



Guidance for Group Leaders Leading the Seven Essentials Discipleship Project

**Finishing Well Ministries
2023**

FINISHINGWELL
MINISTRIES

Suggested Guidance for Group Leaders Leading Small Groups for the Seven Essentials Discipleship Project

In taking a step to influence and lead others to think about God working in our lives through this discipleship project, three things come to mind.

Note: This is a collaborative project. I'm trusting that God will use you to help me refine what it is that the workbook needs to be. I believe that it needs to be revised in many ways, and I'd like to learn from you how to improve it. I desperately value your insights. **Let's grow together.**

First, remember that without Jesus we can do nothing. I love those words from John 15.5-8.

"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples."

But with Him we can bear much fruit. My prayer is that this project will be a good fruit-bearing season for you.

Second, remember that the Spirit will lead you. "For all who are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God" (Romans 8.14).

Our prayer for you is that God will prove himself faithful as He uses His Word through you in this discipleship project to keep conforming us to His Son (Romans 8.29).

Third, I (Hal) would like to personally encourage you in this project by investing time with you – time with new Group Leaders learning to know you, answer questions, encourage you, discuss the main ideas of the material. Once you go through this process once or twice, God could use you as a "seasoned" Group Leader to encourage new Group Leaders and even act as their mentors. Husband and wife teams can meet with new husband and wife teams to build that support network.

Thanks for being willing to make a difference - helping others to fulfill God's plan for our aging years.

May God bless and strengthen you.

Finishing Well Ministries

Leaders/Group Leaders – General Guidelines

- Know your people (questions and stories)
- Know yourself – y’all don’t need to do the same thing – follow the Spirit
- Do the workbook for yourself and watch the videos
- Limit the texts/info to be covered in the group session
- Think through the allotted time for the session
- Encourage everyone to share their insights. Be prepared for rabbit trails – challenges, problems, hurts, pain – follow the Spirit
- Be sensitive to people in the group - to the person who consistently wants to be the first to talk as well as the person who rarely speaks. Be kind and give everyone an opportunity to share.
- Work with the “what’s my mission” theme near the end of each Essential - apply the content of each essential to the mission
- Follow participants as appropriate beyond the class. Be a shepherd of your group. Pray regularly for each one by name.
- As participants “graduate” from the class, encourage them to think about how they might pass it on to others. Also, encourage them to stay in touch with Finishing Well Ministries by
 - Signing up to be a part of their network - <https://www.finishingwellministries.org/>
 - Praying for their mission (actually your new mission)
 - Support FWM financially - <https://www.finishingwellministries.org/donate>

More Detailed Guidance for Group Leaders

In think about leading/facilitating a small group working your way through the Seven Essentials, here are some thoughts to consider.

1. To begin, become familiar with the chapter by working your way through the text and ideas. Do the home work to understand the “Essential” being presented. Write your thoughts and responses in the blanks as appropriate.
2. Watch the videos of Hal teaching through the “Essential” being presented. It will help you get a better understanding of the material. It will also be beneficial in answering any questions other participants might have about Hal’s presentations.
3. If you are facilitating the group with a friend/spouse, compare notes.
4. 4a. As you think about leading others through the material, think about and develop priorities related to the material. Since it is impossible to consider all the included biblical texts in one meeting, what might be the best 4 or 5 texts for you to have as agenda for the meeting? Deal with them first. If there is time, consider others. Let the group know your priority verses.

4b. As you think about priorities, think also about the duration of the study. Are you anticipating one week per/essential or maybe two weeks? Allowing an “2nd week” will give more time for either discussion or additional texts.

4c. As you think through the material, we encourage you to make your own presentation of the Essential. Don’t feel obliged to “follow the workbook.” Condense and/or synthesize the material as the Spirit leads you. Make it your own.
5. In anticipation of each meeting, encourage the participants to read and think through the material. Ask them to make listening to the videos a part of their preparation for gathering together.
6. When launching this project, at the very first meeting, begin with a “get-to-know you” session before diving in. That needs to be a stand-alone session by itself. Knowing a bit about each other can help the participants to relate the material to real life issues of those in the group. Make sure each person introduces themselves. Ask each person to talk about some “aging issues” that they may be facing for themselves. Lead by sharing some of those issues for yourself.
7. As you conclude your first orientation meeting, layout the plan for the next meeting and the overall project. Draw attention to the conclusion of each Essential when it talks about understanding one’s “mission” in life. Ask for participation but lead with your own work on your mission.

