

GETTING YOUR GROUP STARTED

5 questions the people in your group will likely ask . . .

1. Do I Fit Here?

This is the question of acceptance

Invite your friends to be part of your group

Enjoy regular time with your friends

Deepen your relationships with your friends

Bring purpose to your friendships

Action Step: *Have a conversation with your group about others that they could invite and how your group can make these new people feel welcome*

2. Does Anybody Want to Know Me?

This is the question of friendship

Take time for fellowship and make time for introductions

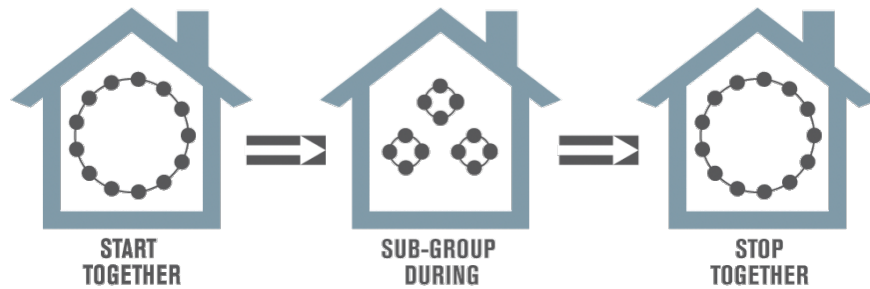
Use subgrouping to deepen connections (iceberg illustration)

Why subgroup?

- When numbers go up, participation goes down

- Subgrouping allows everyone to talk
- Subgrouping by gender encourages deeper personal interaction

When do I subgroup?



- During fellowship
- During discussion
- During prayer time

Action Step: *Try subgrouping by gender during part of your meeting (social time, study time, prayer time)*

3. Am I Needed?

This is the question of value

Facilitate shared ownership

Find a role for every person in your group

- Organize snacks (sweet, salty, drink, and fresh)
- Take turns hosting the meeting

- Come up with ice breakers to get to know each other better
- Plan a social event
- Maintain a list of birthdays, anniversaries, and other important dates
- Follow up with group members who are absent
- Create a group text or Facebook group
- Keep track of prayer requests

Action Step: *Give everyone in the group a responsibility*

4. What is the Advantage of Joining This Group?

This is the question of **benefit**

Small groups are the center of our discipleship, the structure of our serving, the launch pad of our evangelism, the enrichment of our worship and the network of our fellowship

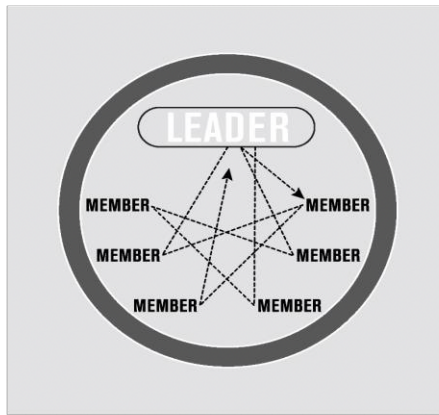
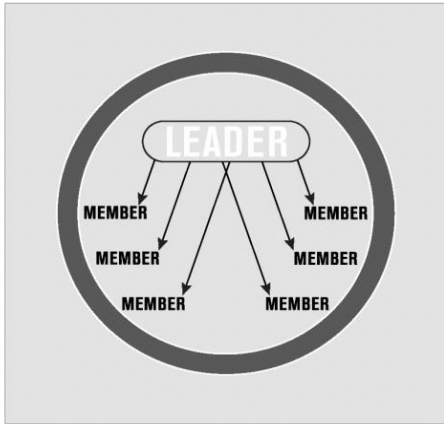
Authentic Fellowship
 Deeper Discipleship
 Gift-based Service
 Heartfelt Evangelism
 Sacrificial Worship

But to do that...it take time and conversations

Don't underestimate **growth** moments in your group meeting

***DISPENSING
 INFORMATION***

***FACILITATING
 TRANSFORMATION***



Facilitate for **life change**

Time + Trust + Truth = Change

It's not just about information, but Transformation!

Facilitation Tips

- Don't answer your own questions
- Get comfortable with silence and quiet
- Encourage more than "yes" or "no" answers
- Use prompts: "anything else?" "how about someone else?"
- Give affirmation whenever you can
- Try to involve everyone, everyone needs to talk!
- Be good listeners – provide support, not quick fixes
- Be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit
- Begin and end on time
- Don't focus on getting through all the material – focus on helping people grow

Action Step: *Balance the discussion—everyone talks!*

5. What is Required for Joining This Group?

This is the question of expectations

Use the Suggested Small Group Guidelines

SMALL GROUP GUIDELINES

Have a Clear Purpose

To grow healthy, Christ like lives by balancing the 5 Biblical purposes in your small group.

Prioritize Group Attendance

Life happens. We know life is crazy and surprises like to pop up in our schedules often, but the relationships we develop in this circle will help sustain us through the ins and outs of the daily grind. We'll do our best to prioritize the group so that we can forge the kind of community we all long for.

Start and End on Time

We value your time and want to always do our best to honor it. Everyone is more than welcome to stick around as long as they'd like, but we want to be sensitive to those who need to bolt!

Maintain Safety and Confidentiality

What happens in group stays in group! Creating a safe place (no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes) for people to be heard and feel loved is a cornerstone of this small group.

Share Roles in the Group

This is OUR group! Whether that's bringing snacks, hosting, facilitating discussions, collecting prayer requests, or something else, everyone plays an important role.

Resolve Conflict Biblically

We're all human. And we've all got issues. Conflict is bound to happen, but when it does, it's OK! That makes our community normal. Instead of panicking, gossiping, or letting the issue grow larger, we'll resolve concerns quickly by consulting Jesus' advice in Matthew 18:15-17.

Limit Our Freedom

We want our group to be a relaxing, encouraging, and comfortable place to everyone who joins us. Since we can't know the backstory of everyone who gives the group a try, we won't drink alcohol during our meetings to avoid triggering someone who's struggled with it in the past.

Optional: Care Well for Our Kids

If you anticipate kids being a part of your group, it would be great to add a word about how involved they'll be in meetings, how they'll be cared for when not present, etc.

Action Step: *Discuss and establish guidelines for your group*