



HOW TO WELCOME NEW PEOPLE INTO YOUR GROUP

New group members become the friends you grow, laugh and serve with. You want them to feel comfortable and relaxed. When you welcome new people to your group, it is a lot like welcoming a friend to your home.

Here are a few ways to help people feel like they are a part of a group where they are seen and cared for:

- 1. Meet them before they attend the first group meeting.** The easiest way to do this is to connect on a Sunday at church. They will probably feel more comfortable meeting you on common ground, and it will take some of the pressure off them when they first attend your group because they won't feel as if they are showing up to a stranger's house.
- 2. Let them know what to expect.** This starts before they even show up to attend the group. People like to know what to expect so they can be prepared. Sending a quick text or email, with details, puts new group members at ease and allows them to ask any questions they may have.
- 3. Greet them at the door.** Introduce yourself and others. It's that simple. Hopefully, you have already met but if you haven't, introduce yourself. Shake hands, side hug, have a warm presence to put them at ease. Take them around the group members individually and introduce everyone to them by name.
- 4. Be their guide.** Show them where the bathroom is, where they can drop their coats and bags, explain what you'll be doing in the group and most importantly - where the snacks are located.
- 5. Put your pets in a separate room.** Not everyone loves animals. Until you determine how everyone in your group feels about animals, it's probably best to put them in a room by themselves.
- 6. Give them something.** If you are meeting at a restaurant or coffee shop, consider buying your new friend a drink or snack. If you're meeting in your home, offer to grab a drink for them.
- 7. Don't speak in code or use 'inside jokes.'** Chances are your existing group members know each other pretty well. Try not to talk about too many things your new friends are not a part of. Find conversations you can include them in.
- 8. Get to know each other a little.** Even if you already know each other and you have a certain conversation planned, ask your group to share a little about themselves. Ask questions like, "How did you find Cross Point?," "How long have you been attending?," and "What do you love about Cross Point?" You don't have to go super deep, but you also don't have to stay too shallow.
- 9. Be you.** Be authentic, transparent and be yourself. The real you is whom people love, and there's no need to try and change who you are.