

# **MAXIMIZE YOUR LEADERSHIP**

**Session for**

# **Group Leaders**

**August 2010  
Colonial Presbyterian Church**

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## **Available Online for Leaders at [www.colonialkc.org/LGresources](http://www.colonialkc.org/LGresources)**

(or click on LIFE Groups, then choose on right hand column "resources for groups and group leaders")

### **Resources**

- "Year of the Bible" resources (internet links to online commentaries, dictionaries, bible study tools...)
- Find a new Bible study resource for purchase
- Information sheet on the Group Study resources Colonial owns that you can check out for your group – this is the COLONIAL CURRICULUM LIBRARY that you borrow from, or add more material to. Most studies available have a DVD and a Leader's guide. Study Guides for group members will need to be purchased separately.
- Information to find out more about becoming a LIFE Group Leader or Coach
- Update your LIFE group information – membership changes, meeting time changes, etc.

### **Leadership Resources:**

- Resources from Maximize Your Leadership August 2010 will be posted here (not posted yet)
- Maximize Your Leadership Training Manual from January 2009
- Videos to equip you as a small group leader (several 3-10 minute videos from small group experts talking about how to handle various group dynamics to increasing your own leadership skills. These videos are rotated about once a quarter.)
- Training Session Packet (August 2008 material) – pick up all the materials in case you missed it!  
Includes: *When Groups Get Messy: Confrontation and Conflict Resolution*
- Sharing Your Story – encourage authentic community through sharing the story of lives
- The Big Picture on Small Groups
- Prayer Resource Packet 1
- Prayer Resource Packet 2
- Dealing with Difficult Members
- Training Session Packet (January 2008 material) – pick up all the materials in case you missed it!  
Includes Articles: *Telling Your Story* and *How to Respond to Someone Who is Hurting*
- How to Have a Great LIFE Group! (Fall 2007 material) – pick up all the materials in case you missed it!  
Includes Articles: *How to Begin a Great LIFE Group* and *Guidelines for LIFE Group Leadership*
- Ice Breaker activities to cultivate community

## **WHY DO WE HAVE LIFE GROUPS AT COLONIAL?!**

In early 2007, the Pastors and Session of Colonial voted to become a church OF small groups, not a church that has small groups. Why and what's the difference?

The Church is God's chosen vehicle for the operation of His love and grace in the earth. The power and work of the Holy Spirit through a dynamic church is how God gets things done - it's how He builds His kingdom. Though the world does not see or know it yet, the Church has what the world is looking for.

How do we get that message out? Scripture and church history have taught us that the most effective model for a dynamic church body, which consistently administers the love of God, comes in the form of small groups that will pray, share, study and serve together – all four components. As a result, these groups are, in many ways, the “life” of the church, and that is why we have decided to call this four-component model LIFE Groups. Colonial is a big place, and on two campuses, so if we are serious about making an impact in our community as a truly dynamic force of Gods love, power and grace, we have to take seriously the model of Church that the scripture presents.

In the Beginning God ... And now you join the work God began at the creation of the world: to be a partner in redeeming the hearts, minds, and souls of those for whom Jesus died to redeem. It is people like you who have always made a difference. Never let anyone say that a small group can't change the world ... Jesus started with twelve... and groups have continued to impact the world like nothing else has. Are you ready to “give it away”? That is where Colonial is going, and I hope you'll go there with us!

**“A church that is changing lives is organized around small groups,  
where people can find friendship,  
be mentored in the faith,  
understand and discuss the Word,  
identify and use their spiritual gifts in service,  
and provide care for one another.”**

