



Presents

**WE'RE ALL
IN THIS
TOGETHER**

DIVERSITY - UNITY - COMMUNITY

The mission of One Planet United Organization is:

“To be a channel helping to create World peace, breaking down barriers that focus on differences, as well as promoting visionary ways to unite all people.”

“We’re All in This Together” is one of our visionary ways of fulfilling the mission of One Planet United which is ultimately to unite *all* people. We know through any kind of support group, people become united through a shared difficulty or burden. By opening ourselves up to our own personal healing that support groups provide, it will in turn help to heal the world. We believe that if we begin at the local community level with programs like “We’re All In This Together” town by town and city by city will grow to where people can come to know that at our core, we are all vulnerable and in need of others to heal and grow.

If you need further help in bringing “We’re All in This Together” to life in your community, you can call us at (954) 340-2115 or 1-866-340-2115 or email us at info@opunited.org. We’ll be here to help in any way we can.

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We're All in This Together

Connecting with existing support groups and information on forming new ones.

This program presented by One Planet United is a guide for any individual who is either looking for information about existing support groups or ideas on how to start a group that might be needed in their community. A strong part of the mission of One Planet United is to unite *all* people and support groups are known to unite humanity unlike any other force on the planet. Through many of the hardships and troubles that life presents to us, people often become isolated and feel very much alone in what they are going through. A person who is struggling with a problem will often feel that they are the only one in the world that is feeling as lost as they are, which increases the feelings of isolation even more.

Support groups are designed to bring people with common struggles out of isolation. The power that is created when a group of people come together who are all struggling with the same problem has often been described as supernatural. An energy is created that most often brings a person out of the dark and into the light. It's like being stranded all alone on a deserted island for a long period of time and a ship full of people has just come ashore to let you know that you are no longer alone and that they are there to help you.

The initial concepts of support groups as we know them today can be traced back to the beginnings of Alcoholics Anonymous. There probably were different forms of support groups well before the start of A.A. but it is usually recognized that the beginnings of A.A. was what brought the idea of support groups out in the open. It was 1934 and a man named Bill Wilson had been told by his doctor that his alcoholism was hopeless and nothing could be done for him. Most alcoholics back in that time died very tragic deaths from brain damage, heart and liver malfunction and suicide. Bill W., as he is affectionately known in A.A. circles, was in a hopeless state of mind and body and desperate to find help for his affliction. The thought came to him that if he could find another person with the same problem, they might be able to draw strength from one another to stay away from a drink.

The meeting of Bill W. and a man named Dr. Robert Smith who later became known as Dr. Bob, is now called by many, one of divine appointment. They met on June 10, 1935. It was a meeting that not only changed their lives forever, but has to this current day been responsible for helping to heal millions of lives. It was the start of two men getting together, both realizing that they needed the support and strength of each other to stay sober, that began a movement of support groups for alcoholics all over the world. Staying away from a drink of alcohol on their own proved to be an impossibility but together, they gained the strength necessary to stay sober. There is a famous slogan in A.A. that says "*We can do together, what I can not do alone.*"

From the start of Alcoholics Anonymous, support groups for people with all sorts of physical, emotional and spiritual maladies and diseases have come into being throughout the world. Millions of people have dramatically changed their lives by embracing a

support group and often find now that their participation in the group is the bedrock of keeping their lives happy and meaningful.

Many doctors and mental health professionals often recommend that their patients seek help in support groups. Although these professionals can't describe in words what the phenomena is that provides healing for so many, most agree that support groups produce profound results.

On the following pages, you will find:

- **Listings and contact information of the most widely known support groups that are active in most communities today.**
- **Information on starting a support group in your own community.**

One Planet United encourages you to reach out to a support group that can help you if you find yourself struggling with addiction or life situations that are too hard to deal with on your own. By either joining a group that is already in existence or beginning one on your own, your life will take on new meaning of indescribable proportions.

ACTIVE SUPPORT GROUPS:

The most current and updated information on existing support groups can be found on the World Wide Web. The websites listed below contain complete information on their respective program as well as access to local groups that meet in or near your community. There are literally thousands of support groups meeting every night of the week around the world.

Addiction and 12 Step Recovery

LISTINGS and CONTACT INFORMATION

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS – www.aa.org Support for those with a drinking problem or a desire to stop drinking.

AL-ANON – www.al-anon.alateen.org Support for family and friends of those with a drinking problem.

AL-ATEEN – www.al-anon.alateen.org Support for teens of those with a drinking problem.

ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS – www.adultchildren.org Support for those who grew up in alcoholic or dysfunctional homes.

DEBTORS ANONYMOUS - www.debtorsanonymous.org Support for those who compulsively spend money and are in unwanted debt.

GAMBLERS ANONYMOUS – www.gamblersanonymous.org Support for those with compulsive gambling problems.

SEX ADDICTS ANONYMOUS – www.sexaa.org Support for those with compulsive sexual problems including addiction to pornography.

SEX AND LOVE ADDICTS ANONYMOUS – www.slaafws.org Support for those with love and relationship problems.

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS – www.oa.org Support for those with compulsive eating problems.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS – www.na.org Support for those with an addiction to drugs.

All of the groups listed above are based on the 12 step model of recovery first brought to life by Alcoholics Anonymous. They are all similar in their approach of having to first admit that you are powerless over your problem or addiction and that your life has reached a state of unmanageability.

It is known that when a person reaches this point of surrender to their problem, there is a great chance for recovery and a new life free from addiction.

Listed below are a few examples of other “life issues” that provide support to those in need. In our current times, the power of the internet can take us to a library of information in a matter of seconds. There are too many websites to list as to which one has the most in-depth information. Type in any category into your search engine for help.

Diseases and Health Related Support

Cancer Support (patients, survivors and family members)

Diabetes

Suicide Survivors

Depression and Bi-Polar Disease

Others

Gay and Lesbian (individuals and family members)

Vietnam Veterans

Single Parents

Parents of Teens

Grief Recovery

Marriage& Relationships

There are additional ways to access information regarding the availability and location of many support groups in your community. They are:

- Local and regional telephone books
- Local daily and weekly newspapers
- Local religious congregations

ADDITIONAL WEBSITES FOR INFORMATION

www.supportpath.com – This site offers a full library of information on the support group community.

www.support4hope.com – This site is dedicated to support various mental health issues.

www.serenityfound.org – This site links to many organized 12 step programs.

STARTING A NEW SUPPORT GROUP

Starting a new support group in your community is a simple process if you follow a few basic steps. If it is for the purpose of starting a group that already has meetings in other locations, begin by contacting the organization either through the mail or on their website and ask for a meeting starter kit. Most existing organizations have a central office location that provides information and tools to get new groups up and running. Refer back to the listings of existing groups and programs for contact information.

What are the most important considerations?

GROUP SIZE:

All it takes to begin is two people who share a common problem. When Alcoholics Anonymous began as a group which later blossomed into a worldwide healing movement for millions, it was started by only two men who leaned on each other for strength and support.

LOCATION:

The first step in forming a new group is finding a location. Back when A.A. began, all of the groups that were being formed always congregated in someone's home. After a time,

the amount of people attending began to be more than the average home could accommodate so they began to look for larger spaces to meet. Meeting at someone's home in the beginning is often a good idea, but as the group grows, most often times, a larger space will be needed. The public venues most often used are local churches and synagogues. They often have plenty of space on different days and evenings and feel that as they are supporting groups in need, they are helping carry out their mission of being of service in the community. They will sometimes ask for a small monthly rental fee, which can be covered by taking up a collection at the meetings. Call any local congregation and ask if they have an available night that you could use their facility. It is normally quite easy to find a meeting place just by making a few calls.

FINANCES:

Money is never a big part of starting a group or keeping it going either. Most support groups never charge a fee for membership or attendance at meetings. A collection is taken at each meeting to cover the costs of rent, refreshments and any books and literature that will be offered. Start up costs might be for the purchase of a coffee pot and some initial books and literature. These costs can be reimbursed after the group has been meeting for a short time.

When using a church or synagogue for your meeting place that does not charge for rent, it is suggested that the group still take up a collection at each meeting and make a quarterly or annual donation to the facility.

FREQUENCY:

There really is no rule of thumb on how often a group meets. Meeting weekly seems to be the most popular although some groups meet as often as two to three times per week. Meeting on a regular basis consistently is the most important thing to keep a new support group strong and growing.

SUMMARY:

By taking the necessary steps to begin a new support group, you will be helping yourself as well as many others. One Planet United believes that we are all in need of support as we go through the journey of life. It is in opening our hearts to others that our own healing will happen as well. Best wishes as you begin your new journey.

One Planet United is available to help and assist you in any way we can. You can call us at 954-340-2115 or email us at info@opunited.org

NOTE:

One Planet United Programs/Templates are continually being updated. Please visit our website often for most recent updates.