

# Informed Consent to Addiction Treatment and Recovery Group Participation

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1. The popular belief that addiction to alcohol and other drugs is or is caused by a disease is not factual, but is actually *highly controversial* in professional and scientific communities.
2. The only realistic remedy for addiction is abstinence. If you continue to drink/use, you will remain addicted and be at high risk of developing more serious health and personal problems.
3. Self-recovery through planned, permanent abstinence is commonplace. According to the official publication of Alcoholics Anonymous, *The Grapevine* (May 2001), over 60% of all successful recoveries occur without the use of recovery groups, professional counseling, or addiction treatment programs. The actual frequency of self-recovery is probably much, much higher than this.
4. If you quit your addiction altogether, you will likely *not* develop new problems or switch to another addiction or substance. It feels good to solve a serious problem, and your future will look brighter.
5. If you leave the door open to future drinking/using, "one-day-at-a-time," you will very likely have more of a struggle than if you make a firm commitment to lifetime abstinence.
6. The abstinent outcome of recovery groups and addiction treatment is very low. Of all newcomers to AA, only about 5% are consistently abstinent after five years of attendance. (AA Triennial Membership Survey, 1989)
7. Federal courts have ruled consistently that Alcoholics Anonymous is "unequivocally religious," and most states have complied with this legal trend by restraining forced participation in AA/NA. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has outlawed coerced participation in AA/NA.
8. The large majority of substance abuse counselors (75%+) are members of AA/NA themselves, so you should take that into consideration when they recommend that you attend their own personal recovery organization. They are in a dual relationship with you, in professional conflict of interest, or both.
9. Others may have an interest in you becoming abstinent, but *how* you become abstinent is no one's concern.
10. Recovery groups are based upon ideology and have very little to do with abstinence. They do not inform members on how to abstain from alcohol and other drugs, nor do they recognize that addicted people recover independently from the group. This conveys to members that independent recovery is impossible, resulting in unnecessary dependence upon the group.
11. Recovery groups are a very poor setting in which to seek helpful or meaningful relationships. Members have more than their share of problems and none have resolved their own addictions. Recovery group attendance carries the risk of financial and sexual exploitation.
12. Telling others about your personal misconduct and other confidential matters gives them control over you. Recovery groups are public gatherings, and no confidentiality should be expected.
13. Self-recovery is not a result of self-improvement, but results in true self-improvement. Self recovery occurs quickly, in the time it takes to make an irrevocable commitment to lifetime abstinence.
14. Addiction is not a family disease, but should be regarded as willful misconduct. Families may protect themselves with a zero-tolerance ultimatum, leaving the addict to choose between drugs and family support.
15. Information and programmed instruction on self-recovery through planned, permanent abstinence, called AVRT®, is available free of charge at <http://www.rational.org>.
16. If you have participated in addiction treatment or recovery groups that have withheld or suppressed the information above, you may voice your complaint to Rational Recovery Systems, Inc., a health corporation devoted to social reform.