

Small Group Strategy Session

9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

August 25, 2007

Table of Contents

A Biblical Mission	2
A Biblical Method	2
A Biblical Model.....	2
Biblical Maturity – What Does It Look Like? (Hint: iTree).....	3
What Kind Of Christian Are We Trying To Produce Through Small Groups?	4
Impact’s Vision:.....	5
Small Groups – The Who, What, Why, When, and Where:.....	5
Small Groups at Impact:.....	5
Nine Qualities An <i>Effective</i> Group Leader Will Demonstrate:.....	7
Ten Activities an Effective Group Leader will be Doing:	9
Every Group Must Make the “Community Climb”	10
Every Member Must Take Risks Along the “Community Climb”	11
How to Lead a Discussion	15
Questions to Ask Before You Choose a Bible Study Guide	16
Using a Bible Study Guide	17
4 Basic Guidelines for Leaders	18
The ABC’s for Sharing Prayer needs (be sure your Group knows these):	18
25 Ways to Pray as a Group – Avoid The “Last Person” Syndrome	18
How to Deal with Difficult People.....	19
Crisis Caregiving.....	20
10 Steps for Starting a New Small Group At Impact	21
Why your small group needs to grow:.....	22
How to lead your small group to grow:	23
When new people visit your group.....	24
Do’s and don’ts for new people at the end of the meeting	24

All Scripture Quotations are taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version, © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society

Why Do We Have Small Groups?

The Biblical basis for small groups.

A Biblical mission requires a Biblical method, patterned after a Biblical model, in the pursuit of Biblical maturity.

A Biblical Mission

Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV)

¹⁸Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

“Changed Lives: Our Most Important Mission!”

A Biblical Method

1 Thessalonians. 5:11 (NIV)

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

Heb 3:13

But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

Heb 10:24

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.

A Biblical Model

- Jesus began his ministry by starting a small group.

Mark 1:16-20 (NIV)

¹⁶As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷“Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.” ¹⁸At once they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. ²⁰Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

Mark 3:13-18 (NIV)

¹³Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. ¹⁴He appointed twelve—designating them apostles—that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach...

Why Do We Have Small Groups?

The Biblical basis for small groups.

- Jesus spent most of his time with his small group.

John 11:54 (NIV)

Therefore Jesus no longer moved about publicly among the Jews. Instead he withdrew to a region near the desert, to a village called Ephraim, where he stayed with his disciples.

- Jesus used the small group setting to teach and model spiritual truth and lifestyle.

Matthew 11:1 (NIV)

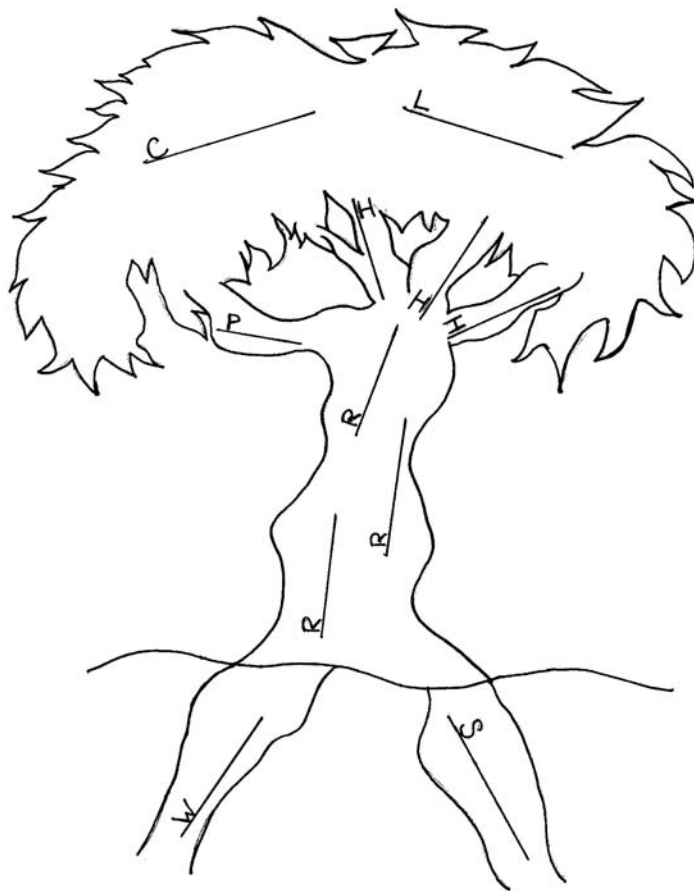
After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee.

- Jesus ministry multiplied as the members of his small group matured into leaders.

Acts 2:14 (NIV)

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.

Biblical Maturity – What Does It Look Like? (Hint: iTree)



Why Do We Have Small Groups?

The Biblical basis for small groups.

What Kind Of Christian Are We Trying To Produce Through Small Groups?

The foundations of every Christian's life should be worship and service.

Through the Small Groups ministry, we seek to produce Christians who will:

Reach UP to God in DISCIPLESHIP (worship and grow in their faith)

Reach IN to the church and CONNECT (belong and serve)

Reach OUT to others and EVANGELIZE (influence)

- Reach Up: We grow as we reach UP to God in discipleship and worship.

Matthew 22:37 (NIV)

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind."

Ephesians 4:13 (NIV)

until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

- Reach In: We reach IN with connection and service to each other.

Romans 12:5 (NIV)

so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Matthew 22:39 (NIV)

"Love your neighbor as yourself."

- Reach Out: We influence others toward Jesus as we serve, interact with and reach OUT to our community.

Acts 1:8 (NIV)

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

As Christians Reach Up, Reach In, and Reach Out, they will:

Pray – to know God's will, to commune with Him, to bring the needs of others before Him

Invest – their time, energy, finances, and other gifts to build the church and serve others

Invite – others to their church, Small Group or other activities

Include – everyone by not hanging out with just one "clique" of friends, but make all feel welcome

Vision, Values, Strategy

Small Groups at Impact

Impact's Vision:

“Changed Lives”

- Small groups are a means to changed lives.
- Our Goal is not more small groups but rather more changed lives.

