



# CODE BLUE

TRAINING FOR LOCAL LEADERS

MODULE SIX

## SMALL GROUPS

Session 1 - Discipleship Basics

Session 2 - Small Group Essentials

Session 3 - Small Group Experience



## LEADER'S MANUAL

The Salvation Army

Australia Territory



## **SMALL GROUPS**

### **SESSION 1: DISCIPLESHIP BASICS**

#### **AIM:**

The aim of this module is to discover practical ways of making a small group culture an active part of the disciple making process. The main objectives are:

To discover what discipleship is, consider the dynamics and value of a small group approach, study elements of a small group, and learn how to cultivate a small group 'culture'.

Parts of this material have been adapted from Backpack: Small Group Discipleship, produced by the Territorial Corps Programme Department.

#### **TIME NEEDED:**

One and a half hours

#### **MATERIALS NEEDED:**


Bibles, pens, multi-media projector, whiteboard and markers.

#### **NAVIGATING THE SESSION:**

Text in **blue** is for your information. It is also directing you to do something.

Text in **red** is for you to "read out" or "answers" for participants to fill in.

Text in **black** also appears in the participants' notes and can be followed as you read aloud.

This symbol  indicates a slide is available to display via multimedia.

During this session there will be times when you may need to divide into smaller groups for discussion.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Small groups and discipleship – where's the link?**

Being part of a small group, home group, cell group – whatever you wish to call it, can be one of the best experiences of Christian community.

Even better than the group itself, is understanding *why* you are part of a group, *why* you may be thinking about starting a group and *what* the group can do for the long-term spiritual development of the people involved.

The short answer to all of that is that being part of a small group is one of the key functions of discipleship. And it's this word 'discipleship' that we are going to unpack in the first part of this session.

When you understand Jesus' call for us to be followers – and to learn everything we can about the practicalities of our faith, you'll see that being part of a small group is one of the best ways you can work through these issues.

To help get you thinking about the opening activity, turn in your bibles to 2 Timothy 2. Keep that open in front of you, referring to it as you brainstorm.



## **PART ONE: DISCOVERING DISCIPLESHIP**

### Opening activity (10 minutes)

Brainstorm the question “What is Discipleship?” Jot down the responses on a whiteboard or butcher paper, and discuss briefly, as appropriate.

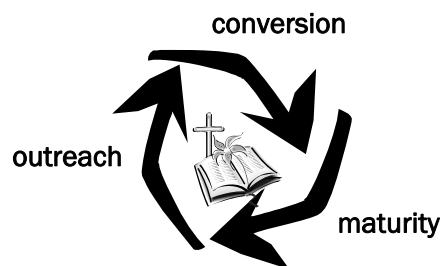
As you talk through each principle below, an example from your own ministry experience may come to mind. Share it.

What? 

Brainstorm what discipleship is

Discipleship is...


- A process of developing our faith – both in others and ourselves.
- An ongoing cycle from conversion to maturity to outreach.
- Not evangelism, although that is an outcome of a growing disciple.
- More than learning about faith; it is living it.
- The journey of becoming like Jesus



#### **The discipleship process:**

Growing people in their faith, equipping them for ministry and sending them out into the world to make disciples. All of this is based on God's Word.

(See 2 Timothy 2:2)

Why? 

- Discipleship is a Biblical mandate (see John 15:16).
- Jesus did it (Jesus called, matured, and sent out his disciples – the ultimate model).

### Discussion Groups (10 minutes)

Break the group into smaller groups and look up Matthew 28:18-20. Ask the following questions:

Discussion 

Look up Matthew 28:18-20

- On whose authority does Jesus make this statement?
- How do you interpret this passage? People often interpret this passage as referring to evangelism, but it is actually referring to discipleship.
- What does “teaching everything I have commanded you” mean? (see below for some suggestions).




## SOME OF JESUS' COMMANDS TO CONSIDER and DISCUSS

- The parable of the judgement (Matthew 25:31-46). This is a critical passage to be held in balance with Matthew 28:18-20.
- Pray for those who mistreat you (Matthew 5:44)
- Go and catch men and women (Mark 1:17)
- Take up your mat and walk (Mark 2:9)
- Go sell your possessions and give to the poor (Matthew 19:21)
- If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off (Mark 9:43)

## MAKING DISCIPLESHIP A PRIORITY IN MINISTRY (15 MINUTES)

Discuss some of the consequences of inadequate discipleship in a corps or community. Ask the question: "What do you think inadequate discipleship looks like?"

Consequences of Inadequate Discipleship... 

- No disciples!
- Learning happens by rote with limited life application.
- The learning/discipleship process does not extend beyond the life of the programme.  
(Ask participants to share what some of these programmes might be)
- Follow-up of intermittent attendees is not carried out.
- Lack of leadership.
- People leave the Church.
- Church members blame the programme and its leaders for not being able to hold people through to Christian maturity.
- People are unaware of their spiritual gifts, often resulting in service in inappropriate ministry for an individual.

## CHANGING THE MINDSET

Three things are needed to change the mindset from a DISCIPLESHIP PROGRAMME to a LIFESTYLE of DISCIPLESHIP

1. Model continual learning.
  - Learning doesn't stop at a certain age.
  - Ask everyone in the group what they are reading or listening to at the moment. Challenge them to keep learning.
2. Shift from program-based ministry to relationship-based ministry  
(remember: it's not what you do, it's how you USE what you do)
  - Teaching that program means little compared to relationship is your key principle for the day. You may like to have this statement (or something similar) in the room for the seminar.
  - People will remember leaders and people over books and principles.
  - We all remember the influence of others in our lives more than events
3. Go for small and deep rather than large and shallow.  
It's the quality of the fruit that counts, not quantity.  
Why? Because it lasts!



