

COVENANT GROUP LEADER MANUAL

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DETAILS TO HANDLE BEFORE YOUR FIRST MEETING

- About three weeks before your first covenant group meeting you need to send the welcome letter which includes the homework for your first meeting. It will be sent to you via email in September, which will make it easy to personalize the letter to your group's date and location. Group members are asked to reply to you assuring you that they got the info and will be at the first meeting. You will send this letter to people with no email via snail mail.
- For your first session you will need a leader's guide and bulletins for each person in the group. You will also need the homework (Quotes and Questions) for the **next** session.
- If you are co-leading, only one of you will be given bulletins and homework for the participants. You both will be given a leader's guide and copy of the bulletin and homework.

COVENANT CIRCLE FORMAT

- **Opening Ritual/Reading** - leader or assigned group member (15-25 minutes)
 - Light the chalice with a themed reading
 - Sharing of Joys and Sorrows (the leader mentions those who have called to say they can not be present)
 - Holding each other in silent support (3 minutes)
 - Themed Responsive or unison readings
- **The Conversation** (55-65 minutes)
 - **Round I** *Something you learned about this topic as you did the homework.* The leader may have a specific question or activity for all. Share in one or two sentences, about 2 minutes. Go around the circle. Before Round II leave some silence.
 - **Round II** *Something you felt about this topic as you did the homework, a way you grew, something that touched you, a story you want to share.* Go in any order. Each person has about 4 minutes. Before Round III leave some silence.
 - During Rounds I and II, one person speaks at a time into an appreciative silence. The only response to the speaker is non-verbal, although the leader may express thanks if that seems comfortable. There is a brief moment of silence between speakers so that we can let the sharing “sink in.” Then the next person will share. This may seem awkward at first, but most groups find it very satisfying. The one who is sharing has the job of speaking deeply from their heart about the topic at hand. Listeners have the task of keeping an open heart to what is shared. The next speaker has the task of leaving some space before they speak. The leader is responsible for helping speakers remember the time frame they have to speak in. The speaking may go in any order. It is assumed that everyone in the group will speak, but if someone does not want to speak, they may pass.
 - **Round III** *Something you gained from this session.* The leader will ask questions as provided in the bulletin. Questions will be generally formed as follows: What did you discover about *the session topic* during this session? What has been most meaningful to you? Ask the group to take a minute to think about the questions and then share with each other when you are ready.
 - The leader should be alert to remind members if they begin to “get into someone else’s life” by reminding them that we share from our own stories, not by critiquing or evaluating someone else’s.
- **Closing Ritual** (5 minutes)
 - Group gathers in a circle for closing words or ritual.
 - Sing “Go Now in Peace”
- **Business** (5 minutes)
 - Presentation of next time’s theme, look over homework (Quotes & Questions)
 - Any other necessary business, announcements, etc.

DEEP LISTENING

“Ours is a ministry of Listening.” This is how covenant group leader, Mary Schwartz, describes what the covenant group process is all about. For many, deep listening is at the core of the covenant group process. A group member last year said, “It was the first time I was listened to and responded to from a point of view that wasn’t trying to convince me.”

Thich Nhat Hahn says, “The greatest gift we can give another is our presence.”

Perhaps the most important thing we bring to another person is the silence in us. Not the sort of silence that is filled with unspoken criticism or hard withdrawal. The sort of silence that is a place of refuge, of rest, of acceptance of someone as they are. We are all hungry for this other silence. It is hard to find. In its presence we can remember something beyond the moment, a strength on which to build a life. Silence is a place of great power and healing.

--Rachel Remen

The practice of deep listening should be directed towards oneself first. If you don’t know how to listen to your own suffering, it will be difficult to listen to the suffering of another person or another group of people.

--Thich Nhat Hanh

We listen to each other.

We set aside our own opinions for a time as we try to understand others.

We listen to seek in the other the truths reflected there that have no words.

True listening involves a setting aside of the self, a total acceptance of the other.

Sensing this acceptance, the speaker will feel less and less vulnerable and more and more inclined to open up the inner recesses of his or her mind to the listener.

As this happens, speaker and listener begin to appreciate each other more and more.