Small Groups – The Who, What, Why, When, and Where:

A group of people who regularly gather together for a specific purpose, which draws each member into a closer relationship with God and others.

- A group of people I feel comfortable with. (Who)
- An appointment I can keep. (When)
- A place I belong. (Where)
- A purpose I can share in. (What)
- A relationship in which I will grow in. (Why)

Small Groups at Impact:

D-Groups

Intense, committed 2-year growth & study-focused, with reading and homework (8-14 participants)

WHO: Anyone seeking deep spiritual growth and/or leadership roles

WHEN: Every week (except holidays or per the leader of the group). Two-year curriculum.

WHERE: At a designated host home, or other suitable facility conducive to fellowship and learning

WHAT: Fellowship, Disciplined Study, Goal Setting, Accountability, Scripture Memorization

WHY: Form deeper connections with fellow Impact members. Grow to a high level of spiritual maturity.

Impact Small Groups

Informal, connection-focused, mid-level study, light reading & homework (8-14 particip.)

WHO: Anyone seeking spiritual growth and fellowship with other believers

WHEN: Every week (except holidays or per the leader of the group). Quarterly Curriculum.

WHERE: At a designated host home, or other suitable facility conducive to fellowship and learning

WHAT: Fellowship, Study, Encouragement of fellow members

WHY: Form deeper connections with fellow Impact members. Grow in spiritual maturity.

Vision, Values, Strategy

Small Groups at Impact

Mega-Small Groups

Informal, drop-in, light study with no homework (15-36 participants)

WHO: Anyone seeking spiritual growth and fellowship with other believers

WHEN: Every other week (except holidays or per the leader of the group). Quarterly Curriculum.

WHERE: At a designated host home, or other suitable facility conducive to fellowship and learning

WHAT: Fellowship, Discussion, Encouragement of fellow members

WHY: Get to know fellow Impact members. Grow spiritually.

Short-Term Groups

Will vary in topic, scope, and duration, may change group type after initial study

WHO: Anyone seeking spiritual growth on a designated topic and fellowship with other believers

WHEN: As determined by the Impact pastoral staff

WHERE: Homes, Impact facilities, or other suitable facilities, depending on the campaign

WHAT: Fellowship, Study of a designated topic

WHY: Learn more about a designated topic, get to know fellow Impact members, grow spiritually.

Affinity Groups

Scrap booking, Shooters Club, etc. May or may not fall under Small Groups Ministry

WHO: Those who share a common interest and meet the criteria of the group

WHEN: As determined by the group leader

WHERE: A place suitable for the activity

WHAT: Meeting together to share in an activity or discuss a common interest or experience

WHY: Fellowship, encouragement, support of people with a common interest or experience

Your Group

WHO: _____

WHEN: _____

WHERE: _____

WHAT: _____

WHY: _____

Leaders Must Lead

The Life and Role of a Small Group Leader

Nine Qualities An Effective Group Leader Will Demonstrate:

Because the essence of leadership is influence (people look up to leaders, leaders model the life of Christ for others, etc.) AND because no organization can rise above its leadership AND because Biblical Servant-leadership is a privilege, not a right... the following nine qualifications must be present (to some degree and ever-growing) in Impact Community Church servant leaders:

An Impact Servant Leader is...

1. MEMBERloyal to the church and pastor

Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.” - Hebrews 13:17

2. TITHERfaithful and cheerful giver

“But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.” - 2 Corinthians 8:7

3. SOLID FAMILY LIFE positive family environment

*“He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?)”
- 1 Timothy 3:4-5*

Grow your roots in Worship

4. WORSHIPPER full devotion to God

Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.” - Matthew 22:37-38

Grow your roots in Service

5. SERVANT Leadership. maintain a consistent servant attitude

“And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” - Matthew 22:39

“Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” - Matthew 20:28

Reach UP

6. DISCIPLER growing in personal discipleship

Leaders Must Lead

The Life and Role of a Small Group Leader

“A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.”
- Luke 6:40

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...” - Matthew 28:19

Traits of a Disciple

- a. Leader
- b. Teachable (*Not proud*)
- c. Life is not his/her own, available to God and others (*Submits to God and His will*)
- d. Faithful (*Believes and trusts in God even when circumstances don't warrant it*)
- e. Growing in God's Word
- f. Applies the word to their life and heart
- g. Good steward; tithes, family, household, time etc. (*Faith in God's sovereignty and power*)
- h. Serves church and community (*Reaches in and out*)
- i. Striving to be like Christ (*Reaches up, in and out*)
- j. Makes disciples (*Prays, invests, invites, & includes*)
- k. Uses gifts (*Knows and uses gifts to serve God and others*)
- l. Spiritually transforming (*Growing in knowledge and understanding of God, His Word and ways*)
- m. Responds to trials with Christ-like attitude (*When trials come their way- they place their faith in God*)
- n. Cares about the unsaved and shares Jesus with them (*Lost people matter to God and to them*)
- o. Obedient to God, His ways and His direction (*His deal's more important than their deal*)
- p. Self controlled (*Able to control self, tongue, indulgences by the power of the holy spirit*)
- q. Prayerful (*Reaches up- fellowships with Christ in prayer and stillness*)
- r. Relationships with other Christians (*Reaches in- fellowships with other believers*)

Reach IN

7. SHEPHERD loves and cares for people

“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.”
- Romans 12:9-15

Reach OUT

8. SOUL-WINNER willing and able to lead others to Christ

Leaders Must Lead

The Life and Role of a Small Group Leader

“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.”

