

Helping Your Group Stay Healthy

The 3 Challenges Your Group Will Face

Every Grow Group will face challenges; it's part of leading people. The key is not just responding, but knowing what kind of situation you're dealing with, because how you respond depends on what's actually going on. Most situations will fall into one of three categories:

1. LIFE CRISIS ISSUES

These are moments when something difficult has happened to someone: loss, illness, job loss, stress, family issues, etc.

How to lead: Be present. Show care. Listen well. This is not a time to correct, it's a time to support.

2. SIN ISSUES

These are situations where someone is making choices that are pulling them away from God. This is not about making accusations, but about coming alongside and asking questions about what's behind the decisions that led to the action and how they're processing it.

How to lead: Lead with both grace and truth. Care deeply for the person, but don't ignore what needs to be addressed. This is where loving, honest conversations matter most. Use Galatians 6:1 as a guide.

Galatians 6:1, "Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself."

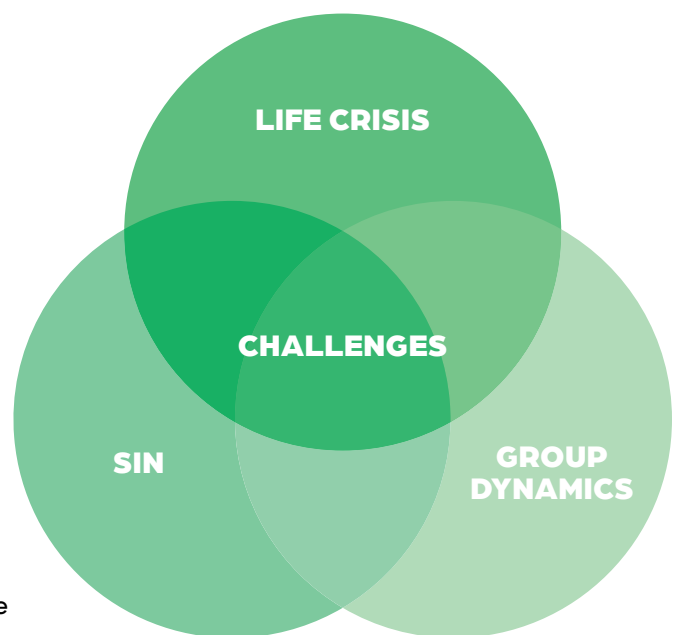
3. GROUP DYNAMIC ISSUES

These are challenges within the group: awkwardness, conflict, lack of participation, someone dominating, etc. This is often the most difficult to deal with because they appear to be personality-driven rather than morally or sinfully based. This tends to be the most subtle, yet the number one destroyer of groups.

How to lead: Step in and guide the room. Protect the environment. Bring clarity and direction so the group can stay healthy. (see troubleshooting guide p. 27)

HINT: Most groups have a "dominator," and if you don't know who it is, it could be you!

Bottom line, we need to keep in mind that it is a privilege to be in a group, NOT a right. There is a standard of social decorum that must be met to remain in the group. For groups to be effective, they must feel safe.



Dealing With Tough Situations & Challenges

When someone in your group shares something difficult (depression, a financial problem, pornography, health concern, marital issue, work conflict, etc.), your role isn't to fix everything; it's to listen well, care well, and help them take a next step.

ASK THESE FOUR QUESTIONS* BEFORE YOU CALL A STAFF MEMBER:

1. How long have you been dealing with this? (duration of issue)

This helps you understand the weight and depth of what they're going through, and the timely context for the potential severity of the issue.

- Listen carefully. The longer something has been going on, the more patience and care it will require. Don't rush the process, just seek to understand their story.

2. Who else knows? (involvement of others)

Find out who else knows about the issue or is involved. If you are the only person, it reveals their level of vulnerability. When was the last time they talked to someone about it? How did those people respond?

3. What advice or counsel have you already received? (level and quality of input so far)

This helps you see what steps they've already taken. Too many times, we give advice that has already been given because we don't ask.

- Affirm any healthy steps they've taken. If they haven't sought help yet, encourage them toward wise counsel, whether that's a trusted leader, mentor, or even professional help if needed.
- Finding out whether they received any input they disagree with can tell you a lot about how they are processing what they hear.

4. Do you have any plans for your next steps? (game plan from this point forward)

Help them think through clear and practical next steps. Keep it simple and doable. You're not solving everything, you're helping them move forward. Provide any resources (if they need to make calls for a professional or staff member, DON'T do it for them).

If you still think you need help after these four questions, then contact the Ridgepoint staff member or email grow@ridgepointwichita.com.

**You are not the Savior—you are a guide.
You don't need to have all the answers.
You just need to ask good questions, listen well,
and point people toward their next step.
That's where real growth begins.***

*Taken from *Circles Not Rows* by David Enns