

Covenants

1. What is a covenant?

- A written expression group values, expectations and /or behaviors which group members hold themselves mutually accountable
- Biblical examples:
 - Genesis 12 and 15- Covenant between God and Abram for a great nation and offspring that number like the stars (notice it isn't already a reality, but a vision)
 - 1 Samuel 18:3 Covenant of friendship and loyalty between David and Jonathan
 - Hebrews 8 New covenant because of Jesus
 - 1 Corinthians 11:25 Communion and the bread/cup are covenant renewals

2. Why have a covenant?

- Getting everyone on the same page - expectations
- Pledge of participation- commitment
- Purpose and parameters for group life- boundaries
- Tool for spiritual growth- challenge and accountability
- Trust building and relationships- community

3. What it contains

- Purpose statement
- Logistics
- Values

4. Steps to making a covenant

- Provide an overview, goal and purpose of covenant, discussion of values and logistics. Hand out 3 * 5 cards for people to write out ideas
- Gather everyone's cards and discuss; look for common ideas and building consensus
- Leader compiles top values and starts writing draft of covenant to share with group. Keep to 5-7 values
- Hand out final covenant, everyone agrees to uphold

5. When to revisit covenant

- Annually to refocus group
- When needed for a tool of accountability with individual members
- Periodically to remind group of values

6. Other thoughts:

- Dream big- have a big vision and purpose for your group
- Plan with the end in mind- how long will your group last? Will there be a plan in place for how long the group will last? Will new leaders be launched from group?