- 1 Peter 3:15

Changed Lives

9. SPIRIT-FILLED exhibits spiritual fruit

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” - Galatians 5:22-23

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” - John 15:5

Ten Activities an Effective Group Leader will be Doing:

1. Pray I will meet regularly with God in private prayer.
2. Prepare I will prepare my mind and heart for our meetings and will include my apprentice(s) in the process.
3. Meet I will conduct meetings that encourage believers and accept seekers.
4. Invite I will reach out between meetings, cultivating both old and new contacts.
5. Recruit I will recruit apprentices, and I will help my apprentices develop an ability to lead.
6. Bring I will encourage group members to worship on Sunday.
7. Serve I will serve others with my gifts, knowledge, energy, time and money, conscious that my greatest influence may occur as I set an example.
8. Win I will make time to build acquaintances with unbelievers, serving them at their points of struggle.
9. Connect I will be available for meetings with Small Groups Directors and pastors.
10. Fail I will regularly stretch myself beyond my current abilities knowing that failure is an effective teacher.

Discussion Questions

- Which leadership quality do you best exemplify?
- Which leadership quality do you need to practice more?
- Which leadership activity are you best at?
- Which leadership activity do you need to practice more often?

Strategy – Running A Great Small Group

How to facilitate fellowship in a small group.

Every Group Must Make the “Community Climb”



Sharing Your Story

- Every member must take risks along the Community Climb.
- The initial risk of entering a group is sharing yourself and your story with others.

Affirming One Another

Romans 15:7 (NIV)

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you.

- No group can reach community if they do not express a genuine acceptance of one another.

Sharing Needs

Galatians 6:2 (NIV)

Carry each other's burdens.

- Christian community requires sharing my needs and giving myself to meet the needs of others.

Community

Acts 2:44 (NIV)

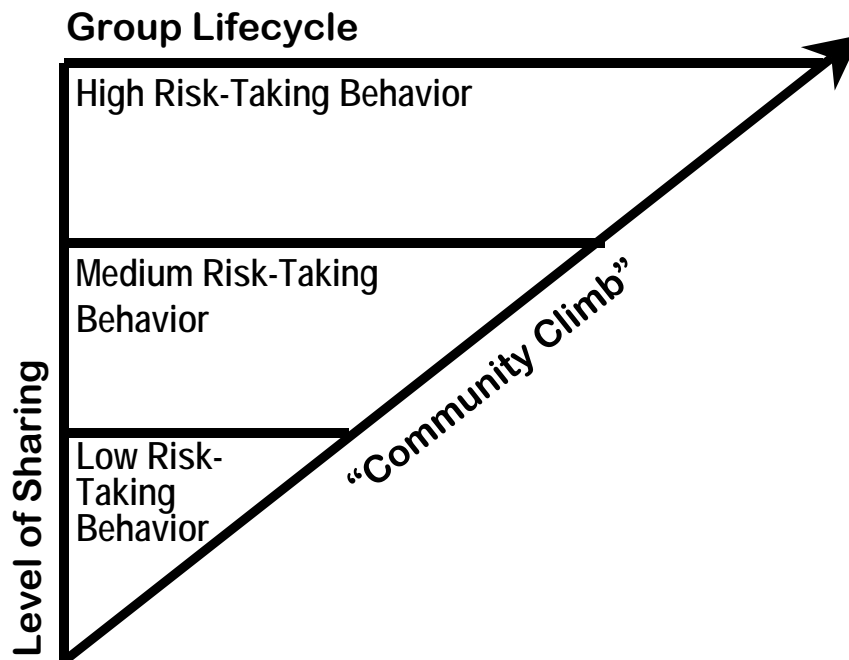
All the believers were together and had everything in common.

- This is the Bible's definition of community - where people live life together and share everything in common.

Strategy – Running A Great Small Group

How to facilitate fellowship in a small group.

Every Member Must Take Risks Along the “Community Climb”



As you make the “Community Climb,” the level of sharing increases. Each increased level requires a greater amount of risk-taking on the part of group members. For example, sharing your needs is a bigger risk than sharing your story. The willingness to take greater risks will largely be determined by how earlier, smaller risks were received.

Community Building for Each Stage of the “Community Climb”

The following sample exercises will help you see the characteristics of each type of community building activity. After you complete each exercise, answer the following questions:

- On a scale of 1 to 10, what was your personal level of risk in completing this activity? Why?
- In order to feel safe completing this activity, what did you need from the other members of your group? Why?

Strategy – Running A Great Small Group

How to facilitate fellowship in a small group.

Sharing Your Story

A Day in the Life of Yours Truly

Introduce yourself to the group by completing the sentences below. Ask one person to complete the first sentence, and then give everyone else a chance to finish. Choose someone else for sentence two, and repeat the process until all of the sentences have been discussed.

1. I start the day by...
2. My most creative time of the day is...
3. The people I enjoy being around are...
4. When I feel “low,” I...
5. I enjoy reading...
6. My favorite pastime is...
7. I usually get to bed around...

Discussion Questions

- On a scale of 1 to 10, what was your personal level of risk in completing this activity? Why?
- In order to feel safe completing this activity, what did you need from the other members of your group? Why?

Strategy – Running A Great Small Group

How to facilitate fellowship in a small group.

Affirming One Another

Your Dream Car

You have a short time to get acquainted with the people in your group. If you had the opportunity to give the person on your right a car, tell them which car you would choose for them and why based on your impressions.

SPORTS CAR: Fire-red Corvette, with cellular telephone

ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLE: Camouflage-green Hummer

CLASSIC CAR: Rebuilt '65 Ford Mustang convertible

4-WHEEL: Heavy-duty Jeep Grand Cherokee

TOWN CAR: Lincoln Continental with refreshment bar

COMIC CAR: 1974 Volkswagen with Rolls Royce front

PICK UP: Dodge Ram 4 x 4 with roll bar

ANTIQUE CAR: 1929 Model A Ford with rumble seat

CIRCUS CAR: Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey variety

RACING CAR: Turbo-charged Porsche with air foils and spoilers

'50s CAR: Red T-Bird with fur steering wheel and leopard upholstery

This activity was Adapted from Beginnings, © 1996 Seredipity House, Littleton, CO. page 12

Discussion Questions

- On a scale of 1 to 10, what was your personal level of risk in completing this activity? Why?
- In order to feel safe completing this activity, what did you need from the other members of your group? Why?

