



Opening Statement

This is a regular open meeting of LifeRing Secular Recovery. LifeRing Secular Recovery (LSR) is a self-help support group for all people who want to get - and stay - clean and sober. The cornerstones of our method are outlined in this brochure (hold up the white brochure "Welcome to LifeRing"). If you don't already have copies, please take some after the meeting. We call our method the 3 'S's:

The first "S" is SOBRIETY.

We feel that in order to remain in recovery, we have to make sobriety the top priority in our lives. By sobriety we mean complete abstinence from alcohol and other addictive drugs. We don't do moderation or controlled use. Our motto is "DON'T DRINK OR USE NO MATTER WHAT".

The second "S" is SECULARITY.

Out of respect for people of all beliefs or none, we conduct our meetings in a secular way. We come to LifeRing meetings to get sober, not to get religion. Your religious and spiritual beliefs are your business – our business is sobriety – so we do not use prayer or talk about religion in our meetings.

The third "s" stands for SELF-HELP:

We rely in our recovery on our own efforts and the help of our friends. We believe that with work and support, we can empower our "sober selves" and reclaim our lives from self-destructive using. Interacting with others like ourselves breaks down the hopelessness we may have felt when we tried to deal with our problem in isolation.

Now, a bit of detail about the format of the meeting:

Everything that we share at this meeting is completely confidential. I ask that if you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs now, that you maintain silence during this meeting. You may speak with members afterward.

The meeting format is flexible. We generally begin by checking in and talking about highlights and heartaches of our past week in recovery, and what we plan to do to stay clean and sober in the coming week. We can discuss anything that is important to us and our sobriety, for example, situations that have tempted us to use, help in making plans for upcoming "slippery" events like holidays, family gatherings, and so on or just the general "shit" that life has dealt us.



Cross-talk is encouraged. In general terms, cross-talk means dialogue, two- way communication; questions and positive, supportive feedback. Cross- talk is what people do in normal conversation. Our meetings strive for a living-room atmosphere; a group of sober friends, relaxed, spontaneous, secure, letting their hair down and talking about the current concerns in their lives. Remember though that cross-talk is voluntary and is always in the power of the person talking – they may merely want to “vent”, without feedback, and are free to say so.

From time to time, we may also have specific-topic meetings – someone may want to share other resources that have helped them (for example, books, audio tapes) or we may have guest speakers, say counsellors who deal with recovery, and so on.

This is **your** meeting, so please feel free to raise anything you would like us to address.

I’d encourage you all to browse the LifeRing literature after the meeting. In particular I’d like to recommend the ‘Recovery By Choice’ Workbook. We strongly believe that freedom of choice is one of the most powerful tools in our recovery and that is what the Workbook is about – building your own personalized recovery plan and toolkit.

If anyone has a particularly urgent issue that they’d like us to discuss first, please let us know and you can start off the meeting.

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