

Handling Group Issues

Quiet member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask clear and concise questions. • Direct easy questions to a quiet member by name. • Enlist the help of others to draw them out. • Express appreciation for the contributions they make. Allow time for silence before asking another question too quickly. • Never force a member to participate.
Overly talkative or dominant member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct questions to people by name. • Talk to them privately about the need for silence after some questions for thought and reflection. • Ask for their help in drawing the silent ones out. • Suggest they ask, "What does anyone else think?"
Member who monopolizes group with their problem(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind everyone of the purpose of the group. • If appropriate, stop and pray for the individual, then gently move the conversation to another member of the group. • Talk to the person privately, suggesting resources for help.
Disagreeing member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to find the cause (e.g., is she sheltering a deep hurt?). • Give feedback to the person who disagrees: "What exactly causes your hesitation?" • Challenge the group by asking, "How can we get around this objection?"
Conflict avoidance to keep peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that the person doesn't have a Biblical view of community and is avoiding conflict. • Talk to the person privately and help her see that she is avoiding honest interaction leading to resolution. • Reassure the person that it's okay for people to disagree on some issues.
Superficial sharing from a member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be open in your own sharing. • Break down in pairs for sharing, application, or prayer. • Meet outside the group to discover interests, opinions, and ideas.
A controversial question is raised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set some ground rules before the discussion. • Emphasize that Christians can hold different views on the same topic. • Convey that all viewpoints must be supported by Scripture. • Focus on what the divergent beliefs hold in common.
A member is argumentative and obstinate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep your composure; don't take things personally. • Examine what is being said and try to find the good in it. • Let them know that you will discuss it with them after the group time. • Meet privately to see if this is a personal problem, communicating that while their ideas are important, the behavior can't continue.
The discussion gets off track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge it, and gently bring the group back to the topic by reviewing and summarizing where the discussion got lost. • Use a key word (e.g., rabbit trail) to remind the group they're on a tangent and gently pull the group back to the topic.

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A difficult question is raised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know." • Offer to find an answer and report on it next time. • Open the question up to the group. • Empower group members the task of researching the question for an answer.
An incorrect answer is given	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember that the person is more important than the answer. • Determine whether the response is truly wrong or just a different opinion. • Affirm the person's willingness to share, then continue the questioning process to see if you can bring the person around to the correct answer. • Ask, "What does someone else think?"; "Does someone else have experiences along that line?"
Group apathy or complaints of wasting time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display enthusiasm and energy. • Be diligent to include every person as a vital member of the group.
A member of the group rubs you the wrong way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pray for this person. • Ask God to change your heart for the person and let you see them through His eyes. • Step back and let the Holy Spirit work in both of you, love them as an act of faith and obedience.
Personality clash between group members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize points of agreement. • Help each side to clearly understand the other. • Talk individually and corporately about maintaining unity.
Members come late	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree as a group on a set time. • Begin each meeting promptly. • Discuss time with the group.
Discussion migrates to a hot topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be intentional about knowing issues that members of your group struggle with. • Create a safe space for people to share openly. • Table discussion if the conversation becomes hostile/destructive and use discretion to revisit during a future group meeting. • If you need help continuing a hard conversation within your group, reach out to your Groups staff for help.
Wrong motives for joining a group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a conversation with group members before joining your group to gauge motives. • Cast vision clearly for the group early and consistently, emphasizing the importance of personal growth in their relationship with Jesus. • If wrong motives begin to arise, point the group back to the values and purpose, and consider having a conversation outside of the group.
Relational conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of body language, tone of voice, using "you" instead of "I." • A member might feel threatened (attack on them or their beliefs) or neglected (needs not being met) from others in the group, which could lead to conflict. • Create space for each person to share their experience and help resolve any unnecessary conflict through guidance and prayer. • When meeting with members, individually affirm their feelings, even if you don't agree with them.