

## BEST PRACTICES

**Format:** Group Leaders are responsible for moving people through the L.I.F.E. rhythms by creating an environment where everyone is *learning, investing, following, and engaging* regularly.

weekly \ bi-weekly

1

**LEARN:** Groups are where discipleship happens. Group leaders have an opportunity to deepen others' faith through study. Discuss the Bible, go through a study, or use the RL sermon discussion guide.

2

**INVEST:** Share a meal or appetizers and drinks while catching up on each other's weeks. Prepare thoughtful questions or share highs and lows to jumpstart connection.

3

**FOLLOW:** Groups get to practice what real life in Christ looks like. Pick a spiritual practice to implement every month. Prayer and Scripture meditation are two essential and basic ways to work the FOLLOW rhythm into your month, but there are many to choose from.

monthly

4

**ENGAGE RHYTHM:** Once a month, RL Groups will either serve a cause in the community or a need in their Group. Have conversations throughout the month about what this may look like and schedule it in advance on the day that you regularly meet so that more people are able to attend.

**You do not have to do every one of the rhythms every week.** The most successful Groups are the ones who do different combinations of these and go at the pace of the people in your Group. Some Groups will be INVEST heavy, others will be LEARN or FOLLOW heavy, but the healthiest groups are the ones who move through all four of these rhythms every month.

## READ THE ROOM

**Fundamentals:** The most important thing we do is create a safe and loving environment for people to feel like they belong. **The best leaders make room for others.**

The best leaders are the best listeners. Do not feel the need to fill in silence all the time. Sometimes people just need time to respond.

- Ask more questions. Be slow to provide answers.
- Try to ask thoughtful questions instead of “teaching.”
- Groups are most powerful when people can learn from each other’s stories and struggles.
- Get comfy with awkward silence.
- When is it ok to go first? When it’s difficult to do so. To experience authentic and honest conversations, leaders should be the first to answer hard questions vulnerably.

Consistency is key. Commit to regularly meeting and going through these rhythms on a rotation that works for you.

The best leaders let others lead. Assign rhythms to those with giftings and abilities in areas you do not. Make space for others to lead sermon discussions, prayer times, or make meals. Shared responsibility creates a feeling of belonging and value.

You will get out of these rhythms what you put into them. So we encourage you to trust the process.



L.I.F.E. GROUP LEADERS

## PERSONAL BUY IN



Be sure you are doing the rhythms yourself. While these rhythms are best practiced in a Group, they get their power and authenticity from the leader's times with God on their own.

Communicate, communicate, communicate. Come up with a plan. for facilitating Group nights. Create a spreadsheet, a group chat, or another process by which you will can easily let everyone know where you are meeting and when and any last minute changes.

Avoid canceling as best you can. There will be times when attendance is low or you feel overwhelmed; our best advice is not to cancel. Whether one person shows up or 15, having an open door always yields good things.

**Stay in touch:** Send reminders about Group nights, who has signed up to lead or bring what. Be sure to check in during the week on things shared during the discussion. Delegate as much as you need to ensure that bases are covered and people are in the loop.