

Home Groups at Capilano Christian Community



Home Group Leadership Manual

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Host Responsibility Check List

Hosts do much more than just provide a home to meet in! You are a vitally important part of the leadership team. For some of our leaders, they are both leaders and hosts. Here is your purpose and some of your responsibilities as the home host —

To Provide A Clean, Comfortable, Welcoming Family Environment to
Facilitate the Growth of People After Jesus Christ

✓ **Is My House Clean And Picked Up By Meeting Time?**

A clean living room, kitchen and bathrooms help people relax and feel comfortable in your home.

✓ **Do I Have Enough Comfortable Chairs?**

Hard chairs make for a long meeting! If needed, you can purchase padded folding chairs for a nominal price at a local store.

✓ **Do I Have Enough Lighting?**

A well-lit (not glaring!) room energizes a group, while a dark or dim room de-energizes it. Maybe it's time to add a lamp to that dark corner!

✓ **Is My House Free Of Dog Or Cat Odors?**

If you have indoor pets, your house may well have odors that you've grown used to. Ask a good friend for an honest evaluation! Also, remember that many people are allergic to dogs or cats. It's a good idea to ask your group about this at your first meeting. If it's a problem, you may need to keep your animals out of the house before or during the meeting.

✓ **Are My Children Interrupting The Group?**

It's important that children do not interrupt the flow of the meeting, either by coming into the room or by requiring you to leave the meeting. Of course, there will be times when this is unavoidable due to an emergency or special circumstance. But these times should be the exception, not the rule.

✓ **To Provide A Warm And Friendly Environment**

As part of the leadership team, your job is to help your members feel loved, accepted, and welcome. This involves things like:

- Introducing them to one another during your first meeting.
- Providing positive feedback and support to various group members during the meetings.
- Making sure to talk with and involve the shy or less popular members before and after meetings.
- Keeping in touch with group members between meetings.

✓ To Provide Support & Feedback For The Leader

One of the host's most important jobs is to discuss and evaluate the group with the leader on a regular basis. This often can be done informally after everyone leaves. Items to discuss include:

- What's going well in the group? What's not?
- Who's hurting in the group? Who's growing? How can you help?
- Are you dividing your time wisely in the meetings? Are you balanced between sharing, study and prayer?
- How can you encourage quiet members to share more openly?
- Another way to help your leader is to jump-start the discussion when it lags.

Sometimes a question will elicit no one response (either because everyone is nervous or because the question was unclear). Whenever this happens, you can help your leader by breaking the ice and answering the question yourself. Or, if the question is unclear, you can ask the leader to rephrase it. This provides an opportunity to regroup and come at the issue from a different angle. Knowing that your hosts will help you out of a jam gives a leader a lot of security.

✓ To Organize Meals For Members In The Hospital (Or Other Special Needs)

One of the host's most important jobs is to organize the group to meet practical needs whenever they arise in the group. A common example would be the need for meals during a time of illness or crisis.

✓ To Organize Weekly Refreshments & Quarterly Potlucks & Social Events.

Hosts are responsible to organize the weekly refreshments and/or desserts. You will also work with your leader to plan the opening session potluck and at least one social event per quarter. Once planned, the host is responsible to organize and oversee the details, for example:

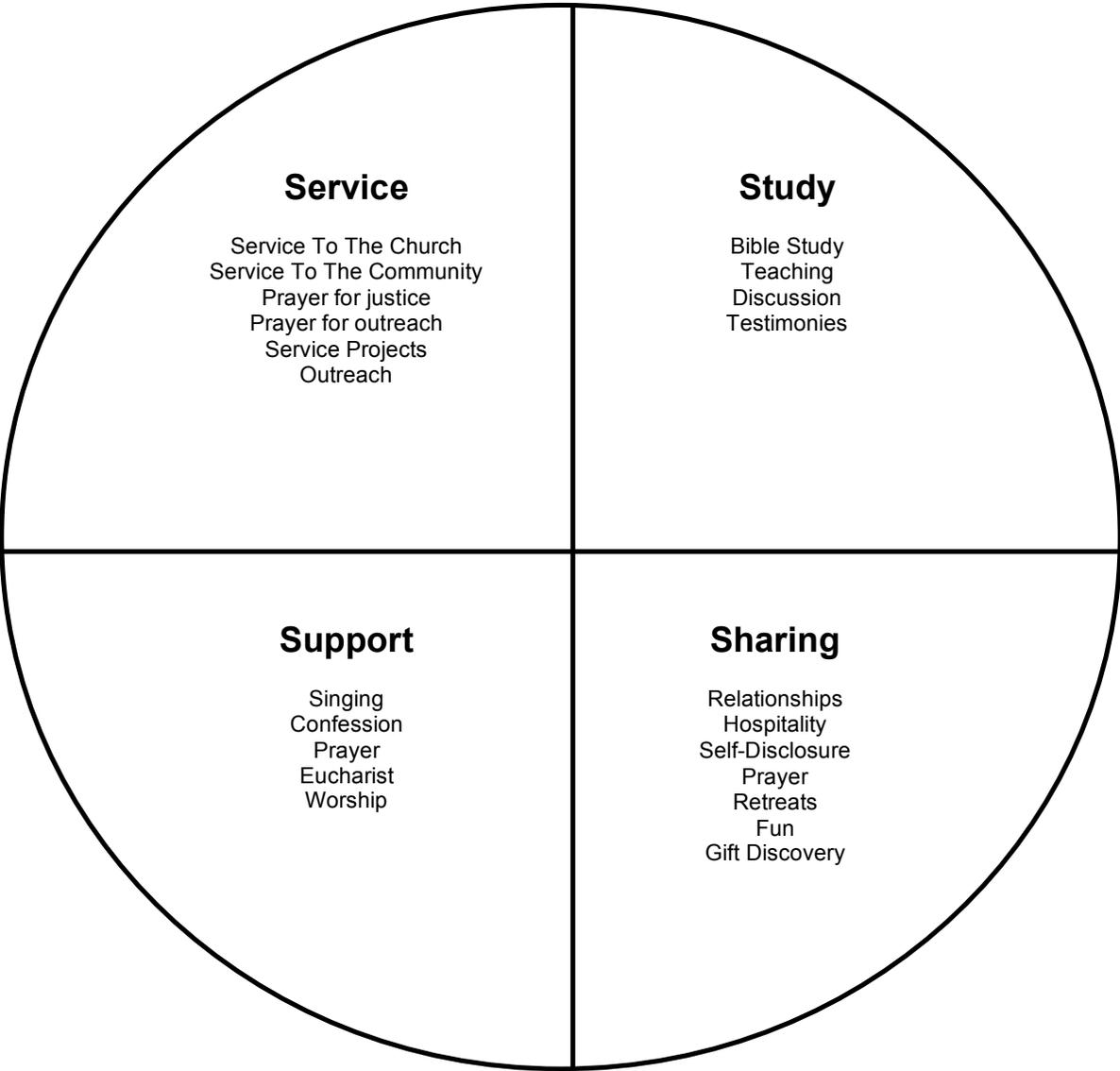
- Who will bring what to the potluck?
- Making any necessary reservations for the group's social event.
- Calling to remind members about an upcoming social event.

✓ To Attend All Home Group Leaders Meetings and Cap Emergent

Home Group Leaders Meetings and Cap Emergent are normally hosted at **Roger and Randene Hardy's** home. These are great opportunities to build community and freshen your leadership skills.

Remember – Hosts are part of the team with the leaders. Participate as a team member exercising the gifts of hospitality that God has placed in you.

Possible Components of Home Group Life



Good Group Life

An Introduction

(Taken from Em Griffin's Getting Together, A Guide to Good Groups, IVP)

1. Three characteristics of a good group

1.1 **Cohesiveness** that is marked by people showing up (for starters) and developing a sense of *we-ness* (as opposed to *Paul and Jane's group*). The makes for the kind of relational bond which supports growth and constructive conflict. The good news is that this kind of group serves its members and is attractive to newcomers. The bad news is that such groups are hard to get into and leave. To create such a group one needs both open arms and standards.

1.2. **People know where they fit.** This process takes time and there will be anxiety until people find their role. The leader's goal; is to assist the group in role differentiation. Look at the list of group roles as well as the exercise in discerning spiritual gifts for starters.

1.3. **Group Ownership.** Realize that people come to a group for varied reasons and that is actually good. If the group is not going to bomb then the leader must help clarify group goals and lead in a way that allows the group ownership of expectations. Clarify, clarify, clarify and contract, contract, contract is the name of the game here.

2. **Three kinds of groups.** Because different groups have different expectation, needs, and gifts, one leadership style is not sufficient to cover all groups. Therefore it is important to recognize that different groups tend to major in one of the following styles and succeed with appropriate leadership.

2.1. The Task Oriented Group--we will get the job done!

Issues	Need	Process	Leadership	Options
Size; Agendas; Disagreements; Making Decisions	5-7 people; Short agendas; Diverse People	Flight-Fight-Unite	Clarity; relational; Delegate	Different leaders; two leaders; or one leader with varied style

2.2. The Relational Group--we will care for one another deeply

Issues	Needs	Leadership
What pulls people together? What fosters trust? Conflict w/o tearing apart Personal freedom and safety Honest self-expression	<u>Clarity of expected behavior:</u> attendance, affirmation, confidentiality, honesty, sensitivity, accountability, prayer Atmosphere for self-disclosure including an openness to grow and change	By example--creating opportunities for caring without engineering openness

2.3. The Influence Group--We want to change and want your help

Issues	Needs	Leadership
What are the group norms or rules? How do we motivate? How to pursue long-term change? What is the Leader's influence? How does empowering happen? What are the Rewards?	Mutual public commitment	A Model who asks for sacrifice

3. Knowing Yourself--Questions to answer

3.1. What dominant *need* characterizes your leadership?

Task:	Relational:	Influence
goal oriented, get the job done; improve performance	role oriented; aware of feelings of others; want harmony in relationships; don't want to be left out	effect-oriented; wants to change the world; a persuader; not easily sidetracked.

3.2 What is your secondary leadership characteristic?

3.3 Share your perceptions and give reasons why you see a particular trait as dominant. Then give feedback and evaluate the observations of others about your primary and secondary leadership characteristics.

