

# How to Make a Hospital Visit

## THINGS TO DO

1. Knock softly on the door. Wait for a reply before entering.
2. Smile with assurance—Jesus is entering with you.
3. Greet the person and introduce yourself to those in the room you don't know.
4. Stand comfortably near the bed without hovering.
5. Ask direct, open - ended questions without being graphic.
6. Be attentive to both verbal and non - verbal communication.
7. How to offer non - verbal attention:
  - a. Face the person.
  - b. Maintain eye contact.
  - c. Offer facial expressions which convey calm assurance.
  - d. Offer a tone of voice which conveys interest and support.
8. How to listen effectively:
  - a. Gather information: "Tell me more about that ...." – The thinking level
  - b. Clarify information: "In other words ...." – The feeling level
  - c. Summarize Information: Concisely recap the main themes and feelings expressed.
  - d. Put yourself in their position. Imagine how you would think and feel.
  - e. Give the person as much room as possible to open up.
9. Assure them of the Lord's desire and willingness to heal them.
10. Continue to discuss the situation until:
  - a) They don't want to talk about it anymore, or
  - b) You know how to pray specifically for them.
11. Ask permission to share their information with those who love them.
12. Remind them of James 5:14–15, but remember that it is the sick person's responsibility to request being anointed with oil as a statement of faith.
13. Touch them when you pray for them. Jesus always touched people.
14. If unsure, ask them how they desire for you to pray for them specifically.
15. Assure them others are praying and that you will check on them again.
16. Wash your hands well before you leave the hospital.

## THINGS NOT TO DO

1. Don't sit on the bed.
2. Don't touch their arm with the I.V.
3. Don't stay more than 10–15 minutes.
4. Don't avoid the obvious—people want to talk about what's going on.
5. Don't be nervous. How would you feel if it were you?
6. Don't talk about a person you knew who died of what they have.

# **Commitment: If You Build It, They Will Come**

## **Introduction:**

Life Groups are like a team; everyone has to do their part for it to truly succeed. Unfortunately, a lack of commitment from members can cause frustration. It also can keep a group from developing close relationships. We are going to examine some practical ways to build a greater commitment from your Life Group members, allowing the group to grow and function in the way God desires for biblical relationships.

## **Definition of Life Group Commitment:**

The willingness of a group member to actively participate in the Life group on a consistent basis.

## **The Challenge:**

Helping every member of your group commit to attend regularly is one of the most difficult components of leading a Life Group.

## **Reasons Why People Don't Commit and How to Respond:**

1. The leader is not fully committed to the group.

Solution: Lead by example and make your Life Group a priority.

1 Timothy 4:12, "Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity."

Questions for consideration:

- Why am I leading a Life Group?
- Am I fully committed to the Life Group?

If you easily and often have reasons to cancel the Life Group, people will recognize the group is not your priority.

2. The leader does not have enthusiasm.

Solution: Despite how you feel, be excited!

Ephesians 6:7, "Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people."

Enthusiasm is a choice you make! People want to be a part of something exciting. On the contrary, a lack of enthusiasm will squelch a Life Group.

3. The leader does not thoroughly communicate.

Solution: Keep your group members informed and plan ahead.

“Communication is essential to developing healthy relationships, healthy families, and healthy churches. Communication is also essential in small groups. Without proper communication with God and with others, your group will become stagnant and superficial.

Regular communication with your group:

- Helps you know the status of each member.
- Shows you care.

Contacting says that you care. It says that you care enough to take the time to get in touch. It says that you care enough to find out why they were absent or what they think about the group. It says that you care enough to check on their prayer requests and to get to know them better.

4. The group does not meet consistently

Solution: Maintain a regular schedule:

Inconsistent meetings can cause frustration in your group members.

How to avoid inconsistency:

- Do not cancel because one or more group members cannot attend.
- Do not cancel because you cannot attend.
- Do not change your meeting time and location too often.

5. The members do not benefit from the group.

Solution: Develop a culture of care within the group.

**1 Cor. 12:22-25** “In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary. And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen, while the more honorable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. This makes for harmony among the

members, so that all the members care for each other.” (NLT)

It is not possible (nor expected) for a small group leader to provide all the care for all the members of the group. It is the goal of a small group to provide mutual interactive care for one another.

Ways to develop a culture of care:

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A person will remain in (or join) a small group if he finds the group’s goals and activities are attractive and rewarding. People base their participation on personal standards.

6. The members of the group know each other too well.

Solution: Develop a leader and multiply

When group members know each other too well, the group runs the risk of becoming ineffective and stagnant.

7. The group is monotonous.

Solution: Give them something to look forward to.

If something better comes up, people will take that opportunity.

Questions for consideration:

- Do I give the group something to look forward to?
- What can I do to eliminate the monotony of our group?

Ideas to create variation in the group:

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A good social gathering allows them to share even more areas of their lives together...During a good social gathering, people discuss things that never seem to come up in a group meeting. People learn to share in different ways.

8. The group members have no personal ownership to the group.

Solution: Share responsibilities with other group members.

