



a people APPRENTICED to the life of Jesus

Life Group New Leader Training

Discussion: *What are some words or phrases that describe our "cultural moment," inside or outside the church?*

Jesus' "offensive maneuver" on his cultural moment (and the church when at its best):

"Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of people."
Matthew 4:19

An intentional community of apprentices who would learn to be...

- LOVED by Jesus
- LED by Jesus
- To BECOME like Jesus
- LEAD OTHERS to Jesus.

"When was the last time you felt it – your own longing, that is? Your longing for love, your longing for God, your longing to live your life as it is meant to be lived in God? When was the last time you felt a longing for healing and fundamental change groaning within you? ...Your desire for more of God than you have right now, your longing for love, your need for deeper levels of spiritual transformation than you have experienced so far is the truest thing about you.... There is a place within each one of us that is spiritual in nature, the place where God's Spirit witnesses with our spirit about our truest identity. Here God's Spirit dwells with our spirit, and here our truest desires make themselves known. From this place we cry out to God for deeper union with him and with others."

Ruth Haley Barton, *Sacred Rhythms*, 22-24

“What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him.

Mark 10:46-52

Reflection:

What is your desire? What is your longing?

What might be your next step?

**What does it mean to lead an NLCC Life Group to be
a people apprenticed to the life of Jesus?**

What is an NLCC Life Group?

A People Apprenticed to the Life of Jesus in Our City

Three IDENTITIES

How is an identity different than an assignment or task?

Family

“A People”

“My mother and brothers are those who
hear God’s word and put it into practice.”

Luke 8:21

Eat Together

Pray Together

Share Life Together

Apprentices

“Apprenticed to the Life of Jesus

“Come, follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.” Matthew 4:19

“Teaching them to obey everything
I have commanded you...” Matthew 28:19

Teachings of Jesus

Practices of Jesus

Key Practices

Silence & Solitude
Private & Common Prayer
Bible Reading & Study
Fasting
Sabbath
Common Worship
Table Fellowship
Simplicity
Healthy Sexuality
Service
Confession
Rule of Life
Examen
Spiritual Direction
Lectio Divina
Daily Office
Prayer Walks

Missionaries

“In Our City”

“As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.” John 20:21

Evangelism - Disciple-making - Justice & Mercy

Common Mission

Individual Mission

[Which of these three identities is most exciting for you?]

[Which seems most difficult?]

What Kind of Person is a Life Group Leader?

Model Apprentice

1 Corinthians 11:1

Philippians 3:17

Is there evidence that I seek a life "in the Spirit"?

- Core spiritual practices
- Openness to His ongoing interaction with your community.

Am I growing in the character and behavior of Jesus?

Is there evidence that I am emotionally healthy?

Frontline Pastor

What are the characteristics of a great pastor/shepherd?

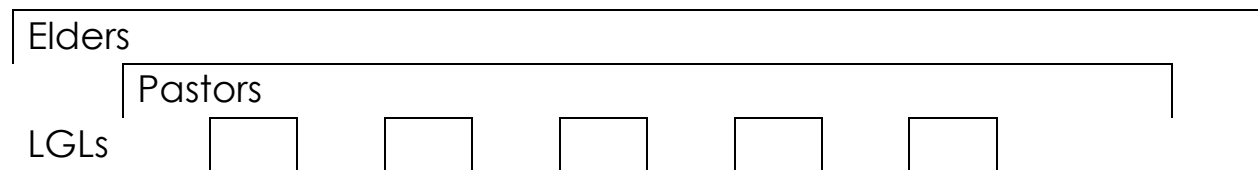
<https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Training/Post/View/202578>

