

Living Sober in a Media-Addicted World

Media Addicts Anonymous
October 22, 2023

3 Year Anniversary



Artwork by Karen R

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Anniversary Schedule

October 22, 2023: (all times are in ET)

<i>10:00am</i>	<i>Anniversary Event with Speakers and Breakout Rooms</i>
<i>12:25pm</i>	<i>Presentation of Slogans by GSRs/Newcomer Greeters</i>
<i>1:00pm</i>	<i>Sunday Serenity Special Edition for the Anniversary</i>
<i>2:15pm</i>	<i>MAA Birthday Party</i>
<i>4:00pm</i>	<i>Sunday Funday Special Edition for the Anniversary</i>

MAA 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 behaviors and to develop strategies to improve our general quality of life. Our primary purpose is to abstain from personal addictive media one day at a time and to carry the message of recovery to other media addicts who still suffer.

The A.A. Preamble is adapted with permission of the AA Grapevine, Inc. Permission to adapt the Preamble does not in any way imply affiliation with or endorsement of this organization.

You Are Not Alone

We are glad you found us.



Like you, we had been looking for a way out of media insanity. We tried one strategy after another in an attempt to cure our media addiction, but we kept falling back into compulsive media-drunk behaviors.

Then we found the Solution!

Realizing media addiction is just like alcohol or drug addiction, we began to apply the time-tested instructions laid out by the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous and it really worked.

Welcome to MAA and to our solution!



Short and Long Term Effects of Media Addiction

The short-term effects of electronic media addiction include unfinished tasks, forgotten responsibilities, weight gain and general lethargy.

Long-term effects create more physical symptoms such as backache, neck pain, carpal tunnel syndrome, and vision problems from staring at the screen. Media addiction also leads to underearning, debting, and bankruptcy, especially if the time spent online is focused on shopping, gambling or gaming. It can also cause social withdrawal, feeling more at ease interacting with people online rather than in person. Media addiction, especially if someone is addicted to adult sites can cause relationship break-ups and loneliness.

The cost of Media Addiction is not unlike the cost of any addiction, causing a life of loneliness, low self-esteem, inability to self-actualize, and loss of authentic human connection.



Artwork by Jose

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Artwork by Karen R

Media Addiction Self-Assessment

Are you a media addict? Here is a list of questions that relate to life experiences common among people who show signs of addiction to electronic media:

1. When using any electronic media, do you find that you lose track of time and feel surprised when you realize how much time went by without being aware of it?
2. Do you ever feel ashamed of or try to hide how much time you spend on your electronic media devices?
3. Do you try to spend less time using your electronic media devices, but find that you can't quit indulging in its overuse?
4. Do you find yourself wondering about things on the internet when you are not able to use your electronic media?
5. Are you trying to fall asleep while browsing or watching something on your electronic media or TV?
6. Do you wake up in the middle of the night to check your electronic media devices?
7. Do you believe you cannot fall asleep without the aid of watching or listening to some electronic media?
8. Do you find yourself frustrated and/or upset when others seek your attention while you are on your electronic media?
9. Do you isolate and want to be left alone with your electronic media programs?
10. Have you experienced issues related to sore fingers/thumbs, eye strain, numbness of extremities, headaches or other physical complications from long periods of electronic media use?
11. Has anyone in your personal life expressed concerns about the amount of time you spend on the internet?
12. Do you find yourself using electronic media in situations where it might be inappropriate or even dangerous? For example, while driving, at school during class, while at work despite rules against it, during a ceremony (funeral, wedding, church service) or at a theater during a concert, play or movie?

How did you score?

If you said "yes" to five or more of these behaviors, you may be a media addict.

YOU!
**We are here
for you!**



YOU!

YOU!

YOU!

12 Steps of MAA

1. We admitted we were powerless over media—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than our selves 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.

12 Traditions of MAA

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 God as is 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 centers 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.

The Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous have been reprinted and adapted with the permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. ("A.A.W.S."). Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions does not mean that Alcoholics Anonymous is affiliated with this program. A.A. is a program of recovery from alcoholism only - use of A.A.'s Steps or an adapted version in connection with programs and activities which are patterned after A.A., but which address other problems, or use in any other non-A.A. context, does not imply otherwise.

MAA Meetings



<i>Day</i>	<i>Time (ET)</i>	<i>Meeting</i>
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>11:30am</i>	<i>Sunday Morning Our Great Hope Big Book Step Study</i>
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>1:00pm</i>	<i>Sunday Serenity 2-Way Prayer Meeting</i>
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>4:00pm</i>	<i>Media-free Sunday Funday</i>
<i>Monday</i>	<i>3:00am</i>	<i>Monday Big Book Solution Meeting</i>
<i>Monday</i>	<i>2:30pm</i>	<i>Media-Free Monday Group</i>
<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>8:00am</i>	<i>Spiritual Awakening Meeting</i>
<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>2:30pm</i>	<i>Relax, Reflect and Recover</i>
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>2:00am</i>	<i>Mid-week Media-Free Group</i>
<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>2:30pm</i>	<i>Relax, Reflect and Recover</i>
<i>Thursday</i>	<i>11:00am</i>	<i>Thursday Morning Meditation Group</i>
<i>Thursday</i>	<i>2:30pm</i>	<i>Relax, Reflect and Recover</i>
<i>Friday</i>	<i>2:30pm</i>	<i>Relax, Reflect and Recover</i>
<i>Friday</i>	<i>6:30pm</i>	<i>Media Free Friday Evening Meeting</i>
<i>Saturday</i>	<i>10:00am</i>	<i>Sobriety Saturday Meeting</i>
<i>Saturday</i>	<i>8:00pm</i>	<i>Saturday Night Big Book Solution Meeting</i>

The Signs and Symptoms of Media Addiction

1. **Dissatisfaction with everyday life**—We depend on media as a way to avoid emotional discomfort, boredom, pain, and problems. Media has become our main source of relief, reward, relaxation, recreation, and relationships.
2. **Mental obsession**—We have a fear of missing out so we want our media with us at all times. We are preoccupied with what's trending in the news and social media. We lose ourselves in gossip, too much information, and the absorption of negative media, all of which result in constant unrest and agitation.
3. **Depression, shame, and hopelessness**—We feel depressed, shameful, and guilty about the amount or type of media we are consuming. We want to stop, but we don't believe we can live without our media dependency. This hopelessness has caused some of us to have suicidal thoughts or prolonged periods of depression and anxiety.
4. **Compare and despair**—We compare ourselves with what we see in magazines, films, TV, and social media. We try to create a persona that other people will admire, but end up feeling despair when we can't live up to those ideals. We are compelled to follow seemingly perfect people on social media even though we know it repeatedly makes us feel inferior.
5. **Isolation**—We prefer to be alone with our media rather than socialize. When we are with other people, we often become distracted by our devices. Isolation causes us to avoid those activities in life which used to bring us joy and connection.
6. **Fantasizing**—Rather than having meaningful relationships with real people, we turn to media to satisfy our need for romance, intimacy, and sexual fantasy. We end up feeling a deeper loss of intimacy with others which leads to more deprivation and loneliness than before.
7. **Risky behavior**—We will endanger our health, life, or someone else's life to get our media fix. We may drive while sending text messages, overeat while bingeing on TV, or deprive ourselves of sleep while using all forms of media.
8. **Time irreverence**—Time is the only commodity we can never get back. When grazing or bingeing on media, we lose track of time and forget what is truly important in our lives. Media takes priority over everyone and everything.
9. **Avoiding our life's purpose**—We abandon creative endeavors, intellectual pursuits, and prioritization of our goals because we focus on passive media consumption instead. We jeopardize our income, education, careers, and overall success by procrastinating and repeatedly using media during study and work hours. We lose faith in ourselves and hope for the future.
10. **Disconnection from our bodies and nature**—We become detached from our body and do not fully enjoy all of our senses. We fail to meet our body's basic needs for rest, sleep, exercise, and good nutrition. We hide indoors with media while avoiding the nourishment and beauty of the natural world.
11. **Physical ailments**—With prolonged media usage we experience backaches, neck pain, headaches, disturbances in sleep, digestive issues, carpal tunnel syndrome, and vision problems.
12. **Withdrawal symptoms**—When we stop using our addictive media, we experience withdrawal and detoxification symptoms. Any time we give in to our compulsion to use our addictive media, we reignite the "craving" and find it increasingly more difficult to stop again.

