

Harvest Oakville D-Group Leader's Guide

Getting started in leading a D-Group for the first time might seem a little vague, even with the *Growing Up* book as a guide.

This handbook is meant to share some ideas and suggestions to make that process easier for you as a D-Group Leader.

What a D-Group IS

It is a group of 4-5 BELIEVERS who desire a deeper walk with Christ; being nurtured by God's word, sanctified by its truth, learning, growing and being committed to disciple others as a result.

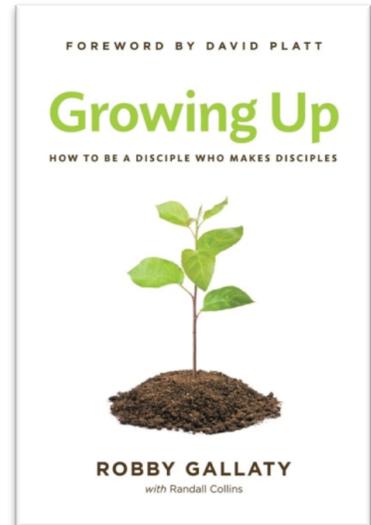
It is purposeful: "to make disciples who make disciples". Therefore it is not meant to be a check mark beside "D-Group" on one's resume, but rather completion of a D-Group is meant to be the start of a life-long discipling process with others.

It is meant to equip believers by allowing them opportunity to be in an accountability group based on the reading, studying and application of God's word. Attendance is expected weekly and participants are asked to sign a covenant of understanding to this end. Journaling and memorization of scripture is not optional. It's an integral part of this process.

What a D-Group is NOT

- It is not the "newest, next and greatest thing."
- It is not a support group or counselling group.
- It is not meant to replace Small (Mixed) Group, Women's Ministry and other studies.
- It is not a Bible study group.
- It is not an evangelistic group

DGs are a tool to deepen a *believer's* walk. Since reading and understanding God's word is at the root, the participant must have the Holy Spirit in them (only available to believers) to help discern meaning and application of God's word for their lives. While one must be a believer, they do not need to be a believer for long. The greatest characteristic of a D-Group participant is a genuine hunger for the word of God and to grow in faith through the intentional study of God's word. A Christ-follower may be a believer for 5 days or 50 years – but until they receive their heavenly reward, they still have time to learn and grow. These are the people you must pray that God will lead you to as you seek for form and lead a group.



Helps and Suggestions to Get Started

Replication.Org Website

This is a website that you'll find helpful in your leading. Check it out: Replicate.Org. It has links/downloads/suggested readings/leader's guide for the Growing Up book etc. Go to the "Resources" Tab and then click on the "Growing Up Challenge" tab under "About DGroups). You'll see a video guiding you through the Growing Up Challenge Instructions. Take some time to go through the site and see all the resources available. There are 13 weekly videos as well pertaining to the Growing Up Challenge that you may find useful. There is a download leader's guide for the Growing Up Challenge as well. There is an app available for both Apple and Android. This will allow your group to share journal entries and prayer requests/updates with one another. The F-260 plan is included. **Note: When attempted in fall of 2017; it was not available for Canada and did not include ESV, but there are plans for an update to the app version and this may be available soon.*

Essential Steps before starting a D-Group:

1. Pray about your resolve to a commitment to lead, for God's guidance as you lead and for those whom He will bring to you to lead in this discipleship relationship. Pray for cleared calendars and availability. Pray for commitment from everyone in the group to make D-Group an important priority in their lives.
2. Read the ***Growing Up*** book prior to starting a group.
3. Choose where in the Bible you'll be journaling from. Appendix 4 from ***Growing Up*** offers a reading challenge for 100 days. That covers basically five months. There is a free download from the site under the [260 Day Plan](#). (See "Foundations" on the replicate.org site.) This will take a typical group through a one year cycle. It includes two memory verses. I'd suggest only one per week is plenty especially for a new believer. If you have someone who's a keener, perhaps they could take on two. However, I'd caution against allowing that to be a discourager to others in the group. This could also be a second set of memory verses for a second time through. Or if you're choosing your own books of the bible to journal from, you might choose a verse from the journaling for that week as a memory verse.
4. Approach those you are inviting to a D-Group. Explain what a D-Group is; ask them if they'd pray and let you know if they'd be willing to go forward with you. Once you have three or four; choose a start date and begin. Have each participant purchase a copy of the ***Growing Up*** book (available often in the Harvest Bookstore) or from the replicate.org site. It's also on amazon.ca for \$19.99 CDN or kindle for \$7.51. It's also on christianbook.com for \$10.49 USD.

