

FORMAT FOR DREAM GROUP CHAIRPERSON

I. Call the meeting to order. This is followed by a moment of reflective silence, and then a prayer or inspirational reading of the chairperson's choice. Keep it brief.

II. Ask for a volunteer to read the first three paragraphs of Chapter Six: Combining 12 Step Work with Dream Work, or any reference that explains why you are together today.

III. Ask for a volunteer to read the "Traditions" if you have adopted any for your group. If not, read this:

We have simple guidelines that help make us feel safe with each other. No group should have a boss; no group should endorse a religion or metaphysical bookstore; no group should forbid membership on the basis of race, creed, philosophy, gender, or religion; no group should meet in someone's house or church without paying rent; no group should make public statements about other types of groups or any spiritual practices.

IV. Ask for a volunteer to read the "Group Guidelines."

V. Call for a vote on the type of meeting the members want. If your group has an agreed-upon fixed format--then you skip this part. By a show of hands do you want:

- regular discussion;
- round robin discussion;
- half discussion and half dream team;
- dream team work.

VI. Read the corresponding explanation for the type of meeting the group has chosen.

Say something like, "Ten minutes before closing time, I will call the room to order again. At that time I will ask for brief summaries of what you learned."

VII. Ten minutes before closing time, call for the close of your meeting. If you had team exercises, call your teams together for closing and ask, "Does anyone want to share what Step or principle you have correlated to this week's dream?" Pass a basket for donations as the members briefly share what they've learned. The basket is for contributions --Tradition 7--to pay for rent, beverages, snacks, and other group expenses.

VIII. The meeting closes with a meditative silence, prayer, or reflection of the chairperson's choice.

GROUP GUIDELINES

1. Each member is asked to honor the integrity and intimacy of this 12-Step dream work group by keeping all dreams, revelations, and information strictly confidential among these members.
"What you hear in this meeting, let it stay in this meeting."
2. Each member is asked to talk about dreams, visions, or life events as they relate to his or her 12-Step program and individual spiritual growth. Members are asked not to digress to religious material or metaphysical philosophies unless it directly relates to the group goal of dream interpretation and the 12-Step programs.
3. No one is an "expert" on anyone else's dreams. Each participant is asked not to interpret meanings for others about dream themes or symbols. Do not say, "This means thus and such." Speak from your own experience. One might say, "In my glossary this image means _____; I learned that the universal meaning for this image is _____; I once had a dream in which the symbol of _____ turned out to mean _____; according to the Hopi Indians this image means _____; when I have a dream about _____ it usually means I need to work on Step ____." Although we may be able to shed light on the interpretation of symbols for others, only the dreamers themselves can interpret them. We share our experience, strength, and hope. We do not dictate.
4. Share only one dream per meeting, unless the group is extremely small or two dreams obviously relate to each other in a series. Dreams that run on for pages or involve multiple dreams won't give others a fair opportunity. Be respectful of the time constraints.

EXPLANATION FOR TYPES OF MEETING

(read the appropriate one)

Regular discussion: In discussion meetings each person is called on or volunteers at random to discuss a personal dream. The speaker shares what he or she believes it means and/or what they would like help with. Members are asked not to interrupt, cross talk, or comment while the speaker is talking. When the speaker finishes, another member is called on by the chairperson and the new speaker makes a *brief commentary* on the previous speaker's dream, its symbology, and the Step it might relate to.

We keep in mind that we speak from our own experience. Once having commented on the previous speaker's dream we then share ours and the process continues. Sharing is not limited to dreams, but can include visions or life events as well. We may discuss past experiences with dreams, applications of dream work, and stumbling blocks to interpretation. Unless it is a particularly large group, we try to let everyone share.

Round robin discussion: The chairperson calls on the first participant. This participant then discusses a dream, what he or she thinks it means, what they understand about its meaning, and what help is desired for understanding it (again, the person doesn't have to discuss a dream, but can share dream work concerns in general). Once finished, that person calls on the next participant. The next member offers his or her insights on the first person's dream before sharing their own dream, and finishes by calling on the next person. Each member comments on the previous dreamer's share and then their own. If time remains after the Round Robin, open discussion begins and cross talk is allowed.

Half discussion and half dream team: This type of meeting is run either like a round robin or discussion for the first thirty-five minutes and the second thirty-five minutes is broken up into dream teams for more individual work. The members regroup for the closing of the meeting.

Dream team work: In dream teams, we break up into two or three-person groups. Each team can decide which of the team exercises they want to use. {Pass out copies of the "Dream Team Exercises" to each of your teams}.