Feed

Protect

Lead

Discipline

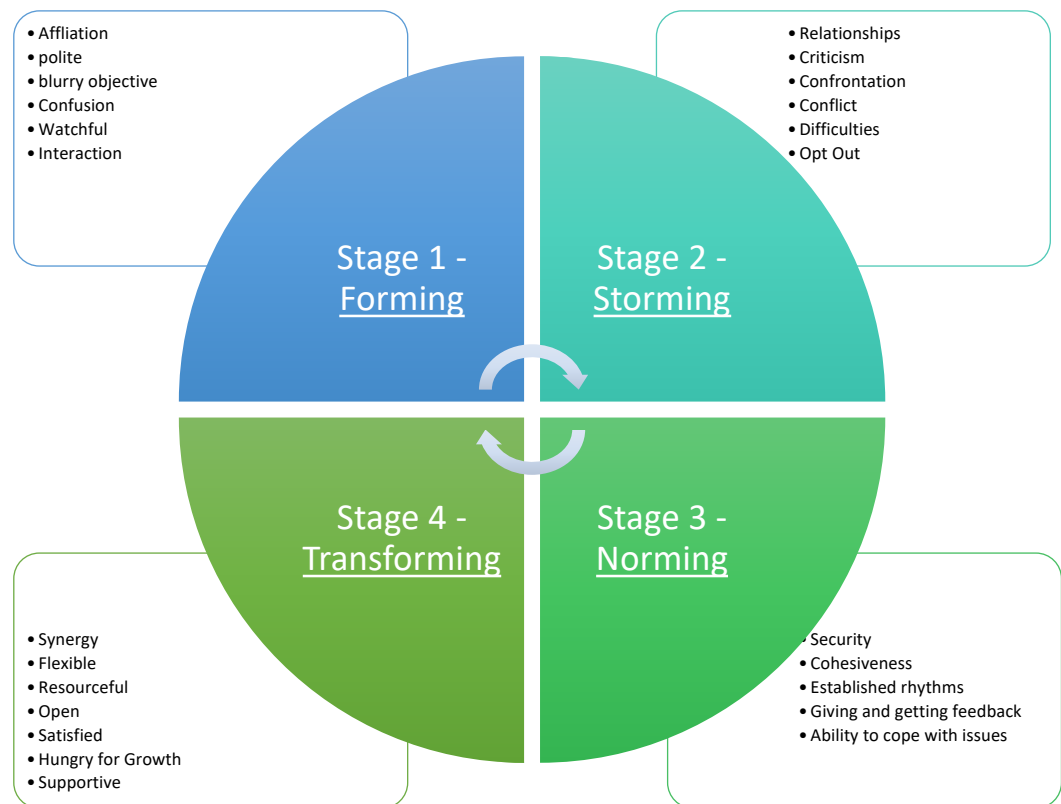


Big Brother/Sister

What are some things that mature siblings do in a family?

- Model knowing and being known.
- Build family time into the rhythm of life.
- Find everyday things to do together.
- Pray... often!
- Help meet tangible needs.

Group Life Cycle (based on Bruce Tuckman)



Ground Rules for Safety

Our common goal as apprentices of Jesus is to learn to be loved by Jesus, to be led by Jesus, to become like Jesus, to lead others to Jesus. For us to open up to God and one another, let's practice the following guidelines for a safe environment:

- You don't have to talk if you don't want to, but we'd love to hear from everyone.
- Any question or comment is welcome (just be brief and respectful).
- Practice *good listening skills*; give everyone a chance to share, and respect different viewpoints and opinions.
- Honour "*sharing boundaries*" and *confidentiality*
- Practice *healthy conflict resolution*
- Seek to be *co-learners* and make this a safe space to ask *any and all questions*.
- *Don't try to fix, problem-solve or rescue*. Our aim is to apply the truth of our identity in Christ and the completed work of his life, death, resurrection and reign to the circumstances of our ..

Group Facilitation: Three Principles

1. Discussion: Opening Our Ears

- Questions that help us pay attention and listen to the text.

2. Disclosure: Opening Up to Each Other

- Questions that help us share and hear one another's thoughts and stories

3. Application: Opening Up to Obedience

- Questions that help us identify and submit to the life-change Jesus is inviting us to experience.

6 Tips for Great Discussion (from Alpha Canada)

1. Ask open-ended questions.
2. Be encouraging.
3. Be yourself.
4. Don't answer all the questions (even if you know it!)
5. Don't be afraid of silence.
6. Redirect or rephrase the questions.

CONVERSATION TIPS

Questions

- Yes, good question! What do the rest of you think?
- Can you explain a bit more, or give an example?
- Are you wondering if... (clarify, rephrase)
- Has anyone else felt that way too?
- And how does that make you feel?
- Can you share with us how that question came up for you?

Affirmations

- Thank you for sharing that.
- I appreciate your honesty. Tell us more.
- Yes, I can relate to that too!
- It's ok to take a minute and think about it. That's what we're here for. No rush.
- It's ok to have different opinions and disagree. Discussion helps us learn other viewpoints.
- I'm glad you're here!
- I can see why you would feel that way!

