CrossLife Vision Statement

To see lives transformed into the image of Christ by the power of Christ.

Living real life with God and Friends!"

CrossLife's Mission Statement

CrossLife Community Church exists to make followers of Jesus Christ whose relationship with Him demonstrates faith, hope, and love; therefore, glorifying God.

CrossLife Community Church

Helping people release their hearts to God!

Life Group Leader's Guide for Success

LIFE GROUPS

Connect with God & Friends!

Exercise #1 What Makes a Powerful Groups Experiences

Think of your best Life Group experience, **list five reasons** why it was your best experience.

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Conclusions

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so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.
1 Corinthians 12:25 (NASB)

with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,
Ephesians 4:2 (NASB)

Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.
Ephesians 4:32 (NASB)

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;
Philippians 2:3 (NASB)

Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices,
Colossians 3:9 (NASB)

bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.
Colossians 3:13 (NASB)

Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing.
1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NASB)

and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.
Hebrews 10:24-25 (NASB)

One Another Verses

"Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."
Mark 9:50 (NASB)

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.
"By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."
John 13:34-35 (NASB)

"*This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.*
John 15:12 (NASB)

so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
Romans 12:5 (NASB)

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor;
Romans 12:10 (NASB)

Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this—not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way.
Romans 14:13 (NASB)

Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus,
Romans 15:5 (NASB)

General Group Expectation

1. **Inviting Others:** To invite friends who will benefit from our group.
2. **Welcome Newcomers:** take extra time to make a new person feel welcomed and that they are an important part of the group.
3. **Group Attendance:** To give priority to the group meetings (Call if I am absent or late).
4. **Have Fun:** To get together at least once during the semester just for fun.
5. **Safe Environment:** To create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved (no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes) Furthermore, unless someone's heath or safety are at risk, keep anything that is shared strictly confidential.
6. **Prayer:** Commit to praying for one another during and outside group times.
7. **Upholding The Bible:** To understand that we may read other material but the Bible is our ultimate authority and source of truth.
8. **Challenge For Leadership Opportunity:** Let people know of the opportunity to be a Life Group leader. Personally talk with those you see have potential.

What else is important to articulate make sure there are shared values, commitments, and expectation?

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Trouble Shooting Issues

Human beings are broken, so everywhere there are people there can be problems. Below are some tips that address some of the challenges that might arise in your group.

Constant Talker:

- Ask, "What does someone else think?"
- Use body language to address other people.
- Direct questions to other people by name.
- Talk privately with the person and ask them to help get others involved.

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Some People Never Talk:

- Ask easier questions.
- Direct easy questions their way.
- Enlist the help of other group members to draw them out.
- Express appreciation (both publicly and privately) for the contributions they make.

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The Group is Not Engaging in the Discussion:

Play "Devil's Advocate".

Ask "Why?" questions.

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What Makes a Great Group Experience?

1. When the following group dynamics are present:
    - An atmosphere of openness and honesty
    - An atmosphere of safety (I will not be judged)
    - A spirit of being accepted
2. When there are both Christians and seekers in the group.
3. When the facilitator is well prepared.
4. When the group members are being challenged spiritually.
5. When group members are excited about inviting friends.
6. When meaningful and helpful relationships are being built.
7. When there is opportunity to put into use what is being taught.
8. When the facilitator knows the group well and prepares specific to their needs and personalities.

6 Ways To Better Listening

Listening skills are critical for Small Group Leaders. Make sure to exercise the following skills when you are meeting with your group. As you utilize them they will become habits, and you'll be an even better leader!

1. **Stop talking.** You can't talk and listen at the same time.

2. **Don't interrupt.** Interrupting people discourages them and makes it less likely that they will contribute to your group's conversations in the Future.

3. **Use body language.** Sit or stand up straight and look the other person in the eye.

4. **Actively listen.** Don't think about what you're going to say while the other person is talking.

5**. Listen for themes**. Try to identify and understand the speaker's main idea.

6. **Be alert**. Watch for nonverbal cues that indicate a speaker's mood.

Trouble Shooting (Continued)

A Group Member Reaches an Obviously Wrong Conclusion:

- Ask, "What does someone else think?"
- Redirect their attention to Scripture which leads to a correct conclusion.
- Speak with them one-on-one if the wrong conclusion is still held.

The Group Drifts Into Irrelevant Tangents:

- Be flexible; sometimes the issues need to be discussed even though they are not scheduled.
- Explicitly bring the discussion back on topic.
- Agree to discuss the topic at a later date.

A Difficult Question is Raised:

- Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know."
- Agree to research the question and bring an answer next time or ask others in the group to do this and steer them to recourses

A Controversial Question is Raised:

- Set ground rules before the discussion begins.
- Acknowledge that Christians hold different views on a variety of topics.
- Scripture must substantiate all viewpoints.
- We are not going to settle this question for all Christians for all time in this one discussion.
- Focus on what the divergent opinions have in common.

Facilitating Better Discussion

While curriculum is a great place to start with group discussions, it is also helpful to know these tips in order to keep a good discussion going as well as to handle awkward or difficult questions that may arise:

- Ask open ended questions. Ask questions like "How does that make you feel?" or “What would you do if…?” or “Why do you think.” Ask directive statements, “Tell me more...”

- Avoid "yes" or "no" questions. They tend to stop discussion rather than promote discussion.

- Ask "Why" questions. These make people really evaluate their feelings and thoughts. For example, "Why do you think Jesus said that?"

- Don't be afraid of silence. Let the group think through what has been said or viewed.

Facilitating Better Discussion (Continued)

- Be ready to share first. As the leader, be prepared to be the first person to share. Your openness will encourage others to open up as well.

- Do your best not to interrupt. Interrupting people makes their future input less likely.

- Practice the art of listening. Really listen to what others are saying, rather than thinking about what you are going to say next while they are still talking.

- Thank people for sharing. This will encourage them to share again.

- Pre-view the video or printed materials beforehand. Being familiar with the discussion material beforehand is a key to keeping the group focused during the discussion period and should be a part of leader preparation.