

WHYZMEN

The Clearness Committee · Facilitator's One-Page Guide

A man brings one real question. Four or five others hold him for the better part of an hour using **nothing but honest, open questions** — no advice, no fixing, no stories of their own. The aim is not to solve him from the outside in, but to clear the interference so he can hear his own inner teacher from the inside out.

“The soul is like a wild animal — tough, resourceful, but shy. If we want to see it, the last thing we should do is go crashing through the woods. But if we are willing to sit quietly and wait, the wild thing may show itself.” — Parker J. Palmer

THE ONE RULE

Members may offer the focus man **only honest, open questions**. An honest question is one you do not already know the answer to — it is not advice wearing a question mark.

- **“What would it feel like if that were already true?”** opens.
- **“Have you considered talking to a financial planner?”** closes — *it's advice in disguise. Don't.*

No fixing, no saving, no advising, no setting each other straight. For a room of accomplished men, this is the hard part — and the whole point. The consulting reflex stays in its holster.

ROLES & FLOW (APPROX. 75–90 MIN)

Roles

- **Focus man** — brings the question, does the talking.
- **Committee (4–5)** — ask open questions only.
- **Timekeeper** — guards the clock, calls mirroring & close.

Flow

- **Silence & framing** (5 min)
- **Focus man states the question** (5–10 min)
- **Open questions & answers** (45–60 min)
- **Mirroring, if invited** (10 min)
- **Affirmations & close** (5 min)

It is not linear. The process circles around and spirals down; let silence be “another member of the group.”

THE COUNTERCULTURAL DISCIPLINES

- **Hold him in your attention, but require nothing back.** He need not satisfy, persuade, or make eye contact with anyone.
- **No comforting hand, no tissue, no joining the laughter.** Even kindness can pull him out of his own dialogue.
- **Sit at the circle's edge** — neither leaning in nor leaning out. Suppress the nods, frowns, and “mm-hmm”s that telegraph your verdict.
- **One follow-up, then yield.** If you itch for a third question before anyone else has spoken, swallow it.

DOUBLE CONFIDENTIALITY

When the hour ends, two seals hold: **(a)** nothing said is ever repeated; **(b)** no one follows up with him about it afterward unless *he* opens the door. Any notes taken are handed to the focus man at the close.

Adapted for WhyzMen from the Quaker Clearness Committee as articulated by Parker J. Palmer & the Center for Courage & Renewal (©2018). The satellite kit: for the man who asks for a longer hour, and for a standing Clearness Room the church can offer any man facing a decision. Triads on Clearness Monday (February 22) use the Clearness Room Guide.