



## Appendix A

**GRACE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH**  
**LIFE GROUP**  
**LEADERS ROLES**  
**MATERIALS**





# LIFE GROUP LEADERS ROLES

1

## LEADERS OBJECTIVE

To develop leaders' character and competency, i.e., what God is calling them to BE and DO.  
*"David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them."* Psalm 78:72

## ROLE OF GFC LIFE GROUP LEADERS

1. GROW SPIRITUALLY AND UNDERSTAND YOUR ROLE AS A LEADER (CHARACTER & CALLING)
2. FACILITATE DISCUSSION IN A WAY THAT EVERYONE ENGAGES
3. BUILD A SENSE OF BIBLICAL COMMUNITY AMONG GROUP MEMBERS.
4. MOBILIZE YOUR GROUP TO SERVE THE NEEDS OF OTHERS.
5. HANDLE PERSONALITIES/GROUP DYNAMICS IN A WAY THAT HONORS THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE GROUP.
6. MOBILIZE DISCIPLING OPPORTUNITIES IN YOUR GROUP.
7. IDENTIFY AND DEVELOP EMERGING LEADERS.



# LIFE GROUP LEADERS ROLES 1: GROW SPIRITUALLY

2

## ROLE 1

To Grow Spiritually and Understand your Role as a Leader  
(Character & Calling)

## CHARACTER AND CALLING

Psalm 78:72 "David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them."

\*Our role is to equip you for character change and calling confirmation.

### CHARACTER

Romans 12:2 "be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is."

### CALLING

Genesis 1:26 "Then God said, "Let Us make mankind in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the livestock and over all the earth, and over every crawling thing that crawls on the earth."

You are to change.

You are to lead.

But you will have to die. *Matthew 16:24,25*

### Discuss:

1. Walk through where each person is abiding with Jesus.  
(bible study, prayer, silence & solitude, worship, etc.)
2. Where do they need to improve?
3. How can you help?



# LIFE GROUP LEADERS ROLES 2: FACILITATE DISCUSSION

3

## ROLE 2

### How to Facilitate Discussion that Transforms Your Group on Three Levels

## WHAT ARE THE THREE LEVELS?

### HEAD LEVEL

- Ask 'what' questions about the facts of the Bible passage or story you are covering.
  - Keep asking people what came next in the passage.
  - This will rebuild it in their minds to help them retain it.
  - Helps everyone feel capable of entering into the conversation.
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- What is happening in this passage?
  - What happened next?

### HEART LEVEL

- Ask 'why' questions that get to the meaning or interpretation of the passage.
  - Let group members struggle with the meaning of it without your interpretation.
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- Was anything in this passage new to you?
  - Do you have any questions about anything in the passage?
  - What do you like about the passage? What do you not like about the passage?
  - What is the problem? Identify any problem, obstacle, barrier or difficulty that you see presented in this passage.
  - Why do you think the passage said that?
  - Does the problem you see get solved? Is the barrier or difficulty overcome? If so, how?
  - What does this passage tell us about God?
  - What does this passage tell us about people?
- 
- If the leader immediately answers his own questions, people begin to wonder why they should even participate. If everyone sits and listens to the leader, it is not a small group discussion – it is a class.
  - If a difficult question is asked, ask the one who asked the question what he or she thinks, or throw the question back into the group. Consider asking the group to find the answer and report back the following week.



## LIFE GROUP LEADERS ROLES 2: FACILITATE DISCUSSION (cont)

4

- If controversial questions come up that don't relate to the topic, let them know that you want to shelve that topic for group time, but would love to discuss it with them later.

### HANDS LEVEL

- Ask 'how' questions that will help them apply the story to their lives.
- Application questions help us become a contributor, rather than just a consumer.
  - What do you believe God is showing/telling you from this passage?
  - How can you apply this passage to your own life?
  - What is God asking you to do?
  - How would you use this passage to disciple someone?

## TIPS FOR ASKING GREAT QUESTIONS

### DON'T ASK YES OR NO QUESTIONS

Asking open ended questions keeps the discussion going. They usually begin with what, why or how. Open questions help you discover someone's knowledge, opinion or feelings. You can also begin with the phrase, "tell me about" or "describe" to prompt discussion. Be careful when asking "why" questions. Asking too many "why" questions may come across as confrontational.

### ASK FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS

Asking a follow up question such as, "What makes you say that?" or "Why do you think that?" can give you greater insight. Asking someone else in the group "What do you think about that?" can open a discussion between more group members.