8. Make each session not only about the Essential but about the participants. Include questions designed for them to share how the Essential impacts them, ideas for implementing the Essential into their life, how the Scripture impacted them as they studied the material.
9. We encourage you to develop an evaluation sheet that will provide feedback in all that people have experienced. What follows are two examples from Stonebriar Community Church and a second one from Don Holloway, a fellow Group Leader.

EXAMPLE

Stonebriar Community Church

Senior Adult Ministry

Important Document checklist

You may want to create a binder using this checklist as a guide and include all of your documents in it. Digital records have their place but someone else may not know where the information is stored.

BASIC INFORMATION

- Birth Certificate
- Veteran's Affairs file number
- Marriage Certificate
- Military records
- Titles to property and assets
- Membership cards

RETIREMENT PLANNING DOCUMENTS

- Update all beneficiaries on relevant documents
- Recent IRA, 401(k), 403(b), TSA, Keogh statements
- Employee benefits program, if applicable
- Deferred compensation and stock option agreements
- Pension and profit-sharing statements

TAX PLANNING DOCUMENTS

- Tax returns; ideally for last three years
- W-2 and a recent pay stub or 1099-R
- Current year tax documents

FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS

- Checking accounts and registers
- Investment documents
- Savings account statements
- Loan documents
- Mutual fund statements
- Business and/or partnership agreements
- Brokerage account statements
- Credit cards and statements

INSURANCE DOCUMENTS

- Life insurance policies and statements
- Medical, homeowners, and auto insurance policies and statements
- Disability and umbrella policies
- Long term care insurance policies

- Annuity policies and statements

ESTATE PLANNING DOCUMENTS

- Summary of your will, living will, durable powers of attorney and health care powers
- Living trusts

Important Document checklist

You may want to create a binder using this checklist as a planning guide.

DESIGNATE A POWER OF ATTORNEY (WHEN NECESSARY)

- Give someone the power to make financial decisions for if you are not able to make those decisions for yourself.
- Remember: accidents may result in your inability to make decisions, so plan ahead.
- People who should have a copy: Lawyer, you, and Power of Attorney.
- Fill out Advance Directive & Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST). Forms may differ by state. See <https://www.dshs.texas.gov/emstraumasystems/POLST.pdf>. They designate your medical wishes.
- Meet with your physician to review and sign your Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST).
- People who should have a copy: Doctor, you, Power of Attorney, and local hospital.
- Keep a copy in a glove compartment of your car.

CONSIDER YOUR WISHES

- What type of service you would like?
- Where do you want the service?
- Where are you to be buried/cremated?
- Think about what you would like in your obituary and who might write it for you.
- Burial/Cremation/Donation to Science – be sure to complete the legally required permit forms for your state in order that your loved ones can carry out your wishes.

EXAMPLE

Stonebriar Community Church
Senior Adult Ministry

Seven Essentials Workshop
Individual Assessment Sheet

1. Which of the 6 Essentials for Seniors had the most impact for you?

- To Grow
- To Connect
- To Care
- To Invest
- To Be Available
- To Plan Ahead

2. What was the depth of impact from applying these principles?

0 (none) 1 (minimal) 2 (modest) 3 (significant) 4 (profound) 5 (transformative)

3. Please share a brief description of your learning/growth from The Seven Essentials and their impact/results.

4. Please share your ideas for future studies or activities for seniors.

5. Suggestions for improvement:

- Class day & time
- Length of study
- Other suggestions...

FINISHING WELL SELF-ASSESSMENT

Finishing well is a process that starts today and ends well (as defined by you and God).

How satisfied are you with your process for:

Finishing Well Overall?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Ambivalent	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
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Growing?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Ambivalent	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
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Connecting?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Ambivalent	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
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Caring/Loving?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Ambivalent	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
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Investing?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Ambivalent	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
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Being Available?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Ambivalent	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
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Planning?

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Ambivalent	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
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This self-assessment is based on the Seven Essentials of Finishing Well Ministries.