

CHOOSE

YOURSELF

Meetup

GUIDELINES

— JAMES —
ALTUCHER

How To Run A Choose Yourself Meet-Up

Remember, when a meeting gets to be too big (more than 30 people) it might be time to split it into two meetings. Meetings can also be done on the phone through free conference calls. I've put a lot of thought into what the ideal components of a "Choose Yourself" meet-up would look like. A huge benefit of splitting meetings into smaller groups is that each town can have a variety of meetings at different times and dates hence enabling more and more people to free themselves.

Choosing yourself requires that you make your own networks and connections that can allow you to continue along the themes of your life. Freedom is the result. More calm is the result. Less conflict in your life is the result. A "Choose Yourself" meet-up will, over repeated meetings, automatically lend itself to increasing the benefits of doing a daily practice. I encourage anyone to form one and run it. By the end of the meeting, people will reap several benefits:

- Ideas on how they can change up or improve their daily practice.
- Ideas on how they can move away or get less dependent on the gatekeepers in their life.
- Ideas on networking. We all need help from others to succeed, pay our bills, meet our obligations, and move forward. Having the support or even simply meeting people who have a similar mindset would certainly help.
- Human contact. The life of someone who chooses him- or herself can be lonely at times, the meetings can ensure that we socialize and have fun.

So here's what I think an optimal "Choose Yourself" meet-up would look like. And by the way, if you recognize some themes from twelve-step meetings of Al-Anon or AA, you are right. Those meetings have been working fine for over one hundred years. The model works, people attend and they benefit, so why not?

By using their models we get hundreds of years of popular consensus on the best ways to get everyone to

- Participate.
- Feel welcome.
- Speak up.
- Mingle.
- Share their own stories without interruptions.
- Respect each other.
- Keep gossip to a minimum.
- Handle the group financials.
- Choose themselves.
- Improve their lives.

Also, each meeting can, through their own “monthly” or “periodically” business meeting, modify their own format. Each meeting can choose itself; its group can do its own thing, provided that the members of the group agree on it. We suggest a meeting of an hour or an hour and a half to start.

At the stipulated time the meeting starts, exactly on time, as this is a sign of respect for everyone’s time.

The moderator speaks:

Hello, my name is X and today I choose myself. I am the chair for this meeting, and that does not mean I own anything or direct anything, I am just member of the community doing service for a specified period of time.

(At this point a notebook might be passed around with dates of future meetings for people to write down their names for when they are available and willing to chair a meeting.)

The moderator continues:

People attending this meeting are welcome to chair any of our meetings, because when we rotate the leadership, and follow meeting guidelines, we ensure that we put principles before personalities and that we keep the focus on what is important: choosing ourselves for success. In the spirit of camaraderie and for the highest good of all, we do not criticize, gossip, interrupt or talk over each other. We respect the order of the meeting.

We remember to put principles before personalities, and if someone feels uncomfortable at any time, anyone can ask the chair to read this introduction again. Any discussions about changes or improvements to our meetings should be brought up in the business meeting, which for this meetup is held every Xth of the month.

We also do not focus on criticizing, or complaining about people who are not here. We do not blame others or put anyone down. Instead we focus on ideas and healthy partnerships that can help each of us move forward toward creating the life we want. We know that choosing ourselves starts with our own health, and we start with that, with getting to a place of health for us, regardless of other people in our lives.

In short, we put the focus on the life we want to create, and not on regrets of the past. The only purpose of this meeting is to choose ourselves, become idea machines, become healthy spiritually, emotionally, mentally and physically, and help each other surpass gate-keepers that may appear to stand between us and a rewarding and successful life, for today.

The format of the meeting starts with either having someone share their story of choosing themselves for 15 minutes, or reading for fifteen minutes from either Choose Yourself!, The Choose Yourself Guide to Wealth, or The Choose Yourself Stories. We remind everyone that whatever is said in this meeting is confidential and must not leave the room. Confidentiality allows all of us to feel safe and share our deepest vulnerabilities. Keeping these meetings confidential is a sign that we are willing to be altruistic, and ready to create a safe space for everyone to choose himself or herself.

Now let's go around the room and introduce ourselves by first name only and share one sentence on something you did during this week to bring the Daily Practice alive. E.g.: "Hi, I'm Mary and this week I've been making lists with ten ideas per day" or "I slept eight hours a day, I spent time with my friends," or "I'm very grateful each day for ten things." If you are a newcomer we welcome you and hope that the meetings can help you as much as they are helping us.

Starting with the moderator, go around the room.

The moderator continues:

Timekeeper

We need a timekeeper who will be willing to time the fifteen minutes of the reading and later on the three-minute shares. Participation is key to success; if you usually hide by blending with the background we encourage you to try and do service like that of keeping time for others. Do we have a timekeeper?

Thank you, Y, for your service.

*Everyone please keep an eye on the timekeeper and respect his or her signals. When the timekeeper says that the time is up please acknowledge his or her and say I will wrap up, and finish, so we can all share.
Fifteen-Minute Reading or Sharing OR READING*

Now lets read from [Choose Yourself!/The Choose Yourself Guide to Wealth]. The book will be passed around and each of us will read two paragraphs. If you do not want to or cannot read, simply pass the book to the next person.

