

## The Importance of the Small Group Guidelines

These five Small Group Guidelines will make or break your Celebrate Recovery ministry. They are five simple rules that will keep the small groups safe. If your recovery meetings are not safe, they will fail. These guidelines are the core of a successful, safe and productive small group.

It is the leader's responsibility to implement the guidelines during Open Share and Step Study meetings. The leader will model the example as the guidelines apply to them as well.

The guidelines play a huge role in keeping consistency in the groups. We strive to have groups facilitated in the same way so when participants go to another group it will be familiar.

Each guideline serves a unique and important purpose. I encourage you to teach your group these guidelines, as they are a great tool for effective listening and communication!

For a new small group, even if there are only three people, it is essential to adhere to the guidelines. This will lead to a smoother transition as the group grows. It also will avoid developing bad habits in the original core group. Remember that the sharing and examples of the original group will influence the new people joining the group.

Read the guidelines at **every single meeting** no matter how long you have been going! In fact, the guidelines become even more important as your group grows closer together. As your group matures, it is not necessary to elaborate on each guideline. However, if one particular area starts to be a problem, address it during the next meeting by re-emphasizing that particular guideline. This might be all that is needed to refocus the group. If it continues to be a problem with one particular person, address it with them individually, before or after the meeting.

One may think it is harmless to discuss what others have shared in the group with co-workers because they will never meet the person, This is not always the case. This lack of discretion may come back to hurt someone! If this guideline is broken, the group member is warned privately. **Remember we always encourage publicly, correct privately.** If it happens again, inform your leadership. The member who has broken this guideline should be asked to leave the group indefinitely.