

Focus Statement
Who We Are/Why We're Here

We are spouses, partners, parents, children, siblings, family members, and friends. We come from many different walks of life but have a common heart. We gather at this time to share our mutual experiences of living with the effects of someone else's mental illness. We believe that our life situations can and will improve as we develop awareness, understanding, resources and self-care skills. Our primary purpose is to share hope and strength with each other that we may improve quality of life for individuals with mental illness, their families, and our communities today.

This is a support group meeting of the With Hope in Mind family education and support program sponsored by NAMI _____. For consistency, this meeting will end at _____. At that time you will be free to leave or stay awhile and fellowship. We will begin our wrap-up about 15 minutes before that time and will have reminders along the way.

As we begin, we would like to remind everyone that you always have the right to speak as well as the right to decline to speak. You may decline by simply saying "pass." Your decision will be respected by all. We would also like to reinforce that this is a safe place. What is said in this group and who you see in this group must remain in the group. These principles come from our guidelines and affirmations which constitute our core beliefs and will guide us through this meeting. While there may be some similarities in our guidelines and affirmations, this is not a twelve step program. Our affirmations are viewed as goals to live by rather than ordered steps. Let us spend our sharing time with the resolve that while we may live with the effects of mental illness in our lives, we choose to live in mental wellness.

Now, let's begin by reading the With Hope in Mind Meeting Guidelines and Affirmations.