

Newcomer Packet

DC CMA

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Are You A Tweaker?

It doesn't matter what you call it. It doesn't matter how you did it. It brought us to our knees, because without exception, that's what it does.

Is speed a problem in your life? Are you an addict? Only you can answer those questions. For most of us who have admitted defeat, the answer is very clear. Yes, we had a problem with speed, and no, we couldn't fix the problem by ourselves. We had to admit defeat to win. Speed was our master.

We couldn't control our drug use. What started out as weekend or occasional use became daily use, and we soon found ourselves beyond human aid. We truly suffered from a lack of power to fix our problem.

Some of us used speed as a tool to work harder and longer, but we couldn't keep a job. Others picked at their faces and arms for hours and hours or pulled out their hair. Some of us had uncontrollable sexual desire. Others endlessly tinkered with projects, accomplishing nothing, but found ourselves so busy we couldn't get to work on time.

We deluded ourselves into thinking that staying up for nights on end was OK, that our tweaking was under control, and that we could quit if we wanted to, or that we couldn't afford to quit, or that our using didn't affect our lives.

Maybe we saw a friend go to jail, or lose their apartment, or lose their job, or lose the trust of their family, or die, but our clouded minds wouldn't admit we were next.

Most of us saw no way out, believing that we would use until the day we died.

Almost universally, if we had an honest moment, we found that our drug use made seemingly insurmountable problems in our lives.

The only way out was if we had the courage to admit that speed, our one time friend, was killing us.

It doesn't matter how you got here. The courts sent some of us, others came for family or friends, and some of us came to CMA on our own. The question is, if you want help and are willing to go to any lengths to change your life

Are You a Tweaker is CMA Conference Approved literature. For more conference approved literature from Crystal Meth Anonymous please visit crystalmeth.org

"To be sober, we need to be honest. We need to be all the way honest, modified only by kindness."

—John A. Macdougall

The Twelve Steps: A Plan of Action

We come to CMA because of our common problem. We stay because of our common solution. To find long-term freedom from the grip of addiction, we work 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.

"Surrender is an action...it brings freedom.

Humility is an action...it brings perspective.

Gratitude is an action...it brings contentment."

To the Newcomer

The purpose of this packet is to help answer some of the questions newcomers may have about recovery through Crystal Meth Anonymous. This pamphlet has been written by members of our fellowship, all of whom have found recovery through CMA.

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.

Am I an Addict?

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.

Can I recover?

There is a solution. Our experiences may differ externally, but internally we believe they are very much the same.

Many of us that had been arrested, lost our jobs and the trust of our family and friends, now lead productive, honest and purposeful lives. To do so, we place our sobriety before all else and remain open to a spiritual life. If you want what we have, and are willing to go to any lengths to get it, then you are in the right place.

We encourage you to stay close to the CMA fellowship and experience recovery with us.

How can I stay sober?

1. Attend meetings and fellowship.

Meetings are where we find the support of others who are recovering from crystal meth addiction. We suggest attending 90 meetings in 90 days in order to get a better understanding of how Twelve Step recovery can help you. Our experience has shown that daily attendance of Twelve Step meetings and fellowship are among the most effective ways to stay sober. **Looking for a meeting? Go to dccma.com/meetings**

2. Get a sponsor and do 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. Get involved in service.

One of the best ways to stay sober is to help others in recovery. Even a person with only two days sober can help someone with one day. 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.

What about God?

Crystal Meth Anonymous is a **spiritual program**, but we believe our members can define what spirituality means for themselves.

What is crucial to recovery is an adherence to spiritual principles. Among these, there are three—honesty, open-mindedness and willingness—that are vital. With these, we will not be defeated.

"My trust in a higher power that wants me to survive and have love in my life, is what keeps me moving forward."

—Kenny Loggins

How is CMA different from 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

"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."

Meetings & Fellowship

Meetings provide a safe shelter where we find **support**, **direction**, **and fellowship**. Meetings give us the chance to listen to the experiences of newcomers who remind us that using is still a nightmare, as well as to the triumphs and struggles of those living in the solution. Even when we have been sober for a substantial period of time, we continue to show up at meetings so newcomers can find the help they seek—just as we found it when we were new.

