

COMMUNITY IS A SPECIAL THING...

When a community comes together, centered around growing to be more like Jesus, something powerful happens. Something miraculous can happen, when we study the Bible, when we pray with one another, when we have an honest conversation with one another.

WHEN WE DO THESE THINGS, TOGETHER, WE GROW.

It's a beautiful thing that happens in our living rooms, in that coffeeshop, in our backyards. That can feel like a lot to you, the small group leader. There's good news—it doesn't have to be overwhelming! When it comes to a small group that will grow and eventually multiply, there are a few things great leaders always remember:

1. Being the small group leader doesn't mean I'm alone in making it happen. We've all seen those one man bands. One man- singing, wailing on the harmonica, playing guitar with one hand, piano with another, all while keeping rhythm with a tambourine and bass drum. One man bands are great for laughs, but one man bands don't make it very far as great small group leaders. Great community has space for everyone to give as well receive. You don't have to do everything, because you're surrounded with people who have God-given gifts they can contribute.

Does figuring out snacks stress you out? Maybe there's someone who would love the chance to bring a batch of cookies. Find yourself in a frenzy to clean your home before people arrive? Perhaps there's someone who's been eager to host people in their home for years. :) Enlist the help of those around you. It'll take weight off your shoulders, and it makes a space that everyone can grow in.

2. Being the small group leader doesn't mean I'm responsible for changing peoples' hearts. I love the story of Jesus and the disciples feeding the 5,000. It's a constant reminder of how God loves to work through us. When we do what we can, with what we have— God takes our efforts and does something miraculous with it. A great small group leader knows that God is faithful, and a rewarder of those who seek Him. When you seek Him together, in community, he will transform the hearts of those in your small group. The life-change happening in your small group may be apparent. But it might not be— that's ok! God's work is sometimes hard to spot, even in our own lives.

It all comes down to this: when you love other people as they are, right where they are at, you create a space where they can thrive and grow in community. That true growth — spiritual transformation, isn't anything you or I could conjure up, it comes from God! God loves to take what we do, with what we have, and do something miraculous in others' hearts.

3 . Creating meaningful small group experiences starts with you. Know this— you already have everything you need to lead a small group that is meaningful! There's no formula, no set structure, no list of rules for a great small group, or being a great small group leader.

Remember these two things:

1. I am not alone in making this small group.
 2. I am not alone in fostering heart-transformation in others.
- You've got others, and you've got God. The last part of the equation is... you! Be you, have fun, and watch as God uses you to draw others closer to Himself! miraculous in others' hearts.