

QUICK START DISCUSSION PROMPTS

SMART RECOVERY SAN DIEGO

Ever felt at a loss to keep the discussion going when it feels the silence has dragged on too long? What if the Check-In process didn't yield any themes? Would you like to have some inspiration for a meeting?

The following handy, dandy Quick Start Discussion Prompts are here to help bridge an awkward silence, outline a framework for a meeting, and/or have in your back pocket if the discussion goes far afield and you'd like to bring it back to "doing SMART".

Prompt categories include a section for general recovery discussions and one for each of the four main Points of SMART Recovery.

GENERAL RECOVERY DISCUSSIONS

- What is the most important idea you've gained from SMART Recovery so far?
- What change are you most proud of?
- What is your favorite SMART Recovery tool? How have you used it recently?
- Which of the 4-points (Motivation, Cravings, Problem-Solving, Lifestyle Balance) has been your biggest focus recently?
- You are about to say *only one sentence*. What do you need to be successful in recovery?
- What is the best idea you've heard about how to recover?
- What is the most surprising thing about your recovery process?
- Which of the 4-points (Motivation, Cravings, Problem-Solving, Lifestyle Balance) has been the most important to you overall?
- What SMART tool have you used in the last week?
- How do you practice gratitude?
- What is the best thing that happened to you this last month?
- What is one boundary you set that has helped you in your recovery?
- What SMART tool would you like to learn more about and put into use?
- Is there an area/situation where you're struggling and don't yet have a tool/strategy that is working for you?
- What do you think makes a meeting more likely to support positive changes in your life?
- Besides changing the behavior that initially brought you to SMART Recovery, what has been the most beneficial change you have made in your life since beginning recovery?



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GENERAL DISCUSSION/RECOVERY (CONT)

- Whether it has been 10 days, 30, 45 or years, what do you enjoy most about the changes you have made?
- What would you like to re-experience because you did not experience it fully the first time?
- Describe a time when you believed giving up was the right thing to do, but regretted it in hindsight.
- Who deserves credit in your life that you've been reluctant to acknowledge?
- Where in your life do you feel misunderstood?
- What do you want to know that you've been too scared to ask?
- How do you let yourself down?
- What activities do you do for self-care?
- What big decision in your life felt scary at the time but looking back was the best decision you could have made?
- What part of yourself are you holding back currently?
- What have you learned about life from loss or death?
- Do you think it's ever possible to be an "overnight success"?
- Describe an "a-ha" moment where you finally recognized how a past moment shaped you.
- Describe a time you achieved what you were striving for only to feel disappointed by the success.
- How are you able to love someone you don't agree with?
- What does it mean to be human?
- If you met your hero, what question would you ask?
- Describe a time when you were your own worst enemy.
- What do you love about yourself that you worry others struggle to accept?
- What have you done in the last 6 months that you're most proud of?
- What's something you're sure you'd never do but secretly wish you had the guts?

POINT 1 - BUILDING AND MAINTAINING MOTIVATION

- What action could you take tomorrow to enhance your process of change? What could you do today to increase the chances that you will take action?
- What are your one or two top values?



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POINT 1 - BUILDING AND MAINTAINING MOTIVATION (CONT)

- What value of yours has been especially important to you lately? Why?
- What is the greatest benefit of changing your addictive behavior?
- What could you do (pick one: next week, this month, this year, this decade) to advance your recovery or your life?
- What value of yours has suffered most because of your addictive behavior?
- What has been the most surprising benefit of changing your addictive behavior?
- What are the top three reasons you choose not to use/do anymore?
- What is happening in your life now that is better because you stopped using/doing?
- What is happening in your life now that is worse because you stopped using/doing?
- What makes people ready for change?
- What piece of advice would you give your younger self if you could?
- What made you ready to change?
- Why is change difficult for you?
- What do you get out of this group and why do you keep coming back?
- What do you know better than anyone else you know?
- How do you prevent missed opportunities?
- Where are you falling short of your potential?
- What did you daydream about as a kid that you'd like to make a reality?
- What are your core values?
- What's your North Star?
- What would you hope would be said in your eulogy?
- What do you think you'll regret not doing on your deathbed?
- How has inaction impacted your life negatively?
- When do you feel most alive?

POINT 2 - COPING WITH URGES AND CRAVINGS

- While having an urge, what belief would most likely get you to use?
- When you experience an urge, does it seem like someone else is talking to you? Who (or what) is it?
- Tell us about a very strong urge you had, and how you coped with it.
- What is your "go-to" tool/strategy when you have an urge?



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POINT 2 - COPING WITH URGES AND CRAVINGS (CONT)

- Many of us associate our unhelpful behavior with other things like people or places. What has been the most difficult association to avoid or break in your process of change?
- What has been the most challenging trigger/cue for you?
- If you are having a difficult time, would you be willing to reach out for support? If so, who would you contact?
- Do you think keeping a log of your urges and when/why they are occurring would help you? Why or why not?