Strategy – Running A Great Small Group

How to facilitate fellowship in a small group.

Sharing Needs

What I Need Right Now

Choose three things from this list that you could use more if in your life this week. Tell the group why you chose what you did.

vitality	self-esteem	direction
tenderness	composure	security
recognition	generosity	balance
activity	confidence	caring
awareness	health	motivation
sharing	solitude	devotion
contemplation	serenity	trust
insight	joy	commitment
communion	integration	forgiveness
surrender	faith	purpose
music	laughter	support
self-expression	companionship	harmony
romance	intimacy	patience
beauty	sensitivity	self-awareness
skill	opportunity	challenges
variety	structure	accomplishments
control	imagination	money
responsibility	education	experience
freedom	strength	energy
fitness	relaxation	comfort
nutrition	touching	sleep
childlikeness	coordination	flexibility
exercise	self-control	celebration

This activity was taken from Ice Breakers and Heart-Warmers, by Steve Sheely, © 1996 Seredipity House, Littleton, CO. page 61.

Discussion Questions

- On a scale of 1 to 10, what was your personal level of risk in completing this activity? Why?
- In order to feel safe completing this activity, what did you need from the other members of your group? Why?

Strategy – Running A Great Small Group

How to facilitate study in a small group.

How to Lead a Discussion

1. Serve as a facilitator, not a lecturer.
 - Your goal is to encourage personal inter-action and self-discovery.
 - Try not to be overly directive or too passive.
2. Focus on what Scripture has to say—and not on you as the leader.
 - Point members to Scripture and allow the Holy Spirit to make application according to each member's needs.
3. Maintain an atmosphere of love and acceptance.
 - Never put down a person's comments or contribution.
4. Ask open-ended questions.
 - Open-ended questions have many possible answers and cannot be answered by a simple "yes" or "no."
5. Encourage involvement.
 - Call on non-participants by name to respond.
 - This also helps control a person who talks too much.
6. Stimulate discussion using active feedback to responses.

Such as:

 - Acknowledging responses whenever you can.
 - Ask follow-up questions to clarify responses that are too general or "vague".
7. Never tell a person she/he is wrong.
 - This kills an open discussion atmosphere.
 - Deal with wrong responses and comments by asking, "What do others think?" or "Does everyone agree?"
8. Encourage application.
 - Ask: "What can/should we do differently as a result of this discussion?"
9. Keep the discussion on track.
 - Beware of "tangents."
 - Suggest that new issues be "tabled" until you finish your present discussion.
10. Summarize the main ideas that are presented to help keep the group focused.

Strategy – Running A Great Small Group

How to facilitate study in a small group.

Questions to Ask Before You Choose a Bible Study Guide

With hundreds of Bible study resources on the market, selecting a study can be a daunting task. Answer these questions to determine if a study guide is right for your group:

- Is this study biblically based? Is it consistent with the teachings of my church? Will the study lead us into better understanding of what Scripture says, or are we likely to be “sharing our ignorance”?
- Will this study build good Bible study habits that will make us better students of God’s word?
- Is the depth appropriate for our group?
- Am I willing and able to commit the preparation time required to lead this study? How much advance preparation is required from group members, and is it realistic?
- Is the subject engaging? Is it relevant to our lives?
- Can the chapters be completed in a reasonable amount of time so that we can still pray and mingle?
- How many lessons are there? What is the group’s attention span – will we grow tired of the study before we complete it? What kind of cycle are we on– will we complete the study before the end of the quarter?
- Will I be encouraged to apply what I learn to personal growth and ministry?

(Taken from: 101 Best Small Group Ideas, © 1996, NavPress, Colorado Springs, CO, page 42.)

Final Question:

Is this material that would make me excited to come back to Small Group every week?

Strategy – Running A Great Small Group

How to facilitate study in a small group.

Using a Bible Study Guide

Are you leading a group through a Bible study guide? Here are a few users' tips to help you make the most of your materials.

First, prepare thoroughly before leading your group through the next lesson.

- As you work through the material, anticipate areas of uncertainty or questions that may come up among group members.
- Prepare for these questions by doing some extra homework before your meeting: either find answers to the questions you anticipate, or locate potential resources you can recommend so group members can look up the answers on their own.

Second, base your approach for leading the meeting on the nature of the study guide.

- Following are three possible approaches to covering study material during your group session.
- Select or adapt the one most appropriate to the study material your group is using.

Approach one:

Follow the guide closely by simply sharing your individual answers to each question.

Approach two:

Follow the guide loosely by sharing the highlights of your individual study preparations.

Approach three:

Depart from following the study guide by using selected discussion questions.

(Taken from: [101 Best Small Group Ideas](#), © 1996, NavPress, Colorado Springs, CO, page 50-51.)

You may change your approach based on:

- The material you are studying
- Your understanding of what will work best for your group

You can even change between styles from week to week, just to keep things fresh.

Prayer

How to facilitate prayer in a small group.

4 Basic Guidelines for Leaders

1. Know your group's prayer priority.
2. Gauge your group's prayer capacity.
3. Guide your group's prayer activity.
4. Celebrate your group's prayer victory.

The ABC's for Sharing Prayer needs (be sure your Group knows these):

- A. About yourself.
- B. Be brief.
- C. Counseling prohibited.

25 Ways to Pray as a Group – Avoid The “Last Person” Syndrome

1. Have the leader pray.
2. Read a prayer together as a group.
3. Use sentence prayers.
4. Have a time of silent prayer.
5. Pray for the person to the left or right.
6. Assign prayer partners.
7. After the group shares the leader assigns people to pray.
8. Keep a group prayer journal.
9. Write a prayer individually or as a group.
10. Have a time for prayers of confession.
11. Lead a time of topical prayer.
12. Teach about prayer.
13. Have members write requests when they sign-in.
14. Write prayer requests on 3x5 cards.
15. Have a time for prayers of praise.
16. Have a time for prayers of adoration.
17. Share answered prayers.
18. Vary prayer postures.
19. Plan a group fast.
20. Organize a prayer chain.
21. Break down into pairs or trios.
22. Share requests then pray.
23. Have a time of popcorn prayer.
24. Pray around the circle.
25. Pray spontaneously as needs or praises arise.

