



New Journey Small Groups

Expectations for small groups:

Consistency

- An ideal small group will develop trusting, committed relationships in which members desire to continue meeting after the duration of the initial study. Some however, might be getting their feet wet and trying something new for the first time. We ask leaders to commit to the full completion of their initial small group study material. After completion, the small group leader can assess if they would like to continue leading/hosting a group or not.

When group leaders run a study for its duration, meet at a regular time, and start and end at the same time each week, this builds trust within the church body that they can rely on consistency if they sign up for a small group at New Journey Church. Not practicing this consistency may inadvertently paint a negative picture for all New Journey's small groups.

- Maintain a consistent weekly schedule, meeting at the same time each week so that your group can plan for it. Do not cancel a meeting if at all possible. Prioritize meeting for the duration of the study.
- Maintain a consistent start and end time of the scheduled program each week. This gives people a clear expectation of how long the evening will be. Making space available after the programmed part of the evening for people to stick around and visit is healthy, but doing this at the end allows those who need to leave the opportunity to do so.

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Comfort

- Allow space for a group 8-12 in size. You may have people in mind for your group—neighbors, a couple from church, etc. but please leave a few empty spaces for anyone from church who may desire to sign up and be a part of your group.
- Create a warm and welcoming environment within your home. Make sure everyone is introduced so that the group can know each other as they build relationships. Some suggestions for creating a welcoming environment are:

- Make sure you have seating for everyone
- Greet people as they arrive, and connect them with others
- Provide refreshments
- Start with some visiting and small talk before diving into the material

Care

- Small groups are a safe place where people can share things confidentially. Make it clear to everyone involved that things shared will be held in confidence.
- If an individual is dominating small group discussion, pull them aside in private, thank them for their participation and invite them to help pull others into the discussion next week.
- Extend invitations during sharing times for everyone to share so that everyone gets to participate.
- Alpha offers some wise counsel for ministering to non-Christians in your group who do not agree with your material. Respectfully listen to their viewpoints. Aggressively attempting to correct them may push them away. Try to win the person, not the argument. Remember, the Christian perspective has been presented in the study material. A fitting response can be, "That's an interesting perspective. What do the rest of you think?"