**Four-Week Sponsorship Plan**

**BACK TO BASICS, A DESIGN FOR LIVING**

**Media Recovery UA**

—**Week One—**

**Pre-Fast Commitment Reading and Writing**

The following are daily writing prompts from the Big Book of AA and the Back to Basic script. Please use these prompts to write about your compulsive media addiction. Write for at least 15 minutes a day.

**SATURDAY AND SUNDAY ASSIGNMENTS:**

LISTEN TO SESSION ONE —ALL FOUR PARTS—OF BACK TO BASICS

Pre-1st Session Writing:

Write for at least 20 minutes a history of your compulsive media time drunkenness. Begin with your first media memories. Discuss how much media you used, how you have tried to solve the problem and failed. How media affects your other compulsions, for example, shopping, gambling, sex, overeating, self harming, etc.

Use the symptoms of MA to help you see all the symptoms that apply to you and your addictions.

Symptoms of Media Addiction from Medical Professionals

Emotional Symptoms:

Inability to prioritize or keep schedules; Procrastination; Isolation; Avoidance of work; No sense of time and chronic lateness; Boredom with routine tasks; Loneliness; Feelings of euphoria when using electronic media; Depression; Dishonesty; Feelings of guilt or shame; Anxiety; Defensiveness; Agitation; Mood swings; Fear; Binge watching; Over-eating while using; Weight gain or loss; Poor nutrition

Physical Symptoms:

Backache; Neck pain; Headaches; Disturbances in sleep; Insomnia; Carpal tunnel syndrome; Blurred or strained vision; Dry eyes and other vision prob

UA Symptoms of Having a Pattern of Time Drunkenness with Electronic Media

1) We consistently spend more time than we plan in front of electronic screens.

2) We don’t feel we have enough time for important things in our lives. We may put off home chores, personal care, and taking care of business while still finding time to focus on our electronic media.

3) Some of us may “graze” on our electronic media throughout the day or week while others of us may binge on it for hours at a time.

4) We plan to use electronic media to further our businesses, goals, or visions and yet end up distracted from our target by it. We end up having even less time to focus on these things.

5) We turn to our media instead of live people to feel connected and end up more isolated and lonely than when we started.

6) We tend to neglect healthy intellectual stimulation since our minds are so focused on passive media consumption.

7) Our creative endeavors become impeded by our electronic focus as our creativity in general becomes more inhibited.

8) We may believe it is necessary to spend time with our electronic media in order to “relax.” Some of us use it as our main source of recreation.

9) We become disconnected from our bodies. We may neglect our health or fail to meet our body’s basic needs for rest, sleep, exercise, good nutrition, etc.

10) We become disconnected from the natural world and our need to fully experience all of our senses.

**Day 1 (MONDAY ASSIGNMENT) - Write a few sentences about what each of these paragraphs mean.**

"AA does not teach us how to handle our drinking (media)….It teaches us how to handle sobriety…It's no great trick to stop drinking; the trick is to stay stopped.."

 "I had to use [media]… to live, to cope with the demands of everyday existence. When I encountered disappointments or frustrations..my solution was [to binge on my electronic devices]. I had always been oversensitive to criticism…When I was criticized or reprimanded, [electronic screens] were my refuge and comfort."

"When I was faced with a special challenge or social event…I had to fortify myself with a couple of [videos, social media posts, shopping, gaming etc.] Too often, I would overdo it…"

“If you are as seriously [media addicted] as we were, we believe there is no middle-of-the-road solution. We were in a position where life was becoming impossible, and if we had passed into the region from which there is no return through human aid, we had but two alternatives: one was to go on to the bitter end, blotting out the consciousness of our intolerable situation as best as we could; and the other, to accept spiritual help.”

“If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit your [compulsive media behaviors] entirely, or when [using media,] you have little control over how long you indulge in your activity, you are probably a [media addict]. If that be the case, you may be suffering from an illness which only a spiritual experience will conquer.”

"We now know what we have to do in order to recover from our media addiction. We must undergo a life-changing, spiritual transformation."

"The ultimate goal of these four sessions is to give you "a design for living." A way to create a life that is satisfying and useful."