### ALLOW PLENTY OF TIME FOR A RESPONSE

Often people need time to think before answering a deeper question. Give them time to think and respond. Sometimes they need to work up their courage to share a more personal response.



## LIFE GROUP LEADERS ROLES 2: FACILITATE DISCUSSION (cont)

5

### ACTIVE LISTENING

To be a skillful questioner, you must also be a skillful listener.

#### 1. PAY ATTENTION

Look at the speaker directly.

Don't mentally prepare a rebuttal.

"Listen" to the speaker's body language.

#### 2. SHOW THAT YOU'RE LISTENING

Nod occasionally and smile and use other facial expressions.

Note your posture and make sure it is open and inviting.

Encourage the speaker to continue with small verbal comments like yes, and uh huh.

#### 3. PROVIDE FEEDBACK

Reflect what has been said: "What I'm hearing is," and "Sounds like you are saying..."

Ask questions to clarify certain points. "What do you mean when you say\_\_\_?"

Summarize the speaker's comments periodically.

#### 4. DON'T INTERRUPT

Allow the speaker to finish each point before asking questions.

Don't interrupt with counter arguments.

#### 5. RESPOND APPROPRIATELY

Be candid, open, and honest in your response.

Assert your opinions respectfully.



# LIFE GROUP LEADERS ROLE 3: BUILD BIBLICAL COMMUNITY

6

## ROLE 3

Build a Sense of Biblical Community among Group Members

## RELATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

### DEFINITION:

How would you define a relational environment? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In a relational environment, the people involved are doing life together with a kingdom mindset. The relationships go beyond just small group time. They move from strangers to friendship. These relationships press into areas of privacy, transparency and vulnerability.

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles."- Acts 2:42-43NIV

How effectively is your group modeling a relational environment?

On the next page rate your group's strength or weakness on each of the following components using this scale:

- 1- Outstanding Strength
- 2- Strength
- 3- Competent
- 4- Needs Improvement
- 5- Needs Significant Improvement



## LIFE GROUP LEADERS ROLE 3: BUILD BIBLICAL COMMUNITY (cont)

7

- \_\_\_\_\_ A safe place – show compassion, pray for one another, demonstrate a spirit of gentleness, be careful with humor, maintain confidentiality
- \_\_\_\_\_ Relaxed atmosphere – be friendly, wear casual clothes, welcome guests
- \_\_\_\_\_ Transparency – share your life openly and honestly, including your struggles
- \_\_\_\_\_ Authenticity – share the true you, not the you that you think others want to see
- \_\_\_\_\_ Listening – focus on people when they talk, care about what they are saying
- \_\_\_\_\_ Patience – allow awkward silences, give each person the opportunity to share
- \_\_\_\_\_ Small group size – a group may be larger or smaller at times, but aim for 6-14 people so that each person can be known
- \_\_\_\_\_ Caring – meet each others physical needs, shepherd one another
- \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus/the Bible – pointing people to Jesus and scripture to apply biblical truth
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mutual Accountability – lovingly and courageously address behaviors that do not glorify God
- \_\_\_\_\_ Guided Practice – allow others to practice reading, leading and praying
- \_\_\_\_\_ Healthy Dialogue – foster open discussion, ask questions
- \_\_\_\_\_ Encouragement – be positive, celebrate victories, thank group members for sharing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Consistency – meet with your group regularly, personal relationships do not happen from a distance
- \_\_\_\_\_ Intentionality – be intentional about growing each person to spiritual maturity; otherwise it's just another class

### **Discuss these additional components that can take relationship to the next level:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Food – sharing food has always been a sure way to connect with others
- \_\_\_\_\_ Homes – the best place to meet is in someone's home; it is a great way to get to know them better
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have fun – get together outside of your normal life group time to participate in fun activities together



