

HOW TO START AN A.R.T.S. MEETING (in a nutshell)

1. Be willing to do the “footwork” and turn the outcome over to your Higher Power.
2. Choose a day and time for the meeting. Consider when other 12 Step groups meet. After noon on Sunday is often a good time. Try starting with an hour-long meeting, changing to an hour and a half after the meeting grows. The day and time may be affected by where you meet.
3. Find a meeting place. Look for churches that already host 12 Step meetings, local Y’s, community clubhouses, libraries, etc. Contact them: 1) by phone, especially if the contact is already familiar with 12 Step programs; 2) in person, with an A.R.T.S. “Basic Pamphlet” in hand; or 3) by letter, with a pamphlet enclosed, followed by a phone call. If you cannot find a place, have the first meeting in your home or in a public place like a coffee shop.
4. Create your own meeting flyer or download one of the A.R.T.S. sample flyers. Add in your meeting information, time, place, and brief description of the meeting (general share, ARTShares, topic meeting). If you did not find a meeting place and have decided to hold the meetings in your home, just list your phone number on the flyer, for example: “for more information please call ...”
5. Carry your flyers around with you to other 12 Step meetings, work, play, etc. and hand them to creative people. Include the Basic Pamphlet as part of your handout. Carry the message.
6. Have the meeting format ready to go when people show up for the first time. It helps to have a notebook with separate sheets for the Preamble, Attitudes, Traits, Talents, Tools, 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, and the Closing Prayer.
7. Take on the role of chairperson yourself for the first three to six months to provide a stable and committed leadership until the meeting is established. Then hold elections for a new meeting leader.
8. Show up every week. Have a meeting even if there are only two of you. “Build it, and they will come.”
9. For ongoing support through this process of starting a meeting, call the A.R.T.S. Hotline to find another A.R.T.S. member who has started a meeting in their area and would be willing to support you during this time.
10. Once your meeting is up and running, please register it with World Service, which you can now do online on the A.R.T.S. website www.artsanonymous.org Go to the Meetings page. Fill out the form and click Submit. In this way your meeting will be listed on the A.R.T.S. meeting list and open to anyone who wants to come. If you have any changes to your meeting location or time during the year, then Submit a new form with the new information. Also please send us a new form every year to update us even if your information is still the same. This way we know your meeting information is up to date, current and correct.

A.R.T.S. ANONYMOUS MEETING FORMAT FOR GENERAL SHARING

1. Meeting Leader: "Welcome to the _____ A.R.T.S. Anonymous meeting. My name is _____. I am a _____ (writer, poet, actor, painter, musician, multi-talented artist, etc.) I am powerless over my creativity."
2. Meeting Leader: "Let's go around the room and introduce ourselves. If you are here for the first time, please let us know." Everyone gives their first name, the kind of artist that they are and ends with "I am powerless over my creativity."
3. Meeting Leader: "Let us all take a moment to say the Serenity Prayer." Every one chimes in.
"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change.
The courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."
4. Meeting Leader: "Would _____ read the A.R.T.S. Attitudes. The attitudes establish the social etiquette of this meeting. Please be mind full of them." Hand the A.R.T.S. Attitude page to reader.
5. Meeting Leader: "Before we begin sharing lets repeat in unison the A.R.T.S. sobriety saying:
"Five minutes every day keeps my art alive.
Five minutes every day keeps the block away.
5-Alive"
6. Meeting Leader: "Now we go to open sharing for 5 minutes each. This is a pitch meeting. When you get done sharing, choose the next person from a show of hands. Who would like to begin?"
7. At the half way point, take time out for the A.R.T.S. treasurer's break and A.R.T.S. related announcement.
Meeting Leader: "Let's go to the Treasurer's announcement, and if there any A.R.T.S. announcements, please make them as the collection goes around. Personal announcements of shows and performances, and flyer should be made after the meeting."
Hand treasurer's announcement to treasurer:
"We have no dues or fees. Please give what you can and if you can't, keep coming back anyway. We need you more than we need your money."
8. Meeting Leader: "We still have time for more 5 minute shares. Then let's divide the remaining time equally amongst us all and go one more round of sharing. Please include your commitment for the coming week and that which you are grateful for today."
9. Meeting Leader: "Would _____ please reading the A.R.T.S. Closing Prayer?" Hands the closing prayer to reader.
10. Meeting Leader: "Would all who care to, join me in the Serenity Prayer.
"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change.
The courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."
11. The meeting is closed.

VARIOUS MEETING TYPES

Choose one of the following for your meeting or rotate these meetings throughout the month.

TOPIC DISCUSSION MEETING:

Ask a member to qualify on what it was like growing up in their family and how that affected their art. Then that person chooses a related topic to their share for the other members to share on for the rest of the meeting. Start with 5 minute shares and if there is any time left over, divide it up equally among the members for a second share.

LITERATURE MEETING:

Ask members to choose from the A.R.T.S. literature a pamphlet to read. Passing it from member to member, each person reads two paragraphs. The meeting leader chooses a topic for the members to share on for the rest of the meeting. Start with 5 minute shares and if there is any time left over, divide it up equally around the members for a second share.

CREATIVE PROCESS MEETING:

The week before the next meeting a member is asked to qualify on their creative process. They are encouraged to bring in one or more samples of their work. Their share should be timed at 8 to 12 minutes. Then the meeting should go to 5 minute shares determined by a show of hands. Before the shares begin, the meeting leader reminds the members that this is a Creative Process meetings and it is inappropriate to physically share their art during their 5 minutes, that this meeting is not an ARTShare meeting. The meeting leader also encourages each member to take a minute during their share to express their respect and gratitude for the qualifier who has just shared their creative process. In A.R.T.S. recovery rests on how we treat our gifts, and receive the gifts of others. Start with 5 minute shares and if there is any time left over, divide it up equally around the members for a second share.

ARTSHARE MEETING: Everyone who wants to brings in their art and shares about it for 5 minutes.

It is highly recommended that the Creative Process Qualification meeting and the ARTShare meeting not be combined, because that will detract from the appreciation that the person who just qualified on their creative process deserves. Start with 5 minute shares and if there is any time left over, divide it up equally around the members for a second share.

STEP MEETING:

Using the A.R.T.S. Step Essays (One through 10 -- essays 11 and 12 have not yet been written), read one essay each week. Each essay takes about 12 minutes to read. Start with 5 minute shares and if there is any time left over, divide it up equally around the members for a second share.