

THE CLEARNESS ROOM

Clearness Room Guide · Clearness Monday, February 22

WHYZMEN: REWIRE RETIREMENT

In Parker Palmer's image, the soul is like a wild animal — strong and resourceful, but shy. Chase it with advice and it bolts back into the woods; sit quietly at the edge of the clearing and it comes out on its own. **This room is built to let it come out.**

THE SPOKEN COVENANT

Read aloud by the triad's timekeeper at the start of every round. The restraint is not politeness — it is what makes clarity possible.

"We are here to listen, not to fix."

"What is said in this room stays in this room."

"We offer no advice unless the man in the chair asks for it."

"We mirror and affirm what we hear — we do not judge, correct, or improve it."

"We trust that a man, truly heard, will find his own clearing."

THE FOCUS-MAN PROTOCOL

One man in the chair at a time — roughly 25–30 minutes each. *Rotate so every man is heard. The triad is the deep room; the full cohort is the sending.*

- 1. Frame.** (1 min) The man names what he brings — a draft mission, or the live question underneath it.
- 2. He speaks, uninterrupted.** (5–8 min) He reads his draft aloud and says where it feels solid and where it wobbles. No one breaks in.
- 3. Hold the silence.** (30 sec) Let it land before anyone responds. The pause is part of the work.
- 4. Honest, open questions only.** (10–15 min) Questions that open, not questions that steer. If it could be advice wearing a question mark, don't ask it.
- 5. Mirror and affirm.** (5 min) "Here's what I heard you say..." Describe, reflect, affirm. Never "what you should do is..."
- 6. He responds.** He refines aloud, or simply sits with it. Refinement — not resolution — is success for the morning.
- 7. Close.** The group affirms the man. Only now, and only if he asks, are opinions welcome. Then the seal: nothing said is repeated; nobody follows up unless he opens the door.

ANY MAN MAY CALL THE RULE

No facilitator sits in your room on Clearness Monday. Whoever notices says the short line, kindly, and the round keeps going. Nobody is in trouble.

- › "Have you thought about...?" → "Can we turn that into an open question?"
- › A third follow-up from the same man → "Let's open it to others."
- › Questions coming fast, no air between them → "Let's leave a little silence."

- › A story about the questioner's own life → "Back to the chair."

IS IT A MISSION YET?

A finished mission passes **two tests at once**. The Gates check that it is **built right**; the Felt Sense checks that it **rings true**. One without the other fails — accurate but dead, or alive but self-deceived.

The Five Gates

Built right — guards the heart from wishful feeling

Recital — he can say it from memory, plainly, no card.

Why — it names a reason, not a role (survives “but why?” three times).

Charge — saying it does something in the chest.

No — it tells him what to decline — he can name three things.

Signature — it traces to his real strengths and values, not a borrowed ideal.

The Felt Sense

Rings true — guards the head from dry correctness

Makes sense — it coheres with who he actually is. (Head)

Energizes — it gives life rather than drains it. (Heart)

God’s leading — it brings consolation — peace, rightness, a settled yes. (Spirit)

Eases the calendar — he suddenly knows where his time goes, and where it doesn’t. (Will)

The rule: both halves nod, or it isn’t finished.

A BANK OF HONEST, OPEN QUESTIONS

So you never default to advice. Open questions cannot be solved for the man — only opened with him.

- › When you say it aloud, where do you feel it — and where do you go quiet?
- › Which words are yours, and which did you borrow because they sounded right?
- › If this were true, what is the first thing you would stop doing?
- › Who is this mission *for*?
- › What would it cost you to live it — and is that a price you want to pay?
- › When in the last year did you feel most like this man?
- › What are you afraid this mission might ask of you?

TWO TRAPS TO WATCH

The Fixing Reflex. These are men paid for decades to solve problems; the instinct to advise will fire. Name it, set it down, reach for a question instead.

Borrowed Clarity. A man without his own mission will reach for a louder man’s. Clarity before collaboration — no pairing on projects or roles until each man can recite his own heading.

“Wise men still seek, knowing their why’s.”

WhyzMen: Rewire Retirement | Navigating Transition, Building Brotherhood, Igniting Jubilee