



Name: _____

Hello, fellow group members. My name is Brian, and I am a “graduate” of the Opportunities for Change program. I completed the required 31 hours, and paid all my Court fees. Most of you who are just starting the group are focussed on those two things: time and money. Oh, and being pissed off because you shouldn’t be here. I know. I felt the same way.

I’m writing this to you at the request of the facilitators of my group, to give you tips on how to get the most out of it. I’ve not only sat where you are sitting, but I took to away new stuff from the program, and it’s helping me in my life now. So, here’s my advice:

- You get out of group what you put into it. If you sit there like a rock, you are more stubborn and stupid than most. Oh, and you will leave just as stubborn. The more you share and the more you listen, the more you will learn. If you are like most guys, you will actually sort of like coming to group.
- Come to every group. The more you miss, the more you will risk getting locked up, or paying for lawyers or whatever. Even more important, if you aren’t here, you miss out on vital information. You will also feel less bonded to the other group members. Consistent attendance is key.
- Do the homework. I used it and the binder to show my wife what I was learning about, and that helped us make some changes together.
- Balance talking and listening in group. If you don’t trust the group, practice listening for the first few weeks. Soak up the experiences, and share when you are ready.¹

Having read this letter prepared by a previous group member, what things can you do to get the most out of group?

¹ Adapted from Fall, K.A. and Howard, S. (2004). Alternatives to Domestic Violence – A homework manual for battering intervention groups. New York, NY: Brunner-Routledge.