

Expectations for the Season

1. **Trust** - Groups function on trust. Without trust groups lack impact and then dissolve over time. Groups have to be a safe environment for people to be willing to share with vulnerability and depth. That means that what is shared in group needs to remain confidential to the group. It also means that when someone shares, they are not to be given advice on what to do unless they ask for it. Leaders are encouraged to ask follow-up questions in order to better understand and help the person share deeply.
2. **Vulnerability** - This is probably the most influential attribute of whether a group thrives or becomes another obligation you don't really want to be a part of. When we share openly and truthfully, it opens the door for endless positive outcomes. The most significant outcome is that it invites God and His people into the places that matter most, allowing Him to transform us and connect to us on a deeper level than ever before. It allows the idea of God's depth of love to start to become the experience of God's depth of love. Here are some tips on how to do this.
 - Share about yourself, not others you know.
 - When you share, remember that the least vulnerable way to share is about the past, the next level is regarding the future, and the most vulnerable way you can be is talking about the present.
 - A scale to keep in mind is the scale of closeness, from 1 to 5.
 - 1 - Sharing at a cliché level. There is no real thought here; it is just full surface level.
 - 2 - Fact sharing. You share what you know, like a teacher with a student or an educational video. (A majority of human communication stays at a level 1 or 2).
 - 3 - Opinion sharing. Now you are sharing your personal thoughts and opinions of things.
 - 4 - Sharing your emotions. This is when you share how things make you feel or what is going on inside of you.
 - 5 - Transparent sharing. This is the deepest level of sharing because it is sharing who you are, your reasons for why you are who you are, and what makes you tick like you do.
3. **Priority** - A great rule of thumb for making groups a priority is if you can't give at least a day's advance notice that you will be missing, you most likely shouldn't be missing. Be there, unless it's an emergency or an agreed-upon absence. "Attendance" means you are at the meeting, prepared, and you participate. We get it. Life happens! Family events come up, or work emergencies, or maybe an illness. But you all should be on the same page regarding what is an okay reason to miss group. Your favorite TV show's season finale? (Hint: NOPE!) A sports game? If you've agreed to a weekly meeting time but miss regularly, you may not be putting a high enough priority on community. Everyone in the group needs to feel like each person is honoring the others' time and are mutually invested in them.
4. **Time** - We start on time—not "when the last person gets there." That doesn't respect everyone else. Honor one another's time by being on time yourself. If something does cause you to be late, communicate that well with others in the group.

5. **Commitment** - We all know we don't get much out if we don't put much in, so we are asking for a commitment. When one person feels disengaged or like they don't care, it has an impact on the entire group. We want each member to get the most out of the time they invest, and to do that we need everyone to be in it together.