Tools of Action for Media Addicts

(These actions support media sobriety)



1. **Go to meetings**—We attend MAA meetings to learn about media addiction, stop isolating, gain support, and identify with other recovering media addicts. Meetings are the platform we use to build a robust personal support network and a real sense of belonging. We encourage newcomers to attend 90 meetings in 90 days to jump-start their recovery.
2. **Give service**—Giving service right away is THE MASTER PLAN for finding success in getting and staying media sober. Service gives us immediate purpose and connection within our fellowship. We suggest that every newcomer and old-timer choose a home group and take on a service position. Any form of service, such as moderator, time-keeper, action partner, dashboard operator, etc., adds to the quality of our own recovery and helps us stay sober. Sponsoring and carrying the message to the media addict who still suffers is the cornerstone of our own personal recovery.
3. **Work with a sponsor**—A sponsor is a media-sober member of MAA who is working MAA's Steps and Tools to the best of their ability. We ask a sponsor to guide us through the Twelve Steps and assist us in staying media-sober. We work closely with our sponsor to discover what behaviors, emotions, situations, and circumstances trigger the “phenomenon of craving,” and the things that may contribute to being out of control and compulsively using media.
4. **Fast from unnecessary media**—Fasting is an essential tool if someone sincerely desires relief from media addiction. It is the tourniquet we use to stop the bleeding. We strongly advocate fasting from unnecessary media long enough to break the compulsive cycle. By fasting from all media except what is necessary for work, school, or family needs, we see our media addiction with greater clarity, detoxify our minds and bodies from the overuse of media, and begin to connect to ourselves and others in deeper and healthier ways.
5. **Design a media replacement plan**—Because media has become our main source of relief, relaxation, reward, recreation, and relationships, we need to find other activities we enjoy. A media replacement plan is an important system to create as soon as possible so we will have enjoyable and healthy activities to replace media.
6. **Create a media withdrawal plan**—When we stop using media, we find there is often a period of withdrawal and detoxification. A media withdrawal plan provides us with a strategy to get the help and support we need during early abstinence. A sponsor and/or action partner help provide tools and guidance in creating this personal plan.
7. **Get an action partner and make outreach calls**—We find it helpful to pair up with an action partner to help us stay accountable with our media usage on a regular basis. Media addiction isolated us from real people. We recover from loneliness and gain support by making frequent outreach calls to other media addicts. We use our support network to bookend our media use.

8. **Prioritize sleep and body care**—Our ability to get sober and stay sober from media includes getting proper rest and a good night's sleep. Therefore, we suggest setting a media curfew for ourselves along with a regular bedtime. We keep electronic media out of the bedroom. During the day, we stay connected to our bodies by eating nourishing food and getting proper exercise and fresh air.
9. **Meditate**—We regularly take time to meditate in order to feed our spirits in ways that media never could. Meditation helps us connect to a Power greater than ourselves which then trains our mind to turn to this Power rather than seek relief through media.
10. **Read recovery literature**—We regularly read and study MAA literature as well as the literature of Alcoholics Anonymous to deepen our understanding of addiction and the pathway to freedom and recovery.
11. **Clarify through writing**—When we write our thoughts down, it allows us to see our disease more clearly. Writing is an indispensable tool for working through our emotions. When we put our difficulties down on paper, it becomes easier to understand a situation and discern any necessary action.
12. **Develop a media sobriety plan**—After we have fasted and become media sober (i.e., abstinent from all unnecessary media) and taken all Twelve Steps with a sponsor, we work with our sponsor to create a media sobriety plan. This plan outlines our personal intentions for media usage. It is our unique guide to making media decisions, as it defines what, when, how, where, and why we use our devices. For many of us, our sobriety plan becomes a continuation of our media fast, that is, refraining from any unnecessary media. Ultimately, our media sobriety plan excludes any media that is our alcoholic (bottom line) media. We continue to re-evaluate our plan with our sponsor to stay media accountable and prevent relapsing.



