

Top 10 ideas for Life Group Leaders

Leader Role

The Life Group Leader acts as a shepherd to the people in their group, by preparing for the lesson ahead of time, leading the group discussion and prayer, and caring for its members.

Don't try to do it yourself. Pray right now for God to help you.

Leaders act as mentors or guides for others who may wish to serve as apprentice leaders.

Leader Expectations

The Life Group Leader is expected to: live an exemplary lifestyle, growing in Christ-likeness, balancing Great Commandment and Great Commission activities while welcoming new members into the group and releasing mature members for other ministry.

Leading Small Groups

1. **Be friendly and encouraging.** *Remember, to be yourself. You don't have to conduct your group the way anyone else does. Allow God to use your unique gifts and talents to minister to your members in your own style.*

2. **Prepare ahead of time.** *You should be familiar with the material and the Bible passages that will be covered at the meeting. You might even want to find a little background information such as the occasion of a passage or meaning a key word from a bible dictionary.*

3. **Make people feel valued and welcomed.** *Pray for each member by name before the meeting begins. You may want to review a prayer list from the previous week. Expect God to lead you to whomever he wants you to encourage or challenge.*

4. **Ask open ended questions and be patient.** *Sometimes people need a moment or two to think about a question. Don't be in a hurry to fill the silence. Encourage each member to participate. Don't let one or*

two people monopolize the discussion. If you have members who always sit silently, privately encourage them that they are valued and appreciated and that you would love to have their input as well.

5. **Let other people talk, but keep the discussion focused** on God's word and what it says to us, not just on what people think. Try to limit people trying to "fix" others during the group time.

6. **Provide transitions between questions.** *Ask for volunteers to read Bible passages and be sure to thank the readers.*

7. **Break into smaller groups sometimes.** *Some topics generate a lot of discussion. At those times you may want to break into smaller groups of 3 or 4. This can encourage the quieter members to share and minimize the dominant voices.*

8. **Remember to pray.** *Group members will have different experience levels with group prayer, be sensitive to this issue. Try to limit prayer requests to immediate family, close friends, or urgent needs. You might want to have your prayer time in smaller groups. If so, briefly share the requests with the whole group when you conclude.*

9. **Rotate Facilitators occasionally.** *You may be perfectly capable but allowing others to facilitate will help them to grow in their faith and gifts.*

10. **One last challenge.** *Before you begin your group, look up each of the following passage, they will prepare you with a shepherd's heart.*

Mat 9:36-8

John 10:14-5

1 Peter 5:2-4

Phil 2:1 -5

Heb 10:23-5

1 Thes. 2:7-8, 11-12

SPECTRUM OF CARE AT NEW LIFE

Vince Maloney, Director of Care • New Life Community Church, Fismo Beach CA • October 2009

As a ministry leader at New Life, it is important for you to understand the different types of care people may need, what you and your group are capable of and designed to provide, and where you can refer people to in order for them to receive the type of care they need. This chart distinguishes the types of care, the places they can be received, and the people who can supply them.

	Life Group Care	Support Groups & Classes	Pastoral Care	Professional Care	Crisis Care
Description	Relational and like-interest groups meet fellowship and growth needs of people in our congregation and community.	Support groups provide care focused on specialized needs and struggles of people in our congregation and community.	Pastoral care focuses primarily on providing religious or relational guidance for people in our congregation and community.	Professional care may be needed for serious emotional needs that greatly impair a person's ability to cope with life.	Urgent specialized professional care is needed to attend life-threatening situations.
Examples	Bible Studies Activity groups Service teams Various classes and ministries	Support Groups: • GriefShare • DivorceCare • Pure Desire (Men/Women) • Women's Restoration • 12 Step recovery • Cancer Support Classes: • Premarital Classes • Marriage Retreats • Foundations Class	Life transitions Relational problems Grief and loss Spiritual problems Intercessory prayer	Depression & Anxiety Schizophrenia Bi-polar conditions Major relational problems Prolonged grief Trauma and recovery	Possible Suicide or homicide Abuse Mental or spiritual instability Severe illness or Injury
Leaders	Pastors Ministry Directors Trained & supervised lay leaders	Pastors Ministry Directors Counseling Interns Outside Professionals Church Elders Trained/Supervised Lay Leaders	Pastors Ministry Directors Counseling Interns Lay Counselors Church Elders After-hours emergency line	Mental Health Professionals Psychologists Psychiatrists Marriage / Family Therapists Social Workers Medical Doctors Attorneys Financial Counselors	911 Law enforcement (Police Sheriff's Department, CHP) Local Hotline Local mental health services Ambulance Hospital ER
Misc.	Open groups and closed groups	On-campus groups Other Church Prayer Rooms Partnership with outside agencies	Pastor on Call (POC) On-campus meetings by appointment Emergency phone response	Counseling services In-patient and outpatient services	Crisis response In-patient facilities Mandatory holds

