

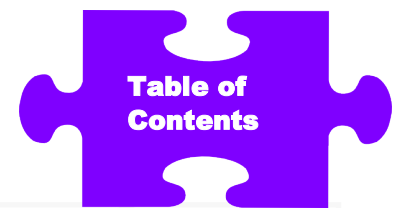


# Life Group Training

**For Leaders & Hosts**



Last Revised 11-7-18



# **Welcome to your Life Group Training!**

## **Tools for Leading a Life Group at Crestview Baptist Church**

**3 Why are Life Groups Important?**

**4 Pieces of the Puzzle**  
(Organizing your group)

**7 Fitting the Pieces Together**  
(Leading, how & when)

**10 Hard to Fit Pieces**  
(Challenges and Expectations)

**13 When it All Comes Together**  
(Practicle ideas and tools for your meetings)

**16 Resources**



**Crestview's Purpose is "Helping people experience life change through Jesus Christ".**

We believe life-change happens through relationships, and groups play a vital role. Life has its share of ups and downs and we all need others to be there for us. We also need to have someone to hold us accountable that knows us well.

Our life groups are designed to encourage the formation of significant relationships where people can share and apply biblical principles to their lives.

*Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.  
Hebrews 10:23-25 NIV*

**The Life Group Ministry Focus Is Helping Others Form Significant Relationships. As a leader or host, your key role is to help create an atmosphere in which Christian relationships can be developed.**

**"You are not responsible for an individual's growth."**

*<sup>6</sup> I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. <sup>7</sup> So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.  
1 Cor. 3:6-7*

**What does it take?**

It is going to take leadership skills, shepherding skills, facilitation skills on your part. And the Holy Spirit on God's part.

- People need the truth.
- People need a safe place.
- People need consistency.
- People need to enjoy their time in the group.



## Life Group Leader

### Qualifications

- Followed Christ for at least a year
- Committed to Spiritual Growth, Community, and Integrity
- Member of Sermon Based Group for at least a season (through 2019 this is optional)
- Good Social Skills
- Demonstrated leadership, shepherding, or facilitating – strength in at least one of these attributes.

### Expectations

#### **Preparation**

- Attend or listen to sermon
- Review and have plan for sermon questions (fit to your group)
- Review other materials as available

#### **Group Care**

- Track and communicate concerns and needs to Group Staff (Jesse, Jordan, Sarah)
- Visit members in hospital and communicate to your group
- Communication network is recommended (Facebook, Text app, etc....)
- Recruit Host (even if church based meeting site)
- Encourage snack rotation or potluck type format
- Encourage serving each other and the Church (A serve coordinator is recommended)
- Encourage group roles (host, record keeping, communication network, serve coordinator...)








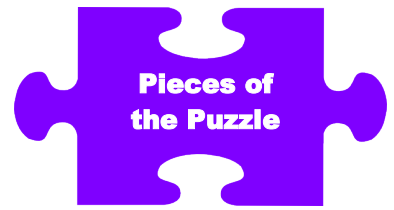
## HOST

A host has the gift of [hospitality](#). They arrange meeting location (often their home), coordinate refreshments or meals, and may also be the communication hub with assistance from the Crestview office.

The host has an important role in setting the stage for relationship building. They set the stage to promote a comfortable, safe atmosphere for the group. This also allows the leader to plan the study and engage with the group on applying biblical principles

### **Crestview's core values can help you determine if you have the pieces you need for a successful group:**

-  • Applying [Biblical principles](#) and values help group members deal with the inevitable challenges of life.
-  • Leaders and Hosts help facilitate an [atmosphere](#) where community can thrive and group members can develop relationships and care for each other.
-  • Being generous with your own time, talents, and money encourages others and sets a great example for group members. Generosity will become [contagious](#) with the group.
-  • Taking ownership at Crestview is [demonstrated](#) by your willingness to lead and host. Members demonstrate ownership through their commitment to attend and serving others in their group and our community.
-  • Being authentic is [crucial](#) to forming significant relationships.



## A TYPICAL MEETING.....

### Welcome, Mingle and Talk

This time is important in getting everyone to feel [comfortable](#) and hopefully take off the masks so many of us put on in church environments. Your groups life-stage experiences and similar interests are likely to come out during this time. Knowing others are going through the same things is a [huge boost](#) to authenticity and openness.

### Study & Homework

A homework component accomplishes a couple of things that help [spiritual growth](#).