**- Bill Donahue**

# God's Purposes for Small Groups

1. **CARE:** A church's ability to provide care and a personal touch is often lost as it grows, therefore, the care needs to come from all members, not just the pastors or other staff of the church. With small groups, someone is in charge of caring for 6-12 people, and each person knows that not only is someone there for them, but an entire group!
2. **LEADERSHIP:** Small group ministry at a church thrives on the ability to identify and develop qualified leaders to shepherd little flocks of believers, who then reach out to the strays who need Christ. It works best when each group as an apprentice leader who is trained by the leader, who can then go out and develop another group.
3. **MULTIPLICATION:** The kingdom of God advances one life at a time, beginning with the command: "Go and make disciples". Keeping open places to welcome new people, and sending others on to share the values and excitement of the group experience. One group, over time, developing leaders and multiplying groups has the potential to reach hundreds of people over a few years time.
4. **SHEPHERDING THE LITTLE FLOCK:** The best discipleship is group discipleship. Jesus practiced it, spending much of His time with no fewer than three of the twelve. Group learning has distinct advantages in that all learn from the wisdom and experience of many people. We act like the body of Christ as we grow together in the knowledge and application of God's Word, as well as in bearing one another's burdens.

**Facilitate: give everyone a role.** Don't try to do everything yourself because you will spoil your people and burn yourself out. Among the tasks you can delegate are: making calls to potential new people, arranging for childcare, food coordination, in-home hosting, prayer requests, sending e-mails, and planning outside group events. The key is to get everyone involved in some way. If you do this, your people will begin to call the group, "my group" or "our group" instead of "the group." When that happens it means they have taken ownership of the group

## In a nutshell:

- The goal of small groups is spiritual growth: to grow in our love for God and one another.
- Small groups are God's delivery system of care – He uses all of us!
- The most strategic person in the life-change process of the church is the small group leader.
- Groups must expand and multiply so that eventually every believer can be connected to others.
- Effective ministry happens in an atmosphere of prayer and celebration – together!

# The Five Habits of Life-Changing Groups

The five habits that create a group where spiritual growth and transformation occurs are:

## CARE

- ✓ Being “for” each other
- ✓ Encouraging each other
- ✓ Coming alongside one another

## SAFETY

- ✓ Having a “come as you are” culture
- ✓ Feeling safe enough to be yourself
- ✓ Accepting each other unconditionally, confidentially

## AUTHENTICITY

- ✓ Being “real” with each other
- ✓ Taking relational risks with one another

## GROWTH

- ✓ Hebrews 10:24 – spurring one another on
- ✓ Pushing each other to take growth steps
- ✓ Naming the areas where growth needs to happen

## HELP

- ✓ Providing resources others may need
- ✓ Can be practical: helping move, filing tax returns, etc.
- ✓ It's also about asking for help when it's needed

### Confidentiality

“What is said in the group stays in the group” is the most important rule of every group because you will not see life change without trust.

No one will talk about the tough issues of life unless they are sure what they said remains in the group.

Discuss this rule on day one and often after that. Every time a new person comes to the group it should be talked about again.

## Setting the Ground Rules

**Key: Ground rules are rules agreed upon by all members of the group, that ensures that the group process works.**

Ground rules provide the “guard rails” for a group

- Clear expectations are essential for a good outcome
- Ground rules ensure that the five healthy habits flourish in the group

The role of the leader

- Responsible for making sure the ground rules work
- Stewards the process and purpose of the group

Examples of ground rules held by most groups:

- Begin and end on time
- Attend the meetings
- Call when you can't come
- Appoint a timekeeper
- The kind of food and beverage served (dietary needs, appetizer v. dinner food, etc.)
- Participation from everyone
- No interrupting or carrying on separate conversations
- Confidentiality/safety (even with e-mails!)
- Bring up issues or dissatisfaction right away
- Set up how one leaves the group

# What is Coming Up for You as Group Leader at Colonial!

## 1. **GroupLink: Sunday, August 29<sup>th</sup>**

**At Wornall it is held from 10:15 – 10:45 am in Fellowship Hall**

**At Quivira is it held from 10:15 – 10:45 am in Fellowship Hall (aka Activity Center)**

### **What is GroupLink?**

It is a mix and mingle event where people come to connect with others. This allows us to connect large numbers of people in a short period of time.

### **What is Your Role?**

Group leaders

- a. If forming a new group – please come to mingle with others and invite them to your group.
- b. If there is room in your group to add one, two or even more, please come to mingle and invite them to your group, or if you know of another group someone may connect better with, let's help one another. Encourage your group members to come with you as well – whether new people join your group or not, it's a place for people to connect – getting to know one another better.

