

REDEEMER SMALL GROUP LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Part VI – Shepherding Members

Promoting Spiritual Growth

As a group leader, you do not *cause* spiritual growth, but you can create an environment that promotes and facilitates such growth. That's why we have stressed the importance of God's Word in your group, teaching groups to pray, understanding the role of the Holy Spirit, and the need to build authentic, lasting relationships with members.

Go over "Small Group Leader Shepherding Plan for Making Disciples" handout

Encouraging Group Members

Tips for becoming encouraging small group leaders

- **Be slow to speak** (Prov 12:18; 13:3; James 1:9) – A great way to encourage members is to listen to their stories with attentiveness and caring. Do not try to fix things quickly or give pat answers to their problems or issues. Simply listen.
- **Exercise sensitivity** – The Bible reminds us that our speech should be seasoned with salt. Our words should be filled with grace (Eph. 4:29) and should mimic those of Jesus who came in grace and truth (John 1:14).
- **Show kindness when you speak** – Words of gentleness are soothing and tender. Truth does not always have to be delivered from a rifle barrel. Truth spoken gently is more readily heard and more easily obeyed.

Pitfalls to avoid when trying to be an encourager

- **Defensiveness** – Don't try to justify yourself. Simply listen to what others are saying and try to clarify what is being said.
- **Sarcasm and criticism** – Sometimes humor gets out of hand. Remember that people are easily wounded with words (Prov. 15:4).
- **Correction** – Don't tell people that their feelings are wrong or inaccurate or say to someone, "You shouldn't feel that way." The point is, they do feel that way, and you need to listen carefully to determine why they have the feelings they are experiencing.
- **Advice-giving** – Avoid giving answers before having really investigated the questions. Advice-giving can be patronizing and can shut-down communication. Quick advice often ignores the real problem

Crisis Caregiving

In cases of impending physical danger, contact the police immediately. Such crises would include:

- Life-threatening situations
- Severe accidents or emergencies
- An attempted suicide or threatened suicide
- Present threats of violence by a person to him or her to themselves or others

Though it is unlikely that you would ever experience any of these in the context of a group meeting, please be aware of the possibility and know that you should contact the police immediately.

If you have a serious situation that may require help and guidance to address (child abuse or neglect), contact Tim and Pastor Rol immediately for help discerning the severity of the crisis and for assistance in reporting the incident to the proper authorities (if needed).

Supporting vs. Counseling

As a small group leader, you are expected to provide support and encouragement to members of your group. However, you are not trained to be a professional counselor, so you should not assume such a role. Instead, your responsibility is to provide opportunities for your members to receive the appropriate care they require. Situations that may require professional help:

- Serious family problems
- History of past abuse
- Addictions
- Severe personality disorders
- Mental disorders or dysfunctions

If you should encounter anything that resembles the examples above, contact Tim and Pastor Rol to see what steps should be taken. Together we can determine a plan for encouraging a group member to participate in counseling or another type of help.




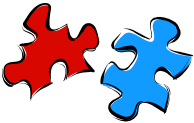

Just because you think someone is in need of counseling does not mean they will be willing to participate in counseling. Work with Tim and Pastor Rol to determine how to approach an individual with the suggestion of counseling or other help.

SHEPHERDING PLAN FOR MAKING DISCIPLES

Adapted from "Leading Life-Changing Small Groups" by Bill Donahue

Leader's Name: _____

Quarter: 1 2 3 4

		Group Development Plan	
		Questions	Quarterly Plan
	<p>Grace To experience and extend saving grace. (2 Cor. 5:18-19)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who can we pray for to receive Christ? • How can we encourage and equip each other to extend saving grace to our families, friends, classmates, neighbors, or world for Christ? • How can we team up in our evangelistic efforts? 	
	<p>Growth To grow in having Christ spiritually formed in us. (Heb. 10:24-25)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the practices, experiences, and relationships that will help form Christ in our groups? • What will we study to form Christ in each other? • How can we foster participation in worship together? 	
	<p>Groups To shepherd one another in loving, authentic community. (Gal. 6:2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we better love, care for, and be the body of Christ to one another? • How can we foster greater authenticity; vulnerability, and openness? • What's the next step in extending or multiplying our loving community to others? 	
	<p>Gifts To discover, develop, and deploy our spiritual gifts to serve the body of Christ (Rom. 12:6-8)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we serve the body of Christ together? • How can we develop and deploy each other's spiritual gifts? • What church "household chores" can we help with as a group? 	
	<p>Good Stewardship To steward our time and treasures for God's redemptive purposes in our church, community, nation, and world. (Matt. 25:40)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we encourage each other to better steward our time and treasures? • How can our group extend compassion locally and globally? • What unique personal, spiritual, or material resources do we have to share? 	