POINT 3 - MANAGING THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND BEHAVIORS

- In your evolving beliefs, what important and helpful belief is emerging?
- You are about to say *one sentence*. You need to tell someone something. Don't tell us who it is, or the story behind the sentence. Just tell us the *one sentence*, with expression.
- What belief would make your life better?
- If you fully accepted yourself, what would you do differently?
- Do you feel there are any problematic terms that come along with changing the behavior that brought you to SMART Recovery? What are they and why don't they work for you?
- What belief is your biggest obstacle in life? What belief could you replace it with?
- What is the biggest problem you feel you need to face in your recovery?
- How can you tell if someone you know has a high level of self-acceptance?
- What was your high and low today (or this week)?
- What is one thing you are proud of yourself for?
- Is there one emotion that is more difficult for you to "sit with" or process?
- What beliefs have you adopted from other people that don't serve you now?
- If people came with a warning label, what would yours say?
- Where in your life are you making unhelpful assumptions?
- When have you spoken out when it would have been easier to say nothing?
- How best do you receive criticism?
- What do you worry you'll never get over?
- What is one irrational belief you have successfully processed?

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POINT 3 - MANAGING THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND BEHAVIORS (CONT)

- What is one belief you've held firmly at some point in your life that has ended up changing?
- What is one mistake you made this last week and what have you learned from it that will help you in the future?
- When you have a particularly difficult day, what are three things you can do to shift your mood or outlook in a positive direction?
- What would make the changes you're trying to make easy?
- What negative thinking patterns prevent you from growing into the person you want to become?
- What negative thoughts about yourself are you holding onto?
- How often do you reflect on your life or behaviors?
- If someone wanted to annoy you easily, what would they have to do?
- What's the last thing you changed your mind about and why?
- Describe a belief you'd still hold tight, even if someone showed you evidence to the contrary.
- Describe an argument you had that helped shape the person you are today.
- What have you done from a place of insecurity that has had long-lasting effects?
- Tell us about a time you fought for yourself?
- What compliments do you struggle to believe?
- Where are you playing it too safe?
- What belief keeps getting you into trouble?
- What affirmation do you need to wire into your programming?
- What needs to happen for you to put courage over comfort?
- Where is your fear of responsibility preventing you from taking the next step?
- Where are your beliefs limiting your potential?
- What's your instinctive reaction when someone or something hurts you?
- How easy is it for you to lose your temper and why?
- How has peer pressure shaped your life?
- When do you feel most vulnerable? What is your first response?
- Where are you not accepting of your role in the problem?
- What emotion is the hardest for you to "sit with"?



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POINT 4 - LIVING A BALANCED LIFESTYLE

- To lead a more balanced life, what could you do more?
- To lead a more balanced life, what could you do less?
- Where are you struggling most right now with maintaining a balanced life? Is it something you're neglecting or something you're neglecting other things for?
- We talk a lot about goal setting in SMART Recovery. What do you know about setting goals and how do you use this tool in your process of change? Where do you struggle with goal setting?
- What are you working on when time fades away?
- What do you think of when someone mentions "self-care"?
- Is there a difference between feeling happy and feeling content? What do you think is more important for your life?
- What are 3 signs of resilience you see in yourself?
- What short-term goal are you working toward right now?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- What is your favorite VACI (Vitality Absorbing Creative Interest)?
- What gets in the way of you taking care of yourself?
- What does our culture say about self-care?
- What is the most helpful thing you're doing for yourself right now?
- What is one habit you wish you could replace, and what would you replace that habit with?
- In which area of your life do you feel the most stressed?
- What is the behavior you're currently practicing that is causing you the most harm?
- What activity in your life brings you the most joy?
- Are you satisfied with your eating habits?
- When do you feel like you are operating at your best?
- Do you feel like you are making the most out of each day?
- How often do you spend time outside?
- How do you feel when you walk into your workspace or home?
- Describe your sleep patterns?
- What areas of your life do you prioritize?



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POINT 4 - LIVING A BALANCED LIFESTYLE (CONT)

- How are you managing your time?
- What is the first thing you thought when you woke up?
- What's at the top of your bucket list, and how will you make it happen?
- What are daily rituals that you swear by?
- What's your go-to strategy for achieving your goals?
- What skill do you need to acquire to achieve your next goal?
- Where are you making work the reason for not achieving your dreams?
- What would you do for work even if you weren't paid for it?
- How are you creating a life well-lived?
- What would it take to remove the biggest obstacle between you and your goals?
- What act of self-care should become a non-negotiable in your life?
- What seemingly insignificant thing contributes greatly to your happiness?
- What are your thoughts about self-compassion and recovery?

