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

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Support Groups and Recovery

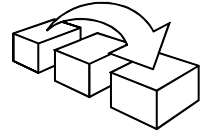
Participants will:

Examine potential benefits of support group involvement

Understand purpose of 12-step based groups

Identify strategies for support group involvement

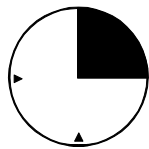
Objectives



Procedure

Step	Segment Name	Time
1	Welcome and review of weekly recovery issues	30 minutes
2	Topic introduction: Support groups	5 minutes
3	Video and discussion: 12-Step Groups	25 minutes
4	Break	10 minutes
5	Exercise: Support Group Interview	25 minutes
6	Open discussion: Getting Involved	15 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
Pencils and paper for participants
Videocassette recorder (VCR) and television monitor
Video: ***Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous***

NOTE!

Your local AA central office may have copies of this video available for loan. To order a copy, contact AA World Series, Inc., P.O. Box 459, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163. Telephone: (212) 870-3400.

◆ Prepare before class:



GETTING INVOLVED

Use a sheet of flip chart paper to write out the key points as shown:
(Handout shown on p. 52.)

GETTING INVOLVED

Shop around!

Consider attending Al-Anon or FA meetings.

Attend meetings regularly.

Ask for an AA or NA sponsor.

Check out other types of groups.



Check that the video equipment is working properly and cue the video.



Directory of local AA, NA, Families Anonymous (FA), and Al-Anon meeting times

Prepare before class (continued):

◆ Make copies:

Truths and Myths about 12-Steps handout (p. 50)

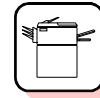
Support Group Interview worksheet (p. 51)

Getting Involved handout (p. 52)

Local AA, NA, FA and Al-Anon meeting directory

Session Three Evaluation (pp. 53-54)

Weekly Recovery Journal (p. 18 — Session 1)



Procedure Steps



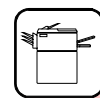
Step 1

Welcome and review of recovery issues

◆ **Welcome participants** as they arrive.

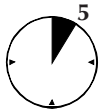
◆ **Introduce the session topic.** Explain that the session will focus on the benefits of getting involved in a group or fellowship that encourages and supports recovery efforts. The most well-known and popular groups, such as AA, NA, and CA, are based on what's known as the 12-Step approach. Today's session is a chance to talk about the importance of getting involved with other people in the community who, like you, are working hard to make changes in their use of drugs and alcohol. Support groups are a good place to start.

◆ **Open the discussion period for weekly recovery issues.** Encourage participants to use their **Weekly Recovery Journals** to keep notes for this discussion time, and to help keep themselves focused on recovery during the week.



◆ **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:** How did it go spending time with a nonusing friend last week? **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”).



SCRIPT:
*Session Topic
and Goals*

Step 2

Topic introduction: Support groups

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

There are hundreds of different kinds of support groups meeting each day in this country. They’re called support groups because the members offer help and support to each other based on personal experiences, rather than on medical or psychological theories. “I know what you’re going through ‘cause I’ve been there myself,” is the guiding philosophy of most support groups.

AA, NA, and CA are the most widely known groups, with daily meetings available in most areas. As you’re probably aware, these groups are for people who want to quit using drugs or alcohol. The meetings are free and open to anyone, and they follow a general philosophy known as The Twelve Steps. These groups provide encouragement and support from people who have “been there,” and they’re often a good place to meet new friends who have quit using and are serious about recovery.

Support groups have a lot to offer, and thousands of recovering people have benefited from joining a group. Membership in a support group can:

- ❖ Help you deal with urges to use or drink
- ❖ Provide support and understanding if setbacks occur

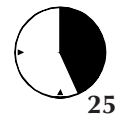
*Support Group
benefits*

- ❖ Give you a place to share and hear success stories
- ❖ Help fill your spare time
- ❖ Introduce you to new people and new ideas

Today's session is a chance for you to consider (or reconsider) getting involved in a support group in your community.

Step 3

Video and discussion: 12-Step Groups



25

◆ Introduce the video *Hope: Alcoholics Anonymous*.

Acknowledge that many group members may already know about or be involved in 12-Step fellowships. Explain that the purpose of showing the video is simply to review and clarify the aim of 12-Step groups. The video provides a good overview of 12-Step groups in general, even though the focus is on AA.

◆ **Show the video.** *(An alternative is to present a brief mini-lecture about the scope and purpose of 12-Step groups.)*



◆ **Highlight some of the main points presented in the video,** and lead a brief discussion using the following questions:

How many of you have attended 12-Step meetings? How many of you are still attending?

What are the benefits of attending AA or NA? How do these groups help people?

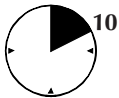
What's one **new** thing you learned about 12-Step groups from watching the video?

Video Discussion Questions

◆ **Mention again in closing that 12-Step groups are free and widely available.** The best way to decide if AA or NA can be beneficial is by attending several meetings. Mention that one reason some people are hesitant to try AA or NA is because they've heard myths about 12-Step groups.



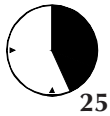
◆ **Distribute handout *Truths and Myths About 12-Step Groups*, and briefly review each of the four points with participants.**



Step 4

Break

◆ **Allow a 10 minute break.**



Step 5

Exercise: *Support Group Interview*

◆ **Ask participants to choose a partner for the exercise, preferably someone they don't know very well.**



◆ **Distribute *Support Group Interview* worksheets and pencils.** Instruct participants to take turns interviewing each other, using the questions on the worksheets. In other words, Person A should ask Person B the questions on the worksheet and record the answers. Then Person B will ask Person A the questions on the worksheet and record the answers. **Allow 10-15 minutes for completion.** (Prompt partners to switch at halfway point.)

◆ **Process the exercise, using some of the discussion questions on the following page:**

How did it feel to do this exercise? Was it easy or difficult?

How did it feel to discuss your ideas about support groups with another recovering person (e.g. your partner in the exercise)?

What benefits of having a support group did this exercise help you identify?

If you joined a support group, how would the members of that group benefit? What would you bring to the group? *(For those who have a group: What benefits do you bring to your group?)*

Discussion Questions

Step 6

Open discussion: *Getting Involved*

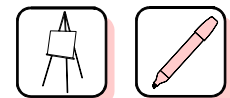
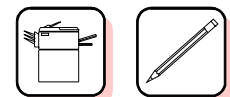
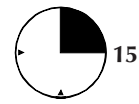
◆ **Distribute handout *Getting Involved***, and use the flip chart outline of the key points (see page 40) to lead a discussion about community resources for support. Encourage participants to use the “good ideas” area of the handout to jot down helpful ideas brought up during the discussion. **Suggested discussion questions are included for each point.**

- ❖ **Shop around until you find one or more AA or NA meetings where you feel comfortable.** It may take a little “detective” work to find the meeting you like best.

What will help you determine if a certain group is right for you?

When will be the best time of day for you to attend meetings?

Who would be a good person to go with you when you “shop around” for a group you like?



Point #1

Discussion Questions

Point #2

- ❖ **If you're dealing with a partner or family member who uses, consider attending Al-Anon or Families Anonymous (FA) meetings as well.** These meetings help you learn not to take responsibility for someone else's alcohol or drug problem.

Discussion Questions

How can you find out if an Al-Anon or FA group would be helpful for you?

What would you expect to get out of an Al-Anon or FA group?

Point #3

- ❖ **Attend meetings regularly. If things are going rough, consider attending everyday.** You build support by being there. If you're about to pull your hair out, use a meeting to get you through it. That's what they're for.

Discussion Questions

What steps will you need to take in order to attend a weekly meeting? How will you carry out these steps?

What are some "warning signs" that would tell you to think about going to a meeting?

How can you "make" yourself go to a meeting when you need it? What works for you?

Point #4

- ❖ **Ask for an AA or NA sponsor.** The meeting secretary can give you pointers. Your sponsor is someone you can call on when you need support, advice, or encouragement.

How would you go about choosing your sponsor? What qualities will you look for?

How will you ask someone to be your sponsor? Give an example of what you will say.

What situations could a sponsor help you with?

- ❖ **Check out other types of groups that can offer you support.** Ask your counselor about support groups that may help you in other areas of your life. (For example, church groups, parenting groups, special interest groups, etc.)

What are some of the benefits of other types of support groups?

How would you go about choosing a group?

◆ **Thank participants for their input. Summarize the discussion using key points from the following script:**

One of the most important things offered by AA, NA, or any support group is understanding and encouragement as you work on your recovery. Being a member of a support group provides you with a way to handle urges to use (go to a meeting instead!), as well as a place to make new friends.

Support groups are made up of people, and since people aren't perfect, we can't expect groups to be perfect either. Take the time to try out several different groups until you find one where you feel comfortable.

Discussion Questions

Point #5

Discussion Questions

SCRIPT:
Summarizing
Getting Involved

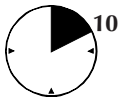
SCRIPT:
*Summarizing
 Getting Involved*
 (continued)

You're the best person to decide if support groups are "your cup of tea." Keep in mind, however, that almost no one who has been successful in recovery has done it alone! If AA or NA isn't to your liking, check out alternate approaches such as Rational Recovery, Save Our Selves, or Women and Men for Sobriety. Ask your counselor for information or call the Reference Desk at your local library for recommended books.

Form your own group. Meet regularly with friends or acquaintances who are also in recovery to discuss solutions, successes, and what works. Share phone numbers, and agree to be there for each other when the going gets rough. A support group need not be "formal." Meeting three or four friends for coffee or a meal once a week to discuss staying straight is a perfectly good way to get support. The key is to commit yourself to attending that weekly meeting.



- ◆ **Distribute a directory of local AA, NA, Families Anonymous, and AL-Anon meeting times.** If available in your community, include information about alternative groups as well, such as Rational Recovery or Women and Men for Sobriety.



