



LOGOPRAXIS

FACILITATOR'S HANDBOOK

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THE THREE ESSENTIALS OF THE CHURCH

There are three essentials of the church,

- *an acknowledgment of the Divine of the Lord,*
- *an acknowledgment of the holiness of the Word,*
- *and the life that is called charity.*

According to the life which is charity is every one's faith; from the Word comes the knowledge of what the life must be, and from the Lord are reformation and salvation. If the church had held these three as essentials it would not have been divided, but only varied, by intellectual dissensions, as light varies the color in beautiful objects, and as various circlets give beauty in the crown of a king.

Divine Providence 259

A Logopraxis meeting is minimalist in its form. It offers a basic structure that consists of three rounds that are marked by some form of contemplative exercise between them like a reading from a Psalm for example. This structure is purposefully minimalist that serves as a framework to support the development and practise of the Word. A Life Group's governing principle being to offer an environment where people can:

1. Have the opportunity to experience spiritual community through the intentional, collective practise of the Word (*The life of charity*)
2. Work to be conscious of being held by the Word as the Lord as the common centre as what guides and directs (*An acknowledgment of the holiness of the Word*)
3. Find the Lord as the Word made visible in the midst (*An acknowledgment of Divine of the Lord*)

THE THREE ESSENTIALS FOR LIFE GROUP FACILITATION

As facilitators we also work from the three essentials of the church:

1. The Lord as the Word in the midst is what guides (*An acknowledgment of Divine of the Lord*)
2. The facilitators must work to be present to their own internal states through their work with the Word (*An acknowledgment of the holiness of the Word*)
3. The facilitator is then able to act as a vessel of charity in being what directs both the individuals and the group back to their own work with the Word (*The life of charity*)

1. THE WORD AS THE LORD IS WHAT GUIDES IN THE MIDST

The Divine of the Lord

One Principle

There is really only one principle that needs to be active in your life to be a facilitator for a Logopraxis Life Group and this is the living acknowledgement that the Word is the Lord. All Logopraxis work proceeds from this principle.

Both the individual-practise-structure and the structure-for-meeting are designed to bring people into a direct experience of the Word as the Lord. This occurs when the Word, as Sacred Text, is experienced as the principal agent that guides and directs the processes involved in the regeneration of the human mind, at both the individual and group or collective levels.

An appreciation of this is needed in order that space is given for people to experience being held by the Word, in the very processes it has initiated in them through their willingness to be engaged with it. The Logopraxis journey is a continual awakening into an ever-deepening appreciation that the Lord as the Word can and will carry them, regardless of how great the challenges are perceived to be.

Vulnerability and Trust

Everyone in Logopraxis work is confronted time and time again with questions of whether they can trust the Word to keep them safe in the midst of the profoundly unsettling inner changes that arise through their work with the Text. There is a paradox here that Logopractitioners can't escape: that in order to learn to trust the Word, one must be willing to step out into the unknown and face the uncertainties of the processes involved in the regeneration of the human mind. Thus, we find that it is only through a gradual submitting of the sense of self to the perceived vulnerability of these processes, that one also incrementally learns to trust them.

This tension between vulnerability and trust is something that the facilitator must hold in focus very clearly in their work for the Life Group. The natural affections will want to relieve a person's suffering and to offer comfort or make things 'better' for others. Such interventions, even if well intentioned, are made from the assumption that we know what the person needs and thus forgetting that what is presenting for anyone in Logopraxis work is being managed by Lord as the Word and is therefore governed by the operation of His Divine Providence.

2. BEING PRESENT TO THE WORD

The Holiness of the Word

An Awareness of Your Own Process

An awareness of your own processes, both in terms of the here and now and in terms of the principles formed through past experience with your work with the Text, is your greatest asset as a facilitator. The same principles that you've learnt to apply in terms of your own spiritual work will be constantly playing out in the individual members of the Life Group too, both in the interpersonal exchanges between members in the group and for the group as a whole.

A facilitator, like everyone else in this work, can only work from where they are as to their understanding of Logopraxis principles and processes, looking to, and trusting in, the Lord and having confidence that He is the one leading and guiding the whole process. The practice of self-examination and repentance therefore applies as much to the processes of facilitating as it does to your own individual work. The end in view is to use your engagement with the Word as the Lord to also support others to experience the Word as the Lord.

Knowing this, and knowing that the Lord's Providence is over it all, means that as a facilitator you can have confidence that your intention to be present to Word for the sake of the group is all that is required for insights to flow, regarding what's needed for the group as a whole or its individual practitioners.

Attending to States of Discomfort

In facilitating a Life Group, there needs to be a state of active attention in which the facilitator is attending to the sphere of the group as a whole, as well as to their own inner reactions and responses to what's passing between members as they share.

