

New Heart Healing and Recovery Group



Leader's Perspective

- The group you will lead this evening will be populated by those very close to the Father's heart. *"The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit."* – Psalm 34:18 He has entrusted you with those He loves; those He desires to heal and restore. He will make His appeal to His precious ones tonight through you (2 Corinthians 5:20). Those in your group tonight will "taste" what our God is like by interacting with you (Psalm 34:8): they will see His love in your eyes and in your smile; they will hear His gracious heart through your voice. And, most importantly, they will encounter His power to save, set free, heal, and restore through the gracious ministry of the Holy Spirit through you (Mark 16:17-18).
- So, get ready. Consecrate yourself.
 - Set aside "your stuff" for the privilege of participating in the wonder of His awesome presence and the supernatural ministry of the Holy Spirit. Often the stressors of the day combined with the fatigue of our very busy and demanding schedule can leave us distracted and preoccupied at the end of the day.
"Setting aside our stuff" simply means we consciously release all of our concerns to Jesus, and receive the grace He has provided for this evening of ministry; grace "cut to fit."
 - Worship
Effective ministry requires intentional availability. There is no activity more effective in preparing and heart and mind for ministry – for the palpable sense of God's presence – than worship. As you prepare for your evening, you may wish to fill your heart and mind with the sounds of worship from a favorite CD. As you listen, begin to worship with those singing.
- Remember:
 - You are leading a group. You are not teaching a Sunday School class. New Heart Healing and Recovery is not so much about dispensing "content" as it is about engaging the group process.
 - ♦ The amount of information the members of your group are able to assimilate is contingent upon who those members are, the truth you are sharing, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit in each group member. Discerning and cooperating with a Holy Spirit agenda for each group is far more important than completing a "lesson plan."
 - ♦ Published materials (books, workbooks, DVD's) are valuable only as a tool – a resource - in aiding the group in discovering truth about God, themselves, and the healing the Spirit of God desires to release in their lives.
Published materials can never be the group experience for an evening. They must always be used to resource the group experience.
 - We are not CD counselors, therapists, or recovery industry professionals. We are "competent ministers of the new covenant" (2 Corinthians 3:6). We are presenters of a promise available through Jesus Christ: "I will give you a new heart with new and right desires, and I will put a new spirit in you." (Ezekiel 36:26 [LB])
 - No two evenings will look the same.

As you have prayed for each member of your group and have sought God's heart concerning His purpose and direction for a specific group experience, expect the Spirit of God to lead. Don't assume. Listen for His direction. Follow His leadership.

The Healing and Recovery Group Experience

• Step One: Welcome – Settle-In

- Welcome each member of your group with eye-contact, a smile, and a warm “welcome expression” (e.g. “Welcome. I’m glad you could be here tonight.”).
- Give the group and opportunity to “settle-in” around the table (or circle of chairs).
- Don’t “give off” body language that you are in a hurry. Create a “relaxed environment” wherein your group can feel accepted, safe, “at peace.”

• Step Two: Worship and Prayer

- Some worship traditions would call this “The Invocation.” Simply defined, we are invoking – or asking for – God’s presence in our group.
- The principle here is “Jesus first.”
Jesus said: “If I be lifted up, I will draw all men to Me.” (John 12:32)
- Don’t be in a hurry. Invite those that sit around the table to worship our awesome God with you.
- You may wish to access this part of the group process for a teaching opportunity:
 - ♦ Worship is our highest call and greatest privilege.
 - ♦ Our worship focuses our hearts and minds on Jesus.
 - ✓ “Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith.” – Hebrews 12:2a (KJV)
 - ✓ Jesus will complete what He has begun in us – Philippians 1:6
 - ✓ Jesus is able to do in us “immeasurably more than we could ask or even imagine.”
- Ephesians 3:20.
- Encourage your group members to give some audible expression of worship. Maybe you wish to sing a chorus you all know quietly. Or, maybe your expression of worship is in the form of thanksgiving for who God is and what He has done.
- Encourage those that feel comfortable to do so to lead out in prayer. When you sense everyone has prayed that desires to do so, you pray for the group.

• Step Three: Introduction to the Group

- For the benefit of the new members of your group and those who are “regulars-but-may-have-forgotten,” introduce your group.
- A typical “Group Introduction” will include the following components:
 - ♦ “Welcome the _____ Group.
 - ♦ We are Healing and Recovery Group. As such, we are more interested in seeing you healed and whole, and in a vital life-giving relationship with Jesus Christ than we are in seeing you free from your issue.
 - ♦ We’ve prayed for you. We’ve prayed because we have nothing to offer you expect Jesus and His power to heal you, restore you, and give you a new heart.”

