

Part D

Understand what a Life Group meeting looks like...

Nothing is more important to the success of your Life Group than having a _____ weekly meeting!

The leader must have a _____ of God _____ to change lives!

Life Group Meeting Format

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| I. Pre-meeting preparation/Set-up | |
| II. Welcome/Ice-breaker | 5-10 minutes |
| III. Bible Discussion | 20 minutes |
| IV. Personal Application | 20-25 minutes |
| V. Outreach Time | 5 minutes |
| VI. Prayer Time | 5-10 minutes |
| VII. Fellowship | |

The Flow of a Good Lesson

FIRST DECIDE: APPLICATION POINT

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>	<u>TIME NEEDED</u>
<i>Open</i>	<i>Get people sharing/superficial level</i>	<i>5-10 minutes</i>
<i>Dig</i>	<i>Get people sharing/factual level</i>	<i>20-25 minutes</i>
<i>Reflect</i>	<i>Get people sharing/feeling level</i>	<i>25-30 minutes</i>

“SAFE PLACE” SCALE

Start with low risk _____	End with high risk
A STORY IN SCRIPTURE	MY OWN STORY
How Simon Peter met God	How I met God
<i>What’s going on in Peter’s life?</i>	<i>What’s going on in my life?</i>

BACK TO THE B.A.S.I.C.S. Life Group Discussion Guide

OPEN: What is the difference in trying and training?
Share a time in your life when you trained. What discipline was involved?
What were the rewards? How could you apply this to spiritual growth?
What makes us hesitate to apply discipline to our spiritual life?

READ: I Timothy 4:7-8

1. What point is Paul making?
2. In your words, what is the purpose of our “BACK TO THE BASICS” lesson series?
3. What role does repetition play in developing spiritual discipline?

REVIEW: GAME PLAN PART I:

Have a plan: Study: _____ Place: _____ Time: _____

1. *Ask God to meet you in scripture.*
2. *Read a brief block of scripture three times.*
 - a. *Generally*
 - b. *Specifically*
 - c. *Personally*
3. *Meditate on the passage.*
4. *Talk to God about what you have read.*
 - a. *Praise*
 - b. *Repent*
 - c. *Claim*
 - d. *Question*
5. *Take one thought or verse with you through the day.*

Why is having a plan important?

What have you found helpful about this plan?

REFLECT: *Share with the group how your daily quiet time with God is going (give each group member the opportunity to answer these questions uninterrupted).*

What are you studying? Place? Time of day?

Share something God has revealed to you during your quiet time.

How do you see God transforming you (what is he working on)?

*What is the key to you sticking with this or starting this?**

*If you need accountability (someone to check on you and encourage you) ask someone in the group to play that role.

Luke 5:1-11

CALLING THE FIRST DISCIPLES

LOOKING INTO THE SCRIPTURE/20 MINUTES. Read Luke 5:1-11 and discuss.

MY OWN STORY/20 Minutes. Share some of your own Spiritual journey with your group.

1. What gets your attention about this first meeting of Jesus and Simon?
 - a. it was a terrific coincidence
 - b. it was more than coincidental
 - c. Jesus trusted a stranger to help him
 - d. how Jesus showed his interest in Simon's work
2. If you had been Simon Peter when Jesus asked him to "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch," what would you have done?
 - a. what Peter did
 - b. made some excuse
 - c. politely told Jesus to stick to his preaching
 - d. suggested another time when the fish were biting.
 - e. gone ahead grudgingly
 - f. wondered who this person thought he was.
3. When they "caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break, how do you think Simon Peter felt?
 - a. overjoyed
 - b. terrible about what he had said to Jesus
 - c. dumbfounded
 - d. aware of who Jesus was
4. When Simon Peter said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" what did he mean?
 - a. You embarrass me because you know more about fishing than I do.
 - b. I feel uncomfortable being around you because of my sinful life.
 - c. I know you are all that you say you are, but I am not ready to follow.
 - d. Stop bugging me. Get out of my life.
 - e. I'm confused. If I say "yes," I know that it will mean changing my life and I don't think I can measure up.
5. "They left everything and followed Him." Why?
 - a. They wanted Jesus to become their fishing partner.
 - b. They followed him in blind faith.
 - c. They were confused and needed time to figure him out.
 - d. They were attracted to his message.
 - e. They were intrigued by the thought of becoming "fishers of men."
 - f. They were irresponsible.
 - g. They knew then and there that he was the Messiah.

