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

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Social Networks and Recovery

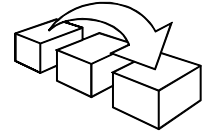
Participants will:

Explore the meaning and importance of friendships

Identify qualities of social network members who support recovery

Explore strategies for building a more supportive social network

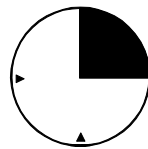
Objectives



Procedure

Step	Segment Name	Time
1	Welcome and review of weekly recovery issues	30 minutes
2	Topic introduction: Social networks and recovery	5 minutes
3	Open discussion: What is friendship?	20 minutes
4	Break	10 minutes
5	Exercise: Starship Straight Ahead	25 minutes
6	Open discussion: Recovery issues and social networks	20 minutes
7	Closure and evaluation	10 minutes
Session Length		2 hours (120 minutes)

Session Structure



Group Leader Materials and Preparation



◆ Materials:

- Flip chart or chalkboard
- Markers or chalk
- Paper and pencils for participants
- Cassette or compact disc (CD) player
- Music selection on cassette or CD



◆ Prepare before class:

WHAT WORKS?

Use three sheets of flip chart paper to write out the questions as shown:
(Worksheet shown on p. 36.)

(2)

WHAT WORKS?

Family Who Use (avoiding their influence)

What works?

What doesn't?

(1)

WHAT WORKS?

Making New Friends (who support your recovery)

What works?

What doesn't?

(3)

WHAT WORKS?

Friends Who Use (avoiding their influence)

What works?

What doesn't?



Check that the equipment is playing properly and cue cassette or CD to the beginning of your music selection

Prepare before class (continued):

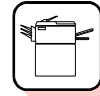
◆ Make copies:

Starship Straight Ahead worksheet (p. 35)

What Works? worksheet (p. 36)

Session Two Evaluation (pp. 37-38)

Weekly Recovery Journal (p. 18 — Session 1)



Procedure Steps



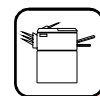
Step 1

Welcome and review of recovery issues

◆ Welcome participants as they arrive.

◆ **Introduce the session topic.** Explain that the session will focus on recovery issues related to social network relationships. A “social network” is made up of all the people with whom we spend time socially, including friends, family, co-workers, neighbors, acquaintances, etc. The emphasis of these sessions will be on identifying the types of relationships that best support recovery efforts. In addition, we’ll share strategies and ideas for dealing with difficult social network issues, such as making new friends and managing relationships with friends who use.

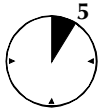
◆ **Introduce the open discussion time set aside at the beginning of each session to talk about weekly recovery issues.** (See the Introduction — “Using This Manual” for recommendations on leading this discussion period.) Explain that the first part of each **Straight Ahead** session will be used to talk about the recovery gains and challenges of the previous week, and to ask for group advice and support on issues related to recovery. Encourage participants to use their **Weekly Recovery Journals** to keep notes for this discussion period.



◆ **Begin by going around the room to ask each participant:** “What is one thing you did in the last week (no matter how small)

that really helped your recovery efforts?” Express support, encouragement, and appreciation for each speaker’s contribution. Set a tone for the group that encourages participants to do likewise.

◆ **Ask about the specific assignment from the previous session:** What have you been doing in the last week to stay busy and keep your mind occupied. **Encourage participants to share other issues from their journals as well.** Keep discussions focused on recovery, finding solutions to recovery-related problems, and sharing successes (“what works”).



Step 2

Topic introduction: Social networks

◆ **Reintroduce the session topic and the purpose of the session using key points from the following script:**

SCRIPT:
*Session Topic
and Goals*

The “experts” who study drug addiction and recovery have long been interested in a special group of recovering people who seem to have stuck to their decisions to quit using **without** formal treatment. These folks are often referred to as “natural recoverers.” When interviewed, they frequently mentioned the changes they made in their social networks as part of their recovery process. These changes included making new friends and acquaintances who are drug free as well as developing strategies for dealing with old friends who still use. In many cases, “natural recoverers” opted to discontinue their associations with users, or at least limited the time they spent with them.

