



### Study Groups: Make them worth your time!

Study groups can be a game-changer **when** utilized effectively. One reason is you don't know what you don't know. Studying with others can bring to light what you are missing. Also, your study group can help keep everyone on track for assignments, provide feedback and support, quiz through material, and contribute to reducing the workload. **The key is communication, preparation, and consistency.** So, let's begin with how to create a study group if one is not created for you in the course.

#### **Creating a study group:**

If the course you are in does not have a system for helping students create study groups, ask your faculty for help. This can easily be done by posting an on-line sign-up sheet for virtual courses or passing around a sign-up sheet in class for in-person courses. Give all students a day or two to self-select into a group and then have the faculty finish assigning all remaining students to a study group. Limit the groups to no more than 4 students. Ask all groups to meet at least once by the end of the first week and preferably a couple more times. After that students may decide if they want to continue in the study group or not. The key is to form the group, get to know each other, and discuss how to get the most out of the study group. If faculty is not able to help, see if you can post an announcement (either on-line or in the classroom) that you are forming a study group. And of course, as you meet other students either virtually or in-person you can always ask them to join.

**First Meeting:** Introduce yourself. Go over the guidelines and considerations provided below to decide what you want from your study group. Set up specific times to meet. Clarify what needs to be done before meeting and what will be done at the next meeting.

#### **Guidelines and considerations:**

- Study groups work well when all members come prepared. Usually, the core textbook readings and recorded lectures will be done individually so group time can be used to discuss, summarize, and quiz through the material (notes, PPT, objectives).
- Quiz each other by turning the PPT slides into questions, quiz the objectives, create a concept map on a white board from memory, ask each member to explain a concept, and/or together work on practice NCLEX questions being sure to review the rationales.
- Consider dividing up work to create a final document of the weekly objectives or textbook chapter notes, then quiz through the notes individually and as a group. If you create the document in Cornell-style notetaking, it will instantly be quizzable!
- Ask each member what they would like to see or do in the study group. Make a plan, then follow it.

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