



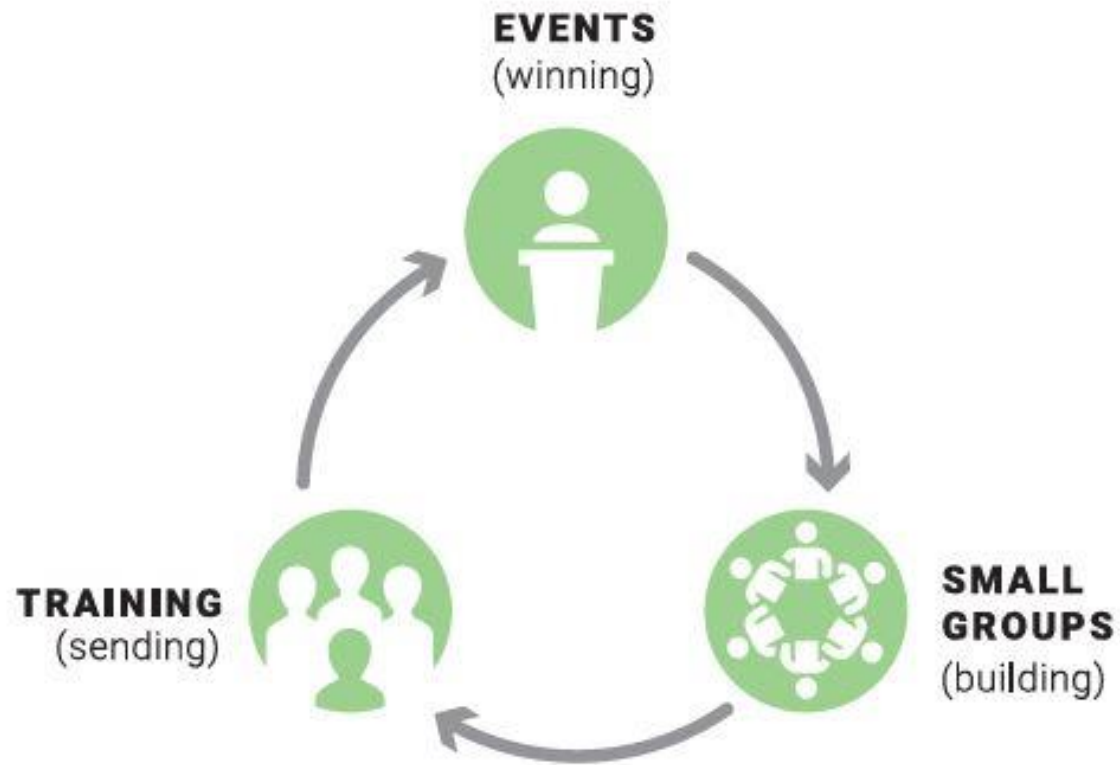
# SMALL-GROUP

## Training

*An introduction to hosting small groups*



# FamilyLife<sup>®</sup> Local Core Strategy

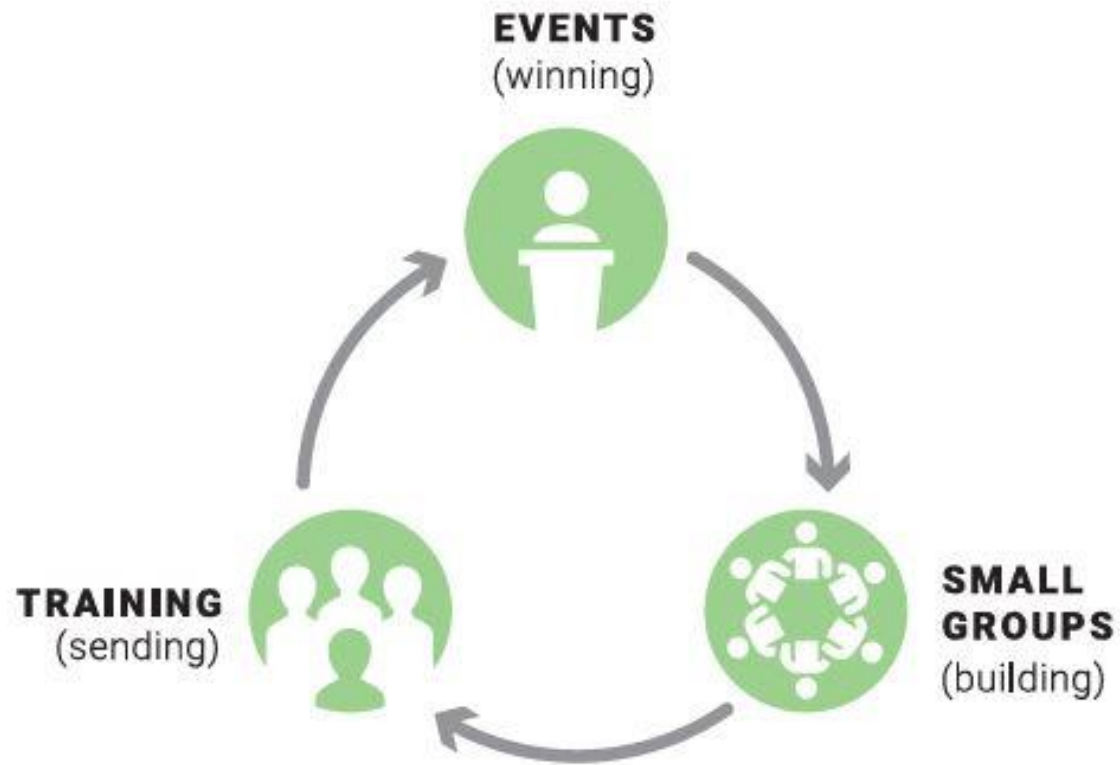


**Events (Winning)**

**Small Groups (Building)**

**Training (Sending)**

# FamilyLife<sup>®</sup> Local Core Strategy



Events (Winning)

**Small Groups (Building)**

Training (Sending)

# **Small Groups** were an **Integral Part of Jesus' Strategy**

- **Although Jesus sometimes spoke to large audiences, most of the time he met with smaller groups, especially his disciples. To them he gave deeper instruction.**  
(numerous scriptures)
- **Jesus met with smaller groups in homes, at synagogues, and during meals. (numerous scriptures)**
- **Jesus met with seekers, discussing the Kingdom of God and answering their questions.**  
(John 1:45-51, Matt 19:16-22, Luke 10:38-42, John 4:1-30)



# Dare to Trust God with Changed Lives

**One key couple and about 250 volunteers led nearly 20,000 people to participate in a highly evangelistic FamilyLife Local Ministry.**

*“We saw God start a movement from the ministry we built.”*



# Small Groups Can Be Like Making Stone Soup

Group members are amazed to discover that **EVERYONE** has something to contribute.



# **YOU** Can Make a Difference as a Couple

## Your Marriage, Your Church, Your Community

- Working as a Team Couple
- Allowing Differences to Make You Stronger as a Team
- Taking Your Relationship with God, and Your Marriage, to a Higher Level



