

The God Within Chapter Starter Manual



A practical handbook for starting a local, in-person The God Within chapter

Preface from the Founder

This manual exists because real work needs real form. Many people feel the call to live from the power within, but a call without structure often remains private intention. The local chapter is where intention becomes practice. It is where people return, listen, take inventory, tell the truth, and support one another in turning insight into action. I wanted this manual to be simple enough for one person to use, sturdy enough for a small group to trust, and humble enough to keep the work itself at the center. If you are reading this because you feel the need for a chapter where you live, begin there. Do not wait for ideal conditions. Start cleanly. Start honestly. Start with the willingness to serve something greater than your own personality.

This manual is for any interested Withiner who wants to start a local, in-person chapter of The God Within (TGW). It is a practical handbook, not a philosophy text. Its purpose is simple: to help a small number of committed people gather, organize, and sustain a chapter that is safe, self-supporting, autonomous, anonymous in practice, and focused on inner change. It adapts proven group principles from Alcoholics Anonymous to the distinct language and purpose of TGW, while also drawing careful lessons from peer-support practice, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Vipassana, and Montessori. The aim is to help a person move from conviction to action with as little confusion as possible.

TGW is not Alcoholics Anonymous, is not a clinic, and is not a religious institution. This manual uses Alcoholics Anonymous group guidance as an organizational starting point because A.A. has accumulated decades of practical experience in how small autonomous groups can remain healthy, nonpolitical, self-funded, and available to people who need them. Where A.A. speaks in terms specific to alcoholism, TGW speaks in terms of awakening the power within and living by TGW principles. The result is a chapter model that borrows structure, not identity.

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How to Use This Manual

This manual can be read straight through, but it is best used in stages. Begin with “What The God Within Is and Is Not” and “Core Principles and Traditions-Inspired Safeguards” so the purpose and boundaries of the chapter are clear. Then work through “How to Start a Chapter Step by Step” and complete Appendix A, the Startup Checklist. Next, choose a simple meeting format from “Suggested Meeting Formats and Scripts” and select one of the opening readings in Appendix C. Use Appendix F, the Startup Announcement Kit, to secure a room and announce the meeting. During the first ninety days, return often to Appendix E, the Chapter Inventory Tool, and Appendix H, the risk-reduction guidance. Used this way, the manual will carry you from first intention to first meeting, and from first meeting to a stable chapter life.

What The God Within Is and Is Not

A local TGW chapter is a voluntary fellowship of people who gather to strengthen the practice of recognizing, trusting, and acting from the power within. It exists so that inner conviction does not remain private aspiration. Through regular meetings, shared reflection, personal inventory, disciplined listening, mutual encouragement, and service, the chapter becomes a place where a person can return to what is true and begin again. A chapter is not controlled by a central authority, and it does not require members to hold a single creed, doctrine, or political identity.

A TGW chapter is not therapy, not medical treatment, not a crisis service, not a business, not a dating pool, not a place for recruiting into causes, and not a place to pressure people into beliefs. It does not diagnose, prescribe, or replace qualified professional help. It does not affiliate with political parties, religious institutions, treatment centers, or commercial enterprises. It may cooperate with outside people or organizations when useful, but it should not merge identities, exchange endorsements, or allow outside agendas to shape the chapter's purpose.

TGW is a peer fellowship for people seeking to live from the power within. It may complement AA, NA, other recovery fellowships, therapy, meditation, or other forms of support, but it does not replace them.

Membership should be simple. A person is a member if they say they are and wish to participate in good faith. There are no dues or formal barriers to belonging. A chapter may distinguish between attendance at a meeting and membership in the chapter for business decisions, but it should keep that distinction light and humane. The spirit is invitation without coercion, responsibility without bureaucracy, and belonging without conformity.

Core Principles and Traditions-Inspired Safeguards

Every TGW chapter should adopt a short written set of operating principles. They do not need to be called traditions, but they should function that way: as guardrails strong enough to protect the chapter from mission drift, ego conflict, money disputes, and outside capture. Without such guardrails, even sincere groups can become confusing, inflated, or divided. With them, a chapter can remain small, clear, and durable. At minimum, a chapter should affirm that its common welfare comes before personal status; that leaders are trusted servants and do not govern; that membership is open to those who sincerely want to practice TGW principles; that each chapter is autonomous except when its actions would clearly harm other chapters or TGW as a whole; that each chapter has one primary purpose: to support the practice and spread of TGW principles through example and fellowship; that it does not endorse or finance outside causes or enterprises; that it is self-supporting through voluntary contributions; that it remains nonprofessional as a fellowship, though members may also seek professional help elsewhere; that it avoids unnecessary organization; that it takes no position on outside controversies; and that anonymity and humility protect the fellowship by placing principles before personalities.

