

## Lighthouse Love-Ops

### Meeting Outline

1. Good morning/afternoon/evening ladies and gentlemen. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. Welcome to this meeting of *Love-Ops*, a program dedicated to help those who have loved ones in prison.
2. Please help me open this meeting by reciting the Serenity Prayer: **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.**
3. In consideration of everyone here, please silence your telephones; please also refrain from texting or any other use of it. If something comes up and you need to use your phone, please take it outside and then return afterward. Thank you.
4. We do not smoke cigarettes in this building and we ask you to respect this. We have snacks, coffee, and other beverages here for you provided by \_\_\_\_\_. We look for volunteers among our participants who will not only serve as a chairperson, but also any who will help us set up before and clean up after each meeting. If you are interested in providing either service, please speak to \_\_\_\_\_ after today's/tonight's meeting.
5. *Love-Ops* is a program that provides support to those people in society who suffer from having a loved one who either is or has been in jail or prison. No one truly understands what this group of people is going through except others who are going through the same thing. *Love-Ops* helps people with incarceration-related loved ones work as a support group for each other. Our meetings follow this direction:
  - Three weeks during the month our scheduled speaker is (a) someone who has already experienced, or is continuing to experience, having a loved one who either is or has been in jail or prison; (b) or, a professional who works somewhere in the field of those who are incarcerated or are on parole/probation supervision; (c) or, someone who serves in some type of jail/prison ministry; (d) or, someone who has been incarcerated. These speakers provide the participants with information, knowledge, and confidence based on their experiences. They share what has worked for them (and what has not) so that we can benefit from their experiences.
  - One meeting is always chaired by one of our leaders and geared toward a recap of what has been learned through the previous meetings of that month. This meeting will allow for open discussion.
  - Whenever we have a week in the month where there is a fifth day/night that we would normally have a meeting on, we hold something different and special for that month, i.e. potluck meal, Dunkin' Donuts, a BBQ, et cetera.
6. Each meeting will last one hour. We also provide fifteen minutes before and thirty minutes afterward for greeting and socializing.
7. I have asked \_\_\_\_\_ to read *Love-Ops*' Standards. **(SEE HANDOUT #1)**  
NOTE: Always ask the group to join in thanking the reader afterwards.

8. We ask everyone to respect the following guidelines during our meeting:
  - A) Always be respectful at all times of everyone here.
  - B) Please raise your hand anytime you wish to speak and wait to be called upon to do so.
  - C) At all times, please refrain from using profanity, racial comments, sexual slurs, and threats.
  - D) During the open floor, please limit your time frame when speaking. If it becomes too long, the chairperson will intervene by giving you a sign that you have one minute remaining. This will be done to allow ample time for everyone to speak.
  - E) What we hear in here *stays in here*. “Hear here?!”
9. Please welcome our leadership team (provide the introduction). Again, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. So that we can all get to know each other better, please go around the room and introduce yourself by your first name only.
10. Welcome to everyone here today/tonight. By a show of hands, is there anyone here for the first time? (If any of the new attendees would like to take this time to tell us very briefly a little bit about you and why you are here, please feel free to do so.)
11. Our speaker will share for approximately twenty minutes. Afterward, the floor will be open for everyone’s questions and discussion. Now, it is my privilege to introduce today’s/tonight’s speaker. **(Provide appropriate introduction.)**
12. **(Based on their mutual decision prior to the beginning of the meeting, either the speaker or the chairperson will guide the open floor discussion. The chairperson will remain in charge of making the one-minute notifications if/when needed.)**
13. **When it gets eight (8) minutes before the end of the meeting, the chairperson will announce that “we have time for one more quick comment or question.”**
14. **The last five minutes of the meeting will be utilized by the leadership group making any pertinent announcements (including the next week’s scheduled speaker, our invitation to people who would like to assist in service, other plans, a reminder to everyone to invite others to the next meeting), and by someone who has been asked to read HANDOUT #2.**
15. After the meeting, please join us for coffee and snacks and getting to know one another better.
16. In closing, we would like to encourage you to attend church this weekend, and if you are not already a member of a church, to seek one to become a part of. Please remember, God is always waiting with open arms and a loving heart for you and all of your problems and struggles. Please join me in closing this meeting with the Lord’s Prayer.

## **LOVE-OPS' STANDARDS**

### **Also Known as HANDOUT #1**

We will always work to maintain solid communication with everyone, with clearly defined relationships and obligations, and promote a commitment throughout the organization to our common mission and goals:

1. We will help the families of those who are incarcerated and/or on post-release supervision.
2. We will provide a regular meeting place for these support group meetings.
3. When possible, we will build pre-release relationships with both those who are incarcerated and their families in preparation for a successful transition back into society.
4. We will encourage the members of the support group to serve as mentors to others in their position.
5. We will encourage the members of the support group to establish or support a community service effort.
6. We will advise the families that their loved one's (s') success is more likely if he/she/they see their families' pre-knowledge, preparation, church life, etc.
7. We will always work to convey useful information to increase awareness of their troubled loved one's (s') needs.
8. We will always work to provide resources/contacts pertinent to their loved one's (s') needs.
9. We will provide opportunities for relationship building.
10. We will maintain Christianity as our basis of inspiration and guidance, always encouraging the support group to enjoy the benefits of building a relationship with God, always promoting that they find a home church to attend.

### **LOVE-OPS' HANDOUT #2**

“[One day] the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”

—*Jesus, Matthew 25:34-40*