The Promises of MAA

(Signs and Symptoms of Media Recovery)

1. **Satisfaction with everyday life**—We turn to our Higher Power and our fellowship to share emotional discomfort, boredom, pain, and problems as well as our joys and accomplishments. Community and spiritual living have become our main sources of daily satisfaction as we have found continued relief, reward, recreation, relaxation, and fulfilling relationships in activities outside of media.
2. **Cognitive indifference**—We no longer have a fear of missing out and enjoy limiting the time on our devices. We stay attentive to what's happening in our personal lives. We actualize ourselves by being fully invested in our life purpose. We balance our media usage with what serves us and others. Our positivity and gratitude lead to greater contentment and peace.
3. **Enthusiasm, gratification, and hopefulness**—Where once we felt despair, we now feel enthusiastic, gratified, and hopeful about life. As we abstain from unhealthy media, we have found that we are living better and more fulfilled lives without it. This gratification has allowed us to have prolonged periods of joyfulness and serenity.
4. **Identify and encourage**—We identify with what we see in our circle of friends. We take time to encourage others and we try to be of service to them. This brings feelings of usefulness as we see that we are valued for who we are. We see through the myth of seemingly perfect people on media and know that our self-worth comes from our Higher Power.
5. **Sociability**—We prefer to socialize with others rather than isolate on media. When we are with real people, we are interested in their companionship. Sociability causes us to embrace those activities in life which bring us joy and connection.
6. **Faithfulness**—We have meaningful relationships with real people. We turn to authentic relationships to satisfy our need for romance, intimacy, and sexual fulfillment. When we stay faithful and honest with our commitments to others, we experience a deeper level of intimacy which leads to more love and affection than before.
7. **Conscientious behavior**—We protect our health, safety, and others by being conscientious of our media at all times. We don't drive while sending text messages, watch TV when eating, or deprive ourselves of sleep because of media.
8. **Time Reverence**—Time is the only commodity we can never get back; therefore, we focus only on what is truly important in our lives. Vital living takes priority over everything media related.
9. **Achieving our life's purpose**—We achieve our creative endeavors, intellectual pursuits, and prioritized goals because we are no longer focused on passive media consumption. We expand our income, education, careers, and overall success by facing and concentrating on our daily studies and income—generating opportunities. We build faith in ourselves and hope for our future.
10. **Connect to our bodies and nature**—We become deeply connected to our bodies and fully enjoy all of our senses. We meet our body's basic needs for rest, sleep, exercise, and good nutrition. We regularly spend time outdoors enjoying the nourishment and beauty of the natural world.
11. **Physical health**—With less time in front of screens and constant media stimulation, we experience greater physical and mental health.
12. **Sanity has returned**—Eventually, withdrawal and detoxification symptoms pass, and we gain freedom from the mental obsession and cravings of media. "If tempted [by media], we recoil from it as from a hot flame.... That is how we react so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition." (see pages 84-85 of the AA Big Book)

MAA Media Resistance Worksheet

When trying to put down media that is troublesome, many of us resist the idea of not using the media that we depended upon for relief, reward, relaxation, and recreation. This worksheet is a tool to help you understand your resistance and to work through to the other side.