- “Ways to Maximize Your Group Experience.”
 - ♦ Use only “I statements.” Please do not attempt to counsel or preach to other members in the group.
 - ♦ Participate. Please do not isolate within the group. As painful as some topics may be, your healing will be dependent upon your willingness to bring “your issue/secret” into the light. Only in the brilliant light of the Truth of the Word of God is healing possible. Remember: “Satan dines on what we withhold from God.” (Francis Frangipane).
 - ♦ Keep group information to yourself. Do not share (i.e. “gossip”) with others information about the members of your group.
 - ♦ Respond to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will speak to you through your leader, a member of your group, or, by way of revelation to your own heart and mind. Respond. Your leader will guide you in how to respond to the Holy Spirit.
- **Step Four Personal Updates**
 - Depending on the size of your group, you may only have time for 2 or 3 to share an personal update on any given evening. However, providing a place for your group to talk to someone who genuinely cares about them and who can point them to Jesus is critically important.
 - Try to discourage a “glamorizing” of the “drinkin’, druggin’, and partyin’” world.
Principle:
Spiritual growth in an individual coming out the world of addiction is often measureable by a recession in the need to have a reputation as the “meanest, baddest, guy that could drink the most,” etc.
- **Step Five: “The Truth and the Issue”**
 - Topic: “Denial: The Art of Believing Something That’s Not True”
 - 1 – Approach
 - Which of the following statements are true; which ones would be false / untrue:
 - a. If the palm of your hand itches, you will receive money.
 - b. If the back of your hand itches, someone is coming to visit you.
 - c. Sasquatch (Big Foot) is a real creature living somewhere in the Northwest.
 - d. Area 51 is secretly holding aliens from other planets.
 - e. If a black cat runs in front of you, you will have “bad luck.”
 - f. I am not getting older.
 - g. I am living the lifestyle I have chosen.
 - h. God hates me.
 - 2 – Bridge to the Topic
 - a. Some of these statements are “old wives’ tales;” others are legends. Some are superstitions. But some statements are the truth.
 - b. For most of us, old wives tales, legends, and superstitions have no power over us whatsoever. Yet, some people will make decisions for their lives based upon a horoscope, a fortune cookie, or what “feels right” at any given moment in time.

- c. Choosing to believe a myth – a lie – in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary is called denial.

Process Questions:

- 1) Have you or someone close to you ever been in denial?
- 2) How does someone know they are in denial?
- 3) Is denial a serious condition for someone trapped in an addiction? Why?

- 3- The Truth

John, renowned as the disciple Jesus loved, has much to say about truth.

- a. In the first chapter of the Gospel he wrote under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he said: *“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”* – John 1:14.
- b. In the 14th chapter of his Gospel, John quotes Jesus Who identifies Himself with the words: *“I am the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the Father but by Me.”* – John 14:6
- c. John 8:32 is our antidote for the denial; it’s the “way out” of the trap of believing something that is not true.
“Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

- 4 – Application

a. Process questions:

- 1) What does it mean “know the truth?”
- 2) “Set you free.” Free from what?
- 3) What does that freedom do for me?

b. Insight:

- 1) When scripture speaks of “knowing” it essentially is speaking primarily of two types of knowing:
 - a) Greek
Intellectual. Cognitive.
The Greeks were fascinated with ideas and concepts and “new thoughts.”
 - b) Hebrew
Experiential. Practical.
The Hebrews believed truth was valuable only to the degree it was experienced in practical day-to-day living.
- 2) Knowing the truth that will result in freedom (from denial, bondage, control, etc) means I know:
 - a) Jesus personally, experientially.
 - b) The truth about my life-controlling issue
 - c) The truth about the freedom available in Christ:
 - I. My identity is no longer in what I do, or the people I with; but rather, in Christ. – Romans 8
 - II. I can think new thoughts, want new things, begin life a new life in Christ – Romans 8:1-3.

III. I can begin cooperating with and not frustrating the grace of God at work in me. – Philippians 2:11-12

- 5 – Personal Application
 - a. Are you in denial?
 - b. What’s the truth the Holy Spirit has revealed to you tonight?
 - c. What’s your response to the truth?
 - d. What’s the next step for you?
- 6 – Prayer
 - a. Pray
 - b. Listen for the Holy Spirit. Follow His leadership.

- **Step Six – Prayer Groups**

Some leaders have chosen to close their groups with Prayer Groups. The Prayer Group experience is an opportunity for each member to be “prayed for.”

Intercession – “Calling on God on Behalf of Your Group Members”

- **Intercession Leader**

A vital member of your Healing and Recovery Team will be your Intercession Team Leader. The primary responsibility of the Intercession Team Leader will be to:

- Gather a team of congregational members who will commit to call on the Lord for the participants in a specific Healing and Recovery Group (e.g. Chemical Dependency, Women’s Issues, etc.).
- Develop a “Prayer List” listing group participants
List is distributed to the Group Leaders.
- Pray daily for each group participant
- Communicate prayer needs and answers with the Intercession Team (e.g. email, text, etc).

- **Fasting and Prayer**

A Healing and Recovery Team may wish to set aside a day a week to fast and pray specifically for the breakthroughs needed in the lives of their group participants.

Follow-Up – “Tracking with Your Group Members”

- **Follow-Up**

Follow-up is essential to building a strong Healing and Recovery Group. Follow-up essentially says to the group participant: “You’re important to us. You are not simply a nameless, faceless member of our group; but rather, we know you by name. We value you.”

