I attended an open group session on 10th May 2019 at the High Watch Recovery located at 62 Carter Road, Kent, CT 06757, USA. The meeting was focused on providing support for alcoholics recovering at the center. The session was held for one hour, starting at 5.30 P.M and ending at 6.30 P.M. The meeting was opened to friends, spouses and family members of those recovering from alcohol. The meeting was led by the Centers therapist. The therapist acted as a facilitator.

Participants were requested to sit in a circle. The meeting started with a recitation of the serenity prayer by the participants. After the recitation, the therapist read the 12 Steps and members were asked to recite the same. The therapist started by welcoming the members and making announcements. In the first ten minutes, the therapist welcomed the members, explained the group’s aims, outlined the ground rules and gave out the structure of the meeting. The facilitator then talked briefly about the group, and highlighted the meeting dates and time.

The facilitator requested the attendees to introduce themselves. Members were asked to state their names, where they came from, how long they had been struggling with addiction, the number of sessions they had attended and what they hoped to gain from the session. The facilitator made it clear that any member who did not feel obligated to reveal personal information was free to state their name and hand over to the next person.

The facilitator then introduced topics related to alcohol, alcohol addiction, causes and consequences and possible treatments. Participants were told to give their personal experiences. This session lasted for forty minutes. The facilitator closed the group meeting by going the thematic issues discussed during the session. There was a group hug at the end of the session.

Concepts and Methods used in the Session

The session employed two concepts and methods in the session. The first one was the serenity prayer. The prayer was recited during the opening of the session. It was a prayer requesting God to give the alcoholics the serenity to accept the things that they could not change. The prayer also asked for alcoholics’ strength to change the things they could and enough wisdom to differentiate between the two. The serenity prayer is believed to have the wisdom to heal. It is also connected to the AA’s Twelve Steps strong conviction on reliance on God and strong will. The serenity prayer sort of help addicts realize that they are trapped by alcohol and only God can deliver them.

The therapists use this prayer to help the addicts seek inner peace, gain strength and acquire more knowledge and wisdom to deal with alcoholism. It is a prayer meant to be recited by the addicts when they are their lowest moments. The prayer acts like a light in their darkest times. The fact that they have a divine power watching over them gives them power to face the situation, make more steps towards recovery and face each day afresh.

After the serenity prayer, the participants recited the 12 steps to recovery as explained in the ‘Big Books of Alcoholic Anonymous,’ written by Alcoholic Anonymous founders Bill and Bob (Bill and Bob, 2013). The book highlights the experiences of women and men who went through alcoholic addiction and conquered the vice. The major focus of the session was the twelve-step method as outline in the book.

The book is divided into two parts where the first part has about 264 pages. The pages give a detailed explanation of the 12 Step concepts and the how these steps help alcoholics overcome addiction. The second part of the book explains how the 12 steps work. This is the part that was read and recited at the meeting. Just like the serenity prayer, the 12 step program is a realization of the desire to seek spiritual help to overcome addiction. It outlines the journey to a spiritual awakening.

Closed Meeting

Closed meetings are organized on behalf of alcohol addicts who do not wish to hold alcoholic related discussions in the presence of family members, spouses or friends. This forum is for those members who desire to stop drinking (Huebner, 2011). During the meeting, they share experiences, strengthen each other’s quest to get better, and give hope for a better future.

Open Meetings

Open meetings are meetings help to help people struggling with alcoholic addition. Unlike the closed meeting, open meetings are available to friends, spouses, family members and spouses who would want to be present when sessions are ongoing.

Steps

Steps involve the 12 Steps proposed by the founders of Alcoholic Anonymous. As discussed earlier, the 12 steps involve a well laid out plan of road to recovery from addiction. The Steps include an admission that alcohol had conquered the minds of the addicts, that there a greater power to help them restore their soberness, that they willingly surrender to God for help and they sought to face their moral issues fearlessly (Smith and Bill, 2013). The steps also involve the admission of their wrongs to God and their readiness to rely on him to help them with their shortcomings. The steps also help addicts make a list of all the people they have caused harm, make amends with these people, and seek prayer and meditation to improve their condition.

Sponsor

A sponsor is a person who is mandated with taking care of a new member who joins a support group. A sponsor is usually a person who has been through the journey of recovery, and has a great deal of knowledge on recovery from alcohol addiction. A sponsor is someone who is conversant with the 12 Steps to recovery. A sponsor should be understanding and sympathetic to a new member joining the support group.

Home Group

A home group is a group consisting of alcoholic anonymous members residing in the same area.

References

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Smith, B. & Bill, W. (2013). The big book of alcoholics’ anonymous paper back.