Facilitator moves

THE MAIN MOVE

"How would you know?" It's the heart of this practice. Use it on the group's own examples.

Then ask: **"What else could explain it?"**

When the room needs help

- **Silence.** Wait ten seconds. Ask, "What might the friend's text mean?"
- **Dominating.** "Let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken and wants to."
- **Overcorrecting.** "The first thought might be right. What supports it?"
- **Endless analysis.** "What can you agree to now?"
- **A raw example.** Acknowledge it; return to the shared case.
- **Giving advice.** "What has helped you?"

PROTECT THE TIME

Give each question about eight minutes and start the practice by minute 65. If time is short, skip the reveal. Begin the close by minute 80 and finish at 90.

When asked for your view

Offer it briefly: "Here's my tentative view. What would make you doubt it?" Keep the question open.

Notes and follow-up

Key texts: Epictetus, *Enchiridion* 1; *Discourses* 3.12.

Examine Your Impressions

Is it true, or does it just feel true?

Today practices the core Stoic skill of examining impressions: noticing a first reaction and checking it before we agree to it.

THE MEETING

Date: _____ **Place:** _____

90 minutes of discussion · Practice and Reflection

Before you begin

Silence your phone, set a quiet timer, and keep this guide open. Have the reading ready on a phone or printout, and a pen for your own notes.

Open (10 minutes)

Welcome. Challenge ideas, give reasons, and share the floor. Passing is always fine, and a made-up example works as well as a personal one. If the group met last month, invite one brief report on the practice.

Ask the whole group: **"When did a first reaction of yours turn out to be wrong?"** Hear three or four brief answers.

Read (10 minutes)

READ ALOUD · EPICTETUS, ENCHIRIDION 1 (THE CLOSING LINES)

Read the passage aloud from the linked text or the QR code. Meet every harsh impression by saying, "You are an impression, and not at all what you appear to be." Then test it.

Enchiridion 1

Ask: **"What would that sound like in your own words?"** Then move to the discussion.

Open · 10 min	Read · 10 min	Discuss · 45 min	Practice · 15 min	Close · 10 min
Welcome; a first reaction	Aloud, together	Questions 1–5	Test one impression	One takeaway each

Discuss

1. What impression hit you hardest recently? What did it ask you to believe?

Probe: Did you accept it?

2. When you got it wrong, was the error in the facts, the value, or the action?

Probe: Which mistake do you make most?

3. Which impressions win you over fastest: fear, pleasure, urgency, or authority?

Probe: Why that one?

4. Epictetus imagines a night watch checking each impression. What would yours check?

Probe: What gets past it too easily?

5. What short question could you ask yourself in the moment?

Probe: When would you need it most?

GOING DEEPER · IF THE ROOM IS READY

Some impressions are accurate. How do you avoid second-guessing everything?

Practice: test one impression

Start with this case, or use a volunteer's example if one is ready. A friend cancels plans at the last minute with a one-line text. Your first thought: "They don't really want to see me."

Work through the steps aloud. Take two or three answers at each step.

1. **Name.** What am I being asked to believe?
2. **Test.** What supports it, and what else could explain it?
3. **Endorse.** What can I actually agree to?

IF TIME ALLOWS · THE REVEAL

You learn later that your friend's car broke down.

Probe: What did the impression add that the facts didn't support?

The test isn't distrust of every feeling; it's checking before you agree.

Close

Return to the opening: **"Is it true, or does it just feel true?"** Take one or two answers. Invite each person to choose one occasion to try the practice; anyone may pass.

UNTIL NEXT TIME · SHOW ME YOUR PASS

Before acting on a strong reaction, ask: "What am I being asked to believe?"

Thank members, confirm the next meeting, and finish on time. Announce the next meeting's topic and its opening question.

After the meeting: send a short recap through your group's usual channel with one or two observations and the practice.