



# **The Fundamental Principles of Divorce Recovery Workshop**

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## Fundamental Principles of DRW

### Introduction

All DRW workshops are run to the following principles and all local DRW groups must abide by them. These rules, set by the trustees, establish a common standard for all workshops.

### The principles

1. The only purpose of the workshop is to help participants recover from the emotional trauma of separation or divorce.
2. The workshop is not to be run for personal gain. Any profit is to be re-invested in future workshops, either locally or nationally.
3. The workshop is to be offered unconditionally to anyone regardless of faith, sex, colour, race or any other basis. It is available to any person, of any age, at any stage of separation or divorce or any time afterwards.
4. The only qualification for attending is that the participants have, in their own opinion, experienced the irretrievable breakdown of a significant relationship. Bereavement, although having many similarities, is not included.
5. No account is to be taken as to whether the participant is the initiator or victim of the breakdown.
6. The workshop is not about conversion to any faith. Religion should only be discussed during group sharing sessions when relevant to a participants' personal divorce experience.

Statements of faith must not be offered with the intention of converting others. No forum for religious discussion should be allowed to develop that detracts from the purpose of the workshop for others. Except where it is known that all participants so wish, deeper issues are best handled on an individual basis outside the workshop, or after the course is over and healing has had a chance to begin. People will then be more receptive and feel less vulnerable. Restraint or silent witness during the workshop can be far more powerful.

7. The workshop is not a place for sexism, selling any products or for recruitment to political or campaigning groups.

Group facilitators should be aware of participants with an axe to grind, political or otherwise, and discourage them. Local group coordinators should not appoint such people as facilitators.

8. Apart from the material in the video and handouts, DRW does not offer advice of any form to others. The workshop only deals with the emotional issues of the participant, helping them understand why they feel as they do. Facilitators should also discourage participants from offering advice during the group discussions.

Particularly to be avoided are the areas of legal, financial, medical, housing, counselling, schooling etc. There are others better qualified to give advice on these matters. Care must be taken to ensure that no advice is seen to be coming from the workshop as DRW could be liable in such cases. Facilitators must not offer advice to others.

"The only person anyone can change in the workshop is themselves and only if they want to".

9. Group sharing sessions are the most important part of the workshop. This is where healing begins.
10. All participants should have an opportunity to talk during group sharing. No participant should be pressurised to talk if they don't want to.
11. Everyone the participants meet at the workshop must have experienced the breakdown of a significant relationship. This gives credibility to the workshop. They should also have attended the workshop themselves, except in start-up situations.

Participants don't have to waste effort justifying to others how they feel but can more usefully spend their time understanding why they feel as they do. All group facilitators must have personally experienced separation or divorce although they may have since remarried. It is preferable that, except in start up situations, they have also attended a previous workshop.

12. Suitable group facilitators are to be selected from participants of previous workshops. Going through the workshop a second time in this role adds an extra dimension to their own recovery and maintains the strength of the workshop.
13. The local workshop coordinator should have the same criteria as a group facilitator (an exception may be made in start-up situations).
14. A series of weekly workshops is preferred to the condensed weekend format. Having seven days to think between sessions is important in coming to terms with issues raised.

15. Where possible participants should pay to attend. Payment helps the recipient value themselves and is an important first step in their recovery - "Surely I am worth this?" It also helps them value the workshop.

Where possible payment should be made in full prior to commencement. This encourages participants to continue with the course once started, which both benefits themselves and lessens the impact of "drop outs" on the morale of other course members. "I've paid so I might as well finish."

16. Exceptions in the amount paid are discouraged but sponsorship may be offered at the discretion of the local committee, i.e. part of the money may be paid for them.

Any exceptions in payment should be put across as "sponsorship" by the organiser rather than as a discount, i.e. the money has been paid for them. Being discrete about any sponsorship is an important for both the recipient and others who have paid in full.

17. DRW is not in competition with other agencies, organisations or professions.

Care should be taken not to knock them in any way especially in the publicity material. No person from the workshop should get into any public correspondence or argument with such bodies.

18. The video is an aid to promoting discussion for group sessions. It is not for casual viewing outside the workshop environment.

19. No personal information is to be recorded about individual participants prior to attending other than that allowed for by the official Response Form. No records are to be kept of anything said during group discussions and all information is to be kept confidential.