

13 Keys for a Deeper Men's Group

1. **TRUST.** Establish a sense of safety and trust in the group. This includes clear agreements on confidentiality and boundaries. Do whatever it takes to maintain trust, including confronting men if they exhibit non-trustworthy behavior. Be trustworthy yourself.
2. **PURPOSE.** Make the uncovering and living of your purpose an ongoing priority in your life. Know the group's purpose. Write it down. Let the group's purpose guide the flow of your meetings and guide your group's evolution.
3. **PRESENCE.** Your presence – how you let the present moment live through you – is your greatest gift and really all you have. Continually bring yourself back to being present with yourself and the men in the circle.
4. **COMMITMENT.** If you're in town, you agree to show up for all meetings (emergencies excepted), and to arrive on time. The group's energy will be drained by men who are not all the way "in" the group; by men who frequently arrive late; or by men who have constant excuses for not showing up.
5. **LEADERSHIP.** Everyone is a leader. Even if one man has been chosen to lead the group, each participant should feel the freedom to stop a process if something feels "off"; to call a man out if that man is not being real with the group; or to call attention to a flatness or a dip in the group energy and create change.
6. **EMBODIMENT.** Leave the day behind and get into your body as fully as possible; make physical contact with the other men in the group.
7. **FEELING.** Feel yourself as much as you can – your heart, your emotions, your numbness, your fear – and also feel everyone else in the group. Men in more advanced groups may also want to feel "What wants to happen next?"

8. **CHALLENGE.** Be willing to give and receive no-bullshit, heart-connected feedback or challenges. When you're receiving this kind of feedback, it might feel strange or disconcerting, as though you are sitting on a hot stove while simultaneously held in warm, loving arms.
9. **TRUTH.** Leave your "heady" advice behind; speak your heartfelt, vulnerable truth from deep in your body and encourage others to do the same. Be willing to speak this truth at any moment, yet be conscious of right timing. This practice keeps you on your own edge and makes you more open, present and alive.
10. **ATTENTION.** No cross talk. One man speaks at a time. Use a talking stick if necessary. (Exception: a man whose habit is to talk continuously as a way of securing attention from the group needs to be interrupted occasionally to help him break his trance.) Give your full attention to the man who is speaking. Also: Pay attention to your posture and unconscious gestures and how they affect the depth of the group's experience.
11. **HUMOR.** Men often use humor as a way of avoiding intimacy or depth with each other. Consider: What would humor that creates *more* openness and connection look like?
12. **TRANSFORMATION.** If you believe that you can't teach an old dog new tricks, perhaps a deep men's group isn't for you. It's critical to a group's life and depth that every man understands this: that if he does things the way he always has, his life will look the same. Everyone in your group – and in your life – is affected by the degree to which you are willing to change. This willingness is a direct reflection of your inner freedom, and your ability to surrender to Divine Will.
13. **SILENCE.** The ability to not just tolerate but to *relish* moments or minutes of quiet is a hallmark of a deep group.