Session 41: Beyond Our Walls: Serving the Wider Community

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:

- Choose one community service setting outside the program that fits their plan and schedule
- State the conduct standard for representing the program in public without speaking for it
- Connect community service to the Community dimension of their 90-day plan (Appendix D)

Opening (3 minutes)

Newcomer bridge (60 seconds): This is Phase 5 — Giving Back. The one idea today is that recovery that never leaves the building becomes a club; service goes beyond our walls. You are welcome here without earlier sessions; everything you need for today is in this session. Recovery that never leaves the building becomes a club. Today we take service past our own walls — to food banks, churches, cleanup crews, and neighbors who will never know your story and do not need to. They will know your work. That is enough.

Check-in prompt (8 minutes)

Name, craving 0–10, one word for your week — then: "Where in this community have you been known for taking? What would it mean for your name to be known there for giving?" 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 34 built a community connection plan — places to belong. This session adds contribution to connection: you do not only join the community, you carry part of its weight. Community service also rebuilds a public identity. Every hour served is a fact about you that the old reputation has to compete with, and it is a fact other people witnessed with their own eyes.

- **Belong, then contribute** Connection without contribution keeps you a guest forever. Set the chairs at the church supper, stock the pantry shelf: guests receive; members carry.
- **You represent; you do not speak** In public you represent this program by conduct. You never speak for it, recruit for it, or explain its business; questions about the program go to staff. Your testimony out there is your work.
- **Choose what you can keep** A community post follows the same edges as a house post (Session 38): real need, named contact, set schedule, a season at a time — and it fits around work, meetings, and the 90-day plan, never instead of them.

Sources & Evidence — Facilitator background — do not teach

Community is one of SAMHSA's four dimensions of recovery, and mutual-help and community participation research associates community connection with sustained recovery (SAMHSA, 2012; Zemore et al., 2018; Kelly et al., 2020). Key sources for this session: SAMHSA (2012); Zemore et al. (2018); Kelly, Humphreys, & Ferri (2020). Evidence strength: Moderate to strong for community and

mutual-help connection. Spiritual practice: Fellowship / koinonia community — correlates with community participation and recovery capital; evidence: Moderate (Zemore et al., 2018; 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. Which community setting fits your plan — and what is the first small job you would ask for there?
2. What part of your old reputation in a community do you most want your service to answer?
3. What could make community service a risk for you — old people, old places, pride? Name the guardrail.

Skill practice (12 minutes)

First-visit script (in pairs): using their Session 34 community plan, each participant practices a two-minute introduction — who they are, what they are asking for (a small, regular job), and when they can start. The partner plays the busy coordinator: interrupt once, and once answer 'maybe next month.' Practice receiving both without shrinking or selling.

Personal application — homework (5 minutes)

Make the first visit, or the decision visit, this week. Report at the next session's check-in: the name of the person you met and the job, if any, you were given. Participants write it in their workbook before leaving. Facilitator: name the homework again at the door as people leave.

Facilitator notes and cautions

Community service in this curriculum is voluntary and belongs in the participant's written plan; it is never added informally as a condition by staff or peers. Watch for old-using geographies: a service site inside a participant's highest-risk map needs a plan and a partner, or a different site.

Closing (2 minutes)

Your story will travel further as work than it ever did as words. Make the visit this week. Next session: what to do when service costs you — time, pride, and the days you do not feel like showing up.

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 ☐