Handling Difficulties

How to shepherd a small group.

How to Deal with Difficult People

Meet some people that have been in groups in the past. More than likely they will show up from time to time in your group. When a person acts out or displays controlling behavior, it's advisable to deal with it immediately by redirecting the group back to the matter at hand. Develop wisdom and learn to discern when the individual's issues are the focus, and when the agenda should be temporarily laid aside. You need to protect the individual's integrity while not giving up the leadership of the group. It's a good idea to approach the person immediately after the group while the issue is still fresh, and share your perception of the behavior with him/her. Remind the person that he/she is a valuable part of the group—but everyone needs to have a chance to participate, to share his/her views, or not to be counseled (depending on the situation).

- **Tongue-Tied Terry:** Terry never draws a lot of attention in the group, because you often have to look twice to see if she is still there. Terry never says a word, and can sometimes control the atmosphere of the group by her non-participation. Give her lots of opportunities to jump in, and approach her from time to time, reminding her that her views and input are an important and necessary part of the group. Lack of self-confidence is a key issue.
- **Gushing Gary:** Gary has something to say about every subject. Often Gary is guilty of engaging his mouth before checking with his brain. A stream of consciousness can be Gary's *modus operandi*, and it can be difficult to stop him once he starts. You may want to sit next to him so you can break his concentration without offending him. Recognize that often under the barrage of verbiage, there is a lot of fear.
- **Skeptical Skip:** Skip has one view on life in the group—"it won't work," or "it will never last." He has decided that life is at best "to get through." Skip can undermine your best plans, and needs to be reminded that though life is tough, God has a wonderful plan for each of us and desires to cover us with grace, blessing, and strength to endure and to overcome.
- **"Advice for Free" Ann:** Ann is the resident counselor with great insight and advice for all that ails you. Ann's language is often liberally sprinkled with "shoulds," "oughts" and "have-to's." Ann needs to be reminded that the group is not looking for counsel, but rather love, acceptance, and forgiveness. Availability, encouragement, and prayer exhibit this.
- **Professor Pam:** Pam shows up with concordance, Bible encyclopedia, and commentaries in hand. She always wants to go deeper, and forgets that application and transformation is our goal. Remind her that Bible study is part of the group's agenda, and that the other group members' needs and input are equally important to the group.
- **Dogmatic Don:** Don combines intolerance with imperviousness, pronouncing the last word on each and every subject (whether he has been invited to or not). He needs to be approached with sensitivity, prayer, compassion, and the reminder that the group needs his input—but not his all-knowing attitude. Restating some of the ground rules at the beginning of each meeting may be a reminder that Don will heed.

Each of these personalities can make a positive contribution if they are brought under the lordship of Christ. Your job, as leader of the group, is to be the advocate of each individual in the group, and help each one "grow up in Christ" (Eph. 4:15). It is helpful to recognize that many people hide their insecurities and deepest fears and hurts behind their behavior. Be gentle when you approach them and be willing to follow through.

(Taken from: How to Build Community Through Small Groups, by Thom Corrigan, ©1998 The Pilgrimage Training Group, Littleton, CO. page 85-86)

Handling Difficulties

How to shepherd a small group.

Crisis Caregiving

From time to time in a small group, an emergency or crisis may occur. As a small group leader, others will look to you in times of crisis.

Handling a Crisis

In cases of impending physical danger contact the police immediately. Such crises would include:

- Life-threatening situations
- Severe accidents or emergencies
- An attempted suicide or threatened suicide
- Present threats of violence by a person to him- or herself or to others

Though it is very unlikely that you would ever experience any of these in the context of a group meeting (or even with members of your group), please be aware of the possibility and know that you should contact the police immediately.

Other serious situations

If you have a serious situation that may require further help and guidance to address (e.g., child abuse or neglect, spousal abuse, et cetera), contact your Small Groups Director and the church immediately for help in discerning the severity of the crisis and for assistance in reporting the incident to the proper authorities (if needed). Remember, in most situations, your first point of contact should be your Small Groups Director. If your Small Groups Director is unavailable, contact one of the pastors or elders. But if there is any threat of violence or danger, call the police immediately.

Supporting vs. Counseling

As a small group leader, you are expected to provide support and encouragement to members of your group. However, **you are not trained to be a professional counselor so you should not assume such a role.** Instead, your responsibility is to provide opportunities for your members to receive the appropriate care they require. Situations that may require professional help:

- Serious marriage problems
- History of past abuse
- Addictions
- Severe personality disorders
- Mental disorders or dysfunctions

If you should encounter anything that resembles the examples above, contact your Small Groups Director to see what steps should be taken. Together you can determine a plan for encouraging a group member to participate in counseling or another type of help. Never contact a church leader directly and give a member's name to them. In such cases, it is imperative that you do not violate a person's right to confidentiality.

Just because you think someone is in need of counseling does not mean they will be willing to participate in counseling. Work with your Small Groups Director and with ministry leaders at the church to determine how to approach an individual with the suggestion of counseling or other help.

(Taken from: Leading Life Changing Small Groups, by Bill Donahue, ©1996, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Pages 151-152.)

Takeoff!

How to start and grow a small group.