4. Know your group. Spend an evening with your group asking each person in the group to share

- What he/she hopes to gain from the group
- What kinds of disappointments *with* groups does he/she bring to this group.
- what expectation he/she has for this group.
- If you have time go over the list of roles asking each person to share
 - which positive role(s) do you normally play in a group?
 - do any of the negative roles emerge in your participation in group life?

5. Make a chart for your group with the following categories Fill out the chart in consultation with your co-leader if you have one. Consult the list of roles in the packet and the notes you took from the group exercise above

Name	Why this person comes to our group	Emerging Roles(s) both + & -
Joe	to influence	mover
Mary	friendship	clown
John	to accomplish something	technician
Jane	relationship	encourager

When you list is complete, discuss with your co-leader or someone in your group the following questions

- Do our goals for the group include their expectations?
- What has the group done so far to foster group ownership of expectations?
- Is the group's dominant trait task, relational, or influence?
- In the past how have we spent our time: in primary task, relational activities, or in influence activities?
- How do our dominant leadership traits fit with group expectations?
- Now that we best know this, how shall we lead this group?

6. Some good resources on small groups (IVP)

Good Things Come in Small Groups
Seven Myths About Small Groups
The Big Book on Small Groups
Biblical Foundations for Small Group Ministry
Getting Together a Guide Good Groups

Home Group Life This Year – Group Discussion & Planning

Home Group Life This Year. (Suggested time: 1 hour)

The previous exercise dealt with discerning spiritual gifts and talents in your home group. This exercise attempts to build on that experience by discussing and planning your home group life together based on those gifts and talents. The body of Christ in home groups has many members with different functions. As each member participates the home group begins to express a healthy corporate life.

A home group may exist for one or several reasons. If your group is unsure of its purpose than it would be well to spend an evening discussing *Good Group Life* found earlier in this manual. This exercise assumes that your home group is primarily a *relational group* or a bible study group. Most groups tend to emphasize one component more than others. You don't have to have all the components to be a good group, but you do have to choose which components you will major in and which you will minor in. Decide on the basis of the kind of leader you are and the talents your group has. You can easily adapt this discussion accordingly.

Here are the four possible components of your home group

- Study (i.e. Bible study): the study of scripture, the use of gifts in building up one another.
- Sharing (i.e. Relationships): to know others and be known, for support and encouragement.
- Support (i.e. Worship): prayer and celebration of who God is and what he is doing.
- Service: (i.e. Outreach): prayer for the church and various ministries, service in the church and outreach to neighbours, teens, prisons, etc.

The question for this discussion is, "What shall we do this year in each of these four areas with our particular gifts?"

Discuss expectations and set some realistic goals as a group so that each member is able to participate and take responsibility at their level of giftedness. You will probably not accomplish everything you desire to do, but that is all right. You will have a good idea where you are going and that is what is important.

Discussion:

1. What do you hope to gain most from this group personally?
2. In what area would you most like to see the whole group grow this year?
3. Which component(s) shall we major in?
4. Which component(s) shall we minor in?
5. Which component(s) shall we not do?
6. What realistic goals can we make in each of the 4 areas?
7. In the area of relationships
 - The what, how, & how much of self-disclosure? A life story each time? In sub groups?
 - The what, how of hospitality
 - The what, how of prayer--1on 1? Groups of 4? Whole group?
 - Potlucks? How often? Who in charge?
 - Other ideas?
8. In the area of Bible Study
 - Who would like to lead a study? When?
 - Who would like to help a new leader prepare and give him/her feedback?
 - Different kinds of study?
 - Speakers from among us? Outside?
 - Other ideas?
9. In the area of worship
 - What areas of worship can we grow in this year?
 - A special evening or worship/prayer occasionally? When? Who coordinate?
 - Who is interested in leading worship regularly?
 - Eucharist?
 - Other ideas?
10. In the area of service or outreach
 - What?
 - Regular prayer for an aspect of the church?
 - Regular prayer for ministries of individuals within the group?
 - Prayer for a specific country? A missionary?
 - A Christmas party? Who keeps track of this?

Planning Two Months of Home Group Life

1. Planning

Godly leadership involves thoughtful, prayerful preparation that is then flexible under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Without preparation there is little to flex; the leader's feet are firmly planted in the air. The small group should be an environment that aids spiritual transformation therefore, more than bible-discussion is needed. Relationships, worship and ministry are also used of god to mold us into his image. Planning these is as important as preparing the bible study.

2. Facilitating group life

- Think beyond one meeting. It is helpful to think in blocks of time (e.g. Two months) and ask - what is the level of the group's relational, worship, and ministry life? How can this evening contribute to group's development?
- Plan on special evenings devoted to one aspect of group life (e.g. Pot-luck or Eucharist or prayer service) so that your group is balanced.
- Decide how to stay in touch with members outside of regular meeting over this block of time.

3. Planning a particular evening

Many groups have found it helpful to divide up leadership of different segments of the evening (bible study, worship, sharing and prayer, hospitality etc.) So that one individual or couple are only responsible for one segment. That spreads the load around.

- Develop the worship, community, or ministry around the theme of the bible study as a frame work for spontaneity. Select hymns that complement the study or what's happening in individuals lives in the group (warfare/victory; suffering/sovereignty; relational/ body-life; expressing affection to god). Be creative, opening or closing worship is fine but avoid using "worship" as "warm up"
- Use experiences that are appropriate for the stage of your groups interaction.
- Have a "ball park" time frame for the evening so that it flows easily and unhurried.

4. Leading the evening

- Be early. This reveals your commitment to the group and (hopefully) your delight in it. Also it sets a good example.
- Greet people as they come. The leader sets the tone of the meeting from the very beginning.
- Discern and deal with any immediate concerns on people's minds. Suggest later discussion with party(s) involved, if the matter can be set aside, for the sake of the rest of the group.
- Remember that a leader both models and sets the tone for the sharing that goes on. Your level of risk, trust, caring and sharing will be what other members will see as the "norm" for the group.

Preparing a Bible Discussion From a Sermon Guide or a Study Guide In Twenty Minutes

1. Do Your Study

- Work through the study guide or sermon guide questions. Write out your answers if necessary.
- When you have worked through the passage, list the *Main Truths* that you understand the passage to teach
- From the *Main Truths* write one *Central Truth* in a sentence.

2. Decide on appropriate applications of the Central Truth.

- What do you think the author hoped his readers would believe or do as a result of this passage?
- How do you sense the Spirit of Christ nudging you to respond?
 - to obey a command?
 - to follow or avoid an example?
 - to fulfil a condition and experience a promise?
 - to believe a truth?
- What might this application mean to members of your home group? think through any outstanding needs in your group of which you are aware. Pray that God will work the truths of this passage into the lives of those in your group.

3. Prepare the discussion. A good discussion has five parts (**A B I D E**)-- Aim; Background, Introduction; Discussion Questions; and Epitome (or summary). If you lead a good discussion then the truths of the Bible passage will ABIDE!

- **Aim:** write an aim for the study based on, or rising out of, the central truth and the applications you noted in your personal study. A good aim is phrased as an objective of the discussion--*to cause the members to . . .* For example an aim for a study of Isaiah 40 could be *to cause members to see how much greater God is than anyone or anything else in creation.*
- **Background:** Gather any background data that members will not have available to them in the text. Keep it simple and usable. For example, if your story is about Jesus healing a leper, some background on leprosy in the first century will assist people to understand how untouchable and unwanted lepers were and what it meant for Jesus to heal a leper through touch.
- **Introduction:** think of an introduction that actually introduces something in the text and grabs interest. An introduction can set the text in its context, or it can take an application and introduce the related idea; For example, an introduction to 1 Cor. 13 might ask the group to brainstorm five current definitions of love from music or movies.
- **Discussion Questions:** you only need 3-5 good questions for an excellent Bible discussion. First delete any question from the sermon or study guide that does not fit with the aim you defined for the study. Questions come in three varieties, observation questions, interpretation questions, and application questions. Questions that can be answered with *yes* or *no*, or simple answers will not aid discussion. Broad questions are better such as, *Observe everything you can about . . .*; or *what do you think Jesus intended when he . . .* Questions that lead to the central truth and its implications are questions that fit with your aim.
- **Epitome:** The epitome is the summary of the main truths of the text in a nutshell. An excellent summary question is, *What is the main truth that God has impressed upon you from this study?* Asking this question or a similar one allows everyone to leave with one big thought or one concrete application--and that will stick with them much longer than if you end on details.

4. Reflect on your study. You can learn how to lead better discussions if you spend a few minutes thinking about what worked well and what did not work well. Notice that the flow of a good study begins with a Central Truth that yields appropriate applications, a central truth which yields an aim and introduction and a summary. You will notice that discussions rarely follow your plan and sometimes no one sees the truths that you see. The point of preparing is that you have a simple plan with which you can be flexible. The art of leading the discussion is a different art than preparing.

5. The art of leading a discussion. The art of leading a discussion is in responding to people as they make contributions. Attend to the person. Listen intently to their contribution. Draw a person out by probing their contribution with, *Say some more about that;* or *That's interesting, how did you come to that?* Pacing a group discussion; drawing out the occasional contributor and controlling the dominating contributor are all skills learned on the job. Remember there are many ways to lead meaningful gatherings. Once you learn this one well you will be able to be more creative.

Evaluating a Group Bible Discussion

It is most helpful to give feedback to people who want to lead well in groups. Evaluating once or twice will yield great benefits. You will be able to change the way you lead so that people in your home group receive more benefit. You can evaluate as a whole group once every 6 months or so. When new leaders try leading a discussion one person can meet with them before to let them know how they will be evaluated and after for the feedback. Mix encouragement with critique. Here is a simple guide for evaluation of the Bible discussion.

Name of the discussion leader:

Evaluator:

Choose one area from each column that was positive and one area from each column that could be improved.