# Starting a FamilyLife Small Group



# FamilyLife **Small-Group** Benefits

- ✓ **Stimulates and guides meaningful conversation between husband and wife**
- ✓ **Doesn't require the leader to be an expert, but rather a facilitator**
- ✓ **Requires only a short-term commitment**
- ✓ **Needs no preparation for the actual study from participants**
- ✓ **Emphasizes practical application in the projects**
- ✓ **Versatile for use in small groups, Sunday school classes, neighborhood outreaches, and weekend retreats and other creative gatherings**
- ✓ **Provides mutual encouragement and accountability**
- ✓ **Offers a variety of practical topics**
- ✓ **Teaches participants HOW to live the Christian life**
- ✓ **Gives couples the opportunity to minister together**

# Small Group Time-Saving Benefits

- ⌚ **Investment in your own marriage**
- ⌚ **Learn more about the Bible and its message**
- ⌚ **Improve your character in Christ**
- ⌚ **Have fun! Make some lifelong friends**
- ⌚ **Serve in, or through, your church**
- ⌚ **Do your kids a favor. 😊**

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# Small Group Leader Preparation

- **Commit to making the study a high priority**
- **Discuss how much you will share about your own marriage**
- **You set the example**
- **Decide how you will share the responsibilities of leadership**
- **Discuss how you will prepare for the session, contacting group members, and even extending hospitality**
- **Commit to pray**