--Unknown

We have begun to learn about a method of deep listening. As we already know, we have to practice before we can listen deeply. Sometimes we can also translate "deep listening" as compassionate listening, that is, to listen with compassion, or to listen with love. We hear with one aim only; we don’t listen in order to criticize, to blame, to correct the person who is speaking or to condemn the person. We only listen with one aim, and that is to relieve the suffering of the one we are listening to. We have to sit still, we have to sit with inner freedom, and we have to be one hundred percent present, body and mind, listening so the other can relieve his or her suffering. If we can sit for an hour, that is a golden hour. That hour is an hour which can heal and transform.

--Thich Nhat Hanh

CHALICE LIGHTING IDEAS

Chalice lightings are usually supplied. For more ideas, see these. Also look in the back of the hymnal for more.

We gather this hour as people of faith
with joys and sorrows, gifts and needs.
We light this beacon of hope,
sign of our quest
for truth and meaning,
in celebration of the life we share together.

--Christine Robinson

Life is a gift for which we are grateful.
We gather in community to celebrate the glories
And the mysteries of this great gift.

--Marjorie Montgomery

As the drops of oil that fill this lamp come together to make their light,
So we individuals come together to make a church.
United in spirit with those who are present in this group,
With the many who came before, and with generations yet to come,
We light this flame to the community we share.

At times our own light goes out
and is rekindled by a spark from another person.
Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude
of those who have lighted the flame within us.

--Albert Schweitzer

We gather around this flame that symbolizes:
the truth we know
and the truth we seek;
the community we share
and the community we aspire to;
the learning that enables us
and the mystery that encompasses.

To face the world's shadows, a chalice of light.
To face the world's coldness, a chalice of warmth.
To face the world's terrors, a chalice of courage.
To face the world's turmoil, a chalice of peace.
May its glow fill our spirits, our hearts, and our lives.

--Lindsay Bates

Here we speak the languages of memory and hope.
Here we are welcomed,
Our journeys embraced and shared
As the drops of oil that fill this lamp
Come together to make their light,
So we individuals come together to make this covenant circle.
United in spirit with those who are present in this group,
With the many who came before, and with generations yet to come.
We gather now in the light and warmth of this flame
The flame of truth and freedom
The flame of hope and wonder
The flame of love for others.
May we live to keep this flame alive in us and in others.

Deep calls unto deep, joy calls unto joy,
Deep calls unto deep, joy calls unto joy,
Light calls unto light.
Let the kindling of this flame rekindle in us the inner light of love, of peace, of hope.
And "as one flame lights another, nor grows the less,"
We pledge ourselves to be bearers of the light,
Wherever we are.

--George B. McKennan

Come in with all your vulnerabilities and strengths, fears and anxieties, loves and hopes.
For here you need not hide, nor pretend, nor be anything other than who you are and
are called to be.

Come into this place where we can touch and be touched, heal and be healed, forgive and
be forgiven.

Come into this place, where the ordinary is sanctified, the human is celebrated, the
compassionate is expected. Come into this place. Together we make it a holy place.

--Rebecca A. Edmiston-Lange

We light this flame to the community we share.
As the budding flower bursts into bloom,
As the glowing light kindles into flame,
May the spirit of life and love, bloom and flame within us,
With ever-renewing light and love.
May the light of this chalice rekindle that which is unique in each of us,
May it inspire us with strength and courage to take on new ventures,
And may the light within shine with love on those around us.
Blessed is the fire of truth and love that burns in us and for us.

This light is only flickering flame
Yet flame illumines our uncertain steps
Flames purify and renew, soften and refine;
They brighten and bring warmth.
Flame reminds us of our brothers and sisters,
Through the generations,
Gathered to seek the truth, to work of justice, to learn to love.
May this flame inspire us to follow in their ways.

With the Advent wreath in this, the darkest time of the year,
We join our Jewish, Christian, and African-American neighbors
In the successive lighting of candles.
May the lights that we kindle here inspire us to give, to love, and to celebrate, And thus to
enter into the spirit of the season.

We gather in the early darkness and new chill of autumn,
Finding warmth from each other;
Turning darkness into a time of light,
Sadness into a time of peace,
Nourishing hope where reason fails.
Grateful for small miracles,
We rejoice in the wonder of making light
Out of darkness, and the daring of hope.)

--(from Haunakah service, adapted for
All Saints)

Evening Service

When we kindle this light, we are joining
With earnest people everywhere who seek,
In the midst of busy lives, a deeper way,
A larger hope, a just and peaceful world.

We light this small flame in the depths of evening
Not to dispel the darkness, for its time is here
But so that we know that we are not alone in our journey.