Format And Content Of The Study	Flow And Climate Of The Discussion
Comment on the aim. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What aim did you perceive during the study? 	
Comment on the use of background. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was sufficient historical & cultural information given so that you could understand the passage? • Was background communicated in an unobtrusive manner? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the leader facilitate discussion? • Did he/she attend well and draw out initial contributions? • Did the discussion develop through questions and sharing rather than through the leader's own observations?
Comment on the introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the introduction develop your interest in the study? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the leader put the group at ease?
Comment on the discussion questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the questions simple and clear? • Did the questions develop the aim of the study and fit with the introduction and anticipate the application of the central truth? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did the leader effectively rephrase questions that did not illicit a reply? • How did the leader handle things that inhibited discussion? • Did the leader respond well to responses (i.e. affirmation/follow-up questions and draw out applications)? • Were you comfortable with the pace?
Comment on the summary (epitome) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the close of the study were the main ideas summarized so that the central message of the passage was clear? • Was the meaning for our everyday life addressed? • Did you personally learn from this passage and discussion? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the group helped to stay on the main track? • Did the leader seem willing to learn with the group?
Summary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What 1 or 2 things could be improved? (Question for both leader and evaluator) • What aspect of this leader's work was the most helpful? (Question for both leader and evaluator) • Pray for the leader 	

Sample Bible Study

What The Bible Says About How We Are To Relate To One Another

Aim: to cause members to change their understanding of fellowship and their participation with one another from a limited understanding and involvement to a biblical understanding and involvement

Background: Paul's New Testament letters contain many ethical exhortations of life in the Spirit. The ethic of the Spirit may be summarized as the ethic of love. Love is always relational. Paul calls the Christian to a lifestyle of love and service to other Christians who share the same Spirit. This can be seen in the verses on *one another* throughout Paul. The call to love is always based on the prior love of Christ for us.

Introduction: Could we go around the room and briefly say why we come to home group? (contributions) I would like us to compare why we come to what the Bible calls us to in our relationships.

Discussion questions:

1. Read over the list of *one another* verses a couple of times silently. As you read, notice which are actions, which are attitudes and which are both. What is your initial reaction/impression?
2. Do you see any common threads running through this list? What do you make of these commonalities?
3. Paul's exhortations assume a particular view of who a person is and what they need to thrive in new life in the Spirit in community. Can you sense what these verses imply about who we are and our relational needs as Christians?
4. How would you describe a group of Christians that visibly evidenced these things in their relationships? What would you see and hear and feel when observing their relationships? What would you not see?
5. Choose an action and an attitude from the list and lead the group in brainstorming how these qualities could be more apart of present relationship given the time and contexts in which you are together.
6. How would you write a job description for a home group leader or deacon or elder based on this list?

Summary

7. What has God impressed upon you from these verses.
8. Let's thank God through for His initiative and example in relating to us so that we might relate to one another in a similar way.

Selected Verses On What The Bible Says About How We Are To Relate To One Another

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Love one another (John 13:34-35) | 15. Serve one another in love (Gal. 5:13) |
| 2. Encourage one another to love and good works (Heb. 10:24) | 16. Bear one another in love (Eph. 4:2) |
| 3. Pray for one another (James 5:16) | 17. Be kind, compassionate, and forgiving to one another (Eph. 4:32) |
| 4. Bear the burdens of one another (Col. 6:2) | 18. Submit to one another (Eph. 5:21) |
| 5. Be at peace with one another (I Thess. 5:13) | 19. Do not lie to one another (Col. 3:19) |
| 6. Wash one another's feet (John 13:14) | 20. Teach and counsel one another (Col. 3:16) |
| 7. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love (Rom. 12:10) | 21. Comfort one another (I Thess. 4:18) |
| 8. Honor one another (Rom. 12:10) | 22. Encourage and build up one another (I Thess. 5:11) |
| 9. Live in harmony with one another (Rom. 12:16) | 23. Do not grumble against one another (James 5:9) |
| 10. Stop passing Judgment on one another (Rom. 14:li) | 24. Confess your sins to one another (James 5:16) |
| 11. Accept one another (Rom. 15:5) | 25. Offer hospitality to one another (I Peter 4:9) |
| 12. Instruct one another (Rom. 15:14) | 26. Use your gifts to serve one another (I Peter 4:10) |
| 13. Greet one another (Rom. 16:16) | 27. Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another (1 Peter 5:5) |
| 14. Care for one another (1 Cor. 12:25) | 28. Have fellowship with one another (I John 1:7) |

Relationships & Self-Disclosure In Home Groups

How can a leader structure the evening so that relationships develop? First the leader must recognize that many people are reluctant to share much of themselves in a group--and for good reason. Often if someone shares a need in a group the group will *jump on the need and try to fix* the person. This can make a person reluctant to share a need in the future. These issues will be discussed more fully in *Crossing The Line of Careful Group Caring*. Also, few people will volunteer self-disclosure, but will respond to an invitation to self-disclose. Once there is a natural connection people will gravitate to those relationships that they want to explore. In other words the stage of the group life makes a lot of difference both in what people are willing to share and their openness to self-disclosure. These issues will be discussed in *Stages of Home Group Life*. The job of the leader is to get the group to the point where natural connections are happening.

Structuring a time for home group self-disclosure is not difficult. If you have done the exercise on *Home Group Life This Year* you already where your home group is at in terms of level of communication. Here are some ideas for structuring Home Group self-disclosure.

- Focus the self-disclosure on a brief around-the-room response to one of the following questions. This serves like an icebreaker, or a check-in to see what space people are in as the Home Group begins. Some of these questions are better used later in the evening or even as a question of application related to the Bible Study.
 - What was it like to get to Home Group today?
 - What was the standout event of your week?
 - What was the high-point of your week?
 - What is a challenge you have faced this week?
 - What is a major decision that you are currently facing?

 - Name one or two of your passions in life, either serious or fun (i.e. eating chocolate)
 - What is something you do that you find enjoyable and why is it enjoyable?
 - Describe the emotions you felt in response to a current event.
 - What child were you in your family? Name one descriptor used of you as that child?
 - What was your nickname and what significance did it have?

 - Tell us about a unique ability you have such as talking backward, making bread, weaving - and how you learned it.
 - How were you significantly influenced in the last 3-5 years?
 - What event has most significantly shaped your life in the last 3-5 years?
 - Describe a significant time in your life and why it was significant?
 - Where you grew up? Would you like to live there again?

 - How big is your family? How does it size affect you?
 - What do you do to relax?
 - If we had more time, what would you like to tell about yourself?
 - What is the best thing you did in the past year?
 - What is one thing you dislike doing?

 - What emotions have you experience in the last 24 hours?
 - What is one of your favorite childhood memories?
 - Describe something that you have accomplished and found great satisfaction in doing?
 - What feelings do you experience now that make you feel like a kid? What associations do they evoke?
 - Describe one of your unfulfilled dreams.

- Build a self disclosure question into your Bible Study
- Build rotating prayer partners into your Home Group Evening where there is self-disclosure and prayer.
- Divide your home group into smaller groups of 3-4 and ask them to work on a self disclosure question and pray for each other
- Spend a whole evening sharing personal testimonies and praying for each other.
- Invite one person to share his or her testimony for 20 minutes each evening you meet until everyone has had a turn. Each time someone new enters the group have them introduce themselves to the group in this fashion.

Leading A Home Group Through The Stages Of Home Group Life

All groups go through typical stages of development. Once you understand these stages of development then you can plan for group life more effectively and you will notice that group frustrations are lower and satisfactions are higher. The following chart summarizes the basic themes in group life.

Stage	Tentative	Transition	Together	Termination
Basic Theme	Inclusion	Control	Action	Conclusion
The Important Question Re the Home Group	Am I welcome?	Will the group work?	What can we commit ourselves to do?	Was the group worth it?
Group member's thoughts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do I belong? • Am I accepted? • What is expected of me? • What can I expect of others? • Will we be able to get along? • Will I accept them? • Are they as committed as I am? • What can I give to this group? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this group going to work? • Is this group what I need? • Can I trust this group? • Whose group is this? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's do something! • I'm willing to risk and help others! • How can we do something together? • How can we reach our goal? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was it worth it? • What did I learn about myself? • What did I learn about others? • What did I learn about God?
Group member's feelings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anticipation • anxiety • excitement • uncertainty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enthusiasm • beginning tensions with others and with group • anxiety • impatience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acceptance • determination • warmth • freedom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • warmth • respect • appreciation • sadness
Group member's actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • initial acceptance • safe topics for communication • hold back on commitment • not ready to get down to serious group business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sporadic attendance • express irritations • some hostility toward leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • will share positive feelings • willing to share leadership • willing to take more risks • willing to give feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • express love • express respect • express appreciation for group members and leaders
The leader model most helpful for the group stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • well prepared • concrete • clear goals • warmth • keep to schedule • thorough explanations • contact with each member • clear invitation to come again 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take initiative • show lots of empathy, respect, warmth & understanding • be authentic in self disclosure • avoid defensiveness • be encouraging • verbalize and discern group process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take less initiative • allow group consciousness to emerge--it is no longer the leaders group but OUR group • identify and utilize group member's gifts • lots of affirmation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show lots of empathy, warmth, and respect • help group end well by reinforce learning and growth that has taken place • give lots of affirmation
Group activities most appropriate for the group stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • low anxiety sharing • whole group activities • get to know each other in 2's and 3's • lots of self-description activities • anything that will help people feel welcome and build trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allow people to share at the level they are comfortable with • talk through group issues • discuss expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • do any activities which attempt to reach group goals • here is a place where you can make a group covenant • express & increase accountability & self-disclosure • projects/outreach possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review +'s & -'s of group • celebration • thanksgiving • blessing each other • releasing others from group expectations
Clever summary	Grope---Flight	Gripe---Fight	Groove---Unite	Gone---Good Night

When a Home Group Becomes a Therapy Group

By
Mike Nichols
Pastor, Capilano Christian Community

1. Introduction

Throughout history individuals have drawn together into groups for protection, understanding, and support. Within the early church, followers of Jesus gathered in households to devote themselves to the Apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer (Acts 2:42). In our day, small groups of Christians meet in a variety of configurations to follow their Lord as did the early Christians. Sometimes these groups of Christians unwittingly drift toward becoming "therapy groups." What is the difference between a basic small group of Christians and a therapy group?

2. Christian Small Groups vs. Therapy Groups

2.1. Christian Small Groups

Since early church times Christians have met in small groups, locating anywhere from households to catacombs. Church history records extensive practice of prayer meetings (Pietists), accountability "classes" (Wesleyans), and small group studies (Reformers). These groups have been Christ-centered, with an emphasis on the Bible and obedience, care of members, friendship, service and outreach.