Goal (Example: to fast from all unnecessary media for 60 days): _____

1. Why do I want this goal? (*Why am I making this goal? What will I gain? How do I expect to benefit from achieving this goal?*)
2. Why don't I want this goal? (*What thoughts and fears have kept me from achieving this goal? How will I benefit, or what will I gain by not working towards this goal? Why do I want to keep things the same? What do I think I will lose if I work towards and/or achieve this goal?*)
3. Write one short sentence, what is my resistance? (What is it I am afraid of or what is it that keeps me from enthusiastically committing to recovering from compulsive media use. Example: I will NOT be able to handle my feelings if I don't use my media. Note: If there are multiple answers, give each answer a separate statement and follow through with all the remaining questions for each statement)
4. Can you absolutely know that your sentence above is true? (*This is a yes or no question.*)

Yes No
5. What are your reactions when you believe this thought? (*What thoughts come to mind and what reactions do you experience when you believe that your answer to question #3 is true?*)
6. Who would you be and how would you live without this thought? (*How would you describe yourself and your life if you did not have these reactions in #5? If you did not have these thoughts?*)

7. Turn this thought around to the exact opposite. *(Turn around the answer to question #3 and make a sentence of the exact opposite. Note: There are several ways to make an opposite statement. Example: I WILL be able to handle my feeling if I don't use.)*

8. Give 3 examples where you have seen the what you wrote in 7 is just as true as your original statement.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

9. What are you willing to give up to reach this goal? *(What are you willing to give up, to put down, to pay, or to sacrifice to achieve your goal? How might this cause discomfort or pain?)*

10. What are you willing to receive to obtain this goal? *(What are you willing to receive, to accept or to experience to achieve your goal? Who or what will you allow into your life?)*

11. What are your liabilities/character defects that you need to address? *(What would prevent you from achieving your goal? (What character defects or weaknesses would hinder you from achieving your goal?)*

12. What are your assets you will activate to accomplish your goal? *(What strengths and character traits can you draw from to help you achieve your goal? These can be the opposites of the answers to #11)*

Media Fasting Plan

1. What media is necessary for work, family, recovery, or personal needs? This is the media that you will discuss with your sponsor that you can use as long as it is necessary for this month. Remember, **when in doubt, leave it out**. All media should help create an abundant and useful life, these are your top lines combined with using all the steps and tools.
2. What media is your alcoholic media, the media that you can't stop using once you start or the media that triggers the obsession of the mind? These are your bottom lines.
3. What triggers you to want to use media? What are your gate-way drugs: i.e., reading news headlines, talking to people about movies or TV shows, subscription updates, etc... These are things to avoid, and are your middle lines. Do everything you can to clear out from your phone, computer, and household, anything that may be a trigger. If you live with someone who uses your alcoholic media, talk to them about your needs and ask them to help you. Do the same when visiting friends. Let people know. Most friends, if they really are your friends, will help support you in this one month fast.

Create your top, middle and bottom lines with media.

"Bottom lines" are self-defined activities which we refrain from in order to experience our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wholeness. Recovery begins by admitting that following our addictive path is making our lives unmanageable and we are powerless to stop.

Example:

Top line:

I am living joyfully and freely. Working the steps daily, meditating daily, going to meetings daily, enjoying my life without media no matter what.

Middle line: (these are things that are gateway drugs—they lead us to pick up):

Negative thinking, self-pity, self-protection, resentment, fear, etc. Opening up YouTube and reading the titles, talking to people about the media I am addicted to, not telling people I need to turn off the TV or not letting them know that media doesn't agree with me, etc.

Bottom line:

Watching or using any of your alcoholic media. Media that triggers the compulsion to use more. Media that triggers the obsession of the mind, etc.

