

GROUP OUTLINE

Group 1: What is Conscious Recovery/Curiosity

(Preface and Introduction from *Conscious Recovery*)

(10 minutes) Meditation

(10 minutes) Check-In: Everyone states their name and says something about curiosity. (What it means to them, how it relates to their addiction and recovery, etc.)

Review Shared Agreements

- One Person Speaks at a Time
- Confidentiality
- Share the Air
- No "Fixing"
- "I" Statements
- Feedback Upon Request

(5 minutes) Introduction of Topic: Introduce clients to the concepts of the "Inner Villain" and "Inner Superhero." Inside each of us is our own deep knowing we are born with-The Superhero-that part of ourselves that is whole and perfect, and over time we develop the Villain or the Belief Systems that may tell us we are broken, also referred to as the "BS Villain". To be clear The BS Villain is not "bad" rather it represents a set of core false beliefs or Belief Systems and behaviors that often develop as ways to keep us protected, what Conscious Recovery refers to as brilliant strategies. However, over time these beliefs and behaviors may no longer serve us, the stories we have started to believe overtime which may or may not be true.

(5 minutes) Group Discussion: Take some time to briefly discuss the topic.

(25 minutes) Art Project: Ask clients to draw two pictures.

One picture of the superpower of curiosity and one of their BS Villain.

(25 minutes) Group Process (Dyads): Each person shares while their partner simply listens, using this format as a template for the conversation:

- Tell me about your addiction. (Clients hold the villain picture up and share from that perspective.)
- Tell me about your addiction. (Clients hold the superpower picture up and share from that perspective.)

Now have them switch roles and do the same thing.

Group Discussion (Time Permitting): How was that? Any insights? Any observations?

(10 minutes) Closing Process

GROUP OUTLINE

Group 2: The Spiritual Lens/Perception

(Preface and Introduction from *Conscious Recovery*)

(10 minutes) Meditation

(10 minutes) Check-In: Everyone states their name and says something about perception. (For example, you might ask the question: "How much of life is perception/perspective.")

Review Shared Agreements

- One Person Speaks at a Time
- Confidentiality
- Share the Air
- No "Fixing"
- "I" Statements
- Feedback Upon Request

(5 minutes) Introduction of Topic: You can say that life's challenges are a result of misperception. It boils down to "I create the meaning in my life." (Car window analogy): Say this to clients: "If you are in a parking lot on a bright sunny day and you walk up to a car window, what will you see?" (They should say "your reflection.") Then add: "If you concentrate, is it also possible to look beyond your reflection and see what's inside the car? Would you say that either perspective is wrong? No, it really just depends on where you put your focus."

(5 minutes) Group Process: Share this quote. (Ask a client to write it on the board for discussion): *"When we are willing to look within and do the work of inner clearing, removing the false ideas, perspectives, and stories we have about our lives, we can open to a new way of being."*

(15 minutes) Group Discussion: Simply lead a discussion with the group related to the quote.

(30 minutes) Group Activity-Circle of Honor: Ask participants to make a circle, standing in order of newest people to elder members. Honor each group by stating that each person has a different point of view based on how long they have been in the program.

Place a chair with multiple items on it in the center of the circle. (That you prepared before group started.) Ask people to describe it from their different perspectives, starting with the person who has the most obstructed view. Then ask if anyone else sees something that wasn't mentioned. You might want to add: "Would you say that anyone is "wrong" about what they can see in the chair, or might it be more about their viewpoint.

Teaching Point: Every perspective is valid. Every viewing point is incomplete. Ask clients to use this as a metaphor and have a brief discussion regarding the different factors that create our point of view. (Age, race, gender, family history, etc.)

Brief Discussion: What are the different ways we can know what's in the chair? (Change your position in the circle, move the chair, ask someone else who has a better view.)

(Remain standing) Ask them to shift to a new place so they can get a new perspective.

(10 minutes) Now, ask clients to come up with some ideas about how they might begin to shift their perspectives. (One way is to question those perspectives.)

(10 minutes) Closing Process

GROUP OUTLINE

Group 3: The Addicted Self/Acceptance

(Introduction from *Conscious Recovery*)

(10 minutes) Meditation

(10 minutes) Check-In: Everyone states their name and says something about acceptance. (What is acceptance, etc.)

