

Intro and Vision Recap (5 min)

Hey everyone, I'm Jake.

For those of you who are joining LGL Meeting for the first time, I want to quickly recap what we are moving toward as LifeGroups. Our vision for our people is to be a Jesus-Centered Family on Mission spread out throughout Cola. Scripture says (in Ephesians 4), that the work of ministry is an *all of us* project. Our job as staff is to come alongside you and your LifeGroup to train you up for the work of ministry.

So, practically that looks like working together to create healthy Core Teams where the weight of ministry leadership is being shared by a group of people as opposed to the LifeGroup Leader trying to carry the weight alone. When this is functioning well, this accomplishes two things:

- **We prevent LifeGroup Leader burnout.** Shared weight = sustainability and a thriving leader
- **Everyone grows together in maturity, which makes room for hospitality.** As you take on weight, you grow in your spiritual maturity and leadership skills. This means your group is better equipped to welcome new people and to eventually plant new groups, so that more people can experience all of the good that our church family has to offer.

Your Core Team Role (10 min)

Take a look at your handout and let's quickly review the role description. I trust that you can read through this, but I want to highlight a few key points - first one being the Big Picture statement at the top. I want to break this down a bit.

Big Picture:

Ensure that the elements of group time are led well by reading through the guide and facilitating conversation.

What are the Four Elements of Group Time? Shout them out.

1 - Doesn't necessarily mean you're doing it all.

Maybe you are. Maybe you're doing some of it. Maybe you're delegating out. But, generally, you oversee it and ensure we're hitting the Big Picture.

In our Group (because its smaller) - I do the first 3 elements - and then Engage the Heart is our Prayer and Care Follow-Up person.

In one Group (because it's larger) - one person is the Discussion leader point person - and others in the Group are leading different elements of the Group Time. (They can do that because their Group is huge, and their Core Four areas are covered.)

2 - your role is, in many ways, the first impression.

For better or worse. This means we must **regularly narrate** why we do each part of Group time. For new people when they come. And for those of us who have been around forever so that, we know why we're doing this. If this feels like white noise, then we can easily create vision drift. And when vision drift happens, your LifeGroup loses momentum and excitement. New people don't stick.

3 - imagine conversational "hot potato."

People learn best through dialogue, not monologue. You should not be the one talking the most.
Rabbinical thought - asked questions.

This means I rarely speak during Discussion leading time. If someone asks a question, I say, “Yeah what do you all think of that?” I’m just setting people up.

Now if someone says something wildly off, I still try to divert to other people and ask, “What do you all think of that?” Because generally, other people catch it too.

Now I have good news - we have created a foolproof way to ensure this happens for you. And that’s by reading the questions in the Guide. Then you’ve done 95% of the work!

- The LGG is designed so that you are...
 - **narrating** each element of Group time both to your involved people and new people
 - Dialogue over monologue, you can ask someone else to read each element if you want
 - **moving** people in the direction of maturity and growth that our entire church is moving in
 - **equipping** other people within the LG by letting them lead out other parts of LG if you want
 - That doesn’t happen if we don’t use the guide
 - Now I know some LGs generally don’t use the Guide or don’t use the Sermon Discussion questions. And I am going to assume you have the purest motives behind it but my concern is two-fold:
 - #1 - if the pattern is you’re not using all of the Guide, you’re probably not moving your group in the same direction as our church.
 - #2 - If you’re not explicitly narrating what we do each night of Group by keeping to the guide, then what are you implicitly narrating to your group by not doing the guide? We’re always communicating by what we do or don’t do. And if you’re not taking advantage of the Guide, you might end up narrating something by your lack of action that in the long-run is unhelpful for the overall health of your Group
 - Caveat: I’m not saying every week you need to be word-for-word keeping to the guide and its Pass or Fail if you’re not reciting the Guide verbatim. I know some groups once a month will do a potluck for the sake of mission and not do the Guide. That’s great. I know of another group that’s so large in attendance that once a month they do Engage the Heart. Also great. But their **general pattern** is they’re using the guide, narrating each element and saying the questions. That’s all we’re asking.
 - If I can say the pointed thing - generally, ppl who are Sermon Discussion Leader want to be those ppl bc you want to talk about the Bible. Which I’m all for. I am you. That being said, I think an easy temptation is to want to talk all about the stuff “up here”

that you miss out on the varying degrees of knowledge and maturity in your LG and you're on a time restraint - you're gonna have a hard time actually moving people.

- The LGG are the train tracks to move your group toward a destination.
- Now that being said, if you wanna do a Bible study or talk theology. Awesome. Maybe turn that into a rhythm or plan something. I know a number of LGs that do that. But we would ask, during LG time, to use the LG guide and ask the LGG questions.

Work through the worksheet - work through each point and ask, "Why is that important?" make interactive/dialogue

Case Studies - What's good? How to grow?

Billy Bob oversees Catch Up on Life. He opens by saying, "Ok, let's Catch Up on Life. What's up, everybody?" Some people talk. Some share very heavy things for a very long time.

Your LG Leader assigned Stevey-Pete to be the Discussion Leader. He enthusiastically said "yes." At LifeGroup during Sermon Discussion, Stevey-Pete pulls out his journal and begins sharing his insights on the passage and thoughts on the sermon since Sunday and sometimes will ask the Sermon Discussion questions on the LG Guide if he thinks they're good enough.

Bobby-Jo wants to lead Scripture Discussion. During LifeGroup time, he wants to work through a book of the Bible together instead of the LifeGroup questions.

Peggy is the Discussion Leader, and one person shares something very heavy during Engage the Heart. They are met with silence. The next person shares and Peggy says, "What do you all think?" Someone shares with her good advice.

JoJo leads the Engage the Heart portion. There are about 8-10 people in her group, and about 30 minutes left before LifeGroup ends so people can put their kids down to bed on time. The first two people share heavy things. They are met with lots of encouragement. After the first two share, there's about 10 minutes left before you dismiss.

A brand new person/couple is checking out LifeGroup for the first time. The Discussion Leader goes around the room asking everyone to share their name and a fun fact. After that, it's business as usual, working through the four elements of group time with no narration.

A digital version of these Core Areas and the resources mentioned above are at midtownlifegroups.com. You can also scan the QR.

Questions

