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# FACILITATING your group

**Goal:** This will give you guidelines to facilitate a successful group.

**Guiding Principle:** You want people to open up and share about their lives. Additionally every group must integrate truth in some way otherwise it is only a social gathering. Some groups will focus primarily on the scripture/content while others focus on socializing. Both are great, but both need to have relationships being developed and truth integrated.

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*“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3:5,6*

**1. Start and End on Time:**

Respect people's time & after group commitments. Average groups last about 1.5 hours.

**2. Open and Close with Prayer:**

Make it a habit to invite God's presence and to thank him for working in your group.

**3. Give Them Something to Talk About:**

When people show up at your group, they are likely bringing with them the stresses and distractions from their day, which can make it hard to get a meaningful conversation started. That's where a good icebreaker can come in handy. [Check the Ice Breaker handout.](#)

**4. Promote Authenticity:**

Your group members take cues from you as to what is safe and not safe to share in the group. Share your weaknesses and struggles and encourage others to do the same. Share authentically yourself to break the ice. This is the only way you will dive below the surface and really begin to “do life” together. [Check out Setting Group Boundaries handout.](#)

**5. Listen & Guide:**

For most groups the goal is less about the teaching and more about allowing people to process and integrate the truths of the Bible into their lives. Ask quieter individuals if they have anything to add. Be ok with silence when you ask a question while they think about it. Don't dominate the conversation, instead, learn how to draw conversation out of your members by asking open ended questions. Apply the 80/20 principle. They do 80% of the talking, you do 20%. [Check out How to Ask Questions handout.](#)

**6. Practice Flexibility:**

Being prepared and having a plan for how your meeting will flow is very important, but don't be so married to the curriculum and your agenda that you aren't open to see what the Holy Spirit

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does. Remember to relax and allow the conversation to flow naturally and to address the current needs of the group members.

**7. Close with Confidence:**

As you approach the agreed upon closing time for your group, take time to highlight the most important things that happened in your time together. What did you learn? What did you decide? What is your next right step as an individual or as a group? Before you dismiss, let everyone know what they can look forward to at your next gathering.

**8. Allow Time for the “After-Group” Gathering:**

Since people will arrive at different times, a great time for everyone to connect is afterwards. You can end the group a few minutes early to allow time to relax and connect in conversation before people head home.

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