

SETTING GROUND RULES

Adapted from *ReGroup* by Cloud, Donahue, and Townsend.

Definition:

Ground rules are rules (clear expectations) agreed upon by all members of the group that ensure the group process works.

Examples of Ground Rules:

- **Begin and end on time**
- Attend the meetings
- **Call when you can't come or will be late**
- Appoint a timekeeper
- Respect each other by listening and valuing what other people are saying
- **No interrupting or carrying on separate conversations**
- No monopolizing the time and attention of the group
- Complete assignments and come prepared to participate
- No Sunday School answers
- **What's said in the group stays in the group**
- Seek to build relationships with other members outside group meeting
- **Bring up issues and dissatisfaction right away**
- Love each other (no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes)
- Be real
- Leave the group well

1. Read through the examples of ground rules above. In your experience what is one rule you've seen broken and what impact did it have on the group?

2. For the next 20 minutes, come up with your group's "ground rules." Ones that are foundational are **bolded** in the list of examples and strongly encouraged to be in the list.

As you discuss what you'd like your ground rules to be, make sure there is consensus within the group. Everyone must agree and buy into all of them.

When the group has reached agreement on the rules, record the final list on the "group covenant" form and have all members of the group sign it. You can find the "group covenant" in *The Leaders Toolbox* page at www.gracehbc.org.

OUR GROUND RULES

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3. As a group, debrief your experience coming up with your ground rules. Discuss:

What went well? What could have gone better?

Did anyone monopolize the discussion? Did anyone not participate? If so, now is the time to ask why.