

Introducing Celebrate Recovery  
– a pack for UK churches



Celebrate  
Recovery  
UK

## PRESENTATION 3: SCRIPT

# WEEKLY GENERAL MEETING NIGHTS

### >>> POWERPOINT SLIDE 1

Celebrate Recovery meetings need to look like Celebrate Recovery!

The ministry needs to be built on the DNA which we referred to in Presentation 2 and is listed in your handout:

## THE DNA

### >>> SLIDE 2

1. Jesus Christ is the one and only Higher Power. The programme is a Christ-centred ministry.

### >>> SLIDE 3

2. The Bible and Celebrate Recovery curriculum are to be used exclusively. The Large Group lessons are taught from the Leader's Guide, keeping at least the acrostic and the Scriptures as the key points in the lessons. This is to keep consistency within groups, allowing teachers to be creative with the introduction and conclusion of each lesson.

### >>> SLIDE 4

3. The ministry is "group based." All groups are gender-specific and "The Five Small Group Guidelines" are implemented and followed every time.

### >>> SLIDE 5

4. Celebrate Recovery is designed to be done in face-to-face meetings. That is the most effective form for building healthy ongoing connections and long-term growth and recovery. As such, there will be no Celebrate Recovery programmes that are online only. Instead, online groups must be connected to a local in-person Celebrate Recovery.

### >>> SLIDE 6

5. We expect each group to be accountable to Christ, the local church, and the model of Celebrate Recovery established at Saddleback Church.

## >>> SLIDE 7

6. Celebrate Recovery is a ministry of the local church. Therefore, Celebrate Recovery will not attempt to dictate any doctrine or policy to a local church. A local Celebrate Recovery ministry should follow the policies of their local church and continue to be grateful for their continued support.

Following the DNA means keeping to the model of Celebrate Recovery established at Saddleback Church. This includes the format of our meetings.

Celebrate Recovery General Meeting Nights includes three parts:

## >>> SLIDE 8

1. **Large Group Time**
2. **Open Share Groups**
3. **Fellowship Time**

Let's take a look at what's involved in each section of the meeting.

## >>> SLIDE 9

# 1. LARGE GROUP TIME

Saddleback recommends 1 hour for the Large Group Time. However, when getting started, you may find this too long for a small group. Perhaps 35 - 45 minutes would be enough time to include all the key elements of Large Group Time. As you experience other Celebrate Recovery meetings in your area, you'll see what will work best for your setting.

The most important thing is to ensure each key element is included every week to keep your group looking like Celebrate Recovery.

Large Group meetings must contain all the key elements of opening in prayer, worship, reading Celebrate Recovery's 8 Principles or the 12 Steps with Biblical Comparisons, a Celebrate Recovery lesson or testimony, and closing with the Serenity Prayer.

Let's consider each of Saddleback's Large Group elements in turn.

## >>> SLIDE 10

- **Opening Worship Song**

This alerts people that the meeting is beginning. In the early days of Celebrate Recovery, when meetings have a relatively low attendance, this may not be necessary.

## >>> SLIDE 11

- **Welcome and Opening Prayer**

Celebrate Recovery is centred on Jesus Christ. Committing the meeting to Him points people to the One True Higher Power right at the start of the meeting.

## >>> SLIDE 12

- **Worship Songs**

Saddleback have approximately three songs at this point in the meeting. They have a fabulous worship band to lead them. Perhaps having a band is not possible for your group just yet. The important thing is to make sure you include a time of worship. Try to keep it upbeat and celebratory. You could listen to a CD or sing along to a CD. Perhaps one person on your team is musical enough to play keyboards or a guitar to lead the worship. Or you could purchase Saddleback's worship DVDs which have their Celebrate Recovery band leading worship with the words appearing for people to sing along to.

## >>> SLIDE 13

- **Reading of Celebrate Recovery's 8 Principles or the 12 Steps and their Biblical Comparisons**

The 8 Principles and the 12 Steps are in your handout.

*[Either choose two people to read them from the handout – one person read the Principle and one person read the Beatitude – or watch the video/s:*

>>> **Video 8: The 8 Principles of Celebrate Recovery** and/or

>>> **Video 9: 12 Steps with Bible Verses**]

Reading out the 8 Principles or 12 Steps means the clear route to Christ-centred recovery is spelled out each week. You can ask leaders or participants to do this – though please ask people before the meeting so that no-one feels picked on; we need to keep Celebrate Recovery a safe place for everyone.

## >>> SLIDE 14

- **Celebrate Recovery Announcements**

This is an opportunity to mention Celebrate Recovery or relevant church-related notices. Keep them brief. Participants and other organisations may ask you for slots to plug their own good causes but Celebrate Recovery is not the place to do this. People won't come back if they get bombarded with unrelated information. Keep Celebrate Recovery a recovery meeting.