HOW TO LEAD A GROUP

- **Handle the Logistics**

The leader's basic job is to take care of logistics like starting on time, preparing the room and making sure to have homework for the next session. The process we suggest makes this leadership fairly easy for most people in most groups. You'll need to read over the Leader's Notes to be sure you are familiar with any special rituals or activities. Sometimes you will have a little bit of preparation to do such as bring special items to the meeting. Try to get all that done ahead of time so that when people begin to arrive for the session, you can be fully present.

- **What a leader Isn't**

The group leader isn't a counselor, the person with the "right" answers, or the authority. The covenant is the authority. These topics have no "right" answers. Each person is responsible for their own behavior. These groups are not therapy groups, we listen to and witness one another's stories...we are fellow journeyers.

- **Method of Sharing and Listening**

The covenant group method of sharing will be new to most group members. They will need to have a thorough explanation and gentle reminders as they try it the first time. There will be some people who will warm up to this routine only slowly, and some will dislike it. Encourage them to give it three tries before they give up or ask for modifications. Our experience with dozens of groups is that almost everyone comes to value this method of sharing and almost all groups stick with it. If after three meetings your group is still rebellious, you can drop the first sharing round and give more time to the third. In that case, the leader will have to take care that everyone who wants to speak during the discussion period.

- **Time keeper**

It's very important to have time enough for everyone to share. Part of the leader's job is to pay attention to the clock so that everyone gets their share of talking time. Much of this can be accomplished by modeling in your own sharing and in telling people how much time they have. However, you'll want to have a few good lines in your repertoire to help people wind up if they are taking more than their fair share of time. "We want to have time for everyone, Joe, so can you wind up?" or "That's so interesting, Mary, but we're going to have to move along," or catch the person's eye and point to your watch with a smile. It is always easier to make these moves with a light touch if you do it before you have become irritated or the group has become restive. Only in the rarest of circumstances should you let anyone take double the allotted time. Sometimes a leader needs to speak to a group member who is taking too much time, week after week. That's best done outside of the session.

- **Joys of leading**

One of the joys of being a leader is watching the group unfold as they go deeper and grow closer. The safe environment of the covenant group process invites and nurtures spiritual exploration and trusting bonds of friendship.

- **Your participation in the group**

Our facilitators are leader/participants. Your participation is important because you can guide by your example. Often you will go first with an exercise to show how it is done. That being said, you are primarily a facilitator, and you will always be watching the group process. If there's a topic that's so "hot" for you that you don't think you can both participate and lead, you should probably either lighten up your sharing or ask someone else to lead that meeting.

- **Silence**

The time of silence is often a completely novel concept to group members. We recommend that the leader time the silence. You can set the tone for the quiet time by reading one of these quotes:

- *You have to be silent. You have to listen to the quiet callings of the heart.* Carlos Castaneda
- *Silence gathered and struck me. It bashed me broadside.* Annie Dillard
- *In quietness and confidence shall be my strength.* Isaiah 30:15
- *Speak only when we could improve on silence.* Sam Keen, *To a Dancing God*
- *Silence is the language of God; it is also the language of the heart.* Dag Hammarskjöld

- **Resistance**

Most of us are not very good about trying out new things. We complain, joke, jibe, and resist. Good facilitators anticipate this and let it be ok, up to a point, while being a cheerleader for the process until such time as the resistance gets so great that the group decides as a whole to make a change. So, for instance, there's bound to be restiveness at the idea of taking three minutes of silence. Let the group know that you're experimenting with this too...timing in with you watch, even, because if you didn't you'd stop after just one minute. Ask them to give it a try for three sessions. If more than one person is still resisting after the third session, you can open a discussion with the group. Perhaps your group just doesn't like the silence. It's also possible that when the ones who don't like it hear from the ones who do, they will be better able to tolerate this practice.

- **Cross Talk**

The core of the covenant group process is the safety that is built in with the emphasis on telling one's own story (rather than "fixing" someone else), no cross talk, limited questions, and equal time. Other parts of the process may be adjusted, but the ability to tell your story and be listened to with an open heart (and closed mouths) by others is crucial.

- **The Third Round**

Some groups never get to a third round, other groups rush through the sharing process because they really like that part. For the third round, you are provided questions designed to encourage reflection on what was heard and said during the session. Ask the questions and then suggest that members take a minute to consider their answers before sharing.