TOP LINE:

MIDDLE LINE:

BOTTOM LINE:

Please create an introduction for yourself and bring it to our next meeting:

Hi my name is _____ a media addict

My alcoholic media is _____

My triggers are _____

My bottom lines are _____

Urge Surfing Worksheet

Please fill out this worksheet BEFORE you get on media for relief, recreation, relaxation, or for any kind of retaliation. This is meant to be a breather, a short "time out," a way to transition from one activity to another.

IMPORTANT: By filling out this worksheet, it doesn't mean you can't use your media. If, when you are done, you still feel you must use your media for any of the above "r" reasons, give yourself permission to do so. If you decide to get on media, you will be doing it consciously rather than unconsciously. But you need to commit to completing the whole worksheet.

Answer every question in the order it is given and don't jump ahead.

1. Close your eyes and take 3 deep breaths in through your nose and exhale through your mouth.
2. Accept how you are feeling right now, accept the compulsion, accept yourself just as you are right now. Accept your life just as it is right now. Don't let yourself judge yourself for feeling this way. Don't attach any judgements you have to this situation.
3. Find something to appreciate about yourself right now. It can be something very small, but something you can appreciate that you are doing or have done. Filling out this worksheet can be one of them.
4. Take out a calculator or add on a piece of paper the number of years you have lived on this planet and multiply it by 365. This will give you the approximate number of days you have been living on earth as a human being. Write the number here _____ (if you want the exact amount of days, figure out how many days since your last birthday and add it to this number)
5. Congratulate yourself for making it this far.
6. Sing a song, any song. You don't have to sing it well. Don't sing for longer than 1 minute
7. Find something humorous about this moment. (It could be the way you just sang your song.)
8. Write for one minute or less on what you are hoping to get from going on your media. What do you think your media will give you or do for you? Write as much as you can in one minute.
9. Close your eyes for 30 seconds and see yourself on one of your worst binges and media drunk days (or weeks).
10. Did you get what you wanted from media then? Did media give you what it promised?
11. Write for one minute about how you felt after binging on media. What did you think about yourself and your life?

12. Looking at how many days you have been alive from the above number you wrote down, how much of your life so far do you think you have been on media? Make a guess? (1/4, 1/3, 1/2, 2/3, 3/4?) _____. How much of your life have you spent bingeing on media in the last 10 years?
13. Answer this question: Am I WILLING to ASK my Higher Power to remove my compulsion to use media right now?
14. Pause for at least 15 seconds and then say the "Serenity Prayer".
15. Ask your Higher Power, in your own words, to remove the compulsion to use your media.
16. Wait and listen. (you can repeat your prayer up to 3 times)
17. Write down at least one thing you are grateful for right now.

18. Make a conscious decision right NOW if you will use media or if you won't.

I am deciding to (circle one) USE NOT USE my media because_____.

19. If you don't use, what wonderful activity will you do instead?
20. Go into your heart and listen and see how it would feel doing that activity instead. How it would feel at the end of the day if you didn't succumb to the media. Write down a few sentences of how it would feel.
21. Move into your life now with clarity and enthusiasm for whatever you decided to do.
22. You can always go back and do these exercises one more time if you feel you need or want to.

Creating a Media Sobriety Plan

A Media Sobriety Plan helps us abstain from the compulsive use of media and the media drunkenness that follows. A personal plan for media use guides us in our media decisions, as well as defines what, when, how, where and why we use our devices. With the help of a sponsor and/or action partner, each member develops their own plan based on an honest appraisal of their compulsive media usage. We continue to reevaluate our plans to keep ourselves accountable so we don't rationalize "acting out" and feed the addiction. Time keeping and the use of a timer is invaluable in applying our sobriety plan to our daily actions.

1. What media is necessary for work?
2. What media is necessary for connection with family and friends?
3. What else do you use media for?
4. What are the types of media you feel get you drunk the most? Be specific.
5. What time of day is the hardest for you to stay away from media?
6. How much time a day do you want to spend in front of a screen?
7. What do you want to use your media for? (Example, relaxing, entertainment, business, etc.)
8. What don't you want to use your media for? (Example: Fighting with people on Facebook, getting lost in the negative news cycles, etc.)
9. What would be a good time to turn media on and off during the day?