# STEP 1 – Decide What Type of Group

| GROUP TYPE                       | ADVANTAGES   | WHOM TO INVITE   |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Follow-Up<br/>to an event</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Captures the enthusiasm</li><li>• Dynamic Group</li><li>• Vision for future small groups</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Alumni of a FamilyLife event</li><li>• Alumni from other marriage events</li><li>• You can also invite others who are on your heart but haven't attended any event</li></ul> |

# STEP 1 – Decide What Type of Group

| GROUP TYPE  | ADVANTAGES   | WHOM TO INVITE  |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Church</b><br><br>(Cell Groups<br>Sunday school<br>A new group<br>Weekend retreat) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Serving the church is a high priority</li><li>• Lots of contacts</li><li>• Childcare</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Church members and guests</li><li>• Ask leaders of existing groups if they could use FamilyLife Couples Studies for a season</li><li>• Outsiders may be willing to join if the church members don't pressure them to other activities</li></ul> |

# STEP 1 – Decide What Type of Group

| GROUP TYPE                      | ADVANTAGES  | WHOM TO INVITE  |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Neighborhood and Friends</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Capitalizes on relationships you have already developed</li><li>• Deeper friendships formed among participants</li><li>• Likely to meet deep needs among those you care about</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• EVERY couple you know—don't rule anybody out</li><li>• Ask alumni of previous groups to attend and invite their friends and neighbors</li></ul> |

# STEP 1 – Decide What Type of Group

| GROUP TYPE                      | ADVANTAGES   | WHOM TO INVITE   |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Outreach or Evangelistic</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effective to introduce others to Christ</li><li>• Unexpressed personal needs</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Usually a prior minimal-commitment gathering or exposure event is VERY helpful</li><li>• Coworkers, neighbors, social acquaintances.</li><li>• Seed the group with a few godly and discrete Christians</li></ul> |



# STEP 2 – Invite Couples to Participate

- 👤 A personal invitation is nearly always best. (Pulpit announcements can work for church groups.)
- 👤 Tell the benefits of small groups.
- 👤 Promise a limited duration of the group, usually six or twelve weeks, depending on whether you meet every week or every other week.
- 👤 4-6 couples is ideal. Never start a group with fewer than 4 couples.

# STEP 3 – Set a Schedule

**Whenever possible, let the participants decide.**

| SCHEDULE OPTIONS        | PROS  | CONS  |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Weekly</b>           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A study can be completed in a few weeks</li><li>• Keeps interest level high</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May create pressure on group members' schedules</li><li>• Requires frequent childcare arrangements</li></ul>  |
| <b>Every Other Week</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allows more time to complete the project on the alternate week</li></ul>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lengthens time needed to complete study</li><li>• Without a regular night reserved, couples forget and schedule something else that night</li></ul> |

# STEP 3 – Set a Schedule

| SCHEDULE OPTIONS | PROS   | CONS   |
|------------------|--|--|
| Monthly          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Existing group already scheduled</li></ul>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Rarely develops good group chemistry</li><li>Social group mentality</li></ul>                                    |
| Varied           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Takes everyone's schedule into account</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>More effort to coordinate</li><li>Increases risk of not completing the study</li><li>Rarely successful</li></ul> |

# STEP 3 – Set a Schedule


| SCHEDULE<br>OPTIONS                   | PROS  | CONS  |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Weekend<br/>Retreat<br/>Option</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Involves couples that are unlikely to make a longer-term commitment</li><li>• Doesn't require outside speakers</li><li>• Low-cost alternative to attending a conference</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Doesn't allow as much time between sessions to apply the principles covered</li></ul> |

