



Mandatory First Meeting

There are only a few things we'll say are mandatory, but having everyone there for your first meeting is one of them. Here's why...

Calendar planning – We've learned that if you put all your session dates on the calendar up front, women can make all their other plans around them, and your attendance can be perfect. To do this, everyone **MUST SHOW UP WITH THEIR "HUSBAND-APPROVED" CALENDARS** at this first meeting. You'll suggest dates for each meeting and keep working at it until everyone has "calendared" every meeting and retreat(s). You'll want to follow up the next day with an email noting these dates once again, just for clarity and future reference.

** To have a consistent day of the week that you meet will make it much easier for the women to remember, plus allowing four weeks between meetings will give the women time to finish the homework and digest the materials.

Rules of engagement – The first session is when you'll lay out the rules. It's important that each woman understands the **COMMITMENTS**, the **EXPECTATIONS**, and the **ACCOUNTABILITY** required to participate. These things say that what's going on is important. The rules for 100% attendance, 100% on time, 100% compliance on reading the books and for doing the homework assignments...all these parameters are set at this first mandatory meeting.

Your faith story – The most important piece of this first meeting is your faith story. **YOU WILL SET THE TONE AND DETERMINE THE LEVEL OF TRANSPARENCY OF YOUR GROUP BY HOW YOU SHARE YOUR STORY.** It's critical that everyone in the group is there to hear it in its entirety. How deep they go, how open they are with you and each other, will be determined in large part by how deep **YOU** go and how open you are.

Financial stuff – In this first meeting, you'll "settle up" with your ladies regarding fees and books (if you are asking them to pay for their books). You'll determine how the books are going to work, and handle the money part of Titus2 Mentoring Women.

** More ideas on how to handle the financial part are under *Selecting Your Topics and Books*.

Getting Acquainted – You only get one chance to start. So having everyone there to meet everyone, learn names, and begin connecting with each other is crucial. When one woman misses the first meeting, then the second meeting and/or retreat is affected, since you have to go back and matriculate one person into the group, holding everyone up to accommodate one

person who didn't make the first session.

We recommend coordinating this first meeting **well in advance**. Pick this first meeting date by email, by phone call, text...however you have to. But be absolutely sure that everyone has it on their calendar and intends to come.

We believe so strongly in this that we recommend NOT including a woman in the group if she misses the first meeting. To redo the calendar, to retell your faith story, etc., etc., you'll need to seek the Lord's guidance as to whether it's His will for the missing woman to be in the group or not. If God leads you to include her and to do what's required to include her, then by all means do so. But be sure it's His idea and not your own. Jesus didn't disciple everyone, and if circumstances or priorities shift a woman's commitment to the first meeting, you may be getting a sample of what it's going to be like throughout the season.