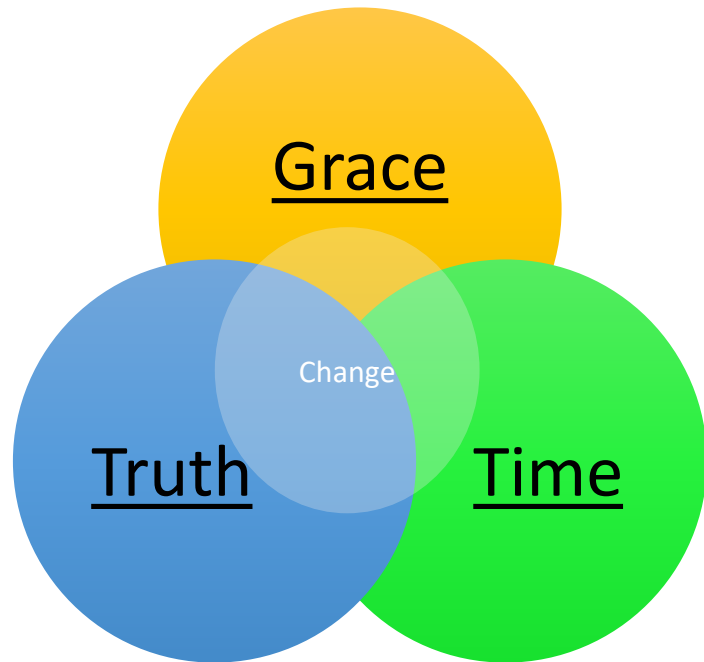
Source: Alpha Canada (alpha.org)

Three Ingredients for Change (Henry Cloud and John Townsend)

Grace: an environment of unmerited favour; providing for others what they cannot provide for themselves (more than forgiveness).

Truth: God's truth, the reality that structures our lives. Both the authoritative truth of Scripture, and authenticity about the need and potential of our lives.

Time: "redemptive time", patience, time to allow experience, suffering, failure, practice to do their work.



Meeting On Video Conferencing Platforms

- Do your best to get comfortable with your chosen platform (Zoom, Google Hangout, etc.). Make sure your internet is stable.
- Be ready 8-10 minutes before the meeting so that early arrivers can be quickly welcomed from the waiting room.
- Hospitality online = making everyone feel seen, heard, known and valued.
 - Communicate with the group ahead of time about what to expect.
 - Intro the controls they need to know about (i.e. mute, chat, etc.)
 - Engage people as early as you can after they "arrive"; make sure they know the topic of discussion, who their fellow group members are, etc.
 - Body language: well lit, close up (shoulders and head), engaged facial expressions, undistracting and quiet background.
 - Use people's names – a lot.
- Extroverts will speak more, introverts will hang back more. Be bold to interrupt the long talker, and protect others' opportunity to speak.
- Use icebreakers to put people at ease.
- If the group is larger than 10, use breakout rooms to keep attention manageable for everyone.
- Be the last one to leave the meeting (i.e. don't end the meeting until everyone is gone.)

Forming Apprentice Groups

This fall we want to re-emphasize the value of face-to-face apprenticeship together with 2-3 other people.

What are A-Groups?

An Apprentice Group is 2-5 peers of the same gender (possibly part of the same Life Group; 3 is ideal) who want to be intentional about growing and enduring as apprentices of Jesus.

Why A-Groups?

Walking closely with 2-3 fellow apprentices...

- ❖ provides a more private and confidential space to be honest about the challenges of following Jesus.
- ❖ ensures that there are a few people who know and support us in our deepest hopes and struggles.
- ❖ keeps us accountable to persevering in our apprenticeship to Jesus, so that we are not distracted or tempted to justify compromise in our lives.
- ❖ gives us spiritual companions who will help us understand the power of grace to change us.

Resources: <https://www.nlcc.ca/programs/apprentice-groups>

How You Can Help:

- ❖ Talk about it with your group
- ❖ Tell your own story.
- ❖ Start one for yourself.
- ❖ Model a first meeting at Life Group (see resources).
- ❖ Help interested members find a “match”.
- ❖ Give us feedback to improve the process.

A-Groups in a New Group:

If the members of the group begin as total strangers, allow the group a few weeks to form and establish a degree of safety before inviting people to consider and make a decision about forming an Apprentice Group.

