yourself. Go back to school, join a training program, pursue a hobby or volunteer activity. Find *something* to occupy your time and fill your mind.

**Keep coming to this group.** Each week you’ll have the chance to share with and learn from others who are working on recovery. You’ll find “excuses” not to come — but resolve to put those excuses out of your mind. Weekly attendance will help you strengthen your goal to not use, and will provide you with information and insights in all areas of recovery. It’s also something you can plan to do in order to stay busy.

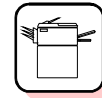
## Step 8

### Homework: *Weekly Recovery Journal*

◆ **Distribute a *Weekly Recovery Journal* sheet**, and ask participants to complete their journal before the next group meeting. Reassure them they're not required to write a lot, and should simply use the journal to jot down notes about the recovery issues they have dealt with in the past week. Let them know there is no "right" or "wrong" way to do their journal. The purpose is to help them stay focused on their weekly successes, rough spots, concerns and goals in recovery. Instruct them to pay special attention to what they do right — what works. **Ask them to bring their journals to group for discussion each week.**

◆ **Provide the following specific assignment:**

Between now and next week, think about what you're doing that helps you stay busy and keeps your mind occupied. Use your journal to keep notes.

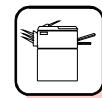


## Step 9

### Closure and evaluation

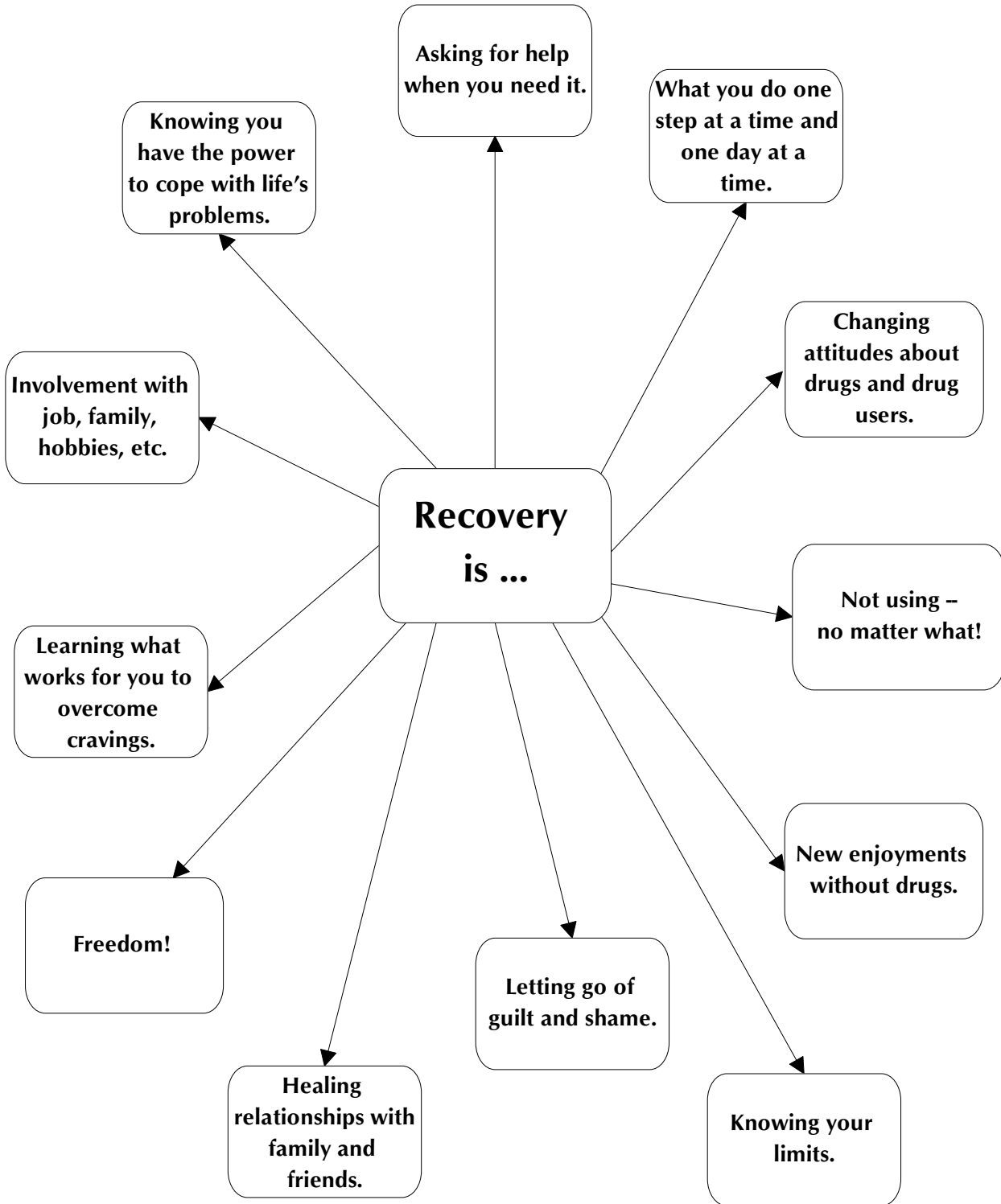
◆ **Provide closure with a brief summary** of the points touched upon in this session. **Go around the room quickly, and ask participants to tell you the most important thing they learned today.**

◆ **Ask each participant to complete a session evaluation.** Thank each person as he or she leaves, and extend an invitation to return next week.