We learn to develop relationships with other members of the fellowship. We look forward to them sharing their experience, strength and hope with us. We ask them how they did it, and they help us learn how to live life in recovery. We join them for the meeting after the meeting to socialize. You may feel a little crazy at first, and that's okay—we all did! When we were using some of us sank deeper into misery than others; some sought help before things spun out of control. But beneath our differing exteriors, we are all the same. And if we can stay sober, anyone can do it. Ask us how—we can help.

Abstinence

Crystal Meth Anonymous suggests abstinence from all mind-altering substances. If we truly believe we are addicts, we must accept that **any drug use will lead us back into our chaos**. The first one is the problem, not the last. We learn how to stay sober one day at a time. The truth is we don't have to use again, no matter what.

A.B.C.

"Alcohol becomes crystal." A drink will impair our judgment and often lead us back to a dealer. Besides, alcohol is a drug and today we are trying a new way of living that doesn't require chemical escapes and fantasies.

H.O.W.

Honesty, Open-mindedness, and Willingness are essential principles of recovery. We use them as a guide for our developing sobriety and to help us accept people, places and institutions as they are. We are honest in our intentions and our actions. We strive for the open-mindedness and willingness to a spiritual solution and to accept suggestions.

One Day at a Time

We try to live in the moment. Yesterday's problems are yesterday's affairs, and tomorrow's surprises can wait until tomorrow. If we can focus on staying sober today—keeping in touch with our sponsor and other fellows, leaning on our Higher Power, going to meetings, and working the Steps—we can be happy, joyous and free. Regardless if we have ten days or ten years, we all are only promised a daily reprieve based on our spiritual condition.

Higher Power

For most of us, CMA was our last resort. Our willpower was not enough. We needed a power greater than ourselves—something stronger than our addiction—to stay clean. In the Fellowship of CMA this power is often called God, God of Our Understanding, or Higher Power. Try to keep an open mind. There are as many concepts of a Higher Power as there are people in CMA. Your Higher Power should make sense to you, and your relationship with your Higher Power is entirely personal. The most important thing is that your Higher Power works in your life.

Acting As If

We are powerless over drugs. It's a problem that many of us have tried to think our way out of, but found we could not. However, we can learn to act our way into right thinking. We take sensible suggestions from our sponsors and our fellows. We do the next right thing. We show up for life at long last.

Counting Days

Nothing beats the cheerful moral support of a warm round of applause as we count up to thirty days, sixty days, ninety days, and so on. Apart from feeling a sense of achievement and connection, we are getting something much more practical: **experience living sober**. Each passing day, week, and month represents many challenges we have overcome in sobriety. More importantly, achieving a milestone shows the newcomer that sobriety is possible.

Ninety in Ninety

Many of us used daily, so we took the suggestion to attend **ninety meetings in ninety days** to heart, replacing the environment of the dope house, sex club or prison cell with the rooms of recovery. Ninety days is also a useful period because it takes us through three months—a season—of being sober. By the time we reach that first milestone and get our ninety-day chip, we've developed a routine we want to continue since we've built a new life full of wonderful sober experiences.

H.A.L.T.

We don't let ourselves get too "hungry, angry, lonely, or tired." We learn to take care of ourselves in recovery. With our screwed up wiring, natural impulses to eat and sleep can easily morph into drug cravings. Feelings like anger and loneliness can appear intolerable. Our sponsors taught us early on to check ourselves any time we had an urge to use and ask, "Am I in H.A.L.T.?" Nine times out of ten, we don't really want to get high. We just need a friend to talk to, a good night's sleep, or even a cookie.

People, Places and Things

We often hear in the rooms: "If you go to the barber shop often enough, you will get a haircut." We do our best to avoid people, places and things that may trigger us. But sometimes, we do not have a choice. If we have to live or work around people or things that tempt us, we take care to keep in close contact with our fellows and sponsors. It is important to be honest about our motives. Whenever possible, we stay away from anyone or anything that triggers thoughts of using—a certain ex-lover, a particular street, or even a special song.

Phone Numbers

Whenever we start to feel the urge to pick up, we start making phone calls to our sponsor and fellows. And we continue to make phone calls until we find someone to talk to and the desire to use begins to subside. Other fellows can remind us of the end result of picking up the first drug or drink, and help us apply spiritual principles to whatever is making us insane. As we continue to recover, we find that our sober network of connections grows and we develop true friendships where we don't only use the phone when we're in crisis.