Daily Body Care Awareness and Adequate Sleep

Media distracts us from taking care of and connecting with our bodies. Our ability to get sober and stay sober from electronic time drunkenness depends on a good night's sleep. Therefore, we suggest setting a media curfew for ourselves and a regular bedtime. We try to keep electronic media out of the bedroom. During the day we stay connected to our bodies, feeding them nourishing food and getting proper exercise and fresh air. We learn to be fully present in our bodies and take time to ground ourselves in the natural world by getting out into nature without our media. We feed all of our senses, allowing ourselves to experience more beauty and pleasure in our lives. When appropriate we utilize health care and healing providers.

1. What time do you want to get to bed?
2. What time do you want to get up in the morning?
3. What are three things you can do this month to take better care of your body?

Creating a Media Replacement Plan

Because many of us use media as our main source of relaxation and entertainment, we need to find other activities that bring us joy. When we stop compulsively using media, there will be a void. It will be difficult to obtain long-term sobriety if we don't have a plan to fill that void. Therefore, a "Media Replacement Plan" is an important system to create as soon as possible so that we will have enjoyable and healthy activities to replace media. Here are some examples:

A. Fun, Pleasure and Relaxation

We write lists of things we love to do for fun, relaxation and pleasure and post it where we can see it. We share this plan with our sponsor or action partners and use these activities daily in place of our electronic media.

B. Connection and Play

We schedule time in our week for play and community. We have often used electronic media as a substitute for true recreation and human connection. We become willing to learn how to play and have more fulfilling relationships with others. When we are with others, we turn off our electronic media and focus on our loved ones.

C. Brain Health Awareness

We exercise our mind in healthy ways whether through study, moderate reading, journaling, or meaningful conversations. We read things that require thought and effort. We may also take classes or workshops to expand our interests and knowledge. We find ways to keep our minds sharp by memorizing phone numbers, poems, etc. Things we used to do before smart phones.

D. Creativity

We take time to nourish our own creativity. This may include participating in artistic endeavors such as writing, visual arts, music, theater, dance, singing, etc., or we may direct that creative process toward whatever endeavors fulfill us.

1. Write a list of 10 things you can do for fun, pleasure and relaxation.
2. Who are three people you want to connect with more? How can you start doing this today?
3. What are three things you can do to exercise your brain this week?
4. What are three things you can do to be more creative in your life? Can you begin one of these things this week?

Questions if You Have a Slip

These are questions to ask if you have a slip. In this format, these are called "Breakdowns."

First, we all have breakdowns. No one is perfect. See this exercise as a neutral situation without bringing in guilt, shame, or blame. What happened, happened. Let's take a look at it and let's move forward with this information in a constructive and powerful way.

Ask and answer the following questions in this order. (Please don't skip steps)

1. Acknowledge the breakdown. Examples: "I broke my media bottom line for 3 hours last night" or "I overslept and missed the B2B meeting. "
2. How did you generate this breakdown? How did you create it? (It empowers us to take 100% responsibility for what we generate in our lives, even if we think it was not our fault. By not playing the victim in any situation, we become better able to recover in all areas of our lives.)
3. What is the underlying belief that is at play? For instance what were you thinking or believing before the event happened? What was the unconscious impulse?
4. What are the prices you are paying living this way?
5. What are the prices others pay when you live this way?
6. Take a moment to experience it, you need to be connected to the consequences without shaming or letting guilt be a part of this inquiry—Take a breath and stay in reality. Now leave this event in the past. Let go of it completely.
7. What is your recommitment or commitment going forward? Be specific.
8. Who do you get to be as you move into the future (Example: I get to be honest, I get to be rigorous with my time, I get to be present, I get to feel my feelings, etc.)
9. What actions do you get to take going forward? Be specific.
10. Who will you ask to help you be accountable to these actions? Be specific.