

Faith Fellowship Ministries

LIFE GROUPS

Living In Favor Everyday

NINE WAYS TO HELP CONDUCT A SUCCESSFUL MEETING

Thank you for responding to the call from Faith Fellowship Ministries, to help fulfill Pastor Demola's vision to reach each community with the love of God.

As you prepare to lead your LIFE group, we will assist you with suggestions, ideas and how-tos which will, together with God, enable you to be an outstanding and successful LIFE group Facilitator. We are only a phone call or an email away.

Remember, the Lord promised He would never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). As you seek His guidance and invite Him to each meeting, He will give you the ability, passion and knowledge needed to conduct a successful LIFE Group for His honor and glory.

1. Many Hands Make Light Work.

As your group grows, involve all members to help in some aspect. Create a warm and inviting atmosphere and you will not have a problem getting people to help. When everyone has a responsibility and feels they are important to the success of the group, they will be inclined to remain with the group. Seek God to lead you to the right people to comprise your L.I.F.E. Group. Sharing your thoughts and questions with a family member or friend will make your job easier.

2. Be Friendly And Be Yourself.

God will use your unique gift and temperament. Greeting people at the door with a big smile and a warm welcome will set the mood for the whole gathering. Remember, they are taking as big a step as you to show up at your house! Don't try to do things exactly like other hosts, do them in a way that is comfortable for you. Admit when you don't have an answer and apologize when you make a mistake. Your group will love you for it and you will sleep better at night. You are not required to have all the answers. If you are asked a question you can't answer, just say, "I will get the answer for you before our next meeting". Discuss the question with your Area Director, and if they can't answer it, email or call the L.I.F.E. Group office.

3. Be Prepared.

Review each session and write down your thoughts. Be sure you understand any specific request being asked in the "Facilitators Corner" video and be prepared to explain it to the group. Being unprepared gives the impression you do not think your member's time is important.

4. Pray For Your Group Members By Name.

Before you begin your session, take a few moments and pray for each of your members by name. You may want to review the list at least once a week. Ask God to use your time together to touch the heart of every person in your group. Expect God to lead you to

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whomever He wants you to encourage or challenge in a special way. If you listen, God will surely lead.

5. **Be Patient When Asking A Question.**

Often times people need a moment or two of silence to think about the question. If silence does not bother you, it won't bother anyone else. Someone will eventually answer. When a response is given, affirm the response with a simple "thanks" or "great answer". Then ask, "How about somebody else?" or "Would someone who has not shared yet like to add anything?" Be sensitive to new people or reluctant members who are not ready to speak, pray or do anything. If you give them a safe setting, they will blossom over time. If someone is a "wall flower" who sits silently through every session, consider talking to them privately and encourage them to participate. Let them know how important they are to you; that they are loved and appreciated, and that the group would value their input. Don't force them to participate if they are not ready. Remember, still waters run deep.

6. **Provide Transition Between Questions.**

Ask for a volunteer to read the scripture and then be patient until someone begins. Be sure to thank the person who reads.

7. **Break Into Smaller Groups Occasionally.**

With a greater opportunity to talk in a small circle, people will connect more with the study, apply more quickly what they are learning, and ultimately get more out of their small group. A small circle also encourages a quiet person to participate and tends to minimize the effects of a more vocal or dominant member.

8. **Small Circles Are Also Helpful During Prayer Time.**

People who are unaccustomed to praying aloud will feel more comfortable trying it with just two or three others. Also, prayer requests won't take as much time, so circles will have more actual prayer time. When you gather back with the whole group, have one person from each group briefly update everyone on the prayer requests from the subgroups. Another great aspect of sub grouping is that it fosters leadership development. Asking individuals to facilitate discussions, or lead a prayer circle, will give them a sense of leadership that can build their confidence.

9. **Don't Forget The Purpose For L.I.F.E. Groups.**

As leaders we serve to create a learning environment, have fellowship and together grow in God. L.I.F.E. Groups are NOT an opportunity to get on the proverbial "soap box". Remember Jesus said he who is the greatest, must be the servant of all. Serving God and His people with gladness and joy is fulfilling His desire and He will bless us abundantly.