



**POSTTRAUMATIC GROWTH (PTG) GROUP  
Start-Up Guide (Fillable)**

PTG Meetings are designed to extend the work of Posttraumatic Growth into sustainable, peer-led community practice.

**HOW TO CREATE A GROUP**

**1. Gather Committed Core Members**

- Identify 3–5 committed Veterans or First Responders

Core Member 1 Name:

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Core Member 2 Name:

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Core Member 3 Name:

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Core Member 4 Name (if applicable):

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Core Member 5 Name (if applicable):

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- Ensure mission is posttraumatic growth (not therapy)
- Confirm confidentiality commitment
- Ensure growth-centered dialogue agreement
- Clarify meetings are always free and volunteer-led

Use of these reference sheets is intended only for individuals who have reviewed and are familiar with the full PTG Group Manual. They are supplemental aids, not stand-alone instructions.

**2. Review the Meeting Guide**

- Download and review complete meeting guide
- Review founding principles together
- Discuss boundaries and non-negotiables
- Review higher-risk protocols
- Confirm referral procedures understood

**3. Secure a Donated Space**

- Identify free, consistent location

Secured Donated Space Location:

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Address:

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Primary Contact Person:

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Contact Phone/Email:

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- Ensure privacy
- Arrange seating in a circle
- Confirm reliable weekly access

**4. Set a Weekly Time**

- Choose consistent day and time

Weekly Meeting Day:

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Weekly Meeting Time:

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Commit to weekly repetition

Communicate clearly to members

**5. Confirm Facilitator Readiness**

Veteran or First Responder

Emotionally regulated

Understands PTG principles

Protects confidentiality

Can redirect trauma loops to growth

Primary Facilitator Name:

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Backup/Co-Facilitator Name:

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Growth begins with showing up.

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**POSTTRAUMATIC GROWTH (PTG) GROUP  
Weekly Facilitation Guide (Fillable)**

**PTG GROUP FACILITATOR SHEET**

**Weekly Meeting Guide and Checklist**

**Duration:** 60 to 90 minutes

**Purpose:** To provide Veterans and First Responders with a safe, structured, growth-centered environment to practice Posttraumatic Growth (PTG).

**Note:** Groups are volunteer-led, held in donated spaces, and always free of charge. No individual or organization owns the group; it belongs to the collective.

**BEFORE THE MEETING**

- Set up chairs in a circle or open arrangement to promote connection
- Have the weekly reflection, reading, or topic ready
- Keep the Closing Statement and Tribe of the Restored Warriors Pledge available
- Prepare any printed materials if needed
- Be ready to reinforce the mission: **growth, not therapy**

**Selected Reading / Reflection Topic:**

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**Domain Focus (if topic-based):**

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**1. WELCOME THE GROUP (5 minutes)**

**Facilitator Opening**

Read:

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“This is a closed Veterans and First Responders Posttraumatic Growth group. Attendance is limited to Military Veterans and First Responders, both current and former, as well as select supporters approved by the group.

The purpose of this group is to find purpose in our struggles, sharing each other’s joys, perspectives, and triumphs in the aftermath of trauma. Please keep shares focused on growth, not on being stuck in trauma.

Please do not share who attends or what is discussed outside of this meeting. If you are struggling, please let us know so we can help.

Keep up the good fight.”

### **Welcome Checklist**

- Welcome members
- Reinforce confidentiality
- Restate mission: growth-centered, not therapy
- Emphasize equal voice
- Remind members: advice only when invited

## **2. REVIEW GROUND RULES**

### **Facilitator Review**

- First-person sharing
- No cross-talk
- No interrupting
- No politics
- No religion debates
- Confidentiality
- Growth-centered dialogue
- Rank and roles are left at the door
- Harsh language may occur, but never directed at one another
- Do not encourage self-destructive behaviors
- Arrive on time when possible

You can summarize this as:

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“Please share from your own experience. Avoid interrupting, cross-talk, side conversations, politics, and religious debate. Keep the conversation growth-centered. Advice should only be given if someone asks for it. What is said here stays here.”

### **3. INTRODUCTIONS**

- If no new members are present, skip this step
- If new members are present, complete introductions

#### **Introduction Prompt**

##### **Veterans / First Responders:**

State your name and how you served.

##### **Supporters:**

State your name and reason for attending.

- If a supporter’s presence is not appropriate for the group, kindly ask them to leave

### **4. OPENING DISCUSSION**

#### **Facilitator Prompt**

Ask:

“Does anyone have a growth challenge or reflection from this week they’d like to talk about today?”

