



FACILITATING A DIVORCE SUPPORT GROUP



HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS



- *The Participant Kit: (Each participant must have one)*
 - *Admittance to the 13-week parish facilitated group*
 - *Recovering from Divorce Participant Guide*
 - *Divorced. Catholic. Now What? Book*
 - *Companion Workbook*
 - *Personal Journal*
 - *Prayers for Divorced Catholics Book*
 - *Daily Inspirations for Divorced Catholics Book*
 - *Subscription to the Daily Inspirations via email*
 - *Rosary*



HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS



- *Group Session:*
 - *5 minutes: Opening Prayers*
 - *5 minutes: Session Overview*
 - *10-15 minutes: Watch Voices of Hope DVD Segment*
 - *30-35 minutes: Group Discussion*
 - *5 minutes: Wrap-up/Closing Prayer*



HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS



- *The P-R-A-Y Method:*
 - *This method is a simple and straightforward way of consistently learning and living the Catholic faith — the key to healing from divorce.*



HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS



- *The P-R-A-Y Method:*
 - *P - Pray: As you might expect, prayer is vital to your relationship with Christ and living your faith.*



HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS



- *The P-R-A-Y Method:*
- *R - Reflect: You can't live what you don't know. Reflect is learning your faith by reading the program materials, Scripture, and the Catechism.*



HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS



- *The P-R-A-Y Method:*
 - *A - Act: As St. James said, "Faith without works is dead." (James 2:26) The Act component is about putting into action what you have learned.*



HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS



- *The P-R-A-Y Method:*
 - *Y - You: Like any successful athlete knows, you must take care of your body. The You component is focused on doing the important things to reduce stress and restore peace.*



HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS



- *How to Use the P-R-A-Y Method:*
- *Review pages 51-54 for detailed explanation*



HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS



- *How to Use the P-R-A-Y Method:*
 - *Session Overviews start on page 75.*
 - *Breaks each session down into the P-R-A-Y components.*
 - *Encourage each participant to complete the session prior to the meeting.*



FACILITATING A GROUP SESSION



- *Setting Up the Meeting Place*
 - *Choose a comfortable meeting place.*
 - *Make it a sacred space by bringing:*
 - *a crucifix*
 - *statue of the Blessed Mother*
 - *a candle*
 - *a Bible*
 - *Bring kleenex*
 - *Provide soft drinks, coffee and snacks, if possible*



FACILITATING A GROUP SESSION



- *Using the Program Materials*
- *Review the session as outlined in the Recovering from Divorce Sessions starting on page 73 of the Facilitator Guide prior to the session.*



FACILITATING A GROUP SESSION



- *The First Session*
 - *Share with the group your personal experience with divorce.*
 - *Ask each participant to share what they are comfortable sharing about their divorce.*
 - *Minimum:*
 - *Name*
 - *How many children, if any.*
 - *Separated? Divorced? How long?*
 - *What parish they attend*
 - *Expect tears*



FACILITATING A GROUP SESSION



- *Weekly Sessions*
 - *Follow the format as outlined in the Recovering from Divorce Sessions in Facilitator Guide for each week.*
 - *At the end of each session, be sure to announce the topic of the next week's session and encourage the group to prepare*



FACILITATING A GROUP SESSION



- *Bonding Within the Group*
 - *The openness and trust in the group promotes healing*
 - *Expect this bonding to overflow outside the group.*
 - *Christ works in this community.*



FACILITATING A GROUP SESSION



- *Celebrate with a Closing Mass*
 - *Have a Mass celebrated just for the group, if possible.*
 - *If you have to celebrate at a regularly scheduled Mass, ask the celebrant to recognize your group during the Prayers of the Faithful.*
 - *Have a social afterward to celebrate the group's success and healing.*



HOW TO START A GROUP



- *Identify and train facilitator.*
- *Host One Hour Recovering from Divorce Workshop 4-6 Weeks Before Starting Group.*
 - *Give 10 Keys to Recovering from Divorce presentation with video*
 - *Describe 13-Week divorce support program*
 - *Invite them to sign-up, pay fee, receive Participant Kit*