These principles become real through habits. Keep money transparent and minimal. Rotate roles. Avoid charismatic dependency on a founder, teacher, or strongest personality in the room. Do not allow chapter time to be used for political persuasion, fundraising for outside groups, romantic pursuit, sales, or professional self-promotion. Protect anonymity inside the room and in public communication. Use group conscience for decisions rather than unilateral control. Encourage people to speak from lived experience instead of authority claims. When conflict appears, return to purpose, not personalities.

TGW Chapter Principles

1. The common welfare of the chapter comes before personal status or influence.
2. For chapter purpose, authority rests in the informed conscience of the chapter. Leaders are trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. Membership is open to any person who sincerely wants to practice The God Within principles in good faith.
4. Each chapter is autonomous except where its actions would clearly harm other chapters or the wider reputation of TGW.
5. Each chapter has one primary purpose: to help people live from the power within by cultivating honesty, responsibility, and freedom from patterns that weaken that capacity.
6. A chapter does not endorse, finance, or lend its name to outside causes, institutions, businesses, or controversies.
7. Each chapter is fully self-supporting through voluntary contributions and declines outside funding that creates dependency or confusion.
8. The chapter remains a fellowship, not a professional service, though members may seek professional care elsewhere.
9. The chapter uses only the structure it truly needs and avoids unnecessary bureaucracy.
10. The chapter takes no position on outside controversies and keeps its focus on its primary purpose.
11. Public communication is based on attraction rather than promotion and protects the privacy of members.
12. Anonymity, humility, and service place principles before personalities.

How to Start a Chapter Step by Step

Step 1: Confirm the Need and Gather the First Two or Three People

Most chapters begin the same way: a few people recognize a need and decide not to ignore it. In practical terms, that means two or three people are willing to meet regularly, keep the purpose clear, and do the small acts of service required to begin. A chapter does not need momentum before it starts. It needs willingness, consistency, and enough humility to let the form grow around the purpose. Do not wait for perfect readiness. Begin with what you have.

Step 2: Decide What Kind of Meeting You Are Starting

Before your first public meeting, decide whether your chapter's regular meeting will primarily be a discussion meeting, a speaker-and-discussion meeting, a reading-and-reflection meeting, an inventory meeting, or a meditation-and-sharing meeting. Most new chapters do best with a simple discussion format supported by a short reading and a brief period of silence. This keeps the barrier to entry low while still reflecting TGW practice. Also decide whether all meetings will be open to anyone interested in TGW or whether certain business meetings will be limited to chapter members. Keep the public meeting format simple and repeatable.

Step 3: Name the Chapter

Choose a simple, dignified name that reflects place, time, or tone rather than personality. Good names are easy to remember and do not suggest ownership by an individual. Avoid naming a chapter after a person, teacher, ideology, therapy method, or outside organization. The name should make clear that this is a local TGW chapter while avoiding exaggerated claims. Examples include The God Within of Northside, Morning Withiners, River City TGW Chapter, or Wednesday Inner Practice Group.

Step 4: Find a Stable, Appropriate Meeting Place

For an in-person chapter, the meeting place matters. Look for a location that is accessible, affordable, neutral, reasonably private, and predictable. Community rooms, libraries, rented meeting rooms, recovery-friendly spaces, and faith-owned rooms can all work, provided the chapter remains clearly independent and unendorsed. Avoid spaces that pressure attendees into another identity, purchase, or affiliation. Confirm the schedule,

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cost, seating, accessibility, parking, noise level, and restroom access before announcing the meeting. A modest and reliable room is better than an impressive but unstable one.

Step 5: Gather Basic Supplies

You need less than most people think. Start with chairs, a sign if the venue allows it, printed readings, a simple attendance or contact card only if you truly need one, a basket or container for voluntary contributions, a clock or timer, and a few copies of your chapter opening and closing script. If you offer refreshments, keep them modest and optional. Do not delay the launch over aesthetics. The strongest foundation is a clear purpose and a reliable weekly meeting.