Review Shared Agreements

- One Person Speaks at a Time
- Confidentiality
- Share the Air
- No "Fixing"
- "I" Statements
- Feedback Upon Request

(20 minutes) Group Process (Dyads): Ask clients to get into pairs to discuss this question: "What does self-acceptance mean to you?"

(30 minutes) Group Process-Continuum: For this exercise use a large open room. Place a sign that says YES on one wall, and a sign that says NO on the opposite wall. Then, with masking tape make a line down the middle of the room. Let clients know you will be making 6 different statements.

Ask them to stand wherever they are on the continuum regarding the statement. (If they totally agree with the statement, they will stand all the way toward the "yes" sign, if they completely disagree, they stand by the "no" sign, etc.) Ask a couple of people to share why they are where they are on the continuum, then ask if anyone wants to change where they are standing as a result of what they have heard. Repeat for all 6 statements.

Statements:

- I feel different than others
- I sometimes criticize myself
- I'm willing to find a new way to view myself
- I know my purpose
- No one is against me
- I love myself exactly as I am

(10 minutes) Discussion: Take some time to discuss what came up during the process.

(10 minutes) Closing Process

GROUP OUTLINE

Group 4: Unresolved Trauma/Resilience

(Chapter 1 from *Conscious Recovery*)

(10 minutes) Meditation

(10 minutes) Check-in: Everyone states their name and says something about resilience.

Review Shared Agreements

- One Person Speaks at a Time
- Confidentiality
- Share the Air
- No "Fixing"
- "I" Statements
- Feedback Upon Request

(30 minutes) Group Activity (Art): Have each client draw a life-changing moment. (This can be something they consider to be "positive" or "negative.")

Ideally, they will spread out so no one else sees what they are drawing.

*Important note: Based on your clinical judgment, there might be certain drawings that are not clinically appropriate for group. We suggest that you gently steer them in a different direction, in a private conversation.

When each client is finished, tape the drawings up on the wall without letting other clients see who drew it.

(30 minutes) Group Process: One by one, have clients guess what the life-changing moment is and who drew it. (If clinically appropriate.)

After everyone guesses, have whoever drew it to stand in front of the group and explain their drawing and about the life-changing moment.

(Time Permitting) Group Discussion: How was that? Any insights? Any observations?

(10 minutes) Closing Process

GROUP OUTLINE

Group 5: Spiritual Disconnection/Self-Compassion

(Chapter 2 from *Conscious Recovery*)

(10 minutes) Meditation

(10 minutes) Check-In: Everyone states their name and says something about self-compassion. (What does compassion mean to them, etc.)

Review Shared Agreements

- One Person Speaks at a Time
- Confidentiality
- Share the Air
- No "Fixing"
- "I" Statements
- Feedback Upon Request

(10 minutes) Teaching Point: Draw a picture of the "seed and tree" and talk about how the seed represents our unconscious beliefs. (We can spend time "trimming and decorating" the tree but nothing really changes unless we get down to the seed). Ask: "If you plant a maple seed, you will get a maple tree, right?" Share with them that the seed represents the unconscious beliefs we have about ourselves and the roots of our addictive tendencies.

(5 minutes) Group Process: Identify one core false belief. Go around the circle and have everyone simply say their belief. (No feedback or comments). Core false beliefs usually start with "I am..." or "I am not..."

(15 minutes) Group Process (Dyads): Have participants interview each other regarding their chosen core false belief using the following four questions. (You might want to write these on the board for discussion):

- Where did this belief originate?
- How do you feel when you believe it?
- When does it arise?
- What would it take to be free from it?

(30 minutes) Group Project: Have them write their core false belief on a piece of paper. They can either make a paper airplane, or simply crumple it up. Then one at a time, ask clients to throw the paper while saying some version of "I now release this belief/lie, etc." (Obviously, you want to choose a place where it is safe for them to throw the paper and you'll also want to instruct them not to throw it at anyone.)

Depending on the logistics of your program, and what is clinically appropriate, you can also walk clients to an outdoor space (woods, park, etc.) and have clients bury the paper.

You may want to say: "People often ask if it is really as simple as writing the belief on a piece of paper and throwing it. My answer is this: Maybe, but for most of us it is simply a reminder that if we find ourselves returning to the critical thought, we can remind our self that we 'threw it away.'"