This involves internally acknowledging the Lord through reminding yourself that He is present and is actively involved in directing what members bring to the group, how they share what they share and how what is passing between members is being received.

In your work as a facilitator, there will be times when you will feel discomfort due to what's being presented by others. Such discomfort can be due to sensibilities about how you are affected personally or the expectations you feel others have towards you as the facilitator of the Life Group. It may arise from a sense of responsibility for others in the group or assumptions about how what is taking place is affecting particular practitioners. It could be a questioning of the mental, emotional or spiritual wellbeing of the person

who's sharing. It may be tied to a concern that what's presenting doesn't fit with your own sense of what a Logopraxis Life Group meeting should be. You may also at times become overly conscientious regarding what to say or do to support the individual or the group as a whole. There can be a fear that you might get it wrong or do or say something that undermines Logopraxis principles.

All of these factors may lead you to feel the need to intervene in the processes playing out in a Life Group in an effort to alleviate either your own or the perceived discomfort of others.

The Need to Honour the Process

However, your discomfort or felt lack of ability to control or offer to what's presenting for a practitioner or the Life Group, is simply the point of your own inner work. In Logopraxis, we recognise that the processes that the Word moves people through are incredibly complex and that no finite human being has the insight, skill or ability to manage their own process, let alone another's transition through them. The Word alone is able to do this for the Word is truly the Lord and the Word is empowered in people's lives to do this when they are willing to engage with it experientially. If people are to come to see that the Lord is the Word and so come to trust in and rely on it for their life, then care must be taken that the processes in experiencing this are honoured, no matter how intense the difficulties might appear.

The Lord as the Word is the one who is managing each member's internal state of life and in the context of the Life Group, He does this for the good of the whole. It is not the facilitator's role to know what this might be for each individual. What you are asked to do instead is to attend to your own states. This way everything that arises within the context of the group is taken as material for inner work. As a facilitator you can listen and trust in this work of inner focus so that its use may be for gaining a felt sense of the general Logopraxis principles and processes that are being expressed in any given meeting.

3. DIRECTING BACK TO THE WORD

The Life of Charity

The Facilitator as the Life Group's Memory

The Word of course is the true facilitator of both the individual's and the group's process. You, as the Logopraxis facilitator, are there to simply direct people back to their practise with the Word and to the Logopraxis principles that that you hear through what is being shared.

The highlighting of these principles of practise can help build a sense of what is emerging from the Life Group as a collective. This will take a unique form each time it meets, always being created fresh and anew, similar but never the same. Thus, your work as a facilitator is to always be looking to maintain an awareness of the higher-level processes that are playing out in the group whilst being in the effort to be conscious of the need to monitor your own inner states as well. Simply reminding oneself periodically, throughout a meeting, that the group is a person who is in need of nurturing and support will provide a basis for the Lord to provide insights that inform of the dynamics at work in the group as a collective human. Another way of thinking about this is to see the role of facilitator as the memory or observing part of the Life Group's consciousness who is able to: direct people back to the Word, reinforce Logopraxis principles when they feel it's appropriate to do so and maintain the minimalistic structures of how to meet.

Ultimately though, the facilitator can offer support for maintaining the conditions that Logopraxis offers for working with the Text but beyond that, it's up to each individual practitioner to take up the opportunity to engage with the Word personally. No one else can do another's work for them. It is a person's commitment to engage with the Word that brings them through to where they need to be.

The Facilitator as a Vessel of Charity

By working to direct practitioners' attention back to the Word as the source, in particular to what has reached out to them or has been illustrated in their work, assists to build trust in the process. The facilitator works as a vessel of charity in this acknowledgement of the Word as it seeks to turn the Life Group's attention to the fact that it is Word as the Lord that has reached out to them and that the point of their work, no matter how remote it may appear to be from what they perceive as the pressing issue(s) in their external life, is to elevate their focus to what interior states are being brought into their awareness. When we acknowledge our blindness without the Word, then the possibility opens for it to see for us.

If the facilitator and the other Life Group practitioners are able to hold this principle in mind along with the end in view; that we are here to support each other to engage with Word so that we can be brought to a fuller sense of the Lord as the Word, then all things

can be endured. The Word is the Priest, Minister, Pastor, Prophet, Healer, Comforter, Saviour and a facilitator is someone who sees the absolute importance of reminding people of this from the ground of their own experience of its truth.

WORKING FOR THE WORK'S SAKE

Just as there appears to be a pattern of an ever-deepening awakening in the work with the Word as a Logopractitioner, there is also a similar unfolding and growing experience into one's work as a facilitator.

Much of the energy and attention of a facilitator who is new to the work of facilitating is at first focused in the general logistics. These might include: the setting up of the space (whether its online or in person), remembering the structure of the rounds and how to introduce them, deciding on what will be offered as a contemplative focus at the start and between the rounds, reminding practitioners of when it's their turn to speak and of how to navigate technology if its online, assisting people to access the readings, reminding them of the meeting dates and of what tasks and submission might look like.

