

point out to the dominators what they are doing. This might lead to some hurt feelings and personal growth- things to be avoided at all costs in squelching a group.

14. Don't urge the silent members of the group to speak up. They might get the idea that you really care about them and that their ideas count after all. They will be more difficult to discourage as a result.
15. By all means don't let the group members express any hostility towards each other. You may find them understanding each other too well as a result and the group will become tenacious of continuing.

*Note.* It is recommended that every group leader express his [*sic*] own unique personality in using the above rules. There is a squelching method that is uniquely yours. You may have found ways to squelch a group that haven't even been thought of yet. But follow any one of these rules with dogged persistence and you need not fear. You will have expressed yourself. The group will certainly collapse, for you will have violated a principle of human nature.



# Wakefield Ministry Scheme



## Teaching Adults Guidance for Tutors

### Appendix One How not to do it

GR K5

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*The following material is taken from Alan Rogers, Teaching Adults, Open University Press 2002. Some of the points relate more to ongoing groups like parish home groups or a Core Group than to the tutoring of ordination candidates, but the list is worth reproducing in its entirety!*

### ***The Fine Art of Squelching Small Groups***

The ability to squelch the life out of a small group may be thought of as an art. Because of the strong interest in this new art, the following ground rules are offered to give direction and purpose to would-be squelchers who wish to develop their talents in this direction.

1. Keep the small group too large for the members to really get to know each other. By all means have at least twenty or twenty-five members in order to do this.
2. Complain at every meeting about how few people have turned out. This will give group members a size-consciousness and a sense of guilt. They will either quit coming or they will invite their friends and the small group will soon grown into oblivion; it will become a large group.
3. Arrange the seats in formal rows like a classroom. Don't permit informality to sneak in by sitting in a friendly circle. In that situation group members might feel encouraged to express themselves and not want to give up the group.
4. Include a long business meeting with each group session and bore everyone to tears. The group will rapidly wither.
5. Dominate the group from the beginning. Establish yourself as the authority on all matters that may come before the group. Make all the basic decisions yourself, while giving the impression of a democratic spirit to the group members.
6. If possible, establish yourself as the teacher of the group and deliver a learned lecture at each meeting. (Our rock-bound guarantee: the group won't last more than three months this way or your money back.)
7. Pay no attention to the needs and interests of the group members. Most people don't know what is best for them anyhow.
8. Answer all questions yourself. Don't let group members speak to each other or answer each other's questions. What do they know that you can't say better?
9. Don't permit the fiction to arise that group members should take turns leading the discussion. They're liable to get too deeply involved and interested and keep the group alive in spite of your efforts.
10. Never allow group members to share anything personal. Change the subject to a nice safe intellectual discussion when this happens. That way they won't get too involved with each other at a depth level. Groups in which this happens become devilishly hard to squelch.
11. By all means, don't encourage members of the group to express themselves. Limit the participation to the more vocal, intellectual members to keep the conversation on a high plane of sophistication. They will bore each other to sleep.
12. Keep the discussion on a theoretical plane, preferably in the realm of theology and philosophy. Mention names like Kant, Schleiermacher and Tillich occasionally to make the others feel inferior.
13. Allow one or two persons to dominate the discussion. That way the others will become quietly angry and the group will fold up in no time. By all means, don't