

THE PRINCIPLE OF COMMUNITY HELPS TO UNDERSTAND WHY OHCE HAS ‘GROUPS’ AND NOT ‘CLUBS’

Every person was born with a desire to belong, to be involved in a group. This is why we think hermits are so strange, because deep down inside we have this need to belong. People have a natural inclination to be involved in a community, a supportive community committed to a worthwhile cause.

Groups in OHCE are supposed to be that kind of community. Don't think that your group is a place or a time; it is a group of people—“a community.” This kind of community is happening whenever people in the group are learning from each other, helping each other, and supporting one another. This kind of community happens not just in group meetings, but when two or three gather at the coffeeshop, or rally to help another person in their group. To be honest, when most people think about "community", this is what they are thinking.

When a new person visits our group they can readily recognize if we are committed to some worthwhile causes. For them they want to belong in order to accomplish something that they cannot accomplish alone. They want to be a part if plans are made with joy and with a serving spirit.

When the program for the day is presented, we are always ready for something new, practical and enlightening. The principle of community is more robust than we realize. We often mistakenly think that community is for the member's benefit. It is, to a degree. But when we stop community with just the members, what we have is one, or at best two dimensional community. When a group reaches out to their friends and neighbors and offers community to them as well, we have community in 3D, a much broader and impactful experience. The community we enjoy is a great " incubator" for those who need to be learning along side us. In our groups, new members have a safe environment to explore the things they do not know, ask questions, and have a group of people help them grow in their understanding.

This is why we must be aware of the needs of others and invite them to come join us in our group meetings each month. OHCE is still one of the most incredible strategies to “bring the university to you”... when we understand its mission and become intentional about extending community to those who need to know what we have learned or are learning.

Adapted from Bob Mayfield’s “31 Days” of inspiration on a blog. 8/2009