A photograph of three men in a social setting, possibly a bar or restaurant, overlaid with a dark blue tint. The man on the left is wearing glasses and a light-colored shirt. The man in the center is smiling broadly and wearing a light-colored button-down shirt. The man on the right is wearing a dark sweater with the word 'WEN' visible and is holding a bottle. The background shows a window with a grid pattern and a potted plant.

start a
group.^x

crossroads

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1. What do we mean by Group, and what should mine look like?

What do we mean by Group?

1. Leader-Led
2. Regularly Meeting
3. IN, UP and eventually OUT.

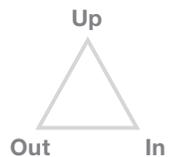
IN = Authentic community, doing life together, being known, having friends who live as family, and more.

UP = Knowing God, spiritual growth, discipleship, receiving identity, hearing God, and more.

OUT = Kingdom impact, living a life that's attractive to people who don't know God, inviting seekers in, and having a mission outside yourself.

The best groups are friends who live like family. Tight knit crews. They choose each other regularly. They're there for each other in ups and downs. They follow God together and bring others along.

They're led by a leader who cares to see people grow and make an impact on the world around them.



What should my Group look like?

Lead the kind of community you want to have.

All we care about is growing in the core DNA: A regularly meeting, leader-led group with IN, UP and OUT.

The rest is up to you.

What do you need right now? What sounds life-giving to you? Where do you feel God is speaking to you?

Do that.

Could your marriage or family use some fresh life breathed into it?

Start a group with other couples or families who want God to remind them of his design for covenant relationships.

Feeling maxed out on work and responsibilities and need a little play?

Start a group around your favorite hobby like dodgeball or knitting. Find others who share your favorite outlet, and bring God into that.

Itching for deeper growth or newly trained in huddle?

Lead one! And immerse yourself around others who are chasing God with all they have.

1. Cont'd

What do we mean by Group, and what should mine look like?

The goal is relationship with others where we're really known and truly loved (IN), deeper levels of knowing God and looking like him (UP) and eventually seeing that overflow in Kingdom impact on the world around us (OUT).

That can happen around a classic Bible study, a soccer league or a group of friends who just love having dinner together. The Early Church didn't have a group guide. They had the lifestyle of Jesus modeled for them and grew spiritually, built community and lived on mission around that. We think we can too.

2. Who me? Why should I want to lead?

What We Offer Group Leaders:

Leaders, you're a rare breed. You are willing to take responsibility for someone else's spiritual growth and pour your life out for others' benefit. Leadership is a beautiful, powerful (and costly) endeavor.

We know specifically it's costly when it comes to time and your own spiritual development. You definitely grow as you lead, but you also get depleted. You need refreshed. Specifically developed by and with other leaders.

So, we want to give Group Leaders all our best in a way that blesses your calendar and doesn't pile on to it.

Here are all the ways we want to resource you to lead an awesome group, and be filled up personally as you go:

The first ever Crossroads Podcast:

We know you're busy, so you have resources to process on your time when it works for you. Leadership topics designed exclusively for group leaders.

Content Ideas:

It's hard to sustain meaningful UP/IN/OUT experiences all year, so we'll have a list of our favorite resources to work through together as a Group. From best books to studies to additional huddle content.

Group Tool:

A place to advertise your group if you choose. Open it up to anyone who likes your post or use it to network and identify other people with niche shared interests like yours. Use the keyword search and filters to find your neighborhood, hobby, profession, other foster parents, green tea drinkers, history buffs, you name it. We've got a lot of people around here. Find yours.

Exclusive Training Opportunities:

You'll have priority seats in the top spiritual development experiences. If you're interested in Story Formed Life, Critical Skills, Israel Story and more: you get the first available spots.

2. Cont'd

Who me? Why should I want to lead?

A Coach:

A trusted, respected spiritual leader will be available to you personally all year long. They'll check in on you, be praying for you and connect you to additional resources if needed. How much you want to engage with them is up to you.

These are our favorite leader trainings. Since you're our new favorite leaders, you get the first spots. Check out all the offerings for the next year, and let us know if and where you'd like us to save you a seat.

Story Formed Life: Trading the American Dream for the Kingdom Narrative We Were Made To Live

Bring your whole group to a trainer's house, or have a trainer come to you. SFL runs for 11 weeks, 2.5 hours/week and you must attend 9 of the 11 sessions. We're prioritizing leaders first, but if you'd like your whole group to attend together, note it when you reach out.

Listening Training: The Key to Healthy Relationships of Any Kind

(Discipling, Marriage, Friendships and more) If you've ever had conflict in relationships, wished you knew what to say in crisis, gotten stuck in a spiral of miscommunications or just wondered how to help someone, you're normal (and you could use Listening Training.) This is a two-day workshop that happens all year with new starts every other month. It runs from 9-4pm twice with one month in between sessions. Email groups@crossroads.net to sign up.

