

FRICITION

Tools For Better Relationships

TIPS TO A SUCCESSFUL GROUP

START & FINISH ON TIME. Doing this will show your small group you value their time.

FRICITION: WHEN PEOPLE RUB YOU THE WRONG WAY

ICEBREAKER

Introduce yourself and share: In group settings, which role do you typically fall into? (Examples: *The listener, the problem-solver, the peacemaker, the jokester, etc.*)

INTRODUCTION

Over the next few weeks, we'll learn how to navigate some of the most difficult relationships in our lives. We all have "those" people in our lives, the nitpickers, complainers, hot-tempered, unreliable, or avoidant ones. They can test our patience and stretch our faith. But God doesn't just call us to tolerate relational friction; He gives us wisdom to respond in healthy, life-giving ways that protect our peace and reflect God's love.

READ |

Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you.
— Colossians 3:13 (NLT)

Overlooking an offense isn't a weakness, but spiritual maturity. If you want to grow in patience, practice overlooking offenses. When we refuse to be offended, we protect our peace and create space for God to work. Being offended is inevitable, but living offended is a choice. In Colossians 3:13, "make allowance" literally means to create space ahead of time. Forgiveness isn't something we scramble to do after we're hurt. It is a mindset we decide on in advance. Holding onto offense has never made a marriage stronger, a friendship healthier, or a person closer to God.

What's one *small* thing that tends to bother you—tone of voice, being interrupted, sarcasm, or feeling ignored? (Examples: "I get triggered when I feel ignored," "I'm sensitive to sarcasm," etc.)

READ |

If the godly give in to the wicked, it's like polluting a fountain or muddying a spring.
— Proverbs 25:26 (NLT)

Forgiveness does not mean being a doormat. Refusing to be offended does not mean allowing people to mistreat you endlessly. Forgiveness and boundaries are not opposites. They work together. Healthy boundaries protect the good things God is doing in your heart. However, grace without boundaries can eventually lead to resentment and burnout. When you forgive, you're not excusing behavior, but trusting God with justice, and taking your hands off what only God can carry. A helpful question to ask yourself when you're offended is this: *Is holding onto this worth losing my peace?*

What are some practical ways that we can forgive while still setting healthy boundaries? (Example: Choosing kindness and grace without over-explaining or over-engaging in a conflict, etc.)

READ |

Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry.
— James 1:19 (NLT)

One of the greatest relationship skills we see in Scripture is empathy: choosing to understand before trying to be understood. When we listen first, we calm situations instead of escalating them. People often speak harshly because their hearts are full of stress, disappointment, or fear. When someone vents, they're usually releasing what's built up inside, not attacking you. In those moments, we have a choice: we can correct, or we can connect. Correcting says, "You're wrong," but connecting says, "I see you." When we slow down, acknowledge how someone feels, and resist minimizing emotions, the tension often softens. Empathy may not come naturally, but it is a choice we make when we intentionally give compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience.

What are some things you can say to connect instead of correct? (Examples: "I can see why you'd feel that way," "Tell me more so I can understand better," etc.)

READ |

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. — Proverbs 15:1 (NIV)

Part of being empathetic is knowing how it would feel if someone were to yell or use aggressive language and choosing not to do the same. Volume and speed tend to rise with conflict. But Scripture & scientific research shows the opposite approach works better.

Speaking low and slow calms your own emotions first, then helps calm the other person. Tone communicates care more than words ever could. Sometimes love means speaking up, but how we speak matters as much as what we say.

On a scale of 1–10, how are you doing at refusing to be offended and speaking gently when emotions are high?

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

- Commit to attending your Small Group for the next five weeks.
- Ask God to reveal any offense you may be holding onto and to help you forgive. If you're comfortable, invite the group to pray with you about letting go of the offense.

CLOSE IN PRAYER:

Dear God, thank You for showing us how to navigate friction in our relationships in ways that reflect Your love and truth. Please give us wisdom, patience, and grace to deal with the difficult people in our lives. Help us to refuse offense, choose empathy, and speak with love. We trust You to bring healing where we can't. In Jesus' name, amen.



Make Time to be in God's WORD

Reading God's Word daily re-patterns the way you think & transforms your mind. Doing your daily devotions is an excellent way to record, process, & share what God is teaching you on a personal level. We do this using S.O.A.P.

- S - Scripture**
- O - Observation**
- A - Application**
- P - Prayer**

Here's an example:

S: *Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "*
--Matthew 4:4 (NIV)

O: Jesus said that we can't live on food alone. Our life is sustained through His Word.

A: Just as food is important to me, God's Word is even more because it will sustain me and give me the strength to live out my life.

P: Jesus, thank You for reminding me that I need Your Word to give me the wisdom & strength to follow You. Help me to make time to spend with You daily. In Jesus' name I pray, amen.

SCRIPTURES FOR S.O.A.P.

Day 1:

Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.

— Proverbs 19:11 (ESV)

Day 2:

To answer before listening—that is folly and shame.

— Proverbs 18:13 (NIV)

Day 3:

Never take revenge... 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord.

— Romans 12:19 (NIV)

Day 4:

Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

— Matthew 5:44 (NIV)

Day 5:

But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because He is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

— Luke 6:35-36 (NIV)