## >>> SLIDE 15

- **Special Music and Offering**

There must be no charge to attend Celebrate Recovery. However some churches choose to take up an offering – this is optional.

## >>> SLIDE 16

- **Lesson or Testimony**

The Celebrate Recovery model offers recovery lessons and testimonies on alternate weeks. There are 25 Celebrate Recovery lessons. They can be found in the Leader's Guide. We must use Celebrate Recovery's lessons and not make up our own. If we are using the Celebrate Recovery name for our ministry we follow DNA #2:

*"The Bible and Celebrate Recovery curriculum ... are to be used exclusively. The Large Group lessons are taught from the Leader's Guide, keeping at least the acrostic and the Scriptures as the key points in the lessons. This is to keep consistency within groups, allowing teachers to be creative with the introduction and conclusion of each lesson."*

Testimonies help people identify with others. They offer hope to the listeners, reinforce recovery to the sharer, and bring glory to God. Testimonies show people how applying the principles truly brings healing and change. In the early years of running Celebrate Recovery your group will need testimonies from outside of the group.

Here are some suggestions for finding Celebrate Recovery testimonies:

- Have your team members each prepare a testimony based on the Principles as far as possible
- Read testimonies from the Leader's Guide
- Ask Ministry Leaders of local Celebrate Recovery groups if there are participants from their groups willing to come and share
- Purchase Saddleback's "Testimonies To Go" DVDs
- Purchase British Celebrate Recovery Testimonies Volumes 1 and 2 from Celebrate Recovery UK

The Ministry Leader needs to read all that's going to be said from the front beforehand to ensure meetings remain safe.

[If time, show mini testimonies

>>> **VIDEO 6: Jag's testimony**

and/or

>>> **VIDEO 7: Terry's testimony**

Testimonies usually take approximately 15 minutes but these 2-3 minute testimonies will give listeners a short look at how testimonies give hope and insight into how Celebrate Recovery helps people change.]

>>> **SLIDE 17**

- **Serenity Prayer**

The full version of the Serenity Prayer is in your handout and on the PowerPoint. Many find this prayer to be a powerful support during the week. It's a helpful way of closing the Large Group Time with participants joining in with the words as they're read out if they feel able to do so.

>>> **SLIDE 18**

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.*

*Living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardships as a pathway to peace; taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it; trusting that You will make all things right if I surrender to Your will; so that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with You forever in the next. Amen.*

>>> **SLIDE 19**

- **Closing Song and Dismissal to Small Groups**

Some people may not be ready to attend an Open Share Group. That's fine – we can only encourage people to attend. Recovery is their responsibility and it's great they feel able to attend the Large Group Time.

## >>> SLIDE 20

# 2. OPEN SHARE GROUPS

Celebrate Recovery sharing groups are always men-only or women-only groups. This is part of the DNA.

*DNA #3: "The ministry is "group based." All groups are gender-specific and "The Five Small Group Guidelines" are implemented and followed every time."*

It's useful to provide a set script for your Open Share Leaders to follow so that nothing is forgotten. Structure and clarity are very important for creating a safe environment for people to share. There is a script outline in the 'Advanced Leadership Training Guide' you could follow or contact your nearest rep for their example script.

You could have a newcomer to your group any week so it's important to get into good habits of running your group from the outset. Stick to the format. Your participants will appreciate that you take the sharing time seriously and want it to be safe for all. You model this by doing the same thing every week even if it's the same few people as previous weeks.

## >>> SLIDE 21

Please remember that the Participant's Guides\* are NOT used in the Open Share Groups. If possible have the room or space set up before Large Group Time begins so that your sharing meeting can begin promptly. Tissues should be provided – it gives people permission to cry and there is healing in tears.

## >>> SLIDE 22

Start with

- **Welcome and Open In Prayer**

Introduce yourself. By identifying your area of recovery, the newcomer will identify with you and it affirms to them that everyone in the room is in recovery.

Keep your prayer simple.

## >>> SLIDE 23

- **Introductions**

People take it in turns going round the circle to introduce themselves with words such as, "I'm Bob and I'm a believer in Jesus Christ who struggles with anxiety and alcohol."

Our identity is in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, which is why we say, "I'm a Christian" or "I'm a believer" first. Our struggle is not our identity!

The leader introduces themselves first. Make it clear which way round the circle you want the introductions to go and that if people only wish to share their name, that's fine. It is suggested the leader starts with just one or two named areas of recovery so the emphasis in the introduction isn't too heavy on the struggles.

