

# What should I do when a group member is repeatedly trying to engage the group in critiquing or discussing the practice?

Below is a script that you can use with a practice partner (choose your spouse, friend, or someone else) to learn how to handle the problem of a group member repeatedly trying to engage the group in critiquing or discussing the practice.

Keep page 2 for yourself and give page 3 to your practice partner. Your practice partner will play the role of Jason.

If possible, rehearse 4-5 times (until you can do it without the tips).

## **Practice Scenario**

In your sharing meetings, Jason keeps trying to draw the group into discussions about the practice at hand. For example, in a prior meeting he told the group he didn't agree with one of the steps and tried to draw the group into a discussion about theology. In this meeting, instead of sharing his experiences, he shares some general thoughts about the subject at hand. You see that he's doing this as a way of participating in the group without doing the work.

JASON

I've worked on relinquishment my whole life, and I think I'm pretty good at it. I've read lots of books about it...

YOU

Let's stop here for a moment.

Why: Stopping allows you to address the problem before it becomes something that affects what the group is trying to do.

YOU

Jason, to make this work, we need to keep the focus on sharing our experiences of using this practice of relinquishment. If you want to discuss the topic in general, we need to do that outside of these meetings.

Why: Naming the problem lets the group know that you won't allow this problem to derail the group's focus.

YOU

(Pause to allow the person to respond.)

Why: By pausing, you give this person the opportunity to respond, and it preserves his or her dignity within the group.

JASON

Okay. I understand.

YOU

Okay, let's move on so we stay on track.

Why: Refocusing helps the group move on and not dwell on this moment.

JASON

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YOU

Let's stop here for a moment.

Why: Stopping allows you to address the problem before it becomes something that affects what the group is trying to do.

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Jason, to make this work, we need to keep the focus on sharing our experiences of using this practice of relinquishment. If you want to discuss the topic in general, we need to do that outside of these meetings.

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