

Media-Free Monday Group
Speaker and Sharing Meeting of Media Addicts Anonymous
Every Monday from 2:30pm-3:30pm ET
Zoom ID: 881 6683 9368 – Passcode: 987162

Notes to Moderator: Please make sure you arrive 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 the 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 A.A.'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.

Welcome Newcomers: We extend a special welcome to newcomers. If there are any newcomers here today, 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. On most Mondays, we have 20 minutes of fellowship time after the close of the meeting when we will greet newcomers informally. Everyone is invited! On the second Monday of every month, we have our business meeting instead of fellowship time.

Meeting Focus: This meeting will last one hour. We start with readings, including the symptoms and tools of media addiction. On the second Monday of the month, we have a Topic meeting. All other Mondays, we have a 10-minute qualification by a member who has been sober from their addictive 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 four volunteers to be readers for this meeting. We will share the reading on the screen. Who would like to give service by reading today? Please raise your hands, and I will take four 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 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.*

(Name), will you please read *Media Addiction as a Disease of Mind and Body*?

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 defense 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 "Seven 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.

Moderator: Thank you.

(Name), will you please read numbers *(see below)* from the *Signs and Symptoms of Media Addiction*?

Moderator: Give appropriate instructions based on the week of the month:

- 1st Monday – read numbers 1, 2 and 3*
- 2nd Monday – read numbers 4, 5 and 6*
- 3rd Monday – read numbers 7, 8 and 9*
- 4th Monday – read numbers 10, 11 and 12*
- 5th Monday – read any 3 of reader's choice*

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.)

Moderator: Thank you. If you identify with 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.

(Name), could you please read numbers [\(see below\)](#) from the *Tools of Action for Media Addicts*?

Moderator: Give appropriate instructions based on the week of the month:

1st Monday – read numbers 1, 2 and 3.

2nd Monday – read numbers 4, 5 and 6

3rd Monday – read numbers 7, 8 and 9

4th Monday – read numbers 10, 11 and 12

5th Monday – read any 3 of reader's choice

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, timekeeper, action partner or dashboard operator 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, 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 an 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 (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 to prevent relapsing.

Thank you all for reading. You can find the complete *Signs and Symptoms of Media Addiction* and the *Tools of Action for Media Addicts* on the website at [mediaaddictsanonymous.org](https://www.mediaaddictsanonymous.org). Our tech support person, (Name), will also add direct links in the chat box.

Tech Support Person: Please add the following links to the chat:

Signs and Symptoms of Media Addiction: <https://www.mediaaddictsanonymous.org/symptoms>

Tools of Action for Media Addicts: <https://www.mediaaddictsanonymous.org/tools>

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

ON THE 2ND MONDAY OF THE MONTH, SKIP PARAGRAPH A, AND READ B, BELOW.

- A.** Our speaker, (Name), will now qualify for 10 minutes. Afterward, 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.

- B.** 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, specific content of your addictive media, or make reference to current events..

ON THE 2ND MONDAY OF THE MONTH, SKIP PARAGRAPH A, AND READ B BELOW.

- A.** 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. (*Moderator: As the meeting progresses, this sharing time may be shortened to 2 minutes at the discretion of the moderator. If you shorten the sharing time, please instruct the timekeeper to give a warning at 1 minute.*)
- B.** Because our meeting is 10 minutes shorter today for our business meeting, shares will be two minutes without a warning. Timekeeper, please let the person sharing know when their two minutes are up.

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.

Wrap Up: If Speaker Meeting, wrap up at 8:25 pm UK time or 3:25 pm ET. If Topic Meeting, wrap up 10 minutes earlier at 8:15 pm 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 when we have 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 they cannot:)* Who would like to volunteer to do this service? **(Name)**? Great!

I'd like to thank **(Name)** for their qualification, **(Name)** for keeping time, and **(Name)**, **(Name)**, **(Name)**, and **(Name)** for doing the readings. Also thank you, **(Name)** for doing the tech support and **(Name)** for being our newcomer greeter. I am **(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.mediaaddictsanonymous.org. Contributions can be made via credit card, debit card, or 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.

MAA Announcements:

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 and shares are two minutes instead of three minutes. Everyone is encouraged to attend our business meeting and to find out more about opportunities for service.

Media Addicts Anonymous is a growing program; we now have one or more Zoom or telephone meetings 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?

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!

A. (If today was a *Speaker Meeting*): I will now turn the meeting over to our Newcomer Greeter, **(Name)**. **OR**

(If today was a *Topic Meeting*): I will now turn the meeting over to our Business Chair.

(Business meeting format is on the next page. Note: Business Meeting duration is 20 minutes max. It ends at the latest at 8:50 pm UK time or 3:50 pm ET.)

Business Meeting Format

MAA Media-Free Monday Group 2:20 pm EST

Business Meeting Minutes: **Date**

Secretary: **Name**

Chair: **Name**

Present: **Names**

Pray in with the *Set Aside Prayer*:

God, please help me to set aside everything I think I know about people, places, and things. Help me to set aside everything I think I know about myself and help me to set aside everything I think I know about you, God. Help me to have an open mind so that I might be able to see the truth and live my life on a spiritual basis.

Ask For a Timekeeper. Announcement by Chair: Business Meeting is capped at 30 minutes.

Last Business Meeting's Minutes: Could someone please read the notes from our previous business meeting? Are there any additions or corrections? Is there a motion to accept the minutes? Is there a second? Is anyone opposed to accepting the minutes?

Fill Positions – The following positions will need to be filled at the Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, and Dec business meetings:

- Moderator/Leader (two-month commitment): **Name, until?**
- Tech Support (two-month commitment): **Name, until?**
- Business Meeting Chair (two-month commitment): **Name, until?**
- Business Meeting Secretary (two-month commitment): **Name, until?**
- General Service Representative (one-year commitment): **Name, until?**

Report: Can we now have a report from our General Service Rep?

Old Business: Is there any old business (ask the person reading the notes from the previous business meeting if there is any old business that still needs to be discussed and voted on)?

New Business: Does anyone have any new business?

Close Meeting: If there is no further business, can I please have a motion to close this meeting? Is there a second? Is there anyone who is opposed to closing this meeting?

Pray out with the WE version of the *Serenity Prayer*.