Group Discussion (Time Permitting): How was that? Any insights? Any observations?

(10 minutes) Closing Process

GROUP OUTLINE

Group 6: Toxic Shame/Authenticity

(Chapter 3 from *Conscious Recovery*)

(10 minutes) Meditation

(10 minutes) Check-in: Everyone states their name and says one thing about authenticity.

Review Shared Agreements

- One Person Speaks at a Time
- Confidentiality
- Share the Air
- No “Fixing”
- “I” Statements
- Feedback Upon Request

(20 minutes) Group Process (Dyads): Let clients know, for this process, they can close their eyes or leave them open. Now say: “Think of a time when you were really authentic, really yourself. How does that feel? What are the sensations in your body? Now, think of a time when you were really inauthentic. How does that feel?” Notice how each of those feel in your body. Have them get with a partner and describe what came up during that process. (Each person shares while other person listens.)

(15 minutes) Group Process (Whiteboard or Flipchart): Iceberg metaphor. Draw a picture of an iceberg. (Showing that most of the iceberg is “below the waterline.”)

Teaching Point: All we can see is what is “above” the waterline. What is “below” the water line that we are afraid to show?

Group Brainstorming: (Write all answers on board or flipchart) Point: Not everything below the water line is "bad." There are dreams, goals, etc.

Brief Discussion: Why are we afraid to be authentic and show people what is below the waterline?

(20 minutes) Group Process: "If You Knew Me..."

Ask: "Are you willing to practice authenticity?"

Important points:

- Say: "Only go as deep as you feel safe doing so"
- You will set the stage by how deep you go in the beginning
- Get an agreement of confidentiality before the process begins
- Do not allow any feedback, questions, or comments about what people are saying—simply keep the process moving

Invite participants to come together in a circle. (As close together as they are willing to sit.) You begin the process by saying "If you knew me, you would know_____..." (Tell them something about yourself.) Then, one at a time, everyone in the circle also completes the phrase "If you knew me, you would know_____..." Tell them ahead of time that there will probably be three or four rounds and that you will let them know when it is the final round. The second round is "If you REALLY knew me, you would know_____..." The third round is "If you REALLY, REALLY knew me, you would know_____...", and so on.

(5 minutes) Group Discussion: Ask the questions: "Do you feel closer or further away from people in the circle?" and "How do you feel about what you shared?" (Too much...too little, etc.)

(10 minutes) Closing Process

GROUP OUTLINE

Group 7: Creating Safety/Trust

(Chapter 4 from *Conscious Recovery*)

(10 minutes) Meditation

(10 minutes) Check-In: Everyone states their name and says something about safety or trust.

Review Shared Agreements

- One Person Speaks at a Time
- Confidentiality
- Share the Air
- No "Fixing"
- "I" Statements
- Feedback Upon Request

(5 Minutes) Group Process: - Four Corners: Tape the four different quotes (found on pages 42-45) to the wall in different parts of the room. Have everyone walk around and read them. Then ask them to stand by the one that they most resonate or identify with. Once everyone has chosen their quote, they sit in small groups (based on the one they selected).

(20 Minutes) Group Process: Each group spends time discussing why they choose that particular quote. (Each group chooses one person to summarize the small group discussions.)

(15 Minutes) Group Process: One person from each group stands up in front of the room and “reports” the highlights from their small group discussion.

(10 minutes) Discussion: Take some time to discuss what came up during the process.

(10 minutes) Group Process (Dyads): Each person shares and then listens. (You might want to write these questions on the whiteboard.)

- What is one conflict you have experienced in the last month?
- How did you handle it?
- What were the consequences of your actions?
- What were the hidden INNER resources?

Now write the INNER resource on an index card. (Some examples of INNER resources are, gratitude, acceptance, courage, etc.)

Group Discussion (Time Permitting): How was that? Any insights? Any observations?

(10 minutes) Closing Process

Group 8: Unlearning/Willingness

(Chapter 5 from *Conscious Recovery*)

(10 minutes) Meditation

(10 minutes) Check-In: Everyone states their name and says something about willingness.