- Helps participants focus on the sermon and biblical principles taught
- Helps participants think about how the biblical principles from the sermon impact them and their fellow group members.
- Makes it much easier on the leader when discussing the homework.

*Discuss that Homework will likely only take 15-20 minutes a week. Also, it's important to point out it helps your group do what many of them have expressed a desire to do more of, read and study the bible. When you go over the group agreement, getting everyone to acknowledge the importance of preparation will make your meeting flow much better.*

### Prayer

Prayer is a vital part of life groups. Often, your group will use this time to express spiritual growth needs or issues. It's important you continue to use the tools you have to [encourage sharing](#) and engagement.

*Remember - being forced to pray in group or just the idea of it can cause people to not want to come to your group. If you have new people in your group, you might want to say something like this: "It's exciting to see how God works in our lives through prayer. We also realize prayer in groups is something many have never done. Know that you will never be forced to pray." Let them know you'll talk more in the weeks to come on how we do group prayer and that we break a lot of the stereotypes of what it means to pray.*

*Leadership tip — breaking your group into smaller, separate male and female prayer groups often results in improved sharing and openness.*

### Serving

*A big part of a [thriving](#) group will be to reach a point of serving together. At times this will be on group nights themselves as they serve each other. However, getting out into the church and the community demonstrates the importance of relationships and helps others realize the importance of having community in their life.*

*13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. Galatians 5:13*



What a Life Group meeting is: [A Holy Moment](#) Hebrews 10:24-25

Our goal is to interact on the issues [God's Spirit](#) may be bringing about [through relationships](#), by studying the homework, and applying biblical principles to the issues that come forward. Our goal is not to [answer every question](#) from the homework.

## ***Hearing God & Personal Preparation***

Where it starts ...

Listening [to the sermon](#) and [writing down](#) any questions that arise.

The bible app at YouVersion may be a great tool for you. Sermon outline notes and questions are there every week.

Where & how it continues ...

- [Listening](#) to your group.
- [Applying](#) it to yourself
- [Asking](#) more questions
- [Exploring](#) additional resources supplied by the church or found by you. Resources can be found on our website at [crestview.church](http://crestview.church).

## ***Taking What You Have Learned to Your Group***

### **#1 The Small to Large Group Principle:**

Talking in smaller groups of three or four before sharing with the entire group. This can often be done in very casual environments.

**This accomplishes:**

- 1) Gets them ready to [engage](#) the whole group
- 2) Helps people [think through](#) what they want to say
- 3) Ensures everyone is getting a chance to [participate](#)

This could even be accomplished through email inquiries or a social app such as facebook private groups.



## #2 Different Ways to ask Questions:

(Remember: The goal is to get others to share, not ourselves)

- Anyone answers
- Go around the circle
- Directed at one person (know your group, don't direct if they aren't ready to engage)
- Piggyback questions

Key: time spent on questions or time a specific person talks should be limited. We'll discuss situations in the next section.

## #3 Understand the Risk Level of the Questions Asked:

- \* **Low Risk** - Casual get-to-know-you type questions, hobbies, interests, etc.
- \* **Medium Risk** - informative—opinions, beliefs, points of view, interpretations of situations, what did you find and what do you think—usually dealing with Scripture, issue or topic.
- \* **Higher Risk** - Growth areas, weaknesses, confession, areas to change, accountability, how does it apply to you (*give them options*).

Questions designed around the Biblical principles from the sermons are provided for you each week. It's wise to plan your group time, however flexibility is also a key to a great growing group.

Notes:





# Building A Connection Life's Most important Principle

## 2nd BASE Characteristics:

Positive feedback, specific appreciation

*1 Thess. 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.*

## 3rd BASE

**Characteristics:** Problem solving, goal setting, opportunities for growth

*James 5:16 Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and wonderful results.*

*Phil 1:6 he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*



## 1st BASE Characteristics:

Present and Past Journey

Likes, dislikes, hopes, dreams, fears, spiritual journey, where I am at right now with God, etc

*Romans 15:7 Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.*

**HOME PLATE Characteristics:** Deep caring community. Affirming and confirming the next risky steps in your journey.

*Gal 5:13, 16 For you have been called to live in freedom—not freedom to satisfy your sinful nature, but freedom to serve one another in love. So I advise you to live according to your new life in the Holy Spirit.*

*The central calling of community is to connect, not to disrupt, to release something powerful from within one person into the life of another that calls forth the goodness in another's heart.*

## Develop a flow for the night

Through prayer & preparation, decide where you want to go & take them there!

