



Community Support Nights Expectations for Community Life

As the community embarks on its shared life, it often helps to have some agreement about expectations for the parameters of formalized community gatherings, such as Spirituality Nights, Agenda Meetings, Community Nights, and Support Nights. In this session, the program expectations for the year should be reviewed and discussed. It will be valuable to have a concrete understanding about how and when these meetings will take place, before JVs commit to additional evening activities, such as an outside class, workout routine, or volunteer experience. It should be made clear that participation is expected for all community activities, and that the absence of any person is a loss for the group as well as the individual. For this reason, scheduling ahead of time is important.

Since the JVs communally own this process, it is useful to have a discussion that incorporates shared decisions about the following choices for the community:

- 1) When will each of these types of meetings take place?
- 2) At what time, and for how long, shall we expect to meet?
- 3) Phone – should be off, on, calls answered, screened, other?
- 4) What should occur if someone has an unusual reason to miss the meeting – should the meeting proceed, be rescheduled, canceled?
- 5) Who will facilitate?
- 6) Who will be responsible for monitoring the time and length of meetings?
- 7) What should happen if a topic is not resolved when time is up – could a group decision be made to extend the meeting, or schedule a time to continue it? The process by which this issue is decided should be one that is shared equally among members.
- 8) Personal or sensitive information may be shared in community. To what extent should this be kept confidential? Some options include:
 - a) An agreement to keep everything shared in a meeting completely confidential – not mentioned outside the group or even alluded to.
 - b) An agreement to only share outside the group only one's personal insights about oneself that arose from a meeting, without sharing another's story.
 - c) An agreement to share anything from a meeting, as long as no names are revealed.
 - d) An agreement to discuss anything freely outside the group.

The Support Team may choose to share with JVs the format of this Guide, including various elements for use during Support Nights.