

Basic And Extended Group Guidelines

(The Basic Guidelines are in bold)

1. **Keep your sharing focused on your own thoughts and feelings, using “I” and “Me” statements. Limit your sharing to three to five minutes.**

Using “I” and “Me” statements keeps us focused on our own thoughts, feelings, and actions, allowing us to take responsibility for our own recovery. Please adhere to the three-to-five-minute rule, so that everyone has an opportunity to share; and to ensure that one person does not dominate the group sharing time.

2. **There is NO cross talk. Cross talk is when two individuals engage in conversation excluding all others. Each person is free to express his or her feelings without interruptions.**

Cross talk is also making comments or asking questions while someone is sharing, speaking to another member of the group while someone is sharing or responding to what someone has shared during his or her time of sharing. This guideline is about respect. When other participants are sharing, we don't want to interrupt their thoughts and feelings, which may be very deep, painful, scary, sad, etc. It's their time about them, not us. Basically, anything that would give the speaker the impression that we don't care about what they have to share, could be considered cross talk.

3. **We are here to support one another, not “fix” another.**

We do not give unsolicited advice or attempt to solve someone else's problems. This includes sharing scriptures for the purpose of preaching or teaching during our time of sharing. We also do not offer book recommendations or counselor referrals. This helps us stay focused on our own issues.

4. Anonymity and confidentiality are basic requirements. What is shared in the group stays in the group. The only exception is when people threaten to injure themselves or others.

It can be very hurtful to discover that someone's sharing is being discussed outside of the group time. Most of the people in recovery have never been able to "tell the secret." They need to be assured that this is a safe place to share. When communicating with group members, be careful to protect anonymity and confidentiality. Please be advised, if anyone threatens to hurt themselves or others, the group Leader has the responsibility to report it to the Celebrate Recovery Ministry Leader.

5. Offensive language has no place in a Christ-centered recovery group.

The main issue here is that the Lord's name is not used inappropriately. We also avoid graphic descriptions. If anyone feels uncomfortable with how explicitly a speaker is sharing regarding his/her behaviors, then you may indicate so by simply raising your hand. The speaker will then respect your boundaries by being less specific in his/her descriptions.

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR ONLINE GROUPS

6. All members must use headphones.

This will ensure that no one else can overhear what is shared in the group if others are present in the home. Even if you are alone in your home/car it helps all participants feel safe as they cannot ensure you are completely alone. So, we just keep this guideline consistent for everyone. This is to protect the confidentiality of what is shared in the group.

7. All members must be alone in the room with their camera on and facing them during the entire meeting.

If you have any backgrounds on, please turn those off. However, a blurred background is fine. Again, we ask that your camera be on, and that your whole face is visible and on camera for the entire group time. This is for two reasons. One, to protect the anonymity of the participants in the group. And second, to ensure that everyone in the group is present and being a respectful listener.

8. This meeting is not to be recorded.

This protects the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.