



Life Group Leader Training

Life Groups offer people:

1. A Place to _____

Yes, whatever a person is like, I try to find common ground with him so that he will let me tell him about Christ and let Christ save him. 1 Corinthians 9:22 TLB

We were not made to do life alone. God created us for community, and Life Groups provide a place to connect with others, share life, and grow in faith together.

2. A Place to _____

We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. 1 John 3:16 NLT

It is through life together that our problems become smaller, and God uses others to bring support and encouragement to our lives. Life Groups become a place where others don't just know your name, but care about what is happening in your life and want to support you in your spiritual journey.

3. A Place to _____

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another. Proverbs 27:17 NIV

We believe every person is growing in their faith if they are connected and serving. Every person is created with a God-given potential to make a difference in the world. Life Groups are a place where you can grow with others to become more like Jesus and reach the potential God has put inside you.

What a Life Group Looks Like

At New Hope Church we use a _____ approach to Life Groups.

This means groups are formed around the leaders' _____ or _____ . We want people to gather together based on the things they enjoy and that are important to them. Essentially, the things you are already doing in your life are the things that can make up your Life Group!

All groups fall within three main categories

- _____ Groups that gather for fellowship. Often these groups meet in coffee shops or in parks.
- _____ Groups that gather to study the Bible or other Christian books. These groups are meant to develop spiritual maturity and knowledge of the Word.
- _____ Groups that gather to participate in a hobby or activity. Sports, crafting, video gaming, thrift-shopping and hiking are all examples of groups in this category.

Group Structure

Groups meet throughout the year in 4 semesters

January-March

April-June

July-August

September-November

Groups meet _____ or _____ during each semester.

Groups meet in a variety of places like homes, parks, restaurants, coffee shops or offices. New groups start every semester, which makes it easy to build community and enjoy different types of groups.

No matter what your group meets about, each meeting should be made up of four things:

1. _____ This is the laid-back time for group members to talk and get to know each other
2. _____ This will vary based on what kind of group you're leading. It could be the majority component of your time if you are an interest Life Group; or just a few minutes of your time if you are a study group.
3. _____ Ask for prayer requests from group members and pray at the beginning and/or end of each group meeting.
4. _____ This is what differentiates your Life Group from your neighborhood social club. Whether its through activities or discussion, always find a way to include the Word of God. This can be as simple as sharing something God is teaching you with the group or talking about a verse you read that week.

Small groups are not a place for:

- Business
- Offerings
- Unapproved materials or speakers
- Controversial Topics

Your Role as a Small Group Leader

God has a part for all of us to play in the church and the role of a Small Group Leader is to come alongside our pastors and the staff of New Hope Church to help care for people.

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-13

The primary role of a Small Group Leader is to help group members _____.

Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds;

Proverbs 27:23

People in your group will be at different places in their spiritual lives and each person will have different next steps to take. Here are some examples of next steps you can help people take:

- Start attending Sunday services
- Start reading the Bible regularly
- Start praying regularly
- Be water baptized
- Complete Growth Track
- Join the Dream Team
- Start tithing
- Start attending Corporate Prayer or First Wednesdays
- Attend a conference or event at New Hope Church
- Invite a friend or neighbor to church or a Life Group
- Complete Life Group Leader training to become a Life Group Leader
- Participate in outreach events and mission trips at New Hope Church

How to be a Successful Life Group Leader

1. _____ for the members of your group.
2. Consider partnering with a _____ to help share the responsibility of caring for and leading your group.
3. _____ with group members outside of group meetings through phone, email, text, social media and/or face-to-face. Encourage group members to connect with each other throughout the week as well.

4. Have _____ through the laughter and by creating an enjoyable environment.
5. Respect people's _____ by beginning and ending your group on time.
6. _____ group members to attend church services and events with you, such as First Wednesday services, conferences and outreach events
7. _____ the group around a member going through a crisis. Use wisdom and be sensitive.

The Importance of Prayer

Prayer is the _____ of our church, and it's important for your Life Group.

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land 2 Chronicles 7:14

Confidence as a Life Group Leader

If you only do what you feel comfortable doing, you don't need God. God's best is often found outside of your comfort zone.

When you serve God and people by leading a Life Group, He will equip you and give you the strength and wisdom to lead well.

For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength Philippians 4:13

For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love and self-discipline 2 Timothy 1:7

When you feel uncertain about leading a group, use Scripture to overcome lies of the enemy:

1. When you feel like you don't have the time, remember _____ and His timing is perfect

If you wait for perfect conditions, you will never get anything done Ecclesiastes 11:4

2. When you feel unqualified, remember _____

It is not that we think we are qualified to do anything on our own. Our qualification comes from God. He has enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant. 2 Corinthians 3:5-6

3. When you feel like your past disqualifies you, remember _____.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God
2 Corinthians 1:3-4

When you feel like you don't know how to help someone in your group, remember ESPN

E: Encourage
S: Share Scripture
P: Pray
N: Next Steps

Leadership Support

As a Life Group Leader, you are never alone in creating community. We have pastors, staff and the Life Group Team who are all working alongside you to invest in great Life Groups at New Hope Church.

Your Coach

As a Life Group Leader, you have a Coach paired with you to help as you need support throughout the semester.

Your Coach's number one priority is to _____ daily. Reach out to your coach if you have a need, prayer request or concern.

