

LIFE GROUP LEADERSHIP TRAINING

INTRODUCTION

- Welcome to Life Group Leader Training here at Lifeline
- We are so excited you've made the decision to lead a life group.
- Life Groups are the way we pastor people, and the goal of this training is to provide you with the whys and how-tos for leading a life group.

SECTION #1: THE WHY

- Relationships are vital – life groups are the backbone of Lifeline
- Life Groups have one, simple purpose—to bring people together. God does His best work relationally
- Real discipleship is taking what God is doing inside us and working it out with other people.

We believe life change happens in the context of _____.

(ECCLESIASTES 4:9-12) Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken

- We weren't meant to do life alone. We want everyone connected in relationships.

At Lifeline, we believe our church must grow _____ and _____ at the same time.

- The front door of our church is wide (Weekend Services/Growth Track)
- Small Groups close the back door of the church so that people don't fall through the cracks.
- People say "Lifeline is getting big, but feels small..." - because of relationships

Lifeline is a church _____ Life Groups, not a church _____ Life Groups.

- Life groups are the vehicle through which ministry takes place.
- No competing ministries
- Best ministry takes place in between Sundays

We are modeled after the early church (Acts 5 – Temple courts/ house to house), and Life groups offer 3 things:

1. A Place to _____

(1 CORINTHIANS 9:22) "Yes, whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground with him so that he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him."

- Life Groups provide opportunity to meet people with similar interests (common group) and connect.

2. A Place to _____

- There's a lot going on in the world today. We need safe places to encourage and strengthen each other with the hope of Jesus Christ.

3. A Place to _____

(PROVERBS 27:17) As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

SECTION #2: WHAT A LIFE GROUP LOOKS LIKE

- As a Life group leader, we don't want you to add another thing to your schedule. We want you to take what you are already doing and invite other people to join you.

At Lifeline, we use both bible study and _____ approach to Life Groups.

In essence, **free market leaders form their group around their _____ or _____**

- Our groups are as varied as we are:
 - Bible Studies
 - Basketball
 - Crafting
 - Exercise
 - Everything in between

Life Groups meet throughout the year in 4 _____.

- 1st quarter: Jan, February (off in March)
- 2nd quarter: April, May (off in June)
- 3rd quarter: July, August (off in Sept)
- 4th quarter: Oct, Nov (off in Dec)

Here are the characteristics of our Life groups:

All Lifeline Life Groups meet _____ during each quarter.

- Not monthly or bi monthly (not enough for relationships)
- For example, an outreach group might do a food drive monthly, but meet weekly to prepare for the outreach to facilitate the building of relationships relationships.

All Life Groups are comprised of _____ people.

- 2 people is a date!

4 components of a group:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Very few rules – 4 things we ask you not to engage in:

- Business
- Offerings
- Unapproved materials or speakers
- Controversial topics
 - We don't want to engage in things that bring division, but things that bring life.

Your Role as a Life Group Leader

At Lifeline, we talk a lot about people taking next steps.

The primary role of a Life Group Leader is to help group members take their _____ in their walk with God.

(PROVERBS 27:23) "Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds;"

We are all either taking steps or are helping people take their next steps.

Some suggestions for next steps:

- Be water baptized
- Complete Growth Track
- Join the Dream Team
- Take an Equip Class
- Daily spiritual disciplines

Any next step that will help someone get closer to Jesus is a step we will help others take!

7 Steps – How to be a successful Life Group Leader:

1. _____ **for the members of your group.** Just imagine what the folks in your group might be facing or feeling and let God speak to you about how to pray for them.
2. **Consider partnering with a _____ - _____ to help share the responsibility of caring for and leading your group.** (Luke 10, Jesus sent people out 2x2)
3. _____ **with group members outside of weekly meetings through phone, email, text, social media, or face-to-face.** Encourage group members to connect with each other throughout the week as well.

