

Real Love Group Guidelines

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1. **Confidentiality:** Each group member contracts with other group members to keep the names and information about the lives of other group participants under any and all circumstances in confidentiality. Each member of the group is free to talk about himself/herself outside of group but agrees not to talk about other group members even to one's significant other.
2. **Starting Group:** *Your first group session is free.* If you return to group, your 1st session will be applied as one of your 1st 4 sessions. It is recommended that you attend 4 group sessions to allow you enough time to give the group a reasonable trial. If you have any questions, please ask.
3. **Leaving Group:** If you decide to stop group, please announce this to the group and then return for at least one more session. This will allow you and the other group members time to work through feelings about termination and saying good-bye.
4. **Membership Fee:** Group is \$80/month. Your payment will run on the 1st of every month. If you need to cancel, please send a cancellation request by email *30 days prior* to cindy@austinempowered.com. A current credit card must be kept on file.
5. **Attendance:** Group is a commitment of your time and energy to show up on time, every time for yourself and for your fellow group members. Group process focuses on Real Love principles and relationships, including those among group members. Your decision to join group is a decision to underwrite the group.
6. **Relationships:** Social contact is encouraged. Contacting each other for the purpose of getting loved when you are empty and afraid and the opportunity to be loving when someone else contacts you is an intended benefit of this group; however, dating, romance, and sex between members of the group are agreed to be inappropriate unless a couple comes to group already paired. This is designed to allow participants to experience real love without the complications of imitation love disguised as romance or sex.
7. **Calls:** You are encouraged to make calls to people in the group during the week in between group meetings. This allows for new feelings and behaviors to develop that will ultimately bring you more peace and love. New group members are encouraged to make calls in order to feel more loved for several

- weeks (if not months) before they receive calls.
8. **Triangulations:** Any form of relevant communication between group members outside of group must be brought back to the group so that all know what has transpired between members outside of group. This is necessary to keep trust and openness within the group.
 9. **Check In:** Each member will have the opportunity at every group session to “check in” with the group at the beginning of each session to give a brief two-minute overview of his/her week. If more time is needed for processing, sharing, or to work through an issue, then they may ask for “time” at check in.
 10. **Feelings:** To aid in the expression of feelings, you are asked not to use drugs, alcohol, tobacco, gum, food, sugar or caffeine during or just prior to group. Please apply this to any technology use as well. However, water IS allowed.
 11. **Vulnerability:** When sharing in group, try to remember that what feels like weakness in you, looks like courage to those witnessing it. Vulnerability and trust get developed hand in hand.
 12. **Feedback:** When a participant asks for feedback from the group, he will simply listen without responding as group members express their thoughts feelings. When group members respond to the speaker, they are responding from their own personal experience of how/what they have heard touches their own experience in life rather than complimenting, analyzing or advising the speaker. Next, if the speaker is open, the group will help guide the speaker through the Accountability and Resiliency steps.
 13. **Non-negotiable group rules:** No violence. No threats of violence. No leaving the group (or a call) without working through feelings of anger, frustration, sadness, confusion, etc. No enabling of self or others to stay stuck or dishonest by avoiding, people pleasing, fixing, blaming, etc. Asking to take a brief momentary break (time out) to gather your composure before continuing on the phone or in person is, however, advised.
 14. **Responsibility of group members:** It is the responsibility of each member to ensure that the group adheres to these guidelines. If at any time there is a conflict or question that arises during a group session, it is the member’s responsibility to address the issue by requesting a “time out” if they notice they are triggered and stating a future time to discuss the issue.

(Updated 5/16/2019)