

Guidelines for Healthy Small Groups

Small groups are comprised of people, and people come in all "shapes" and "sizes." Every person is "fearfully and wonderfully made" in the image of God our creator and brings to Small Group a valuable set of experiences, wisdom, and perspectives all wrapped up in a unique personality. As a result, no two Small Groups are alike. Each has its own dynamic character, reflecting the sum of its parts.

Yet, within that diversity, there is a common core for Christian Small Groups - Jesus Christ. The following suggestions will help to ensure healthy groups that both preserve the value of each person and center our faith on Jesus Christ.

1. Relax & enjoy yourself.
2. Begin and end on time.
3. Call when you can't come. Host phone number: _____
Make every effort to be at Small Group. This is important to building trust with the group and it shows your good character. Be a faithful and trustworthy person.
4. Be willing to join in the discussion. The host of the group will not be lecturing, but will encourage people to discuss what they have learned in their personal Bible time. Plan to share what God has taught you in your individual study.
5. Try to be sensitive to the other members of the group. Listen attentively when they speak, and be affirming whenever you can. This will encourage more hesitant members of the group to participate.
6. Be careful not to dominate the discussion. By all means do participate! But allow others to have equal time.
7. Build trust through confidentiality. Refrain from gossip, both inside and outside the small group.
8. Be gentle and respectful of each other by listening well, asking appropriate questions when someone is sharing, and avoid quick answers, snap judgements, or simple fixes.
9. Commit to getting to know the other members of the group and pray for them regularly.
10. Relax and enjoy yourself.