10 Steps for Starting a New Small Group At Impact

1. Pray – seek God’s will as to whether you should be a Small Group Leader, and if so, what kind of Small Group you should lead.
2. Check out the requirements for a Small Group Leader at Impact. If you don’t meet the requirements yet, work with the Small Groups Director in getting them fulfilled.
 - Go through the iTree Membership Class, and agree to the membership covenant
 - Read and agree to the Small Group Leaders Covenant (see Appendix)
 - Must be approved as a Small Group Leader by the Small Groups Director
3. Get Trained
 - Attend Small Group Leader Training, offered twice a year, or review most recent video of a recorded training session and demonstrate understanding of the material in an informal discussion with the Small Groups Director
 - Attend bi-monthly huddles.
 - Join an existing group as an apprentice.
 - Read “How to Lead Small Groups” (McBride)
4. Write A Brief Small Group Proposal
 - This simple proposal will help you clarify your plans and let us know what you want to do.
5. Meet with the Small Group Coordinator
 - Discuss your Small Group Description
 - Discuss and sign the Small Group Leaders Covenant (see Appendix)
 - Finalize all details so that your group can be promoted at Impact on Purpose, in flyers, etc.
6. Recruit a Leadership Team
 - Each group should have a leader, apprentice, host(ess), and childcare worker(s) lined up before beginning.
7. Develop Your Prospect List
 - Impact Staff will help, but are not responsible for recruiting people for your group
 - Members, attenders, or visitors from Impact who have expressed an interest in being involved in a small group.
 - Neighbors
 - Unchurched friends
 - Co-workers – remember to be careful with this one, especially if you are a supervisor
8. Schedule Your First Meeting
 - If you are meeting at the church, you must complete an [Event Scheduling Form](#).

Takeoff!

How to start and grow a small group.

9. Invite Prospective Members. Consider these ways that you can invite people to your group:

- Personal invitations – face to face (one suggestion: talk to people between services)
- Phone contacts or emails
- Follow-up chats, phone calls or emails
- If possible, begin about 2-4 weeks in advance

10. Hold Your First Meeting And Develop Your Small Group Covenant

- This should be completed with your small group within the first 2 weeks of meeting.
- Make sure everyone helps develop, understands, and agrees to the “ground rules” – this will prevent a lot of “unmet expectations” in the future

Why your small group needs to grow:

Reaching out to new members fulfills God’s commands.

Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Reaching out to new Members grows our church.

Acts 2:46-47 (NIV)

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, (47) praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Reaching out to new members meets their need for relationship.

“New members in a church will leave after 6 months if they have not made at least seven new friends” – Church Growth Inc.

Reaching out to new members will keep your group healthy and vibrant.

“If a group has been together without adding any new newcomers in the previous two years there is a 90% chance that the group is saturated, and that it will not row for the duration of the group’s life.” – Charles Arn

Takeoff!

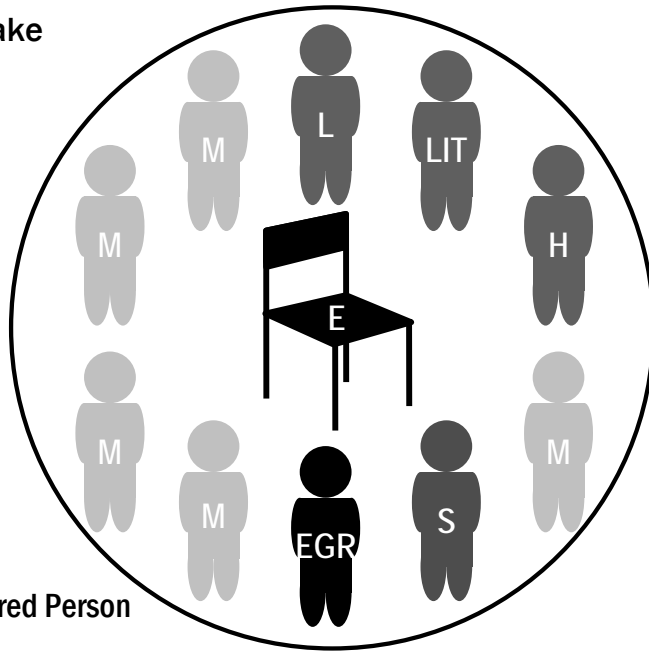
How to start and grow a small group.

How to lead your small group to grow:

Use the Empty Chair.

The People Who Make a Small Group

- L = Leader
- LIT = Leader in Training
- H = Host(ess)
- M = Member
- S = Seeker (Visitor)
- E = Empty Chair
- EGR = Extra Grace Required Person



1. The empty chair symbolizes:
 - Openness
 - Something is missing
 - There is always room for more
2. The empty chair focuses attention:
 - Prayer
 - Invitation
3. The filled chair celebrates success
 - We are growing
 - God is answering our prayers
4. How to implement the empty chair
 - Teach your group about it
 - Develop a list of potential members
 - Regularly pray for God to bring them to fill the chair
 - Involve everyone in the process

Takeoff!

How to start and grow a small group.

When new people visit your group

Do:

- Affirm them
- Introduce yourselves
- Explain what is happening

Don't:

- Embarrass them
- Single them out
- Expect them to be up to speed

Do's and don'ts for new people at the end of the meeting

Do:

- Invite them to come back
- Ask if they have any questions

Don't:

- Pressure them to come back
- Ask for a commitment right away
- Ignore them

Bibliography

Helpful small group resources.

- 101 Best Small Group Ideas, © 1996 Navpress
- Leading Life-Changing Small Group, Bill Donahue, © 1996 Zondervan Publishing
- How to Lead Small Groups, Neal McBride, © 1990 Navpress
- How to Have Great Small Group Meetings, Neal McBride, © 1997 Navpress

Appendices

Small Group Leader Commitment

Small Groups are vital to Impact’s health and growth! Because Small Groups and Small Group Leaders are so important, we ask you to prayerfully consider the following that we ask of Small Group Leaders at Impact, and sign if you are willing to serve.

