



Guidelines for Online I-Groups

For using video conferencing (Zoom, Skype or other) for your I-Group.

Watch this overview video <https://youtu.be/2uLDVCxqQ6w>

If you need online space, go here: <https://mkpconnect.org/info/support-online-i-groups>

- **For Online I-Group Leader Support** email onlineigroup@mkpusa.org
- **For Community Chat** join the Slack Workspace: <http://bit.ly/mkpusagroupsslack>

Guidelines for Group Safety:

Many have asked about what should be different in an online I-Group meeting. The short answer ... not that much. And there are a couple of important distinctions to consider.

Commitment to Presence: Deep emotional reactions can happen when doing work in an I-Group. When we are together in person, we are able to read cues in body language, and make sure that men are present in the 'here' and 'now' of the space. If a man is deeply triggered, we are there with him. We ask all men in online groups to commit:

- **Facilitate work with extra sensitivity.** Check in frequently with a man doing work, "Are you present?" "Are we good to continue?" "What's happening for you now?"
- **Do not drop without a clean check-out** and/or a commitment to follow-up with other members of the group. Don't leave triggered and disappear. This is a safety risk for every man in the group.
- **Avoid 'regression' that might take a man out of the present 'here' and 'now' of the space.** This could happen during any round, and we're especially aware of clearings, and 'magician' work rounds. This doesn't mean to avoid thinking or talking about the past: It does mean to avoid reenergizing traumatic memories. Our peer-facilitated groups are not a substitute for professional mental health services.

Bioenergetic Work: There are lots of creative ways to engage your body in your work. And online groups are a fantastic place to learn more about your breath, your voice, and your sensory experience.

Willingness to Pause: Create spaces in the flow of the meeting for men to pause and 'see' one another in the space. This conscious pause gives each man the opportunity to see and feel what other men might be experiencing through their facial expressions and posture.

Set your environment

In the online realm, a man may be in his home, car, workplace, or really...anywhere. And each man can contribute to create a grounded, safe, and present space. Some basic considerations are:

- **Quiet environment**, try to have a private space where you will not be interrupted.
- **Use a headset**, you'll hear better and ensure confidentiality.
- **Ensure your household** is aware that there may be noise associated with men's work.
- **Be fully present** and help others be present.
- **Arrive on the call early** to deal with technical difficulties.
- **Mute your microphone** except when speaking, background noise makes it difficult to hear.
- **Focus on the group**, limit distractions by shutting off notifications and closing windows.

Set Ground Rules

You can modify these to fit with your existing group agreements, but this is a baseline of rules we think are important for online meetings.

- **This is confidential space.**
- Promptly address abuse or threats of abuse.
- No recording of any kind.
- Be on time.
- No multitasking while on the call.
- Ask before offering feedback or questions.
- Do not attend under the influence of alcohol or recreational drugs.
- Take responsibility for your words and actions.
- Use I Statements.
- You may pass at any time.
- If you check out early, commit to follow-up.

Effectively Use the Software:

Taking Turns – One man speaks at a time. This helps everyone hear clearly.

Checking In – Check-ins are best done by inviting the next man when complete, or having one man call on men in turn.

Using Mute – Mute your mic on entry to the meeting. To speak, use the Unmute button in the bottom left of your Zoom window; mute yourself when finished speaking. If you prefer to call in from a phone, use *6 on your keypad to mute or unmute.

Background Sounds – Background noise can be a significant barrier to successful meetings. When not muted/speaking, be aware of your mic brushing against clothing. Coughing, eating and other seemingly small noises may also overpower another Zoom speaker.

Still Environment – It's best to not move around if you can prevent it. If you need to move, turn off your camera to prevent distracting others.

Follow I-Group Rounds

You can modify these to fit with your existing norms and culture; feel free to add and be creative!

- **Logistics** - Assign scribe and time-keeper. Affirm the Ground Rules for the Group.
- **Check In** - Name/Animal Name, Intention, P.I.E.S or similar type question, feeling. This is also a great time introduce a short meditation, poem, or silence to connect.
- **Accountability**, Support Accountability & Clearings.
- **Short Break** - Stretch, Stand, Move (**if using a free account, restart the meeting here.*)
- **Get Re-Grounded in the group** - Practice Silence or meditative breath
- **Work Round** - Name/Animal Name, "My work tonight is_____."
I rate my work to be _____. (use number system i.e. 1-4)
I want _____ minutes for my work.
Men take turns for work.
Ensure adequate time is given for transition and feedback rounds.
- **Check Out** - Wants, honoring, blessings and feelings, transition to closing.

Help us change the culture, become a Member! <http://mkpusa.org/membership>