

THE TWELVE STEPS OF CRYSTAL METH ANONYMOUS*

1. We admitted that we were powerless over crystal meth and 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 a God of our understanding.
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 God 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 a God of our understanding praying only for the knowledge of God's will for us, and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to crystal meth addicts, and to practice these principles in all of our affairs.

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*CMA Conference Approved
Literature*

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P.O Box 3314

Redfern, NSW 2016

www.crystalmeth.org.au

CMA Phonenumber - 0414660851

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WHAT IS CRYSTAL METH ANONYMOUS?

WHAT ARE THE TWELVE STEPS? WHAT ABOUT ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS? HOW CAN I STAY CLEAN?

Crystal Meth Anonymous

What is Crystal Meth Anonymous?

Crystal Meth Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other, so they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from addiction to crystal meth. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using. There are no dues or fees for CMA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. CMA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; and neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to lead a sober life and carry the message of recovery to the crystal meth addict who still suffers.[†]

What are the Twelve Steps? The Twelve Steps of CMA are a set of principles designed to produce a spiritual awakening. Including prayer and meditation, the Steps guided us to a more honest way of living and helped us to repair the damage caused by our addiction to crystal meth. By working the Steps, we learned how to lead fulfilling, sober lives.

How does CMA work? Like other Twelve Step fellowships, CMA's program of recovery consists of three basic components:

- 1. Meetings and fellowship.** We attend meetings regularly to learn how others have stayed sober and to find support in our efforts to cope with fear, loneliness, grief or other emotions that might overwhelm us from time to time. After a meeting, we often go out as a group for dinner or coffee. At fellowship, we discuss the ideas we have just heard and get to know other members on a more personal level. Our experience has shown that daily attendance of Twelve Step meetings and fellowship are among the most effective ways to stay sober.
- 2. Sponsorship and Step work.** A sponsor is another recovering addict whom we choose to offer us guidance in working the Twelve

Steps of CMA. They also share with us how they have stayed sober and make suggestions to help us stay sober as well. Sponsors do not tell us what to do; the choices we make in recovery are ours alone.

- 3. Service and commitments.** We strengthen our sobriety by helping other addicts. We volunteer to do service. For example, we agree to make coffee, stock recovery literature, keep a group's finances, or stand by the door to offer a warm hello to a newcomer. These commitments keep us attending meetings regularly, help others in the program get to know us and provide us with the satisfaction of following through on our promises.

How is CMA different than other Twelve Step programs? We have found that we relate best to other crystal meth addicts because they understand the darkness, paranoia and compulsions of this particular addiction. The Twelve Steps of CMA were adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous. We do not believe we are better or worse than those in other Twelve Step programs. At the same time, many of us fail to fully identify with "a falling-down drunk" or, in the case of a heroin addict, "a nodding-off junkie." The hyper-extended length and intensity of crystal meth's effects, be it compulsive cleaning or sexual activity, were unique. Many of us have attended other Twelve Step programs, but the feeling of identification in the Rooms of CMA has helped us to keep coming back. After all, who but another meth addict understands the insanity that accompanies the high and, finally, that seemingly bottomless drop into depression that makes us desperate to use still more?

What about alcohol and other drugs? Many of us struggled with the suggestion that we give up alcohol and other unprescribed drugs, along with crystal meth. The first step in our recovery was for us to admit we were

addicts. We came to understand that our addictive behavior could easily be transferred to other substances. Physicians, psychologists and other professionals familiar with the treatment of our disease refer to this as cross-addiction. This is a very real danger. Further, cocaine, marijuana, alcohol or other drugs have often led us right back to crystal meth. For some of us, it took time, but for most it happened fairly quickly: Our innocent escape to the neighborhood bar sent us back to our crystal meth dealers in search of our drug of choice. It is important for us to remember that alcohol is a drug, period.

What about relapse prevention?

We experienced great relief when, in time, the desire to use crystal meth was lifted. We know that it is easier to stay clean than to get clean. Relapse never had to happen, but when it did, it was crucial for us to be rigorously honest about our using, and in any self-examination that followed. We returned to meetings immediately, called friends in the program, and discussed our obsession to use. We did not risk being further caught in the familiar patterns and torment of our addiction. We tried to accept our mistake, without being embarrassed. CMA members welcomed us back, listened and often made helpful suggestions as we redoubled our efforts in recovery.

Why one day at a time? The idea of never using crystal meth again was impossible for us to comprehend. In early recovery, we were encouraged to make a commitment each day not to use just for *that day*. This pledge was still too much for some of us. In these instances, we promised ourselves something along these lines: "I won't use crystal meth, *just for the next hour*." This helped us to stay in the here and now and not to get caught up in what *might* be. For these reasons, we say we stay sober one day at a time. ■

[†]ADAPTED WITH PERMISSION OF THE GRAPEVINE OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS