


SALTY GROUPS

Group Leader Training



 we're better together

THANK YOU FOR LEADING IN THIS MOMENT

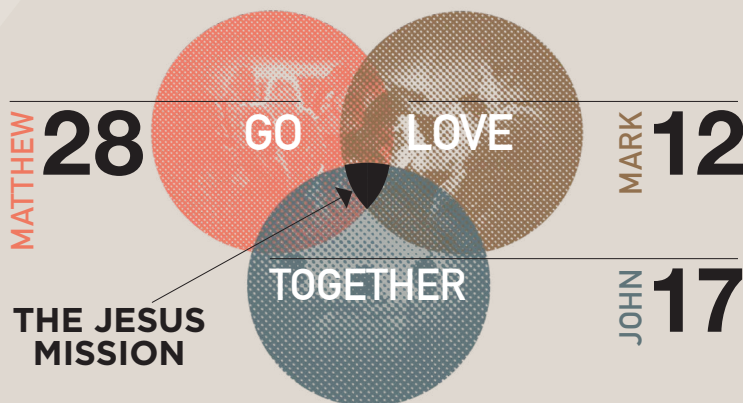
Thank you for your commitment to lead a group at Salty.

The words of Jesus in the Great Commission are focused and clear: make disciples. Any other core mission takes us off course, and doesn't lead to healthy growth and mobilization of His witnesses that Jesus states in Acts 1:8.

God is at work today moving His people into mission and raising up leaders like you to impact the world. Groups help build relationships, engage in healthy conversations around Jesus and advance the Kingdom. Through these transformational conversations, you will help:

- multiply disciples who create disciples
- mobilize everyday-life missionaries
- build a leadership pipeline within your group
- create a discipleship culture at Salty

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8



We're Better Together!



The Great Commission - GO

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Matthew 28:18-20



LEADER TIPS

Facilitating a Group requires dealing with interpersonal dynamics and working to create effective communication among people with different backgrounds and levels of church experience.

Here are a few tips to help you facilitate a good conversation together:

- 1 Start With You**
 - 2 Group Meeting Dynamics**
 - 3 Conversation Bridges**
 - 4 Accepting and Leveraging Silence**
 - 5 Facilitating Empathy**
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START WITH YOU

As a leader / facilitator/host, you must first start with you. Take the time to think and pray about what you are doing. Being aware of your thoughts and feelings can set the tone for the group. Here are a few things you can do to prepare:

1. **Capture your feelings.** Stop and pray about and even write down what you're feeling about your group before you gather. It will help you be available to others as you lead.
2. **Be authentic.** People appreciate genuineness and it tends to make everyone more comfortable; it will also invite others to be authentic.
3. **Practice gratitude.** Find something about your group to be really grateful for before it begins, and thank God for each person especially as you get to get to know them.
4. **Choose love** - both for God and your group members. While our experiences are different, work to honor God and connect with the feelings group members are expressing.

Greatest Commandment



“The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Mark 12:29-31

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GROUP DYNAMICS

Every Group is unique and eventually defined by both the group members' and the facilitators' personalities.

Here are some basics to keep in mind...

1. Engage Immediately

- Greet everyone warmly and cheerfully.
- Listen for outside interests. What are they passionate about or involved in?
- It's okay if you don't enjoy or 'like' them, but fight to value them.
- Become an expert question asker! (see Conversation Bridges)

GROUP DYNAMICS

2. Direct the Conversation

- Give structure to the conversation with confidence and energy.
- Announce, model and uphold ground rules: confidentiality, start & end on time, respect, no fixing.
- If necessary, reinforce the main point with YOUR story BRIEFLY. Don't be the expert.
- Model vulnerability. It's okay to be wrong.
- Bring closure to each Group session by summarizing main ideas and stating your appreciation for the conversation.

3. Enable the Participant:

- Engage each person eagerly
- Practice patience
- Avoid trying to fix or prescribe
- Affirm each participant

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CONVERSATION BRIDGES

When facilitating conversations, you may need to draw participants deeper OR redirect the conversation.

These prompts can be helpful:

- Would you mind elaborating on that ...
- Can you dig a little deeper ...
- Great! Let's hear from someone else ...
- Have the rest of you thought about this in a similar way ...
- Have any of you had a similar experience ...
- Where does this show up for you ...
- Thanks for sharing - let's hear from someone else ...
- Tell me about your experience with that ...
- Can you help us by saying that in a different way ...
- Where does that experience leave you ...
- How have you tried to reconcile that ...

ACCEPTING & LEVERAGING SILENCE

Effective facilitating and listening also involves the value of silence. Here are some tips:

- Normalize silence. Talk about it from the start and re-frame it as a good, expected characteristic of any healthy group.
- If you don't get a response, rephrase the question, approach it from a different angle, or focus on one part or one aspect of the question.
- Don't use silence as an excuse to deliver your own "lecture" or fill the time.
- If someone says something and no one joins in, ask the group, "How many of you have had a similar experience (or see things the same way or agree with him/her)?" Then invite someone to: "Tell us why you agree or disagree."
- Don't let your response assign positive or negative value. Lean into what God says. Lead into scripture.
- If participants are not responding to the question, you may want to give your personal opinion (but keep it brief). Role-modeling brevity is helpful.
- Deflect questions directed to you often, and ask other participants in the group to respond. Set others up as experts.
- Affirm responses. Encourage, praise, even reward participation depending on your group or response.
- Don't move through a series of questions like a robot.
- Don't do more than one question at a time. It confuses people.
- Call on specific individuals to break the ice. Use names.

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FACILITATING EMPATHY

Modeling empathy sets the tone that will turn experiences into meaningful connection. Below are some tips for practicing and modeling empathy with your group. Also check out the Empathy vs Sympathy Video.

- Observe your own feelings before you respond. Self-awareness is a key to growing empathy. Pay attention to your own reaction as the conversation continues, and even mentally “name” them (e.g. - I am feeling anxious or I can feel myself getting defensive). Once your feeling is inwardly recognized, you can decide how you might respond best.
- Listen with active, responsive cues and mirroring of language. You will set the tone for how your group hears one another. Demonstrate active and open listening with non-verbal cues (leaning in, nodding) and verbal cues (mmm-hmm... tell me more... what is that like for you?) as others share their stories.
- Look for common feelings not contexts. It can be tempting to compare others experiences with your own and assume they're the same, but no.
- Validate experiences. You are likely to hear feelings, opinions and experiences that are vastly different from yours or clearly immoral, and you may have a strong reaction to them. Remember that everyone's experience is real to them. It may not be true or moral, but it is where that person is.
- Seek connection versus trying to solve problems. When we share our emotions, what we need most is to feel like others have heard us. (Seen, heard, valued)



Better Together

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." John 17:20-23