



**Ground Zero Ministries
Women's House Handbook
and Participation Agreement**

Our Mission

The mission for this program is to disciple individuals out of habitual sin, and life controlling issues; and help them to overcome bondages by teaching them to develop a relationship with Jesus, and live according to the teachings of His word. The efforts of the program begin with creating a safe environment for participants; while providing guidance for them to discover their God given, gifts and talents. Our goal is to train individuals to develop their full potential in the Lord Jesus Christ, to create opportunity for them to develop in His plan for their lives and enter service in the Body of Christ. By providing Biblical based teaching, accountability and mentorship, we intend to steer participants of the program toward transitioning into the fulfillment of their destiny and become contributing members of society through practical application of their selected vocation as they become mentally sound, emotionally balanced, socially adjusted, physically well and spiritually alive in Christ

Purpose of Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to help ease your transition into Ground Zero Women's House by clarifying important guidelines, procedures, and expectations while living in the house. We recognize that our participants all come from various backgrounds, cultures, upbringings etc. so we're hoping to avoid any unnecessary adjustment difficulties by clarifying requirements and expectations and making sure we are on the same page.

Stable Home:

GZM Women's House is a safe environment with a loving home atmosphere and provision of basic needs for the woman and the children. A supportive environment to learn the skills necessary to maintain the home including cleaning, budgeting, grocery shopping, cooking, time management, and communication skills.

Legal & Medical:

We provide assistance with court needs, Child Protective Services, Social Services, Probation reporting and healthcare needs for both women and children.

Spiritual Care:

We are a Biblically based organization teaching the application of Biblical principles to every day life. There will be daily devotion time of Bible reading and prayer, regular church attendance, Ground Zero Meetings, prayer, and pastoral counseling. Small group studies and personal books with workbooks also required.

Employment and Education:

We will support participants in discovering God given purpose in vocation and education, as well as assistance in finding employment, education for future employment or both depending on personal circumstances.

Personal/Spiritual Growth & Devotions:

There will be morning daily devotions including personal Bible reading and prayer from 7:00am - 8:00am. Personal/Spiritual growth books with workbooks hand picked for participants to complete monthly.

House Responsibilities:

Participants will be responsible for daily chores, weekly laundry, and as needed house maintenance as a group activity. The chore board and laundry board can be found on the wall, in the hall near upstairs bathroom, along with the expectations of the details of the chore. Food shopping will be shared equally among the ladies living in the home, following the food board located in the kitchen on the door. The goal is to learn how to be a part of a healthy family, living in home with shared responsibilities as well as learn effective communication.

Dress Code:

The dress code should be modest, clean and neat.

Shirts should not be low cut and skirts should not be shorter than the length of fingertips while held to your side.

Shorts should not be shorter than five inch leg length.

No see through clothing without cami t-shirts or other appropriate coverage underneath.

Community Involvement and Accountability:

Participants will actively take part in small group meetings, mutual support meetings (AA/NA/GZM) each week. They must attend at least 3 of these meetings per week.

Participants must attend one church service per weekend either Saturday night or Sunday morning at Redeemer Church.

Each participant will meet with the house leader each week to discuss goals and progress.

Code of Conduct:

Physical assault or verbal threat is inexcusable.

Use of drugs and alcohol will not be tolerated. Participants must be willing to submit to drug/alcohol screening.

Friends of the opposite sex/significant others will not be allowed in house.

Only children of that rooms participant is allowed in personal bedrooms.

No visitors allowed beyond the common area of living room, middle room, and kitchen.

Common Area:

The common areas are meant to be utilized by all participants in an effort to avoid isolation and to build relationships, therefore it is important to not be on mobile devices while watching movies and engaging in common room activities. We understand that its important to have alone time and we're all about taking naps. Jesus took naps. However, if we notice that you're isolating we will have a discussion about what's really going on inside of your brain.

Establishing Independence:

Participants will be required to contribute to food supply as well as other household supplies.

Every Participant will be responsible for house chores assigned by the House Leader.

If a participant finds themselves without work, they must complete at least two job application daily and/or reach out to employment agencies until employment is secured.

If participant is in school to further their education to secure employment work requirements will be reduced to part time.

Participants will take care of all lawn maintenance and snow removal keeping the exterior of the house in a very presentable fashion.

**Disciplinary assignments may be given for failure to comply with the above rules and requirements.

**Violations will be brought to the Executive Director for review of the situation, as well, as an interview with individuals involved with the violation.

Keys to a Healthy Lifestyle

Fill out the following areas pertaining to how you expect to live in recovery during your time in the transition to life program.

Practicing Self-Care:

Making time for things like regular exercise, personal hobbies prayer and meditation help to maintain balance in life.