## >>> SLIDE 24

- **Read the "Five Small Group Guidelines"**

Without fail, these guidelines are to be read before sharing begins EVERY week no matter how few people are there or how often they have been attending. Reading them reinforces how important they are. The guidelines are in your handout:

## >>> SLIDE 25

1. Keep your sharing focused on your own thoughts and feelings. Limit your sharing to three to five minutes.

## >>> SLIDE 26

2. There is NO cross talk. Cross talk is when two individuals engage in conversation excluding all others. Each person is free to express his or her feelings without interruptions.

## >>> SLIDE 27

3. We are here to support one another, not 'fix' another.

## >>> SLIDE 28

4. Anonymity and confidentiality are basic requirements. What is shared in the group stays in the group. The only exception is when someone threatens to injure themselves or others.

## >>> SLIDE 29

5. Offensive language has no place in a Christ-centred recovery group.

It is the role of the group leader to ensure these guidelines are followed. If someone breaks a guideline, the leader should correct the speaker gently, reminding them of the rules. The most important thing is that people feel safe – not fixed, not discussed, not interrupted etc.

For more information about the guidelines see the Leader's Guide, the 'Advanced Leadership Training Guide' or speak to your regional representative.

After reading the guidelines, we have the

## >>> SLIDE 30

- **Leader's Focus**

This is a reminder of the Principle and the lesson's acrostic from the Large Group Time. It gets the sharing focussed on recovery.

## >>> SLIDE 31

- **Focus Question and Open Sharing**

It's usual to start the Open Share Group meeting with 'Focussed Sharing' and then transition to "Open Sharing". You could start the "Focussed Sharing" with a focus question based on the lesson or testimony just heard such as, "What did you find most helpful from tonight's testimony?" (Saddleback give an example of a focus question for each lesson in the back of the 'Advanced Leadership Training Guide'.)

Explain clearly how you will manage the turn-taking of group sharing – going round the circle or 'popcorn' style. Keep all your groups following the same style each week for consistency. (This is explained in the video later.)

The group leader takes a turn in personal sharing too – this shows that everyone in the group is on the recovery journey.

Depending on the length of time available and number of participants in the group, you may have time for more than one focus question. Some groups list a couple of questions on the bulletin sheet which could be used. However, ALWAYS ensure you leave plenty of time for everyone to have time to share in “Open Sharing” because this may be the only time in the week someone can share in a safe environment.

Open sharing, as opposed to focussed sharing, is not necessarily based on the evening’s principle but on the participant’s present personal recovery experience – struggles and victories. The guidelines continue to be followed.

### >>> SLIDE 32

- **Wrap Up**

Thank participants for their contributions. Remind people of any important notices.

### >>> SLIDE 33

- **Closing Prayer**

Again, keep the prayer simple, hopeful and Jesus-focused. It’s advisable to pray a short general prayer for all and not try to pray for individual needs at this point. Leaders can assure their group members they’ll pray for them in the week.

### >>> SLIDE 34

- **Invitation to Fellowship Time**

Open Share Groups look quite different to other typical church small groups where ‘cross talk’ is encouraged!

This video will give you a glimpse of what an Open Share Group looks like.

### >>> SLIDE 35

### >>> VIDEO 10: Open Share Group

The video may well have prompted questions. Please get in touch with your regional representative to get your questions answered. It may be possible for your rep to attend a team meeting and give you some training on facilitating Celebrate Recovery small groups.

It’s one thing to watch an Open Share Group but there’s nothing like being part of one. Visit an established Celebrate Recovery group to experience it if you can.

## >>> SLIDE 36

The third part of a Celebrate Recovery General Meeting Night is Fellowship Time.

### 3. FELLOWSHIP TIME

Here is an opportunity for participants to wind down after sharing and get to know others who could become part of their support team.

Remember the guidelines stated 'what is shared in the group, stays in the group'. People should not be bringing up in the Fellowship Time what others have shared in the Open Share Groups. This will not feel safe and is possibly someone wanting to 'fix' another. If the participant themselves wishes to discuss their own issues and brings up their own issues in conversation, that's fine and just up to them.

## >>> SLIDE 37

If you are able to attend the Celebrate Recovery meeting of an established group, we recommend you do. Let them know you're intending to come so they can be prepared and enable you to see their best.

Saddleback have some resources which you may find helpful for running your General Meeting Nights. See the handout, "Further Help" for details.

*\*Participant's Guides are not used in Open Share Groups. Open Share Groups need to be open to newcomers every week. The purpose of Open Share Groups is to allow people to share, without interruption or fixing, about what is going on in their lives and recovery. The Participant's Guides are designed for use in single-sex Step Study Groups which are a next step in growing your recovery ministry. Step Studies are designed to run at a different time in the week to the General Meeting Night for people who wish to go deeper into the recovery process.*