2.2 Therapy Groups

The beginning of group therapy is traced to 1905 in Boston where a medical internist named Pratt began to treat tuberculosis in classes. The "healing power" of groups, analyzed as a scientific model, is less than 100 years old! In the 20's and 30's group work was adapted to the treatment of psychotic patients. In the 60's and 70's there was an explosion in group therapy. The "encounter group" emerged, which was conceived as a group for enhancing the emotional growth of healthy individuals rather than working with the emotionally disturbed.

Today, normative group therapy may be defined as several emotionally challenged people who meet as a group with a therapist for the purpose of finding more effective ways to live.

2.3 What Happens in Therapy Groups?

The "curative power" of group therapy is seen from the following dynamics that happen in sessions:

- hope is instilled
- a decrease in a sense of isolation, replaced with the thought that "I am not alone in this"
- information is imparted and processed
- a climate of concern and support is fostered
- a safe place is created to replay interactions of significant others for reflection and correction.
- socialization and increased relational skills occur
- more mature life responses are observed, allowing changed behaviour as a result
- interpersonal learning experiences are enhanced
- catharsis is realized
- an increased sense of personal responsibility is manifested as a result of the group process.

For all of this, some research still shows that group therapy is no more effective than individual therapy.

Both group therapy and a biblical worldview share the assumption that human relationships are crucial for healthy functioning. Some forms of group therapy part company with biblical faith because they operate in a closed system where the group creates its own meaning and healing apart from a personal Creator and Savior. As well, faith is often (not always) reduced to being a projection of one's neurosis.

3. When Does a Christian Small Group Become a Therapy Group?

3.1 The Obvious Difference

It should be obvious from the list of the "curative powers" of a therapy group noted in 2.3 above that many of the "healing dynamics" of such groups are also present in a small group of Christians when they meet for Bible study and prayer. This is simply a function of the dynamic of any good group. In Christian groups, however, there is an added factor that affects the dynamic, that is, the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Holy Spirit gives a small group of Christians a different focus and mandate. The focus is on Jesus Christ and the mandate is worship, obedience, caring and outreach.

3.2 The Unwise Metamorphosis

I believe a small group of Christians unwisely and (usually) unhelpfully becomes a "therapy group" when there is a change:

- from a focus on Christ to curing, rescuing, maturing, sanctifying, or fixing an individual, couple or family.
- from a focus on fellowship, friendship and caring to counselling an individual, couple or family.
- from a focus on encouragement, blessing, prophecy and prayer dealing with walking in the Spirit by faith to intensive work on an individual, couple or family.
- from a balance of Christ-centered task and process involving everyone equally to inordinate attention on problem-solving for one or more members of the group.

3.3 Careless Caring

The worst case scenario in such situations is that the group will take the crisis or pain away from the person to whom it belongs and thus rob that person of the potential of growth. When the group does the growth-work for someone in pain the group communicates a powerful but subtle message: "You really are incapable and helpless". Thus dependence is created and the person is not empowered to grow.

Such careless helping plays into the "helpless syndrome" or "victim motif". Thus a group can *characterize* the person the group is trying to help. This syndrome is marked by:

- discounting personal ability to be responsible for his/her life
- a chronic sense of crisis
- increased demands for help, which are not an evidence of need but of a misplaced desire to control
- helpless talk, e.g. Language related to being hopeless, defensive, apologetic, playing the baby, sad, hurt, bitter, lazy, submissive, depressed, afraid, despairing, guilty, and vulnerable.

The symptoms of careless helping in a group are:

- aggressive advice which attempts to fix one of the many problems facing the dysfunctional family member
- encouraging the individual to adjust to the dysfunctional family system
- hoping to restore the individual and family to where it was before major problems set in
- encouraging the individual to change or recover for the sake of someone else (other than God and self)
- elaborate explanations
- pious platitudes and self-sensitive sympathy
- lots of time and people using lots of emotional energy trying to solve one problem
- these "helpers" using self-descriptive language like tired, worried, sensitive, burdened, confused, strained, loving, supportive, careless, tolerant, ever-optimistic, dependable, nice.

<i>Small Groups Are Supposed To Be Therapeutic, But They Are Not To Become Therapy Groups -- Roberta Hestenes</i>

4. Building Therapeutic Values into a Christian Small Group

4.1 What characterizes the dysfunctional family?

Dysfunctional families are characterized by many factors: minimizing serious problems such as alcoholism, drug dependencies, sexual addictions; being defined as a person by another person's behavior; denying responsibility for one's own growth and maturity; poor communication -- dishonest, inaccurate, narrow band of information; little ability to speak for oneself, to self-disclose, and speak with affect; a lack of individuality within the family system; playing an anxiety role within the family system; inappropriate alliances and triangles formed to pass anxiety around in family rather than deal with the issues; emotional and intellectual fusion rather than their differentiation.

4.2 What Healing and Therapeutic Values Can Be Built Into Christian Small Groups?

In a Christian small group, where members have traumatic histories, one is likely to see people minimize problems, deny responsibility for issues in their lives, poor communication skills, inability to speak about emotions, attempts to form inappropriate alliances to gain support on their issues, and the passing of anxiety from their personal life to the group.

When these folks experience or witness more health in their Christian small group than they do in their primary relationships, then their Christian small group experience can become an ally in their healing and recovery. For example, when the leaders model mature autonomy, healthy relationships, an ability to speak of their emotional life separate from their intellectual life, an honesty in communication, taking responsibility for their growth, the ability to give and receive nurture, then a healing atmosphere is created which will motivate, aid, and reinforce what is happening in therapy.

Many experiences in the Christian small groups allow this healing atmosphere to take place: verbal gift-affirmation of one another (vs. criticism), allowing everyone to say what they believe (vs. not being believed), taking time for each person to tell their story or present their family of origin with the group only asking clarifying questions and what kinds of healing they may

pray for (vs. being overlooked); identifying helpful and unhelpful roles people play in the small group (vs. acting out an anxiety role); being comfortable listening to another's pain without trying to ease it (vs. robbing pain and growth); making a contribution through your gifts (vs. being unimportant); contracting for accountability (vs. no accountability or demand for conformity).

In accountability groups the healing atmosphere is fostered by being accountable to each other for growth, for good, for the best in Christ. This means blessing what the Spirit is doing in one another, helping one another see the work of God in each other and refusing to reinforce instability. This is done by standing with another in areas where they are obedient, attending to the person, appreciating the good and acknowledging it before others. Have a high view of failure (failure ≠ moral failure or giving up). Affirm failing in the right direction of faith, risk, obedience. This primarily positive work is supplemented by refusing to bless or overlook areas of serious compromise or blindness or sin.

Small group leaders can create a healing atmosphere in their groups by writing their history in advance. Choose the metaphor for your group. The metaphor you choose (e.g. Bus stop, hospital, war zone, family) communicates whether there is a healing atmosphere. Choose the values for your group -- pray these values, turn these values into goals. Choose the ethos for your group (e.g. Fun, stress, respectful). You will set the tone you pick. Even when led carefully, a Christian small group can unwittingly become a therapy group substitute.

5. Solutions

5.1 Be clear about the focus of the group, i.e. Stating: this is the purpose for which this group meets, these are the functions within our purpose, and these are the functions outside of our purpose.

5.2 Be clear about the benefits and drawbacks of self-disclosure. Be sure rules for self-disclosure are understood. Getting Together, Em Griffin, IVP, 1982 has a helpful chapter on this. Indiscriminate self-disclosure does not make for a better group.

5.3 Be clear about how the group will deal with personal problems and crisis. Discuss this paper in your group. Prayer, encouragement, support and care may be appropriate. Counselling and careless helping are not.

5.4 When a personal problem or crisis arises, stop the group from rushing in. Then stop whatever group process is going on and ask the person:

- "In telling us this what help are you requesting?" Or "What would be helpful and unhelpful?"
- Then keep the group focused within the purpose of your group by deciding and stating, "_____ is within our purpose and capability as a small group and _____ is beyond our group's purpose and capability."

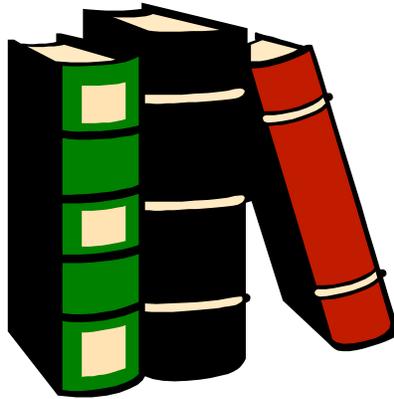
5.5 Follow up with prayer, especially focusing on scriptural truths not fix-it prayers; encouragement for the person to make an appointment for counselling or at least a pastoral visit with appointed people in the church; and ask permission, if needed to consult with people who can give you (as group leader) or the whole group advice.

5.6 To do or not to do? Here is a final check-list of what a basic small group could tackle, and what it should avoid (except in providing friendly, prayerful support in a general way):

Refer These Issues	Consult On These Issues	Do These Things
habitual issues such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anger • compulsive sexual issues • eating disorders • gambling • substance abuse issues • codependency abuse grief marital issues premarital issues divorce depression enmeshed family relationships parenting problems emotionally turbulent past self-esteem issues etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sin issues • forgiveness issues • disobedience issues • crisis issues • reconciliation issues • issues calling for church discipline • etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prayer for normal stresses in everyday life • work and career concerns • obedience & growth • outreach • etc.

revised 5/2000

Resources for Home Group Leaders



The Fine Art of Squelching a Home Group

adapted from an adaptation

NOTE: It is recommended that every group leader express his own unique personality in using the above rules. There is a squelching method that is uniquely yours. You may have found ways to squelch a group that haven't even been thought of yet. But follow any one of these rules with dogged persistence and you need not fear. You will have expressed yourself. The group will certainly collapse, for you will have violated several principles of normal human interaction.

The ability to squelch the life out of a home group may be thought of as an art. The following ground rules are offered to give direction and purpose to those who wish to develop their talents in this direction.