- **Difficult People**

If someone forgets the no cross talk agreement, refer the entire group to the covenants agreed upon. If it continues, the leader may want to talk afterwards with the individual to remind that person of the power of telling your story with no judging or advice from others.

Sometimes people have to be helped to quit the group. If someone's behavior has been hurtful or destructive of the process, if other group members have complained or said they would not continue to come if someone else's hurtful behavior is not confronted, you should talk to the person individually. If that doesn't work, you can ask those who are complaining to talk to that individual, or bring up the issue in the group. If none of those things work, you might have to say to that individual something like, "It seems that you just don't care for this process. Perhaps this is just not the right kind of group for you." and finally, "If you come again, you have to live by the rules," and "I am sorry, but I have to ask you to drop out of the group."

The leader's monthly group meeting is a good place to talk through difficult issues. It is very helpful to have other persons to consult with when you get into these difficult places. You are not alone, but be assured that these kinds of problems don't happen very often.

THE LEADER'S 'CLIFF NOTES'

- **The Purpose:**

Covenant groups are a way to help people think about their lives spiritually through the process of sharing with others their thoughts and experiences. The results are twofold: they will grow in their understanding of what is personally meaningful at the same time as they build a caring community.

- **Your Job as leader:**

- **Maintain the structure**

- start each session promptly
- calm initial anxieties
- make expectations clear
- interpret each assignment
- end each session promptly
- check on absent members (to see if they have concerns or need help)
- make sure everyone has homework for next meeting (including absent members)
- get key to meeting room

- **Facilitate the process**

- model non-judgmental witnessing and acceptance of opinions
- allocate and monitor time for checking in and addressing the topic
- allow time for all to speak, prevent monopoly by any one member
- delegate some functions thus promoting shared leadership
- keep the group on track
- encourage participation by all
- be aware of group dynamics
- remember your participation is a model for others
- help the group develop and maintain ground rules

- **You are Unique**

Because covenant groups are not therapy, support, or problem solving groups, the leader's role is unique. Our group focus is on listening to and witnessing each other's spiritual growth. Unlike other facilitator roles, a covenant group leader is a member of his/her group (with all the member's benefits and responsibilities). And remember, you don't have to have all the answers!

**Adapted from Calvin O. Dame's "Information for Credo Group Leaders" created for New England*

- **More Tips For Leaders**

- **A good leader**
 - Explains his/her role in the covenant group process.
 - Is self-aware – good leaders know their own strengths, weaknesses, hot buttons, and biases.
 - Is committed to democratic principles.
 - Is neutral – the leader’s opinions are not used to promote or disparage other's ideas.
 - Is helpful to the group in setting up their ground rules.
 - Creates opportunities for everyone to participate.
 - Focuses and helps clarify the dialogue when needed.
 - Is able to stay in two roles at once (remember you are both a member and the facilitator of shared leadership in the group), both during and after the covenant group session.
 - Intervenes to address behaviors, not personalities.
 - Encourages and affirms each participant.
 - Participates as a member in the covenant group, modeling group norms.

**Adapted from page 9 of UU Study/Action Issue - Dialogue Circles: A Guide for Facilitators by Robert M. Sarly; Autumn 1999*

What Small Group Ministry is intended to offer participants:

- A way to deepen our spirituality through shared practice.
- A way to come together to explore important and interesting topics.
- A way to deepen our connections with the congregation.
- A way to organize and practice service to the larger community.
- A way to connect across age, gender, ethnic, economic, and other differences.
- A way to help newer members engage with our community.
- A way to explore and deepen our practice of our shared UU principles.
- A way to be engaged, included, and heard in a safe, nurturing environment.

What Small Group Ministry is not intended to be:

- A social club, although ties between church members deepen through SGM.
- A debate society, although many important topics are discussed
- A support or therapy group, although the atmosphere is positive.
- A worship service, although there is a strong spiritual aspect to the meeting structure and topics.
- A rigid template of activities, although there are general guidelines to follow.
- A closed “fraternity”, although groups must be limited in size to be effective

COVENANT GROUP PRINCIPLES

- **Model Deep Sharing**

In the first few sessions, it's a good idea for the leader to be the first person speaking on the theme. This will let her/him model good practice by keeping her/his answer to the right length and the optimum depth of sharing. Generally the aim will be to cause people to recall past experiences and share their memories and resulting insights with the group, to share their stories and to think about the topic.

