

SKILL 6: HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR GROUP

Love one another (John 13:34)

Nothing is more powerful and meaningful, nor more fundamental to our faith and essential to our groups, than loving and caring for one another.

Here are some ways as leaders that you can be God's instrument in helping your group to be a place where group members experience God's wonderful love and care.

1. Provide a safe, caring and learning environment during group meetings (see Skill 4: How to Facilitate Discussions)

2. Pray for each member individually. Nothing is a greater indicator of whether you really think about, care for and value a person than making the time and commitment to pray for them.

3. Provide meals for members during difficult times like recuperation from surgery or serious illness, or loss in the family.

4. Provide physical help for members like running an errand for someone who is unable to get around or pitching in at their home painting, mowing their lawn, baby sitting, helping them to move, etc.

5. Provide church or professional references for people struggling with financial, material, addiction or marital needs (see References under Leaders Notebook). Grace has financial counseling (Good Sense; contact Bonnie Landon) and limited benevolence and material resources (contact Dennis Tollison), and addiction and marital counseling (CareWorks; contact Denise Winter). Maintain extra close contact with group members as they go through especially tough times. This might involve going out for coffee so he/she can talk. It might be arranging regular phone calls to the person in need or visits to the home or hospital. It might be sending cards, a prayer, even holding a prayer meeting for the person in need.

6. Remember important dates of members like birthdays, anniversaries, birthdays of their kids, etc. Send birthday cards, thank you cards, think of you notes, emails, and phone calls.