

Developing a LIFE Group that is “More Than a Meeting”

One Way of Thinking

New Hope LIFE Groups

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Assumptions

- Full commitment to the LIFE vision for groups (rather than bible study or care group vision) with the end goal being full-duplication of a LIFE Group
- Centralized accountability, training, & encouragement within the New Hope Network
- Freedom for LIFE Group leaders to modify & create in order to best fulfill the LIFE purposes in their context & in line with their personality
- LIFE Groups are increasingly led by leadership teams (with a point leader), rather than by one individual or couple
- People need to have a clear goal beyond themselves, & also need to experience a sense of progress toward that goal
- LIFE Group development & planting will be a messy process (some things will get easier as we go, but some things will always be messy)
- **PLEASE NOTE → What you will read here is merely ONE WAY of thinking...the primary goal of this document is to stir our creative juices as we seek to allow function to drive and create relevant forms (rather than the other way around). You may think of a totally different way to implement some of these things, and that is great!!!**

Functional Challenges

- *How do we adequately engage all LIFE purposes within one group?*
 - If we create an open, inviting, outreach atmosphere, then how will we deeply build into the lives of people & develop leaders?
 - If we major on building into believers, then how will we realistically create environments attractive to outsiders?
 - If we try to split time between the components in one weekly meeting, then how will we build any sense of momentum (especially as it relates to outsiders knowing when to come & insiders knowing when to invite outsiders)?
 - How do we create a culture in which people are always being challenged to take the next step in commitment & involvement (in other words, how do we call for, evaluate, & measure progress regarding individuals & groups)?
- *How can we streamline people's focus & labor?*
 - Key leaders are giving leadership to many things & are often not able to give adequate attention to leading & shepherding their LIFE Groups
 - Several people are involved in multiple groups, but unable to give full attention to any one group
 - Is progress matching our levels of activity?

Form Proposal – A Three-Tiered Approach (all of this within 1 LIFE Group, but not within 1 meeting time)

○ ***Tier One – Large Group***

- Regular place & time (weekly or bi-weekly)
 - Eliminates confusion
 - Builds momentum with inviting outsiders
- Outreach-minded
 - Open & inviting atmosphere to all people
 - “Exposing people to biblical truth in the context of a loving community.”
 - Core group knows that this meeting is not primarily for their needs
- Entry Point
 - Minimal commitment required
 - Inconsistent attendance likely (but expected)
 - Fishing pool (opportunity to help people take the next step)
- Co-ed participation
- Size Flexibility
 - Could grow up to around 30 people in one gathering
 - Goal is not to have an intimate discussion
 - Choose a facility that would allow for maximum sustained growth

○ ***Tier Two – Core Groups***

- Regular times (weekly or bi-weekly)
 - Eliminates confusion
 - Helps core people know when they are getting deeper help
- Equipping-minded
 - People wanting to walk with God are invited
 - Higher level of commitment expected
 - Outside preparation & study
 - Attendance expectations
 - Vulnerability & accountability
 - Leadership development forum
- Advancement Point
 - The next step for a new believer or for a believer wanting to go deeper with God & others
 - Growth of core groups becomes a quantitative measure of a LIFE Group’s progress
 - 1-to-1 discipleship takes place between group members
- Gender specific participation (to deal with deeper personal issues)
 - Start with one guys’ group
 - Start with one ladies’ group
 - Expand number of group as necessary along relational lines
- Numerical growth (after a core group reaches around 10 participants) necessitates splitting groups
 - The new core groups become the core of the new LIFE Group plant

- The new core group leaders become the leadership team of the new LIFE Group plant
- ***Tier Three – LIFE Leadership Team***
 - *Point Leader*
 - Oversees development of every tier
 - Mentors Co-Leader
 - Mentors some on the LIFE Leadership Team
 - Leads the initial core group
 - Periodically teaches at large & core group meetings
 - Disciples other younger believers within the LIFE Group
 - Directs the LIFE Leadership Team to develop & adjust the group's plant plan
 - Works with the co-leader to evaluate progress toward the planting phase
 - *Co-Leader*
 - Assists the point leader in overall group development
 - Mentors some on the LIFE Leadership Team
 - Leads the new core group (once it develops)
 - Periodically teaches at large & core group meetings
 - Disciples other younger believers within the LIFE Group
 - Helps the LIFE Leadership Team develop & adjust the plant plan
 - Becomes the Point Leader of the new LIFE Group plant
 - Develops the new LIFE Leadership Team
 - Directs the new LIFE Leadership Team to develop the new group's plant plan
 - *LIFE Leadership Team*
 - Made up of people who are consistently “getting it” over a period of time & is the next step of maturity beyond core group
 - LIFE Group Point Leader
 - LIFE Group Co-Leader(s)
 - LIFE component champions (if this is a good fit)
 - Learning biblical truth (teaching team)
 - Intercession
 - Fellowship
 - Extending LIFE to others