- Because we must maintain a consistent vision and direction for the Small Groups Ministry, I understand that a Small Group Leader at Impact must have attended the I-Tree Membership Class, must be a member at Impact, and is asked to submit to Impact’s oversight of the Small Groups Ministry and Leaders.
- Because every participant in a Small Group at Impact deserves the best Leader possible, to continually make myself a better Leader, and so that I will be aware of any changes to the Small Group Ministry at Impact, I understand that a Small Group Leader at Impact is asked to attend a Strategy Session (or view the video of the event) once every 12 months, and to attend Info Meetings / Huddles as often as possible.
- Because Impact needs to be aware of the needs of the Small Groups Ministry, in order to best support Small Groups, I understand that I need to submit attendance records and other paperwork as requested in a timely manner.
- Because Small Groups needs to reach out to as many people as possible, I understand that while Impact will promote the Small Groups Ministry as a whole, I should do my best to “recruit” new members by taking the initiative to meet and invite new people to my Group.
- Because a Small Group Leader “represents” Impact in their role as a spiritual leader, I understand that I am held to a “higher standard,” and will do my best to set the best example possible in my words and actions.

Signed _____

Date _____

Appendices

Small Group Proposal

Thanks for your interest in becoming a part of the incredible, life changing, ministry of small groups at Impact. Please take a few moments to complete this form. Doing so will help you think through the various issues involved in starting a new small group. It will also allow our small group team to help you make real the vision and passion God has given you for this ministry. When complete please return to James Tysinger, Jim Outman or Dawn McBride at the church office.

Name: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

Email: _____

Best time to reach me: _____

Who is this group for?

(It is important to think about what the people you will invite to your group have in common. For instance: a common stage in life, a common interest, or a common purpose. If those you want to include in your group are likely to have children, do you plan to offer childcare?)

When will your group meet?

(Be sure to clarify how often: weekly, bi-weekly, monthly...)

Where will your group meet?

(If you will offer childcare, where will the children meet?)

What will be the primary and secondary purpose of your group?

(Fellowship, Support, Bible Study, Prayer, Service)

Why do you want to start this group?

Appendices

Pre-Approved Curriculum, Part I

Topic	Title	Author	Type
All	Holy Bible/Commentaries	God	Book
Prayer	Too Busy Not To Pray	Bill Hybels	Book
Prayer	Does it Make Any Difference?	Philip Yancey	Book
Grace	In the Grip of Grace	Max Lucado	Book
Christian Living	What Matters Most	Tony Evans	Book
Christian Living	The Search for Significance	Robert S. McGee	Book
Christian Living	He That is Spiritual	Lewis Sperry Chafer	Book
Christian Living	The Purpose-Driven Life	Rick Warren	Book
Christian Living	The Screwtape Letters	C. S. Lewis	Book
Christian Living	Nooma material at www.nooma.org	Rob Bell	Website
Finances	Your Money Counts	Howard Dayton	Book
Spiritual Warfare	Overcoming the Adversary	Mark I. Bubeck	Book
Men's Issues	"Every Man" Series	Stephen Arterburn	Book
Women's Issues	Captivating	John and Stasi Eldredge	Book
Women's Issues	Contagious Joy	Women of Faith	Book
Women's Issues	The Excellent Wife	Martha Peace	Book
Marriage	His Needs, Her Needs	Willard F. Harley	Book
Marriage	The Five Love Languages	Gary Chapman	Book
Marriage	Men Are Like Waffles, Women Are Like Spaghetti	Bill and Pam Farrel	Book
Singles	Single Men Are Like Waffles, Single Women Are Like Spaghetti	Bill and Pam Farrel	Book
The Church	The Purpose Driven Church	Rick Warren	Book
The Church	A Church That Flies	Tim Woodruff	Book
Work	Your Work Matters to God	Doug Sherman	Book
Teens	Boundaries With Teens	Dr. John Townsend	Book
Apologetics- defending Christianity	The Case for Christ	Lee Strobel	Book
Apologetics- defending Christianity	Mere Christianity	C. S. Lewis	Book
Creation	The Case for a Creator	Lee Strobel	Book
Creation	Darwin's Black Box	Michael Behe	Book
Creation	Unlocking the Mystery of Life		DVD
Creation	answersingenesis.org		Website
Jesus	Snapshots of the Savior	Ed Young	Booklet

Appendices

Pre-Approved Curriculum, Part II

Spiritual Maturity	Growing to Be Like Christ		Book
Fellowship	Connecting with God's Family		Book
Spiritual Gifts	Gifts: Unlocking the Heart of Good		Book
Fellowship	The Life Giving Power of Community		Book
Spiritual Growth	Growth: Training vs Trying		Book
Grace	Grace: An invitation to a way of life		Book
Spiritual Maturity	Fully Devoted: Living each day in Jesus' Name		Book
Faith	Faith Lessons on the Promised Land		Book/ Video
Evangelism	Developing Your Life Mission Everyday		Book
Evangelism	Sharing Your Life Mission Everyday		Book
	21 Day Connection		Book
Women	Women Who Believed God		Book
	Living Pure- Inside and Out		Book
	Pure Joy- God's Formula for Passionate		Book
	Experiencing God		Book
	Surrendering Your Life For God's Pleasure		Book
Small Groups	Sustaining Small Groups In Your Church		Video
Small Groups	Starting Small Groups In Your Church		Video
Pre-Marital Counseling	So You're Getting Married		Video
Marriage / Pre-Marital Counseling	Boundaries In A Marriage		Video
Evangelism	Becoming A Contagious Christian		Video
Relationships / Marriage	The Five Love Languages		Video
Basics of the Faith	Christianity 101		Video
Alpha Program	Confidence to Share the Gospel		Video
Alpha Program	The Alpha Leaders		Video
Alpha Program	The Alpha Course		Video
Alpha Program	How to Run the Alpha Course		Video
Alpha Program	The Alpha Leaders' Training Video		Video
Alpha Program	The Alpha Course Video Set		Video
Bible	Serendipity Bible for Groups		Book
Book of Genesis	The Creation		Video
Book of Genesis	The Roots of Isreal		Video
Christian Living	Experiencing God: Knowing & Doing the Will of God	Blackaby & King	Book
Christian Living	Living Pure Inside Out	Bill Hughes	Book
Christian Living	Pure Joy	Tullos, Turner, Wyatt	Work Book
Christian Living	Growing In Christ	Nav Press	Book
Discipleship	Discipleship Essentials	Ogden	Book
Early Childhood	Connection - Christmas	Brooke E. Gall	Work