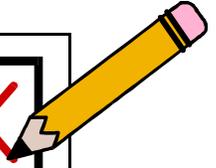
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1. In comparison to Simon Peter's call, how would you explain your spiritual beginning?
 - a. tame
 - b. more intellectual
 - c. just as confusing
 - d. even crazier
 - e. different, but just as real
 - f. not sure
 2. What is the condition of your spiritual boat right now?
 - a. sinking
 - b. out for repairs in dry dock
 - c. dead in the water
 - d. sailing at a fast clip
 - e. sailing in the wrong direction
 - f. battered by the heavy waves
 3. Where do you think Jesus is, in relationship to your spiritual boat?
 - a. on the shore watching
 - b. swimming out to meet me
 - c. climbing on board
 - d. aboard, but not doing anything
 - e. casting our the nets
 - f. pulling in the catch
 4. How does the idea of "putting out into deep water and letting down your nets for a catch" sound to you?
 - a. scary
 - b. crazy
 - c. okay, but. . .
 - d. fine, if someone will join me
 - e. just the invitation I've been waiting for
 - f. not sure what you mean
 5. What is it going to take to get you going?
 - a. time to consider the cost
 - b. a little support from others
 - c. a good kick in the pants
 - d. time to get myself together
 - e. help to clean up my life
 - f. frankly, I don't know

Life groups

DO'S AND DON'TS

(circle the ones that stick out in your mind)

	Do's	Don'ts 



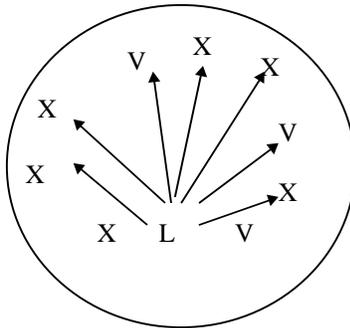
Part E

UNDERSTAND HOW TO ELICIT DISCUSSION

Discussion: After some meetings you will say, “This was a great group tonight!” What happened?

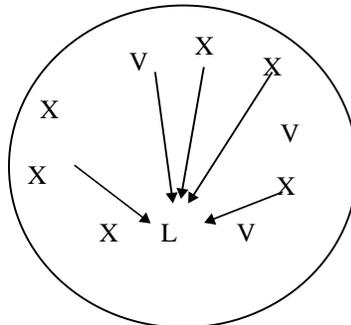
SUCCESSFUL GROUP DYNAMICS

NOT THIS:



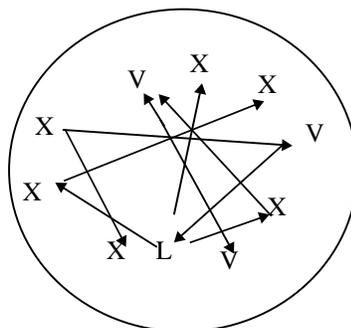
...The leader doing all the talking and the people doing all the listening.

NOT THIS:



...Each group member responding only to the leader.

BUT THIS:



...Members interacting with each other, the leader guiding the discussion.

BRAINSTORM: *What can you do as a group leader to create an atmosphere for this kind of discussion and interaction?*



7

KEYS TO USING THE LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE:

1. _____ and _____ over the discussion questions before your group meeting.
2. Follow the _____.! Give each group member a copy.
3. Be _____!

_____ questions.
_____ questions for follow-up.
Stop and _____ about major concerns.



_____ the lesson when appropriate.

4. Keep a good _____, remembering to leave a majority of your time for the _____ section.
5. Don't be afraid to _____ the _____ question. Use the choices given for answers to help people verbalize their feelings.
6. Give everyone the opportunity to answer the _____ question(s), but don't _____ anyone to talk.
7. Keep a natural _____ to the discussion. Don't be over-_____ on the guide.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

1. Enjoying. Members sense when you enjoy the group interaction. When you are prepared and you have placed the meeting in God's hands, you are free to enjoy the discussion. It frees your thoughts to be creative and even humorous.

2. Listening. It is important for a Life Group leader to use active listening in the group. Physically and emotionally focus on the person who is talking in your group. Face the person to whom you are listening. Maintain good eye contact. Interject brief phrases to let the speaker know that you are listening.

3. Clarifying. It is important for good group dynamics that everyone is understood. When meanings are unclear, ask a question for clarification. Examples: “I’m not sure what you meant. Could you restate that?” or “Could you say a little more about what you mean?” Clarifying can be a compliment because it shows the speaker you are listening.

4. Re-directing. When a group member continues to address all of his or her comments and questions to the leader rather than the group, use re-directing. Examples: “What do the rest of you think about John’s question? “Is there anyone else who has a comment at this point?” These types of questions will also help involve more people in the discussion and keep one individual from dominating the Life Group.

