



## LifeRing Sobriety Policy Statement

LifeRing defines 'sobriety' as "complete abstinence from alcohol and illicit or non-medically indicated drugs" (from the original and current Bylaws of the organization). Please read this entire section for further clarification.

We value all methods of combating addiction and try not to interfere in the relationship between a participant and their health care provider. We celebrate all periods of sobriety in a person's journey, whether it be 24 hours, 24 days, or 24 years.

We do encourage patients to become informed and proactive in their own health care, including mental health care and substance abuse treatment, and to exercise their rights as patients. Medications obtained with disclosure of alcohol/drug use (to your care provider), that are taken as prescribed, are not a breach of sobriety.

LifeRing is a poly-abstinence organization, i.e. we advocate for and provide tools that promote abstinence from all non-medically indicated drugs and substances. Many people with substance use disorders are addicted to more than one drug, but few people alive are actively addicted to literally all of them. For example, a person who is addicted to crack and meth may report occasionally drinking a beer or a glass of wine without harmful consequences. From time to time people with this type of pattern ask LifeRing for support to continue their non-addicted use. The firm and clear answer that we have always given is, "No." The member is expected to work at quitting not only the drug or drugs to which they are addicted, but also the drugs to which they are not addicted. The "occasional beer or glass of wine" and the other non-addicted uses have to stop.

The answer to "Am I sober if I take \_\_\_\_\_?" is something that is specific to each person and their recovery plan. Again, LifeRing is a poly-abstinence organization that does not interfere in the relationship between a participant and their health care provider.

We absolutely welcome people who might be pursuing moderation or harm reduction to attend LifeRing meetings. LifeRing recognizes that moderation might be a short term period in one's journey to sobriety. However, we do not have tools that specifically address this type of strategy. We respectfully ask that members do not promote topics like moderation in LifeRing meetings.

*approved 09-2021*