

## **A.R.T.S. Step One Workshop Agenda**

*Note: The suggested timing adds up to about 2 hours and 30 minutes.*

### **Opening**

*Leader/Facilitator:* Welcome everyone. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a \_\_\_\_\_. I will be leading this workshop today. Also serving today are:

*(Tech person and any others helping to run the workshop introduce themselves.)*

Thank you for participating in today's workshop on Step One. This is an opportunity for more intensive study than you might experience in a meeting. The workshop is designed to go for about 2 ½ hours with a ten-minute break.

The Twelve Steps of A.R.T.S. Anonymous are the program of recovery. The book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, where the Twelve Steps first appear, states, "Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery." Through the Twelve Steps it is possible to dismantle and move through the blocks that prevent us from fully engaging in our creative expression. It is possible to find freedom from what holds us back.

We invite those who participate in these workshops to share them with others. The scripts are available on the [artsanonymous.org](http://artsanonymous.org) website. By sharing experience, strength and hope, all who participate benefit. It is also possible that those who submit writing to the Literature Committee could have it included in future A.R.T.S. Literature.

All who wish to join me, let's begin with the Serenity Prayer.

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.*

We will now read the Steps of A.R.T.S. Anonymous. Are there volunteers willing to help read?

*(Tech screenshares the Twelve Steps of A.R.T.S. Anonymous)*

*Leader/Facilitator:* I will now give a brief overview of today's workshop.

-We will have a speaker for about 7-10 minutes.

-This will be followed by introductions.

-We will then present questions for writing on Step One.

-Writing for about 20 minutes, followed by a ten-minute break.

-Then we will go into breakout rooms to share in a small group.

-When we come out of the Breakout rooms there will be some additional questions for about 10 more minutes of writing.

-After that we will have an open sharing of what people wrote, or what they wish to share about the Step, or their experience at today's workshop.

Are there any questions before we go on? Much of this will become clearer as we go.

### **Speaker**

*Leader/Facilitator:* Please allow me to introduce the Speaker for today, \_\_\_\_\_, who will share personal experience, strength and hope with Step One.

*(Allow up to 10 minutes for the Speaker. Tech gives a warning of time remaining if the Speaker wants it)*

*Leader/Facilitator:* Thank you\_\_\_\_\_.

### **Round Robin/Introductions**

We will now go into a round robin session. In one minute or less, please introduce yourself by your first name and your art, what you hope to get from the workshop

today, or anything you wish to say about what you just heard from the speaker. I will go in the order of who I see on the screen until everyone has had their minute.

*(Up to 20 minutes; it depends on the number present. Tech times)*

## **Question Sets 1 and 2 and Writing**

*Leader/Facilitator:*

**Step One: We admitted we were powerless over our creativity - that our lives had become unmanageable.**

Many of us come to the A.R.T.S. Anonymous 12-Step Program because we feel lost, or feel blocked, or are in emotional pain about our creative expression. Some of us engage in activities to avoid our calling to create. Others are fearful of sharing what we create with anyone.

What does it mean to be powerless over our creativity? Are our lives really so unmanageable? The Twelve Traits of A.R.T.S. Anonymous can help identify what our own powerlessness and unmanageability looks like.

*(Tech screenshares the Twelve Traits of A.R.T.S. Anonymous.)*

Before recovery and seeking a solution in A.R.T.S. Anonymous, these were some of the common traits many of us experience or experienced.

1. We grew up in an atmosphere of invalidation which resulted in ambivalence about our artistic expression.
2. In any given 24-hour period we found ways, consciously or unconsciously, to avoid doing that which gave us the most joy – expressing our creativity.
3. We withdrew from our art by investing ourselves in lifestyles, relationships and work activities incompatible with our artistic purpose. Our creative energy was often diverted into destructive compulsions.
4. We made needless sacrifices for our art and yet were afraid to make the necessary sacrifices. We were unable to balance the significant areas of our lives – Physical, Financial, Social, Love, Family, Spiritual and Creative.

5. Self-defeating thoughts and societal myths turned in our heads: It's too late – I'm too old – I'm not ready – I am not enough – Art is not practical – Artists are neurotic – You'll starve. We accepted these as true when, in fact, they were not.
6. We felt intimidated by other artists' success. Jealousy, envy, fear, self-pity, perfectionism, resentment and other character defects blocked our creative expression.
7. We stood repeatedly at the edge of a beginning; unable to move forward, avoiding our art, and unable to commit to pursuing or developing our creativity as a means of earning a living. The concept of supporting ourselves through our art seemed overwhelming.
8. We thought of our art as divorced from reality, denying ourselves the right to follow our dreams. We forgot that artists are entitled to their right work and deserve the happiness and success that right work brings.
9. We denied our responsibility to fully develop and realize our talent. We did not feel worthy of the success we achieved or desired. We felt like a fraud.
10. Being multi-talented, we had difficulty discerning our true artistic vision, making a commitment to it and establishing the priorities to fulfill it.
11. We had difficulty following through on projects and frequently sabotaged our efforts. We wanted to work at our art but didn't know how. We became impatient with the process, forgetting that the results come in God's time, not ours. Our time was unmanageable.
12. We were afraid of our creative energy and mistrusted our artistic instincts. Lacking spiritual awareness, we did not see ourselves as channels for the infinite creative process. We did not realize our art is a gift to be shared.