Step 7

Closure and evaluation



- ◆ **Distribute a new *Weekly Recovery Journal* worksheet** and encourage participants to continue using the journal to record successes and challenges in the coming week.

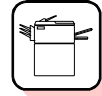
- ◆ **Provide the following specific assignment:**

Between now and next week, make it a point to attend a support group meeting of your choice (AA, NA, CA, Al-Anon, etc.) Use your journal to keep notes.

◆ **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 person to complete an evaluation.** Thank people as they leave and extend an invitation to return next week.



TRUTHS AND MYTHS ABOUT 12-STEP GROUPS

MYTH: AA, NA, and all 12-Step groups try to **force** religion on you.

TRUTH: The 12-Steps and Traditions followed by AA and NA do not advocate or promote any particular religion or religious belief. There is, however, a strong emphasis on spirituality, or discovering one's uniqueness and wholeness as a human being. Also, several of the steps in the 12-Step philosophy mention "God, as we understand Him," or "a Higher Power." If the idea of religion or "God" makes you uncomfortable, you are free to think of your "Higher Power" in any way you choose. You can benefit from AA and NA groups even if you don't believe in God.

MYTH: 12-Step groups like AA / NA won't accept **methadone** patients.

TRUTH: Some individuals who attend NA or AA groups may have a personal bias against methadone patients, or people taking **any** medication, for that matter. However, the World Service headquarters of these organizations have no official rules against accepting people who are on methadone, so long as the methadone is taken as part of a committed and sincere program of recovery.

You may have to "shop around" in your community to find a NA or AA group made up of individuals who understand and accept the benefits of methadone for drug abuse treatment. You can also petition your methadone clinic to start its **own** 12-Step group for people in the program.

MYTH: 12-Step groups like AA/NA try to **brainwash** you.

TRUTH: The purpose of 12-Step programs is to offer support and hope to anyone who is struggling to overcome an addiction. The support is provided through meeting fellowships and open discussions. The hope comes through the personal understanding one gains from exploring the ideas or themes of each of the 12-Steps. All people attending AA or NA meetings are free to accept the ideas that they find useful, and reject the ideas with which they don't agree. The only requirement is a sincere desire to end one's personal addiction.

MYTH: You have to stand up and **talk about yourself** at meetings.

TRUTH: You are free to attend any AA , NA, or other 12-Step meeting and not say a word. The word "anonymous," which is included in many 12-Step group names, refers to the fact that you are not required to disclose or tell **anything** about yourself until you are ready. When you attend meetings, there may be other participants who share "testimonials" or talk about the progress they are making in their recoveries. This type of participation is purely voluntary. Many people are helped by simply attending meetings for the drug free fellowship offered. Others come to listen, learn, and work quietly on their recovery issues. It is up to you to decide the level of your participation. Some people have attended for years before ever talking at a meeting. Most people eventually do choose to participate, and, as with most groups, the more you participate, the more you get from the group experience.

GETTING INVOLVED

Shop around until you find one or more AA or NA meetings where you feel comfortable. It may take a little “detective” work to find the meeting you like best.



Good ideas -

If you’re dealing with a partner or family member who uses, consider attending Al-Anon or Families Anonymous (FA) meetings as well. These meetings help you learn not to take responsibility for someone else’s alcohol or drug problem.



Good ideas -

Attend meetings regularly. If things are going rough, consider attending everyday. You build support by being there. If you’re about to pull your hair out, use a meeting to get you through it. That’s what they’re for.



Good ideas -

Ask for an AA or NA sponsor. The meeting secretary can give you pointers. Your sponsor is someone you can call on when you need support, advice, or encouragement.



Good ideas -

Check out other types of groups that can offer you support. Ask your counselor about support groups that may help you in other areas of your life. (For example, church groups, parenting groups, special interest groups, etc.)



Good ideas -

SESSION EVALUATION OF STRAIGHT AHEAD

SESSION 3

THIS BOX IS TO BE COMPLETED BY DATA COORDINATOR:

[FORM 72; 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. 12-Step groups such AA and NA are: (1) Free (cost nothing to join) (2) Strictly for very religious people (3) Only available in hospital programs (4) A good place to meet other recovering people (5) 1 and 4 above [21]
2. Before you can join a 12-Step group you much be addicted for 12 years. 0=True 1=False [22]
3. The best way to get involved in a 12-Step fellowship is to: (1) Shop around and find a group where you feel comfortable (2) Make a commitment to attend group meetings (3) Keep an open mind in group meetings (4) Ask for a sponsor (5) All of the above [23]
4. 12-Step groups do not accept methadone patients. 0=True 1=False [24]
5. An example of a support group is: (1) Narcotics Anonymous (NA) (2) AL-ANON (3) Friends who meet regularly to discuss recovery issues (4) 1 and 2 only (5) 1, 2, and 3 [25]

Straight Ahead
 Session 3 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] |