

Sharing Our Spirit Stories Meeting Script

We welcome you to the Sharing Our Spirit Stories group and hope you will find in this fellowship the support and friendship we are fortunate enough to enjoy. We who have struggled to trust God and deepen our relationship with the Spirit understand as perhaps few others can. We, too, were lonely and frustrated, but in community we discover that no situation is really hopeless and that it is possible for us to find both inner peace and outer agency, as well as more connection with God and genuine emotional intimacy with others.

Before we begin, let us acknowledge that the land currently governed by the United States of America was nurtured, loved and cared for by Indigenous people for thousands of years before contact with, and colonization by, Europeans. In the Seattle-area, we are settlers on land that belongs to the Coast Salish People, specifically those from the Duwamish Tribe, who were not only forced to sign a treaty but who have yet to be federally recognized by the US government. May all Indigenous people and nations be granted respect, reparations, and sovereignty, and may we all learn to see ourselves as agents of healing, now and into the future.

(hold silence for a few moments)

This is a fellowship of people who share their experience, strength, and hope in order to solve their common problems. We recognize that our identities are shaped by our beliefs about God, and our beliefs about God are shaped by our identities and our experiences. We believe that separation from God is an illusion, yet at various times in our lives it feels very real and overwhelms us all in different ways. We gather together for one primary purpose: to help people who want to heal, strengthen, and deepen their relationship with their Higher Power. We do this by welcoming and giving comfort to those seeking support, by bravely telling our stories of encounter with a loving God, and by giving understanding and encouragement to any person struggling to trust in God's love and welcome.

The SOS Stories program is a confidential circle designed to hold space for both our intimacy and our disconnection from our Higher Power; we are here to witness to one another and to ourselves, not to boast or to wallow. The loving interchange of testimony among members and regular time for meditation and prayer thus make us ready to receive the priceless gifts of connection and serenity.

Confidentiality is a fundamental principle of the SOS Stories program. Everything that is said here, in the group meeting and member-to-member, must be held in

Sharing Our Spirit Stories Meeting Script

confidence. Only in this way can we feel free to say what is in our minds and hearts, for this is how we help one another heal and grow. It takes a great deal of courage to admit that we doubt God's presence, and we honor that bravery with our confidentiality.

Is there anyone attending their first, second or third SOS Stories meeting? If so, please introduce yourself by your first name so that we can welcome you.

Now we will go around the room and introduce ourselves by our first name. "My name is _____ and I'm growing my relationship with God." Answer, "Hi, _____"

Please feel free to share about today's topic or whatever is on your heart or mind. At this meeting we discourage feedback, advice giving, and crosstalk. Examples of crosstalk include: referencing a share by using the sharer's name, agreeing or disagreeing with a share, interrupting a share, or making comments during a share. Please practice respect by listening only. We recognize the difficulty in keeping this commitment, and the wisdom of over 50 years of recovery communities affirms its necessity for preserving the integrity of all groups. After the meeting, there will be time for cross talk and open discussion if you wish to join. For those who are members of other 12- step programs, please focus on your experience of deepening your trust in your Higher Power.

This meeting closes at 10, and we want everyone to have a chance to share. We suggest that shares be limited to 3 minutes. A timer will go off after two as a reminder. Is there a volunteer to set a timer?

(A timekeeper is identified who will operate a timer)

Who would like to start us off with a topic?

Closing

In closing, we would like to say that the opinions expressed here were strictly those of the person who gave them. Take what you liked and leave the rest. The things you heard were spoken in confidence and should be treated as confidential. Keep them within the walls of this room and the confines of your mind.

A few special words to those of you who haven't been with us long: Whatever your problems, there are those among us who have had them, too. If you try to keep an

Sharing Our Spirit Stories Meeting Script

open mind, you will find help. You will come to realize that there is no situation too difficult to be bettered and no unhappiness too great to be lessened. We aren't perfect; we are all engaged in practice. The welcome we give you may not show the warmth we have in our hearts for you. After a while, you'll discover that though you may not like all of us, you'll love us in a very special way—the same way we already love you. So talk to each other, reason things out, but let there be no gossip or criticism of one another. Instead, let the understanding, love, and peace of the program grow in you one day at a time.

Will all who care to please join me in the Serenity Prayer.

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