Critical Skills:

At the beginning of Hebrews 6, we're told that we MUST have six skills subjects in our tool belt if we're going to be mature. And in Matthew 10 Jesus tells his guys that they're going to wrestle with the devil so they'd better gear up for it. Critical Skills combines these two ideas to teach you the necessary skills for maturity and how to use your authority where the enemy has gained a stronghold in your life. The class alternates between lectures and meeting with a drill group to practice your new skills. The class is broken down into two 14-16 week long sessions. Due to the length of the class and the material that is covered this class has a high commitment level. We teach you the six basic skills of maturity and spend time practicing them in a small group setting we call Drill Groups. We also learn what the Bible says about the enemy and our authority and we think both of those mature best through knowing what the Bible says and actually practicing it. Email criticalskills@crossroads.net with the subject "Group Leader Sign Up" for more details.

2. Cont'd

Who me? Why should I want to lead?

Ministry 101/201:

A crash course in hands-on ministry for anybody who wants to grow in praying for, and being sensitive to the spiritual needs of others. This two-session training, while being a quick teaser, will provide an overview of Baptisms, Repentance, Deliverance, Worship, and Prophecy, and give ministers hands-on experience with speaking God's words to another person. If you're a follower of Christ who wants to get skilled in urging people forward in God's purposes, come get some Ministry Basics! This course is offered about four times per year. If you'd like to get on the invite list for future sessions, email MinistryBasics@crossroads.net. A compact, 2-night class is for people who want to minister to others and just need a little help and some authorization. It covers topics like salvation, baptism, worship as a ministry tool, repentance and prophecy.

Israel Story:

Exploring the story of the nation of Israel and its role in God's bigger story - past, present, and future. John Myers leads the Israel Story with many years of experience as a leader in both American culture and messianic Jewish culture in Israel, and is the father of Calev Myers (Jerusalem Institute for Justice). He helps groups discover the Biblical and historical narrative of the nation of Israel in a six-week smaller group teaching & discussion format. Email groups@crossroads.net to find out more about being part of an Israel Story group.

Huddle:

The most reproducible discipling tool in our belt is huddle. It's a strengthening year of following another leader through core lifestyles you can easily pass on to others. If you've wanted to go through huddle but haven't found a chance yet, it's usually available year-round. Email groups@crossroads.net to let us know your interested, and we'll try to find one that fits in your schedule.

3. What does success look like?

A successful Group Leader is a guide.

They go first spiritually and help others make the journey too. Some might even call them a disciple-maker, shepherd or spiritual parent.

Being a disciple of Jesus means making disciples. So we believe we're all called to become spiritual parents. Parents are human. They can't meet their kids' every need, but they do care to see that every need is met. A great group leader keeps a pulse on their people, regularly considering what they need.

Where are they spiritually? How could they move to the next place?

Through prayer and leveraging resources at Crossroads, you care to help them keep growing closer to God and each other.

Most simply, your charge as a leader is to: Become a tribe. Find your people and give them what they need.

Find your people means take the time to find and develop a group of people you really love. (John 13:35)
Give them what they need means:

1. Listening for God's voice and following together as a group. (My sheep listen to my voice. I know them, and they follow me. John 10:27)

2. Prayerfully partner with God to become our best selves, the people God made us to be. You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. (Galatians 5:13)

At times, that might be more spiritual development like attending an Onsite Group together for deeper truths about the Bible or family. It might be leading a huddle or calling in a Story Formed Life facilitator to lead your group for a season.

Sometimes, crisis will hit. Then, you might need to lean into community care resources. Go to Listening Training together. Connect them to groups like Real Marriage or any of our Healing Groups that meet onsite. Even seek out some deliverance in Critical Skills.

A lot of times, you should just have fun. You might want to find a hobby together, or go camping, or take a trip. You'll want to share regular meal times, learn to parent together or just enjoy each other's company. These are your porch-drinking, travel-the-world, stand-next-to-me-at-my-wedding people.

3. Cont'd

What does success look like?

Find a purpose together.

Something that unites you and leverages what God is doing in your group for others' benefit too. Maybe you'll serve together. Or maybe you have seeking friends who get curious about what you have, and you invite them to join. Maybe you'll take on the bringing God to all the prisons in Ohio or tackling the heroin epidemic in our city. (Yep, those are just regular groups of people who want to live as a family on mission too.)

Wherever your group goes, that's your charge: Become a tribe. Find your people (the ones you love and want to invest in), and give them what they need.

Whenever you're unsure how to do that, we're here to help.

4.

How do I get started?

The path to leading a Group

1. Fill out an application.

Whether we go way back, or you're new to leading at Crossroads, we're serious about good groups. So we're serious about finding great leaders. Don't worry, you'll be done in no time.

GOAL: Clarify expectations + Confirm commitment

2. Let's chat.

If you aren't already connected via huddle or serving, let's get to know each other. Just a casual coffee date in the atrium. (The coffee is on us!)