Describe your ideal, yet workable plan for incorporating or continuing prayer and devotions in your daily life:

What are some ways you are going to stay physically active throughout the week in addition to your job? (Taking walks, working out, etc). Be specific about times and make sure they are added to the weekly schedule.

Describe some of the ways in which you desire to spend your free time:

Describe what you would like to avoid doing or limiting when you have free time. Be specific about the limitations you want to put on things (1 movie per week, Facebook every other day, etc.):

Here are some ideas for healthy, productive ways to spend free time:

- Learning to play an instrument
- Joining a gym
- Painting or drawing
- Swimming
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Writing stories
- Joining/starting a book club
- Fly a kite
- Gardening
- Cooking,
- Photography
- Volunteering
- Canoeing or Kayaking

**These are just examples of ideas of things to do. It's important to be willing to try new things that we have never tried. After all you won't know if you enjoy flying a kite unless you go fly one. So, go fly a kite and lets discover some new activities that might be your new favorite thing to do.

Planning and Cooking Nutritious Meals:

Regularly eating nutritious meals can help the body recover from the harmful effects of unhealthy life choices.

Explain your plan for eating healthy meals:

What has been a struggle for you in the past in eating healthy?

What are some healthy eating habits you need to develop?

How can we hold you accountable and/or help you reach your goals for eating healthy?

Setting and Achieving Personal Goals:

Goal setting helps the healing process, increases self-efficacy, and requires self-examination, which are all great in recovery.

List 2 Long Term Goals:

1. _____
2. _____

List 2 Short Term Goals:

1. _____
2. _____

Refer to Goal Setting Worksheet on the next page and fill out the form for one of your long-term goals.

Goal Setting Worksheet

Setting and Achieving Personal Goals

Name: _____ Goal Start Date: _____ My Goal is:

Goal Completion Date: _____

Steps to Reaching My Goal:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

I Will Know I Have Reached My Goal Because:

Two Things that Will Help Me Reach My Goal:

1. _____
2. _____

The Barrier(s) to Me Reaching My Goal:

Maintaining A Clean Living Space

A clean environment promotes feelings of safety, Security and comfort while also improving personal hygiene.

What would you like your living space to look like (i.e. bed made everyday? Clothes always put away, etc)?

Building Healthy Relationships

Relationships built on honesty, trust communication and healthy boundaries reinforce sobriety, even in stressful times.

What boundaries do you see needing to put up when it comes to relationship with men?

Do you need to put up any boundaries with old friends or family? If so, please explain what you need to do.

Managing Finances

Money can be a powerful trigger but saving and spending money wisely can help reduce stress and sustain a healthy lifestyle.

Participants will be required to save a minimum of 100.00 per month and show the use of all Finances.

Fill out an Attached Budget form and review with your House Leader.

Describe issues or barriers from the past that have made it difficult for you to manage money:

What are some ways we can keep you accountable with money (hold money for you in a savings account, review monthly bank statements, etc):

Items prohibited in the home, on your person or in personal vehicles.

- 1. Alcohol and illicit drugs or mind altering medications. These substances are not allowed**
- 2. Drug paraphernalia: Items used for consuming drugs, such as syringes, pipes, or bongs, are not permitted.**
- 3. Tobacco or vaping products: these will be allowed for the first three months only outside the premise of the house with an expectation of quitting after the three month period.**
- 4. Pornographic materials: In line with Christian principles, materials of a pornographic or explicit nature are not allowed as well as personal massagers or sex toys of any kind.**
- 5. Weapons or dangerous objects: Items such as firearms, knives, or other dangerous objects**
- 6. Non-prescription medications are not allowed with in the bedrooms of the participants.**
- 7. Occult items, including but not limited to tarot cards, crystals, horoscope's, sage etc.**

****The purpose of this list to support participants in the goal of living a life according to Biblical principles and to keep yourself and other participants safe on that journey. This list is not a comprehensive list so if the House Manager or Executive Director find items that we believe to go against our mission they will be confiscated. If you are in violation of procession of these items a conversation with the Executive Director will occur. We are believers in grace and God gives us second, third, and fourth chances. We also understand you're not going to be perfect. We're not perfect, but we have to be willing to surrender though. Consequences for violations will vary based on the participant, the violation and is at the discretion of the House Manager and the Executive Director.**

PROGRAM SERVICES PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT:

DISCLAIMER, WAIVER, RELEASE & AUTHORIZATION

This Participation Agreement is made and entered into this date between the parties:

GROUND ZERO MINISTRIES

Utica, New York

hereinafter referred to as "GZM", and

Student/Client Name: [in full -no abbreviation]

Street Address [no PO Box]

City, State & Zip Code

Telephone Numbers: (mobile)_____ (other)_____

Email:_____

hereinafter referred to as the "Participant", **ACKNOWLEDGES THE FOLLOWING:**

Proposed program or services:_____

PREAMBLE: Ground Zero Ministries is an evangelical Christian discipleship ministry for people confronting life controlling problems. Participant accepts that the instruction and/or activities sponsored by GZM are the sole prerogative of GZM to coordinate, implement, refine and regulate.

