

# GROUP LEADER CHEAT SHEET

## Opening The Group – first meeting

### Welcome

- So glad that you're here!
- Please help yourselves to coffee/snacks
- Tell them where the bathroom is (if applicable)
- Introduce yourself and the other group leaders

### Group Objective

- Overall – connect relationally & grow spiritually
- Our group - share your group objective. e.g.
  - “Help each other build healthy marriages”
  - “Create a safe environment for growth”
  - “Knowing Jesus on deeper levels”

### Group Guidelines

- Show Up: make a point to be consistent in attendance and ready to share
- Join In: take part in the discussion, honor others, have fun, make friends
- Be Real: be yourself, ask questions, express doubts, be open

\*You may also want to review Group Dynamics from the Group Starter material

## Story Cards for an ice breaker (if applicable)

- Which card best represents...
  - A great way to introduce yourself
  - Your perfect weekend
  - Your current feelings about church
  - Something that recently made you laugh
  - Something you're grateful for
  - Your current goals / ways you've changed this season
  - Your current view of God

## Discussion Tips

### Transition Statements:

#### Normal:

- Thank you for sharing.
- Who's next?
- Anybody else?
- Any other thoughts?
- Does any brave soul want to go first?
- Can anyone relate?
- Does anyone have a different experience?
- Can anyone expound?
- Let's hear from someone we haven't heard from yet.

### When the conversation goes too far off topic:

- Try to summarize the last person's answer and ask them if you summarized it correctly. Then ask, does anyone else want to answer the question?

## When things get awkward and you need to redirect:

e.g. when people start talking about topics that are inappropriate in the moment - politics, suicide, abortion, etc. or when people say things that will obviously lead to lots of unsolicited feedback.

- The best thing to do is to find the very next available moment—like when they take a breath—and insert yourself by saying something like:
  - Thank you for sharing, I appreciate your perspective on such an important topic. To help us stay on point, let's table that for now - perhaps you and I could discuss it further offline. Does anyone else have something to add to the original question?

## When an opinionated group member starts preaching at someone with a different opinion or experience and you need to de-escalate or protect the dignity of the other person:

Example: Matthew (an unchurched person) says he has a hard time trusting that God is good. Then Peter (a seasoned church person) points his finger at Matthew and says “the Bible says you just have to have faith! There's always going to be a reason not to trust but blah blah blah...”

1. Start with:
  - a. Thanking the passionate person for sharing
  - b. Celebrating the skeptic/unchurched person - “Matthew, I'm so glad you felt comfortable enough to share what you're feeling.”
  - c. Validating each person's stories/opinions - “I know everyone has different stories based on their experiences...”
2. Then use one of these strategies:
  - a. Acknowledge their experience and ask if anyone has had a similar or different experience
  - b. Share a story of how you had a different experience or how it took you time to grow
  - c. I'd like to hear from...
  - d. Can anyone relate to...? Does anyone want to pushback?

# Closing The Group

## Homework / Next Week:

- Assign this week's homework (if applicable)
- Remind people when and where the next group will be, who's bringing snacks, etc.

## Upcoming Events:

- Share about upcoming Grace Church events that are relevant

## Prayer:

- Ask for any prayer requests
- Try to ask different people each week to close in prayer

## Dismiss:

- Thank everyone for coming
- Invite people to stick around as long as they like