Appendices

Education			Book
Early Childhood Education	Connection - 21 Day	Elzinga & Reyenga	Work Book
Early Childhood Education	Connection - Christmas	Elzinga & Reyenga	Work Book
Early Childhood Education	Connection - Christmas	Elzinga & Reyenga	Work Book
Early Childhood Education	Connection - 21 Day	Brooke E. Gall	Work Book
Early Childhood Education	Connection - 21 Day	Elzinga & Reyenga	Work Book
Evangelism	Content of The Gospel		Video
Evangelism	Conversational Skills to Share the Gospel		Video
Finance	Crown Ministries		Book
Gospel of Luke	The Birth		Video
Gospel of Luke	The Parables		Video
Gospel of Luke	The Passion		Video
Home Builders	Home Builders Leader Guide	Coons	Book
Home Builders	Home Builders Leader Guide - Couples	Coons	Book
Ice breakers	Ice-Breakers and Heart Warmers	Steve Sheely	Book
Marriage	Mastering Money in Your Marriage	Blue	Work Book
Marriage	Building Your Mate's Self-Esteem	Rainey	Work Book
Marriage	Growing Together in Christ	Sunde	Work Book
Marriage	Resolving Conflict in Your Marriage	Horner	Work Book
Marriage/Sex	Good Sex - Leader's Guide	Hancock & Powell	Book
Parenting	Improving Your Parenting	Rainey	Work Book
Parenting	Growing Kids God's Way	Ezzo	Book
Parenting	Growing Kids God's Way - Leader's Guide	Ezzo	Book
PDL	The Generosity Factor	Zondervan	Book
PDL	Surrendering Your Life for God's Pleasure	Zondervan	Book
PDL	Developing Your Shape to Serve Others	Zondervan	Book
PDL	Connecting w/ God's Family	Zondervan	Book
PDL	Sharing Your Life Mission Every Day	Zondervan	Book
PDL	Growing To Be Like Christ	Zondervan	Book
PDL	Pursuing Spiritual Transformation - Gifts	Zondervan	Book
PDL	Pursuing Spiritual Transformation - Giving	Zondervan	Book
PDL	Pursuing Spiritual Transformation - Groups	Zondervan	Book
PDL	Pursuing Spiritual Transformation - Growth	Zondervan	Book

Appendices

PDL	Pursuing Spiritual Transformation - Grace	Zondervan	Book
PDL	Pursuing Spiritual Transformation - Fully Devoted	Zondervan	Book
Prayer	The Beginners Guide to Intercession	Sheets	Book
Pre-Marriage Counseling	Before You Say "I Do"	Wright & Roberts	Book
Pre-Marriage Counseling	Before You Say "I Do"	Wright & Roberts	Video
Pre-Marriage Counseling Video Series	So You're Getting Married	H. Norman Wright	Video
Pre-Marriage Counseling Video Series	So You're Getting Married	H. Norman Wright	Video
Pre-Marriage Counseling Video Series	So You're Getting Married	H. Norman Wright	Work Book
Pre-Marriage Counseling Video Series	So You're Getting Married	H. Norman Wright	Work Book
Rich Mullins	Homeless Man		Video
Search for Peace, Understanding & Happiness	On the Way Home		Video
Small Group Training	Small Group Ministry Training Manual	Saddleback Church	Binder
Small Group Training	Impact Group Leader's Manual	Impact Church	Binder
Small Group Training	Impact Group Leader's Manual-Master	Impact Church	Binder
Small Group Training	Leading Life Changing Small Groups	Bill Donahue	Book
Small Group Training	Small Group Leaders' Handbook	A Small Group	Book
Small Group Training	How to Lead Small Groups	Neal F. McBride	Book
Small Group Training	Starting Small Groups in Your Church	Dr. Dan Reiland	Book/Video
Small Group Training	Sustaining Small Groups in Your Church	Dr. Dan Reiland	Book/Video
Training for Leaders	Catalyst 2002 - #1	John C. Maxwell	Video
Training for Leaders	Catalyst 2002 - #2	Andy Stanley	Video
Training for Leaders	Catalyst 2002 - #3	Erwin McManus	Video
Training for Leaders	Catalyst 2002 - #4	Behind the Speakers	Video
Training for Leaders	Catalyst 2002 - #5	Laurie Beth Jones	Video
Training for Leaders	Catalyst 2002 - #6	Louie Giglio	Video

Appendices

Training for Leaders	Catalyst 2002 - #7	Andy Stanley	Video
Training for Leaders	Catalyst 2002 - #8	John C. Maxwell	Video
Training for Leaders	Developing The Leader Within You	John C. Maxwell	Set
Training for Leaders	Developing The Leader Within You	John C. Maxwell	Work Book
Training for Leaders - Advanced	The Art of Self Leadership		Audio
Training for Leaders - Advanced	Building Contagious Churches		Audio
Training for Leaders - Advanced	Developing Contagious Students		Audio
Training for Leaders - Advanced	Extending Hands of Compassion		Audio
Training for Leaders - Advanced	Launching a Small Group Ministry		Audio
Training for Leaders - Advanced	Lessons From a Capital Campaign		Audio
Training for Leaders - Advanced	Pursuing Production Excellence		Audio
Training for Leaders - Advanced	Responding to a National Crisis		Audio
Training for Leaders - Advanced	The Seminary of the Future		Audio
Women Christian Living	Mom - Entering God's Presence	Natalie J. Block	Work Book
Women Christian Living	Women Who Believed in God	Winnie Christensen	Work Book
Youth Ministry	Christ in Youth		Video
Youth Ministry	Insiders Guide to High School	Interlinc	Video
Church Growth	Building Your Church	Cousins/Poling	Work Book
	Questions of Life	Nicky Gumbel	Book
	Searching Issues	Nicky Gumbel	Book
	The Seven Check Points	Stanley & Hall	Book