Yes, *You* Can Start a C.A. Meeting

*"Life will take on new meaning. To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends—this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives."****

Desire & Willingness

Have you ever thought about how a C.A. meeting gets started? Your hometown may have several C.A. meetings or perhaps only a few. They usually began out of a need to carry the message of recovery to others. In every case, someone made a decision to help Cocaine Anonymous grow by starting a meeting. It was often scheduled for a day or time when there was no other meeting available. People needed a place to go to share their experience, strength, and hope with others in recovery—others who had "been there" and who could understand. Someone found an available location and arranged to pay rent. Cocaine Anonymous World Services or the local Fellowship of C.A. was notified and a Starter Kit was provided. Or perhaps a local meeting donated chips and literature to help the new meeting get going. Someone made flyers and phone calls to get the word out that there was a new C.A. meeting starting. Meeting formats were printed and speakers were scheduled. Eventually, the group held its first business meeting, a name was chosen for the group, and trusted servants were elected.

You can start a C.A. meeting, too. You already have the necessary tools. It takes willingness, commitment, and one or two people with a desire to stay sober and help others do the same. It doesn't matter if the meeting is large or small. We are told that we "can't keep what we have unless we give it away."

Starting a meeting can be accomplished by simply making a few telephone calls, showing up to open the door, and making a pot of tea or coffee.

Get the Word Out

Once the location, day, and time for the new meeting have been established, the next task is to get the word out. If there is a local C.A. Fellowship, contact them to get the new meeting put into the directory and/or onto the Area website. Announce the newly scheduled meeting in other C.A. meetings and let it be known you'll share details afterward with anyone needing directions, rides, or additional information. Flyers with all the pertinent details can be especially helpful. Let people know that the new meeting is for newcomers and old-timers alike and that support would be appreciated.

Preparation

If there are no other C.A. meetings nearby, you can obtain a Starter Kit from the Cocaine Anonymous World Service Office via the contact information on the front of this pamphlet. Starter Kits include literature, chips, and a suggested meeting format with optional readings. Meeting formats can also be downloaded from www.ca.org.

Remember

- Bring desire & willingness;
- Contact your local C.A. Fellowship and/or C.A. World Services;
- Review the definition of a "Group" in the C.A. World Service Manual;
- Get chips and literature;
- Choose a meeting format;
- Set the day and time;
- Find and rent a location;
- Create flyers;
- Get the word out;
- Get a coffee maker or teapot;
- Get a basket for the 7th Tradition;
- Keep coming back.

Finally ...

Tradition Five of Cocaine Anonymous tells us that our primary purpose is to carry the message of recovery to other addicts. Helping others and being of maximum service is our goal; it is the foundation of our recovery. Starting a meeting not only contributes to the growth of Cocaine Anonymous, it enhances your own recovery. The effort involved in starting a C.A. meeting is minimal, but the rewards are infinite.

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The Twelve Traditions of Cocaine Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon C.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for C.A. membership is a desire to stop using cocaine and all other mind-altering substances.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or C.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the addict who still suffers.
6. A C.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the C.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every C.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Cocaine Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. C.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Cocaine Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the C.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, television and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.*

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The Twelve Steps of Cocaine Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over cocaine and all other mind-altering substances—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 wherever 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 through 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 addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.**

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"We're Here and We're Free"™

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20121223

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