

Media-free Monday Group
Speaker and Sharing Meeting of Media Addicts Anonymous
Every Monday from 7:30-8:30 UK time
Zoom ID: 881 6683 9368 – Pass code: 987162

Notes to Moderator: Please make sure you are on the line at least 10 minutes before the meeting starts. Please read the script as is and please keep the meeting clipping along so we have more time for shares. Please be sure to write down everyone's name who volunteers for service during the meeting so you can thank them at the end and so it is easier to keep track of who your readers are.

Greeting: Welcome to the one-hour Speaker and Sharing meeting of Media Addicts Anonymous. My name is (name) , and I am a recovering member of MAA. I will be your moderator for today. At any time during the meeting, you may press unmute to speak but please keep yourself muted at all other times.

Serenity Prayer: Will those who wish to, please un-mute your microphone now and join me in the "We Version" of the Serenity Prayer:

God, grant US the serenity to accept the things WE cannot change, courage to change the things WE can, and wisdom to know the difference.

Preamble: Media Addicts Anonymous is an international fellowship of individuals who, through shared experience, strength, and hope, come together to find relief and recovery from media addiction. We welcome everyone who wants to stop using media compulsively. There are no dues or fees for membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions, neither soliciting nor accepting outside donations. MAA as a whole is not affiliated with any public or private organization. We have no opinions on outside issues, especially those concerning media. We neither endorse nor oppose any causes, political views, ideology, or religious doctrine.

We support all forms of media sobriety, including abstinence from electronic media, films, radio, newspapers, magazines, books, and music. We use AA's 12 Steps and 12 Traditions as adapted for Media Addicts Anonymous as our program of recovery and utilize the tools of MAA to clarify compulsive, obsessive, or destructive media-related behaviours and to develop strategies to improve our general quality of life.

Welcome Newcomers: We extend a special welcome to newcomers. Are there any newcomers to this meeting? Please un-mute yourself and tell us your name and location, so we can welcome you. *(Pause and wait for newcomers to respond)* We are glad you are here! We suggest you attend at least six meetings, so that you have time to identify with the speakers and learn more about the program. Every Monday, except for the 2nd week of the month when we have our business meeting, we have 20 minutes of fellowship time after the close of the meeting when we will greet newcomers informally; everyone is invited!

Meeting Focus: This meeting will last one hour. We start with readings, including the symptoms and tools of media addiction. On the 2nd Monday of the month, we have a Topic meeting. All other Mondays, we have a 10-minute qualification by a member who has been fasting from media for at least one month.

We suggest that you put away all unnecessary devices and pay attention to what is being said. By focusing on this meeting alone without distraction you will get this program much faster. We are using computers and phones to recover from media addiction. To meet this challenge, we ask you

NOT to use the chat when people are sharing. We have a special time later to share contact information for outreach. If something is urgent, send a chat message to the tech support or moderator. To avoid getting distracted, it may help to use “speaker view.” And please keep your camera on, if possible, to promote a sense of connection and unity.

Readings: I need three volunteers to be readers for this meeting. We will be sharing the reading on the screen. Who would like to give service by reading today? Please raise your hands, and I will take three names.

MAA has adapted the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, as developed by Alcoholics Anonymous, to help us recover from media addiction.

_____(name)_____ will you please read the Twelve Steps of Media Addicts Anonymous?

The Twelve Steps of Media Addicts Anonymous

Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery:

- 1. We admitted we were powerless over media—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 God.*
- 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 God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God’s will for us and the power to carry that out.*
- 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other media addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. (Pass)*

Moderator: Thank you.

I will now read the Tradition of the Month and the 12th Tradition

The Twelve Traditions of Media Addicts Anonymous

- 1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon MAA unity.*
- 2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving Higher Power that may be expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.*
- 3. The only requirement for MAA membership is a desire to stop compulsively using media.*
- 4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or MAA as a whole.*
- 5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the media addict who still suffers.*

6. *An MAA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the MAA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.*
7. *Every MAA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.*
8. *Media Addicts Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centres may employ special workers.*
9. *MAA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.*
10. *Media Addicts Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the MAA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.*
11. *Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.*
12. *Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.*

Media Addiction as a Disease of Mind and Body:

We of Media Addicts Anonymous see media addiction as an illness similar to alcoholism. Like drug and alcohol addiction, media addiction is both a physical and mental disease. The over-use of media destabilizes the prefrontal area of our brains. This is the area responsible for remembering details, planning, and prioritizing tasks. When we compulsively use media, our frontal lobes go "off-line," weakening our ability to stop using media when we need to move on or go to bed.

Media also affects the pleasure center of the brain triggering a release of dopamine. Like drug addiction, more and more media is needed to induce the same pleasurable dopamine hit, eventually creating a dependency. Because of these two mental and physical responses, media addicts have little or no defence against the first click. Therefore, we see media as a mind-altering and mood-altering drug. Media becomes our dopamine high or our dope.