5. Register your group with Harvest Oakville.
6. Check or complete the membership process here at Harvest.
7. **Choose a day, time and place where you'll meet.** Some say they meet for an hour. Most 1.5 hours. Respect people's time. Plan to start and end on time. For some it will be a great discouragement to start late and not be able to finish on time or skipping or cutting short time in prayer. It is recommended that you start on time even if everyone isn't there. This will train your group to be timely. Yes, there are things that come up time to time, but for those who might be habitually late, this will allow them to know they are missing out by choosing to be late. If you don't start on time, you'll be training those who are there on time, not to bother coming on time. Communicate expectations on the first day.
8. Depending on your group (seasoned believers or brand new to the faith), it may be a good plan to spend a week or two together before starting with your official calendar. Someone brand new to the faith has very likely never journaled before, may not have read the bible very much, if ever, and the approach should be encouraging rather than overwhelming and discouraging causing any new believer to think they can't do it, want to quit or cause them to doubt in any way their salvation status.

How to Get Started (a sample timeline)

Week #1:

- Welcome/pray/introductions/get to know one another. Share emails/contact info. Ask what each is hoping to experience through D-Group participation.
- Share the calendar and reading/scripture memorization plan for your group. Discuss known planned dates off plans (Christmas for instance).
- Fill out Appendix 2 “Spiritual Journey Inventory”. (This will be good for you to get a feel for each of the members in your group as you begin.) See page 6.
- Have each participant read and sign the “Disciple Making Covenant” (Appendix 1 in Growing Up or see page 7).
- Share the Prayer Log (See Page 8) as a way of tracking prayer requests shared and answered over your time together.
- Go through the Growing Up book briefly together. For the next week assign each participant to read the Forward and Introduction. Assign a scripture reading ie: 2 Timothy 3:10-17 (a reminder that the word of God is the foundation of D-Group). Assign a scripture memory verse. Perhaps Psalm 119:11 *“I have stored up your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.”* (This is a good reminder of why it is good to memorize God’s word.) End with prayer for one another in the D-Group journey. For unity and bonding of the group. For God’s provision and protection weekly.
- Talk about memorization – the importance of keeping up with it daily. As they become greater in number it’s important to go through them all weekly. There is not time to hear them all each week; but as leader it’s a good practice to revisit an earlier one from time to time and challenge them any given week to recall it.

Week #2:

- Pray – discuss what the first week has been like – challenges/opposition.
- Discuss the highlights from the reading assignment in Growing Up. (Forward/Introduction)
- Do a H.E.A.R. journal exercise together from the Scripture reading assignment (2 Tim 3:10-17). Help a beginner to not feel awkward. Take it slowly.
- Give out next Growing Up reading assignment – Chapter 1
- Now begin your official calendar of assignments by giving out the first week’s journaling and scripture memory exercises for the next week. That might be the F260 plan or another you’ve chosen.

If you have new believers new to the Bible, you might begin by taking smaller passages until it becomes routine. It’s not about how much of the Bible can be covered in the year. Better to

start slow and well and stay with it for a year – understanding and applying what has been learned and understood.