# STEP 4 – Pick a Topic

## FamilyLife Resources Ensure Excellence

### Options:

 **Prepicked topic** – Some are reluctant to join a group without knowing the topic.

 **Let the group decide** – Have enough copies of several studies ready to start immediately.

 **Video-driven or facilitator-driven?**

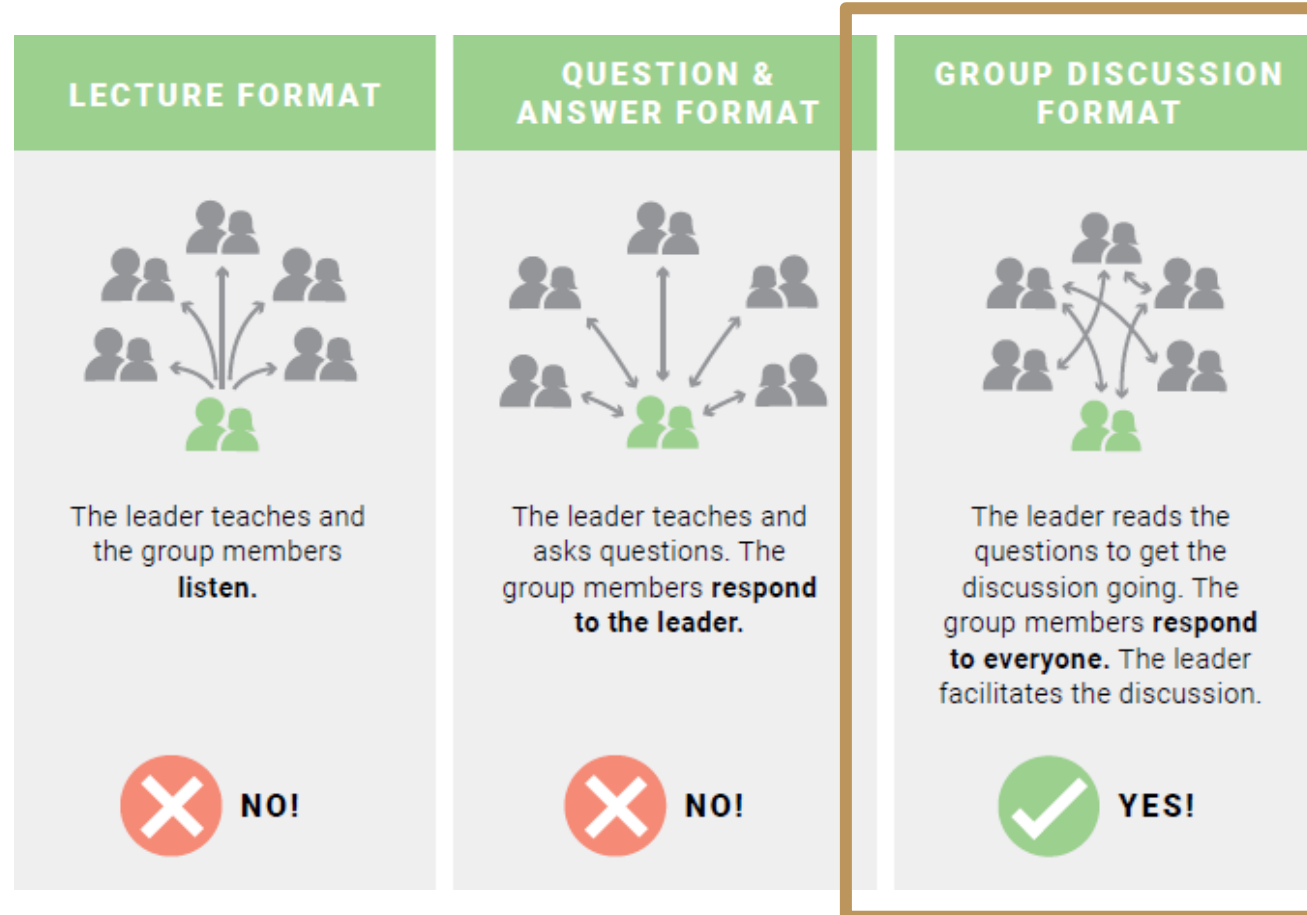
# Leading a FamilyLife Group

- Point out the ground rules
- Read the questions
- Set an example of sharing
- Deal with challenges
- Watch the time

## Severe Marital Problems?

- *Refer couples to godly counselors*
- *Recommend FamilyLife events*
- *Encourage them to continue in the group*

# Leading a FamilyLife Group



# Step 5 – Create an Inviting Atmosphere

- Provide a comfortable, relaxed setting.
- Arrange the group so that everyone can have eye contact.
- Greet each couple and introduce them to other group members.
- Show respect for everyone by beginning and ending on time.
- Encourage couples to complete their project. Praise those who do but don't rebuke those who do not.

**Optional: Serve simple snacks and beverages.**



# Leading a Virtual Group

## Begin with virtual etiquette.

- **Mute all mics unless speaking**
- **Raise your hands to indicate a desire to share**
- **Clap in a circle motion to show agreement**
- **Using thumbs up/down to respond to Y/N questions presented to the group**
- **Use the chat feature, if desired**
- **Following other directions specific to the study**

-Trevor and Tanya Kravick

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