We have found that when we compulsively binged on media for relief, reward, relaxation, recreation, and as a replacement for relationships, we ended up feeling remorse and regret. We call these the "7 Rs of Media Insanity." We are here today to counter this insanity with another "R": the "R of Recovery." Here is a list of The Signs and Symptoms of Media Addiction. See where you can identify.

(name) will you please read The Signs and Symptoms of Media Addiction?

The Signs and Symptoms of Media Addiction

1. *Dissatisfaction with life—We depend on media for relief from our pain and problems. Media is our main source of relaxation, recreation, reward and relationship and we feel bored and empty when not using.*
2. *Time irreverence—Electronic media distract us from our goals as it takes priority over everything else. When bingeing or grazing we lose track of time and forget what is important.*
3. *Exhibiting risky behaviour—We endanger our life or other people's lives to get our media fix. We may drive while sending text messages, overeat while bingeing on TV or deprive ourselves of sleep while gaming.*
4. *Mental obsession—We are preoccupied with the news, social media etc., and so we want our devices with us at all times. We have fear-of-missing-out.*

5. *Isolation—We prefer to stay indoors on media rather than outdoors in nature or socialising. Even in the company of others we don't interact but lose ourselves in our devices, which makes us feel lonely and remorseful.*
6. *Compare and despair—Through our media use we compare ourselves with others and may create an online persona we think people will like and respect. Unable to live up to this ideal version of ourselves we end up in despair.*
7. *Avoidance of work and inability to plan and prioritise tasks—Because we use our time to be on media we procrastinate on necessary tasks and thus jeopardise the success of our education, work, etc. Poor time management may lead to a crisis, often followed by a new binge.*
8. *Obsession with fantasy—Our need for romance and sex is increasingly satisfied through fantasy, as presented by media. We lose the ability to have real relationships because of unrealistic expectations. We become dissatisfied, feel disconnected and lonely.*
9. *Depression, shame, and dishonesty—Depressed and ashamed we lie about our media consumption. We tell ourselves we want to change our lives, but we don't know how to live without our electronic media. Some of us have suicidal thoughts.*
10. *Disconnection from our bodies and nature—We fail to meet our basic needs for rest, sleep, exercise, good nutrition, etc. We avoid the natural world and do not fully enjoy our senses.*
11. *Withdrawal and inability to stop—When we stop using media, we experience withdrawal symptoms such as cravings and agitation. We can't stay stopped and after giving in to our alcoholic media, we find it even harder to try to stop again.*
12. *Physical ailments—Our prolonged media use leads to backache, neck pain, headaches, disturbed sleep, carpal tunnel syndrome, as well as problems with our vision. (Pass)*

Thank you.

If you identify with at least 5 of these signs of media addiction, you may be a media addict. You are in the right place. You are not alone; you are one of us, and you matter. Besides working the Twelve Steps as outlined in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, we also apply the following tools to help create and maintain a strong media recovery program.

We will now be reading the short version of MAA's tools. Please go to our website for more detailed information on how to work these tools at www.mediaaddictsanonymous.org.

_____(name)____ could you please read the Twelve Tools of Media Addicts Anonymous?

The Twelve Tools of Media Addicts Anonymous

1. *Meetings—Meetings are a place we learn about our addiction. We stop isolating and gather with others who want to recover from media addiction.*
2. *Sponsorship—A sponsor is a media-sober member of MAA who has taken all Twelve Steps and is living the Steps and Traditions to the best of their ability. We ask a sponsor to guide us through the Twelve Steps of Recovery and help us create and use our media sobriety plan.*
3. *Media Awareness and Trigger Identification—We work closely with our sponsor to discover what behaviours trigger the “phenomenon of craving”. These are the things that cause us to be out of control and compulsively use electronic media.*
4. *Media Fasting—We recommend fasting from any unnecessary media for a period of time. This helps us see our compulsion more clearly, start to break the cycle, and connect to ourselves and others in deeper and healthier ways.*
5. *Media Sobriety Plan—We make A “Media Sobriety Plan” to help us define what, when, how, where, and why we use our devices.*

6. *Media Replacement Plan*—We make a *Media Replacement Plan* so that we will have enjoyable and healthy activities to replace media.
7. *Media Withdrawal Plan*—We make a *Media Withdrawal Plan* to help us cope with the moodiness, anxiety, boredom and agitation etc that we may feel when we stop using media. "Sobriety Action Partners," "Sobriety Action Meetings," out-reach calls, tracking urges and asking Higher Power to remove the obsession are a few of the strategies we include.
8. *Daily Body Care Awareness and Adequate Sleep*—We set a media curfew for ourselves and a regular bedtime, and we try to keep electronic media out of the bedroom. During the day we eat nourishing food and getting proper exercise and fresh air.
9. *Meditation*—We regularly take time to meditate, to feed our spirits in ways that electronic media never could.
10. *Literature*—We read the *Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous* and other Twelve Step literature to reinforce our understanding of addiction and how to recover.
11. *Writing*—We write daily to help us gain a wider perspective on our difficulties and our disease.
12. *Service*—Carrying the message to the media addict who still suffers is the basic purpose of our Fellowship. Any form of service, no matter how small, which helps reach a fellow sufferer adds to the quality of our own recovery. (Pass)

Thank you all for reading.

