

To the Newcomer

Welcome. For many of us, coming to this meeting for the first time was one of the toughest decisions of our lives. We came in alone and afraid. But from the stories we heard that day, we found that we were among friends and we realized that we were not alone.

Whenever we have a new member, it is our custom to share our personal stories of addiction, including the experiences, feelings, and events which first brought us to the program. New members are also welcome to share their stories with us, and we encourage them to do so.

In these meetings we speak about our experience, strength, and hope. As a reminder, we accept what others say because it is true for them, and we work towards taking responsibility in our own lives rather than giving advice to others. We are an anonymous group, so we use only our first names. We avoid cross talk such as interrupting, giving advice, criticizing, debating, or interrogating. We use “I” statements instead of “you” statements. To keep this a safe place for everyone, we refrain from sharing explicit details, names of victims, or specific places we have acted out. We do not share outside this room what is shared in here.

This meeting can be the start of a rewarding journey of recovery. How many meetings to attend – and how frequently – is a personal choice, but we encourage new members to attend several meetings before deciding. We know that we will always be welcome in these meetings. Sharing our experiences, we discover that we are not alone, and healing can begin.