



“Must Haves” – *Identifying and Discussing Basic Needs for Self-Improvement*

Opening Exercise: “Gotta Have It: The small things in life”

Directions: As a group go through the following list one by one. With each item on the list, group members are encouraged to share their opinion using one of these choices:

- ✚ **“Gotta have it”** - (This is something very important to you)
- ✚ **“Could live without it”** – (You either are not interested at all or you could give it up or live without this if you had too)

“Gotta Have It” List:

- ✓ Morning coffee
- ✓ Sunday football
- ✓ A dog
- ✓ Gym membership
- ✓ Owning a car with driver’s license
- ✓ 12 Step Meetings/Self Help Groups
- ✓ Streaming video entertainment (Netflix, Hulu, etc.)
- ✓ A relationship partner (as compared with being single)
- ✓ Sweets
- ✓ Newer more modern smart phone
- ✓ Music on in the background at home when doing chores
- ✓ A best friend
- ✓ Regular, quality, professionally done hair cut/style
- ✓ A book you are reading
- ✓ A hobby

- ✓ **Continue with your own ideas:** Now the group should follow this same process with everyone in the group coming up with at least one thing in life that you “Gotta have” then sharing that with the group to discuss in the same manner as the above examples



Part 2 – “Must Haves” for Progress and Goals

Directions: For this part of the exercise, the group will try to focus on more important things that are important in life as they are basic needs for goals. As a group go through each topic and group members should try to share “must haves” or basic needs that are personally important for making progress in each area. These things should be non-negotiable things you would not be willing to compromise. Discuss each one by one with everyone in the group encouraged to share at least one thought per topic if possible

Topics:

Friendship – For someone to be your friend, what is one non-negotiable requirement? – Some examples provided to get the group started:

- “For someone to be my friend, they have to be ***honest***, I can’t stand liars”
- “To be my friend you have to be ***loyal*** and not talk behind my back or gossip about me”
- “I can only be friends with people who ***love animals***”

Now as a group discuss people’s thoughts on **Friendship** then continue with the rest of the list

Love (Romantic) – “For me to love someone they must....”

Serenity – “I need ____ in my life to experience inner peace”

Weekends – “On my weekends, I need to have....”

Entertainment – “What forms of entertainment are most important to you? (Reading, going outdoor, sports, binge watching, social media, music, etc....)”

Balance – “To achieve balance in life I need....”

Health – “To feel healthy in life I need...”

Safety – “To feel a sense of security in life I need” ... (A guard dog, alarm system, self-defense skills, safe car in good condition, stay out of crime areas, etc....)

Recovery (Substance related) – “To successfully manage substance use issues I need....”

Good Mental Health – “For me to be calm, stable and regulated mentally I need...”

Happiness – “I need ____ in my life in order to be truly happy”



OTHER? – If the group is up for it and there is time, discuss other life areas in the same way

Closing Questions

- How do you make sure that you get your basic needs met?
 1. What specifically do you do?
 2. What skills or do you still need?
 3. Who or what can help you?

- What are you doing now to make sure you have your needs met?

- How can you improve for the future so that you have more of what you need?

- To close out the group, everyone should try to answer the following: ***“Three things that I will specifically start doing to make sure that my basic needs are met so I can achieve my goals are:*”**
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