Timekeeper: Who will be our timekeeper for today? (*wait for volunteer*) Thank you!

A. (*If today is a Speaker Meeting*)

Our speaker, (*name*) , will now qualify for 10 minutes. Afterwards, we will open the meeting for anyone who wishes to share. Timekeeper, please let our speaker know when 8 minutes are up and when their qualification has ended.

Thank you, (*name*) , for sharing your experience, strength and hope with us.

-OR-

B. (*If today is a Topic Meeting*)

This is a topic meeting. Does anybody have a topic they would like to offer for our meeting today? (*the moderator should offer a topic if nobody else does; you can take more than one topic to share on*)

Open Sharing:

We will now open the meeting for sharing. We ask members to focus on the symptoms of media addiction and the tools of recovery. We do not engage in crosstalk, which we define as interrupting, directly addressing another speaker, commenting on someone else's share, giving advice, or making suggestions. Please do NOT mention media titles or specific content of your addictive media.

Timekeeper, can you please let the person sharing know when two minutes are up and again at three minutes? Please acknowledge the timekeeper's warning at 2 minutes by saying, "Thank you," and at 3 minutes, please wrap up quickly.

If you want to share, please raise your hand now and I will call on people in the order that your hand was raised. Please wait for your name to be called before you unmute yourself. Tell us your name, and, if you're comfortable, your location. This helps to facilitate connection and outreach.

(If Speaker Meeting, wrap up at 8:25pm UK time or 3:25 pm ET; if Topic Meeting, wrap up at 8:15pm UK time or 3:15 pm ET so we have time for the business meeting)

That's all the time we have for sharing today. If you did not have a chance to share at this portion of the meeting, you can share during the fellowship time or at our next meeting. Please come back.

(except for the 2nd Monday): Is our speaker (name) willing to serve as newcomer greeter after the meeting? Great! *(If not)* Who would like to volunteer to do this service? (name) ? Great!

I'd like to thank (name) for their qualification; (name) for keeping time; (name) , (name) , and (name) for doing the readings, (name) for doing the tech support, and (name) for being our newcomer greeter. I'm (name) . Thank you for letting me serve today as your moderator.

Seventh Tradition:

It is now time for the 7th Tradition. MAA has no dues or fees. We are self-supporting through our own contributions, which are for the development of MAA literature, costs incurred by the MAA General Service Board, and the maintenance of our website at www.mediaadictsanonymous.org. Contributions can be made via PayPal on the MAA website. Please give what you can, and if you can give nothing at this time, keep coming back because you are more important than your money.

If you want to share your contact information in the chat for outreach, you can do that now. The chat can be saved on your computer or phone if you go to the 3 dots in the corner.

We will have a time for announcements after the closing serenity prayer.

The Promises:

Who would be willing to read the promises from page 83 in the Big Book?

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are half way through. We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity and we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change. Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations, which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves. Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us—sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them.

Thank you (name) for reading.

Closing:

In closing, the opinions expressed here today are strictly those of the individuals who gave them. The things we have heard here are spoken in confidence and should be treated as confidential. We do not take outside the meeting whom we hear at the meeting. If we try to absorb what we have heard, we are bound to gain a better understanding of the way to handle our problems and

begin to change our lives. Let us talk to each other, reason things out with someone else, and let there be no gossip or criticism of one another, but only love, understanding, and fellowship.

Closing Prayer:

Please un-mute yourself and join me in saying the "We Version" of the Serenity Prayer:

God, grant US the serenity to accept the things WE cannot change, courage to change the things WE can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

Thank you everyone for a great meeting.

(on the 2nd Monday, turn the meeting over to the business chair)

We will now have 4 min for announcements

Timekeeper, will you please let us know when four minutes are up?

On the second Monday of the month, this group has its business meeting instead of fellowship time, and the regular meeting will be 10 minutes shorter. Please join us and consider taking on a service position.

Media Addicts anonymous is a growing program; we now have one or more zoom or telephone meeting every day of the week. Please go to our MAA website for more information on meetings, literature and fellowship.

Does anyone have any other MAA-related announcements?

I will now turn the meeting over to our Newcomer Greeter (name)

(Meeting ends at the latest 20 minutes after the end, i.e., at 8:50 pm UK time 3:50 p.m. ET.)