**DAY 2 - (TUESDAY ASSIGNMENT) Write a few sentences about what each of these paragraphs mean.**

"Our stories disclose in a general way what we used to be like, what happened, and what we are like now. If you have decided you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it—then you are ready to take certain steps."

"At some of these we balked. We thought we could find an easier, softer way. But we could not. With all the earnestness at our command, we beg of you to be fearless and thorough from the very start. Some of us have tried to hold on to our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely."

"Remember that we deal with [media addiction]—cunning, baffling, powerful! Without help it is too much for us. But there is One who has all power—that One is God. May you find God now!"

"Half measures availed us nothing. We stood at the turning point. We asked God's protection and care with complete abandon."

"Our description of the alcoholic, the chapter to the agnostic, and our personal adventures before and after make clear three pertinent ideas:

 a) That we were [media addicts] and could not manage our own lives.

 b) That probably no human power could have relieved our [media addiction].

 c) That God could and would if [God] were sought."

“Lack of power, that was our dilemma. We had to find a power by which we could live, and it had to be a Power greater than ourselves. Obviously. But where and how were we to find this Power?”

“Actually we were fooling ourselves, for deep down in every man, woman, and child is the fundamental idea of God…For faith in a Power greater than ourselves, and miraculous demonstrations of that power in [human] lives, are facts as old as [humans themselves].”

“We finally saw that faith in some kind of God was a part of our make-up, just as much as the feeling we have for a friend.”

**DAY 3 - (WEDNESDAY ASSIGNMENT) Write a few sentences about what each of these paragraphs mean.**

"Men and women USE ELECTRONIC MEDIA essentially because they like the effect produced by ELECTRONIC MEDIA. The sensation is so elusive that, while they admit is it injurious, they cannot after a time differentiate the true from the false. To them, their ELECTRONIC MEDIA ADDICTED life seems the normal one. They are restless, irritable and discontented, unless they can again experience the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once by WATCHING A FEW VIDEOS OR PLAYING A FEW GAMES OR SHOPPING ONLINE OR SURFING THE NET OR LOSING THEMSELVES ON SOCIAL MEDIA, ACTIVITIES which they see others taking with impunity. After they have succumbed to the desire again, as so many do, and the phenomenon of craving develops, they pass through the well-known state of a spree, emerging remorseful, with a firm resolution not to BECOME DRUNK ON MEDIA again. This is repeated over and over, and unless this person can experience an entire psychic change there is little hope of her recovery."

"Some evidence suggests that if you are suffering from [media addiction], your brain makeup is similar to those [who] suffer from a chemical dependency, such as drugs or alcohol. Interestingly, some studies link [media addiction] to physically changing the brain structure – specifically affecting the amount of gray and white matter in regions of the prefrontal brain. This area of the brain is associated with remembering details, attention, planning, and prioritizing tasks. …One of the causes of [media addiction] is structural changes to the prefrontal region of the brain… rendering you unable to prioritize your life, i.e., the Internet takes precedence to necessary life tasks."

"[Media addiction], in addition to other dependency disorders, seem[s] to affect the pleasure center of the brain. The addictive behavior triggers a release of dopamine to promote the pleasurable experience activating the release of this chemical. Over time, more and more of the activity is needed to induce the same pleasurable response, creating a dependency. [For instance] if you find online gaming or online shopping a pleasurable activity and you suffer from an addiction to the Internet, you will need to engage in more and more of the behavior to institute the same pleasurable feeling prior to your dependency."

"On the other hand—and strange as this may seem to those who do not understand—once a psychic change has occurred, the very same person who seemed doomed, who had so many problems [they] despaired of ever solving them, suddenly finds [themselves] easily able to control [their] desire for alcohol, the only effort necessary being that [they] followed a few simple rules."

"If you ask [them] why [they] started on that last bender, the chances are [they] will offer you any one of a hundred alibis…Once in a while [they] may tell the truth. And the truth, strange to say, is usually that [they have] no more idea why [they clicked that first video] than you have.

"The fact is that most [media addicts], for reason yet obscure, have lost the power of choice [to use media]. Our so-called will power becomes practically nonexistent. We are unable, at certain times, to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago. We are without defense again the first [click]."

