

Guidelines for Faith Sharing in Centering Prayer Groups

These guidelines are important to the community as they come together to share.

- We accept one another as we are.
- We do not give advice.
- We do not criticize what others share.
- We listen attentively and without interruption when someone else is speaking.
- We keep the sharing in the group absolutely confidential.
- We share experiences from our own lives, not abstract ideas.
- We gather to care, not to cure or remove the crisis or pain. God does the healing.
- We decide among ourselves how much time we will devote to sharing, making sure that each person who wants to share will have a chance to speak.
- We are always free to remain silent if we wish.
- We will love each other as Christ loves us.
- The facilitator (or group members) has permission to remind the group when straying from these guidelines.

These guidelines should be discussed by the group and modified if desired, to fit the particular needs of the group. Once the guidelines are agreed upon, they should be returned to from time to time to renew the group agreement.

It is helpful to print copies of the agreement for each member and to have on hand some copies to give to new members.

From the *Facilitator Handbook*, 2020

Centering Prayer Group Facilitator Support

A service team of



Contemplative Outreach

For information and resources:

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Contemplative Outreach

Centering Prayer Group Facilitator Support



Mission

Serving Others on the Spiritual Journey
in Community

Supporting and enriching the efforts of facilitators to serve small groups of people who have come together to share the practice of Centering Prayer and to deepen their relationship with God in the context of contemplative community.

Purpose

Contemplative Outreach created the Facilitator Support Service Team to support the facilitators who serve Centering Prayer groups.

“Facilitating is a ministry that empowers people and enables group process. As a ministry it helps group members to become more aware and more loving. . . . Good facilitating enables the growth of a Centering Prayer support group, empowering the group to feel capable and strengthened for the spiritual journey.” (Mary Mrozowski)

*“A weekly support group that practices some form of contemplative prayer has the advantage of pooling silence, which is a kind of liturgy, as well as providing encouragement to each other. Such a group helps to renew our resolution to persevere in prayer if we have slipped for a good or not-so-good reason. Sharing prayer together, especially silent prayer, increases faith.” (Fr Thomas Keating, *Invitation to Love*, 20th Anniversary Ed., p. 161)*

Resources

The service team provides support for the facilitator’s service through resources such as:

Facilitator Handbook

The Facilitator Handbook has been designed to be useful to both new facilitators and as an on-going reference for established facilitators. It is also used as foundational material in the Facilitator Formation Level 1 Workshop.

Facilitator Formation Level I Workshop

The purpose of the Facilitator Formation Level I Workshop is to empower people with a strong commitment to the practice of Centering Prayer to facilitate Centering Prayer groups.

The Level I workshop consists of ten sessions. Some of the topics discussed include the attributes and spirituality of a group facilitator, practical concerns for establishing a Centering Prayer group, group dynamics that may arise during faith sharing, as well as development of a group’s statement of purpose and guidelines for sharing.

The video conferences for Level I are available free of charge to view or download here:

<https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/vlp/facilitator-formation-training-level-i-workshop-video-access/>

The Facilitator Handbook is available for download free of charge here:

<https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/download/facilitator-handbook/>

A file containing information on using the video conferences, handouts, and exercises is available free of charge here:

<https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/download/how-to-use-facilitator-training-level-1-workshop/>

Facilitator Formation Level II Workshops

The Facilitator Formation Level II Workshop materials foster and deepen the process of transformation in facilitators and members of Centering Prayer groups. The following topics can be shared with small groups or at a multi-topic workshop retreat:

- Twelve Principles of Spiritual Leadership
- What is Contemplative Service? From Mythic to Mystic
- Four Levels of Listening
- Dispositions of the Servant Leader
- Stages of Prayer and Faith Development
- Five Common Obstacles to Centering Prayer
- The Human Condition
- The Psychological Experience of Centering Prayer
- Mystery of Transmission
- Five Stages of Groups to Maturity

Encouragement!

The Centering Prayer Group Facilitator Support Service Team is available to:

- Assist in the planning and presentation of Level I and Level II workshops.
- Provide information and resources, and answer questions about group facilitation or on-going formation of group facilitators.
- Offer support and encouragement by phone, email, or Zoom.