

Shepherding Your Group Well

Helpful Tips for Group Leaders

Central reason people get into a group in the first place – to build friendships and to grow spiritually.

Cultivate an environment of ENCOURAGEMENT in your group by:

- a. Active listening.

James 1:19 - ¹⁹ *My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, ²⁰ because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.*

- b. Showing gentleness and kindness when you speak.

Philippians 4:5 - ⁵ *Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.*

Ephesians 4:32 - ³² *Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

Encouragement Exercise – one way to create an encouraging environment in your group would be to ask members to complete the following sentence for one designated member:

“(Name), I am so glad you are in this group, because...”

Let each person in the group speak life-giving words to that member.

Cultivate an environment of CARE in your group by providing care in these three areas:

1. **Personal Care** – the direct support you as the leader give to the group members.

Ways to do that:

- a. Prayer Support, text/email communication each week, visits when someone has a need or a life transition.
- b. Be their friend and support, not necessarily their counselor.
 - i. Ask the person, “How can we help?” before taking a course of action. At the very least ask if you can pray for them.
 - ii. Have our “mental health resources page” in mind.
 - iii. Be aware of our “care groups” for those with specific ministry needs.

2. **Mutual Care** –the care group members give to one another.

Galatians 6:2 – ² *Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.*

Here are some practical suggestions to provide “mutual care”:

- a. Providing meals when a baby is born or a need arises,
- b. Create a text chain where you can share needs, prayer requests, and necessary communication
- c. Sit together in a church service or event,
- d. Serve together in one of our many opportunities here at Journey,
- e. Attend events that other group members or their kids are participating in,
- f. Get together for a meal during an “off” time,
- g. Provide resources when a need arises in the group

3. **Backup Care** – having support of those in leadership to help you navigate a difficult situation in your group.
- For intense/emergency care needs, always know that you are not alone.
 - One resource: www.takethejourney.cc/mental-health-resources/
 - In cases of physical danger or other serious situations, please take those to your pastor to determine the needed course of action.

God wants us to grow as shepherds! One of the most rewarding aspects of ministry is in this area of caring for people, particularly in their times of need. Personally caring for members, building a group where mutual care happens, and knowing you have backup care in your corner are all keys to having a life-giving and successful group!

What I Will Do to Grow:	Due:
<p>What can I read? Recommended Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“The Loneliness Epidemic: Why So Many of Us Feel Alone and How Leaders Can Respond,”</i> by Susan Mettes • https://www.barna.com/mettes-loneliness-blog/ • https://www.rootsofloneliness.com/ 	
<p>What can I listen to and/or watch? Recommended Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast • Carey Nieuwhof Leadership Podcast 	
<p>Who can I talk to? Recommended Resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with a close friend or mentor and honestly evaluate the condition of your soul. • Talk with someone you respect and admire who has mastered this competency. 	
<p>Who can I observe/watch?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with someone you respect and ask them to assess you in this area. • Watch someone lead a group and then de-brief what you observed with him/her. 	