



Community Support Nights Community Goals and Objectives

Supplies Needed:

Butcher Paper/Poster board

Markers

Community is a choice, which nourishes and challenges us as we try to discern how social justice, spirituality, and simple living become a part of the daily lives of this particular group. What is essential to community – commitment, sacrifice, forgiveness, and generosity - is not exactly popular in contemporary society. Fortunately, community is not expected to happen overnight. Community is a process. There is a JVC maxim that says, "If you are working at community then community is working." The goal of this session is to set achievable community goals and objectives.

1) Opening Reflection

*I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My commandment is this: love one another just as I love you.... This, then, is what I command you: love one another. **John 15.11-12, 17***

2) Check In

3) Process

This session involves brainstorming followed by group discussion. As is all brainstorming, this is a time to get all the ideas out without judgment. Butcher paper and markers would be helpful.

- Begin by listing general expectations of and goals for community-the list should include ideas from everyone. Have people talk about their ideas of community life.
- Next brainstorm objectives. The objectives, as a means to achieve the goals and expectations of community, should be specific rather than general ("I would like to eat dinner together" rather than "I want to spend time together"). Remember, this is brainstorming; nothing should be criticized or eliminated at this point.
- Review all of the suggestions. Look for common themes and ideas that could be combined or eliminated because of repetition. If there are differing opinions, now is the time to discuss them.
- Every community member should agree to each objective, which should be specific, measurable, and achievable. It is important that the objectives be written down since they will be reviewed at a later session. Perhaps the objectives could be posted in a prominent location. The following are examples of achievable objectives:

- 1) We will eat dinner together Monday through Thursday. Each of us will be responsible for signing up for [number] evenings a month to cook.
- 2) We will honor each ' ? ' night as our community night. We will begin by eating dinner together and then doing something as a community.

4) Check Out

5) Closing Prayer

In the kingdom of God I am never less than an individual, but I am never only an individual. I am always a member of a group, called by God to a response of love, which must include the whole group or it is literally unacceptable to God.

A community is indeed God's family, and the Lord who calls us to a response of love takes as done to God self whatever we do to one another. "Whatever you do to the least of my children you do to me." There can be no relationship of love with God unless we relate to one another in love. Sometimes this seems the highest cost of being a Christian. It is much easier to love the God I don't see than the [community member] I do see.

The Christian Vision by John Powell, SJ