"That may be true of certain [non-media addictive] people who, though [binging] foolishly and heavily at the present time, are able to stop or moderate, because their brains and bodies have not been damaged as ours were. But the actual or potential [media addict], with hardly any exception, will be ABSOLUTELY UNABLE TO STOP [BINGING] ON THE BASIS OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE. This is a point we wish to emphasize and re-emphasize, to smash home upon our [media addict] readers as it has been revealed to us out of bitter experience."

**DAY 4 - (THURSDAY ASSIGNMENT) Write a few sentences about what each of these paragraphs mean and how it might relate to your addiction.**

"My drinking assumed more serious proportions, continuing all day and almost every night. The remonstrances of my friends terminated in a row and I became a lone wolf."

"Liquor ceased to be a luxury; it became a necessity…I began to waken very early in the morning shaking violently…Nevertheless, I still thought I could control the situation…"

"This had to be stopped. I saw I could not take so much as one drink. I was through forever…my wife happily observed that this time I meant business. And so I did."

"There had been no fight. Where had been my high resolve? I simply didn't know. It hadn't even come to mind. Someone had pushed a drink my way, and I had taken it. Was I crazy?"

"The remorse, horror, and hopelessness of the next morning are unforgettable. The courage to do battle was not there. My brain raced uncontrollably and there was a terrible sense of impending calamity."

"It was a devastating blow to my pride. I, who had thought so well of myself and my abilities, of my capacity to surmount obstacles, was cornered at last…No words can tell of the loneliness and despair I found in that bitter morass of self-pity.

"Had this power originated in him? Obviously it had not. There had been no more power in him than there was in me…That floored me."

"Thus [I became] convinced that God is concerned with us humans when we want Him enough."

“There I humbly offered myself to God, as I then understood Him, to do with me as He would. I placed myself unreservedly under His care and direction.”

"I ruthlessly faced my sins and became willing to have my newfound Friend take them away, root and branch. I have not had a drink since.”

“…We made a list of people I had hurt or toward whom I felt resentment. I expressed my entire willingness to approach these individuals, admitting my wrong. Never was I to be critical of them. I was to right all such matters, to the utmost of my ability.”

"I was to sit quietly when in doubt, asking only for direction and strength to meet my problems as He would have me."

“…Particularly was it imperative to work with others as [Ebby] had worked with me. Faith without works was dead, he said.

“These were revolutionary and drastic proposals, but the moment I fully accepted them, the effect was electric. There was a sense of victory, followed by such a peace and serenity as I had never known."

"Step 1 - We admitted we were powerless over Media – that our lives had become unmanageable."

**DAY 5: (FRIDAY SESSION) RESISTANCE WORKSHEET—THIS MEETING WILL BE 1 HOUR**

**DAY 6 AND 7 (WEEKEND ASSIGNMENT):**

LISTEN TO SESSION ONE —ALL FOUR PARTS—OF BACK TO BASICS

LISTEN TO SESSION TWO —ALL FOUR PARTS—OF BACK TO BASICS

Answer briefly the following questions in preparation for creating your Sobriety Plan

**MEDIA TIME DRUNK ACTION MEETING**

**Part 1**

Questions:

Where have you spent more time than you planned in front of electronic screens?

Where have you put off home chores, personal care, and taking care of business while still finding time to focus on our electronic media?

Do you “graze” on your electronic media throughout the day? Explain.

Do you binge on it for hours at a time? Explain.

Do you plan to use electronic media to further your businesses, goals, or visions and yet end up distracted from our target by it? Explain.

Do you turn to our media instead of live people to feel connected and end up more isolated and lonely than when we started? Explain.

Do you tend to neglect healthy intellectual stimulation since your mind is focused on passive media consumption? Explain.

Where have your creative endeavors become impeded by your electronic focus?

Do you believe it is necessary to spend time with electronic media in order to “relax?” Is it your main source of recreation?

Where have you become disconnected from your body or neglected your health or body’s basic needs for rest, sleep, exercise, good nutrition, etc., because of media usage?

Where have you become disconnected from the natural world and all your senses due to media usage?

**ADD ALL OF YOUR WRITING THIS WEEK TO THE HISTORY OF YOUR MEDIA USAGE.**