

Notes to the Leader for G249 — In Community

Session Preparation

The depth of this session will be enhanced if each member thinks about the topic in advance. Please distribute the preparation sheet at the end of the prior session or email it to members. Have a few extra copies available at the gathering for people who have forgotten to bring their copies.

Centering Practice: Be Here Now

Leader says (with long pauses between sentences):

Before we begin, let's come fully into this time and this place using the mantra, "Be here now." Here's how it will work. Close your eyes. As you inhale, mentally say, "Be here now." Repeat the phrase as you exhale. Pace your repetition of "Be here now," so one repetition lasts for your whole in-breath and another repetition lasts for your whole out-breath. Continue until you hear the gong. *[Allow about 2 minutes for this centering exercise.]*

Preliminaries

Prior to beginning the session, take a few minutes to go over the announcements of the church events given at the last leader meeting or from a recent church bulletin. Remind members of the next meeting date and location. Get volunteers to light the chalice. Pass the bowl of quotations.

Discussion

The discussion period is meant to allow group members to go deeper, to share things they may have forgotten to share, and to exchange ideas. It is important that people not comment on others' sharing except in a very supportive way.

Timekeeping

Use this timetable as an aid to keep the gathering on track. It leaves 15 minutes available in case the sharing portion runs longer or if a Life Ritual is planned. If it appears that portions of the session will run long, the group members can decide whether to stop continue or eliminate other portions.

Preliminaries	2 minutes
Centering practice	3 minutes
Opening	1 minute
Check-in	15 minutes
Reading	2 minutes
Silence	5 minutes
Deep listening	55 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Singing	2 minutes
Closing	1 minute
Total	101 minutes