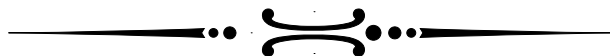


GROUP FAITH SHARING GUIDELINES

As we listen to others share how God is speaking to them, God can also speak to us. We need to *listen attentively*, with our ears and eyes and hearts open, in order for us *to hear God speaking* to us through others.

1. See Jesus in every member of your group.
2. Love each member just as she or he is today.
3. Treat everyone as well as you want them to treat you (apply the “Golden Rule”).
4. Share only what God is revealing to you about yourself and your own life.
5. Allow each person equal time to share with the group, but don’t force anyone.
6. Be courteous of one another. Allow each person to speak without interruption.
7. Listening is even more important than speaking (we have two ears, one mouth).
8. Do not try to solve another person’s problems. Do not teach, preach, judge, condemn, or give advice. Just listen and offer support.
9. Do not share with others outside the group what you heard in the group. Confidentiality is essential for the trust level of a group.
10. All members of the group assume responsibility for these guidelines. Gently remind and lovingly encourage one another if anyone forgets.



Faith-Sharing Dynamics

I. Dynamics of Faith-Sharing: The faith-sharing process is both personal and communal. It embodies the following theological and spiritual dynamics in the biblical truth that God reveals God's self in our human experience:

1. An individual has a religious **experience** (or a group has a shared experience).
2. The person (or the group) **reflects** on the experience.
3. The person (or the group) **articulates** his or her reflection on the experience.
4. The person (or the group) **discovers the meaning** in the experience.
5. The person (or the group) **responds to the forward movement** in the experience.

II. Essential Components of Faith-Sharing:

- **Grateful Listening:** receive sharing thankfully, as a gift, with faith-filled listening.
- **Open Acceptance:** withhold judgment about what others are sharing.
- **Prayerful Reflection:** have attentive awareness to the presence of God.
- **Peaceful Silence:** maintain a contemplative attitude (a loving gaze at the real), a discerning heart, a gentle openness to God's presence.
- **Affective Experience:** describe the interior movements you experienced.

III. Brief Reflections to Prepare for Faith-Sharing:

- What did I experience as I reflected and prayed?
- As I look over my prayer, where and how did I experience God's presence most deeply? Where did I encounter God or experience grace in my prayer?
- What past experience resonates with me most at this time in my life?
- What feelings does all this arouse within me?
- What do I wish to share and how will I express myself briefly? (Remember that faith-sharing is always invitational, never forced. I share what I can, not what I can't.)