4. **Have _____ through laughter and by creating an enjoyable environment.** Joy is a core value of ours...for God's sake, have fun!
5. **Respect people's _____ by beginning and ending your group on time.** Set clear expectations (add – Consistent: Don't cancel your group).
6. **_____ group members to attend church services and events with you like equip classes, conferences, or outreach opportunities.** You are a connector.
7. **_____ the group around a member going through a crisis.** Use wisdom and be sensitive. What an honor to walk with people through difficult times.

KEY: Always remember we do not have to fix them - we point them to the One who can.

The Importance of Prayer

Prayer is the _____ of our church, and it is important for your Life Group.

How to pray for your group:

- Pray for any requests your group members share.
- Ask for the presence of the Holy Spirit in your group. (a basketball game can be just as spiritual as a bible study)
- Pray that God will open people's hearts to hear His truth.
- Pray for authentic community to develop.
- Pray for wisdom and strength to lead your group well.

SECTION #3: Confidence as a Life Group Leader

- The leader often benefits the most
- Leaders often tell me how much this changes their life – never wrecks their life
- KEY: If you only do what you feel comfortable doing, you don't need God. God's best is often found outside your comfort zone.
- When you serve God and people by leading a Life Group, He will equip you and give you the strength and wisdom to lead well.

(Philippians 4:13) "For I can do ALL THINGS through Christ, who gives me strength."

(2 Timothy 1:7) "For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline."

3 primary lies that the enemy whispers in a leader's ear

1. You don't have time:

When you feel like you don't have the time, remember God has _____ you for this, and His timing is perfect.

(Ecclesiastes 11:4) If you wait for perfect conditions, you will never get anything done.

2. You are unqualified:

When you feel unqualified, remember God has _____ you.

(2 Corinthians 3:5-6) "It is not that we think we are qualified to do anything on our own. Our qualification comes from God. He has enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant."

- God doesn't call the equipped, he equips the called.

3. Your past disqualifies you:

When you feel like your past disqualifies you, remember God uses _____ people.

(2 Corinthians 1:3-4) "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God."

- Often our pain is our greatest ministry
 - Who better to lead a marriage life group – than a couple who has struggled?
 - Who better to lead a recovery life group than someone who has faced addiction?
 - Who better to lead a grief life group than someone who has overcome a broken heart?

That's what is so amazing about our free market life groups! It creates opportunity for people to use their trials as a testimony to help others!

Struggling Group Members

From time to time you may encounter a group member who is struggling.

When you feel like you don't know how to help someone in your group, remember ESPN:

E: _____

S: _____

P: _____

N: _____

Leadership Support

As a Life Group Leader, you are never alone in creating community. We have pastors, staff, and other life group leaders who are all working alongside you to invest in great life groups at Lifeline.

Your Pastors

As a Life Group Leader, you have a team of pastors to help as you need support throughout the quarter.

Your pastor's number one priority is to _____ for you daily.

Reach out to your pastor if you have a need, prayer request, or concern. For the fastest possible assistance, email info@lifelinelodi.com and share your concern and phone number so one of our pastors can get back to you asap!

A few points on how to create good group dynamics:

Set _____.

- Be sure to start on time and end on time.
- Activity clearly defined (have a plan for your group each week, don't "wing it.")

Follow the _____ rule.

- Give the members of your group room to speak up instead of doing all the talking yourself.
- About 70% of talking should come from members and 30% from the leader. Instead of answering every question, try asking follow up questions that lead them to the answer!

Keep discussion _____.

- If conversation takes a negative or destructive turn, guide it back to a healthy place.
- If someone needs to talk about a sensitive or complex issue, you can follow up with them after the group or call your pastor to help you respond well.

Keep the conversation relevant to _____.

- Remember people in your group will be at different places in their spiritual journey.
- Be thoughtful when you talk about spiritual concepts or church terms that might be unfamiliar to new Christians or new church-goers.

Respect _____.

- Men should minister to men and women should minister to women. A couple may minister to a single person.
- We want to maintain integrity and purity in our Life Groups.
- These boundaries will help protect the leaders and group members from entering into an uncomfortable or inappropriate situation.