

# EXPECTATIONS

## THE VISION

During the first year, your Community Group will likely go through different stages (see "Four Stages of Community"). Initially, there is often what we call the "honeymoon" stage where everyone seems to like each other, and community is fun and exciting. But as time passes, difficulties can arise—whether from conflict, unmet expectations, or sin struggles. We want to take a moment to discuss some of the more common issues we see in community so that you will not be surprised. Remember, your Coach and Pastor are here to help you and your group through any of these situations.

## COMMITMENT

Setting expectations (see "Aligning Expectations") as an entire group is imperative to the success of your group. Unmet expectations are a huge driver of conflict. These mutually agreed upon expectations will also help with overall group commitment because everyone understands what is expected of them individually. However, even with those conversations, sometimes there will be an individual within a group that consistently misses or shows up late. If this continues to be a pattern, it is loving and appropriate to have a one-on-one conversation with this person to seek to understand why commitment is an issue. Again, please use your Coach or Pastor as a resource if you need help navigating these conversations or if you have had one-on-one conversations with the individual but nothing has changed.

## CONFLICT

As was mentioned earlier, unmet expectations will often lead to conflict. The fact that you have a group of broken people (by nature) trying to live life together in an authentic way will bring conflict at some time or another. It's important to understand that conflict is not a bad thing but is an opportunity to learn, grow, and glorify God. Remember that it is important to always go to the person with whom you have conflict one-on-one, first, before bringing anyone else into the conversation (Matthew 5:23-25, 18:15). We will be discussing conflict in more detail in an upcoming huddle but wanted to touch on this briefly here.

## GOSSIP

We see in Scripture that gossip is a sin (Romans 1:28-19). It is not honoring to God or loving to others in the way we, as believers, are called to be. Our tongue has the ability to give life or death (Proverbs 18:21), and we will give an account for every word that is spoken (Matthew 12:36). Gossip will break trust and destroy a Community Group if not handled properly. This is why it is always important to go directly to the person with whom you have conflict or question (see Conflict section above). It is not loving to have side conversations with other people about another person, even for the sake of "processing" with someone else. There are two ways you can be a part of gossip: 1) being the sharer of gossip and 2) being the hearer. Both parties have responsibility. As the hearer, it is important that you stop the person sharing and ask them to go directly to the person that the information is about. If they refuse, or if gossip continues to be an issue, please feel free to reach out to your Coach or Pastor for guidance.



## TRUST

All of the things we have discussed in this document contribute to building trust within a Community Group. Getting to know one another by spending time together outside of group, and sharing Life Stories will also help. However, please note that trust-building takes time, and each individual will likely be different. For some, sharing and trusting will come more easily than for others. It is important to allow each person to get there at his/her own pace. If there is a pattern month after month of a person consistently not opening up or sharing and they have not made any strides in this area, it is appropriate to meet with them one-on-one to seek to understand why. Does that person see group as an unsafe place? And if so, why? As always, please reach out to your Coach or Pastor for help.

## ALIGNING EXPECTATIONS

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER IN ORDER TO ALIGN GROUP MEMBERS' EXPECTATIONS:

1. What are our expectations for the relationships in this group? How much time will we spend together? (examples: phone calls, hanging out, being checked on, etc.) (2 Corinthians 13:11; Proverbs 17:17)
2. Where will this Community Group rate as a priority in relation to other activities/commitments? When is it okay to miss our weekly group meeting? (examples: dates, work event, family in town, vacation, etc.)
3. How do we define authentic accountability? How should we approach accountability in this group?
4. What will a typical meeting look like?
5. What kind of study will we do?
6. Are there any topics that should be off limits to discuss with the group? If so, which ones? Why? (examples: dating issues, sin struggles, work issues, conflict, priorities, spiritual disciplines, finances, etc.)
7. At what level should issues be discussed? (examples: sharing budgets, boundaries in relationships, conflict, etc.)