

Advocacy, Choices and Empowerment (ACE), Inc.

Member Handbook (11/09)

PURPOSE

The purpose of ACE is to provide a safe, nurturing environment where people living with mental health challenges can grow in their recovery through peer support, learning, activities and socialization. ACE will provide support and access to resources to help our members in their recovery.

- *“A.C.E., Inc. is a consumer-driven agency and caring community whose mission is to reduce the isolation of consumers of mental health agencies, and to improve their quality of life. This goal is met by challenging, encouraging and offering hope to members through peer support, educational services, social and recreational activities, advocacy, and opportunities for community involvement.”* (Our mission statement.)

WELCOME TO ACE CLUBHOUSE

Your first contact with ACE Clubhouse will be through the registration process. This will include a tour of the clubhouse (please ask any questions you may have) and an intake procedure which will include registration as a member of ACE, and a review of the guidelines for ACE members. If there is anything you do not understand, please ask about it. If you have difficulty seeing or reading, please ask the staff member to read it to you. They will be happy to help you.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ACE MEMBERSHIP

1. You must be at least 18 years old and reside in Tuscarawas or Carroll County.
2. You must not be a threat to yourself or others.
3. You must follow ALL of the rules, guidelines and policies of ACE. (You may request to see the policy book, which a staff member will review with you and explain the policies. You may not have the book to keep with you.)
4. You must pay the dues to be a member.
5. You must be an individual labeled with a mental health diagnosis, a past or present consumer of mental health services, or a support person for someone dealing with mental health challenges.

- *No person is denied membership because of race, religious belief, gender, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, national origin or agency where you receive services.*

ATTENDANCE

1. There is no requirement that you attend a certain time or day. You choose when you want to attend. Please check out the schedule because there are many opportunities to share support, educational opportunities and to HAVE FUN!
2. There is an attendance sheet at the front entrance. You must sign in when you come in and sign out when you leave. You must list the correct time on this sheet. In an emergency (like a fire), this will tell us who is safely out of the building.
3. In certain weather conditions or emergencies, the Clubhouse and outside activities may be canceled. If you have any doubt as to the Clubhouse being opened, please call to make sure people are there.

HOUSEKEEPING RULES

1. If you make a mess, clean it up- whether in the Clubhouse or the vans. No littering of trash or cigarette butts.
2. Help with chores to keep the Clubhouse neat and clean. (This is also a health and safety issue.) If you see something that could be a danger, please bring it to the attention of staff as soon as possible.
3. Keep your belongings with you. We are not responsible for lost items.
4. The restrooms are located on the second floor and by the kitchen.
5. Parking is on the street. Please lock your car for safety.
6. Lunch is generally served at 12:00, noon.
7. Cell phones are permitted, but please do not disturb others or a group meeting by talking in a crowded room or talking loudly. Please step out of the room to a more private area to take your call- outdoors or the music room, if it's not in use. Please try to limit your incoming calls to prevent too much disruption and re-enter your group or activity as quietly as possible. Please limit cell phone use on ACE transportation to emergencies only.
8. The phone on the first floor is for member use. Please remember that there are others who may need to use the phone, so keep your calls short. Try to give people the privacy that they need by not listening to their call. In order to maintain phone privileges, you **MUST** follow the guidelines for phone use, which are posted on the bulletin board above the phone area.
9. You may be asked to complete surveys from time to time on your satisfaction with the Clubhouse. These are used to help us become aware of issues and make improvements in the program. It also helps us with receiving funding to keep the Clubhouse open and offering outside activities.

GROOMING RULES

Keep yourself clean and neat and avoid strong body odor by bathing regularly, washing your hair, and brushing your teeth. When using cologne, please apply it very lightly. Some members have allergies to perfumes and colognes. Please respect their needs. If you need help or have questions about this, please talk to staff. They are there to help.

BEHAVIOR RULES

- *ACE premises include the sidewalks around the ACE property.*

1. **NO** alcohol or illegal drug use on ACE premises or at ACE sponsored events. This can result in the loss of your membership. Do not participate in any activity while under the influence. Do not talk about using drugs or alcohol, current cravings or past experiences, unless it is in a formal discussion session
2. There is to be **NO** sharing, selling or trading of prescription drugs on ACE premises or at ACE sponsored events. If you take medication, bring only the dosage you will need for the day or the time you will be at ACE, and keep it securely on your person at all times. Sharing or selling prescriptions is a crime.
3. **NO WEAPONS PERMITTED** on premises or at ACE sponsored events.
4. You must be willing to accept direction from the staff and lend your cooperation.
5. **RESPECT EVERYONE** – (staff, members and visitors). Honor people's differences and learn about them with an open mind instead of putting them down.
6. You must represent ACE with dignified, respectable, responsible behavior at all times. We also ask you to do this when you are in the community, as you represent ACE.

7. NO fighting, swearing (any type of profanity), verbal or physical threats, intimidation, sexual harassment (which includes off-color jokes, name-calling and touching.)
8. NO abuse – physical, verbal or taking advantage of people.
9. No public displays of affection. This can offend others.
10. NO stealing or “bumming” of cigarettes, money, food or possessions.
11. When someone tells you “No” do not keep bothering him or her about the issue.
12. No excessive noise or rudeness. Be kind to each other.
13. Keep a cheerful, pleasant, helpful and non-judgmental attitude. We are all here for support and acceptance of who we are.
14. If you are having a personal problem (even at home or work), schedule a time with staff to talk to them in private. We want to respect your confidentiality.
15. Support and be sensitive to the needs of others, avoid gossip, put-downs, back biting, and a harsh tone of voice. If you are having difficulty with another member or members, we expect you to keep your disagreements outside of ACE.
16. Be responsible for your own actions. You are not responsible for the actions of another person. Everybody makes a choice to behave the way they do.
17. Respect people’s private space and boundaries.
18. Keep what you hear at ACE, at ACE. Nobody (including you) wants to hear what he or she said in confidence out on the street. If they did, they would tell it themselves.
19. Do not purposely damage ACE property.

DRESS CODE RULES

1. Dress appropriately at all times – on ACE property or at ACE sponsored events. Nobody wants to see part of your body (that should be covered) hanging out of your clothes.
2. NO mini or micro-skirts are permitted.
3. Shoes must be worn. Sandals are permitted.
4. Shirts and pants must be worn that are not revealing or provocative.
5. Have clothes clean and odor-free with no holes where they reveal private areas of your body.
6. REMEMBER: The way you dress is the single, most important, unspoken communication you can make about yourself to others. And if you look good, it is easier to feel good about yourself.

EQUIPMENT RULES

1. Use proper care, safety and follow posted rules when using any computers or equipment.
2. Absolutely NO outside discs, CD’s, DVD’s or ANY OTHER item that may cause a virus in our computers. Not following this rule can result in the loss of your computer use.