

LifeRing Partners

For the Friends, Family and Loved Ones of Those In Recovery

Mission Statement

LifeRing Partners is an association of clean and sober people who are affected by their personal relationships with substance abusers. The group is an affiliate of LifeRing Secular Recovery, which is based on the principles of Sobriety, Secularity, and Self-Help. LifeRing Partners is based on the principles of Secularity, Self-Help, and Boundaries.

The purpose of LifeRing Partners is to allow members to meet regularly, face-to-face, with other people dealing with substance abusers, whether alcohol, street drugs, or prescription drugs (which can also be "street drugs"). Potential members include anyone who may be impacted by the addict's actions:

- the addict's spouses and children
- the addict's significant others
- the addict's relatives
- the addict's friends
- the addict's work associates

LifeRing Partners Meetings

Talking to similarly affected people helps members to realize that they are not alone, as one of the attributes of addiction and its collateral damage is isolation.

Members can help each other develop strategies to cope with and improve their situations, including ways to set personal boundaries, since the biggest issue faced by many people dealing with substance abusers is the effect of the addict's actions on their own lives.

A key attribute of the meetings will be to focus on you, the person affected by the addiction, and not on the addict. The addict's addiction is often perpetuated by co-dependent support, because the affected people want to "save" the addict. National statistics show that the recovery rate for addicts in their first attempt at sobriety is approximately 15%.

LifeRing Partners support groups will focus on you and how you will conduct your life, regardless of the success or failure of the addict. Meetings will be structured in the same way as LifeRing Secular Recovery meetings:

- There will be no discussion of religion, Higher Powers, or twelve steps.
- Discussion between meeting attendees is actively encouraged.
- Meeting focus is on practical coping strategies and support for LP members. Coping strategies should include:
 - ❖ Ways of setting boundaries
 - ❖ Writing contracts with the addict, in which you state what you will do if the addict should relapse
- The convenor will work to keep the focus of the meeting on the members and not on their addicts.
- What is said in the meetings, stays in the meetings.

It is impossible to develop these strategies in crisis mode; the group will offer a safe place to talk and think about them, along with support from your fellow members.

Should Addicts Attend?

An addict, who currently attends LifeRing meetings with addicts associated with other LifeRing Partners members, should not be allowed to attend LifeRing Partners meetings. The meetings should be closed to ensure a high level of confidentiality.

However, addiction runs in families. It is not unusual to find an addict whose parents and children are addicts. A substance abuser may be allowed to join LifeRing Partners, if:

- They are currently in recovery, and
- Their reason for joining is to cope with the effects of another's addiction in their lives.

Research has shown that recovering addicts are usually not prepared to deal with this until they have two to three years of recovery under their belt. LifeRing Partners convenors may wish to consult with other convenors if such a situation arises.

The Mantra

LifeRing members in recovery use the mantra: *I will not drink or use, no matter what.*

For LifeRing Partners members, the mantra is: *I will not help my addict use, or ease the consequences of the habit; but I will support all his/her efforts towards recovery.*