DISCLAIMER:

GZM is not a medical facility, nor does its provide any sort of psychiatric or psychological diagnostic or curative treatments or therapy, nor any services generally described as being in the nature of a medical or behavioral science. Nor does GZM offer a medical/health diagnosis or prognosis to any individuals. GZM's programs do not include any clinical based or other diagnostic measure of a medical nature. The programs and services offered to a Participant by GZM are intended to offer a framework for fostering self-help, and developing personal growth or improvement upon instruction and activities originating within Christian discipleship strategies. Participant will benefit according to his/her own commitment level towards the goals of the programs and services offered. GZM, therefore, makes no representation or guarantee of success in the ultimate personal outcome or the goal pursued, nor of any judicial or agency proceeding mandating participation. No records maintained by GZM may be deemed "medical" records by definition and are not subject to surrender upon resort to either a HIPPA release and/ or other medically related authorization purporting to request "medical" records.

[_____]
Initial

I (Participant) certify that desire and request permission to attend and/or participate in the ministry activities offered by GZM, which is my voluntary act, and accept that this participation is expressly conditioned upon full compliance with the terms of this Participation Agreement, or other GZM materials on which I have notice. I hereby submit to the Ministry's expectations for my participation in all activities or services coordinated by GZM.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

First: Ministry Scope & Limitations

Participant acknowledges that the programs offered and services or activities sponsored by GZM are conducted pursuant to the protocols, guidelines, services criteria, strategies and techniques solely established by GZM. Participant agrees to fully abide by such standards, which may only be varied at the option of GZM, or any conditions for the performance or completion of services as may be imposed by a referring agency or Court and which are expressly adopted and accepted by GZM prior to entry into ministry participation. Participant has no vested right in the programs or services offered by GZM and may be suspended or terminated from participation in any program or service at any time for any or for no reason, without liability to GZM. By way of illustration only, GZM reserves the right to suspend or terminate any Participant who attends an GZM function where there is: (i) reasonable suspicion of the Participant's present intoxication or impairment from the influence of drugs; (i) if the Participant exhibits conduct that reasonably suggests the Participant may pose a threat to self or the physical safety of others, or; (iii) there is a medical/health reason brought to the attention of GZM reasonably suggesting that participation would not be recommended at that time.

Second: Participation Disclosures & Waiver/Release Terms:

The following representations, disclosures, waivers and releases are made by the Participant as a condition of engagement in all GZM ministry services, which shall survive the termination of the Participant's enrollment in GZM services or activities, unless expressly stated otherwise:

[Student/Client and a parent/guardian for any minor, must initial on the lines provided for each term to denote acceptance]

[Initial]

_____ I understand that a fundamental part of GZM strategy to assist me is animated by applying biblical truths from The Holy Bible, and spiritual strategies and principles common to evangelical Christian discipleship ministry. As a result I agree to take part in or attend Christian religious activities sponsored or coordinated by GZM, even where what is espoused may contradict my firmly held religious or personal belief, and shall not amount to any form of discrimination under federal or state law;

_____ I understand Staff will regulate and monitor my living spaces. I authorize GZM to make room searches and a physical search of my person if need be. I release Ground Zero Ministries from all responsibility for any physical and financial loss of property, claims of unlawful contact from incidental touching associated with conducting a search of person or property, or in the case of accidental injury;

[Initial]

[Initial]

_____ I understand Staff will regulate and monitor my communication for a period of time as determined by the Staff. I give Ground Zero Ministries permission to open both incoming and outgoing mail to spot check for drugs or anything that might be harmful to the welfare of the program or other students. I also give permission for Ground Zero Ministries staff to monitor incoming and outgoing telephone conversations, cell phone use, or my use of any other portable electronic devices and computers. To implement this representation, if requested, I agree to disclose a portable device password or pass code for any such device in my possession;

_____ I understand Staff may monitor, regulate and even prohibit my contact and/or unapproved interaction with individuals not actively participating in GZM programs or services, including a restriction and prohibition on contact with the opposite sex;