1. Dominate the group from the beginning. Establish yourself as the authority on all matters that may come before the group. Make all the basic decisions yourself, while giving the impression a democratic spirit to the group members.
2. Pay no attention to the needs and interests of the group members. Most people don't know what is best for them anyhow.
3. Keep the discussion on a theoretical plane. Don't get personal. If you can speak like an expert in theology and philosophy--all the better. Mention unknown names like Kant, Schleiermacher, and Tillich occasionally to make the others feel inferior.
4. If possible, establish yourself as the teacher of the group and deliver a learned lecture at each meeting. (Guaranteed--the group won't last more than three weeks!)
5. Don't permit the myth to arise that group members should take turns leading the discussion. They're liable to get too deeply involved and interested and keep the group alive in spite of your efforts.
6. Never allow group members to share anything personal. Change the subject to a nice safe intellectual discussion when this happens. This way they won't get too involved with each other. Groups in which this happens become devilishly hard to squelch.
7. By all means, don't encourage all members of the group to express themselves. Limit the participation to the more vocal, members to keep the conversation centered on pet agendas. This will eventually bore people and your group will become a place where people catch up on their sleep.
8. Don't urge the quiet members of the group to speak. Don't give the quiet members any indication that you really care about them and that their ideas count after all. They will be more difficult to discourage as a result.
9. Allow one or two persons to dominate the discussion. That way the others will become quietly angry and the group will fold up in no time. By all means, don't speak to the dominators about what they are doing. This might lead to some hurt feelings and personal growth--things which you want to avoid at all costs.
10. Keep your home group too large for the members to really get to know each other. By all means have at least twenty or twenty-five members in order to do this.
11. Include lots of discussion about the details of how your group is organized--who will bring what, who will do what. Lots of "business discussion" regularly bores everyone to tears. The group will rapidly wither.
12. Arrange the room to prevent any eye contact between people and minimize the possibility for interaction. If that happens group members might feel encouraged to express themselves and not want to give up the group.
13. Ask and answer all questions yourself. What do they know that you can't say better?
14. By all means don't let group members express any discomfort they may feel toward each other or about the group. If they understand each other too well as a result or work out a new way to be together, then they may want the group to continue.
15. Complain at every meeting about how few people have turned out and when those who came actually showed up. This will give group members a size consciousness and sense of guilt. They will either quit coming or they will invite their friends and the small group will soon grow into oblivion; it will become a large group.

Trouble Shooting in Home Groups

Taken From *Good Things Come In Small Groups*, IVP

This chart is meant to stimulate you to creative problem solving in your home group. Few of these approaches may work in your group but if it gets your creative juices flowing then it is worth the effort.

Symptom	Problem	Possible Approach
Members come late	Group patter to start late. Exact start time not clear	Set definite time. Begin promptly. Discuss with group— <i>“We’re having trouble-getting going. Is it too early? Are there conflicts?”</i> Let members respond.
Agreed-on preparation not completed	Too much expected. Not clear how it relates to what group will do. Lack of commitment may relate to being too busy and other priorities	Be realistic. May need to change expectations. Check to make sure group understands and agrees to preparation.
Quiet members	Questions asked are too hard or too easy; not enough open-ended questions asked. Members not prepared or not given enough time in-group. Openness not yet developed. Leader and others not handling silence, jumping in too quickly.	Think through sequence of questions. Have quiet member read passage out loud. Remind members that verbal people need to hold back at times so those quiet members can speak up. Do a round where each person responds. Allow more time for people to think. Engage a quiet person by responded to their contribution with a follow-up comment or question to draw them out. Do tasks in smaller grouping so that quieter member can participate.
Overly talkative members	Outgoing. Doesn’t like silence. Sees things quickly.	Talk to privately. Mention that we need silence after some questions to look and reflect. Ask their help in drawing others out. Suggest that person ask <i>“What do some of the rest of you think?”</i>
Issues causing disagreement	Verbal people win out. Tangents. Not accepting differences.	State ground rules. Try to stick to passage or subject at hand. Suggest they discuss problems after the meeting. Agree that there are differences of opinion on this topic. Ask <i>“On what can we agree?”</i>
Always-right members	Knows right way for everything. Knows only right interpretation of passage.	Avoid arguing right and wrong with person. Put focus back on passage, to collect more data and summarize. Let facts clarify. Help group look for alternatives and see right person’s frame of reference. <i>In what circumstance might John’s interpretation hold true?</i>
Disagreeers	<i>But</i> is favorite word— <i>that’s true, but . . .</i> May hold groups back from action or conclusions, causing group to stagnate.	Give feedback to disagreeer, <i>“what exactly causes your hesitation?”</i> Confront group with choice of holding back (no risk) or going ahead (risk but also growth) Ask, <i>“How can we get around this objection?”</i>
Pacing slow or fast	Too much time on some parts. Little interaction. Questions too simple or too general. Full answers not sought. Application too general	Plan time for each component. Move parts along with good transitions. Test study questions with another person to see if they are clear, open but not overly general. Ask for specifics in sharing. Push for all to answer <i>“What else?”</i>

Symptom	Problem	Possible Approach
Prayer stifled	Lack of trust in-group. Prayer is new to some members. Different styles of prayer. Not aware of specifics for prayer. Not aware of expectations re prayer.	Spend more time building relationships through low anxiety sharing. Break into smaller groupings for prayer so that it is more personal and less threatening. Review rules for confidentiality. Prevent group from <i>fixing</i> someone who shares something for prayer. Discuss prayer. Learn different styles of prayer. Pray on one topic before moving to another. Respond to the study in prayer. Pray through different Psalms.
Ingrown group, little growth or service or outreach	Purpose not clear. Study not motivating. Limited sense of growth personally. Fear.	Plan non-threatening activities to which you can invite others; have active service or outreach where new members are added and cared for by home group. Review, worship the character of God. The purposes of God, and different aspects of life in community of faith.
Superficial sharing	Leaders not setting example for the kind of sharing they want in their home group. Application questions not specific. Community building not challenging growth as a group.	Plan relationship-building activities that are appropriate for the group's stage of development. Ask for specifics in sharing mixed with freedom to share at the level individuals are comfortable. Meet in smaller grouping for sharing within your home group. Meet one on one outside the group for sharing and prayer. Do a party with a purpose of members getting to know each other better. Do a recreational activity as a group or a service project.
Members with ongoing problems	Problems dominate group life. Member monopolizes group with personal crisis.	Talk individually to the person, suggesting resources for help such as counselling. Help group see its purpose, identity. Go over paper When Home Group Becomes A Therapy Group and discuss how group can & will appropriately respond to crisis needs. This clears the air of unrealistic expectations and the discussion can be referred to when future issues come up. In-group with many new members you may need to repeat the discussion.

Formulating a Home Group Covenant

Beyond the Sermon-based Home Group Covenant at Cap, some groups may wish to form their own covenants. This sheet gives some basic data on covenanting and the steps involved.

1. Definition of a covenant : a formal, solemn and binding agreement; a written agreement or promise between two or more parties for the performance of some action; a pledge or contract.
2. Reasons for covenanting
 - Biblical implications (Act. 1:4, Heb. 10:24-25, Eph 4: 15-16)
 - Establishes intentionally
 - Provides freedom by defining expectations
 - Provides accountability
 - Enhances commitment
 - Serves as a reference for evaluating
 - A tangible way to say, *I love you*. It puts content, response, accountability into love
3. When to covenant
 - Wait until there is a growing level of trust established in the group
 - when the leader has become a member and members feel comfortable and ready to increase their commitment (note when an ambitious or exacting a commitment/covenant is written too early in the group's life, it can be a frustrating experience and produce feelings of inadequacy)
 - The process of making a covenant will either tell you that your group is in the Action Stage or will thrust your group into Action.
4. Types of covenants
 - Assumed-- each person may have an idea but you never talk about it
 - Purchased--the details are set up by another and you buy into it (for example some one who joins a group that is already going accepts the commitments set by those who are already)
 - Imposed--directions set by a supervising person or group
 - Negotiated--the group agrees together on the ingredients of the covenant (Though the first three types of covenants are usually in operation when a group begin., the last one is for the group that wants to be intentional)
5. Steps of covenanting
 - Talk about individual needs, hope. and dreams and visions
 - Cluster concerns together under the components of home group life
 - Make specific statements about what you as a group would like to commit yourselves to.
 - Check each statement with each group member
 - Finalize and have members verbally commit themselves to the covenant or sign it together.
 - Support your covenant with encouragement, training and review.
6. Note: a covenant is not meant to state long range goals of a group, but rather describe where the group is in terms of their present commitment to shared values and activities. If all you can commit yourselves to is attendance at a weekly meeting time, then that is okay. That lets you know where your group is.)
7. Possible ingredients of a group covenant
 - Relationships
 - Attendance commitment, other ways of being accountable
 - Who can Join and when
 - Identifying and using gifts
 - Duration of commitment - when will we renegotiate?
 - Length or meetings and content
 - Bible Study
 - Personal disciplines outside the group - QT? Scripture memory? preparing for the study?
 - Bible study - what to study? Who will lead?
 - Other study--Books to read and discuss?
 - Worship
 - How much at each meeting
 - Who will lead
 - What form - singing, psalms, prayer
 - Service/Outreach
 - What? Where?
 - Prayer?
 - Information?

Personal Accountability

The following questions are designed to assist you in creating a relationship of personal accountability. The questions are somewhat intrusive -- but it is in these more vulnerable areas that we need to be accountable. You might wish to expand this list to include additional questions of your own.

1. How is your relationship with God right now?
2. What have you read in your Bible in the past week?
3. What has God said to you in this reading?
4. Where do you find yourself resisting Him these days?
5. What specific things are you praying for in regard to yourself? To others?
6. How are you connecting with your church? Cell groups?
7. How are you giving away what God has given to you? Are you enjoying this?
8. What are the specific tasks facing you right now that you consider incomplete?
9. What habits intimidate you? Frustrate you?
10. What have you read in the secular press this week that has affected you?
11. What general reading are you doing?
12. What have you done to play and rest this past week? Do you find yourself refreshed as a result?
13. How are you doing with your spouse? Kids?
14. If I were to ask your spouse about your state of mind, state of spirit, state of energy level, what would the response be?
15. Are you sensing any spiritual attacks from the enemy right now?
16. If Satan were to try to invalidate you as a person or as a servant of the Lord, how might he do it?
17. What is the state of your sexual perspective? Tempted? Dealing with fantasies? Entertainment?
18. Where are you financially right now? (Things under control? Under anxiety, in great debt?)
19. Are there any unresolved conflicts in your circle of relationships right now?
20. How are you working out forgiveness?
21. When was the last time you spent time with a good friend of your own gender?
22. What kind of time have you spent with anyone who is a non-Christian this past month?
23. What challenges do you think you're going to face in the coming week? Month?
24. What would you say are our fears at the present time?
25. Are you sleeping well? Are you sleeping enough? Too much? Do you wake rested?
26. What three things are you most thankful for?
27. Do you like yourself at this point on your pilgrimage?
28. What are your greatest confusions about your relationship with God?
29. How are you walking in the Spirit?
30. How are you overcoming temptations and vulnerabilities?
31. Which aspects of the fruit of the Spirit are you seeing evident in your life?
32. Describe your personal dreams that God has given you. Are you moving ahead in these areas?
33. What kind of person will you be in 5 years? Is this the kind of person that you want to be?

Evaluating A Home Group Evening

Once or twice a year you may find it beneficial to evaluate a particular Home Group Evening. Here is a suggested format.

1. The Study

- 1.1. Overall, how did the Bible discussion go?
- 1.2. Were people interacting with the Bible in a fresh ways and applying the Bible to their lives?
- 1.3. Who participated in the discussion? Who did not?
- 1.4. What was done positively to encourage discussion and nurture?

2. The Sharing (and development of relationships)

- 2.1. How did you see group members interacting with one another?
- 2.2. Were people being listened to?
- 2.3. Were needs being shared and met?
- 2.4. Was there a climate of trust and acceptance?
- 2.5. Were people who miss home group being followed up?
- 2.6. Were there any conflicts? How were they handled?
- 2.7. Were people enjoying being together?

3. The Support (or Worship)

- 3.1. Were people being led to experience God?
- 3.2. Was there a sense that the group was experiencing Christ among them – caring, teaching, calling?
- 3.3. Did God-centered prayer link all aspects of group life?
- 3.4. Was there any effective, creative worship?

4. The Service

- 4.1 Were people being supported in their personal ministry, service or witness?
- 4.2 Has your group moved into an action phase? Have you engaged in service? How has it benefited your group?

5. The Setting

- 5.1. Think about the setting in which your group met – the climate, seating arrangements, lighting, temperature, mood with which the group began, etc. -- is there anything you want to change to improve the setting?

6. Your Leadership

- 7.1. Did you creatively prepare for the evening?
- 7.2. What components of home group life did you intentionally build into the evening?
- 7.3. What did you do during the evening to foster a climate safe for self-disclosure?
- 7.4. What did you do to lead people to experience God?
- 7.5. What did you do to encourage people to care for one another?
- 7.6. What did you do to encourage the group to own their group and exercise leadership and initiative?
- 7.7. Were members' gifts utilized?
- 7.8. Are new leaders emerging?
- 7.9. What aspects of leading did you find satisfying?

Evaluating Your Home Group Life This Year

This checklist can help your home group to evaluate the quality of their relational life in home group and to increase both the sensitivity and quality of those relationships.

Check the number on the rating scale that corresponds to your evaluation of the following categories. For example,

- if you feel that responsible participation was lacking, check 1
- if you feel that responsible participation was present, check 5;
- if you feel that the responsible participation of the group was somewhere in-between, check an appropriate number on the scale.

Responsible participation was lacking. We served our own needs. We watched from outside the group. We were 'grinding our own axes.	1 2 3 4 5	Responsible participation was present. We were sensitive to the needs of our group. Everyone was on "the inside" participating.
The leader' ran the group by himself/herself. The leader rarely consulted group members when making decisions.	1 2 3 4 5	Leadership was shared among the members according to their abilities and insights. The group leader was the overall coordinator, but group members shared the responsibilities.
Communication of ideas poor. We did not listen. We didn't understand. Ideas were ignored.	1 2 3 4 5	Communication of ideas was good. We listened and understood one another's ideas. ideas were vigorously presented and acknowledged.
Communication of feelings was poor. We didn't listen and didn't understand feelings. No one cared about feelings.	1 2 3 4 5	Communication of feelings was good. We listened, understood, and recognized feelings. Feelings were shared and accepted.
Authenticity was missing. We were wearing masks. We were being reserved and pretending, hiding our real selves.	1 2 3 4 5	Authenticity was present. We were revealing our honest selves. We were engaged in authentic self disclosure
Acceptance of persons was missing. Persons were rejected, ignored, or criticized.	1 2 3 4 5	Acceptance of personas was an active part of our give and take. We received on another in Christ, recognizing and respecting the uniqueness of each person.
Freedom of persons was stifled. Conformity was explicitly or implicitly fostered. People were not free to express their individuality. They were manipulated.	1 2 3 4 5	Freedom of persons was enhanced and encouraged. The creativity and individuality of persons was respected.
Climate of relationship was one of hostility or suspicion or politeness or fear or anxiety or superficiality.	1 2 3 4 5	Climate of relationship was one of mutual trust in which evidence of love for one another was apparent. Burdens and joys were shared verbally and actively.
Goals were fuzzy, contradictory or just plain missing. We weren't sure of where we were going.	1 2 3 4 5	Goals were clear to all. We had a definite sense of direction.
Accomplishment was low. We were proud, fat, and happy, just coasting along., our meeting was irrelevant; there was no apparent agreement.	1 2 3 4 5	Accomplishment was high. We were digging hard and were earnestly at work on a task. We created and achieved something.
Bible study or other material was superficial, haphazard, and irrelevant	1 2 3 4 5	Bible study or other material brought us new understanding of God and ourselves and caused personal growth and change.
Prayer was mechanical, tagged on, and	1 2 3 4 5	Prayer was personal, spontaneous, worshipful, and

sometimes non-existent		expectant
Initiative toward people outside the group was non-existent. We were interested only in ourselves.	1 2 3 4 5	Initiative toward persons outside the group was high through prayer and personal involvement toward both Christians and non-Christians
Training for Christian growth, discipleship, and life skills was non-existent. No new people learned to be leaders.	1 2 3 4 5	Training for Christian growth, discipleship, and life skills was effective. People learned to be leaders and were given feedback for growth.
Group social life was dead. Group life consisted only of stereotyped meetings	1 2 3 4 5	Our group enjoyed social life sufficient to get better acquainted, have fun, and provide opportunity to include new people.
Group members tend to complain about what is lacking in the group or what is wrong with the group	1 2 3 4 5	Group members were thankful recipients of what the group offered and expressed more positive than negative feelings about group life.

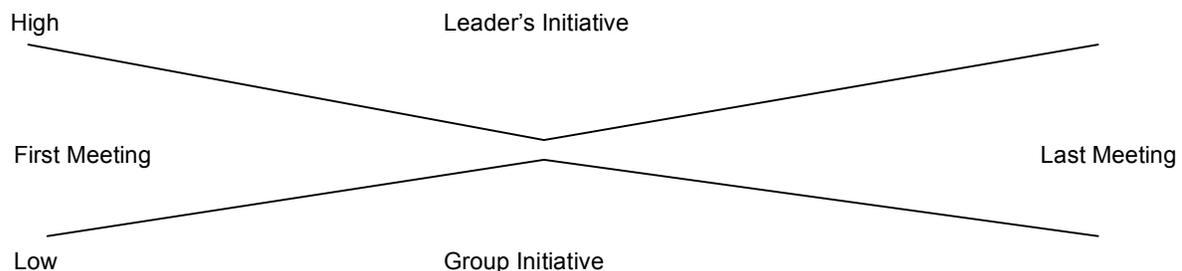
What has God taught you through the group experience?

In what ways can the group be improved?

When Home Groups Loose Their Fizz –The Renewal Of The House Group Life

What does it mean to serve as a home group leader for some time and then to run out of gas as a group? When groups run out of gas often the first thought is to shut the group down and take a break or move on to another group. There is another option—and that is to lead your group through a process of renewal. Here is one suggestion for re-establishing a group that has lost its zip. Working through these issues as a group will encourage decisions and commitments that will bring renewed life to the group as well as change.

1. Check your identity as a group: Reaffirm your commitment to Christ as Lord. Each person is a servant and steward of Christ; there are no masters. Mk. 9:33,37
2. Reaffirm your commitment to the group and its task. Start by checking priorities: is each person able to handle work and family commitments? Are they able to freely give the time needed to make the home group work (an average of 3 hours + or – per week)? Do they see home group as one of their primary Christian relational commitments?
3. Reaffirm the purpose for the group's existence. It is intended to be a redemptive fellowship; it is intended to help restore the image of Christ; it is intended to help equip each participant with the character of Christ so that he/she can enjoy God and be obedient. What would the group like to change as a group in order to see this purpose more incarnate in the group? Is the group willing to go through the process of making a covenant? Some discussion and brainstorming here will yield wonderful fruit.
4. Clarify *your role* as a leader. Remember you are part of the ministry and leadership team in the community. You can re-read the *Sermon-Based Home Group Covenant* and *Host Responsibility Check List* to begin the process of reclarifying your role and gift. In brief, your role is
 - to exhibit a growing walk with Christ via Scripture study, prayer, worship and warm, loving relationships;
 - to plan and conduct home group evenings so that there is a balance of sharing, study and support;
 - to encourage and pastor group members where possible in their growth in Christ.
1. Clarify *your gift* as a leader. Recognize you gift (Rom. 12:8) in terms of what size of group are you gifted to lead well (i.e. what is your people capacity)? What are your strengths and weaknesses? What kind of co-leaders and helpers will strengthen you weaknesses? What is your ministry capacity?
2. Clarify your relationship with your co-leader's role and gifts. Talk about how you can exhibit the kind of relationship you want others in your home group to imitate.
3. Recommit yourself to serve your group by leading it—to influence not by pointing the way by treading it. You will serve your home group by providing:
 - Vision – this means at least restating the home group covenant; articulating your desire for growth for all in the group to be more like Christ; restating the distinctive values of your home group
 - Initiative - beginning the year with strong directive, leadership; facilitating relationships and group life and then letting the group take more initiative as they progress to the appropriate stages of group life. The normal pattern of leader initiative and group initiative looks like this



- Encouragement - for others to use their gifts to serve the group and lead it where appropriate
- Setting expectations - for openness, climate of group and being willing to risk resolving conflicts

Roles People Play in Groups

Taken from The Time Trap; pp103-104.; R. Alex Mackenzie; McGraw-Hill

Here, in outline form are the various roles that group member play. It is a useful exercise with established groups to hand out this sheet in established groups to every group member and have them identify the roles they think they play and that others play. Talking about this as a group, giving feedback to each group member, debating the roles identified for members in an affirmative atmosphere will help your group move to a new level of solidarity, trust and ability to do mission.