1. Which questions am I going to **focus on**?
2. **How long** are we going to spend on each question?
3. **Who** do we need to hear from and **how** will I engage them?

*Review sample of sermon outline and questions in resources*



*And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone. 1 Thess. 5:14*

## **Perspective on Challenges**

You will not have all the answers, however there are tools to help you analyze what may be going on and how to head the right direction. Staff is available to help if you get stumped. “I don’t know, but I’ll find out” can be a great answer.

### **Figuring Out What’s Going On: Four Questions**

**1. How long have you been dealing with this? (Duration of Issue)**

When did this first occur?

**2. Who else knows? (Involvement of others)**

Have you talked to anyone else about this? If so, who? How often? Any other people know? When was the last time you talked to someone about it? How did they respond?

**3. Have you received any advice or council on how to deal with this?**

What have those you’ve talked to said about it?

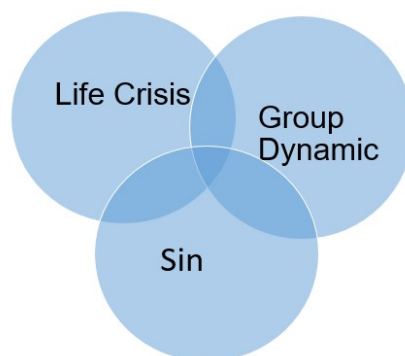
Have you sought any other help or resources regarding this issue?

**4. Do you have any plans for your next steps?**

What do you think might be your next step? Would you like me to check on some other resources? (Don’t make the calls, but give them referrals, etc.)

## Major Growth Group Challenges

When messy lives intersect there are bound to be challenges.



Relate   Reveal   Respond

## Responding to the Challenges

1. Watch for clues that something deeper is going on.
2. Recognize the pressures that work to keep you from responding.
3. Make use of the people and resources available to you.
4. Keep your eyes on the whole group and when necessary set appropriate boundaries

I Go   We Go   You Go

## ***Trouble Shooting Guide***

### **Situation---Someone is talking too much**

#### **OPTIONS:**

1. Take this person aside and address the issue. Explain to them that when any one person dominates the discussion it doesn't allow those who are more introverted to share in the discussion. Ask them to limit their input.
2. Share what the vision of Life Groups is and help them contribute accordingly.
3. After you pose the question ask someone else specifically to answer so the talker doesn't have time to interject.
4. \_\_\_\_\_



Situation---You have a critical person in your Group

**OPTIONS:**

1. Take the person aside and remind them of the purpose of Life Groups and what the consequences are of their critical spirit.
2. Help this person to see that his critical spirit hurts people and doesn't help make a Life Group a safe place to build healthy relationships.
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Situation---You have an EGR

**OPTIONS:**

1. It is important to establish clear boundaries with the person early. For example, when they phone you, immediately let them know you only have a few minutes to talk. After a few minutes gently let them know you appreciate the call but you have to go now.
2. Address the situation. Pull them aside and gently bring the situation to their attention with a suggestion and an offer to help solve it. Let them know you are bringing the issue up because you love them.
3. Understand that some issues such as sexual abuse, alcoholism, or drug abuse require professional help. Help that person to get in touch with the appropriate resources that can truly help them.
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Situation---Someone leads the conversation off track every week**

**OPTIONS:**

1. Immediately following the person's response redirect the group back to the original question by restating it.
2. Have a private chat and bring the matter to the person's attention. Ask them to stick to the subject at hand when they respond to a question.
3. When the person's response derails or gets off track, redirect them, even if you have to cut the person off.
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:



Situation---Someone dominating group discussion

**OPTIONS:**

1. Take some time to get to know this person. It could be that this person is a natural leader who needs some coaching on how to balance their leadership and people skills.
2. Remind them that their style can come across as challenging to people in the group. Ask them to monitor themselves.
3. Take them aside and let them know you see leadership gifts and skills in them and would they like to work with you as a leader apprentice so that in the future they could have their own group.
4. \_\_\_\_\_

Situation---Someone has a hard time opening up

**OPTIONS:**

1. Take some time as a leader to talk one-on-one with this person.
2. Invite them to share and state again the group agreement that we will make your Life Group a safe place.
3. Create smaller groups from time to time for this person to share in.
4. Take some time to call them and let them know you are glad they come to your Life Group. This may help them feel a part of the group and help them feel safer.
5. \_\_\_\_\_

What other situations are you concerned about?

Notes: