

## Our Class Care Group Leaders

Name	Phone

## My Care Group

Name: Address:  Phone:  E-Mail: Spouse Children B'day/Anniv	Name: Address:  Phone:  E-Mail: Spouse Children B'day/Anniv
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# Adult Bible Study Fellowship

## Connecting Members with One Another

Research by Thom Rainer demonstrated that:

- 16 out of 100 persons whose primary point of contact was through a worship service were still active after 5 years.
- 83 out of 100 persons whose primary point of contact was through Sunday School or other small groups were actively involved in the life of the church after 5 years.

### Keys to connection

**The teacher or teachers must be committed to lead the class to be transformational.**

- ⇒ Cast the vision for spiritual and numerical growth.
- ⇒ Model ministry through visitation and personal evangelism.

**The class organizes class leaders to meet ministry needs.**

- ⇒ Organize by gender—If care groups are a part of a coed class organize the care groups by gender.
- ⇒ Include members-in-service—In-service members are members who teach or work in another Bible study group. Don't forget anyone.
- ⇒ Contact members weekly—The contact may not be a visit but some kind of contact should be made weekly to every member. Remember it is about building relationships.
- ⇒ Make short but frequent contacts—The contacts don't have to be long letters, visits, or phone calls. Shorter and more frequent visits are probably more productive than one long infrequent visit.

### What Do Care Group Leaders Do?

Assure that every class member is contacted weekly including:

- Absentee contacts
- Crisis contacts
- Encouragement and evangelistic contacts

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## Connection Checklist

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Review the following checklist for ideas on assimilating new church members. Some of the ideas will help the church as well as an adult Sunday School class assimilate new church members.



- We publicly welcome new members and celebrate their decisions.
- We make clear our expectations of new members, including our stated mission and values.
- We interview new members to discover their needs/expectations of church membership.
- We assign/enroll new members in BSF immediately upon joining the church. We maximize Sunday morning Bible study for assimilation. We communicate to new members the importance of membership in a BSF class.
- The adult BSF class begins immediately to make contact with new church members.
- The adult BSF class assigns all newly enrolled members to a care group for ministry and follow-up.
- We monitor the participation of new members at intervals of three, six, and/or nine months after they have joined.
- We deliver/interpret new member informational packets to all new members within two weeks after they have joined.
- We have new member orientation that tells our church's history to new members.
- We involve new members in at least one role/task/ministry within six to eight months after they have joined.
- We help new members identify and use their spiritual gifts.
- We interview new members at the end of one year to determine their satisfaction/need fulfillment with the church and their personal spiritual journey.



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## Connecting Skills

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1. **Learn to Listen**—Everyone can be a good listener because no words of wisdom or other actions are needed. Good listeners, in fact, use their ears more than their mouths. As we listen, words of affirmation and encouragement will come to mind as the Holy Spirit guides our thoughts.
2. **Learn to share emotions**—Allowing people to express their emotions is important. When you sit with people and encourage them to express their emotions, your actions say that you care. Never discourage people in crisis from expressing their emotions. The message that you really do care becomes more visible when you find yourself crying with the person in crisis, if you really feel moved to tears. One note: Make sure your expression of emotions is sincere and not contrived or artificial.
3. **Learn to remember**—We all have special days, whether they are good days or are reminders of losses in our lives. Visit with each member of your Bible study group. Ask about special events and dates in their lives. Then create a calendar for all who accept ministry assignments. Encourage ministry team leaders and members to send cards, letters or other appropriate expressions of concern to members at significant times. Again, verbal contact is not necessary every time contact is made.
4. **Learn to be present**—Everyone in your group experiences significant events that mark transitions in life. Some events are related to children—sports events, school events and so forth—while other events are passages in the course of adulthood. Invite yourself to accompany adults in your group when they attend some of these special events or when transitions occur in life.
5. **Learn to connect**—Too often we think we have to do something big every time we minister. In fact, merely calling or visiting with no set agenda can minister. Connecting with members in simple ways says that we really do care. Sometimes ministry leaders can invite members to their homes for coffee and snacks and fellowship.

-- Richard Dodge, 5 Ministry Basics Anyone Can Learn, ([www.lifeway.com](http://www.lifeway.com))