As you continue to make progress in your recovery you may find it helpful to give some thought to who you include in your social network. For example, “natural recoverers” noted that they found it very difficult to continue friendships that were centered around nothing but drug use. These associations were found to trigger cravings. On the other hand, some “natural

recoverers” reported being able to maintain relationships with friends who used drugs, providing the friends were willing not to use in their presence.

The decision to include or not include people who use drugs in your social network is a personal one. The main thing is to seek out friends who encourage and support your recovery efforts. Today’s session will provide you with a chance to think about friendships and social networks and explore your own needs and goals in this area.

Step 3

Open discussion: What is friendship?

◆ **Introduce the discussion by asking participants to listen to a song about friendship. Provide a cassette player or CD, and ask participants to pay attention to the words of the song.** You may also want to take the time to provide lyric sheets so people can follow the words. Music works at the level of metaphor. It helps synthesize our thoughts and feelings about a subject, and paves the way for a fuller discussion. Use one of the following suggestions or pick your own.

Suggested titles:

You’ve Got A Friend

*We All Need Somebody
(To Lean On)*

That’s What Friends Are For

Wind Beneath My Wings

Stand by Me

If I Could

Artists:

James Taylor (Carole King)

Bill Withers

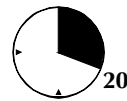
Dionne Warwick

Bette Midler

Ben E. King

Patti LaBelle

◆ **After listening to the song, lead a discussion about the nature of friendship, using some of the questions listed on the following page.**

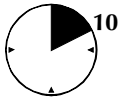


Discussion Questions

What does this song say to you about the nature of friendship? What do friends contribute to your life?

What are some things you do to keep your friendships with others going?

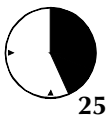
Let's talk about friends who have helped you with your recovery goals. What's been the most helpful thing a friend has done for you to keep you on track with what's good for you in recovery?



Step 4

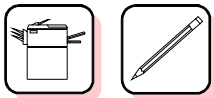
Break

- ◆ Allow a 10 minute break.



Step 5

Exercise: *Starship Straight Ahead*



- ◆ **Distribute *Starship Straight Ahead* worksheets and pencils.** Tell participants you want them to take part in an exercise to explore their friendships, especially those friendships that help them stay strong in recovery. **Explain that you want them to participate in a fantasy exercise,** and encourage them to let themselves go and have fun with it.

- ◆ **Use the following script to lead the group fantasy:**

A wonderful space being from another planet has come to earth to visit you. The space being is named Zando.

SCRIPT:
***Starship
Straight
Ahead***

Zando tells you about the planet he comes from, explaining that it's a place where you can be the person you always wanted to be and have the life you've always dreamed of having. Zando wants to take you to his planet, and you are eager to go. So you make your plans.

Here's the deal, though. Zando tells you that there are drugs on his planet, too. Because of the atmosphere on his planet, the temptation to use can be very overpowering and strong. But if you use while you are there, well, he paints a very nasty picture of what would happen if you used on his planet. Still, though, because of everything that he's told you, you really want to travel with him, because this planet offers you the chance to be who you've always wanted to be and have the life you've always wanted. Zando assures you that after living on his planet awhile, the temptation to use drugs gets very weak and faint, and eventually it won't trouble you any more.

In order to make it easier for you, Zando tells you that you may choose three people from your social network to travel with you. He tells you that you must choose the three people who help you the most in your recovery. In other words, the people who support you, encourage you, and give you strength to not use.

Think about it for a minute. Then write the names of the three people you would choose where it says "Support Crew."

❖ **Stop here, and process the exercise thus far using some of the discussion questions on the following page.** Go around the room and ask each person to respond to some of the questions. **Use a flip chart to list and summarize some of the responses from participants.**

SCRIPT:
Starship
Straight
Ahead

(continued)



Discussion Questions

Was it easy or hard to pick your “crew?” Why?

How did you decide who would be your “support crew?”

What personal qualities helped them make the list?

Tell us a little bit about what each of your “support crew” members does to support or encourage your recovery? What do they do specifically that helps you feel encouraged and supported in recovery?

