

**CR 101 Newcomer's Group  
Small Group Meeting Leader Guidelines**

1. Good evening. Welcome to the Celebrate Recovery Newcomer's group. The purpose of this group is to explain how Celebrate Recovery works and to help you identify an open-share group to attend next week. This is a 'one-time' only group. During the latter part of our time, we will divide into a men's group and a women's group to give you a chance to share and to ask specific questions.

2. Leader opens with prayer. (Keep it simple.)

3. Leader introduces themselves and shares a short (3-minute) testimony.

My name is (your name) and I am a believer in Jesus Christ who struggles with (your specific issue). ...

4. Leader introduces their co-leader, who shares a short (3-minute) testimony.

My co-leader tonight is (co-leader's name) and they are going to share a short testimony.

Co-leader shares.

5. At this time, we are going to watch a video that explains the basic of the Celebrate Recovery program. Although this video was made at another church, we follow the same essential program here.

Start the video. Instructions for this are on a separate sheet.

## *Celebrate Recovery*

6. Review the Friday night schedule.

We follow the same program here as you saw in the video. Our open meeting is on Friday night. We have a meal available at 6:00. Serving stops around 6:45 so we can clean up before the large group meeting. The large group meeting begins at 7:00 and runs until 8:00. In the large group, we have a time of praise and worship of our Higher Power, Jesus Christ. This is followed by a teaching on one of the 12 Steps of a testimony from a Celebrate Recovery participant. At 8:00, we break into open share groups. These groups are issue-specific and gender-specific. Then at 9:00, we meet back together for the Lighthouse Café, a time when we can share one-on-one with someone, find a sponsor, or just have time to relax together. We usually charge for dessert, but as newcomers, we invite you to enjoy dessert on us tonight. Childcare is available for children under 12 beginning at 6:45.

Give specific costs for the meal, childcare and dessert.

7. Explain Step Study groups and the difference between them and the open share groups.

Step Study groups meet at another time during the week. These groups help participants work the steps using the Celebrate Recovery workbooks. The group leader determines the meeting time. When the group has completed the first workbook, the group closes to new people. A new group will be started as soon as enough people express an interest.

There are several key differences between the open share groups and the Step Study groups. First, you are free to attend an open share group without actually sharing. However, as a participant in a Step Study group, you are making a commitment to share from your life. Second, no materials are required to participate in the open share groups, but sharing in a Step Study group revolves around answering the questions in the workbook prior to the meeting and sharing your answers with fellow participants during the meeting. Third, Step Study groups may have participants dealing with a variety of issues while the open share groups are more specific to a particular issue.

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8. Discuss program materials.

The only required materials for Celebrate Recovery are the workbooks used in the Step Study groups. These can be purchased at the literature table. There are other optional materials available, including the Life Recovery Bible and Life Recovery Devotional. There are also free handouts dealing with different issues or areas of recovery.

9. Discuss sponsors and accountability partners.

We have mentioned the terms 'sponsor' and 'accountability partner.' A sponsor is someone of the same gender who acts as a mentor and advisor within the program. This is someone you choose to help you as you work the steps. It is usually the person with whom you will share your moral inventory when you get to Step 5. Accountability partners are fellow participants who act as encouragers as you work your recovery.

10. Discuss chips and distribute newcomer chips.

We distribute chips as a way to encourage, recognize and celebrate recovery. The blue chip is our newcomer chip. We also use it in our groups as a 'desire' chip. This is a tangible reminder of the change we want to make in our lives.

We also give chips based on the length of sobriety. The chip;s for 30 days, 60 days, 90 days, 6 months and 9 months are given out in the open share groups. The 'annual' chips we give out in the large group.

We also have a '12 Step' chip that we give to those who finish a step study. These are also given out in the large group.

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11. In just a few minutes, we are going to break into a men's group and a women's group and have some time to share and answer any questions you may have. Before we do that, we need to go over our group guidelines. These guidelines are read in every small group meeting. They are designed to provide a safe and productive meeting for everyone. Adherence to these guidelines is a requirement for participation in the small groups. Please listen carefully as (co-leader) reads the guidelines.

Co-leader reads the group guidelines.

12. I want to point out a few things that you will encounter in your groups. First, you will notice that people introduce themselves as someone who struggles with a particular issue, rather than someone whose identity is the issue. They will say something like, "Hi, my name is (your name) and I am a believer in Jesus Christ who struggles with alcohol (or substitute your corresponding false identity)." We want to identify with our Higher Power Who can free us, rather than take our identity from our issue. When we introduce ourselves, the group will respond back, "Hi (your name)." This is to acknowledge and encourage each participant as they share.
13. Break into men's and women's groups for sharing.