

COUNTRY HILLS DISCIPLING MODEL PLAN

WHAT IS A HUDDLE?

- A place to directly disciple others (one another)
- A place to give and receive encouragement and accountability and grow in your faith
- A group of 2-3
- Regular and consistent in their rhythm of meeting (the same time at least every other week)
- Tends to be led by a Huddle leader
- Something you are invited into – it is not something people bring a friend to
- A shared privilege, not a right – it is not owned or controlled by one person, but it tends to be facilitated by one person
- Relaxed and fun—laughter should happen regularly
- Dependent upon openness and honesty within the life of the Huddle
- Tends to be for a season only, not forever—at least a year is typical but can be longer
- Something that multiplies over time, as members start their own Huddles with people they are discipling or with others as God leads

HOW IS IT DIFFERENT FROM A SMALL GROUP?

Huddles do have a few similarities to small groups; they are smaller but meet regularly and often at the same location.

Differences:

- Huddles are not open to “the public.” They are a group of people who are committed to attending each Huddle and are invited to be a part of the group by the leader. Huddles don’t grow by adding more people to an existing Huddle. Huddles grow when current members start a Huddle of their own.
- Huddle leaders act as the primary disciplers of the members of the group. They are giving their lives as something worth imitating, giving their members access to all parts of their lives. Huddle leaders are inviting the members of the Huddle to imitate the parts of their lives that look like the life and ministry of Jesus.
- In small groups, creating a warm, friendly environment with few-to-no challenges is often important especially so new people can be invited. In a Huddle the environment is one that is a safe place to be honest, and one of accountability, learning, encouragement and challenge. We want to get real, and challenge and encourage one another – this means risking offence.
- People often miss small groups if things come up, in a Huddle the expectation is that you never miss a Huddle unless it is absolutely unavoidable.
- Small groups often revolve around particular studies. The direction and trajectory of Huddles are guided by the Huddle leader being obedient to the prompting of the Holy Spirit as He leads and by the particular needs and seasons of the members of the group.

Spiritual Growth & Huddle patterns

There is no formula to spiritual growth, but there tends to be a form; from exploring faith, to growth (including failure), to actually living it. It will be the same with a Huddle – it takes time and patience, and since we are people there will likely be times of plateau, or failure, and of heightened growth and challenge.

Use the first 5-6 Huddles to find your format, decide what you will do with your time, learn the way of Jesus and the practices of the way of Jesus, to share your stories and begin to pray for one another. What you do here sets the tone, so be intentional in going to deep places, don't allow one person to take over or for one person to remain quiet. The purpose here is to really get people to begin living the way of Jesus and discern what God is speaking to them and as a group hold them accountable and challenge them to be obedient. Pay attention to where group members are at, if you have a plan but they need extra care, prayer, or encouragement let the Holy Spirit lead and you be sensitive to life needs rather than your plan. Example:

- a. If they are struggling with Identity, spend several Huddles on passages about identity in Christ, or Neil Anderson's "Who I Am in Christ."
- b. If they are struggling with being over-scheduled, exhausted, stressed or tired, spend time talking about – and planning – a new rhythm.
- c. If they are struggling with prayer and connecting with their Father, take time to pray together and share what has helped you.

Once you have established the Huddle, know one another, are seeing growth in relationships with God and others, and more consistency in living the Way of Jesus and the practices you are likely ready to dig into deeper issues with one another – sinful habits and patterns, growth areas, challenge to greater obedience in areas, taking risks and planting seeds for the kingdom.

The purpose and goal of a Huddle is growth – if people are growing and being more obedient you know you're heading in the right direction.