



Topic Summary

It may be the case that your group will at some time during the year, whether in an opening testimony or during one of your confession times, share deep wounds, past trauma, intense pain, or profoundly serious sin. These meetings can be intense, scary, and stressful for you as you try to discern how to respond and what to do in the aftermath.

Navigating these moments well is one of the most challenging tasks you have as a leader. These types of confessions are often complex and sensitive, requiring a careful and considerate touch. Thankfully, we have the power of the Holy Spirit that enables us to love others in extraordinary ways.

Questions

- If you haven't encountered any of these situations yet, consider how you would respond to someone who broke down emotionally in your group or shared something deeply painful that they did or that was done to them. What are some strategies you would employ? How would you want that person to feel after you respond to them?
- Has your group done any of the types of intense sharing described above? How do you feel about how you handled the situation?
- How do you plan on handling the aftermath of an intense meeting? What are some ways you could follow up with the individual who shared or with the other members of your group who listened alongside you?

Suggestions

- Take time to pray for those who share something deeply vulnerable in your meetings. A good thing to do is have all the members of the group lay hands on the person who shared while you pray for them (if they're comfortable with it, of course). Always respond in honest prayer and gratitude for the gift of authenticity that the group was given.
- Encourage your guys to only share intense things that they have done some degree of personal reflection on. It can be damaging to both them and to the rest of the group if they haven't done much thinking about what they're sharing.
- Recommend other types of professional support. You and your other participants shouldn't bear the burden of a profoundly serious or scary confession. You are not a professional support group! Point people in the direction of professional help as much as you can.