Playing the Tape Forward

As we move through life in recovery, there will be situations that catch us off-guard. We may see an ex or an old dealer, or something on TV sets it off. However strong that urge may be to pick up, we take a deep breath and quickly work Step One: We think about the whole event, not just the excitement of getting the drugs and taking the first hit. Honest reflection tells us that if we use, we will end up all alone again, isolated from the world and even from ourselves. We "play the tape forward" to the end and realize the disease of addiction makes us think we can get high just this one time, but we cannot. Honestly looking at our history, we find our best option is to call our sponsor and find a meeting of other recovering addicts who will listen to our thoughts and cravings.

Sharing

At this point, we might simply enjoy this state. When we have the urge to use or life is becoming difficult, we share about it in a meeting or with our sponsor or a fellow addict. It's not a bad thing to talk about our thoughts and feelings, no matter what they are. **A thought is only a thought; a feeling is not a fact.** Talking it out, we quickly see that we don't have to act on all of our misguided plans and the pain passes. We also share about when our lives are progressing well. Sharing this type of experience reinforces the notion that the program works and our lives do get better when we stay sober

Suggestions

If we earnestly desire to be sober, we have a chance to live a new life. Some people try to get sober on their own willpower and fail, but in CMA we are encouraged to reach out and get help from recovering people. We came to the fellowship because our willpower alone had failed us, leading us back to crystal meth or other mind-altering substances. We had a history of bad decisions; the answers we came up with did not work. **Taking suggestions—such as reading pamphlets, using some of the tools here, and working the Steps—is central to our recovery. s**

We have found that any addict's successful recovery is based in working the Twelve Steps. These suggestions are presented as additional tools to complement the Steps based upon the experiences of our fellows in recovery. Just for today, we choose to stay sober by continually working our programs and using these tools

Prayer and Meditation

Recovery in CMA is a **spiritual journey**. Through prayer we reach outward to the universe instead of relying on our selfish egos. We learn to meditate, we create moments of calm in our lives instead of reacting to our emotional turmoil. Prayer and meditation also served a practical purpose, helping us through moments of crisis. We ask our Higher Power for the next right word or action, **listening** for a little help to accept our situation or ourselves.

Connection

Walking our sober path and practicing the spiritual principles of the Twelve Steps in our everyday lives, we experience increasing comfort with intimacy and the joy of living without shame and remorse. We wake up to a wonderful fact: **We can be sober—in the moment, in our right mind**—and not want to jump out of our skin. We learn to love ourselves and begin to feel whole again. In time, we can enjoy sex without thinking of crystal meth.

Sobriety allows all kinds of connections to become possible again. We find new friends in our fellowship and rediscover bonds with family and friends who respect our recovery. We feel grateful for those relationships. Each day, we're given the opportunity to explore healthy intimacy with everyone, including ourselves. It may be the most difficult and rewarding thing we do, and we do it with the support and wisdom of the fellowship.

Our sober sex lives have a new spiritual center. One relationship we try to cultivate as we work the Steps is our relationship with a Higher Power. Where solitude used to terrify us, we now find it can be a beautiful experience. **Cultivating conscious contact with our Higher Power, we realize that we are never alone.** Day by day in recovery, whatever our spiritual and romantic lives look like, we no longer fear connection. We have found true intimacy, with ourselves and with others.

"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."

Sponsorship and Stepwork

A sponsor is an addict who has made some progress in 12-Step recovery and shares that experience on a continuous, individual basis, with another addict who is attempting to attain or maintain sobriety. Sponsorship responsibility is a basic part of the CMA approach to recovery from addiction through the 12 Steps.

There is no single best way to sponsor. All members are free to approach sponsorship as their own personalities may suggest, using their own individual experiences. A sponsor is a person who:

- Can often relate to the situation and care
- Leads by example, focusing on humility, responsibility, anonymity, honesty, and building trust.
- Provides a guide through the 12 steps,
- Encourages the sponsee to attend meetings, find a home group, get a service commitment, and attend service events.
- Encourages work with other addicts.
- Makes suggestions to help the sponsee live by the principles of the program
- Introduces recovery literature
- Notes progress that the sponsee may not be able to see
- Helps the sponsee identify character defects

How to Get a Sponsor

All we had to do was ask. Some of us asked CMA members whose recovery we admired. Some of us asked our friends in CMA to recommend someone. Others asked for help getting a sponsor when we shared at meetings. When we got the courage to ask for help, we usually got a positive response. Many of us were told "yes, I'd be happy to" right away. Some of us were invited to meet and discuss it to see if it seemed like a good match. Sometimes someone agreed to be an "Interim Sponsor," sponsoring us for the short-term or to try it out.

When to Get a Sponsor

It is never too soon or too late to get a sponsor. Many of us got sponsors right away. Some of us needed to take time to decide who we wanted to ask. Some of us resisted getting a sponsor. Looking back on it, that made our early recovery more difficult. It has been proven through our experience that working with a sponsor makes recovery easier.

While we looked for sponsors, we were sometimes approached by people offering to sponsor us. Sometimes we said yes, but didn't have to accept an offer that didn't feel right.

Sponsorship does not have to be a life-long relationship. Many of us began with an interim sponsor until we found someone available for a more permanent relationship. Some of us changed sponsors if it wasn't working.

How Sponsorship Works

CMA is based on the value of people who share a common problem helping each other. With our sponsors, we began to believe that **we could do together what we could not do alone**. Our sponsors were our hotlines. We called them when something triggered us to think about using, or when unpleasant memories came up that used to send us to dealers, bars, or the Internet.

Our sponsors identified with our feelings and gave us hope that, in spite of how we felt, we did not have to use. Our sponsors acted as sounding boards when we had to make decisions. We found it a good idea to discuss major decisions with our sponsors, not so they could make the decision for us, but so they could share their own similar experiences.

Sponsors unfamiliar with a particular dilemma often directed us to someone else in the fellowship who has had related experiences. Our sponsors made suggestions based on their own experience. Our sponsors sometimes gave us advice. We tried to be willing to accept the help being offered.

Sponsors help not only when times are confusing or tough but also when things are going well. Success and hope are also shared with a sponsor. By simply sharing we find unconditional love, selfless giving, patience, tolerance, honesty and trust in this crucial relationship. Although CMA members differ in their approach to sponsorship work and in the time they can give, nearly all see it as an opportunity to enrich their own spiritual growth and experience the satisfaction that comes from working with others.

What a Sponsor is Not

It is not a sponsor's job to be a landlord, loan company, lawyer, doctor, accountant, psychiatrist, financial broker, marriage counselor or therapist. Sponsors who are in those professions leave that role at the door of CMA. Here they are like us: one addict trying to help another. Sponsors do not keep up the pretense of being right all the time. If they do not know the answer, they may quickly admit this, and help us find other sources of information including professional guidance when needed.

What Does a Sponsee Do?

It is suggested that sponsees contact their sponsors regularly. Many of us called our sponsors every day, even if it was just to check in. We also met in-person with our sponsors. Most sponsors told us how often they expected us to call and meet with them.

However we communicated with our sponsor, we found it was **important to be honest** and keep an open mind. We were willing to take suggestions and did the work our sponsors recommended. Our sponsors guided us, but it was made clear that we were responsible for our own recovery.

We could not expect our sponsors to work harder on our recovery than we did ourselves. Sometimes we worried about being a burden, and our sponsors always told us that we were helping them a lot more than they were helping us. We came to understand that by using our sponsors, we helped them recover. Our sponsors often told us that they could only keep what they had by giving it away

Getting Involved in Service

One of the main principles of the program is that we give it away to keep it. Whether through setting up the meeting room, acting as secretary for our home group or working on a committee, service keeps the fellowship running smoothly. Service keeps us connected and takes us out of our own heads. And we don't have to chair a meeting or join a committee to be of service. We learn to look everywhere around us to see how we can help. Showing up, taking a chip, sharing our experience with the Steps, and talking honestly about our lives in sobriety—by taking part in the fellowship we are being of service.

We often take on **service commitments** in an effort to support individual meetings and Crystal Meth Anonymous as a whole. In doing so, we have benefited personally. Especially as newcomers, we were often encouraged by our sponsors to take commitments at meetings.

Being "of service" is the core of our First Tradition: "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon CMA unity." Showing up early to help set up chairs or make coffee helped us to meet other members as the room filled up. We learned responsibility by having others depend on us. Following through on our commitments improved our sense of self-worth, while supporting the fellowship.