- **Ask Questions**

The leader's primary role is to get others to participate.

- **Guide the Discussion**

Questions may also be useful on those occasions when one needs to guide the discussion. If someone has gone off on a tangent others appear uninterested in following, one might ask, "And how is this relevant to our topic tonight?" If the quieter persons in the group are not getting into the discussion, ask follow-up questions to draw them in. For example: "John, how would you answer the question?" Or, "Anybody else have any insights into this question?"

- **Avoid Task Orientation**

We Unitarian Universalists tend to want closure, or at least a sense of progress, but covenant groups are not primarily task groups. Whether the group adequately addresses the meeting's topic (or completes a section of a quilt) is not of first importance. Whether the group's trust level grew stronger or was weakened is more important.

**Adapted from Covenant Group News, Robert L. Hill, 2000*

HOW TO HANDLE CHALLENGING SITUATIONS

Most covenant groups will go smoothly because participants are there voluntarily and have a stake in the program. However there are challenges that occasionally arise in any group process. Here are some of the most common challenges you are likely to encounter together with some suggestions about effective ways to deal with them.

- **Challenge 1: An aggressive or talkative person dominates the discussion or interrupts people who are speaking.**

As leader, it is your responsibility to contain and guide domineering participants. Once it becomes clear to you what this person is doing, you **MUST** intervene and set limits. If you suspect that making eye contact with this person makes her/him feel as though you are encouraging them to speak, then start by limiting your eye contact with them. Remind the group that everyone is invited to participate: "Let's hear from some folks who haven't had a chance to speak yet." If necessary you can speak to the talkative person by name, "Charlie, we've heard from you. Now let's hear what some of the others have to offer." Be careful to moderate your comments and tone of voice – you are trying to make a point without offending the dominating person.

Ask the person who constantly interrupts to please stop interrupting by saying, "Our ground rules call for us to listen without interrupting and Pat has not finished yet." You may also need to check-in with the interrupter separately, since speech patterns can be cultural and the interrupter may not see it as an interruption (they may see it as demonstrating involvement and enthusiasm).

- **Challenge 2: People start offering unsolicited advice and trying to problem solve for a group member.**

As leader, it is your responsibility to contain and guide members who forget the ground rules of the covenant group. You must intervene, but you must also use caution here. If people are responding to non-verbal "requests" for advice/help based on information revealed during check-in, it may be appropriate to take time for advice and problem solving (this is, after all, a 'ministry' group). Before you do though, check out the assumptions. Do ask the person assumed to be the requester if they want help and do ask the group explicitly whether they want to take time to deal with the issue.

You may choose to say something like, "Please let me remind the group that our ground rules prohibit offering unsolicited advice. Pat, if you want the group's input, let us know and you can chat with folks after the group session ends." If the issue is a cataclysmic one, the group may choose to abandon its topic time and minister to its members. Usually, however, the "ministry" of the group is focused on witnessing each other's spiritual growth.

- **Challenge 3: Lack of focus, not moving forward, participants wander off topic.**

Responding to this challenge takes judgment and intuition. It is the leader's role to help move the dialogue along, but it is not always clear which way it is, or should be, going. Keep an eye on the participants to see how engaged they are, and if you are in doubt, check it out with the group. "We're a little off topic right now. Would you like to stay with this session plan, or would anyone prefer consider an alternative topic?" If only one participant goes into a lengthy digression you may have to say, "We seem to be wandering off course, and I'd like to make sure others get a chance to speak."

- **Challenge 4: Certain participants seem shy and don't say anything.**

Try to draw out quiet participants, but don't put them on the spot - it should always be permissible to "pass". Make eye contact – it reminds them that you'd like to hear from them. Look for non-verbal cues that may indicate they are ready to speak. Frequently participants will feel more comfortable in later sessions of a covenant group and will join in then. Some people simply need more time to process their thoughts and feelings. When someone finally does chime in with a brief comment after staying long on the sidelines, you can give encouragement by expressing genuine interest.

- **Challenge 5: Someone puts forth information which you know to be false.**

Ask, "Has anyone heard of conflicting information?" If no one offers a correction, offer one yourself. And if no one knows the facts and the point is not essential, put it aside and move on. If the point is central to the dialogue, encourage members to look up the information before the next meeting. Remind the group that even experts often disagree.

