

Substance Use Discussion Questions

- 1** Oftentimes, a person's relationship with drugs and alcohol will change over time. For example, you might have initially used drugs only a few times a month as a fun way to relax, but eventually they become an everyday necessity. How has *your* relationship with drugs changed from the time that you first used to now? Do you still use for the same reasons, or have those reasons changed?

- 2** Some people can function adequately, and complete their responsibilities such as work or school, despite having an addiction. However, for most of these people, functioning would be even better without drugs. How did your functioning change at work or school after you started using? Even if you are able to keep up with your responsibilities while you use, how do you recovery would change things?

- 3** The rituals and activities that surround drug use can be difficult to give up. For example, a smoker might enjoy the ritual of having a cigarette--not just the nicotine. Similarly, a drinker might have more trouble saying goodbye to their drinking buddies than to alcohol itself. What are some rituals or activities that *you* associate with drug use, and how do you feel about giving them up? Do you think you could achieve recovery without changing your lifestyle?

- 4** Many people use drugs as a crutch to help them handle difficult emotions such as anger, depression, and anxiety. These emotions are challenging for everyone, and it can be hard to resist the temptation of an easy escape. What choices does a person have, other than drug use, when they are confronted with these painful emotions? What emotions might lead you to using drugs or alcohol?

- 5** Some people say that addiction is a disease, and others believe it is a choice. What do *you* think, and why? How do you believe counseling, support groups, or other treatments could help a person who struggles with addiction?

- 6** Drugs and alcohol affect your judgment, thoughts, feelings, and more. Such changes might lead you to make decisions that you *would not* make while using drugs or alcohol. Have you done things under the influence of drugs that you wouldn't have done while using drugs or alcohol? Have you noticed any behavior patterns that occur only when you are intoxicated?