

## Small Group Guidelines

1. Keep your sharing focused on your own thoughts and feelings. Limit your sharing to three to five minutes.
2. There will be NO cross talk. Cross talk is when two individuals engage in conversation, excluding all others. Each person is free to express his or her feelings without interruptions.
3. We are here to support one another, not “fix” one another.
4. Anonymity and confidentiality are basic requirements. What is shared in the group stays in the group. The only exception is when someone threatens to injure themselves or others.
5. Offensive language has no place in a Christ-centered recovery group.

### Accountability Team Phone Numbers

Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

Accountability Partners: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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## PHYSICAL/EMOTIONAL AND SEXUAL ABUSE

We meet every Friday night...

6:00 – 7:00p.m. Dinner

7:00 – 8:00p.m. Main Meeting

8:00 – 9:00 p.m. Small Groups

9:00 – 10:00 p.m. Connection Café

Real Life, Moscow Campus  
Eastside Marketplace Mall

For Celebrate Recovery – Moscow Info  
[www.CRMoscow.com](http://www.CRMoscow.com)

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For World Wide Information on CR  
[www.celebraterecovery.com](http://www.celebraterecovery.com)

## The Problem

Abuse is the damaging and improper use of someone, leaving the sufferer without a voice, options, or freedom. In relationships, the stronger partner dominates over the other leaving us to fear and hide. It can take form as a combination of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. While we do not hold any responsibility for the actions of another, we are responsible for our reactions. In some cases, such as childhood abuse, we can find true healing by saying we hold no responsibility. Abuse can happen in every kind of relationship, every social and financial standing.

Abuse damages our bodies, emotions, thinking, relationships, and our spirits. We have lost dominion over our bodies and now feel a loss with ourselves. We believe lies about ourselves such as: we are trash or that we are only a body and not worth anything else. We are overwhelmed by fear, guilt, anger, and grief and work hard to suppress all emotions and feelings. We learn distorted ways of thinking in order to survive like learning how to “check out” or doublethink by holding two opposing thoughts to be true at the same time. Abuse destroys relationships. Connection with others become distorted and the impact affects our ability to trust and have boundaries. We develop a need for control that can lead to unhealthy and unsafe coping mechanisms. Abuse of any kind has a direct impact on how we view God. Our spirit struggles to believe that a good God can exist. Abuse touches every area of our lives and leaves a path of destruction.

Some warning signs that we may be in an abusive relationship are feeling like we are always walking on eggshells around our partner, avoid certain topics for fear of being yelled at, feel like we can't do anything right, we hide the truth or make excuses for our partner's behavior, feel emotionally numb or helpless, sex is mandatory, our opinion is ignored and our accomplishments diminished. If these are present in a current or past relationship, it is wise to seek guidance to work through these issues.

## The Process of Recovery

The starting place for recovery is facing what is true. If we don't speak the truth about what really happened or is happening, we cannot come into healing. Eph. 5:11 says, “Have nothing to do with fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.”

It is vital that as we face the abuse of the past or deal with a current abusive situation, we do so very carefully. We need to deal with it in small portions at a time and learn when we have had enough. It is essential that as we work towards healing that we do so in the context of relationship. Because the damage was done in relationship it is necessary that the healing is also done in relationship. Developing a personal support team including accountability partners, a sponsor or counselor, and medical help (as needed) is important. Journaling can be helpful as you can see patterns and see progress. This process of healing will hurt, but the pain is necessary to find healing.

The process of recovery varies based upon the duration and depth of the abuse, the age of the onset of the abuse, and the closeness of the relationship that was violated. All degrees of abuse take time and hard work to reconcile so that we can find healing and live unafraid. Healing comes for our bodies as we find the courage to reconnect with how our bodies feel and learn healthy ways to deal with the pain of the past. Our emotions find healing as we find our voices, as we learn to speak what is true, and learn how to not live out of fear, guilt, anger, and grief. Learning new ways of thinking takes hard work and discipline. We find healing as we learn to think in the ways that God sees us and our past abuse. We learn to stand on truth instead of lies. Relationships are necessary for the healing process because we need to discover what healthy and safe relationships look like. We learn how to have healthy boundaries with others and how to respect other people's boundaries. Our spirits find hope and healing as we learn to trust who God really is and not how we have viewed him in the past. Even though our lives have been marred by abuse, God is able and willing to write a new story into our lives full of hope, purpose, and joy.