

Leading Leaders Coaching Session #5



Leadership Competency: **Encourager (part 2)**

Key verse: 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12

Key question: Do other leaders look forward to spending time with me?

Description: An Encourager provides care, support, and resources for 2-5 LifeGroup leaders. Encouragers hold LifeGroup leaders accountable in empowering ways.

Connect:

1) In your past, who encouraged you the most? What kinds of words did that person use?

Celebrate:

2) What has been something encouraging that someone has said or done for you lately? In your life? In your ministry?

Coach:

3) How would you rate yourself as an encourager on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being a model for others to learn from? Why did you give yourself the score that you gave yourself?

4) The last time we met, we discussed an action step that we each would take that will make us leaders who encourage others in a way that shapes their soul. So, who did you encourage in a sincere, specific, and strength-based way? How did that person respond? What did you do well? What do you wish you had done better?

5) In the Leadership Greenhouse - Leading Leaders - Podcast 5, Rick Eimers said that encouragement is truly an underutilized tool, that every follower of Christ can do it, and that we can't opt out! Why do some believers tend to "opt out" when it comes to encouraging others?

6) Rick Eimers also reminded us that when we see a great man or woman of God there is usually some encourager behind the scenes who saw something in his or her life that no one else saw and encouraged them in that area. What skills or habits are necessary for us to see in the lives of others the potential that no one else sees?

7) Rick Eimers mentioned Larry Crabb's book, *Encouragement*. In the book, Crabb mentions three categories of words: a) Death words (words that are hurtful), b) Shallow words (words that are trivial and superficial), and c) Life words (words that heal and help). Presumably, our LifeGroup Leaders are not allowing "Death words" to dominate in the lives of their members. How can we help our LifeGroup Leaders move more and more from the use of Shallow words in group members' lives to Life words?

Communicate:

[Together, read through the following article.]

Encouragement Takes the Sting Out of Life

by Charles Swindoll, edited by Rick Duncan

All of us need encouragement. We need somebody to believe in us. To reassure and reinforce us. To help us pick up the pieces and go on. To fuel our flame of determination as we face the odds against us.

I don't care how influential, secure, or mature a person may appear to be, an expression of encouragement never fails to help. All of us need it. Those of us who slug it out in the trenches of leadership need massive doses of it. Regrettably, most are too proud to admit it. This pride is as prevalent among members of God's family as it is on the streets of the world.

There is more to encouragement than a quick pat on the back. It is a deliberate, strong commitment to lifting up another's spirit. The New Testament reminds us of its value:

Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near. ([Hebrews 10:24–25 NLT](#))

Let's take a close look at the word itself. *Encouragement*, as used in [Hebrews 10:25](#), is from the same Greek root used for the Holy Spirit in [John 14:26](#) and [16:7](#). In both those verses He is called "the Helper." The actual term, *parakaleo*, is from a combination of two smaller words, *kaleo*, "to call," and *para*, "alongside." Just as the Holy Spirit is called alongside to help us, so it is with us when you and I encourage someone else. In fact, when we encourage others, we come as close to the work of the Holy Spirit as anything we can do in God's family.

Believe me, when Christians begin to realize the value of mutual encouragement, there is no limit to what we can stimulate others to accomplish. It is thrilling to realize that God has "called *us* alongside to help" others who are in need. How much better to be engaged in actions that lift others up rather than actions that tear them down!

The beautiful part about encouragement is this: *anybody* can do it. You don't need money to carry it out. You don't even need to be a certain age. Frankly, some of the most encouraging actions or words I've received have come from my own children at a time when my heart was heavy. They saw the need and moved right in . . . they "came alongside and helped."

I am absolutely convinced that there are thousands of people who are drying up on the vine simply because of the lack of encouragement.

Going back to the statement found in [Hebrews 10:24](#), we are to "think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works." In other words, we are to give thought to specific ways we can lift up, affirm, and help others.

Maybe a few ideas will help spark an interest in putting our encouragement into action:

- Observe and mention admirable character qualities you see in others, such as punctuality, diligence, a good attitude, thoroughness, efficiency, or a good sense of humor.
- Correspond with thank-you notes or small gifts with a handwritten note attached.
- Express appreciation for someone's extra effort; Notice a job well done and say so.
- Cultivate a positive, reassuring attitude. Encouragement cannot thrive in a negative atmosphere.

- Be supportive of someone you know who is really hurting.

Encouragement is not a technique to be mastered. Rather, it's a sensitivity to people and their needs that must be nourished and demonstrated. We can learn to leverage biblical fellowship to move beyond superficial smiles and shallow greetings.

Be warned, though. Our overly-busy lives can distract our focus and derail our efforts to grow as encouragers. Perhaps the following suggestions will help you take the sting out of someone's life.

1. Be filled by the Spirit so that His words overflow from you into others.
2. Have a mindset of ministry when interacting with other people.
3. Cultivate active listening skills.
4. Develop a careful selection of encouraging words.
5. Look for and then seize opportunities for encouragement.
6. Use ICNU – (Here's what "I see in you...") as a routine habit.
7. Be a "door opener" in conversation rather than a "door closer."
8. Be passionate about moving beyond surface conversations to deeper interactions.

"Once we see that words can have power, we must no longer be content with shallow words that mean little. We must set out to harness that power with a clear awareness that words can both tear down and build up." Dr. Larry Crabb, *Encouragement*, p. 22.

"God intends that we be people who use words to encourage one another. A well-timed word has the power to urge a runner to finish the race, to rekindle hope when despair has set in, to spark a bit of warmth in an otherwise cold life, to trigger healthful self-evaluation in someone who doesn't think much about his shortcomings, to renew confidence when problems have the upper hand." Larry Crabb, *Encouragement*, p. 25.

Remember: A few well-timed words suited perfectly to the need of a particular moment can yield enduring results in someone's life. Who will you encourage today?

<https://www.insight.org/resources/article-library/individual/encouragement-takes-the-sting-out-of-life>

8) What stood out to you in the Charles Swindoll article? What part of the article was especially challenging or helpful to you?

9) In the article, Swindoll mentioned "a few ideas will help spark an interest in putting our encouragement into action." Reread those 5 bullet points. Which of the 5 ideas might you be able to put into practice immediately?

10) The article mentioned that the busy-ness of life can derail our efforts to grow as encouragers. What are some practical ways we can incorporate encouragement into the routines of our lives?

11) Let's brainstorm a list of encouraging words. (Write these down on a large Post-it for everyone to see.)

12) In the podcast for today, Rick Eimers said that through encouragement we can literally change another person's life, that the person sitting in front of us is important and unique. He said, "If the person sitting in front of you is a LifeGroup Leader, then you can assume that God is at work. If you are not speaking life to them then something is missing." What do you think is missing when we don't encourage?

13) How do you think CVC would change if every Leader of Leaders and every LifeGroup Leader took more and more seriously the role of being an encourager?

Care:

14) Who is God calling you to encourage? Why? What is one action step you need to take to encourage that person?

15) How can we pray for each other? (As you pray for one another, remember the challenge from Rick Eimers. Pray, "God, show me what You are doing in the lives of those around me. And give me words of life to speak them.")