Step 6: Assign Simple Trusted Servant Roles

At launch, you only need a few trusted servants: a chair or facilitator to open and guide the meeting, a secretary to handle announcements and keep basic records, and a treasurer to collect and report voluntary contributions and expenses. If the group grows, it may add a literature person, greeter, safety contact, or outreach contact. Roles should be viewed as service, not rank. Rotation should begin early so the chapter does not harden around one personality.

Step 7: Hold a Founding Business Meeting

Before or shortly after the first public meeting, hold a simple business meeting. Decide the chapter name, regular meeting day and time, location, opening and closing format, contribution method, prudent reserve, role descriptions, rotation schedule, and how business decisions will be made. The best standard is an informed chapter conscience: people hear the issue, ask questions, discuss it respectfully, and seek substantial agreement rather than domination. Record the decisions in one place so memory does not become the constitution.

Step 8: Launch Simply and Announce Carefully

When announcing a new chapter, keep the message factual and modest: chapter name, meeting day, time, location, and a one-sentence description of purpose. Attraction works better than hype. Avoid testimonial-style promotion, exaggerated promises, founder worship, or public disclosure of members' personal stories without clear consent. Optional registration with thegodwithin.org may help visibility, but registration is optional and does not change the chapter's autonomy.

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Step 9: Protect the First 90 Days

The first ninety days are for consistency, not innovation. Meet at the same time in the same place. Use the same basic format. Track income and expenses carefully. Rotate small tasks. Pay attention to whether newcomers feel welcomed, whether people can hear the purpose clearly, and whether any one personality is taking over. If problems arise, simplify rather than expand. Stable rhythm is more important than early ambition.

Suggested Meeting Formats and Scripts

A good TGW meeting is simple enough to repeat, structured enough to feel safe, and open enough to allow honesty. Most chapters will do well to keep meetings to sixty or seventy-five minutes. A reliable rhythm is opening, a short reading, a minute of silence, guided sharing or discussion, announcements, optional contributions, and a closing.

Sample Weekly Discussion Meeting

Chair: “Welcome to The God Within chapter meeting. This chapter exists to help people practice living from the power within through honesty, reflection, service, and fellowship. We are self-supporting through voluntary contributions. We are not affiliated with political parties, religious institutions, treatment providers, or outside causes. We protect anonymity and ask everyone to respect the privacy of what is shared here. Please speak from your own experience and avoid cross-talk, fixing, or advising unless the format clearly allows it.”

Chair: “We’ll begin with a short reading.” Then read a brief TGW text, a reflection on personal responsibility, an inventory prompt, or a short passage on awareness and practice. After the reading, observe one minute of silence. Then say: “Tonight’s topic is: Where am I resisting the power within, and what would honest action look like this week?” Members share one at a time, usually for three to five minutes, without interruption. Near the close, the chair asks whether any newcomers would like information after the meeting and whether anyone is available to speak with them.

Chair: “We’ll now make room for announcements related to this chapter only.” Keep announcements brief. If the chapter passes a basket, the chair may say: “We are self-supporting through voluntary contributions. No one is required to contribute.” Then close with: “Thank you for being here. Take what is useful, leave what is not, and let what is true become action.”

Complete 60-Minute Meeting Script

0:00-0:05 | Opening

Chair: “Welcome to this meeting of The God Within. This chapter exists to help people practice living from the power within through honesty, reflection, service, and fellowship. We are self-supporting through voluntary contributions. We have no dues. We are not affiliated with political parties, religious institutions, treatment providers, or outside causes. We ask everyone to protect anonymity and respect the privacy of what is shared

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here. Please speak from your own experience and avoid cross-talk, fixing, or advising unless the format allows it.”

0:05-0:10 | Reading and Silence

Chair: “We’ll begin with a short reading.” Read one of the chapter’s chosen readings. Then say: “We’ll keep one minute of silence to become present.” After the silence, the chair introduces the topic: “Tonight’s topic is: What truth in me is ready to become action?”

0:10-0:40 | Sharing

The chair invites members to share one at a time, usually for three to four minutes each, depending on attendance. The chair may say: “Please share from your own experience. Let’s keep enough brevity that others have time.” If the group is small, a second round may be offered. If the group is large, the chair may gently keep time. The tone should be honest, calm, and practical rather than performative.

0:40-0:50 | Newcomers, Announcements, and Voluntary Contributions

Chair: “If anyone is new or returning after time away and would like to introduce themselves by first name, you are welcome, but not required, to do so.” After this, make chapter announcements only. If the chapter passes a basket, the chair may say: “We are self-supporting through voluntary contributions. No one is required to contribute.”

