

Group Discussion Guidelines

We suggest the following guidelines for ensuring that your conversations together contribute to safety within your group. Share these with your group!

- **Confidentiality:** Let's agree that what is shared in the group stays in the group. We need to know that what we share will be guarded by our fellow group members.
- **Listen:** Let's value one another during the discussions by really listening to what is being shared, and not trying to think about what we're going to say next.
- **Pause:** Let's not rush into the silence. Allow a pause in conversation after someone shares so they have the chance to finish and the group has the chance to consider what they've said.
- **Silence:** It's important to allow silence in the group so that members have the opportunity to share and to process the topic or question being considered.
- **No "Cross Talk":** Be considerate of others as they share, not having "side conversations."
- **No Fixing:** We are not here to fix each other or our groups. Jesus does that part. Give encouragement; speak truth; point to Jesus. Don't try to solve every problem that is mentioned.
- **No Rescuing:** Don't immediately rush to condolences when a person is sharing something deeply personal. This may actually short-circuit their sharing.
- **Sharing:** Be sensitive about the amount of time you take to share.
- **Be self-aware:** Try and be aware of how you are affecting the environment through your words, actions and non-verbal communication.
- **"I" Statements:** Try to use "I" statements rather than "them," "the church," "us," or "we." You represent you. Let others represent themselves.
- **Conflict:** We will commit to resolving conflict biblically – with appropriate and humble confrontation, restoration, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

As the facilitator, you may want to lean in from time to time to remind the group of these if necessary.