## 2. **Groups for a Season**

For those who want to experience a group just for a season of 4, 6, 8+ weeks, we are encouraging them to come to GroupLink and 1) join a new or existing group, or 2) let them try one of our groups for a season. To see a full list of what is being offered, go to [www.colonialkc.org/groupsforaseason](http://www.colonialkc.org/groupsforaseason). If you're interested in leading a group in the future, please contact your Director of Engagement.

## 3. **Give It Away Day – September 18 ALL CHURCH SERVE DAY!!!**

See what is available and sign up for serve projects at [www.colonialkc.org/localimpact](http://www.colonialkc.org/localimpact)

## 4. **Sermon Based Questions will begin on October 3**

## 5. **The development of Ministry Connectors**

If you are interested in supporting and encouraging people along their discipleship pathway, to help them become passionate, selfless followers of Christ, please contact your Director of Engagement.

## 6. **Did You Know?**

We have LIFELine groups: Griefshare and DivorceCare. Contact your Director of Engagement to get registered for either one.

- DivorceCare meets on Thursdays at Quivira. If there is anyone in your group who could use some additional support during the season they are in. The class runs continually for about 16 weeks then starts again.
- Griefshare meets on Wednesdays at Wornall Campus (and hopefully at Quivira for the Spring class).

## 7. **NEXT STEPS – see the following pages**

## What “NEXT STEPS” looks like in *Grow with Others*:

- \* **Seeker Group**

- \* **Starting Point**

- \* **Discover Colonial**

- \* **Discover Your Design (DYD)**

- \* **LIFE Groups and Spiritual Growth Studies**

- \* **Leadership Track**

### Seeker Group:

**Ask any question about God and faith. Leads you on a journey of finding spiritual truth — and you decide what you believe. This is an interactive/Q and A driven format.**

- Led by Pastor Jim (potentially at Quivira on Wednesday at 6 pm beginning in 2011) *Note: This will be a pilot class first at Quivira led by Jim, but open to all.*
- We are looking for interested leaders to do the same at Wornall.
- We are looking for people who could co-lead and substitute as well for both campuses.

### Starting Point: (Andy Stanley)

**This 10-week study explores the foundations of the Bible and Christianity.**

- Well-suited for those who recently have begun a relationship with Jesus, but appropriate for people in all stages of their spiritual walk.
- The format for this group is in a LIFE Group which may or may not take place on Sunday mornings.
- The goal is for “Starting Point” to be offered at least once a quarter at both campuses.
- The course will be led by lay leaders.

### Discover Colonial:

**Learn more about Colonial’s purpose and beliefs and how to become a member.**

- Was called “New Member’s Class” or “Pastor’s Class”
- During this class, staff Directors will speak to their ministries and how new members can use their gifts in those ministries. They would also learn about the history of Colonial, some Presbyterian polity and the expectations of membership.
  - **Worship:** This is a commitment to worship the Lord not just on Sundays, but throughout the week.
  - **Grow:** This is a commitment to be actively following the Next Steps Pathway and involved in activities that will continue to develop all members into fully devoted followers of Christ.
  - **Serve:** This is a commitment to regularly serve both the church and the community in the Name of Christ
  - **Share:** This is a commitment to share your faith with those in your sphere of influence, inviting them to join you in worship at church, in your LIFE Group, in serving others, or in anything where they can come to know Jesus Christ.

### **Discover Your Design:**

#### **Find out your spiritual gifts and get plugged in to serve at Colonial.**

- We encourage people to discover IN-DEPTH their design (their spiritual gifts and passions) to match them with opportunities.
- Most likely curriculum would be Discover Your Design.
  - More than just a class to attend, this program follows up with a coach/mentor for everyone taking the class. This coach works with the person to help them find a place to serve then continues to follow up to make sure it's the right place. If not, the coach works to help them find other opportunities.

### **LIFE Groups:**

#### **Groups meet on and off campus and typically have 8 to 14 adults who meet together weekly for share life, study God's Word, pray and serve together. Groups are available for all life stages.**

- At any point, we encourage people to get connected to a LIFE Group. However, we want to funnel people to the above offerings first if they are new to Colonial or are in need of that knowledge area.
- Curriculum available for check-out from the Colonial Curriculum Library for all stages of spiritual growth. (Recommended studies will be featured on a regular basis.)
- Timeline: New groups starting this fall.