GOAL: Connect relationally + Consider capacity, character and competence for group leading.

3. Get Oriented.

Check out Group Leader Resources to get the lay of Groups land. Hear vision, strategy, best practices and available resources at your site.

Rally as a team of Group Leaders across the city and start strong together.

4. Register Your Group + Sign "I Promise"

(and if you want to use the Tool to find others, post.)

Whether you're looking for new people or you're already set, we want to know what Groups are out there. So all Group Leaders will register and sign an "I Promise" document agreeing to basic disciplines and beliefs for spiritual health.

Register your group on the Group Tool. (You can make your group private, or you can post it publicly to find new people. There are a ton of sweet new features that let you customize your group, search by keywords, find niche common interests and more.)

5. Invite Your People

5. What's expected of a leader ongoing?

What's Expected of Group Leaders

Group Leaders aren't Journey Hosts. They're spiritual parents. People committed not just to facilitating an experience, but people devoted to sharing their life, home and story to continually help others move to new place with God.

Group Leaders will be accountable to:

1. High Character:

Honor what you sign up for in the Groups "I Promise."

2. Growing Competence:

Receive strategic equipping based on your type of group to regularly be taking your group to a new place spiritually via required leader experiences twice a year.

3. Be a Team Player:

Reply to short, easy to fill out, quarterly emails about your Group. Simple, but oh so helpful.

4. Be Fruitful and Multiply:

Eventually, your group should multiply. We won't say when, where or how, but you'll know when. It might be when things get stale, and you realize, it's time to move on. It might be when life is taking your group in lots of different directions, seasons have simply changed. It might be when things are so great, you feel a nudge that God's calling you to share the love with others. We'll coach you in this as we go, but we know God's design has always been that healthy things grow and reproduce. We think healthy groups do too.

6. What else do I need to know?

Who should be in my group? What if I don't know people?

First, pray. Ask God who he has for you this season. Look for people who you naturally and regularly do life with right now. For many, you already have a group that you're plugged into, but you've just not formalized it. If you're just getting started or revamping, or you want to open your group up and/or meet new people, we'll have new and improved ways to find them. People can search for your group using the Group Tool or you can share it in your networks to market yourself.

How is leading a group different than leading other groups?

Instead of many different types of group experiences at Crossroads (huddle for discipling, small groups for belonging, Journeys for short-term growth, etc), we want everyone in meaningful community all year long with a leader committed to discipling them in whatever way they need while growing in UP/IN/OUT.

6. Cont'd

What else do I need to know?

There's no one way to start a great group. They can be through natural relationships, shared goals or common interests. Whatever the glue, we want groups to have longevity so that over time, they'll produce more significant spiritual depth and relationships.

How has the huddle guide changed?

It's lighter on content and deeper on relationship. The current huddle content has been simplified to drive deeper integration and sense of family. Think less content to get through, and more space for "discernment discipling" and relationship building. Instead of 50 weeks of content that takes 1.5 years (generally) to complete, it'll be 7ish months of content you can move through more flexibly throughout a year's time. This way, there's no temptation to rush, you have space to pause for other life moments (struggles and celebrations), and you can take as much time as your group needs to really feel equipped with a strong foundation for discipling others.

Will huddles still multiply?

Yes. Healthy things of all kind grow. Healthy groups aren't stagnant. They reproduce. We won't call groups "huddle" in such a specific, stand alone way as we have before. But if you're leading a group that's ready for huddle material, you'll use it! It's a tool in your toolbelt. When you've completed, they will be ready to pass that on to others. You'll likely find your group is ready to multiply too making it the perfect time to send your participants out to lead their own just like we've seen in the past.

How do I find people to disciple or people to disciple me?

Often, the people who need to be disciplined are all around you. You're doing life with them already. Look at who your natural people are and ask God who he might want you to lead or be led by. Groups are designed to enable more discipleship using your pre-existing circle of family and friends. If you don't see some there, we'll have a Group Tool designed to help you make new connections, or email groups@crossroads.net.

How do I discern where people are spiritually and what they need?

We have developed trainings and will have specific tools to help you discern where your group members are spiritually (seek, receive, follow, produce) and what they will need (to grow personally and ultimately help others to grow as well). You'll get everything you need at Group Leader Resources.

What are all the tools available?

We're integrating resources from all across the board for a more flexible, accessible portfolio of offerings that include everything from Story Formed Life to Healing Groups. We're customizing and simplifying everything we have to be leveraged by leaders better and to serve the growth happening in homes far more. The overall goal is integration and maximum flexibility of tools to serve and equip disciplers and group life in homes. See what's available in your Group Leader Resources.

I read this far. What should I remember?

Congrats on reading it all! Impressive...pray about being a leader. We need you, and we think you'll be glad you said yes. Visit crossroads.net/groups to apply to be a leader and check out all the great resources we have to support and equip you.