Review Shared Agreements

- One Person Speaks at a Time
- Confidentiality
- Share the Air
- No "Fixing"
- "I" Statements
- Feedback Upon Request

(10 minutes) Group Process (Large Group): Give each client a handout of the reading. (On page 51 of this guide.) Then ask clients to read one sentence of the reading, then go around the circle and have a different client read the next sentence, and so on. (Let clients know it's OK if they want to "pass" and not read out loud.)

(20 minutes) Group Discussion: Simply open the group to any group members who want to share what the reading means to them.

(30 minutes) Group Activity-Unlearning Circle: Ask participants to make a circle, standing far enough away from the person next to them that they can spread their arms out. (Space permitting.) Ask for a volunteer to stand in the middle of the circle. (VERY IMPORTANT: please don't "force" anyone to go into the middle of the circle, it should always be on a volunteer basis.) You can also let the group know that there might not be time for everyone to get a turn in the middle of the circle.

Now, have the clients in the circle open their arms to make an enclosed circle. (Instruct them not to touch each other.)

The person in the middle of the group shares one of the core false beliefs that are troubling them, or that they want to “unlearn.” A reminder that core false beliefs generally start with “I am” or “I am not.”

Ask the person to say the belief loudly enough that the other group members can hear. Once the person says it, have other group members offer affirmations that will help the person to “unlearn” the belief.

Key point: The affirmation isn’t necessarily the opposite of the core false belief.

Every time someone offers an affirmation, the circle opens a bit. (Group members take a small step back.)

Examples: Someone says their core false belief is “I am a bad person.” Some affirmations might be, “You are learning and growing”, “You have the capacity to forgive yourself”, “You are a precious being”, etc. Again, you might want to coach your clients not to say, “You are a good person.”

Group Discussion (Time Permitting): How was that? Any insights? Any observations?

(10 minutes) Closing Process

GROUP OUTLINE

Group 9: Spiritual Principles/Presence

(Chapter 6 from *Conscious Recovery*)

(10 minutes) Meditation

(10 minutes) Check-In: Everyone states their name and says something about presence.

Review Shared Agreements

- One Person Speaks at a Time
- Confidentiality
- Share the Air
- No "Fixing"
- "I" Statements
- Feedback Upon Request

(10 minutes) Introduction of Topic: Spirituality and Presence

Share these key points. (You might want to write these key points on the board for discussion):

- Most of us have been conditioned to focus on the past or the future
- This focus can prevent us from fully experiencing life
- Presence is a moment-to-moment decision

(25 Minutes) Group Process – Non-Resistance Exercise (Dyads): Have clients think of a situation in their life that has been causing them anxiety or worry, then have them interview each other using the following questions. (Give each client the handout with the questions on page 57.)

Related to the situation that has been causing you anxiety or worry:

- What are your thoughts about it?
- What thoughts do you have about controlling the outcome?
- In what ways are you asking yourself “what if?”
- In what ways are you obsessing with worst case scenarios?
- What would it take for you to shift your thinking?

Now, ask them to sit in silence and bring their awareness to the present moment. Ask them to repeat quietly to themselves some version of the following statements:

- I am perfectly OK in this moment.
- The future has no power over me.
- I have the tools to navigate life.

(25 Minutes) Group Process - Living in the Question Activity (Dyads): Have clients sit and face each other. Choose one of the questions below. Person A asks person B the question and listens for an answer. Person B gives a *short* one word or one sentence answer. Without responding, person A then repeats the *same* question, and so on, for 3 minutes. (You will set a timer and let them know when to start and stop). Now, repeat but reverse the roles within the pair. (Choose a different question)

Some suggested questions: What is addiction? – What is recovery? – Who are you? – What is reality?

(10 Minutes) Closing Process

GROUP OUTLINE

Group 10: Owning Your Power/Forgiveness

(Chapter 7 from *Conscious Recovery*)

(10 minutes) Meditation

(10 minutes) Check-In: Everyone states their name and says something about forgiveness. (How they perceive forgiveness, how it might help them in their recovery, etc.)

Review Shared Agreements

- One Person Speaks at a Time
- Confidentiality
- Share the Air
- No "Fixing"
- "I" Statements
- Feedback Upon Request

(20 minutes) Group Process (Small Groups): Have people break into four small groups. (We suggest going around the circle and have them "count off" 1, 2, 3, 4.) Then have them discuss this question in their small groups:

"What might prevent you from forgiving yourself?"

Now, ask them to reach under their chair, where they will find a word taped to the bottom of the cushion, that you will have placed there before the group started. (Found on pages 62 and 63.)

(30 minutes) Group Process (Dyads): Have clients get with a partner and share how the word they chose might help them with self-forgiveness. Then have them switch roles and listen to their partner's word, etc.

(10 minutes) Group Discussion: How was that? Any insights? Any other observations?

(10 minutes) Closing Process

GROUP OUTLINE

Group 11: The Great Remembering/Surrender

(Chapter 8 from *Conscious Recovery*)

(10 minutes) Meditation

(10 minutes) Check-In: Everyone states their name and says something about surrender. (What it means to them, etc.)

Review Shared Agreements

- One Person Speaks at a Time
- Confidentiality
- Share the Air
- No "Fixing"
- "I" Statements
- Feedback Upon Request

(10 minutes) Introduction of Topic: Surrender. Here are the key talking points. (You might want to write them on the board):

- We often try to control situations and people to feel safe
- Many of us have been conditioned to believe surrendering is weak
- It's possible that surrendering control is actually a strength

(10 minutes) Group Brainstorming (Whiteboard or flipchart): Ask a client to come up and write on the board/flipchart. Have them write answers exactly as clients say them or ask if it's OK to condense/paraphrase. Now ask the other group members to answer the question: "What does surrender mean to you?" (All answers are perfect and will be written on the board.)

(10 minutes) Group Discussion: What stood out that wants to be discussed?

(20 Minutes) Group Process – Turing it Over Practice:

Ask everyone to get a blank piece of paper make a dot in the center of the page. They then draw a large circle around the outside of the paper and make “spokes” that connect the dot with the circle. On each of the spokes, they write something that is troubling them. This could be a person’s name, or a situation that is currently difficult for them. Once they have filled up the page, have them stand in front of the group and say: “These are the situations in my life I am ready to release. I am now choosing to let go of trying to control them.” Invite them to use their own language. Once they have read them all, ask them to tear up the paper and dispose of it.

Group Discussion (Time Permitting): How was that? Any insights? Any observations?

(10 minutes) Closing Process

GROUP OUTLINE

Group 12: Awakened Living/Purpose

(Chapter 9 from *Conscious Recovery*)

10 Minutes) Meditation

(10 Minutes) Check-in: Everyone says their name and one thing about what it means to live on purpose.

Review Shared Agreements

- One Person Speaks at a Time
- Confidentiality
- Share the Air
- No "Fixing"
- "I" Statements
- Feedback Upon Request

(20 Minutes) **Group Activity:** Have each group member write two or three core false beliefs on an index card. Have each of them stand in front of the room and read the cards. Now ask them to tear the card up and throw away. (Into bowl.)

IMPORTANT: They are not processing, giving feedback, or discussing. Invite them to notice how it feels when they hear people read their core false beliefs.

(15 Minutes) **Group Activity:** Make a list of seven people...three qualities...have participants fill out sheet. (On page 72.) Let them know it's ok if words repeat. When they are finished filling out the sheet, ask them to circle any words that repeat. Ask them to write down the THREE words that repeat most often on an index card.

Teaching Point: We can only recognize traits in others if you have them in yourself. "You spot it, you got it."

(10 Minutes) Group Activity: Have participant make two lines facing each other. Each person will read their card to the person standing in front of them saying: My name is _____ and I AM _____. Now a person from one side moves to the other end of the line, and everyone on that side "slides down" a person. Repeat this process until everyone from side "A" reads and listens to everyone from side "B."

(10 Minutes) Teaching Point: When we are "living on our card" (practicing the three words) we are living on purpose. (Practicing authenticity.)

Symptoms of Authenticity: Satisfaction, Fulfillment, Meaning, and Harmony

Symptoms of IN-Authenticity: Frustration, Defensiveness, Conflict, and Judgment

Say something like: "When we are living on our cards, we experience the symptoms of authenticity. If you find yourself feeling frustrated, getting defensive, etc. you can simply read your card and remind yourself of who and what you really are.

(5 minutes) Closing Reading: Simply read the excerpt from Marianne Williamson (page 69) out loud to the group.

(10 minutes) Closing Process