### **Spiritual Growth Studies:**

#### **These short-term, on or off-campus studies cover a variety of topics related to men, women, marriage, parenting, finances, evangelism and the spiritual disciplines. They provide an opportunity for enrichment for those who have already engaged at a deeper level in their relationship with Christ.**

- These studies are done in a LIFE Group style with a service project still expected by the group.
- These studies would incorporate our current Sunday School opportunities.
- Curriculum available for check-out from the Colonial Curriculum Library for all stages of spiritual growth. (Recommended studies will be featured on a regular basis.)
- Examples of some "regular studies" on rotation could be: The Truth Project, Perspectives...
- One notable option: As expressed by the Reveal Study, one of the major catalysts for moving people from explorer/beginner toward fully devoted is the teaching of beliefs/core doctrines. We could potentially create a class/curriculum taught by Elders and Pastors that would cover the core doctrines of the Reformed Faith. This could be captured on video and offered as a curriculum choice to LIFE Groups and could be held as a regularly offered class at the church as a spiritual growth study.

## **Leadership Track**

The Leadership Track is a part of the overall Next Steps, and like Next Steps, a person can participate in any of these along their spiritual journey, go back to Discover Colonial, or DYD, attend a Lead 360 workshop, then on to LIFE Groups, etc.

To truly grow people, we recognize that personal mentoring relationships are key. We especially see this need when it comes to raising up people to lead these classes and the LIFE Groups that will come out of them. In line with this thinking, the first step on the pathway is one to be taken by leaders in the church, both staff and non-staff. As Directors, we have challenged each other to start this process and we invite you to join us. Lastly, you will see this step at both the beginning and the end of the pathway. It is a first step for our existing leadership, but also an end goal. Everyone can and should be involved in mentoring relationships and we hope that as people grow, they will invest their time in others.

### **Leadership Mentoring:**

**This focuses on the equipping of leaders to raise up more leaders.** *“He appointed twelve – designating them apostles – that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach...” Mark 3:14*

Mentoring relationships are integral to complete spiritual growth. Being invested in by another and investing in the lives of others has great spiritual impact on our lives. We see two primary models:

#### **Leaders:**

- One hand-picked leader (e.g. Jim West) chooses 2-3 leaders to invest in for one year.
- It is recommended that leaders choose genre-specific (for example, if Jim Howard chose to invest in 2-3 leaders, it would be great for him to choose people who are interested in developing their mission and service mindset. Likewise, we want to focus on LIFE Group leaders investing in other LIFE Group leaders as this is a large area of need. As we have so many inactive and active elders, this is a great pool to choose from as they vowed to shepherd and care for the congregation.)
- The following year, each one of those leaders chooses another 2-3 leaders to invest in the same way. This multiplication will result in a HUGE intentional impact as the years progress.

#### **Everyone:**

- We encourage everyone to have a Paul, a Barnabus and a Timothy in their lives. These relationships result in growth, learning, deep friendships and most importantly – impacting people for Christ.

### **Leadership Community:**

**This is a regular process of training, encouragement, and prayer with/for our leaders.**

The process is this:

- three times a year, ALL leaders (group, SS, children's leaders, youth leaders, etc) would be asked to come to Leadership Community. The event is two hours (or less) in length. At this event, first, the pastor encourages and casts vision for leadership, etc. for 30 minutes or so. This is the "insider's look" at what is happening at Colonial this semester and next. This is an important connection time of pastor to leaders to thank them, share their celebrations with them, and pray for them.
- Then, there are breakout sessions for the ministry areas: group leaders, children's leaders, etc. as well as topical learning available (eg, how to handle conflict).

### **Lead 360**

**This is a series of standalone workshops offered throughout the year by business, counseling and clergy professionals.**

- These type of classes would be for leadership development and could include conferences (like Leadership Summit) but the primary goal would be classes with titles like:
  - Going from Good to Great
  - How to Lead a Life-Transforming Spiritual Group
  - The Healing Power of Forgiveness
  - How to Speak the Language of the Poor
  - Etc – whatever business, counseling and clergy professionals we can bring in!