The leader must of course be sensitive to the needs and feelings of the participants. The leader must be flexible enough to adapt his or her style to lead the group to a positive relational experience. The leader encourages each participant to assume roles that will help rather than hinder the group in coming together—relationally, or to make a decision, or to reach a goal.

Group Blocking Roles	
Aggressor	Criticizes and deflates status of others; disagrees with others aggressively
Blocker	Stubbornly disagrees; rejects others' vies; cites unrelated personal experiences; returns to topics already resolved.
Withdrawer	Won't participate; converses privately; self-appointed notetaker
Recognition seeker	Boasts; excessive talking; conscious of his/her status.
Topic jumper	continually changes subjects
Dominator	Tries to take over, assert authority, manipulate group.
Special interest pleader	Uses group's time to plead his/her own case.
Playboy	Wastes group's time showing off; story teller; nonchalant; cynical.
Self-confessor	talks irrelevantly about his/her own feelings and insights.
Devil's advocate	More devil than advocate.
Group Building Roles	
Initiator/Starter	Suggests new or different ideas for discussion and approaches to problems; proposes goals and tasks
Information/Opinion Giver	Offers facts, opinions, ideas, suggestions, relevant information; pertinent beliefs about discussion and others' suggestions to aid group discussion
Information/Opinion Seeker	Asks for facts, information, opinions, ideas, feelings from other members to help group discussions.
Elaborator	Builds on suggestions of others
Clarifier	Gives relevant examples; offers rationales; probes for meaning and understanding; restates problems.
Tester	Raises questions to "test out" whether group is ready to come to a decision.
Direction Giver	Focuses attention on the task to be done and develops plans on how to proceed
Coordinator	Shows relationships among various ideas by pulling them together and harmonizes subgroups
Diagnoser	figures out sources of difficulties the group has in working effectively and in reaching their goals
Evaluator	Compares group decisions and accomplishments with group standards and goals

Reality Tester	Examines the practicality/workability of ideas; sees alternative solutions; applies solutions to real situations to see how they will work
Energizer	Stimulates higher quality of work from the group
Summarizer	Reviews discussion; restates major points; pulls it together
Group Maintenance Roles	
Tension reliever	Uses humor or calls for break at appropriate times to draw off negative feelings.
Compromiser	Willing to Yield when necessary for progress.
Harmonizer	Searches for common elements in conflicts; mediates differences; reconciles points of view.
Encourager	Praises and supports others; friendly; encouraging.
Gate keeper	Keeps communications open; encourages participation.
Trust Builder	Accepts and supports openness of others; encourages individuality and risk taking
Interpersonal Problem Solver	Promotes open discussion of conflicts; resolves conflicts; increases group togetherness
Standard Setter	Expresses group goals; makes others aware of direction and progress; knows group norms and procedures
Communication Helper	Shows good communication skills; makes sure people understand what others are saying
Process Observer	Watches the process in the group and helps group examine their effectiveness
Evaluator of Emotions	Keeps in touch with how members feel about the way the group is working; how feel about each other and shares own feelings about both
Active Listener	Listens and serves as an interested audience for others, receptive to ideas and supportive when group is not in disagreement
Gate keeper	Keeps communications open; encourages participation.

How to Grow a Group That Works

Take an inventory of the “best group I’ve ever been in” and figure out from the following what “made it work”

A “Best Characteristic”	Description	How it worked in “best group”
Leaders knew what they were doing	Goal oriented or Relational oriented or Outreach oriented	
Goal oriented group	5-7 people, clear leadership & agenda	
Relationship group	Clarity of expectations, Safe for self disclosure Leadership by example of caring “One Anothers”: honor, encourage, acceptance, care, submit, teach, confess, stop judging, pray, bear, etc.	
Outreach group	Leadership by persuasion to task Plan and do task decided on	
Comprehensive Group	Give time to: Nurture from Scripture, Relationship & Hospitality; Worship and Service beyond the group	
Leaders facilitate life of group over several months	Planning for two-six months so that group has comprehensive experience; plan special evenings for fun; Eucharist; intercession; service; Stay in touch with members outside of group	
Spiritual gifts are discerned and utilized	Inventories; self-disclosure; feedback to individuals; prayer; service; time to process how the gifts and roles of different people are impacting the group	
Good Bible study in group	Study has ABIDE Aim Background Introduction of relevance of study Discussion that actually on the text Epitome sums up main truth & impact	
Pay attention to process of group life over months together	Am I welcome? Expectations, uncertainty—so low Anxiety sharing, 1-1’s, welcoming Will the Group work? Is this group what I need? Can I Contribute? Is leader O.K.? -- so Leader warmth, understanding, Negotiate expectations What can We do together? “Our” group – so gifts identified and Utilized Was it worth it? Time for evaluation & celebration	

Discussion Questions For Each Chapter
Getting Together A Guide For Good Groups
By Em Griffin, IVP

Chapter 1 - The Good Group

- List the elements common to a good group.
- Describe a group experience where these elements were apparent and one where they were not apparent. What was the group like? Why?

Chapter 2 - Scratching Where They Itch

- Summarize in your own words the difference between task-oriented, relationship-oriented and influence-oriented groups.
- read pp. 42-45 and answer the following:
 - Are you primarily a goal-oriented person, a role-oriented person or an effect-oriented person?
 - What emphasis do you conceive of your group having?
 - Profile the people you know you will lead - what agendas, expectations are they bringing to the group? What then will be your initial style of leadership?

Chapter 3 - Take Me to Your Leader

- What insight have you gained into yourself as a leader?
- What kind of leadership comes naturally to you?
- What areas of good leadership will you need gifts of others?
- What areas will you need to work on?

Chapter 4 - Methods of Decision-Making

- Which method of decision-making comes most naturally to you?
- Reflect on a decision that was made by consensus. Evaluate that decision by the "rules" on pp.81-62, as well as the cautions on p.84. What did you see?
- Do you have the willingness to lead people in consensus decision-making? What experience, skill, or help do you have for this? What help do you need?

Chapter 5 - Leading a Discussion

- What positive and helpful things do you learn in this chapter about discussion leading?
- 2. What things are lacking in Griffin's concept of a discussion if we would apply his format to Bible Studies in particular?
- Pick one "group-discussion problem" you've experienced and evaluate the practicality of Griffin's advice.

Chapter 6 - Self-Disclosure

- How do you respond to the benefits and draw backs of self-disclosure? Are you suspicious of "self-disclosure" in a group? Why or why not?
- Reread the section on "Who" pp.121-124. What are the implications for structuring and leading "sharing" times in a small group?
- Are you willing to disclose yourself to the group (p.127)? Evaluate your own level of self-disclosure to a group and what you feel is appropriate.
- Reread pp. 129-132. Now plan four weeks of questions which could be used to stimulate self-disclosure on the different levels mentioned on p.129. Allow each week to build on the previous week in terms of the breadth and depth of self-disclosure asked for in the question.

Chapter 7 - Conflict

- Pick out one conflict between people in your group or between a person and the group, or two individuals where you were one of the parties involved.
 - Analyze the reasons for the conflict (cf.pp.136-142).
 - What method of reducing conflict was used? (cf. p.142-149).
 - How would use of *confronting* have changed the process or outcome of the conflict? (pp. 150-155).

Chapter 8 - Persuasion

- Do you see yourself in small group leadership as a coordinator or influencer? (p. 179, par. 2) Why?
- How can your leadership enhance the process of internalization (by group members)?

Chapter 9 - Deviance

- Select a "deviant" in one of the small groupings you are involved in (home group, prayer group, work group). What do you learn from this chapter about "making the most of it"?

Chapter 10 - Self Fulfilling Prophecy

- Reflect on your efforts to motivate" people in the last two weeks in light of this chapter. What insight do you gain?

Chapter 11 - Leadership a Personal View

- List one or two main things this book has helped you to see about your leadership.

Dealing with Conflicts in Home Groups

Material taken from *Conflict*
in Getting Together, A Guide For Good Groups by Em Griffin, IVP

1. Thesis: Conflict a fact of life of home group life--it is already present in your group. The question is how are you going to deal with it.

2. The Benefits of conflict

- conflict keeps things from getting boring
- conflict allows ideas to be re-examined for soundness
- conflict is good practice for any big blow ups ahead
- conflict is therapeutic if dealt with openly--it will draw group together, if conflict is not dealt with openly then it will drive people apart.

3. Reasons for Conflict

- a status gap - i.e. a struggle with authority between leader and lead
- multiple roles - i.e. group trying to serve different interests.
- different perceptions of the same event
- different goals
- conflict of values such as freedom vs. equality or effort vs. mastery
- personality clashes??--this is a non-reason--people don't get along because of power struggles, contrasting perceptions, competing roles, separate aims, different values.

4. Dealing with conflict

- *Avoidance* is "staying clean" of hot topics or withdrawing from "heat" in group discussion
 - Avoidance is OK when the issues are trivial or the group/person needs a temporary cooling off period
 - BUT avoidance is generally a poor pattern because it ends up making all conflict "sin". It also refuses to deal with anger which means that it will resurrect in an uglier form
- *Giving In* is accommodating by yielding to the demands of others. When this method is used conflict is often experienced as personal attack or rejection. A proper response may be seen as to grin and bear it or to give in for group harmony
 - giving in is OK when the issue is trivial or when a person will learn more from doing it their own way even if they are wrong
 - BUT giving in can be "sloppy agape" when you give in to simply save ruffling feathers.
- *Competing* means fighting as all costs for the issue
 - Competing is OK when the issue is crucial or when the issue is crucial and the time is short.
 - BUT competing often generates bitterness and is not conducive to group leadership
- *Compromise* means getting only part of what you want. Compromise emphasizes convictions and the continuing relationship equally. Often this is a good option especially where power needs to be balanced between combatants.
- *Confronting* is loving care and honest confrontation. Confronting assumes that disagreements are neither good nor bad, but an occasion for creativity and solidarity. Confronting takes time and energy. There are several ways to confront
 - role play - seeing the world from another's view
 - empathic dialogue to understand each other's perceptions
 - third party counsel
 - search for common ground

5. Fighting fair

- admit that you're mad--don't pretend when it hurts
- own your anger--don't use the *you made me mad* but *I'm angry--I* messages are assertive but *you* messages are aggressive.
- avoid sarcasm--don't use digs either funny or serious
- one beef and one befeer at a time.