- **Challenge 6: Lack of interest, no excitement, no one wants to talk, only a few people are actively participating.**

This rarely happens in covenant groups, however, if a leader talks too much, or does not give people plenty of time to collect their thoughts and respond, members may become silent and passive. People need time to think, reflect and get ready to speak up --- give it to them. Occasionally you might have a lack of excitement in the topic because the group seems to be in agreement or dealing only with the surface issues of the topic. Sometimes members may not feel that discussing a topic is appropriate based on something revealed during check-in. Regardless of the reason, you should check out the appearance of a lack of interest with group members by saying something like, "I'm not sensing much energy in the room for this topic. Do we want to continue with it or talk about something else?" Then close your mouth and wait to hear from several members, not just one. You may need to go around the whole circle in order to get a clear idea of what is going on.

- **Challenge 7: Tension or open conflict in the group arises, perhaps when two participants lock horns and argue, or when one participant gets angry and confronts another.**

If there is tension, address it directly. Remind participants that disagreement and idea conflicts help to clarify one's thinking. Explain that, for conflict to be productive, it must be focused upon the issue, and on the legitimately different ways of viewing it. It is acceptable to challenge someone's facts, but personal attacks and challenges to personal beliefs are not acceptable. You must interrupt personal attacks, name-calling, or put-downs as soon as they occur. You will be better able to do so if you have established ground rules that prohibit such behaviors and encourage tolerance for all views. Don't hesitate to appeal to the group for help: if group members bought into the ground rules, they will support you. You may also need to talk one-on-one with the person who engaged in the prohibited behavior.

- **Challenge 8: One member engages in ax-grinding, telling negative stories about a third party or group who is not in the room.**

As leader, it is your responsibility to contain and guide members who engage in questionable behaviors. You must intervene by saying something like, "I am not comfortable hearing this in this covenant group setting. It sounds like something between you and someone who is not here to present their side of the story, and I'm not clear that it relates to the covenant group topic we are considering. If it is related, perhaps you could tell us how it is related to the topic without naming names?"

- **Challenge 9: A member uses categorical language or engages in slurs presenting some category of people in a stereotypical way; often this can be presented under the guise of humor.**

As leader, it is your responsibility to contain and guide members who engage in questionable behaviors. You must intervene by saying something like, "I am not comfortable with this sort of language (or humor). It seems to me that it is stereotyping certain people in a negative way that really is not funny to me or them. I hope you will not use it again."

**Adapted from the 1st Unitarian Society in Newton*

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY “ARCHETYPES” by Peter Bowden

We are complex beings. Despite this, there are some types of behaviors we can expect to see in groups. As an exercise, it may be productive to discuss these small group participant archetypes in ongoing leader meetings. Knowing how you intend to deal with each type can help when these behaviors emerge. But remember, people are *not* this black and white!

- **Talker**

These people talk non-stop. They always have something to say and have trouble not blurting out. Many talkers KNOW they have trouble not talking.

- **Thinker**

These people spend the majority of their time thinking and never get around to sharing. Why? Maybe they aren't sure they know how they feel. Maybe they are just interested in hearing what others have to say. They are very attentive of the group, but without good facilitation can end up not participating verbally.

- **Know-it-all**

They always have an answer, the right answer. They've figured it all out. Some may occasionally be open to new ideas. Some are so sure of their positions they are closed and have difficulty hearing ideas that contradict their positions.

- **Outsider**

These people have trouble identifying as part of a group. They have an identity as being outside of normal groups and cultures. Whether they know it or not, not belonging is part of their self concept. This may be true across the board or in specific situations. For whatever reason they have decided they are an outsider.

- **Director**

Directors tend to always have a sense of how things should be happening. It's not so much that they have strong opinions, but they have an agenda concerning where the group should be headed. They will very easily make decisions for the group before the group realizes it had a decision to make!

- **Debater**

Some people feel it is their duty to be the “devil's advocate” and fuel debate regardless of their own belief. They may even agree with the person they are debating.

- **Center**

Some people always need to be at the center of attention. One way this manifests is through never-ending drama in a person's life. Some people just like to be in the center of everything, and a group is the ultimate place to display this tendency.

- **Judge**

These people have opinions about everything -- about other people, the group, other people's ideas – just about everything under the sun. They think therefore they judge! And it is their duty to share it with you. Or so they seem to think.

Note: These are just SOME types of behavior that we see in groups. There are others. A great way to improve your facilitation is to know which of these tendencies YOU have, as well as how you might handle them as they pop up in other people.