

COMMUNITY GROUP GUIDELINES

It is vitally important to the health and safety of a Community Group that the group leader lays a foundation by setting some guidelines for group time. Having some guidelines set up will give the people in the group some boundaries to operate within. It also helps in creating an environment that is safe for transparency, vulnerability, sharing, and growing closer in relationship with each other and with God. Setting some basic discussion guidelines for how you will honor one another in our group discussions is important.

Community Group Guidelines...

- ...give boundaries for people to operate safely.
- ...help with the flow and pace of the discussions.
- ...help us value one another.
- ...help people to be more comfortable sharing with transparency.

SAFE GROUP: We will strive to create an environment where everyone can be real, open, and honest with their struggles and victories.

CONFIDENTIALITY: What is said in the group stays in the group.

LISTEN: Let's value one another during the discussions by really listening to what is being shared. Try to avoid thinking about how you are going to respond, or what you are going to say next.

PAUSE: Allow pauses in conversation after someone shares. Give the person sharing the chance to finish before responding.

SILENCE: It is important to allow silence in the group as it provides an opportunity for someone to share and for members in the group to process the topic or question being considered.

NO "CROSS TALK": Be considerate of others as they are sharing. No side conversations.

NO FIXING: We are not here to fix each other. Jesus does the fixing. Give encouragement, speak truth, and point to Jesus. Don't try to solve problems or fix each other.

NO RESCUING: When people are sharing something deeply personal, resist the temptation to make them feel better about themselves and offer condolences. This will often cause them to stop sharing.

SHARING: Be sensitive about the amount of time you share. Don't be offended if the leader asks to hear from others.

BE SELF-AWARE: Be self-aware of how you are personally effecting the environment through your words, actions, and non-verbal communication.

USE "I" STATEMENTS: Try to use "I" statements rather than "them", "the church", "us", "we", etc.

CONFLICT: We will commit to resolve conflict biblically. When conflict or sin issues between group members arise, we want to make sure we are honoring God and each other in the way we deal with these issues:

- Disunity (Matthew 18:15-20)
- Restoration (Galatians 6:1-5)
- Forgiveness (Colossians 3:12-13)
- Reconciliation (Matthew 5:23-24, Matthew 7:1-5)

