



HOW DO WE FIND GRIEF SHARE LEADERS?

We all enjoy doing the ministry of GriefShare, but it's not without its challenges! One of those is finding new leaders to come alongside us. Building a leadership team is crucial for having an effective and long-lasting GriefShare ministry. Ideally, you'll have a team of four (two men, two women). At a minimum you should have two people on your team. Whatever you do, don't try and start this ministry alone.

There's no secret to finding GriefShare leaders, but you do need a plan. In this article you will find proven tips that have benefited leaders across the nation and will help you put your plan in motion.

ESSENTIALS

There are three essentials to build your plan around. First, the foundation of any ministry plan is prayer. Ask your church staff to pray for the Lord's guidance in selecting leaders. Put the request for leaders on your church's prayer list (often found on the church's website), and let those who are involved make it a matter of daily prayer.

The second essential is to choose potential leaders who have a vibrant living relationship with Christ, people who are spiritually mature. Those who themselves have experienced healing from a death-loss are especially fitted for GriefShare ministry. They've walked the same walk as those attending and can relate and offer real-life advice from their own experience. Some common characteristics to look for in potential leaders can be found in your GriefShare Leader's Guide.

The third essential is to approach your leadership team as having many different (but important!) positions to serve in. Not everyone can commit to two hours a week or facilitate a small group, but people want to help. For instance, having a "hospitality team," who greets, sets up snacks, and makes name tags, allows people to have a limited commitment while freeing up other leaders to minister to hurting or struggling participants. "Administration" is another area to offer; these volunteers will be responsible for administrative needs, such as creating contact lists, registration, emails, etc.

With those three essentials in mind, let's look at five proven and practical tips for finding leaders .

FIVE TIPS FOR FINDING LEADERS

TIP 1: We have found in successful GriefShare churches around the country that **PLACING AN AD** in the weekly bulletin or newsletter has yielded great results. Here's a sample ad you can run for two weeks. (Note: Run this apart from inviting participants to your upcoming GriefShare session. Let this be a stand-alone ad.)

Have you experienced the deep grief of losing a loved one to death? Have you learned valuable lessons and experienced healing from the hurt? Would you like to help others do the same? Then please call or email to learn more about the different volunteer opportunities with our GriefShare ministry. [Include contact info.]

Once people contact you, call them back and inquire about their level of interest and a little about their story of grief and healing. Be sure to guide them to the GriefShare website and also send them a GriefShare brochure. You can follow up again with them later.

TIP 2: Another great idea is to **SET UP AN INFORMATIONAL MEETING**, usually after a service, for those interested in coming and hearing about the different volunteer opportunities in GriefShare. Their attending the meeting carries no commitment: it's an info-only meeting. Place an ad, like the following, in your church's bulletin or on the website. (Note: Run this apart from inviting participants to your upcoming GriefShare session. Let this be a stand-alone ad.)

Have you experienced the deep grief of losing a loved one to death? Have you learned valuable lessons and experienced healing from the hurt? Would you like to help others do the same?

There will be a GriefShare informational meeting open to anyone who would like to consider different volunteer opportunities in this healing ministry. This is an info-only meeting: no commitment is required—just come for 10 minutes and find out about the ministry. Visit us at 12 p.m. (after the 11 a.m. service) in Room xxx. Refreshments / brochures / 3-min video / Q & A's

Run the ad a week before the meeting and the week of the event. Have Potential Leader Questionnaires on hand for those who appear motivated and qualified. A sample form is available to download and print in the GriefShare LeaderZone Library. Show a promotional video (available on the LeaderZone in the Promotion section); it takes just a few minutes and gives a good ministry overview. Get contact and interest level information. Give them a phone call or email later in the week to go deeper. Have a Potential Leader Questionnaire ready to email them if they seemed initially qualified and did not fill out a form at the table.

TIP 3: Many churches have had success finding leaders by **PROVIDING A GRIEFSHARE MINISTRY EVENT TABLE** in the foyer of their church or by hosting a Ministry Fair. Put an ad in your bulletin inviting those interested in learning about the different volunteer opportunities in the GriefShare ministry to come by and visit. On your table, display a GriefShare participant workbook, GriefShare brochures, Potential Leader Questionnaires, and your GriefShare kit. Showing the GriefShare promo video will round out your display. Make sure you have someone at the table (leaders and alumni too) to answer questions and take completed forms. After your event, contact your potential leaders by calling and conducting a phone interview. God will guide you as you make your choice.

TIP 4: Another option that has proven to work well is **PROVIDING SHORT MINI-PRESENTATIONS** informing different groups within your church what GriefShare is all about. An effective way to get the word out to your church family is scheduling a "7-Minute Presentation" at already-scheduled church meetings. If every month you asked to be a "guest speaker" at a meeting like the deacons' meeting, choir practice, church staff meetings, Sunday school classes, home small groups, etc., you would have covered twelve groups in your church by the end of the year! If people in your church don't know about GriefShare, they can't get involved. This is a great way to inform them.

At the end of each presentation, encourage those who would like more information on the various volunteer positions in GriefShare to contact you at the phone/email located on the GriefShare brochure you handed out to everyone.

For step-by-step instructions on conducting this 7-Minute Presentation, visit the LeaderZone Library. Have other GriefShare leaders or alumni help you do these presentations. Have fun, and inform and encourage potential volunteers to contact you!

TIP 5: If you have been running your GriefShare ministry a while, one very powerful place to find leaders is **FROM PAST GRADUATES** of your ministry. Keep a watchful eye on your participants to discern if there is a future leader in your alumni. What a great testimony to have someone who has been healed through GriefShare "go back" and "give

back” to a new group of hurting people. One way to effectively do this is by sending out emails to past participants asking if they would prayerfully consider volunteering. If you offer different leadership positions, a person can start on the setup or hospitality team and grow into becoming a small group facilitator. As a reminder, a group facilitator must demonstrate substantial recovery from his or her grief and other past hurts to effectively minister to others. More information on identifying group leaders can be found in the GriefShare Leader’s Guide.

BENEFITS OF FINDING LEADERS – BUILDING A LEADERSHIP TEAM

- 1** It prevents burnout: You will burn out if only one or two are leading. Shoot for four (two men and two women is the goal to build from).
- 2** Guaranteed backup: If a leader calls in sick, is running late, is caught in traffic, or has car problems, the meeting still goes on and does not start late (or worse, cancel).
- 3** Both male and female represented: Participants always connect better with the same sex. A guy always wants a guy leader, and the same is true for a woman. It really is best.
- 4** More gets done with more leaders: One could be at the sign-in table, another greeting at the door, another talking with participants at their chairs, one could handle problems that surface, just to name a few.
- 5** Able to increase the number of small groups: As more first-time participants attend and become a part of your ongoing classes, you can easily break out or divide into smaller groups instead of having one really large one.
- 6** Ideas, encouragement, prayer support, accountability: All four are increased when there is more than one leader. Plus the fellowship time with your leaders outside of GriefShare is a wonderful bonding and uplifting time. Schedule some outside time.
- 7** It’s biblical to build a leadership team around you: Our Lord had His twelve disciples; Paul exhorts us to follow his pattern of leadership, which was having leaders like Timothy, Titus, and many others around him as a team doing God’s ministry.

We at Church Initiative are committed to helping your ministry be successful. Your free GriefShare consultant is available by phone or email. So please call us at 1-800-395-5755, weekdays 9 a.m.–5 p.m. (EST), or email us at info@griefshare.org. We’d be glad to discuss building your leadership team with you (2 Corinthians 1:3–4).