## **PART TWO: SMALL GROUPS**

### **HOW SMALL GROUPS ARE DIFFERENT FROM LARGE GROUPS (10 MINUTES)**

Discipleship can happen in a large group. It happens on Sundays, at camps, at conferences. The key here is to understand that in any healthy ministry, the discipleship process needs to take place in BOTH the small and large group context.

Consider the table below: 

<b>LARGE GROUPS</b> <i>(Worship services, rallies, camps, etc.)</i>	<b>SMALL GROUPS</b> <i>(cell groups, training sessions, prayer groups, etc.)</i>
Hype and momentum Decision making opportunities Continual growth Direct challenge Common teaching Limited participation Formal atmosphere	Intimacy and sharing Decision follow-up opportunities Continual multiplication Direct accountability Specific teaching Full participation Casual atmosphere

**\*DISCUSS THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF BOTH APPROACHES.**

Key points can be transferred to whiteboard or butcher paper. Encourage participants to add more ideas to their table of large versus small groups.

**Some small groups that may already exist in our Corps**

- Senior pastoral care council meetings
- YP teachers' meetings
- Bible study groups
- Pre-worship service prayer meetings
- Membership classes
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Add your own  
thoughts here



### **MORE THAN A BIBLE STUDY**

When some people think of a small group, they immediately think of a group of people who meet each week to study the Bible. This is true, but a small group can, and should be, MUCH MORE than this.

If we take the Acts 2 early church model and put it under a microscope, we will see that there is much more to be experienced in a small group.



## CHARACTERISTICS OF SMALL GROUPS AND THEIR MEMBERS (20 MINUTES)



**ACTS 2:42-47 (NIV)** [Ask someone to read the passage before you teach the principles.](#)

“They devoted themselves to the Apostles’ teaching...”

- A desire to [learn](#)

“...and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread...”

- Eating and sharing [life](#)

“...and to prayer.”

- [Committed](#) to prayer; sharing requests

“Everyone was filled with awe...”

- [Reverence](#) and praise for God

“...and many miraculous signs and wonders were done by the apostles.”

- An [expectation](#) that God would work in their midst
- [Ministry](#) to one another

“All the believers were together and had everything in common,”

- [Unity](#) of purpose

“...selling their possessions and goods, they gave to everyone as he had need.”

- [Serving](#) each other and the community in [practical](#) ways

“Everyday they continued to meet together in the temple courts.”

- Committed to [corporate](#) worship
- Balance of [large](#) and [small](#)

“They broke bread together in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts...”

- Sharing of [meals](#)
- A [genuine](#) concern for one another

“...praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people.”

- A [witness](#) and lifestyle that is [attractive](#), even to non-Christians

“And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

- Multiplication and [growth](#)



## **PART THREE: MAKING DISCIPLES (20 MINUTES)**



A small group doesn't mean much if it doesn't result in disciples being made. A group that morphs into something else or that refuses to change its membership is not doing its job as a group.

In groups of 3, write down your 'top 3' qualifications for a small group leader.

### **Characteristics of a Small Group (or any) Leader**

#### **FAITHFUL**

Read out Matthew 25:21

- Discuss together what you regard as "little". Have participants fill in their response:  
What do you regard as little?  
Some ideas: putting away chairs, driving people home, washing dishes, tithing, turning up week in, week out.
- Learn to LOVE your "little".

#### **AVAILABLE**

- Doesn't make excuses.
- Ready and willing to serve.
- Makes a deliberate commitment.

#### **TEACHABLE**

- Willing to learn.
- Doesn't have to be a Bible expert.
- Desire to teach others (Read out this text: 2 Timothy 2:2).
- The best small group leaders are those who have been regular small group attendees.

## **RAISING LEADERS AND APPRENTICES (REPRODUCTION)**

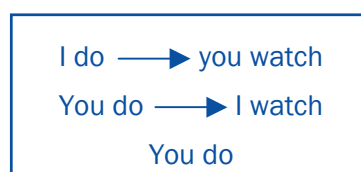


One of the most overlooked parts of discipleship is actually the most important. Scientifically, it's called reproduction. Basically it means that people keep growing by 'reproducing' their life in another.

A good analogy is the apprentice:

Every good leader has an apprentice, an assistant, a protégé. A small group is a perfect way to develop leaders and lends itself to the apprentice model.

The apprentice model is a basic discipleship model that looks like this:







The apprentice model is one where each small group has an apprentice leader who is learning to lead the group.

List some ways you could use an apprentice leader...

(Facilitators may want to list these on a whiteboard)

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### **CLOSE & PRAYER (10 MINUTES)**

This is the end of 'part one' of small groups. Next session we will discuss:

- Dividing groups
- Creating new small groups
- Choosing material and curriculum for your group
- Dealing with communication in groups – difficult, talkative and quiet people

### **2 PRAYER IDEAS:**

1. Go back to the Acts 2 list and choose a CHARACTERISTIC that you would like to cultivate in a small group you are currently part of or soon to be part of. *Pray with a partner for this characteristic to be developed in you.*
2. If you are not part of a small group, but are just discovering what DISCIPLESHIP may mean for you, go to the Acts 2 list and choose a CHARACTERISTIC that you would like to be developed in your life.

*You may pray to be more: hospitable, focused on worshipping God, outward looking. Again, find a friend in the group and pray for this for one another.*