_____ I understand that my occupancy or residency within any GZM or Staff controlled property is purely that of a revocable licensee while an enrollee in good standing with GZM, and continues only until the license is terminated, On any termination of the license to remain, I shall immediately surrender the described space and shall remove all property and personal belongings. I understand that in any occupancy or residency arrangement made with or through GZM, I shall not be considered a tenant of any premises, and assume none of the statutory or common law rights and privileges of a tenant. Nothing about my occupancy or residency within any GZM or Staff controlled property shall operate or be construed to create the relationship of landlord and tenant between the parties, as that phrase is used in the §713 the Real Property Actions and Proceedings Law of New York and GZM retains a common-law right to oust me as a trespasser without resort to legal process. Upon any termination of this Agreement, GZM may employ peaceable self help remedies including, by way of illustration only, physical lock-out of or ejection;

_____ I understand that Ground Zero Ministries will not be held responsible for any personal property left, lost or stolen while participating in Ground Zero Ministries. When leaving Ground Zero Ministries, I will be solely responsible to take all personal property, belongings and affects with me;

_____ I understand that I am responsible for expenses incurred for the repair or replacement of damaged or lost GZM property, or that of others, caused by my conduct;

[]
Initial

[Initial]

_____ I hereby release and discharge GZM, its staff, agents, employees or officers, from and against any and all liability, causes of action, claims for damages or losses of any nature on account of injury sustained to my person or property, arising out of, or as a consequence of, my participation in any GZM services, or upon the advice I solicit from GZM Staff, if resulting solely from the ordinary negligence, common fault or lack of ordinary due care exercised by GZM;

Third: Confidentiality Terms:

Confidentiality is a basic tenet in offering all GZM services, but not at the expense of defeating the purpose of the Participant's reason for seeking GZM services. This may warrant disclosure of private information to third parties consistent with the aims of the Participant 's program attendance. All communications and records of communications between GZM [its staff, agents, employees or officers] and Participant are considered and treated as confidential and privileged pursuant to generally accepted legal standards/definitions. However, any confidentiality and privilege enjoyed by the Participant remains subject to partial or complete waiver where disclosure of private information is expressly required by conditions for performance or completion of services imposed by a referring agency or Court mandating attendance. All information, communications and records otherwise enjoying confidentiality and privilege will or may be disclosed:

- where there is reasonable suggestion of conduct posing a threat or harm to third parties;
- where there is reasonable suggestion of intention to harm one's self;
- where there is reasonable suggestion of intention to commit a crime;
- where there is any occurrence or reasonable suspicion of child abuse/neglect;
- and subject at all times to the provisions of any applicable and mandatory reporting requirements imposed by law.

Participant waives any claim to common law or statutory privilege, and consents to the disclosure of private information compatible with these terms, whether or not such disclosure is communicated in advance to Participant. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Participant waives any private right of action for damages from any alleged breach of a "duty of confidentiality", for "invasion of privacy", "defamation", "infliction of emotional distress" *, or any such other tort or cause of action arising from an alleged breach of a fiduciary duty from a disclosure of private information. A "duty of confidentiality" if any at all, is understood to regulate the parties' interactions only as a rule of law governing disclosure of communications deemed admissible in a court or tribunal of law.

[Initial]

Fourth: Legal Effect: It is understood and acknowledged that this Participation Agreement, acting as either a waiver, release, exculpatory agreement or authorization, is intended to be broad and inclusive in application as permitted by the laws of New York State. In no event, however, does this release relieve GZM for liability from acts or omissions amounting to "gross negligence" or "intentional tort". If any portion of this Agreement is held invalid, it is understood that the balance hereof shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect. This Agreement between the parties contains terms, conditions and representations which are contractual in nature and is not mere recitals of intentions. All recitals within a preamble and all section headings or titles are deemed binding.

I state that I have carefully read the foregoing Participation Agreement and know the contents thereof; and I sign this document as my own free act. I acknowledge that adoption of this Participation Agreement is a condition precedent to any client involvement in GZM. I understand that any misrepresentation or omission of a material fact, or noncompliance with what has been represented, may be justification for refusal of enrollment in, or continuance with, any GZM services.

I further acknowledge that in the event my participation is terminated for any reason, except where unlawful, my representations and waivers shall survive and remain enforceable against me, as the case may be.

NOTE: THIS IS A LEGALLY BINDING AGREEMENT THAT I HAVE CAREFULLY READ AND UNDERSTAND, I KNOW THE CONTENTS THEREOF AND I SIGN AS MY OWN FREE ACT.

Signed this ____ Day of _____, 20__.

Ground Zero Ministries:

By: _____

Acknowledgment of Program Participation Agreement:

[Participant]

Name: _____
[Print]

Sworn to before me this
day of _____ (insert month) , 20 _____

Notary Public

[]
Initial