## **Walking the Small Group Tightrope: Meeting the Challenges Every Group Faces**

**By Bill Donahue and Russ Robinson**

Zondervan Publishing/Willow Creek © 2003

Leading a small group is more about art than painting by the numbers. Just as there are essentials to know, there are not automatic formulas to make a group a success. It is the group leader's ability to master the art of managing the dynamic tensions that consistently exist in every group in order to enter into life-transforming, life-giving small group.

This book looks at the six areas in which group leaders must balance in order to have the kind of group, community and friendship that God wants for us.

<b>The Six Challenges</b>	<b>The Six Tensions</b>
The Learning Challenge	Truth balanced with Life
The Development Challenge	Care balanced with Discipleship
The Relational Challenge	Friendship balanced with Accountability
The Reconciliation Challenge	Kindness balanced with Confrontation
The Impact Challenge	Task balanced with People
The Connection Challenge	Openness balanced with Intimacy

For this leadership session, we will focus on the first challenge: **Balancing Truth with Life**

**What is the balance in your group between Bible study and the sharing of life? How much should a group focus on biblical content? How much time should a group spend on helping members with personal issues? Obviously, both are important, the challenge is to avoid drifting too far toward one or the other.** What follows is a summary of the information contained in the book.

### **Truth**

As God's people, we are committed to the truth: "Your word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heaven," (Psalm 119:89) and God's promise in Isaiah, "So is my word that goes out from my mouth: it will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11). These verses make it clear that God's truth is central to community.

An emphasis on truth apart from life will turn you into a Pharisee. A life without truth turns you into a person without a foundation, "blown here and there by every wind of teaching" (Eph. 4:14).

Sadly, many small groups, especially ones termed "Bible studies" default to becoming a "truth group," which really means a group focused on doctrine, right and wrong answers, fill in the blanks, and the accumulation of information. Members value those who know the most. It is in these groups that people become preoccupied with finishing the lesson. They believe the more you know, the more raw material the Spirit will have to work with to change your heart. There is some truth in that, but a half truth. God wants a heart to work with, or truth has no effect. In response to the Pharisees, Jesus said, "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me" (Matthew 15:8). Unfortunately, some small group study materials reinforce this mind-set by asking questions that require answers instead of prompting discussions.

Truth *will* set you free, but not all truth, just applied truth. Truth matters when it moves from the head to the heart, then out to the hands and the feet.

## Life

People come into groups to talk about their lives, to tell stories, engage with one another. After all, their lives are important to them! Of course, if groups drift too far this way, members start to believe that the group is “of the people, by the people, and for the people.” Meeting the needs of members is vital, but God’s truth needs to shape our responses rather than life experience or the “theological drifting” toward believing Oprah is evangelical. Though Oprah encourages and uplifts, she readily mixes truth and error, serving it up as a spiritual elixir to all who listen – a congregation of nearly 22 million viewers.

Sadly, there are many groups that are famous for becoming “prayer and share” groups – they share their prayers, which is aka the latest gossip “I’m concerned about...”

When activity and social interaction become primary, there is a temptation to avoid the truth – but truth calls us to change! Members may be *informed* about God through tidbits here and there, but never really *transformed*.

## Truth Meets Life

What if we could bring these two ends of the spectrum together? When this happens, spiritual transformation happens – and that should be the outcome of any group meeting together.



Parker Palmer, who oversees the “Courage to Teach” program for K-12 educators across the country and parallel programs for people in other professions, including medicine, law, ministry and philanthropy, writes: “In him [Christ], truth, once understood as abstract, principled, propositional, propositional, suddenly takes on a human face and human frame. In Jesus, the disembodied ‘word’ takes flesh and walks among us. Jesus calls us to truth, but not in the forms of creeds and theologies or worldviews. His call to truth is a call to community – with him, with each other, with creation and its Creator. If what we know is abstract, impersonal, apart from us, it cannot be truth, for truth involves a vulnerable, faithful, and risk-filled interpretation of the knower and the known.”