5. Summarizing. Summarizing the groups response after a series of questions and answers allows the group leader to acknowledge members’ contributions and keep the lesson on track. A summarizing response might be, “So what we see in this passage is....”

6. Paraphrasing. Paraphrasing allows you to repeat the thoughts of others and enables them to share more deeply. It summarizes what has been heard and allows the group to explore personal feelings, thoughts and actions. You might say something like, “That was a very painful event in your childhood, wasn’t it, Greg? How do you deal with it?” Another response might be, “It is exciting to hear of the victory you shared, Kim. How does that impact your relationship with your husband?”

7. Affirming. It is always important to recognize and affirm the person who is talking. Try to always address the person by his/her name. Examples: “Sue, thank you for your comment.” “Tom, that was an excellent point.” Never tell a person that they are wrong. You can say, “I’ve never thought about it that way” or “That is interesting,



very interesting.” You could redirect the question to the rest of the others: “What do the rest of you think?” A good rule of thumb is that you must make a comment on every comment. Everyone wants to feel important!

8. Handling talkative and silent members. Members who dominate a discussion can ruin a good Life Group. Excessive talkers can be handled through the proper use of group dynamics, nonverbal communication, and seating arrangement. Eye contact is important. The Life Group leader should break eye contact with the talkative person. Sit beside him, not across from him. Maintain consistent eye contact with less talkative members. When the talkative member pauses in the middle of a lengthy speech, the leader should break in and say, “Does anyone else have anything to add?” It may come to the point you may have to talk to the talkative member outside of the study. You might say something like this, “I am struggling to get everyone involved in the discussion. I appreciate your help, but I really need you to give a chance for others to participate.”

REVIEW THESE 8 COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND DECIDE WHICH WILL COME NATURALLY AND WHICH YOU WILL NEED TO WORK ON:

Enjoying

Listening

Clarifying

Re-directing

Handling talkative and silent members

Summarizing

Paraphrasing

Affirming

Natural:

Needs work:

HANDLING PROBLEMS: RESPOND TO THESE SITUATIONS

SITUATION #1

Your Life Group has been meeting for two months and things have really jelled. However, the group is not growing and no one is bringing friends.

SITUATION #2

Discussion is not the problem in your group. Everyone is so willing to talk that you are having little time for the reflect section and personal application.

SITUATION #3

You have noticed that very little personal information is being shared in the group. Things are very surface level. Answers to reflect questions are mostly theory and generalizations.

SITUATION #4

Your group is blessed with a new Christian with a lot of enthusiasm. The only problem is, he won't let anyone else speak. He answers every question before anyone else has a chance.

SITUATION #5

Group attendance is very sporadic. Everyone seems to enjoy when they come, but you never have everyone there the same week.

SITUATION #6

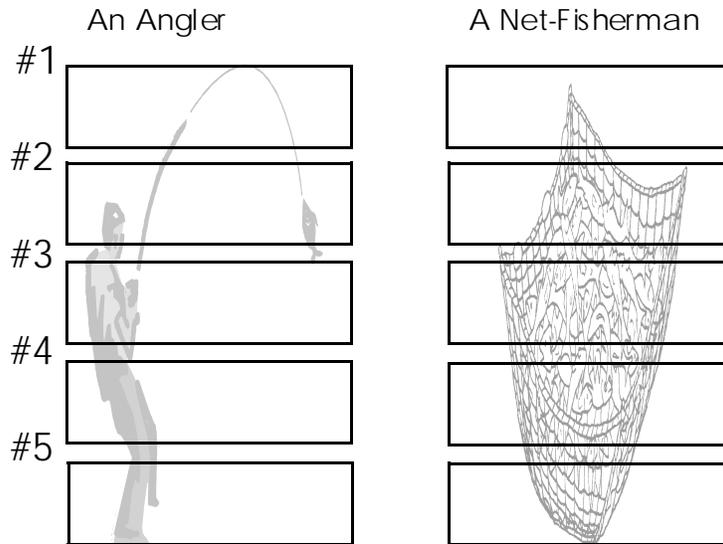
Group prayer time is becoming routine and superficial.

A

KEY CONCEPT:

Net-Fishing

~Contrast~



~Conclusion~

*So they pulled their boats up on shore,
left everything and followed him.*

Luke 5:11



DISCUSSION: How does this concept work perfectly in a Life Group?

B

KEY GOAL: Multiplication

Why multiplication?

Anticipate the objections.....

OBJECTION:

ANSWER: