## **Bringing the Message Home**

### **Introduction**

Many of us enter Heroin Anonymous feeling broken, eager for a new life free from addiction. The fellowship began on July 26, 2004, when a heroin addict reached out to start a meeting for those in recovery. This group has since offered hope to countless individuals. As a member, you can show others that there is a way out of addiction. This guide will help you share this message in your community and support others on their journey.

### **Getting Started**

To bring Heroin Anonymous to your community, follow these steps:

1. **Recruit Members**:
   * Reach out to halfway houses and rehabilitation centers for support.
   * Some existing meetings may allow you to make announcements about your new group.
   * Network with attendees before and after meetings to find others willing to help.
2. **Choose a Meeting Location**:
   * Options include churches, community halls, or halfway houses.
   * Select a day and time that works for the most people. Consider accessibility for those who may want to attend.
3. **Announce Your Meeting**:
   * Once you have the details, promote the meeting. Create flyers, announce it at other meetings, and network to spread the word. Start this process a few weeks in advance to allow potential attendees to adjust their schedules.

### **Meeting Setup**

Now, it’s time to decide on the type of meeting you’ll hold. Here are some options:

* **Open Meetings**: Open to anyone.
* **Closed Meetings**: For those who identify as heroin addicts.
* **Men’s Meetings**: For individuals who identify as male.
* **Women’s Meetings**: For individuals who identify as female.

While coed meetings may help spread the message faster initially, it's essential to choose the format that feels right for your group. Remember, each group is autonomous and can decide how to operate as long as it helps those in need and does not conflict with H.A. as a whole.

**Possible Meeting Formats**:

* **Topic Discussion**: A member selects a topic for discussion.
* **Meditation Book**: Use a daily meditation book as a discussion starter.
* **Mainline Newsletter**: Discuss articles from the H.A. newsletter.
* **Big Book**: Read and discuss sections from the Alcoholics Anonymous text.
* **Step Discussion**: Focus on a different step each week.
* **Traditions**: For more experienced groups, discuss the 12 Traditions of H.A.

**Facilitation Methods**:

* **Tag**: The speaker chooses the next person to share.
* **Ticket**: Distribute tickets and draw them to select speakers.
* **Open Share**: Members volunteer to speak.
* **Sequential**: Go around the room after each speaker.
* **Speaker**: Invite someone to share their story for a longer period.
* **Stick**: Use popsicle sticks with topics for members to draw and discuss.
* **Meditation**: Start with meditation and then share.
* **Check-In**: Members briefly share their current feelings.
* **Book Study**: Read from the Big Book and pause for sharing.
* **Fellowship**: Break into smaller groups for discussion.

### **Moving Forward**

Once you've decided on the meeting type, it’s time to put your plan into action! Your meeting can combine different ideas. Consistent outreach is key to attracting attendees. Talk to people and share the message with warmth and sincerity. Remember, a meeting can be as simple as two or more people coming together to support each other.

Be patient; it takes time for attendance to grow. Choose a creative name for your group—this can be a fun part of the process! You can find name ideas at heroinanonymous.org.

### **The Homegroup**

The homegroup helps maintain a safe space for those seeking recovery. Initially, this may be just one person handling most tasks, but more will likely get involved over time. The homegroup operates under a group conscience, with monthly business meetings to address decisions. For more details, refer to the Home Group pamphlet at heroinanonymous.org.

**Common Service Roles**:

* **Chair**: Leads the meeting and reads the format.
* **Co-chair**: Steps in when the Chair is absent.
* **Treasurer**: Manages financial contributions and expenses.
* **Secretary**: Records meeting minutes and announcements.
* **General Service Representative (GSR)**: Represents the meeting to local intergroups.
* **Coffee**: Prepares coffee for the meeting.
* **Greeter**: Welcomes attendees and helps them feel at home.
* **Baskets**: Collects donations during the meeting.
* **Chips & Literature**: Keeps supplies of recovery literature and key tags available.

When establishing these roles, consider creating bylaws for your homegroup to clarify expectations and responsibilities.

### **Keeping a Group Conscience**

As your homegroup grows, maintaining a group conscience can become challenging. Robert’s Rules of Order can provide structure, but the group can choose to suspend these rules if desired. Here’s a simplified version of how a group conscience meeting might flow:

1. Serenity Prayer
2. Attendance
3. Reading and approving the previous meeting’s minutes
4. Service roles provide updates
5. Old Business: discuss unresolved motions
6. New Business: present new motions for consideration
7. Motion to close
8. Closing prayer

### **Making Business Changes**

Motions for changes must come from group members (not the chair) and need a second to start discussion. After discussing, the chair calls for a vote.

### **Connecting Meetings**

If there aren’t other H.A. meetings nearby, look for nearby meetings listed at heroinanonymous.org. If multiple groups form, they may create a district for better support.

### **Fully Self-Supporting**

The 7th Tradition emphasizes the importance of self-sufficiency. We should not rely on outside entities for support or promotion. Always ensure rent and expenses are covered through member contributions.

### **Contacting Heroin Anonymous World Services**

Once your meeting is established, reach out to Heroin Anonymous World Services to inform them of your new group. This helps those struggling with heroin addiction find your meeting online. They can also provide a starter kit and formats for your group.

### **Twelve Steps of Heroin Anonymous**

1. We admitted we were powerless over heroin—that 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 God as we understood Him.
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 Him 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 God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His 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 heroin addicts and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

### **Twelve Traditions of Heroin Anonymous**

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon H.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose, there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for H.A. membership is a desire to stop suffering from heroin addiction.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or H.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the heroin addict who still suffers.
6. An H.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the H.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every H.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Heroin Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. H.A. ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Heroin Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the H.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we must maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, reminding us to place principles before personalities.

### **Our Primary Purpose**

H.A. is not affiliated with any sect, denomination, politics, organization, or institution; we do not wish to engage in controversy or endorse any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay sober and help other heroin addicts achieve sobriety, as stated in our 5th Tradition.

### **Singleness of Purpose**

H.A. is a fellowship of heroin addicts helping one another achieve sobriety through the 12 Steps. By focusing on heroin addiction, we create a space for individuals to come together, share their struggles, and find recovery. This commitment to a single purpose ensures that heroin addicts have a safe place to seek help.