

SUNDAY EVENING RCA MEETING LEAD COUPLE FORMAT

[Before beginning, pass out copies of the following to be read by members]

The Preamble – How It Works (part 1)

The Twelve Steps

How It Works (part 2)

Characteristics of Functional / Dysfunctional Couples

(On alternate weeks – Tools of Recovery)

Safety Guidelines

The Promises

(Give the timer to the timer couple)

6:00PM – (The Meeting Begins)

Welcome to the Sunday evening meeting of “Recovering Couples Anonymous”. My name is _____ and my name is _____. We are recovering couples, and your speaker couple for this evening. This is a couples meeting. Only couples may share. Interested individuals may attend this meeting twice, without their partner, to learn about the program.

After a moment of silent meditation, will those who care to please join us in the Serenity Prayer? In this meeting we substitute the words “us” and “we” for “me” and “I”.

[Pause....] “God, grant us the serenity
To accept the things we cannot change,
Courage to change the things we can,
And the wisdom to know the difference”

We hope you will find in this fellowship the help and friendship we have been privileged to enjoy. The format for this evening is a “Speaker Couple”, then open sharing. [The last week of the month alternates between a “Step Study” and Tradition Study]

Will the couple who has the RCA Preamble and How It Works Part One please share reading them?

Will the couple who has the Twelve Steps please share reading them?

Will the couple who has How It Works Part Two please share reading them?

We will start the meeting phone list circulating. Phone calls are a helpful tool of the program. “Phone list couples” are willing to receive RCA couple support calls. If you would be willing to receive RCA phone calls please add your name, number and e-mail address to the list. Free copies of the phone list should be available on the clipboard, if not, copies are available from the literature couple after the meeting.

Now let us introduce and greet ourselves as couples. [Leaders start.]

“My name is _____ and my name is _____ and we are a recovering couple”

[Each couple introduces themselves]

Would a couple now share reading (1st nine "Characters of Functional/Dysfunctional" one week, "Tools of Recovery" the next week, then the 2nd 9 "Characters of Functional/Dysfunctional" the next, then "Tools of Recovery" again the next, and so on.)

Would all available sponsors please raise their hands? Long distance sponsors are also available. Please see the literature couple for a phone list.

It is now time for us to share our experience, strength and hope. We will read our chosen topic material [or step], which is _____, and then we will speak for up to 7 minutes each. [Advise the timer couple how you want your time broken down]

[Speaker couple begins sharing]

It is now time for other couples to share their experience, strength and hope. When one partner shares, the other partner may share next if that partner chooses. Please limit your share to 3 minutes, the timer will go off at 2 minutes, please wrap up your share by the second beep at 3 minutes. We ask that everyone honor this boundary.

Group Conscience suggests that couples who shared last week refrain from raising their hands to share until 7:00pm. Newcomers are invited to share at anytime. However, the last six minutes of the meeting will be made available for them to share if they wish to do so. Please address your share to the group. Sharing will end at 7:20 PM.

[Sharing will end at 7:00PM if a business meeting is scheduled]

Would a couple now share reading the "Safety Guidelines"?

Who would like to begin sharing?

[As leaders of this evening's meeting, and if time permits, as sharing time nears the end you may ask for newcomers, or for anyone that has a burning desire, to share]

7:20 PM – [Sharing ends – or **7:05 PM** if there is a business meeting scheduled]

Thank you, that's all the time we have for sharing. If you did not get a chance to share, please speak to another couple after the meeting, or make a "couple-to-couple" phone call.

Now as we practice the "Seventh Tradition", will a couple please share the reading of "The Twelve Traditions"? Seventh tradition contributions are for rent, literature and the National Service Organization. The basket will be passed a second time for childcare expenses.

We now hand the meeting format over to the secretary couple for RCA related announcements.

[After the secretaries' announcements – close the meeting with...]

Would a couple please share reading "The Promises"?

Would those who care to please join in closing the meeting with The Unity Prayer?

The Safety Guidelines read at this meeting have been enhanced. By adding the following paragraphs to the reading of the Safety Guidelines we have found that these words have helped create a safe environment for everyone. The Safety Guidelines have been typed with the following paragraphs as part of that reading.

Safety Guideline Enhancement Language

Reminder: This is an open meeting and all are welcome. It is, however, a Recovering Couples Anonymous meeting, so only couples may share.

If you wish to discuss something your partner shared when you leave the meeting it is suggested you ask your partners permission before bringing up the subject. Your partner may say "Yes" or they may say "No". Everyone needs to feel safe to share whatever he or she needs to share.

To keep our meeting a safe place, if a violation of the safety guidelines occurs any member of the group can raise their hand. If the violation continues any member of the group can knock on his or her chair.

Learning and recognizing when we are violating the safety guidelines is hard, especially during difficult and emotional times. The gentle hand raising or knocking on the chair is not intended to shame or embarrass anyone, rather to help us keep focused on our own recovery in R.C.A.