0:50-0:60 | Closing

Chair: “Before we close, take a moment to ask yourself what one honest action belongs to you after this meeting.” Pause briefly. Then say: “Thank you for being here. Take what is useful, leave what is not, and let what is true become action.” After the meeting, trusted servants remain available for newcomers and practical questions.

Other Recommended Formats

A reading-and-reflection meeting begins with a short TGW reading and invites members to speak only about the reading. An inventory meeting uses written prompts such as “What truth am I avoiding?”, “Where am I blaming instead of owning?”, or “What action would align me with the power within today?” A meditation-and-sharing meeting includes ten to twenty minutes of silent sitting followed by structured shares. A speaker-and-discussion meeting invites one member to speak briefly from experience and opens discussion afterward. New chapters should avoid making formats too complex too quickly.

Roles, Rotation, Finances, and Anonymity

The health of a chapter depends less on formal offices than on faithful service. Even so, clear roles prevent confusion. The chair facilitates the meeting and protects the format. The secretary handles announcements, keeps a simple record of business decisions, and helps maintain continuity. The treasurer reports income, expenses, and reserve levels plainly and regularly. A literature or readings person manages chapter-approved readings if needed. A safety contact helps the chapter respond calmly and appropriately if behavior threatens the safety or unity of the meeting.

Rotation protects the chapter from dependency and resentment. Roles should have clear terms, such as three, six, or twelve months, depending on chapter size. No one should be treated as indispensable. Founders should model this principle especially. The healthiest chapters spread responsibility early, even if imperfectly, because participation creates ownership and reduces hierarchy.

Financial practice should be simple, transparent, and cautious. Chapters should accept only voluntary contributions connected to the chapter itself and decline outside donations that create confusion, dependency, or obligation. A chapter usually needs a prudent reserve sufficient to cover rent and basic supplies for a short period. Beyond that, avoid accumulating money without a clear chapter purpose. Report contributions and expenses regularly. If the chapter later chooses to support broader TGW service efforts, that decision should come from an informed chapter conscience, not assumption. Until then, the first duty of chapter funds is to keep the local meeting available.

Anonymity has two levels. Inside the chapter, it means confidentiality and discretion: who was there and what they said should not become social currency. Outside the chapter, it means members should think carefully before publicly identifying themselves as TGW members, especially in ways that could turn the fellowship into personal branding. A chapter should not post identifiable member stories, full names tied to vulnerable disclosures, or images that compromise privacy without explicit permission. Anonymity is not secrecy for its own sake. It is a practical protection against ego, pressure, and fear.

Safety, Boundaries, and Conflict Handling

A welcoming meeting is not the same as an unbounded one. Chapters should aim to create a space where people can participate without harassment, intimidation, financial coercion, bullying, or manipulation. No one should be pressured into a belief, therapy choice, political view, romantic interaction, or financial contribution. Unwanted pursuit, threatening conduct, and predatory behavior undermine the chapter's purpose and may justify asking a person to leave. Protecting the meeting's safety does not violate anonymity or autonomy.

At minimum, chapters should state a few boundaries aloud or in writing: speak from your own experience; respect time limits; avoid cross-talk unless invited by the format; do not diagnose, prescribe, or attempt to treat others; do not solicit business or causes; do not use the chapter to pursue members romantically; and respect privacy. If children attend, additional care and clear boundaries are required. If a venue has its own safety rules, chapter servants should know them.

When conflict arises, first distinguish between discomfort and danger. Honest disagreement is part of group life; intimidation is not. Minor issues can often be handled by a calm reminder of the format. Repeated disruption should be addressed by trusted servants or the chapter conscience, ideally with witness, clarity, and written follow-up if needed. If someone poses an immediate threat, follow venue rules and contact appropriate authorities. A chapter should never pretend to be equipped for emergencies it cannot responsibly manage.

How TGW Relates to CBT, Vipassana, Montessori, and 12-Step Recovery

TGW can learn from several mature traditions without collapsing into any one of them. From 12-step recovery, TGW can learn how autonomous groups stay united through shared purpose, humility, service, anonymity, and regular meetings. From CBT, TGW can learn the value of noticing distorted thinking, challenging unhelpful patterns, and aligning action with clearer perception. From Vipassana, TGW can learn disciplined observation, silence, nonreactivity, and direct attention to experience as it is. From Montessori, TGW can learn how environment shapes conduct: a room, format, and culture can be prepared in a way that quietly supports responsibility, freedom within limits, self-directed growth, and respect for others.

These influences should remain influences, not affiliations. A TGW chapter is not a CBT group led by clinicians, not a Vipassana center with formal retreat discipline, not a Montessori school, and not a 12-step meeting for addiction recovery unless the chapter explicitly serves such a population and is honest about its limits. Members may personally draw from these frameworks, but the chapter itself should remain clear about what it does: it offers a fellowship-based practice of living from the power within.

Appendices

Appendix A: Startup Checklist

- At least two or three people committed to starting the chapter
- Chapter name chosen
- Regular meeting day, time, and location confirmed
- Opening and closing scripts selected
- Initial meeting format chosen
- Chair, secretary, and treasurer identified
- Printed readings and basic supplies prepared
- Simple finance method and prudent reserve agreed
- Anonymity and safety statement prepared
- Founding business meeting held and decisions recorded
- Public announcement drafted in simple factual language
- Optional registration with thegodwithin.org considered
- Plan in place for welcoming newcomers after meetings
- Review scheduled after the first 30, 60, and 90 days

Appendix B: Sample Chapter Covenant

We gather to practice living from the power within. We protect the common welfare of this chapter. We place principles before personalities. We remain self-supporting through voluntary contributions. We do not affiliate with outside causes or controversies. We protect anonymity and respect privacy. We speak honestly from our own experience. We avoid domination, fixing, or coercion. We welcome sincere participation. We rotate service. We return again and again to responsibility, humility, and action. What is said here remains here.

Appendix C: Sample Readings and Reflection Prompts

Appendix C-1: Sample Opening Readings

Reading One: The Work Begins Within

The power we are seeking is not elsewhere. It is not found in spectacle, in performance, or in the approval of others. It is found in the willingness to become honest, present, and responsible. We gather here to remember that the life we want cannot be borrowed. It must be lived from within. Tonight, let us practice attention, humility, and action.

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Reading Two: Principles Before Personality

No one in this room has to be impressive. No one has to dominate, persuade, rescue, or perform. We are here to practice what is true, not what is dramatic. The chapter remains healthy when humility is stronger than ego, when listening is stronger than display, and when service is stronger than status. Let us place principles before personality.

Reading Three: Freedom Within Limits

Real freedom is not chaos. Real freedom grows where honesty, restraint, and respect make room for the deeper life to emerge. We do not gather to indulge every impulse. We gather to strengthen the part of us that can observe, choose, and act in alignment. Within simple limits, the inner life becomes clearer. Within shared responsibility, freedom becomes trustworthy.

Reading Four: Return to Action

Insight without action fades. Reflection without responsibility becomes self-protection. Every meeting asks the same quiet question: What truth am I ready to live? We do not need grand promises. We need one honest action, one clean decision, one act of courage that brings inner knowing into outer life. Let this meeting end in action.

- What truth in me have I been avoiding?
- Where am I blaming others for work that belongs to me?
- What fear is blocking honest action?
- Where did I act from compulsion rather than awareness this week?
- What would it mean to trust the power within today?
- What am I pretending not to know?
- What one action would bring my inner and outer life into better alignment?

Appendix D: Frequently Asked Questions

How many people are needed to start a chapter? Two or three sincere people are enough to begin. More may help, but willingness matters more than size.

Do we need approval from a national office? No. Chapters are autonomous. Registration with thegodwithin.org may be helpful for visibility, but it is optional and should not be treated as permission to exist.

Can we charge dues? No. Chapters are best supported by voluntary contributions from participants.

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Can professionals lead the chapter? A chapter as a chapter should remain a fellowship, not a professional service. Professionals may attend as members, but the chapter should not present itself as therapy or treatment.

Can we meet in a church or other institution-owned room? Yes, if the arrangement is practical and the chapter remains clearly independent, non-endorsed, and free from pressure to adopt the host's beliefs or agenda.

What if someone is disruptive or unsafe? Protecting the meeting is part of protecting the chapter's purpose. Trusted servants may remind people of boundaries, ask a disruptive person to stop, or ask them to leave if necessary. Immediate threats should be handled according to venue rules and, when needed, with outside emergency help.

How often should we review how the chapter is doing? New chapters should review their functioning after 30, 60, and 90 days, then periodically through business meetings or a chapter inventory.

