

groupLeader Gathering

8 Ingredients for Creating an Atmosphere for Spiritual Growth

When a new group forms the members arrive at the gathering with various expectations. For some they want to meet new friends or meet like-minded people. For others their motivation is to grow in their faith and learn more about God. Many groups find themselves stuck trying to prioritize between relational connections and spiritual growth. God uses relationships to provide a tangible context for us to experience and apply the love he has for us. Much of the spiritual growth that God has in mind for us is not possible without relational connection.

This workshop will explore the challenges of creating a group environment that meets the diverse needs of all members and sets the course for a life changing experience.

We hope the following ingredients are all pretty familiar to you. It's not our goal today to introduce something novel, but to show how combining simple ingredients can create a beautiful recipe for a thriving group.

Story Cards

A low intensity icebreaking way for group members to talk about themselves on their own terms.

Stories

A chance for Group Leaders to model authenticity, vulnerability creating a safe space for group members to do the same and be accepted as they are.

Spiritual Growth Assessments

A starting point which will empower group members to map out a course for the spiritual growth they desire.

Rhythms

Avoiding ruts and stagnancy by intentionally mixing up the activity, thoughtfully developing a calendar of events, utilizing 3 vital relationships as a gauge for effective rhythms within your group.

Make it Personal

Get to know each member of your group by spending time outside of the group meeting, approach each relationship with curiosity, and with an investment mindset anticipating the return that God will bring through the relationship.

Prayer

Pray for the collective group and each individual seeking insight from God on what he wants to accomplish for them. Continue to work to establish an environment of prayer amongst the group stemming from confidence that individuals and the group can experience God's presence through prayer. Encourage group members to pray for themselves and each other.

Cultivate Relationships

Do whatever you can to create relationship building opportunities among the members of your group. It's not your responsibility to directly become the providential relationship that God uses to change the lives of every group member. Perhaps God uses you to connect others by creating an environment for them to discover those providential relationships within the group.

Pathways

Keep in mind the creativity of God designed each of us with our own particular spiritual makeup. In addition, our groups may be populated with a diverse mix of personalities, temperaments, and backgrounds. For this reason, it's important not to heavily depend on one pathway of experiencing God. For instance, one person may experience God best through reading while another experiences him best through prayer and yet another through observing the vastness of his creation. As a Group Leader, we serve our group well by exploring various pathways of experiencing God so each group member can discover and experience their own preferred pathways while appreciating the preferred pathways of others.