STORY continues**❖ When the discussion is completed, continue the story:**

The day arrives, and you, your support crew, and Zando head off to the wonderful planet where you can be happy and live the life you dream of. Suddenly, there’s a problem with the spaceship. Zando tells you the ship is overloaded, and in order to make it, you will have to send one of your support crew back to earth in a special space pod. There’s no danger, but it must be done. Zando advises you to ask the two most supportive of your crew to stay with you. Think about it for a minute, then decide who you will send back to earth in the space pod. Draw a little space pod and write his/her name in it. Cross that name off your support crew list.

❖ Stop the story again, and process using some of the following questions:**Discussion Questions**

Was it easy or difficult to make the choice? Why?

How did you feel about making the choice?

What factors related to your recovery influenced your choice of crew member to send back to earth?

❖ **Resume the story when each person has discussed his/her choice.**

Your journey with Zando continues toward the wonderful planet where you can live the life you've always wanted to lead, as long as you don't use. As you near the planet, you begin to feel some cravings. Zando tells you this will pass, and besides, you have your support crew to help you out when you need them.

But wait! Zando gets a radio transmission. He's informed that new regulations will only allow three passengers to land on the planet at one time. Zando tells you that you must send another member of your support crew back to earth in a space pod. Again there's no danger, but you must decide who to send back. Zando advises you that you will really need a strong support person when you land — so choose wisely.

Who will you send back this time? Draw another little space pod, and write the name of the person you choose on the pod. Remove that name from your crew list.

❖ **Stop the story, and process using some of the following questions:**

Did you have a hard time making your choice? What made it difficult or easy for you?

How did you feel about having to make this choice?

Let's talk about the remaining member of your "support" crew. Why did you choose this person? What does he/she do to support and encourage you to not use?

If you begin having strong urges to use, how will you ask your support person for help? What will you say? When will be the best time to ask for support?

STORY
continues

Discussion
Questions

SCRIPT:
Summarizing
**Starship
Straight
Ahead**

◆ **Thank participants for their input. Use information from the following script to summarize the discussion:**

Zando’s planet could really be earth. It holds the opportunity for us to be happy and live life to the fullest. The purpose of this exercise was to help focus attention on the part our social network (our friends, family, and acquaintances) plays in our recovery efforts. The choices you made during the exercise can help you explore the qualities you value in your recovery “support crew.” You are the best person to decide who helps you, who you can count on, and who you trust.

Friends serve a different need for each person. The key point is that a supportive friend or group of friends can help recovery efforts, if nothing else by simply giving you someone to talk with about your problems. Ultimately, you are responsible for your own recovery. A good friend can help keep you in touch with that reality in a caring and nonjudgmental way.



Step 6

Open discussion: Recovery issues and social networks



◆ **Distribute *What Works?* worksheets** and lead the group in a brief discussion of the key social network issues identified by recovering people: making new friends, dealing with friends who use, and dealing with family members who use. **Write out each of the worksheet questions on flip chart paper (see page 22) or chalkboard, and use these to “take notes” so that participants’ input from the discussion is summarized.**

◆ **Begin by asking participants to explore each of the issues on the worksheet, focusing on “what works” and**

“what doesn’t work” based on personal experience. Encourage them to listen and contribute to the discussion, and to use their worksheets to make notes about what they hear that makes sense to them, for example, ideas they’d like to try or approaches they want to avoid.

◆ **Use ideas from the following script to lead the discussion:**

The three social network issues on the worksheet are identified by recovering people and treatment professionals as important considerations in long term recovery.

❖ **MAKING NEW FRIENDS**

Only you can pick your friends, and ultimately who you hang out with is your business. However, making new friends who don’t use drugs and who support your recovery efforts can help you develop new interests and a new sense of identity.

So when it comes to making new friends who would support your recovery, what do you need to do? What works?

Additional questions to encourage exploration:

Where are good places to meet new friends?

What might you say to a potential new friend?
(Encourage a few “impromptu” role plays.)

What’s worked for you in the past when you decided to make friends with someone? What did you do to get the friendship going?

What approaches have you tried in the past for making new friends that **didn’t** work? What did you learn from that?

