2019 Turning Resistible to Irresistible: Three Tensions That Could Make Your Community Group Resistible, And How To Overcome Them.

"Creating Irresistible Group Environments" - How can we create groups that keep group members coming back week after week? In this breakout session we will look at three tensions that could create resistance in the engagement of your group members. We will also explore best practices from experienced Group Leaders on making a group environment irresistible.

Tension #1: Inconsistent Leadership - Failing to create a **Predictable Environment**: Predictability contributes to the building of trust. A lack of predictability reveals that at some level there is a lack of **Accountability**. Where there is no accountability one never feels the confidence of knowing what to expect. If the culture in the environment (first modeled by the leader) lacks accountability, it will likely spread throughout the group and manifest itself in various forms of unpredictable behaviors which could cause the group members to feel unsettled and/or disappointed from unmet expectations. This is why it is helpful for leaders to discuss expectations early and allow yourself to be held accountable to the expectations you set. From there the rest of the group can be accountable as well. An unpredictable environment is easy to resist, therefore, in order to create an irresistible environment we must create a predictable one. This may be accomplished through preparation, intentionality, communication, time-discipline, and faithfulness.

Question for Panel:
What are some practical ways to contribute to the predictability of a group?

Question for Audience: for the next 3 minutes, discuss some of the ways you would like to create a more predictable environment for your group.

Tension #2 - Diversity Not Acknowledged - Diversity comes in gender, ethnic, experiences, personality types, age, cultural, and social economic placement. We have to acknowledge and celebrate diversity. If people do not feel that this is being done, they will choose to flight or fight. They will typically leave the group or stay in the group without participating. The tension here is related to creating a sense of **Belonging**.   A group whose members do not have a sense of belonging is a group that is easy to resist.

Question for Panel:
What are some ways Group Leaders can acknowledge the diversity in their group, creating a sense of belonging for everyone?

Question for Audience: Take the next 3 minutes to share how you can acknowledge the diversity that is in your current group.

Tension #3 Disengaged Leadership - This is very common. Often when we as Community Group Leaders think of **Care** our minds go to how we respond to the difficult situations our group members encounter in their personal lives. While those scenarios are important, there is another context that perhaps equally influences the group member's sense that they are cared for. This is the communication that takes place weekly. This is remembering important days for members of the group, celebrating anniversaries, a card from the group on the anniversary of a member's lost loved-one, etc... This is revisiting previous prayer request and continuing to pray, or celebrating answered prayers. This is previewing or forecasting what's upcoming so that group members have the chance to plan and process in order to participate and engage more.

These are the often overlooked ways that groups leaders can create a sense of **Care** among groups. It's hard for disengaged leaders to communicate Care to their members. What this can result in is when a member needs care on an urgent situation they may hesitate to reach out to the leaders because the confidence that they matter to the leader has not been established. (Have you ever had a member say that they would've reached out, but they didn't want to bother you?) Here is where the Leader Essential *Cultivate Relationships* is of true value. **A group where there is no real care beyond the meeting is a group of shallow relationships.** This kind of group is highly resistible. Therefore, to create an irresistible group environment, we must establish a sense that we **Care** for every member in the group.

Question for Panel:
What other practical ways can Group Leaders contribute to a sense of Care?

 Question for Audience: Take the next 3 minutes to discuss ways you have been able to show care for your group outside of the regular meeting time.