## LIFE GROUP LEADERS ROLE 4: MOBILIZE TO SERVE

8

### ROLE 4

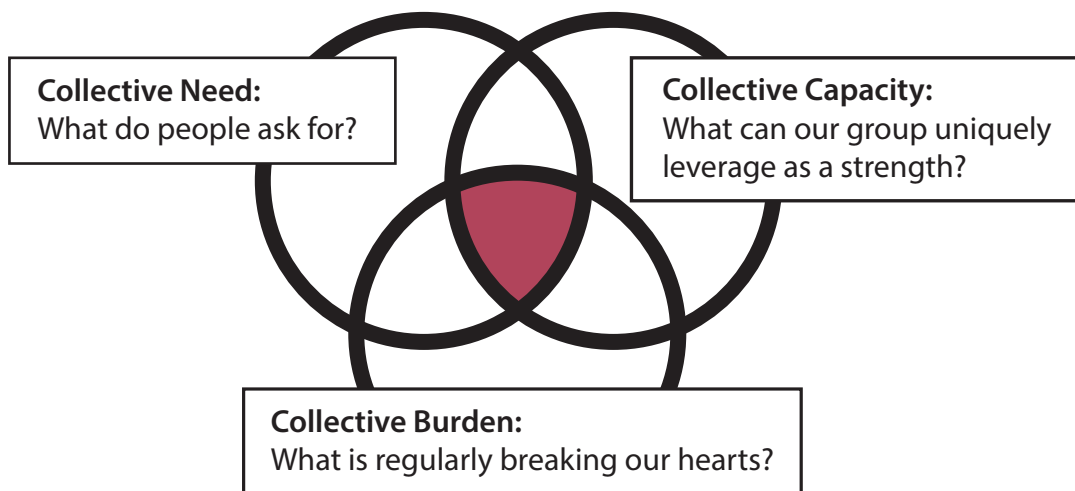
Mobilize Your Group to Serve the Needs of Others.

### WHAT MOBILIZING MAY LOOK LIKE

"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good." 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

"Give justice to the poor and the orphan; uphold the rights of the oppressed and the destitute." Psalm 82:3

1. Discuss verses above and our role as a part of God's Kingdom and His calling to be on mission to those inside our groups and to those in our communities.
2. Discuss SERVE in terms of "one another" in your group. Make a handout with each person's spiritual gifts or passions and encourage everyone to help with various roles in the group. (hospitality, admin, encouragement, facilitating, serve projects, prayer, teaching, helps, etc.)
3. Discuss SERVE in terms of caring for needs in the community where you live, work or play. Plan service opportunities using the diagram below to facilitate conversations about NEED, CAPACITY and BURDEN and the sweet spot where they overlap.





# LIFE GROUP LEADERS ROLE 5: RESOLVING CONFLICT

9

## ROLE 5

Handling Personalities and Group Dynamics

## GOD'S PLAN FOR RESOLVING CONFLICT

In dealing with conflicts within our groups, we want to dig into the Scriptures to see what God has to say on how to handle these difficult situations.

Read Matthew 18:15-18 and Ephesians 4:25-32.

What are some examples of conflicts that might arise in group life?

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What do you believe are some key factors in facing relational tension within your group?

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What works? What doesn't work?

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## LIFE GROUP LEADERS ROLE 5: RESOLVING CONFLICT (CONT)

10

### GUIDELINES FOR RESOLVING CONFLICT

Conflict is inevitable in small group life. We need to be prepared for it. Below are some good reminders of how conflict is handled in a healthy, godly manner. These guidelines come from the workbook, *Coaching Life-Changing Small Group Leaders*, pp. 110-111.

**1. Leaders are responsible for the process, not the outcome.**

You give wise counsel, guide the process, and hold people accountable. In the end, whether or not they forgive and reconcile is totally out of your hands.

**2. The conflict need not be resolved in one meeting.**

Life is not a TV show – not everything can be resolved in thirty minutes. As you are dealing with conflict, give some space. Allow people time to process their thoughts and feelings. Allow time to work things out and heal.

**3. Conflict must be processed with trust and confidentiality.**

There is great potential for additional wounding if confidentiality is not held high. Don't discuss this matter with people outside the group, unless it is truly someone from whom you are seeking wisdom and insight.

**4. Prepare your heart.**

Recommend a time of prayer and solitude, often a half or whole day, for each person involved in the conflict to prepare their hearts for the process they are going to walk through.

**5. Start soon.**

Waiting will only deepen the wounds and prolong the pain.

**6. Meet face-to-face.**

Email and telephones are great for some things, but not for conflict resolution. Letters and emails only document the offense and allow people to read into their words. So set the appointment by phone and meet face-to-face to talk.



## LIFE GROUP LEADERS ROLE 5: RESOLVING CONFLICT (CONT.)

11

### **7. Keep it simple.**

If the conflict is between two group members, then according to Matthew 18, they should talk to each other first. You may need to encourage them or hold them accountable for doing this.

