

Open Share Group Format

Leader: “Good evening. I’m a believer in Jesus Christ who struggles with _____, my name is _____.”

1. Welcome and Opening Prayer

Optional: Short version of the Serenity Prayer

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

Leader: “This meeting is specifically for those who struggle with _____, and for those who are exploring this area of recovery for themselves.”

Optional: Read “The Problem,” “The Solution,” or the group’s Information Sheet to help focus the group, to help the Newcomer identify, and to help fill in the extra time typical of smaller groups.

2. Introductions

Leader: “Let’s take a minute now to introduce ourselves. I’ll begin, and we’ll go around the room. If you don’t want to say anything, you can just say pass. ‘I’m a believer in Jesus Christ who struggles with _____, my name is _____.’ The reason we introduce ourselves this way (I’m a believer...) is that our identity is in Jesus Christ—the One and only Higher Power. Then we go on to say, ‘who struggles with _____.’ Our struggles are not our identity! Our struggles are our hurts, hang-ups, habits, and sins.”

(Leaders, please list only one or two struggles here to keep it simple for the Newcomer.)

3. Read Group Guidelines

Leader: “Before we open the meeting for sharing, I would like to share our Small Group Guidelines. These guidelines are designed to provide a safe and productive meeting for everyone. Please listen carefully and honor these guidelines through the meeting.”

- **Keep your sharing focused on your own thoughts and feelings. Please limit your sharing to three to five minutes.**
- **There is no cross-talk please.** Cross-talk is when two people engage in a conversation during the meeting. Each person is free to express their feelings without interruptions.
- **We are here to support one another.** We will not attempt to “fix” one another.
- **Anonymity and confidentiality are basic requirements.** What’s shared in the group stays in the group. **The only exception is when someone threatens to injure themselves or others.**
- **Offensive language has no place in a Christ-centered recovery group.**

4. **Leader’s Focus**

Leader reads through lesson acrostics from Bulletin Inserts passed out during the Large Group Meeting, then presents the topic question. For example: What part of the testimony touched you the most?

5. **Focus Question and Open Sharing**

Ask who would like to respond to the focus question to share first, and then transition the meeting to open sharing for those remaining. Or your two group leaders may want to share first to set the tone for the group. When groups are very young, most people in the circle are new to recovery. They need the modeling and transparency of the leaders to set the tone for the group discussion.

It’s vital to keep the Group Guidelines during Open Share time.

6. **Wrap Up**

After sharing time, thank everyone for participating.

Optional: For groups that want to offer sobriety chips:

Leader: “Tonight we are going to offer chips for various lengths of sobriety. There is nothing magical about these chips. They remind us of where we’ve been and where we are now by God’s power. These chips mark special occasions or clean time in our recovery.”

Optional: Individual prayer requests as time allows.

7. **Closing Prayer**

8. **Invitation to Solid Rock Café**

Encourage attendees to use this time to connect with others in the Open Share Group and find Accountability Partners or Sponsors.