



UP FOCUS MEETING(Spiritual Practices)

PLANNING GUIDE

Use this General Guide to help you lead your next UP Meeting (a Bible-centered gathering that helps people grow in their love for Jesus). There are numerous options for you to pick from in order to plan a meeting that is customized to your CG (and in accordance with how Holy Spirit is leading you).

MEETING GOAL:

Facilitate learning, discussion and implementation of that month's Spiritual Practice, in order to develop regular and intentional rhythms in our lives that nourishes our relationship with Jesus, and helps us to live and love as Jesus did.

BEFORE THE MEETING:

- Remind group about the upcoming meeting (location, date, time), and send a link to that Month's Spiritual Practice if not playing it in person.
- Pray for the meeting and each member of it!
- At least once a month, meet as leaders to:
 - Plan who is leading which week;
 - Assess the CG development, including each member's UPWARD, INWARD, OUTWARD & FORWARD growth;
 - To check in with each other, pray for one another and pray for the group together.

STEP 1: ICE-BREAKER

FORMING ----> NORMING ----> PERFORMING

PICK ONE:

- What is your absolute dream job?
- What sport would you compete in if you were in the Olympics?
- Favorite local restaurant (and order)?
- What 1 book (not the Bible) would you bring to a deserted island?
- What hobby do you wish you had more time to explore?
- What is the best movie that you have seen recently?
- If you had an additional hour each day, how would you spend it?
- What is the best advice you have received?
- Highs and lows since you last met?
- What are you most grateful for right now?
- What's is one thing we don't know about you?
- Dashboard: Check in how everyone is doing physically, mentally/emotionally, spiritually?
- How did you see God working in your life last week/month (answered prayers, praise reports, testimonies)?
- More Icebreakers: <https://teambuilding.com/blog/icebreaker-questions>

IF VISITORS or WELCOME BACK MEETING:

- Go around and do introductions;
- Briefly go through basic introductory information:
 - CG Definition: A Community Group ("CG") is a gospel-centered group that share life and a mission to bless our city. Our local focus is_____.
 - Mission: That we grow to live and love like Jesus, while leading others to do the same;
 - What To Expect: meeting location(s) each week, start/end times, how we communicate (within Messaging on MC App), etc.
 - Group Policies: Everything discussed remains confidential, we always respect one another (even when different viewpoints & opinions), and everyone is welcome (no matter what you believe or how long you have been following Jesus).

STEP 2: ANNOUNCEMENTS/ TRANSITION TO DISCUSSION

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Review MC Upcoming Events With Group
<https://monterey.church/events>
- Reminders about upcoming CG Events (Serve or Enjoying Our City), next week's meeting, etc.

TRANSITIONS (pick one):

- Read a Psalm;
- Play a worship song; or
- Pray/ask someone to pray.

STEP 3: DISCUSSION

Briefly discuss an overview of that month's Spiritual Practice focus using the teaching notes (<https://monterey.church/practices>), or consider watching the teaching as a group during your meeting.

Pick a few questions below, or customize specific questions based on that specific Practice.

- What stood out to you from the teaching about this Practice?
- How would you define the Practice in your own words?
- Has anyone ever tried this Spritual Practice before? How did it go?
- What challenges and benefits have you seen from incorporating this Practice in your life?
- Why do you think this is an important spiritual practice for us today?
- How have you seen or possibly could you see this Practice helping you to grow to live and love more like Jesus?
- What practical tip do you think will be most helpful in order to start/continue incorporating this Practice into your daily/monthly rhythms ("Rule of Life")?

Depending on the Practice, consider trying the Practice as a group, or pick a day next week for the group to try the Practice on their own. Make sure to discuss how it went, and remind the group about the "J Curve" of Practices (it takes numerous times and consistency before you really begin to start seeing fruit). Encourage your group not to give up!

STEP 4: PRAYER

- Go around and ask each member "What is one thing that you would like the group to pray for (personally) this week?"; or
- Make sure to create time for prayer as a group, and allow space (even periods of silence) to give people time to listen to God and pray aloud as they feel led; or
- Have everyone write a prayer request on a piece a paper, fold it up and put in a hat and have everyone pick a prayer to be praying for this week; or
- Have everyone set a daily timer to pray at the same time for one another; or
- Have each person pray every day this week for the person on your left or right.

AFTER THE MEETING (pick one):

- Who needs encouragement this week? Ask how the Lord wants you to specifically encourage that person this week.
- Ensure that your Serve Event for this semester has been scheduled and all responsibilities have been delegated.
- Encourage the group with a verse from the reading this week, and see what stood out to them in the chat.
- Reach out to members that you haven't seen in awhile.
- Divide roster of members between leaders and begin praying for/meeting with your assigned members to learn their goals for spiritual growth, and how best to encourage/shepherd them.
- Ask Holy Spirit to reveal one thing about a member, and share it with them (ICNU Affirmations)!
- Remember the 3 I's - Identify, Invite and Invest in those future leaders!
- Delegate one part of next week's meeting to the F.A.S.T (Faithful, Available, Servant-Hearted, Teachable) members (posting on chat, leading Ice Breaker, writing down prayer requests, etc.)