For the small group leader, we must stand in the tension between truth and life. That is, “make sure truth is very present in your meeting, but also make sure truth is brought to bear on life in community. You must call members to open their lives to one another so they can be changed.” (page 33 of *Tightrope*) Truth has to meet life for people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

## How to have Truth meet Life

- Connect Scripture with Story
- Turn questions into discussions
- Practice active listening
- Vary learning styles

### *Connecting Scripture with Story*

Jesus used stories to teach. “Groups grow when Scripture and story collide with members’ lives, demanding that they shape their ongoing story in conformity with God’s story, becoming more like Christ in the process. Thus truth and life are integrated in the group’s learning process.” (page 35 of *Tightrope*)

### *Turn questions into discussions*

For the most part, asking a question means you are after a certain answer – except in small groups. Questions need to create discussion. They need to invite insights, opinions and personal reflection. Yes, personal. A truth-focused group would ask: “What does God promise us when we are tempted?” (referencing 1 Cor. 10:13) The better question: “When have you felt most trapped, like there’s no way of escape from temptation?” That requires personal reflection that opens up discussion and allows several people to engage. At some stages in your group, you may want to choose to break the group into groups of twos or threes so people feel safer to talk and engage even more freely. Bottom line: for truth to meet life, the small group has to move from general “yes and no” content to more personal questions.

### *Vary Learning Styles*

Everyone learns differently, and different truths require different kinds of presentation and interaction. It is easy to get into ruts as a group to “read and discuss then pray” each week. Keep engagement and “anticipation” of the meeting high by changing the routine, where you meet, adding music to your worship time, bringing fun projects or learning activities to the lesson – yes, even though we are adults, many of the most memorable “lessons” come from those that involve us crafting some kind of project, partly because it gives us time to think and process. Don’t overlook the potential of role-playing the scripture you are reading.

There are those who are experiential learners. When you want a group to value serving the poor, don’t just teach it, but pile into cars and go visit a homeless shelter and serve meals, bring blankets, coats, etc.

### *Practice Active Listening*

Leaders need to be better listeners and facilitators. When we really hear what someone is saying, with our eyes and ears, we can seize holy moments that God is at work and the Holy Spirit is in charge of the agenda.

You can help yourself by noticing:

- What the mood of the group is? Does a change when a statement is made?
- Are people leaning in, engaged in discussion, or slouched in their chairs?
- Do their expressions communicate guilt, sadness, lack of interest, confusion?
- What are people saying by their tone of voice?

### **Conclusion:**

As you and your group carefully walk the truth-life tightrope, you will see the fruit of your efforts – spiritual transformation in members’ lives!

# Training: Helping Others Take “Growth Risks”

## Definition:

A growth risk is any action or statement, new or out of your comfort zone, that has a possibility of a negative outcome. The challenge is given in context of the group.

## Biblical References:

Colossians 1:28 “...we present every person complete in Christ...”

Hebrews 10:24 “...let us consider how we may spur one another on...”

## Why is a growth risk important?

- It’s about LIFE CHANGE – life transformation, both spiritually and personally
  
- It’s not about trying something “new” – it is about risk – stepping out of our comfort zone! Colonial is a coast guard cutter, not a cruise ship!

## **Notes:**

---- Tear this sheet off and hand in before leaving ----

## **TAKING GROWTH RISKS**

### **THIS PAST YEAR:**

1. How have you or your group experienced growth, spiritually and personally, in the last year?
  
2. Was there a particular growth risk that you all took?

### **THIS COMING YEAR:**

- **Growth Goal: Service (IDEA: if did one last year, do two)**  
*We want to encourage everyone to try do service projects in which you can build relationships at the places that you serve at – make it even more meaningful.*
  
- **Growth Goal: Multiplication of leaders and groups by January 2011**  
*Are there people in your group who could lead a new group? Are there people in your group who lead a “group for a season” to get another one started and then return to your group? Are there people in your group who could lead a spiritual growth class or a Lead 360 class?*
  
- **Growth Goal: Spiritual Growth (grow in love for God and one another)**
  
- **Growth Goal: Other...**