

ADDING SOMEONE TO A COMMUNITY GROUP

Wouldn't it be nice if you were in community with your best friends and no one ever left the group and you all stayed in community for 50+ years?!? Well, as great as that sounds, it's very unlikely. Life is transient: marriage, job change, move, etc. As a result, it's not uncommon for groups to lose folks and be in a position where they need to add more. Below are some guidelines for adding new group members.

WHEN THE GROUP WANTS TO ADD A MEMBER OR MEMBERS:

- First, ask the question: "Is our group currently healthy?" Adding people to an unhealthy group isn't wise.
 - It is strongly recommended that the existing group complete a community group assessment prior to adding a new member.
 - If not, this isn't a good time to add, but rather seek help on changes you need to make for the current members. Set a date to revisit this idea after you have made the appropriate changes.
- Then, ask the questions:
 - Is this the right time? (If you are in the middle of a vulnerable study, it may not be the appropriate time to add someone.)
 - Is this the right person or persons? (Can they commit to the expectations you all have for each other and as a group?)
 - If they cannot attend regularly, this would not be the best person to add.
- Realize this is a group decision. Ask each member how they feel about adding someone (both at that time and that specific person or persons). If there is a split, consider how strongly the opposing members feel and if it will cause major issues in the group.
 - If you do add, everyone needs to be aligned with the decision.
- In advance, discuss the group's expectations with the potential members and see if this is a fit for both parties.

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- Once the decision has been made, you will need to realign the group's expectations.
- This is now a "new" group. Understand that when you add a person, the dynamic of the group changes. It will begin to function differently to accommodate a new person with new ideas, struggles, and God given gifts that you want to make room for and enjoy.

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