Although we highly encourage your participation, we understand if you simply can't do it for any reason.

OPTION #2

Some groups may opt to change the reading of the book if there is a person who can share their story of how they choose themselves, in that case, the person will speak for fifteen minutes.

Facilitator says: Now we will have a share from a member who is choosing him or herself. There will be no interruptions, no questions and no cross talk. The qualification for a "speaker" or "qualifier" is that she or he has been to at least four meetings of Choose Yourself and is willing to share

OPTION #3

Once a month, or once every so often, the meetings need to have a business meeting because it is key to maintaining the finances/electing new chairs (for example if the meetings happen monthly and we need a quarterly person to commit to running the scripted meetings) / select a "library person" who will use funds from the treasurer to buy a book if it is needed, select a "treasurer" who will keep track of donations and keep safe any prudent reserve savings and pay the rent (if applicable) etc. The meeting is timed at ten minutes. And it runs like this:

You can also follow the **ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER**

Facilitator says:

We need a volunteer to run the business meeting, can someone please volunteer? [wait] Thank you "Z" for your service. Z will read from the format and we will run this business meeting for 15 minutes. The time keeper will let us know when there is only five minutes left and when there is one minute left, are you OK with that timekeeper? Thanks for your service.

1. *Open: Read minutes from the last business meetings.*
2. *Treasurer's report he or she says how much money there is in reserve, if we are on time paying the rent and the meetup fees, etc.*
3. *Library report: do we need to have a book for new comers? Can we get money from the treasurer to do so?*
4. *3. Old Business Followed by New Business: People propose ideas, if one is proposed it needs to be seconded, and then there is discussion and voting. If time is running out things can be tabled for the next meeting*
5. *If something is proposed we will have discussion and voting.*

DONATIONS

Facilitator says:

Now, before we move on to shares we will pass a basket/envelope around for donations. We do have some fees associated with the meetup and the rental of a room, and a suggested donation is three to five dollars, but if you cannot do it, we understand, please keep coming back because we need YOU more than your money.

Sharing: Until fifteen minutes before the closing of the meeting, Shares are 3 minutes or 2 minutes each.

Moderator says:

The floor is now open for sharing. Please remember to acknowledge the timekeeper, do not talk about other people in the room and keep your sharing to your own experiences. Cross talk or criticizing is not accepted as we keep the focus on ourselves and we respect the time each person has for their own share. We share our stories of how we are choosing ourselves and the experiences we encounter along the way. If anyone feels uncomfortable or feels there is cross talk he or she can ask the facilitator to read this again. If anyone wants to give feedback to someone else that can be done in the after meeting, one-on-one.

Fifteen minutes before the meeting ends we will talk about: Gatekeepers, permission networking, and idea sex.

Five minutes: Gatekeepers

Moderator says:

We are now fifteen minutes from the end of the meeting so we will discuss gatekeepers. By show of hands people ask permission to speak and the facilitator picks the first person, which in turn, when finished, will pick the next.

If nobody volunteers, then the facilitator can do the first share, or wait until someone wants to share.

If you are experiencing a "gatekeeping" situation you can share it with us and we will listen. There will be no cross talk, but in the after-meeting if anyone cares to share or help one another you can do so.

Volunteers can describe the gatekeepers that are in their way. For instance, they just submitted a book to a publisher. Or they are hoping for a promotion from their boss.

There will be no cross talk, and networking is highly encouraged after the meeting.

People will have suggestions but it's hard to follow suggestions. Everyone has to come up with the solutions from inside. By sharing in the open we give each other a chance to form new ideas from within.

If nobody is sharing on this you can continue with the next segment.

Five minutes: Permission Networking

Moderator says: Perhaps someone has an idea they want to share with someone at a certain company, or they need a contact. Or maybe someone wants to meet someone from another industry. Or maybe someone wants to meet Richard Branson (space's the limit here). We all have ideas. Some have ideas for themselves, some have ideas for others.

People can simply state: I would like a contact at SalesForce, in the marketing department. Again, no cross talking, if someone is willing to talk to this person the end of the meeting is where these conversations will happen.

If nobody is sharing on this you can continue with the next segment.

Five Minutes: Idea Sex

Moderator says:

Probably when people were sharing their Daily Practice of the week, they shared one or two of their ideas (or more) from their idea-list that week. Imagine taking one of your ideas and combining it with one of their ideas, what would result. Some riffing could occur here but no criticism. Every bad idea is an idea and worth exploring. Ideas are like mazes. You never really know where you are going until you hit the exit. Even a dead end is an opportunity to turn around and explore more of the maze. Write down ten ideas that you got just by being on the meeting. After the close people can have idea-sex from what they heard and thought.

Close

Moderator says:

We have now come to the close of the meeting, we are grateful that you are here and we hope you benefit from this gathering. Keep coming back!

The After-Meeting

There should be at least fifteen to thirty minutes of "after-meeting" where people walk around and talk to one another.

This also gives people a chance to get to know and support one another and to fulfill the second part of the daily practice, which is meeting more and more people who are interested in helping you and supporting you.