Session 40: Service Starts at Home: House, Family, and Neighbors

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

Materials: Whiteboard; workbooks and pens

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

- Name the service owed first to the household they live in and the family they came from
- Identify one neglected home duty and schedule it
- Distinguish ordinary kept responsibilities from the specific living amends of Session 24

Opening (3 minutes)

Newcomer bridge (60 seconds): This is Phase 5 — Giving Back. The one idea today is that service goes home first, to the people who watched you at your worst. You are welcome here without earlier sessions; everything you need for today is in this session. It is easy to serve strangers and be admired for it. It is harder to serve the people who watched you at your worst and are still deciding whether to believe you. Today service goes home first — because that is where it is believed, or not.

Check-in prompt (8 minutes)

Name, craving 0–10, one word for your week — then: "What is one job at home — here in the house, or with your family — that everybody knows is yours, and everybody knows you dodge?" 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)

Living amends (Session 24) repaired specific harms; ordinary service is the daily fabric underneath: dishes done without announcement, a yard kept, a call made on the day promised, a house rule carried without being chased. Family and housemates do not measure recovery by testimony; they measure it by Tuesdays. Service at home is unglamorous, unrecorded, and the most credible witness a person in recovery owns.

- **Home is the first congregation** The people under your roof experience your recovery before anyone hears about it. If it does not work at the sink and the table, it does not work.
- **Unannounced counts double** Service done for credit teaches the house to discount it. Do the job, leave it clean, let them discover it. Trust rebuilds at exactly that speed (Session 27).
- **Neighbors are the near field** The person in the next room, the next bunk, the next house: near enough to help this week, ordinary enough to keep it honest.

Sources & Evidence — Facilitator background — do not teach

Recovery capital research counts stable housing roles and family relationships among the resources that sustain recovery, and relapse prevention treats daily structure and kept routines as protective factors (Granfield & Cloud, 1999; Marlatt & Gordon, 1985; SAMHSA, 2012). Key sources for this session: Granfield & Cloud (1999); Marlatt & Gordon (1985); SAMHSA (2012). Evidence strength: Moderate. Spiritual practice: Service and helping others — correlates with recovery capital in the home and the Community dimension of recovery; evidence: Moderate (Granfield & Cloud, 1999; SAMHSA, 2012). 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. What does your household currently carry that should be partly yours?
2. Why is serving at home harder than serving strangers? Be specific.
3. What one home duty will you take over this week — and how will the house know it is permanently yours?

Skill practice (12 minutes)

The home audit (solo writing, then pairs): list every recurring job in your current household down the left of the page; mark who does it now on the right. Mark one job that should carry your name. Pairs review for honesty: is it real, is it recurring, is it yours to take? Each person states the job and the day it starts, out loud, to their partner.

Personal application — homework (5 minutes)

Take over the marked job this week and do it on schedule, unannounced. If your family is not under your roof, make the scheduled call or visit you named instead, on the day you named it. Participants write it in their workbook before leaving. Facilitator: name the homework again at the door as people leave.

Facilitator notes and cautions

Some participants' home situations are unsafe or closed to them; never pressure contact where there is a protective order, an active threat, or a boundary set by the other party. For them, 'home' is this house and the family of recovery — service there counts in full.

Closing (2 minutes)

Big testimonies impress rooms. Washed dishes convince families. Take your post at home this week and hold it. Next session: we take service out the front door — into the wider community.

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 ☐