*(Tech screenshares Step One and the two sets of questions below)*

**Step One: We admitted we were powerless over our creativity - that our lives had become unmanageable.**

**Experience: What does Step One mean to me?**

- What inspired me to attend my first A.R.T.S. meeting?

- What do I think it means to be “powerless” over my creativity?
- What is my relationship with creativity, and how does powerlessness apply?
- Are there ways I try to control my creativity or art making? How does this affect me?
- What is the difference between being powerless and being empowered?

**Strength: How do I feel about Step One?**

- What keeps me from taking Step One?
- What happens when I am in denial over my ability to control and manage my creativity?
- Do I struggle to take care of and respect my creative expressions?
- What are some of the signs that my life has become unmanageable?
- How do the opinions of others affect my creativity?

*Leader/Facilitator:* These questions are offered as prompts to choose from for writing on Step One. The questions are loosely divided by an emphasis on what we think and how we feel. They are optional, and you may have other ways to explore Step One.

Is there a volunteer willing to read the questions aloud?

Are there any questions before we begin writing?

*(Allow 20 minutes to write. Tech times)*

**Break**

*Leader/Facilitator:* We will now take a 10-minute break. Please everyone, mute yourself. If you are doing anything distracting, please turn off your video. Some of you may wish to continue writing during this time. We will all come back together at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock.

*(Break for 10 minutes. Tech times)*

## **Breakout Rooms**

*Leader/Facilitator:* Welcome back everyone. Some of you may feel you have things to talk about. We will now be putting everyone into a breakout room of 4-5 people for sharing on the Step for about 25-30 minutes. There are suggested guidelines and a format for the breakout rooms posted in the chat. Breakout rooms will be given a 5-minute warning before closing.

*(Tech person first puts the breakout room format and guidelines below in the chat. They then assign and open the breakout rooms. Use the "broadcast" feature to give a warning for when the breakout rooms will close)*

### **Breakout Room Format:**

- Everyone briefly introduces themselves by their name and art
- The group selects a volunteer to read the guidelines
- The group selects a volunteer to be the Timer
- The group decides how much time to give each person to share, and may include a warning for when time is up

### **Guidelines:**

- Each participant may share their writing or what they are learning about the Step
- Please mute your microphone while others are sharing or reading
- Please avoid engaging in crosstalk or asking questions about what another is sharing

## Final Questions and More Writing

*Leader/Facilitator:* Welcome back, everyone. A final set of questions will now be introduced to explore the hope that can be found in this Step. You have the option to use any one or all of these questions, or another question. Is there a volunteer to read the questions?

*(Tech person screenshares the set of questions in the box below)*

### **Hope: How does Step One relate to me and my creative expression?**

- How might accepting that I am powerless over my creativity help me to actively enjoy my creative gifts?
- If I can imagine letting go of fear and control, would I be more empowered to do my art? Would my life become more manageable? What would my day look like?
- What would treating my creations with respect look like?

*Leader/Facilitator:* We now have ten more minutes to write.

*(Allow ten minutes to write. Tech times)*

## Open Sharing and Wrap Up

*Leader/Facilitator:* In the time we have left, we will take a show of hands to hear from those who wish to share something they wrote, or any breakthroughs or "aha" moments they experienced today.

*(Allow about 20 minutes depending on time. Tech times)*

## Closing

*Leader/Facilitator:* Are there any announcements related to A.R.T.S. or to this series of workshops?

*(Tech person screen-shares the Closing Prayer)*

*Leader/Facilitator:* We will end with the Serenity Prayer, but first, may I ask someone to read the Closing Prayer of A.R.T.S. Anonymous?

*In closing, I would like to say that no matter how distanced we may feel from our creative sources, no matter how long it has been since we were in touch with our creative spirit, or how feeble may seem our creative impulses, they are reawakening in our Higher Power's time, through this program and through our actions, no matter how small or how simple, a day at a time. I may not be able to see my own growth, or even to see my creations as beautiful, but I am able to see yours as inspiring and enriching my emotional, spiritual and physical world. We are not recovering merely to hide our light under a bushel; our creative gifts are a gift. To celebrate them, we humbly apply ourselves, sometimes to the work of art, and sometimes to play. May A.R.T.S. Anonymous teach us that our art, celebrated, will benefit and feed our own souls first, and the world's second, for the world hungers as much for this beauty as for food. We meet here together to feed this deeper hunger.*

*Leader/Facilitator:* Please join me in the Serenity Prayer

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.*