#### **Opening Discussion Checklist**

- Allow space for brief check-ins, grounding practice or meditation practice.
- Members share by stating first name, then their thoughts
- Keep shares focused on growth, meaning-making, lessons, and movement forward

### **5. MAIN MEETING FORMAT**

#### **Choose one format each week**

##### **Option A: Weekly Reflection Meeting**

- Use an official weekly reflection from the manual or a member’s PTG-based reflection
- Pick by week of the year or random selection
- Read it aloud

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- Members share reflections
- Each member states first name, then thoughts

**Facilitator Focus:**

- Redirect if discussion gets stuck in negativity
- Redirect if members drift into war stories or graphic trauma detail
- Re-center on meaning, growth, and what is being learned

**Option B: Reading Meeting**

- Read a short PTG-focused excerpt

Examples:

- *Struggle Well*
- *Restoring the Warrior*
- *Transformed by Trauma*

- Members share reflections
- Each member states first name, then thoughts

**Facilitator Focus:**

- Use gentle redirection if discussion strays
- Bring discussion back to growth and application

**Option C: Topic-Based Meeting**

- Choose a PTG-related topic such as:

- Increased personal strength
- New possibilities
- Deeper relationships
- Appreciation for life
- Existential or spiritual change

- Members share thoughts and experiences
- Each member states first name, then thoughts

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**Facilitator Focus:**

- Redirect if discussion becomes stuck in negativity
- Redirect if it drifts into war stories
- Keep the group focused on growth, insight, and forward movement

**Key Discussion Notes**

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**6. REDIRECT COMMON CHALLENGES**

**Facilitator Checklist**

- Redirect trauma dumping toward growth
- Use structured rounds if one person dominates
- Re-center if discussion drifts politically or religiously
- Re-focus if conversation becomes advice-heavy without invitation
- Conduct personal outreach if attendance drops

**Helpful Redirection Language**

- “Let’s bring this back to growth and what you’re learning from it.”
- “That sounds important. What has helped you move forward with that?”
- “Let’s make space so everyone has a chance to speak.”
- “Let’s steer away from politics/religion and stay centered on the mission of the group.”
- “Would you like support or just space to be heard right now?”

**7. HIGHER-RISK PROTOCOLS**

- Pause and validate emotional distress
- Refer suicidal ideation to **988 immediately**
- Encourage outside support for substance instability or significant impairment

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- Check in with anyone who appears overwhelmed before they leave
- Rotate leadership to prevent facilitator burnout

### **Simple Response Guide**

If someone becomes highly distressed:

1. Pause the discussion
2. Validate what you are seeing
3. Move toward safety and support
4. Do not try to act as a therapist
5. Connect them to immediate resources if needed

### **Sample Language**

- “I’m glad you said something.”
- “You do not have to carry that alone.”
- “Let’s make sure you have support before you leave.”
- “If you’re having thoughts of harming yourself, we need to connect you to 988 right now.”

## **8. FOLLOW-UP NEEDED AFTER MEETING**

- Check on anyone who appeared distressed
- Follow up with absent members if needed
- Reach out to anyone who may need additional support
- Note any leadership rotation or planning needs for next week

### **Follow-Up Notes:**

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## **9. CLOSING THE MEETING**

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**Begin 10 to 15 minutes before the meeting ends**

**Part 1: Gratitude and Self-Care Round**

Each member shares:

- One thing they are grateful for today
- One thing they will do for self-care

**Part 2: Facilitator Reads Closing Statement**

“As we close today’s meeting, let us remember why we come together. This group is not meant to replace any other program or clinical approach. It is here to give us space to grow, to support one another, and to remain open to many different paths of healing and recovery.

We carry forward the lessons of the Five Domains of Post Traumatic Growth:

- To find new appreciation in the small moments of life.
- To strengthen relationships through empathy, compassion, and connection.
- To discover new possibilities and directions we may not have seen before.
- To recognize the strength and courage we already hold within.
- To seek deeper meaning, whether through reflection, faith, or a renewed worldview.

Before anyone leaves, please make sure no one is in distress. If you notice a brother or sister struggling, check in and remind them that they are not alone. Together we can guide and encourage one another as we grow side by side.

Finally, let the work of this group extend beyond these walls. Stay connected, encourage one another, and live out growth with resilience, courage, and hope.”

**Part 3: Tribe of the Restored Warriors Pledge**

**Stand in a circle. Facilitator says, “Repeat after me.”**

We are warriors; we are not meant to struggle alone.  
I will face the past and the present with my Tribe.  
Our mission is to heal and grow with intent and purpose.  
Not just to survive but to thrive.

**WEEKLY CLOSING REMINDERS**

- Gratitude round completed
- Self-care round completed
- Closing statement read

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- Tribe pledge completed
- Confirm next meeting date/time
- Make sure no one leaves in distress

### **FACILITATOR REMINDER**

**Posttraumatic growth is a lifelong practice of transformation, connection, and meaning-making.**

**Weekly practice. Continued growth. Lifelong connection.**

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