HOW TO START A GROUP



- *Run announcement in bulletin four consecutive weeks prior to start of group.*
- *Be sure to include phone number and email address of facilitator.*
- *Post posters around parish prior to bulletin announcement.*



HOW TO START A GROUP



- *Have refreshments and snacks*
- *Create a reverent environment (statues, crucifix, candles, tablecloth)*
- *Start on time and end promptly.*
- *90 minute sessions are ideal.*



HOW TO START A GROUP



- *First (Introductory) Meeting:*
 - *Overview of program including guidelines*
 - *Distribution of materials*
 - *Introduction by facilitator and background*
 - *Introductions by participants*
 - *Have kleenex available!*
 - *Assign first session materials to review*



HOW TO START A GROUP



- *Tips for increasing participation:*
 - *Get surrounding parishes to post in their bulletin.*
 - *Post in diocesan newspaper.*
 - *Run ads on Facebook to reach those that have stopped attending Mass.*
 - *Offer childcare*
 - *Host on Wednesday evenings*



WHAT MAKES A GOOD FACILITATOR?



- *Most important: Has a zeal for souls.*
- *Cares about people who are experiencing divorce.*
- *Has a very hopeful attitude for how God is going to work in their life.*



WHAT MAKES A GOOD FACILITATOR?



- *Some Key Characteristics:*
 - *Charity*
 - *Empathy*
 - *Hopefulness*
 - *Knowledge of the Faith*
 - *A strong Catholic faith life*



WHAT MAKES A GOOD FACILITATOR?



- *Optimal Candidate:*
 - *Been divorced 3 or more years (time to heal)*
 - *Been through the annulment process*
 - *Strong knowledge of the Catholic faith*
 - *A strong Catholic faith life (not cafeteria)*
 - *A hopeful perspective (not bitter)*



WHAT MAKES A GOOD FACILITATOR?



- *Key Characteristic for a Group Leader who has NOT been divorced:*
 - *Strong Catholic faith life*
 - *Excellent understanding of Church's teaching on divorce.*
 - *Precise understanding of the annulment process.*
 - *Great compassion and zeal for souls*



WHAT MAKES A GOOD PARTICIPANT?



- *Seeks healing*
- *Ready to begin dealing with the issues regarding their divorce.*
- *Not too "raw" — outside the first 90 days.*



WHO IS NOT A GOOD PARTICIPANT?



- *Not actually separated or divorced.*
- *Too "raw" — in first 90 days*
- *Expresses intensity of emotion that makes other uncomfortable, is distracting, showing signs of mental instability. (meltdowns, tirades, distraught)*



DO'S AND DON'TS FOR STARTING A GROUP



- *DO: Accept up to 15 people (8-12 ideal)*
- *DON'T: Lead a co-ed group*
 - *Participants are more comfortable in same gender groups*
 - *Removes temptation for romance (very vulnerable)*
 - *TIP: All together for teaching, separate for discussion.*



DO'S AND DON'TS FOR STARTING A GROUP



- *DO: Begin with prayer*
 - *Opening prayer to the Holy Spirit*
 - *Decade of the Rosary*
- *DO: Encourage sharing*
- *DON'T: Allow monopolizers*



DO'S AND DON'TS FOR STARTING A GROUP



- *DON'T: Allow new participants after third week.*
- *DO: Respect confidentiality*
- *DON'T: Allow participants to critique or advise other participants*
- *DO: Be ready with questions to start dialogue*
- *DON'T: Allow spouse-bashing*



ENCOURAGE CONTINUED INVOLVEMENT



- *Most participants will be filled with new found zeal for their faith.*
- *Encourage them to get involved in their parish.*
- *Encourage them to continue to maintain their newly formed faith-based friendships.*



CONSIDER STARTING A SUSTAINING MINISTRY



- *Offer spiritual, educational and social activities at least once month.*
- *Not for forming dating relationships.*
- *Provides a "safe" place to be social and maintain faith-based friendships.*