

FORMAT FOR REFUGE RECOVERY MEETING

Before the meeting, the chairperson is to find 5 volunteers:

- to lead the meditation,
- to read the Preamble,
- to read the Four Noble Truths,
- to read the Eightfold Path,
- to read the dedication of merit.

OPENING

To begin the meeting, Chairperson rings bell once and reads:

Welcome to the Refuge Recovery weekly group. All are welcome here. Our primary purpose is to offer a Buddhist-inspired path to recovery from addiction of all kinds. Our group recognizes and respects that there are multiple perspectives and approaches to recovery; we are gathered in the spirit of investigation of a Buddhist approach. We do not claim to be the only authority, but we know from direct experience that the path outlined in the Four Truths leads to the end of suffering that addiction causes. We invite you to investigate and practice these truths and find out for yourself if they are valuable to your process of recovery.

My name is ____, and I am the group's chairperson. My role is non-authoritative. I am not an empowered Buddhist meditation teacher; I am here to facilitate the group and to lead our discussion.

It is the intention of this group to explore Buddhist perspectives on recovery. This group is meant to be a support for your recovery, not as a substitute for your dedicated practice; spiritual growth and recovery require individual effort.

Please silence all electronic devices at this time or turn them on airplane mode as the vibrations are disruptive.

OPENING READINGS

Chairperson reads:

I have asked ____ to read the Refuge Recovery preamble.

I have asked ____ to read the Four Noble Truths.

I have asked ____ to read the Eightfold Path.

INTRODUCTIONS

Chairperson reads:

In an effort to build community and to get to know each other, we start each week by introducing ourselves. There is no need to identify yourself by anything other than your name, and, if you wish to do so, whether this is your first time here. My name is _____.

MEDITATION INSTRUCTIONS

Chairperson reads:

We will now do a 20-minute guided meditation. Please hold your comments and questions during the meditation. If you are new to meditation, know that there is no wrong way to meditate. Find a comfortable sitting position that is upright, but not uptight. Try to relax the muscles in your face, shoulders, and the the rest of your body. If you need to adjust your posture during the meditation, just do so in a way that is least likely to disturb the people around you.

I have asked ____ to be our meditation leader.

[These instructions are to be read slowly to the group, pausing between each instruction to allow the participants to absorb and implement these practices.]

TOPIC INTRODUCTION (choose an option below)

1. Book Reading Meeting Option

Chairperson reads:

We will be reading from the Refuge Recovery book starting on page _____. Please feel free to pass if you do not want to read aloud.

2. Speaker Meeting Option - *Speaker chooses a recovery based topic, or, tells their story of addiction and how Buddhist principles have helped them in their recovery process.*

Chairperson reads:

I have invited ____ to be our speaker. Please welcome _____.

GROUP SHARING

Chairperson reads:

The meeting is now open for sharing, please limit your sharing to 3-5 minutes. Try to keep your sharing focused on today's topic or on the relationship of recovery, addiction, and Buddhist principles.

In the spirit of practicing wise communication and community, please do not cross-talk; the chairperson may ask an individual to redirect if necessary. In addition, be mindful that we all come from different backgrounds and paths to recovery, so please speak your truth without the use of hate-speech or harmful language.

Sharing is tag-pass, please pick someone to share when you have finished. If you would like to pass, please tell us your name and pass to someone else.

[Leader picks first person to share.]

If someone asks what cross-talk is:

- *Cross-talk includes: offering advice, directly speaking to an individual member instead of the group, or questioning or interrupting whoever is speaking.*
- *Cross-talk is not: referring to someone's share if you are moved by it or if it reminds you of your own experience.*

CLOSING

Chairperson rings bell and reads:

The sharing part of the meeting is now closed. Thank you to all of our volunteers, to everyone who shared, and to everyone who listened. If you didn't get a chance to share and feel that you need to, please see me or someone after the close of the meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chairperson reads:

Dana Announcement: We do not have any dues or fees but there are expenses related to this meeting. Suggested donation is \$5 but we want you here more than your money, please give what you can but do not feel obligated to do so.

Are there any other announcements?

- Thank all our volunteers.
- Our other meetings can be found at refugerecovery.org
- Upcoming Refuge Recovery related events
- Cleanup announcement
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ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Chairperson reads:

In order to create an atmosphere of openness and to help this to be a group where we feel safe to share about our recovery, we ask that who you see here and what you hear here remain confidential.

DEDICATION OF MERIT

Chairperson reads:

We will close today's group with a dedication of merit. I have asked ____ to lead us in our offering.

Volunteer reads:

May any goodness that comes from our meeting be shared with all of the suffering addicts in this world.

May each of us do what needs to be done to free ourselves from the suffering of addiction and craving and may our recovery be an offering to all beings everywhere.

Chairperson rings the bell three times to end the meeting.