How to Create Good Group Dynamics

- **Set Expectations** – A key to helping people feel comfortable in your group is to let them know what to expect. Take time to share how the group will flow from week to week. This can include things like explaining the times you will begin and end the group, how discussion or group activities will happen, and how group members can share prayer requests or best engage the group.
- **Follow the 70/30 Rule** – Give the members of the group room to speak up instead of doing all the talking yourself. About 70% of the talking should come from members and 30% from the leader.
- **Keep the discussion positive** – If conversation takes a negative or destructive turn, guide it back to a healthy place. If you someone needs to talk about a sensitive or complex issue, you can follow up with them after the group or call your coach to help you respond well.
- **Keep the conversation relevant to everyone** – Remember, people in your group will be at different places in their spiritual journey. Be thoughtful when you talk about spiritual concepts or church terms that might be unfamiliar to new Christians or new church-goers
- **Respect boundaries** – Men should minister to men and women should minister to women. A couple may minister to a single person. We want to maintain integrity and purity in our Life Groups. These boundaries will help protect the leaders and group members from entering into an uncomfortable or inappropriate situation

Stay Connected

Throughout the semester, respond to your Coach and Life Group Team about group attendance, potential new Life Group Leaders, and how your group members are moving one step.

Starting Your Group

All Life Groups Leaders must complete the following steps before starting to lead:

- Complete Growth Track
- Complete Life Group Leader Training
- Complete the Life Group Leader application
- Sign the New Hope Church Leadership Commitment

Thank you for completing Life Group Leader training!

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I recruit people to come to my group?

- Start with people who are already in your sphere of influence; co-workers, friends, and neighbors
- Find people around you who are new to the church, new believers, or have shown interest in getting involved.
- Look for people who you think you can help to realize their potential
- Ask God to send the right people to your group

Where can I hold my Life Group?

We encourage leaders to host their Life Groups in places where they like to spend their time. Some of the most common meeting places are homes, restaurants, parks, coffee shops and office buildings. There are a few rooms on campus that are available, upon reservation, for interest and study groups.

Where can I find Life Group curriculum?

Our list of approved books and authors is available online. Additionally, you can find discussion questions from the current sermon series available on the Life Group Leaders Facebook page.

How frequently does my group need to meet?

Weekly or bi-monthly. This allows enough time to develop genuine relationships.

Does New Hope Church offer childcare during Life Groups?

It is up to you whether your group offers childcare, is child-friendly, or is for adults only. New Hope Church does not arrange for childcare for your group.

How can I tell if group members are moving one step?

Ask! Make it part of your discussion whether in a group setting or individually. Here are some great questions to guide your conversation:

- How did you get connected to this Life Group?
- What are you most looking forward to in the group?
- Do you attend New Hope Church?
- Have you ever been in a Life Group before?
- What do you feel like God has been doing in your life lately?
- Have you ever been to a New Hope Church conference?
- What areas of your faith are you hoping to grow in the coming months?
- What are you focused on in your life right now?

- Have you been through Growth Track? Do you remember what personality type you are or what your spiritual gifts are?
- Have you ever served on the New Hope Church Dream Team?
- How can I pray for you?

Everyone in your group will be at different places spiritually. The vision of helping them “move one step” is not to get them to do everything at once, but to help identify where they currently are spiritually and offer a practical next step to help them grow.

What should I do if someone ask a question I can't answer?

da Holy Spirit. Encourage them to spend time reading the Bible and praying. Also, let them know that you will do your best to find answers to their questions and get back with them at your next Life Group meeting. Do some personal research and call your coach to get advice.

What should I do if someone in my group (or the group) that requires attention beyond what I can provide?

If you encounter a difficult situation within your Life Group, please know that you are not alone. If a member is going through a crisis, you can rally the group around them to provide prayer, encouragement and support. Use wisdom and be sensitive to the situation. If you are unsure of what to do, don't hesitate to ask your Coach.

How can I share “wins” from my Life Group?

We can't wait to hear about the life-changing moments from your Life Group! Email stories to sbalk@newhopepeople.com or post pictures and stories on the Life Group Leader Facebook page.

Helpful Scripture References

At New Hope Church, we believe ministering through the Word of God is the most powerful way to care for people. As you pray over a Life Group member, try inserting that member's name in the Scripture to make it more personalized

As a leader, we encourage you to find and memorize at least three Scriptures which will equip you when you are walking someone through a tough situation as well as give you strength as a leader throughout the semester.

Here's a list of powerful Scriptures you can apply to any situation:

And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first commandment. And the second, like it, is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these. Mark 12:30-31

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me Philippians 4:13

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight. Proverbs 3:5-6

"My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts" says the Lord, "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts are higher than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:8-9

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have what we asked of him. 1 John 5:14-15

"No weapon formed against you shall prosper, and every tongue which rises against you in judgement you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is from Me." says the Lord. Isaiah 54:17

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose Romans 8:28

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Jesus Christ Philippians 4:6-7

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. James 1:2-4

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

I Corinthians 13:4-7

So faith comes by hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ

Romans 10:17

One day the apostles said to the Lord, "We need more faith, tell us how to get it." "If your faith were only the size of a mustard seed," Jesus answered "it would be large enough to uproot that mulberry tree over there and send it hurtling into the sea! Your command would bring immediate results!" Luke 17:5-6

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see Hebrews 11:1

If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you James 1:5

Where there is no guidance, a people fall, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety.

Proverbs 11:14

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.

Romans 8:1-2

Come now, let us settle the matter," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool" Isaiah 1:18

Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14