Appendix E: Chapter Inventory Tool

- Is our primary purpose still clear to newcomers within the first ten minutes of the meeting?
- Are we keeping the chapter free from political, commercial, romantic, or ideological capture?
- Do our leaders function as servants, or has authority begun to collect around personalities?
- Are contributions handled transparently, simply, and in proportion to actual needs?
- Do members feel emotionally and physically safe in the meeting?
- Are we welcoming without becoming vague about purpose or boundaries?
- Are meetings consistent enough to build trust, or are we changing the format too often?
- Do we protect anonymity in the room, in print, and online?
- Do we encourage lived experience over teaching, fixing, or self-promotion?
- Are newcomers being noticed, welcomed, and given a path to return?
- Are we rotating service in a healthy way?
- What problem have we been avoiding because it is uncomfortable to name?

Appendix F: Startup Announcement Kit

Sample first-meeting announcement:

The God Within of [City/Area] will begin meeting on [day] at [time] at [location]. This is an in-person fellowship meeting for people who want to practice living from the power within through honesty, reflection, service, and fellowship. The chapter is self-supporting through voluntary contributions, has no dues, and is not affiliated with political parties, religious institutions, or outside causes.

Sample venue inquiry message:

Hello, I'm helping start a small local fellowship group called The God Within. We are looking for a simple, reliable room for a weekly in-person meeting of approximately [number] people. We are a self-supporting community group and would like to ask about room availability, rental cost, seating, accessibility, parking, and any house rules we should know about. Thank you for your time.

Sample newcomer welcome statement:

Welcome. You do not need to be certain about anything to be here. If you are interested in practicing a more honest, responsible, and awake way of living from within, you are welcome. We ask only that you respect the meeting format, the privacy of others, and the purpose of the chapter. If you have questions after the meeting, someone will be available to speak with you.

Sample founding business meeting agenda:

1. Open and restate purpose
2. Confirm chapter name
3. Confirm day, time, and location
4. Approve meeting format and opening/closing language
5. Identify initial trusted servants
6. Agree on contribution method and prudent reserve
7. Review anonymity and safety practices
8. Decide how chapter conscience decisions will be made
9. Plan first public announcement
10. Set next business meeting date

Appendix G: Optional Recognition and Registration with thegodwithin.org

Registration with thegodwithin.org should remain optional. A chapter does not need permission to exist, and registration should not be treated as control, chartering, or

supervision. Its purpose, if used, is practical: to help people find local chapters, to encourage consistency in public information, and to give chapters a way to identify themselves as participating in the broader TGW fellowship while remaining autonomous.

A simple recognition standard may include the following: the chapter meets regularly in person; it has adopted the basic TGW chapter principles; it is self-supporting through voluntary contributions; it does not affiliate with outside causes or institutions; it protects anonymity and privacy; and it provides accurate public meeting information. A registered chapter should be free to leave registration at any time without penalty. Recognition should never replace local chapter conscience.

Appendix H: Role Clarity, Legal Boundaries, and Risk Reduction

A TGW chapter is a voluntary peer fellowship. It is not therapy, medical care, legal advice, crisis response, case management, or clergy counseling. Chapters should not advertise or imply that they diagnose, treat, cure, or professionally manage mental health, addiction, trauma, or relationship crises. Members may share personal experience, but they should avoid acting as professionals inside the meeting unless the chapter is explicitly hosting a clearly identified outside educational guest and the chapter conscience agrees.

If someone appears to be in immediate danger or poses an immediate danger to others, follow venue rules and contact emergency services or appropriate authorities. A chapter should not promise confidentiality beyond what safety requires. Keep records minimal. Do not collect sensitive personal data unless there is a clear need and informed consent. If the chapter maintains a contact list, collect only the minimum information needed, store it carefully, and use it only for chapter communication.

When possible, avoid financial practices that create unnecessary exposure. Keep contributions and expenses transparent. Use simple records. Do not commingle chapter money with personal money longer than necessary. If the chapter later opens a bank account or formal entity, that decision should be made with care and, where appropriate, independent legal or accounting advice. Until then, simplicity is a form of protection.

A chapter begins with a room, a time, a few willing people, and a clear purpose. It endures through repetition, honesty, humility, service, and the refusal to drift. Start simply. Keep the chapter clean in purpose and practice. Let the structure remain light. Let the work remain real. If the chapter protects its purpose, it can grow without losing itself. If it forgets its purpose, no amount of activity will save it.