

GROUP GUIDELINES

The group guidelines should be observed by all Pure Desire groups. These guidelines can be found on page 22 in the *Seven Pillars of Freedom Workbook* and page 289 in the *Betrayal & Beyond Workbook*.

CONFIDENTIALITY

What is said in a group is presented in trust and confidence. It should be given the utmost consideration and privacy and never shared outside the group. Even with spouses, information about another group member's story should not be shared without that person's consent. In order to protect confidentiality, the group is not open to guests or visitors. Anyone who is considering joining the group after it has launched needs to go directly to the group leader.

RESPECT OTHERS

SELF-FOCUS, LISTEN RESPECTFULLY, LIMIT SHARING,
AND RESPECT OTHERS

Speak only for yourself, avoid giving advice, and allow others the time to formulate their answers and come to their conclusion. Do not contribute to side conversations and give everyone an opportunity to share.

COMMITMENT TO ACCOUNTABILITY

REGULAR ATTENDANCE, TAKE OWNERSHIP, AND BE RESPONSIBLE

Make attending group a priority and let your leader or co-leader know if you cannot attend a meeting. Contact a group member three times each week and contact a group member daily if you experience relapse. If you feel uncomfortable at any time with something being done in the group, talk with your leader or group.

Group leaders also need to be accountable to the church. It is important for group leaders to submit to the leadership of the church; adhering to all leadership policies and requirements set forth by the church. Leaders should also be meeting with the leadership of the church at least once a quarter to report the successes and challenges groups are seeing.

COMPLETE HOMEWORK

COMPLETE HOMEWORK AND STAY ON SUBJECT

Homework facilitates the journey to healing. Allow 20-30 minutes each day to complete your homework. Every group member that completes the homework has the opportunity to participate in sharing and making a contribution to the group. The homework needs to be done in writing, and includes the assignment for that week, FASTER Scale, Group Check-In, and Commitment to Change.

COVENANT TO CONTEND

FOR ADDICTION RECOVERY GROUPS

Make a commitment of accountability stating your commitment to the process of your healing. This is a public commitment that is witnessed by the entire group.

MEMO OF UNDERSTANDING

FOR ALL GROUPS

It is important to understand the purpose and parameters of Pure Desire groups and the moral and ethical obligations of group leaders outlined in the Memo of Understanding. This document must be signed before an individual joins the group. Make no exceptions!

PURE DESIRE GROUPS BEST PRACTICES

The following practices help ensure a positive, effective group experience and should be observed along with the practices described in the **Covenant to Contend (CTC)**, **Memo of Understanding (MOU)**, and **Group Guidelines (GG)**.

INCLUDING NEW MEMBERS

- ➔ In *Seven Pillars of Freedom* groups, new members can join any time up through the end of Pillar Three, so long as they have signed the MOU and CTC. For *Unraveled* (for women), this point is up through Chapter 3. But, this should be done with caution and careful consideration for how a new member can disrupt established group trust. After this point, new members should be included in a new group.
- ➔ For groups focused on betrayal (*Betrayal & Beyond* for women and *Hope for Men*), we do not recommend adding new members after the group has started. This should only be done with extreme discretion and careful consideration by the leader. We also do not recommend adding new members to teen groups after they have begun.
- ➔ A new member should join in at whatever lesson the group is currently on. We do not recommend attempting to have group members working on different lessons. Progress through the material as a group.

GROUP SIZE

Effective groups will be between four and seven people. We do not recommend starting a group with less than four, as attrition of members up front is common. If the group grows beyond seven members, the group should multiply with a new leader or break into multiple discussion groups for the homework.

MEETING TIME FRAME

The group meeting time is two hours. If the material is covered in less time, the group may break early. When the group reaches two hours, the group should pick up next week where they left off. Committing to end at two hours regardless keeps the group focused and helps avoid rabbit trails.

GROUP LENGTH

Groups should not cover more than one lesson in each meeting, so that group members may fully process the lesson. Some lessons will take more than one week. For *Seven Pillars of Freedom*, *Betrayal & Beyond*, and *Unraveled* groups, the group will meet for no less than eight months, and may last as long as 12. *Behind the Mask* is a five-month commitment.

GROUP PARTICIPATION

Everyone participates in every meeting, unless they haven't completed their homework. Group leaders should facilitate conversation in a way that everyone has time to participate and share. A group member should not be forced to share anything they aren't ready to share yet.

LEADERSHIP ACCOUNTABILITY AND RELAPSE RESPONSE

Potential leaders should have demonstrated at least six months of sobriety (no porn or masturbation) before leading a group. If a group leader relapses, they should step out of leadership for two to three weeks to focus on their own healing and give way to a coleader, but remain in the group. If a pattern of relapse or an addictive lifestyle returns, the leader should step down completely until six months of sobriety can be established again.

LEGAL ISSUES

Every person who attends a Pure Desire group must sign the Memo of Understanding. Make no exceptions! This document is your safeguard against 99% of the issues that could come up in a group.

- ➔ Any person who is going through a **divorce** or facing legal charges of any kind, particularly if lawyers are involved, should not participate in a group until the legal proceedings are finalized. Group members could be subpoenaed to testify if the person stays in group.
- ➔ Any person **on parole** may participate in group, but only after their probation officer has been contacted by the group leader or church staff and given clearance for participation. The probation officer can inform the church or group leader of any issues their attendance may cause.

- ➔ If a **reportable offense** is disclosed in group (sexual activity with or abuse of a minor or threat of violence against self or others), the participant should be told they have 24 hours to report or that the group/church must do so for them. The participant should refrain from group participation until the reported offense has been dealt with by authorities.
- ➔ The church must have a **Reducing the Risk policy** in place, which clearly states how minors are protected, childcare workers are appropriately vetted, and appropriate measures are taken when anyone with a record of sexual offense is on property. If this policy is not currently in place, please visit churchlawandtax.com for more information.
- ➔ For legal issues not discussed on this document or the Memo of Understanding, **please contact a legal professional in your state.** Pure Desire Ministries International is not qualified to give legal advice, nor do we recommend that a church or group ever attempt to give legal advice. When in doubt, error on the side of caution and contact a lawyer for further direction.

THREATS OF HARM TO SELF

If anyone is threatening harm to self, a group leader should alert their ministry leader or staff pastor immediately. Pure Desire Ministries also recommends the following action be taken:

- ➔ Always take the threat of self-harm seriously.
- ➔ Engage in conversation with the individual and, to the best of your ability, determine the level of threat and if individual has a plan for self-harm.
- ➔ Contact law enforcement if harm is imminent.
- ➔ Do not leave the individual unattended.
- ➔ If possible, transport the individual to a medical center for evaluation.
- ➔ Support the individual in seeking and receiving professional treatment regarding suicidal ideation.