



ADDING SOMEONE TO A COMMUNITY GROUP

THE VISION

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...especially in singles community. Singles community can be a very transient time for folks: 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 an online assessment prior to adding a new member.
 - If not, this isn't a good time to add and 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.
 - 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.
 - Take a vote. If you do add, everyone needs to agree to that decision.
 - Keep the culture of your current group unless you are looking to make some changes that will make your group stronger.
 - In advance, discuss the group's expectations with the potential members and see if this is a fit for both parties.
 - 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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LEAVING A COMMUNITY GROUP

THE VISION

While there are acceptable reasons to leave a community group (getting married and moving to another city/state are two great examples), there are also bad reasons to leave a community group. We should always try to maintain the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace (*Ephesians 4:3*), and we should never leave a community group because of (unresolved) conflict. Here are some guidelines to help you process through leaving a community group well.

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE TO STUDY:

- *1 Corinthians 13:4-7*
- *Colossians 3:12-15*
- *Ephesians 4:1-6*
- *Philippians 2:3-4*

WHEN A COMMUNITY GROUP MEMBER WANTS TO LEAVE THE GROUP:

- Ideally the member would include the leader/co-leader and group in the decision making process.
 - Share in person (not via email or text) about the desire to leave.
 - Allow the group to process with them and ask questions.
- Ask the hard questions:
 - Is there unresolved conflict with someone in the group?
 - Is it getting too hard?
 - Are feelings of fear coming up or feeling exposed?
 - Has another CG asked the person to join them?
 - Are any of these possible reasons for leaving:
 - Marriage
 - Changing churches
 - Moving
- If there is unresolved conflict, encourage the member to go back to the person or group and have the appropriate conversations (see Conflict Field Guide, pages 56-59).

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- Each situation is different, thus no formula for how it “should be” done.
 - Consult your coach or director for input/feedback on what would be the best next steps.
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