**Building Strong Home Groups**

**Workshop materials:**

* Building Strong Home Groups Handout
* Blank note sheets for each member and a few pens
* Large sheets of paper for each table and for the front of the room
* 8½” x 11” card stock (or similar size)
* Markers

**Goal of Session [slide 2]**

* Stress the importance of a strong home group as the foundation of NA
* Identify and prioritize actions that can be taken to strengthen home groups
* Get involved in taking action

**Introduction [slide 3] 5 minutes**

Explain the purpose of the session, covering the following points:

* This workshop is meant to help strengthen our home groups.
* The main goal is to find ways to grow and improve.
* Demonstrate the process so that everyone can then do it in their homegroups.
* Extra time for this workshop can be scheduled in a group or area business meeting, or on a separate day.

Call attention to the Building Strong Home Groups handout that lists the five steps we will be working with today.

**Icebreaker [slide 4] 10 minutes**

Ask each table to practice the small group discussion process by brainstorming a group name for their table.

What positive message do they want to convey with their name?

Give them 5 minutes to agree on a name and write it on the card stock on the tables, then go quickly around the room to hear each table’s name.

**Building Strong Home Groups Discussion Set-up [slide 5] 5 minutes**

We strive for a positive, attractive atmosphere in our homegroups, a feeling of unconditional love, recovery, and stability, but sometimes we fall short. We seem to share many of the same ideas about what a strong home group is, but HOW do we get there, that seems to be the question.

Introduce the Building Strong Home Groups handout to the group. This tool can be used in a group’s business meetings and helps groups think about practical ways to become stronger and find new ways to approach challenges.

Talk through the five steps on the handout. Explain that we are going to work through the steps so that everyone can have practical experience in how the process works.

**Large Group Discussion [slide 6 & 7] 15 minutes**

**Step 1:**

In a real home group setting, the group may choose different areas to focus on for improvement. To save time, for this exercise we’ve identified 5 possible areas:

* Our message
* Traditions
* Sponsorship
* Service
* Atmosphere of recovery

Help the whole group decide on two of them to focus on for this workshop. Ask for ideas and see if there is consensus on two areas. If not, take a show of hands for each and pick the top two. Write each of these on a large sheet of paper at the front of the room.

**Step 2:**

Brainstorm a couple of issues that need improvement for each of the chosen areas. Encourage everyone to share any experience they may have from their homegroups. If necessary give some examples:

* If the area is “service” an issue could be not enough trusted servants
* If the area is “traditions” the issue could be newcomers sitting in the back and not really connecting with the group, or a couple of people dominating the group.

Normally we would talk about any issues in each area within our homegroups, but to save time today we are just going to list a few for each area.

Write down the issues under each area.

**Small Group Discussion [slide 8, 9, and 10] 30 minutes**

**Step 3:**

For this exercise each table is a “group.” Members can consider their own home group experience as a foundation. Remind groups to choose a recorder and facilitator for each group.

Divide the room in half and ask one half to consider one area, and the other to consider the second area. Then ask each group to choose one of the issues from the list under their assigned area. They should do this very quickly using a show of hands if need be and not get bogged down in discussion.

Ask members to brainstorm a list of solutions for their issue. Remember that there are no bad ideas. Allow 15 minutes for this part of the exercise.

**Step 4:**

Once the list is created ask members to choose their top two solutions

**Step 5:**

Use the rest of the time to consider simple, practical action plans that a group could take to implement these solutions.

Remember! Be specific about who will carry out the action, what exactly they are going to do, when it should be done by, and how much it’s going to cost.

Recorders should use the large sheets of paper to record the group’s ideas for action. Remind them to write LARGE = 8 lines/sheet. Ask each group to identify their sheet by writing the area and issue at the top of the sheet. Place the sheets on the wall as they are filled.

**Small Group Feedback 15 minutes**

Ask as many groups as possible to share their solutions and action plans.

If necessary ask questions to identify the “who”, the “how”, the “when”, and the “how much.”

Ask if the actions reasonable and within reach?

**Wrap-up [slide 11] 5 minutes**

Finish the session by letting members know that our hope is that they will see value in this process and make time in their group business meeting for it.

Remind members that groups may decide to do this exercise once each year or more often. They also may want to revisit their list of issues if the ones that were prioritized are addressed and resolved.