

GROWTH GROUP OVERVIEW

WHAT IS A GROWTH GROUP?

A Growth Group is a group of 2-3 people of the same gender who meet weekly/bi-weekly to grow closer to each other and Jesus. Because Growth Groups are more personal, they work best when organically created between a group of 2-3 friends. Summit Community Church will sometimes help organize Growth Groups, but think they work best when formed naturally through relationships developed in our other ministries (serving, Connect Groups, etc.).

WHAT DOES A GROWTH GROUP DO?

A Growth Group meets weekly/bi-weekly for an hour and focuses on three pillars:

1. **Accountability:** Very rarely do things get done in life without accountability. The beginning of the Growth Group session will involve going through a predetermined list of accountability questions. The questions are designed to give each group member the opportunity and space to discuss their relationship with God and pressing issues going on in their life.
2. **Bible Reading:** A Growth Group commits to reading from scripture together both in and out of the weekly group meeting. The group will take time during every meeting to discuss what they read and read the current days reading together. If a group member does not complete the week's reading, the whole Growth Group commits to reread the scripture again before the next meeting. This is not a punishment, but a way to hold each other accountable and allow God more time to use those passages in the group members lives.
3. **Prayer:** There are few things more powerful than having a committed group of individuals to pray for you and the people in your life. Every Growth Group meeting will take time to pray for the spiritual growth of each member as well as for other believers and nonbelievers.

WHO SHOULD GET INVOLVED IN A GROWTH GROUP?

Growth Groups are designed for people who want to grow in their faith. They are a commitment, involve confidentiality, and take work outside of the meeting time. While the hope is that all SCC members will eventually take part in a Growth Group, for many people, they need to make sure they are ready for this type of commitment before entering one.

WHAT DOES A TYPICAL GROWTH GROUP MEETING LOOK LIKE?

A typical Growth Group meeting will involve the 2-3 members meeting at a central location. They will take 40ish minutes to go through the accountability questions and to talk through the reading they completed, and 20ish minutes to pray for one another.

WHAT IS THE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE OF OUR GROWTH GROUP MINISTRY?

Growth Groups are a part of SCC's ministry platform, however, we think they work best when run organically by the group members. There is a director over Growth Groups who is available for training, questions, difficult situations, and encouragement. Here is the organizational structure of Growth Groups and how they fit in with the overall structure of SCC.

Jesus → SCC Lead Pastor → Discipleship Pastor → Growth Group Director → Growth Group Members

FAQ'S

The following are some frequently asked questions regarding Growth Groups.

1. What if someone shares some pretty deep stuff?
 - a. Great! We know sharing deep/personal material can be difficult to share AND receive well. We think a healthy rule to remember is, "Give encouragement as often as possible; advice, once in a great while; and reproof, only when absolutely necessary."
2. What if someone fails to do the reading?
 - a. SCC thinks holding people accountable to completing the reading by requiring the group to reread the passages is a healthy way to ensure people have ownership in the group. We do not view reading again as a punishment. We think God still has something to speak to your group through those passages. If someone consistently fails to do the reading there should probably be a conversation addressing their commitment and readiness for a Growth Group.
3. How do we choose what to read?
 - a. SCC has provided a reading plan on the Growth Groups Bible Insert that will take the group through the New Testament in a year. The plan is designed to have the group read 4 chapters a week outside of group and one chapter together in group totaling 5 chapters a week. This means a person is reading one chapter a day with the weekend to catch up on any missed days.
4. Why aren't the groups co-ed?
 - a. These groups are designed to be safe places to discuss sin, struggles, and accountability. This happens best in single gender groups.
5. What if someone is dominating the conversation?
 - a. This is a common problem with Growth Groups. Most people who dominate conversation very rarely know that they are doing it. A polite, honest conversation about everyone's answers to the questions being timely will go a long way.
6. What if someone does not open up?
 - a. Opening up rarely happens quickly, but should happen as the group grows closer together. If everyone in the group is opening up except one person, it might be a good idea to have a conversation with the person about your desire to see them open up in group. Many people, if safely nudged, will open up.
7. How much should we share?
 - a. What is said in Growth Group should stay in Growth Group, so real struggles should be shared. Sex life, eating disorders, people pleasing, addictions, pornography, anger and any other sin issues should be openly shared and kept in confidence.
8. How do we get other people involved?
 - a. If you are a Growth Group of 2, it really helps to have a 3rd person. You are welcome to invite a new person to your group, but it is best to make them aware of what the group does before they come to the first meeting. If you have a Growth Group of 3 and you want to add a 4th, it might be best to split into 2 Growth Groups of 2 members. We find that 3 is the magic number (see question 12 for more insight).
9. What if the group is becoming too social?
 - a. Growth Groups have a tendency to naturally become social. Stick with the bookmark you received as the agenda for your group meeting. Even if you have the agenda memorized, still make sure the book mark is present at each meeting, so everyone knows to try and stay on

task. If your group deviates from the bookmark over time, have a serious conversation about getting back on track.

10. What if the group becomes inconsistent?

- a. If the group is consistently having a hard time meeting, it might be time to end the group. This is not a bad thing. Hopefully the members of the group are closer than they were before it started meeting. The deeper relationships should be celebrated.

11. What if someone needs to be removed from the group?

- a. If someone breaks confidentiality, is regularly missing meetings, or fails to consistently read the scripture they might need to be removed from the group. This works best when the group has a hard conversation with them to express their thinking. We think no one should be removed from a group without the group members first having a conversation with the Growth Group Director.

12. Why can't we have more than 3 people in our group?

- a. Once you get above 3 members intimacy drops, the meetings take a long time to complete, people shy away from sharing deep things, and rescheduling group meetings becomes exponentially harder. If a group grows above 3 members, it would be best to split the group into two smaller groups.