Sharing the Load

In the process of establishing norms for the group, it is important to steer clear of an unhealthy dependence on one or two people to do all of what is required to do life together. You do not necessarily have to do everything! Your responsibility (beyond the roles of model apprentice, front-line pastor, and big brother/sister) is to determine how these roles will be fulfilled within the group. Some roles that can easily be delegated/shared:

- **Preparing and facilitating the study:** 2-3 individuals appropriately gifted can rotate.
- **Making snacks:** set up a schedule, or identify those who love and have time to prepare.
- **Hosting the group:** this can be rotated (with ample communication) or a hospitable member can host all gatherings.
- **Communicating meeting times and instructions to the group:** someone with an organizing bent who can communicate graciously and consistently.
- **Planning social gatherings:** a team of people could do this together.
- **Planning mission/service opportunities:** this could be one person's passion, which the group rallies behind, or a "team" of members who make the plans.
- **Planning and leading group worship:** with an instrument, hymnbook, lyric videos, etc.
- **Facilitating prayer time:** identifying format, leading prayer ministry, etc.

What you cannot delegate or abdicate as a leader:

- **Conflict intervention**
- **Guarding against false teaching**
- **Building relationships with group members**
- **Responsibility to Pastor Tim for the health of the group.**

Re: Shared "Non-leadership"

Some groups shy away from identifying a leader – either no one wants to shoulder the burden, or no one wants to set themselves above their peers as leader. The tendency of such groups is to settle at a lower level of engagement and accountability in apprenticeship. If there is to be shared leadership, it should be conscious, identified, and collaborative. People need to know who will step up in times when direction, intervention, clarification, or communication is necessary.

Child Care

This is cited as one of the main barriers to parents' and caregivers' participation in small groups. Here are a few ideas if you are having conversations that revolve around child care.

Alternating Weeks

- In some groups, parents swap weeks attending Life Group so that each parent gets to attend twice a month while the other takes care of the children.

Finding a Babysitter (Individual or Group)

- Check with Children's Ministry for recommendations.
- Ask for recommendations on "NLCC Friends" Facebook page.
- Members with children can take turns paying babysitter, or the group can share the load so it isn't too burdensome for the families.
- Ask teenage children of members to care for younger children

Work with Individual Needs

Group Members care for children on alternating weeks

- Create a rotation of parents watching children.

Schedule Life Group during programs where children will be otherwise occupied

- such as during Middle School Youth, or a community program.

Mission Ideas

A formative and crucial part of our Life Group identity is that we are Missionaries in our city. As we learned about last week, we are seeking to Evangelize, Make Disciples, and seek Justice & Mercy. Here are some ideas and/or organizations to help see some of the potential opportunities your life group can participate in.

ORGANIZATIONS

Fraser Valley Gleaners: preparing vegetables for soups and mixes to be shipped overseas to places in need.

- Contact far in advance!
Phone: 604.870.9272 | 85 Winson Rd., Abbotsford, BC

Langley Food Bank

Phone: 604.533.0671 | 5768 203 St., Langley, BC

Langley Christmas Bureau

- Family sponsorship & Christmas hamper program
Phone: 604.530.3001 | [#120-19860 Langley Bypass, Langley, BC](#)

Sources Langley Food Bank

Phone: [604.542.7594](#) | 208-20445 62 Ave. Langley, BC

Habitat for Humanity ReStore

Phone: 604.514.1223 | 20104 Logan Ave., Langley, BC |
<https://www.habitatgv.ca/applytovolunteer/>

Youth Unlimited Langley: Prepare, serve, and share a community meal with vulnerable Langley youth on Wednesday evenings.

Phone: 604.590.3759, info@youthunlimited.com | “Hangar 17” at Langley Airport.

IDEAS

- Serve coffee/tea/donuts/sandwiches etc. to individuals in Langley/Surrey
- Rake leaves for your neighbors
- Thanksgiving/Christmas dinner for a family/friends in your community
- Host a garage/yard sale and donate proceeds to a local organization
- Respond to needs in church community (making a meal for a family in need; can be coordinated with Care Department)
- Volunteer for Langley or Surrey community events or programs together. Be creative! There are SO many events (Fort Langley Jazz & Arts Festival, Terry Fox Run, Canadian Festival of Chili and BBQ, Canadian Blood Services etc.) that our friends and neighbors attend and can be such fruitful time of mission for us.