For instance in the E100 plan (Appendix 4) the first **day** is Genesis 1 and 2. A slow start would be to do Genesis 1 and 2 over 5 days for the first **week** as follows:

Day 1: Gen 1:1–25	God’s creation of the earth
Day 2: Gen 1:25-31	God’s creation of man in his image
Day 3: Gen 2:1-9	God’s creation of rest and tree of good and evil
Day 4: Gen 2:10-17	God gives man work
Day 5: Gen 2:18-25	God creates woman and marriage

Week #3: and each week following, the same routine is followed:

1. Open with prayer
2. Recite memory verse(s)
3. Discuss book chapter read that week
4. Share H.E.A.R. Journal
5. Accountability Question (this might not be every week necessarily, but paying attention to what has already been shared and following up ie: Last week you mentioned finding it difficult to be patient and respectful with your supervisor at work. Have you prayed about it asking for God’s help? How has it changed this week?)
6. Giving out/reminding of next week’s reading, H.E.A.R and memory verse assignment
7. Prayer

It will become routine as you go; but you might decide on a time template like the following to help you stay on time: *(This is based on one leader and three group members; the more people in a group, the more time will be necessary in your group. This is important to think about if your group is under a strict time line like before work or during lunch hour.)*

Time	What
9:00 - 9:05	Arrive/greeting
9:05 - 9:10	Opening Prayer: For the Holy Spirit’s guiding
9:10 - 9:20	Each shares their memory verse(s)
9:20 - 9:45	Discuss Book reading ie: Growing up or other future book taken up
9:45 - 10:05	Sharing of one H.E.A.R journal from that week (5 minutes each)
10:10 - 10:30	Each shares a prayer request is prayed for by another group member or the leader; model the importance of sharing briefly (God knows the details) and spending the bulk of this time actually praying. (5 minutes each) Accountability questions come naturally in this time.

Remind everyone of homework assignments and dismiss.

Supplemental Women's Resources

There are a good number of books listed on the replicate.org site

In addition, the following were books that Kandi Gallaty gave at her live presentation to the women leaders at a workshop she presented at Harvest Nov 2017:

1. The Lost Art of Disciple Making (Leroy Eims - Navigators)
2. Biblical Femininity (Chrystie Cole)
3. Gates of Splendor (Elizabeth Elliot)
4. Hiding In the Light (Rifza Bary)
5. Hiding Place (Cory Ten Boom)
6. Counterfeit Gods (Tim Keller)
7. My Heart: Every Beat Surrendered to Our Unchanging God (Julie Manning)
8. This Momentary Marriage (John Piper)
9. What is the Gospel (Greg Gilbert)
10. Christian Biographies (ie: Hudson Taylor)

Spiritual Journey Inventory

1. After coming to the Lord, I finally understood:
2. The closest I have felt to God in my life was:
3. The farthest I felt from God was:
4. If I could change one incident in my life it would be: and why
5. One incident in my life that I would never change would be: and why
6. The turning point in my relationship with God was: and why

Disciple-Making Covenant

I will commit to the following expectations:

1. I pledge myself fully to the Lord with the anticipation that I am entering a time of accelerated spiritual transformation.
2. I will meet with my D-Group for approximately one and one-half hours every week, unless providentially hindered.
3. I will complete all assignments on a weekly basis before my D-Group meeting, in order to contribute to the discussion.
4. I will contribute to an atmosphere of confidentiality, honesty, and transparency for the edification of others in the group as well as my own spiritual growth.
5. I will pray every week for the other men/women who are on the discipleship journey with me.
6. I will begin praying about replicating the discipleship process upon completion of this group.

Signed Mentee _____

Signed Mentor (Group Leader) _____

Date: _____

Accountability Questions

1. Have you spent time in the Word and in prayer this week?
2. Have you shared the gospel or your testimony with an unbeliever this week?
3. Have you spent quality time with your family this week?
4. Have you viewed anything immoral this week?
5. Have you had any lustful thoughts or tempting attitudes this week?
6. Have you told any lies or half-truths to put yourself in a positive light before others?
7. Have you participated in anything unethical this week?
8. Have you lied about any of your answers today?