### WHAT IS RECOVERY?



## **MOVING STRAIGHT AHEAD**

### ■ **Stop using all drugs. Don't be around drugs.**

You already know this, but it's worth repeating again. Don't hang out with so-called "recreational" users. Don't deal, hold someone's stash, or help someone score. Stay away from all drugs. This includes cocaine, speed, other opiates, and pot. The only exception is methadone or other prescription drugs you need.

### ■ **Avoid people and situations that trigger your urges to use.**

People and situations that trigger craving vary from one person to the next. Learn to recognize your dangerous situations and develop a variety of planned actions you can take when you feel you have the urge to use. **If something has worked in the past, keep doing it!**

### ■ **Ask a non-using family member or a close friend to be your "partner" in recovery.**

Recognize your need for another person to call on when you need help. It's in your best interest to tell someone about your recovery, your program, and your plans for the future. Ask for help and emotional support as you move to establish a solid recovery. Involvement in NA or AA groups can help.

### ■ **Begin to form a self-image of yourself as a recovering person.**

One way to begin this process is to find new friends and acquaintances who don't use drugs. If you keep running with the same old drug using crowd, you increase your chances for setbacks. Work to shed the image of yourself as a drug user, righteous dope fiend, junkie, or hustler. Ultimately, you are who you think you are. Begin, in small and large ways, to **think** of yourself differently.

### ■ **Plan your time and stay busy.**

Find things that you enjoy doing. Make and carry out plans to get involved in something you really like, or something that makes you feel better about yourself. Go back to school, join a training program, pursue a hobby or volunteer activity. Find something to occupy your time and fill your mind.

### ■ **Keep coming to this group.**

Each week you'll have the chance to share with and learn from others who are working on recovery. Weekly attendance will help you strengthen your resolve to not use, and will provide you with information and insights in all areas of recovery. It's also something you can plan to do in order to stay busy.

## WEEKLY RECOVERY JOURNAL

WEEK # \_\_\_\_\_

RECOVERY AREAS	SUCCESS	ROUGH SPOTS	CONCERNS	GOALS
<b>STAYING CLEAN</b> Handling cravings Avoiding triggers Not using				
<b>RECOVERY WORK</b> Group attendance AA/NA meeting AA/NA sponsor				
<b>SOCIAL RELATIONS</b> Recovery "partner" New friends Avoiding users				
<b>PERSONAL</b> Job, school, hobby Plans and goals Self-image work Family				

*Before each group, jot down details about how the past week has been for you. Be specific about your successes, rough spots, concerns, and goals in each recovery area.*

## SESSION EVALUATION OF *STRAIGHT AHEAD*

### SESSION 1

**THIS BOX IS TO BE COMPLETED BY DATA COORDINATOR:**

[FORM 70; CARD 01]

SITE # <input type="text"/>	CLIENT ID# <input type="text"/>	DATE: <input type="text"/>	COUNSELOR ID# <input type="text"/>
[5-6]	[7-12]	MO DAY YR [13-18]	[19-20]

**Please answer these questions based on what you learned today. Select the best single answer.**

1. Recovery from drug addiction involves:
  - (1) Quitting drugs and getting clean
  - (2) Changing attitudes about drugs and using drugs
  - (3) Learning to handle cravings and triggers
  - (4) Finding a new purpose in life (job, hobby, family, etc.)
  - (5) All of the above

[21]
  
2. People and places have no effect on triggering drug cravings. .... 0=True 1=False [22]
  
3. A good way to strengthen recovery is to:
  - (1) Make new friends who don't do drugs
  - (2) Come to group meetings and stay in treatment
  - (3) Avoid making plans and staying busy
  - (4) 1 and 2 above
  - (5) All of the above

[23]
  
4. A "recovery journal" helps keep you focused on personal recovery issues. .... 0=True 1=False [24]
  
5. A "partner" in recovery could be:
  - (1) A close friend who is also in recovery
  - (2) A drug using family member who wants you to get straight
  - (3) A sponsor from your AA or NA group
  - (4) 1 and 3 above
  - (5) All of the above

[25]

***Straight Ahead***  
Session 1 Evaluation  
Page 2

**For the following items, please circle the number on each line to show how you feel about this session.**

- |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |         |          |      |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------|----------|------|
| Full .....      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 ..... | Empty    | [26] |
| Rough .....     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 ..... | Smooth   | [27] |
| Weak .....      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 ..... | Powerful | [28] |
| Relaxed .....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 ..... | Tense    | [29] |
| Worthless ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 ..... | Valuable | [30] |

**Now circle the number on each line to show how you feel right now.**

- |                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |         |           |      |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------|-----------|------|
| Pleased .....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 ..... | Angry     | [31] |
| Quiet .....     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 ..... | Aroused   | [32] |
| Afraid .....    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 ..... | Confident | [33] |
| Excited .....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 ..... | Calm      | [34] |
| Worthless ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 ..... | Valuable  | [35] |

**If mapping was used in this session, place an “X” on each line to show your opinion about it.**

**Mapping was...**

- |                   |   |   |   |   |   |   |         |               |      |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------|---------------|------|
| Interesting ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 ..... | Uninteresting | [36] |
| Difficult .....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 ..... | Easy          | [37] |
| Comfortable ...   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 ..... | Uncomfortable | [38] |
| Worthless .....   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 ..... | Valuable      | [39] |