6. Discussion

- what conflicts presently exist in your home group?
- what are the reasons for the conflict?
- given the issue, what manner of dealing with the conflict will you use?
- where do you feel adequate and inadequate in dealing with conflict?

Dealing with Deviance in Home Groups

Material taken from *Deviance*
in Getting Together, A Guide For Good Groups by Em Griffin, IVP

1. Thesis--groups create deviants

2. Questions and Answers about deviance in groups

- Q: what kind of person is a deviant?
- A: There is no one type. Deviance is a label conferred by a group on *different* behavior. The deviant is acting naturally by his/her self perceptions therefore deviancy is acting counter to others around you. It involves clashing values and sub-cultures.
- Q: How do groups react to deviants?
- A: they are threatened. They try to conform the deviant to the majority pattern. Deviants often emerge when there are unspoken ground rules and conformity to these assumed expectations is part of the group ethos. Pressure to conform is stronger for a deviant if he/she is attracted to the group. If the deviant shows signs of wavering--conformity then the group will give more attention. This attention decreases after conformity.
- Q: What if the deviant refuses to conform?
- A: The group may begin to believe that the deviant's position is o.k. Pressure to conform rarely touches inner conviction. The lone stand of a deviant can touch inner convictions of a group.
- Q: If a deviant does conform and the group isn't swayed by deviant, what happens?
- A: The group rejects the deviant and may ouster or reject the person in not-so Christian ways. It is a fact of group life that those who insist on being different are rejected.
- Q: How do deviants deal with being outcasts?
- A: They don't like it. They seek to avoid the group's displeasure and try to cope by means of trying to mask differences or keeping a low profile or keeping quiet. The results in a group are loneliness for the deviant and loss of experience of diversity for the group. Sometimes differences may be flaunted or deviants will join with other deviants for positive strokes.

3. The benefits of deviance.

- Q: does deviance actually hurt a group?
- A: no, actually it helps a group become a group.

4. Things to note

- groups foster deviance
- deviance is a necessary group role. Without deviance little is accomplished.
- deviance pushes limits so unwritten rules of group life become clear--both naughty and nice unwritten rules
- groups who repel deviants get smaller, tighter, and dissatisfied.
- deviance is creative in a group
- groups need a deviant. Groups of eight or less can only handle one deviant.
- Q: what is the best way of dealing with deviance?
- A: enjoy it and take advantage of it. Be honest in disapproval but defend the right to be different. Eliminate unfair shots at those who are different

5. Things to discuss with your coleader

- who in your group fulfills the deviant role in which area of group life (study, sharing, support, service)?
- how have group members been threatened by this person's different behavior?
- how is your group pressuring this person to change? What has been the result?
 - conformity by the deviant?
 - movement by the group?
 - a stand off?
- what response/leadership can you give as leaders so that the deviant is not outcast and the group can benefit from the experience?

Decision Making in Home Groups

Material taken from *How Then Should We Decide*
in Getting Together, A Guide For Good Groups by Em Griffin, IVP

1. Issue: a group wants to make a decision in line with God's will, how do they go about it?

2. What is a "good" decision?

- Quality--it is consistent with Scriptural truth, ethics, and will have the most impact for the Kingdom
- Timely--it will consume the appropriate amount of time for the nature of the issue
- Commitment--one to which the "deciders" are committed
- Cohesiveness--one which bonds the individuals to the group
- Learning--the process helps the learners learn/own process

3. Methods of decision making: Four methods of decision making along with their strengths and weaknesses are summarized in the chart below, then briefly explained.

	Quality	Time	Commitment To Solution	Attraction To Group	Learning
Voting	+	+	+/-	-	+
Appointing An Expert	?	++	-	0	-
Statistical Survey	+	++	- -	0	-
Consensus	++	- -	++	++	+

- *Voting*: This decision by the majority resolves an issue in a relatively short period after discussion of varying views. The vote forces a decision to be made. Commitment to the decision can be positive or negative (if you've won or lost). Cohesiveness follows suit. Learning is generally high, and the quality of the decision is generally good.
- *Appoint an Expert*: The most difficult part of this method is deciding who the expert should be. Beyond this decision, this method often produces the quickest decision and saves group time. However the benefits of a group think-tank and resultant group commitment to the decision is lost. Cohesiveness is neutral (not negative--because no one is voted down) nor positive (for no one struggled together). Thus little learning is accomplished and the quality of the decision is only as good as the expert.
- *Averaging polled decisions*: Here, options are ranked by individuals, not the group. This gives equal weight to each contribution and taps into representative wisdom of the sampled group. Thus a quality decision is possible. The data collecting time is relatively brief, but the group's commitment to the solution is obviously low, as is the learning and attraction to the group.
- *Consensus*: By far consensus decisions take the most time, for there is no guarantee that a consensus will be reached. Because of the time involved this process produces the highest group cohesiveness and commitment to the decision with as much learning as in the voting debate. Also, the quality of the decision is generally very high.

4. Ground rules and Pitfalls of consensus decisions

- Ground rules.
 - Announce the intention of the consensus process at the beginning and encourage forbearance
 - Be aware of the process--everyone needs to contribute, be suspicious of quick agreement. Seek true unanimity.
 - Encourage open expression of disagreement. Get all the ideas on the table
 - Don't mistake silence for agreement. Seek out the quiet one.
 - Don't expect complete unanimity. Where something everyone can approve of (even if not agree with) is reached, you functionally have a decision.
- Pitfalls
 - frustration in reaching a decision can cause personal attraction to the group to fall
 - Desire for unity can keep people from expressing doubt. Group think can result and a false unity. When this happens the expression of doubt is seen as a schism.

5. So, which method do I use? No method is perfect. Each method has something to say for it. The choice of method has to do with the importance of a particular decision, the time available, the need of the group's commitment to the decision and to the group, as well as the size of the group.

6. Exercise (best done with you co leader)

- What method of decision making have you used in the following areas?
- What method would you use in the future having understood the material above?
- (In answering, weigh the factors pointed out in #5

Have Used This Method Of Decision Making	Would Use This Method Of Decision Making	Decision
		when and where the group is to meet
		who is to lead what part of the meeting
		what kind of group you will be
		who will be added to the group
		who will be sent out from the group to start another group
		how to organize a social event
		how to respond to the persistent talker
		how to respond to the persistently needy person
		how to deal with a difficult group dynamic

Influencing People to Grow in Home Groups

Material taken from *Almost Persuaded*
in Getting Together, A Guide For Good Groups by Em Griffin, IVP

1. Thesis: part of a leader's job involves persuasion and influence p.179). Otherwise leaders would merely be coordinators. Thus, the important question--what is legitimate persuasion?
2. The Ethics of Influence--We have two ethical responsibilities--to love those we attempt to influence, and to treat them justly.
3. False and Unethical lovers are numerous:
 - *Non-lover*: refuses to lead, influence (for a variety of reasons). Therefore looks as if doesn't care.
 - *Legalistic lover*: has preset standards that are imposed upon another. Demands performance for approval. Actions look like love, but have no warmth,
 - *Flirt*: no commitment to group, only interest is quick conquest
 - *Seducer*: will influence by any method which makes his/her view attractive and impressive
 - *Rapist*: forces his/her way on another person using guilt, position, and embarrassment. Drives away the non-conformist
 - *Smother lover*: won't accept a no. Persists out of need for approval
4. The True Lover Is Exemplified By Paul in 1 Thess. 2:7-8,10-12
5. Treating people justly. Justice is equal to not imposing a belief or standard on those we are trying to influence. A person must be left free to choose. Justice gives people an opportunity to accept or reject the leadership influence, regardless of how the influencer feels. To act justly implies lots of dialogue with someone to discover where people are, what they want, while wrestling with the truths revealed in Scripture
6. Three Methods of Influence
 - *Identification*: Influence through identifying with the leader, or the hero, or the persuader. For lasting influence the persuader/leader must be viewed as attractive and be in relationship to the persons to be influenced.
 - N.B. the influence lasts only as long as the relationship is either mutually important or attractive to the "admirer"
 - N.B. Often influence by identification happens "unaware" to the person being influenced or to the influencer. Otherwise such influence can be unethical.
 - N.B. Vulnerability of the leader is an asset.
 - Problems with Identification influence:
 - getting past the person to the issue. Leaders must encourage questions, probes
 - when the leader is "irresistible" then identification influence becomes seductive
 - *Compliance*: In this form of influence the leader has control over something a group member wants. (e.g. position, grades; approval, etc.). Such influence is only legitimate when behaviors/agreements between the leader and the follower are open, ethical, and do not violate freedom of choice.
 - Problems:
 - Compliance may touch actions but not inner convictions
 - compliance only continues with rewards
 - it can turn people into hypocrites--acting in a way not true to themselves.
 - *Internalization*: This type of influence results in people acting from their own convictions developed as a result of the influence. This requires credible leaders who model being and doing, and people whose desires and needs leaders recognize and seek to mold. An environment of freedom of choice stimulates internalization.
 - N.B. Actions taken by an individual through Identification or Compliance can lead to internalization, but Internalization as a goal and method is the most ethical.
7. Pick an area of home group life and decide how you have tried to influence group members (Best done with you co leader). (You may want some group feedback).
 - coming on time
 - preparing the study ahead of time making a responsible
 - godly decision concerning
 - career
 - opposite sex relationship same sex relationship use of money
 - use of time
 - avoiding an action you deem unbiblical
 - getting involved in influencing (and ministering) to others
 - attending a conference
 - your choice
8. With your co-leader identify your "unconscious" pattern of influencing others. What kind of lover are you? List positives as well as helpful suggestions.
8. Discuss how you could positively influence someone in your group to move ahead in Christ in an area known to the group or to the leadership.