Session 37: Service as Recovery Capital: Giving What You Have Received

Duration: 60 minutes • Recovery education group. Ensure all participants are seated and ready

Materials: Whiteboard; workbooks and pens; the Session 37 handout (Received and Passed On)

Learning objectives — by the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Define service as recovery capital in their own words
- Inventory what they have received in recovery and name one thing they can now give
- Commit to one small act of service this week, with a day attached

Opening (3 minutes)

Newcomer bridge (60 seconds): This is Phase 5 — Giving Back. The one idea today is that a recovery that gives keeps growing; service is recovery capital. You are welcome here without earlier sessions; everything you need for today is in this session. Up to now, most of this program has flowed toward you — teaching, plans, people, support. Phase 5 turns the flow around. A recovery that only receives eventually stalls; a recovery that gives keeps growing. Today we name service for what it is: not extra credit, but capital — something you build, hold, and draw on for the rest of your life.

Check-in prompt (8 minutes)

Name, craving 0–10, one word for your week — then: "What is one thing this program — or one person in it — has given you that you did not earn and could not have bought?" Log every craving score on the roster.

Passing is honored — you may pass any question, prompt, or practice without explanation, step out and rejoin, and choose a partner-only option where one is offered.

Teaching (20 minutes)

Session 32 named your strengths and gifts; this phase puts them to work. Recovery capital is the sum of resources a person can draw on to sustain recovery — relationships, roles, community standing, useful work. Service builds every one of them at once: it gives the week structure, gives other people a reason to trust you, and gives you evidence that you are becoming someone new.

- **Receiving is a stage, not a destination** Gratitude that never becomes generosity curdles into entitlement or shame. The handoff from helped to helper is a normal, expected stage of a maturing recovery — not graduation from humility, but its fruit.
- **Service is capital, not decoration** Every kept commitment deposits trust: with the house, with family, with employers, and with yourself. Small deposits, made weekly, compound into the standing a free life is built on.
- **Start where you already stand** The first field of service is this house and this room: chairs set up, coffee made, a newcomer greeted by name. No one needs a title, a testimony, or a anniversary chip to start.

Sources & Evidence — Facilitator background — do not teach

Purpose — meaningful daily activity, work, and service — is one of SAMHSA's four dimensions of

recovery, and recovery capital research links relationships, roles, and community resources to sustained recovery; the helper-therapy principle describes how helping others benefits the helper (SAMHSA, 2012; Granfield & Cloud, 1999; Riessman, 1965). Key sources for this session: SAMHSA (2012); Granfield & Cloud (1999); Riessman (1965); Bandura (1977). Evidence strength: Moderate. Spiritual practice: Service and helping others — correlates with the helper-therapy principle and recovery capital; evidence: Moderate (Riessman, 1965; Granfield & Cloud, 1999). Full citations: Appendix H. The session's Scripture material is in its optional handout (Appendix I), as theological foundation, quoted from the King James Version.

'Evidence strength' grades the correlated mechanism, not the spiritual practice itself

Pause midway through teaching: ask, "What part of that sounds most like your life right now?" Take two or three answers, connect them to the teaching, and continue. Teach in your own words — the bullets are your map, not a script to read aloud.

Discussion questions (10 minutes)

1. Where in your life are you still only receiving? What makes the turn toward giving hard?
2. Who gave to you early in recovery, and what did their giving actually do for you?
3. What is one act of service inside this house you could own every week?

Skill practice (12 minutes)

Service inventory (in pairs): each person lists what they have received in recovery down one side of the page — rides, meals, patience, a bed, a second chance — and beside each item, one way it could be passed on. Partners help shrink each pass-it-on item to something doable within seven days. Each person marks one and names the day aloud.

Personal application — homework (5 minutes)

Do the one marked act of service this week, on the day you named. Write two lines about it in your workbook: what you did, and what it was like to be the giver. Participants write it in their workbook before leaving. Facilitator: name the homework again at the door as people leave.

Facilitator notes and cautions

Watch for grandiosity — the participant who wants to rescue the whole town by Friday. Service in this phase is small, scheduled, and supervised. Also watch the opposite: the participant who believes they have nothing to give. Everyone in this room has a testimony, a pair of hands, and a chair they can set up.

Closing (2 minutes)

You came here carried. You will leave carrying others — that is not the graduation speech, it is the mechanism. Start this week, small and on schedule. Next session: finding your post — matching what you carry to a need that is actually there.

Fidelity check for this session: objectives named at the start ☐ craving scores logged ☐ skill practice completed in full ☐ homework written down by participants ☐ session note filed today ☐