1 Cor. 12:7 A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.

The leader's role in creating ownership for others:

1. You have to be willing to give up some responsibilities.
2. You have to help people see your need for their help.

Ways to develop ownership:

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9. The group members do not make the group a priority.

Solution: Ask for a commitment from them.

### **Steps of Action:**

1. Pray
2. Examine your leadership
3. Address the reason(s) for no commitment from your group members

# Infusing Your Life Group with “Outside Life”

## Introduction:

Who wants to settle for just being average? None of us! But what happens when you have run out of creative ideas? As in any relationship, fresh ideas for your Life group will bring renewed vitality. A Life Group that has reached its full potential recognizes the need to spend time outside of the normal group meeting time. By infusing your Life Group with “Outside Life,” you can expand and accelerate the connections in your group.

## A. Planning Group Activities

1. Failure to plan is to plan for failure.
2. The “event planner” (you could see if someone would volunteer to do this)
3. Shared events draw strangers together...draw groups together and friendships evolve.
4. Sharing in Life Group meetings can be superficial but a picnic with interactive games can deepen friendships and relationships.

## B. The Power of a Social Activity

1. Increases excitement, interest and involvement.
2. Attracts new people.
3. Allows more opportunities to practice real fellowship.
4. Creates opportunities for further discipleship.
5. Helps knit new people to the group and to the church.

## C. How to Have an Effective Activity

1. Think togetherness.
2. Use variety.
3. Use the power of food.
4. Do not do all the work yourself; delegate.
5. Plan ahead (Failure to plan is to plan for failure)
6. Combine activities with group meetings. (celebrate birthday's special events in people's lives, ect...)
7. Relax, have fun, and enjoy each other.

#### D. Serving Together

- A great website is [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org)
- Choose someone in your group that will research some ideas and present to the group.

## Relationship-Building Ideas

1. Make a group phone call from your meeting to any member who is absent. Pass the phone around so everyone can talk. Open the call by saying, "We just want you to know that we miss you!" (Taken from *250 Big Ideas for Purpose Driven Small Groups*)
2. Pick names out of hats to assign "prayer partners" within your group for a month or two (men with men, women with women). Pair up into your prayer partner groups during group prayer times. Encourage them to stay in touch with each other throughout the week. Draw names again every few months to keep mixing it up.
3. Play "Secret Prayer Partner." Have everyone in the group secretly draw a name from a hat. For a predetermined number of weeks/months, they are the person's "secret prayer partner," praying for them regularly, but also surprising them with notes or gifts (*i.e., bookmarks, cookies*). This can develop into a fun game of trying to figure out who your Secret Prayer Partner is. Enjoy a big "reveal party" at the semester's end!
4. Ask group members to secretly write down five facts about their lives that others in the group may not know and collect the sheets. Before your next meeting, list several of the interesting facts on a sheet of paper, and make copies for each group member. Give the sheets out to the group at your next meeting and give them three minutes to match the most details with the correct group members (without conferring with others!).
5. One evening, play "The Blessing Game." Have a group member sit in a special seat. The other group members take turns encouraging the member in the special seat, either by sharing positive attributes they see in the person, what they mean to them, or sharing a specific scripture to encourage them. You can choose to go through your whole group in one evening or bless one or two people a week for several weeks. (A variation of "The Blessing Game" is to have members write encouraging notes to one another on index cards or note paper. Collect the notes, and then mail them out to the group members during the week.)
6. Compile and distribute (with permission) the names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, birthdates and anniversary dates for your group members. Challenge them to write a note, make a call or send an email to at least one person on the list each week.
7. Organize a "birthday bonanza" for a member. Assign different people to surprise the birthday person in various ways, *i.e.,* one person sends an email, another delivers a dozen cookies, another calls and sings "Happy Birthday." Be creative and see how many different things you can do for someone on their birthday!
8. A day-long group retreat can be a special time of fellowship and can accelerate friendships within your group. Many retreat centers offer rooms to rent at a reasonable hourly rate. Otherwise, schedule a retreat for a local state park and rent a pavilion.
9. Schedule a regular night out to a local restaurant that doesn't have reserved seating like Chick-fil-A, Jason's Deli or Schlotzsky's. Make it a consistent night of the week and a convenient location and just allow people to show up as they can, week to week. If you're consistent, you'll develop many relationships as different pairings of people and families participate.
10. Have a Girls' Night or Guys' Night Out once a month. If there are children involved, have the guys watch the kids together while the girls go out and vice versa!

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# **Multiplying Your Ministry!**

## **Cast the Vision of Multiplication**

### **Why Multiply?**

- **It's Biblical**
- **Shortage of groups**
- **Growing Church**

### **Identify and Develop Emerging Leaders**

- **2 Timothy 2:2**
- **Jesus modeled it**

### **How you Intentionally Apprentice**

- **Observation**
- **Preparation**
- **Multiplication**

### **Types of Multiplication**

- **Sending-** 1 New leader and team are sent out from existing group. Add more people to each group.
- **Releasing-** Existing leader and 2 or 3 new teams are sent out from existing group. Add to each group to fill.
- **Turbo-** All members become leaders and apprentices and create new groups.