



RECOVERY IN FOCUS · GROUP CURRICULUM · FACILITATOR GUIDE

Parenting in Recovery

Guilt sorting, what kids need, repair, and the long game. Four parts, two group classes.

Topic category (billing anchor)	Family and Relationship Skills / Trigger Management, with Relapse Prevention
Clinical focus	Parenting guilt/shame and parenting stress as relapse drivers; structured repair, predictable contact, and stress planning as relapse prevention and family stabilization
Evidence base	CBT (guilt/shame work) · attachment-informed parenting education · Relapse Prevention · MI stance
Format	One participant packet · two group classes of about 2 hours each · Class 1 = Parts 1–2 · Class 2 = Parts 3–4
Group rules	2 to 12 clients, same time · at least 1 active Medi-Cal beneficiary · no minors mixed with adults

This file: facilitator guide class agendas, mandated-report + custody guardrails, FIRP

Companion file: participant packet (print one per member) 4 parts · 8 exercises · 1 vignette · doable list · hazard plans

FACILITATOR GUIDE

GUARDRAILS: READ BEFORE EVERY RUN

- **Mandated reporting:** this topic can surface disclosures about children's current safety. Know your duty and your facility protocol cold, and set the frame honestly at the top: "I'm a mandated reporter; what that means is if a child's current safety comes up, I have duties. Past-tense recovery material isn't that. Current-safety concerns we handle together, properly." No ambushes, no pretending otherwise.
- **No case litigation in group:** custody and child-welfare specifics route to counselor, lawyer, and social worker. The group holds the parent, not the proceeding.
- **Members without contact:** some members have lost custody or contact entirely; the session can hit them hardest. Name the distance-parenting lane out loud early, and watch them through Part 3; individual follow-up generously.
- **Grief under the guilt:** some members' children are grown and gone, or deceased; if that surfaces, it's grief work, held briefly and routed individually.
- **No parenting superiority:** custody status is not a scoreboard in this room; enforce it like milestone math.

How to run this session

- **HOLD BOTH TRUE THINGS:** the session fails if it collapses into either pure guilt processing or pure cheerleading. The harm stays real; the protective-parent fact stays real; your job is keeping both on the table every segment.
- **LINK:** paying-back-lost-years spending and the never-missed-streak idea link parents instantly across very different custody situations.
- **LAND IT CLINICALLY:** parenting stress and parent-shame are relapse pathways; the doable list, tap-out plan, and streak are relapse prevention wearing family clothes. Say that mapping plainly in both classes.

Mixed-functioning group adjustments

- Read everything aloud; the two-column sorting (did vs am) works on the board at every level.
- Lower-functioning rooms: run the whole session on the two true things, one never-missed weekly thing, and the tap-out plan.

HOOK SOURCE NOTE: parental substance use as an adverse childhood experience and the one-stable-adult protective finding are both standard in the ACE/resilience literature; present as "the research on childhood adversity found both." Everything else in this session is skills, not statistics.

CLASS 1**Parts 1 and 2 (about 2 hours)**

Opening (10 min)

Set the mandated-reporter frame (guardrails), then the session frame: *"Two things are true in this room: addiction touched your kids, and your recovery is now one of the best things in their lives. Tonight we hold both."* Icebreaker, volunteers only: "First names or ages only: who are you doing this for?"

Part 1: The Two True Things (40 to 50 min)

Teach (5 min or less): the hook (ACE and the one-stable-adult counterweight); the guilt/shame sorting applied to parenting; shame's brutal irony (it produces more absence).

PLAIN "Which is harder to believe: that it hurt them, or that you're good for them now?"

DEEPER "When shame tells you to stay away from your kids 'for their own good', whose good is it actually serving?"

- **Exercise 1** (yes/no): item 2 (shame-driven avoidance) is the room's secret; hands going up frees everyone.
- **Exercise 2** (the sorting): private page; volunteers share the converted sentence only.

Part 2: What Kids Actually Need (45 to 55 min)

Teach (5 min or less): predictability, presence, age-sized honesty; what's NOT on the list; small-and-never-missed as the whole game.

- **Exercise 3** (the doable list): go around on the never-missed weekly thing; challenge oversized commitments down ("will that survive your worst week?").
- **Ray vignette + Exercise 4:** read aloud. "She'd been waiting for the quiet" is the line; question 3 (your version of the puzzle) collects the room's doable list.

Close Class 1 with the talk-it-out questions. Assign: do the first instance of the weekly thing before Class 2.

CLASS 2**Parts 3 and 4 (about 2 hours)**

Opening (10 min)

Check in: who did the first instance, and what happened? Streak day one gets honored like a milestone, because it is one.

Part 3: Repair With Kids (50 to 60 min)

Teach (6 min): the four rules (actions carry, age-size the words, never hand them the adult load, their pace); the "you weren't there" answer.

- **Exercise 5** (yes/no): item 2 (over-explained from guilt) is common and forgivable; name it as guilt's work, not malice.
- **Exercise 6** (age-sized sentences): written for each kid; volunteers read theirs; the room gently edits oversized ones down. The "adult problem I will not hand them" line gets said aloud; it's the session's protective core.
- Role-play option for willing pairs: the teen saying "you weren't there," the parent practicing the answer and the silence after it. Facilitator demos first.

Part 4: The Hazards and the Long Game (45 to 55 min)

Teach (5 min or less): parenting stress as trigger with the tap-out plan; the co-parent front with the Anger session's tools plus kids-never-messengers; the custody long game as record-building (cross-reference Justice-Involved: boring months are pages).

- **Exercise 7** (hazard plan): tap-out plans read aloud; normalize stepping away as parenting, not failure.
- **Exercise 8** (building the court record): members in family court name this month's pages; the ten-years-from-now line is written by everyone and read by volunteers. Let it land; it's the session's horizon.
- **Skill of the day:** start the streak. Promise the check-in, and keep checking for weeks; streaks live on witnesses.

Close with the group questions and the summary read aloud.

FIRP scaffold (one note per member, per class)

Class 1. Focus: member's family-functioning / relapse-prevention objective, plus today's topic: parenting guilt and shame as relapse drivers and the protective-parent reframe. **Intervention:** *Educated group on parental substance use within the adversity framework and the protective effect of a stable recovering parent; facilitated guilt-versus-shame sorting applied to parenting with conversion of shame statements to repairable actions; educated group on children's core needs (predictability, presence, age-appropriate honesty) versus compensatory patterns; guided each member to a sustainable weekly contact commitment; facilitated vignette analysis; linked members' patterns and processed responses.*

Response: individualize; document any mandated-report matter per protocol. **Plan:** complete the first instance of the weekly commitment; return for Class 2.

Class 2. Focus: same objective, plus today's topic: repair skills with children and parenting-stress relapse planning. **Intervention:** *Reviewed commitment follow-through; educated group on child-appropriate repair principles including action-based trust rebuilding, age-sized disclosure, protection of children from adult emotional load, and child-paced reconciliation; guided written age-sized statements and rehearsed responses to child confrontation; guided a parenting-stress trigger plan including a tap-out protocol and co-parent conflict rules; supported custody-involved members in record-building framing with case specifics routed to counsel; assigned streak continuation.* **Response:** individualize; document any routing. **Plan:** maintain weekly streak with report-back; counselor/legal routing as arranged; individual follow-up for grief or no-contact members.

COMPLIANCE NOTES: 2 to 12 clients, same time; at least one active Medi-Cal beneficiary; no one 17 or under mixed with adults (outside a certified school site). Facilitator: licensed/registered clinician or certified/registered AOD counselor, in scope. Participant list each class; one note per member per class with attendance plus that member's specific response, provider-signed, finalized within 3 business days (service day counts as day 0), tied to that member's problem list or objective. Mandated-reporting duties apply as framed; no custody or legal advice; land every segment on the substance-use and relapse link.