These tasks and demands on the facilitator's attention, whilst important, do detract away from their ability to be able to focus on the content of what is being offered. It is therefore not unusual or surprising that in the early stages of working as a facilitator that there can be some anxiety around getting it right, questions as to whether what is being reflected back to the group is enough and concern that the connections back to the Text and core Logopraxis principles aren't able to be made quickly in the moment so that they can be offered to the group in the meeting.

But as has been pointed out already, your best asset as a facilitator is your own work with the Word and your trust in that, that the Word will act through you as a vessel if you submit yourself to this process, regardless of what you perceive your value is or what the proprium would have you own. And also, that these states of uncertainty as a facilitator are just another part of your spiritual development and experience of learning to trust the Word, expect now there is a heightened awareness that your individual work is for sake of others and also for the love of the Practice or the Work itself.

Maurice Nicoll, who integrated his readings of the Heavenly Doctrines into his practise of the Fourth Way, described these patterns or shifts in the core motivational factors evident in work, these being...

1. Work on oneself
2. Work for the sake of others
3. Work for the Work's sake

In relation to this he stated that...

The first line is work on oneself, which begins with sincere and uncritical self-observation according to what we are taught by the Work to observe. The second

line is work in connection with one another, to understand one another and not to react mechanically to the unpleasant manifestations of others in the Work, to learn a common language and so externally consider them. The third line is to help those teaching the Work and to assist in the transmission of it.

(Psychological Commentaries on the Teaching of Gurdjieff & Ouspensky; Vol 3; p900; Maurice Nicoll)

So, we can see that these shifts in the focus of our motivations as we develop as facilitators also speaks to the growth of the three essentials of the church within:

1. The work of charity beginning with the need to work on oneself in shunning evils as sins and in developing spiritual literacy skills so that we might be able think spiritually. *(The life of charity)*
2. This work then extending so that we can attend to listening for the group to be its memory so that we might be the sign post which points back to the Word. *(An acknowledgment of the holiness of the Word)*
3. This work extending again so that we work for the love of the Practice itself because it serves the Lord as the Word's purpose and desire for the salvation and regeneration of the human race. *(An acknowledgment of Divine of the Lord)*

Each facilitator just as each practitioner, has a unique gift to offer of the Lord. The only work you need to be doing as a facilitator is to keep engaging with the Text and to keep practicing it. The rest will unfold and evolve as it needs to and the form of use that that takes for each will be under the Lord's Providence. Your concern is not be about what that looks like but instead is about what the Word is showing you and what your responses to that is teaching you. The principle remains the same for all regardless of whether you are officially in the role of a facilitator or not; that if you keep returning to the Text then the Text will lead and carry you where you need to go.

BASIC SCRIPT FOR FACILITATING A LIFE GROUP

Welcome. Whilst our Life Group meetings are an opportunity to share our work with each other and connect in the Word through this- they are also a practise group ... in that they offer us a space for us to practise spiritual literacy skills.

The Life Groups work on a Three Round structure:

R1: you'll be given an opportunity to share your work. If you're listening in R1 then we ask that you listen attentively to what you hear the Lord saying to the church within you.

R2: you'll be given an opportunity to share what you've heard in R1

R3: is an opportunity for questions about the LP process or anything that has come up.

I'll explain these in more detail as we move through them but that's just to give you a general overview of what to expect.

Centring

A Logopraxis life group meeting begins with a short time of contemplation and whatever the group decides to do in this space is done with the intention of providing an environment where the members can centre themselves - steady the inner activity of their minds and lift their awareness out of external life concerns.

It is a reminder that as we approach the text as a group, we're approaching the Lord and that in coming together, a space of worship is created within which holiness resides.

So today I'll be reading a small section of... (*insert chapter and verses of Scripture you are using*). The verses will be read slowly, in a mediative way.

This will be used to break up the rounds as well again with the intention of redirecting our attention back to the Word and maintaining a worshipful focus.

So.... I'll start by asking everyone to **Please mute themselves.... (if group is online)**

***** Do the Meditation *****

Jesus said where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them

ROUND ONE

Is an opportunity for you to share a summary of your work over the two-week period – you'll each be invited one at a time now to do so

There isn't any cross talking in R1 so we ask that you ...
Please unmute when it's your turn to speak and then mute again(if online).

In LP the summary is called a submission* and includes..... number, principle, task, what you noted or what came up for you in your work with it.

If you have struggled to find something to work with or to engage in the work then this struggle can a still be something that you offer as your gift to the group

Those listening** are asked to:

- listen to what the Lord is saying to the church within you
- Offer neutral space: i.e.. body and facial expressions - so that speaker is given space to become aware of what arising for them internally as they share

What you hear in Round One you'll be invited to share in Round Two.

***** **Read the next part of the Psalm** *****

Let those who have ears to hear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches

ROUND TWO

Is an opportunity to share what you heard in R1

The work as you listen in this round is to attend to the quality of the thoughts and affections arising in your mind, in response to what you're hearing

One aspect of the work in this type of listening is to see and not act on any tendency to compliment praise, affirm, criticise, or correct, what another has said.

This ability to hold both the speaker and attend to our mental activity is considered a core spiritual literacy skill in how to be in Logopraxis group life. And as something we develop, as we give attention to practicing it, when we meet.

I won't call on you by name so just share something when you have something to offer

***** Read the next part of the Psalm *****

ROUND THREE

Any questions about the LP process

Anything else that has come up from the reading/text or from the group today

Admin things that can also be done in R3 time.

Show them the Daily Practise Guide to LP – under *LP Resources* on the website

How to post online- explain and also video link

How to Enter Zoom meetings via the website

Explain that they can join any group if they can't make their regular one – show them Find meeting times where all the groups are listed

15 CORE LOGOPRAXIS PRINCIPLES

Here are some core Logopraxis principles. You might like to choose to highlight one or two during the meeting. The reference for where they are explained in the LP Handbook is in italics in brackets.

These are by no means exhaustive and often you will find that you hear the opportunity present itself to offer one or two of these as they are illustrated in what the practitioners are sharing or have been struggling with. However, as a new facilitator there is a lot to attend to and it can sometimes be helpful, even for experienced facilitators, to read through these before a meeting and choose one or two of these to use as a point of focus as they listen.

The Word is the Lord (*A new way of being, LG as a human, LP is to practise the Word*)

Our work is a gift for others (*A new way of being, step 6, LG as a human*)

Our work is seeing how the Word is true (*A reorientation...*)

The Text reads/studies us (*A reorientation..., Step 2, and 6*)

We are reading for application to the life of the mind not for information alone (*A reorientation...*)

The Text describes our states of mind - not places or events in the future or past (*Step 1*)

Thinking spiritually is to remove person, place, time and space (*Step 3, how to meet*)

We just need to find one thing to work with (*Step 2 and 3*)

Spiritual life is not about outcomes – it's about process (*Step 3 and 4*)

The aim of the task is observation not changing outer life conditions (*Step 3 and 5*)

All life flows in - the freeing is in the seeing of what the proprium is (*Step 4 and 5*)

Failure is success (*Step 4 and 5*)

The LG can be thought of as a human form (*the LG as a human form*)

LP LG's are practise groups (*How to meet*)

The Word forms a new mind – this is repentance/metaonia (*LP is to practise the Word*)

Another good reference tool for LP principles is the Points to Ponder document .

<https://logopraxis.online/logopraxis/exercises-in-consciousness/logopraxis-points-to-ponder/1881/>

GUIDED MEDITATION SCRIPT

- The following script is offered in preparation for the reading of Sacred Scripture as a guided meditation prior to the beginning of a Logopraxis Life Group Meeting.
- The facilitator works to speak slowly and rhythmically with a view to creating a state of relaxation in those listening.
- They should use their own breath to guide the interval between each paragraph. Work to a one breath pace (exhale and inhale) to separate each paragraph. It should take approximately 5 seconds to complete a breath.
- A shorter pause should be taken where a hyphen (-) is indicated
- When the Sacred Scripture is being read, read one verse at a time and work at a pace of two breaths (10 secs) between each verse.

I invite you to sit back and relax position with your feet flat on the floor and your spine straight

Now bring your attention to your breath

*And as you continue to watch your breath - deepen your breathing -
and on each exhale allow your body to become more relaxed*

*Take a moment to scan all your muscles groups -
and if you are aware of any centres of tension -
just release those now*

As the body relaxes further you're invited to go deeper and deeper

Now bringing your attention to your thoughts

*Just allowing the thoughts of the day to settle -
so that the mind becomes still and clear*

*So as the body is relaxed - and the mind is still and clear -
so now bringing your attention to the area of your heart*

*Rest in the awareness that the feeling that you have life in yourself is an appearance -
and that that appearance arises from the Lord flowing into your soul moment to moment*

*So is the body is relaxed - and the mind is still and clear -
So the heart is at peace -
open to receiving the Word of the Lord*

READ CHOSEN SCRIPTURE

When the scripture reading has been completed bring people back to the group as follows...

*And now bringing your attention back to you breath once more-
Taking in a few deep breaths and slowly releasing them*

*Becoming aware of the sensation in your body- of your presence in the room- and of the
presence of others here-
And when you feel ready, I invite you to open your eyes to rejoin the group*