



Working Out Loud Circle Guide

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Week 4: Review your online presence

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What to expect this week

It's only Week 4 and you're still in the early stages of developing a new habit. So this week, you'll continue practicing ways to offer contributions while you do exercises to help you with managing time and reviewing your online presence.

Related reading from *Working Out Loud*

Chapter 14 - Deepening Relationships through Contribution

Blog post: workingoutloud.com/blog/calling-aunt-sally

Suggested agenda

Thing to do	Approx. time
Check-in	10 mins
Exercise: A different kind of contribution	10
Discuss your contributions	10
Exercise: Reviewing your online presence	15
Discuss your online presence	10
Checkout for Week 4	5

Check-in (10 minutes)

How is it going for each of you? How are each of you feeling about the process and your progress so far? Be sure to celebrate when someone got a response or made a connection, and try to help each other with challenges. If someone is struggling, it's

okay to spend more time helping them work through it. You'll all learn from it and you can help each other manage the remaining time, even if that means deferring certain topics to the next meeting or for in between meetings.

Exercise: A different kind of contribution (10 minutes)

Every week, you should go through your relationship list and practice asking *What do I have to offer that can further develop the relationship?* We'll keep expanding the set of contributions over the coming weeks. For now, remember the universal gifts of recognition and appreciation: thanking someone, giving them credit or praise, letting them know you're thinking of them. These are all wonderful gifts that anyone can give.

Now, let's add another simple contribution and practice offering it. Take a particular resource that you've found interesting or useful - a book, a TED talk, an article - and list it here. (If you're stuck, you can always list *Working Out Loud!*)

Now practice asking yourself *For whom might this be a contribution?* Try to list three people.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The last step is to send a link via any platform you prefer - e-mail, text, Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn - along with a personal comment such as "I loved this, and it made me think of you." A simple message like this can make someone's day and bring you closer.

Do this for at least one person now.

The group discusses their contribution (10 minutes)

Someone should talk about their contribution, to whom they would offer it and, importantly, how they would offer it. By helping each other think of gifts they would share and how they would share it, everyone expands their understanding and becomes a bit more comfortable.

Exercise: Reviewing your online presence (15 minutes)

One of the bonus exercises from last week was a “vanity search” - searching for yourself on the Internet. If you didn’t do it yet, try it now.

If you didn’t find much about you or your goal, you can take small steps to change that. Start by listing all the profiles that exist: LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, your intranet at work, and anywhere else where there’s your name a section you can customize.

Now pick one profile that others on your relationship list would be able to see and add a short sentence about your goal. For example, I added “Author of Working Out Loud” on LinkedIn. If your goal is to move to a new city, consider adding something as simple as “Moving from New York to Tokyo.” If you’re exploring the idea of writing books for kids, you might add “Aspiring author of children’s books.”

Keep it short. Feel free to try different things till you come up with something you’re comfortable with.

You can think it as leveraging an online platform to “voice your intention.” That one simple step is a kind of signal to others and yourself, and it can increase the chances of connections related to that goal..

The group discusses their online presence (10 minutes)

Having each of you share what you added to your profile - saying it out loud in front of a trusted group - can help you. Don’t worry so much about getting it exactly right. You can easily change it as you learn and grow. For now, the important thing is just taking a small step in shaping your online presence.

Checkout for Week 4 (5 minutes)

1. Confirm the time and place for the next meeting.
2. Remind people to read the Week 5 circle guide and suggested reading.
3. Ask: “What will you do this week?”

Before the next meeting, keep working on your relationship list and on the contributions you would make for each person on it. Try making at least one more contributions. If you’re struggling to make progress or find time to invest in yourself, look at the two simple techniques in the bonus exercises. They will definitely help you.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I want to invest in myself, but I really don’t have time.

Though we all have different jobs and different schedules, almost no one feels he has extra time. After all, your time is already accounted for, so when you choose to do something new, you have to make a trade of some kind. For example, whenever you say yes to a meeting or a task, you’re saying no to something else that could be much more valuable. Ask yourself, “What’s the something else?”

Since your time is most likely fully allocated, you probably won’t find *spare* time. But you can identify activities you’ll start saying no to so you can invest in things more important to you in the long term. For example, average Americans may consider themselves busy, but they also spend more than 34 hours a week watching TV. Whether or not you consider that a good investment, the point is that you can’t make extra time. All you can do is make conscious decisions on how to spend the time you have and, if you want to, exchange low-value activities for investing in yourself.

Bonus exercises

Easy: Something you can do in less than a minute

Look at your calendar for the next week, and schedule the times you’ll work on working out loud - even just 15-minute slots. Any progress is better than none.

More challenging: Something you can do in less than 10 minutes

Read the post [“Calling Aunt Sally”](#) in the related reading section above. Then reach out to one person on your list or even to a friend or relative who’s not related to your goal. Your message could be as simple as “I’ve been thinking of you.” As you do it, how does it feel? Why do you think you feel that way?