SCRIPT:
What Works?

Point #1

**Discussion
Questions**

Point #2**❖ FRIENDS WHO USE**

It's not possible to control what our friends do. Some recovering people still maintain relationships with friends who use. The experts will tell you that this can be risky, especially in early recovery when cravings and urges to resume drug use are strong. Many times, being with old friends who use can trigger a "slip" or even a total relapse. Again, you have to decide who you will hang out with, and who you will avoid. The key issue with friends who use is to avoid being influenced. So what works?

If you have friends who still use, what works to keep you from being influenced?

Point out that when we talk about being "influenced," we don't necessarily mean that our friends might try to talk us into using, although that can happen. What we're really talking about is our own internal "triggers" that cause us to "influence" ourselves when we're around active users.

Additional questions for encouraging discussion:**Discussion Questions**

What have you done in the past to minimize being influenced by friends who use? How were you able to do that?

When it comes do avoiding the influence of friends who use, what doesn't work?

In your experience, what do you consider a "bad idea" for dealing with friends who use?

Point #3**❖ FAMILY WHO USE**

The saying goes, "You can choose your friends, but not your family." And with the exception of spouses or partners, this is generally true. Your relationship with

your family is special, personal, and influenced by your feelings for each other and the history you share. You're the best judge of what will and won't work in dealing with your family. So let's talk about avoiding the influence of family members who use. What works?

If you have family members who still use, what helps you deal with the situation?

Additional questions for encouraging discussion:

What have you done in the past to minimize being influenced by family members who use? How were you able to do that?

When it comes to avoiding the influence of family members who use, what doesn't work?

In your experience, what do you consider a "bad idea" for dealing with family members who use?

Discussion Questions

◆ **Thank participants for their contributions to the discussion.** Encourage them to use their worksheets to jot down ideas and strategies they feel were useful.

◆ **Provide closure by summarizing the discussion.** Review the discussion notes recorded on the flip chart sheets, highlighting "what works" and "what doesn't work" for each of the three topic areas.

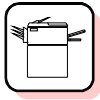
Remind participants that each person is the ultimate judge of what works or doesn't work in their relationships. Encourage participants to pay attention in the week ahead to the kinds of things done by members of their social networks they find to be particularly helpful and supportive.





Step 7

Closure and evaluation



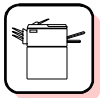
- ◆ **Distribute new *Weekly Recovery Journal* worksheets** and encourage participants to continue using the journal to record their successes and challenges in recovery in the week to come.

- ◆ **Provide the following specific assignment:**

Between now and next week, make it a point to spend some time with a friend or acquaintance who **doesn't** use. Use your journal to keep notes about your thoughts and feelings.

