

Celebrate Recovery®

Open Share Group Format and Reminders

To create a consistent and safe experience, Open Share Groups at Brookwood Celebrate Recovery should honor the format below.

1. Welcome and Opening Prayer

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

2. Introductions (Leader always starts introductions for modeling and to create a safe environment)

Leader: “Let’s take a minute 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 found in Jesus Christ. Our struggles (which we sometimes call our hurts, habits, hang-ups or sin) are not our identity. They are not who we are. If you’re not a believer in Christ, you are welcome here, and you can introduce yourself however you feel comfortable.”

HINTS: • Leaders, please list only one or two struggles here to keep it simple for the Newcomer.

- If there are Newcomers in the group, have the sharing go in the direction that will allow the newcomer to hear as many other people share as possible before it’s their turn.

3. Read the Small Group Guidelines (see reverse)

4. Leader’s Focus

Leader presents the Leader Focus question(s). You may also add, “...What part of the testimony/lesson spoke to you or moved you the most?”

5. Focus Question and Open Sharing

One of the two group leaders should always share first. This will serve as a model to newcomers and participants that we are all on this journey together, that this is a safe place to share and demonstrate proper use of the guidelines.

HINT: Again, if there are newcomers in the group, have the sharing go in the direction that will allow the newcomer to hear as many other people share as possible before it’s their turn.

6. Wrap Up

- Thank everyone for participating. Hand out and explain the C.R. Prayer Cards and Connection Cards.
 - Explain that the prayer cards are voluntary, but if you choose to take a card you are committing to pray for that person throughout the week. Give people a few moments to fill them out. Continue with the announcements below as they write.
 - *Hint:* Do not hand out the prayer cards at the beginning. We do not want to encourage people to be writing their own prayer requests while others are sharing.
- Encourage people to “like” and follow www.facebook.com/CRatBrookwoodChurch/
- Invite people to Crosstalk Café and remind them to be respectful of other Open Shares still in session as they leave.
- “If you’d like information about connecting with our Care Department for additional help, please let me know.” (Care booklets are available at C.R. Sign-up Central as a tool for leaders to help people reach out for help.)
- “If you’d like to talk about how you can start or have a deeper relationship with Christ, please see me after group”
- Close in Prayer

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Small Group Guidelines and their Explanations

To create a consistent and safe experience, Open Share Groups at Brookwood Celebrate Recovery should read the guidelines as written below in conjunction with the meeting format on the back of this sheet every week.

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.

We may remind you about these guidelines during your sharing to ensure the consistency and safety of the group, but this is not a judgment about your sharing. It's simply part of the process."

- 1. Keep your sharing focused on your own thoughts and feelings, using "I" statements to talk about your own actions or thoughts. Limit your sharing to 3 to 5 minutes** so everyone has a chance to contribute.
- 2. There is NO cross talk. Each person is free to express his or her feelings without interruption.** Cross talk is anything that interrupts a persons' sharing such as conversation between others in the group, asking follow up questions, making comments or making "I can (or I can't) relate to you" statements. Speak only in terms of your own recovery and experience.
- 3. We are here to support one another, not "fix" one another.** Advice, book referrals, counselor referrals etc., should only be discussed outside of group time and if a person specifically asks.
- 4. Anonymity and confidentiality are basic requirements. What is shared in the group stays in the group.** Violations may result in expulsion from CR. **The only exception is when someone threatens to injure themselves or others** or we are concerned for someone's safety. Please remember this guideline during interactions at Crosstalk Café, when seeing other participants in public and in your social media posts.
- 5. Offensive language has no place in a Christ centered recovery program.** This includes graphic descriptions as they can be painful triggers for others in your group.