### **8. Affirm the relationship.**

This is always the starting point when you meet. The goal is to restore a broken relationship or to help a person grow. And if you didn't love the person or value the relationship, you wouldn't be meeting – so start there.

### **9. Get the facts.**

Besides offering your own observations and feeling, be sure to let the other person or people speak too. As you listen, try to discern the facts. What is really going on here? Be patient, this process will take some time.

### **10. Make observations, not accusations.**

Be firm and direct, talking about what you have seen, heard, felt, and understood.

### **11. Promote resolution.**

Remember, the goal is not to win or lose. The goal is to restore the broken relationship and move forward. Sometimes that means we agree to a solution. Sometimes we simply have to agree to disagree. And sometimes, as Proverbs 19:11 says, it is to our glory to overlook an offense. Decide together what steps, if any, they need to take on the road to resolution. And then help the group members follow through.

### **12. Encourage reconciliation.**

Resolving the conflict is not the end of the journey. Trust may have been broken; perhaps relationships have been damaged. Though things may feel awkward for a time, work with the leader to restore the broken relationships whenever possible.



## LIFE GROUP LEADERS ROLE 5: RESOLVING CONFLICT (CONT.)

12

### PRACTICAL STEPS FOR RESOLVING CONFLICT

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 10:31, *"do you all to the glory of God"*. This encouragement is not limited to Sunday morning. Paul was imploring the church to bring honor and praise to God daily, especially in the way they resolved personal conflicts. When conflict arises, and it will, a good first question to ask yourself is, "How can I please and honor the Lord in this situation?" With this, I find it helpful to remember it is appropriate to overlook minor offenses as Proverbs 19:11 says, *"Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense."* If you can answer "no" to all of the following questions, then the offense should be overlooked.

- Is the offense seriously dishonoring to God?
- Has it permanently damaged a relationship?
- Is it seriously hurting other people?
- Is it seriously hurting the offender?

However, if you answer "yes" to any of the questions, the offense is too serious to overlook, but you have the opportunity to glorify God.

#### **Let's get practical handling conflict in a healthy manner.**

1. Go to the offender in private or with a trusted third party, if there is someone both of you know who is able to speak God's truth to both of you. Remember, the goal should always be reconciliation of the relationship. So, when we go to the offender, we should go gently. Even though, as believers in Jesus, we have experienced the greatest forgiveness in the world, we often fail to show one tenth of that forgiveness to others. Colossians 3:12-14 says, *"Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."*
2. Go in a manner that honors God. When I think of Matthew 28:19, *"go and make disciples"*, I know we will encounter conflict. The key, when we encounter conflict, is to view it as an opportunity to glorify God. We conduct ourselves in a way that honors God. We are not aggressive, harsh or unkind. We speak truth in love and remember we are Christ's ambassador, especially when handling conflict.
3. Go in a way that allows those you are in conflict with to speak into your life as well. Allow the person disciplining you to speak into your life. Being in proximity with the ones we disciple in their day-to-day lives helps us when conflict arises. This is not only important in making disciples; it is vital! When we handle conflict in a biblical way, we glorify God, serve others, and grow to be more like Christ.



## LIFE GROUP LEADERS ROLE 6: DISCIPLING OPPORTUNITIES

13

### ROLE 6

#### Mobilize Discipling Opportunities

### WHAT MOBILIZING MAY LOOK LIKE

1. Think through where each person in your group is on the Wheel. (p. 6 of Leader's Guide)
2. Discuss who is Faithful, Available and Teachable.
3. Discuss who is interested in discipling or being disciplined.
4. Prayerfully consider who could be matched up over at least a few weeks. Discuss these matches with other coaches for feedback.
5. Meet with each person/couple to see if they are interested in discipling or being disciplined as you review the Disciple Making reminders handout with them.
6. Ask each what they think of the other to see if they are willing to move forward.
7. If they are ready to be matched, meet with both parties and go over "What to do as you begin" section.
8. Launch. Remind them it's a trial and see how it goes for a few weeks.

# LIFE GROUP LEADERS ROLE 7: IDENTIFY NEW LEADERS

14

## ROLE 7

### Identify New Leaders

## THE PROCESS OF IDENTIFYING NEW LEADERS

1. Review p. 12 in Leader's Guide.
2. Ask them to ID who potential leaders are. (IDENTIFY)
3. Plan ICNU conversations with them. (INVITE)
4. Decide what their next steps are. (INVEST)
5. Walk through how to have debriefing conversations with apprentices after they lead in a certain area. (INSPIRE)