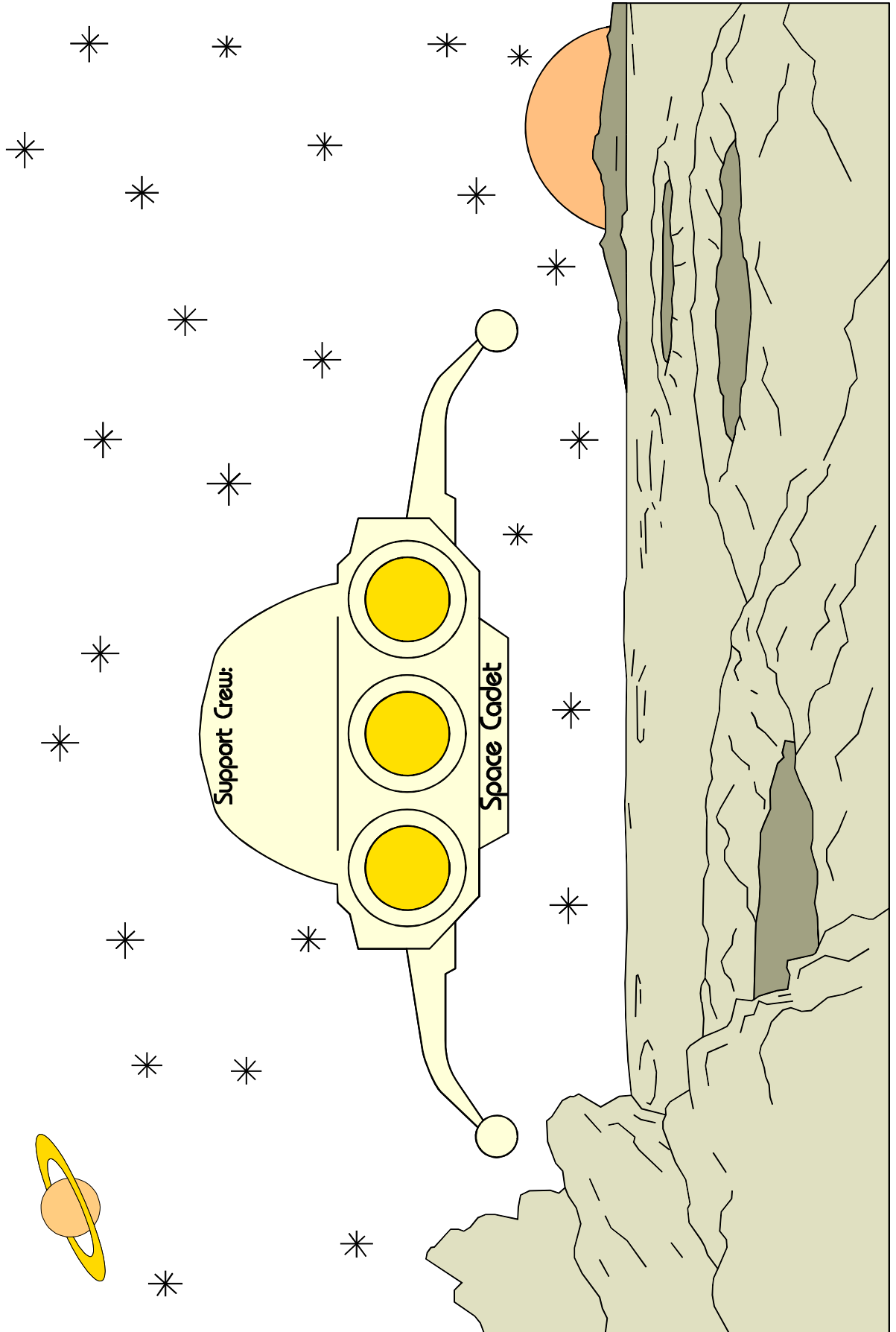
- ◆ **Go around the room quickly and ask participants to share the most important thing they learned from today's lesson.**

- ◆ **Briefly preview next week's session.**



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

STARSHIP STRAIGHT AHEAD



WHAT WORKS?

MAKING NEW FRIENDS (who supports your recovery)

What works?

What doesn't?

FRIENDS WHO USE (avoiding their influence)

What works?

What doesn't?

FAMILY WHO USE (avoiding their influence)

What works?

What doesn't?

SESSION EVALUATION OF STRAIGHT AHEAD

SESSION 2

THIS BOX IS TO BE COMPLETED BY DATA COORDINATOR:

[FORM 71; CARD 01]

Form box containing fields for SITE #, CLIENT ID#, DATE, and COUNSELOR ID# with sub-labels like MO, DAY, YR.

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

- 1. A social network may include: (1) Friends, (2) Family members, (3) Strangers, (4) 1 and 2 only, (5) All of the above. [21]
2. Spending time with friends who use may trigger your urges to use. 0=True 1=False [22]
3. A possible way to meet new people who don't use drugs is through: (1) Current nondrug using friends, (2) 12-Step fellowships, (3) Volunteer groups, (4) Church or temple meetings, (5) All of the above. [23]
4. A true friend will support and respect your recovery efforts. 0=True 1=False [24]
5. A good way to deal with a close friend who still uses is to: (1) Move to another city, (2) Ask him/her to not use around you, (3) Have an honest talk about your needs for recovery, (4) Excuse yourself and walk away if drugs are brought out, (5) 2, 3, and 4 above. [25]

Straight Ahead

Session 2 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]