When it was announced at a meeting that a commitment was available, some of us received a gentle nudge from our sponsors or a friend in the program. It was their way of pointing out an opportunity for us to contribute to the group. **By accepting a commitment, we made a contract with the group to show up—on time— and perform the duty to the best of our ability.** If we couldn't meet our obligation, we found a replacement and notified the meeting's Secretary or Chair.

Acceptance of responsibility helped us to stay sober. For many of us, being of service was a new experience—very different from the self-centeredness that so often ran our lives when we were using.

On the following page is a list of different service commitments we have taken at CMA meetings. This list is not intended to be comprehensive. Because every CMA group is autonomous, some groups may not have all of the positions listed here, and some groups may have other commitments that are not included.

Setup	Arrives early to setup chairs and arrange the room as appropriate for the particular meeting's format.
Coffee/Refreshments	Makes coffee and sets out cookies or other snacks. Sometimes this commitment involves purchasing supplies for refreshments.
Greeter	Welcomes people as they enter the meeting.
Cake	Buys or makes cakes for anniversary meetings in groups that celebrate sobriety milestones in this fashion.
Chips	Hands out sobriety chips to help other members mark their time in sobriety. Sometimes this commitment involves purchasing chips.
Phone List	Maintains the group contact list.
Sponsor Coordinator	Makes announcements asking for people to identify themselves if they are willing to act as a sponsor and helps match members with potential sponsors.
Literature	Maintains a stock of program literature and makes announcements at meetings to let members know what is available.
Cleanup	Insures the room is returned to order after the meeting. Sometimes makes announcements reminding attendees to put away their trash.
Treasurer	Collects the Seventh Tradition contributions, pays the meeting's bills, hold the prudent reserve, and makes reports to the group as to its financial condition. This individual is also responsible for forwarding any contributions the group may make to the local intergroup, the General Service Office, or other service entity.
Secretary	The responsibilities for this commitment vary widely from group to group but generally center around making sure the meetings run smoothly. They may also help run the business meetings.
Chair	The responsibilities for this commitment also vary but may include calling the meetings to order, selecting speakers or discussion leaders, and helping to run the business meetings.

Service Structure Commitments

The service commitments we just mentioned were all at the individual meeting level. Other opportunities to be of service exist with your local Intergroup and the General Service Organization. These positions, such as General Service Representative or Intergroup Representative, are elected and have various requirements for clean time. Local intergroups and the General Service Organization also operate several committees, providing even more opportunities to do service.

Many other opportunities for service exist, such as conventions, fund-raising, public information, hospitals and institutions outreach, as well as other areas



There is a **Solution**

Crystal meth used to seem like a good answer to our problems. Not anymore. We came to CMA because we finally realized that our drug use was causing most of our difficulties. So when the urge to use again becomes strong, we take a deep breath, reach out for help, and trust in the better answer we are finding a day at a time in our fellowship, in the Steps, and in our Higher Power. We never have to use crystal meth or any other drug ever again.

Let's not forget what we can do this day:

Today I Can...

Draw on the power of honesty. I embrace change and redefine myself. Word by word, deed by deed—I strive to reflect the truth.

Today I Can...

Put down my old habits. Selfishness and hardness give way to an instinct for service. Gratitude now is my rule.

Today I Can...

Appreciate the richness of life by welcoming, sharing and laughing with another addict. Turning Godward, I find progress and peace.

Today I Can...

Take in a new reality—that in this struggle I am not alone. Many have walked this path before, and I have fellows at my side.

Today...Together...We can live in hope!

Information contained in this packet includes CMA conference approved literature



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DC Meeting Locations



Triangle Club

1638 R St NW Washington, DC 20009 with the "red door"



DuPont Circle Club

1623 Connecticut Avenue NW Washington, DC 20009 second floor



Emmanuel Espisopal Church

811 Catheddral Street Baltimore, MD 21201 enter on W. Read Street



The Frederick Club

205-B Bucheimer Rd Frederick, MD 21701





DC CMA has **in-person**, **online and hybrid** meetings 7 days a week at multiple times each day.

Visit our website for times and details



"Connection keeps us sober"

Fellow:		
Fellow:		
Fellow:		