

# catalyst

GROUPZINE™  
A STUDY FOR NEXT GENERATION LEADERS

## Volume 4: In Common LEADER'S GUIDE

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# INTRODUCTION

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*All the believers were together and had everything in common.*

Acts 2:44

In the beginning, there was community: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit.

In the garden, there was community: Adam and Eve, walking with God.

In the Old Testament, community: the nation of Israel building, serving, worshipping together.

In the first century, community: Christ living and working with groups small and large, teaching and healing, explaining and demonstrating.

In the first church, they had everything in common.

Throughout history, the refrain of togetherness binds us together as believers. We were created to live in community, to work in community, to serve in community, to worship in community. The Trinity itself serves as our example. In creating this volume of the Catalyst GroupZine, we determined to compile the leading names in the church to contribute to the discussion. What characteristics define true community? How can we move from a place of co-existence into a life in common?

*In Common: Intentional about Community* is a study for groups and individuals who are ready to embrace the challenge of pursuing an active, thriving, intentional community.

Leading communicators will guide you through what it means to engage Next Generation Leaders as you pursue authentic community. The relevant content, engaging design, and provoking wisdom allows you to think, dialogue, debate, question, reflect, and ultimately grow in the **Elements of a Catalyst Leader**. (See page 9 of this guide for a full list and explanation of the elements.)

# HOW TO USE A GROUPZINE

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There are five primary success factors that will help you get the most out of this GroupZine:



**1. Buy the GroupZine.**

If you need additional copies for your group, call 888.334.6569 or visit [catalystgroupzine.com](http://catalystgroupzine.com).



**2. Get a group of people.**

This study can be completed individually, but it was designed with a small group in mind. Establishing a group with your co-workers not only increases learning, but multiplies leadership in your organization. Or, use this study as a platform for your weekly or monthly ministry team meetings. Your team will appreciate your willingness to invest in them and it will increase your influence. The size of your group is up to you, but we recommend between 2 and 12 people.



**3. Read a section and answer questions by yourself.**

This study is divided into six sessions – each one representing an element of a Catalyst Leader. Within each session are a variety of articles and exercises to engage your mind. There are discussion questions and some journal pages provided within the GroupZine, but you'll notice there is also plenty of white space to doodle, dream, and create your own questions.



**4. Convene at a cool spot.**

Gather your group at a coffee shop, discuss over dinner, meet in a cultural hotspot of your city, take your group to the park, or even ask to use your pastor's house for one night. Mix up the environment from week to week to get your creativity flowing.



**5. Discuss your thoughts.**

As a leader, encourage your group to bring their questions to the table and find the answers together. Conversation is a starting point to form true community (a goal of this resource), and through authentic dialogue your group members will grow. To help you facilitate discussion, we have provided some additional questions and activities on the following pages.

**(REPEAT)**

# TOOLBOX

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The GroupZine was designed to have a fluid, organic structure. By this we mean that the content and strategies are meant to be simple, helpful, and authentic to individual's needs and personalities. The most effective small group leaders are intentional in how they lead. So whether you need a little structure or a lot, we have provided some tools to help organize your meetings and develop your group facilitation and discussion skills. You can choose how formal or informal you want your group to be.

## **First Meeting**

At your first meeting we recommend you not start with the first session, but rather start with laying the ground work for the group (see also Tips for Understanding the Adult Learner on page 4). Here are some considerations for a successful first meeting:

### *Create Buy-In*

The small group concept may be new for some people so it will be important at your first meeting to dialog about format, expectations, and any concerns the group members may have. Some group members may feel uncomfortable discussing certain topics especially if they feel it will be held against them. Here are some ideas to ease those concerns:

- Establish trust among group members by stating that everything said in the group stays in the group.
- State that each member's title and position is to be left at the door. Your normal hierarchy within the organization is irrelevant at your small group meetings.

### *Create an Environment of Participation*

During your first meeting we recommend you lead the group through an interactive exercise that will set the tone for the remaining meeting. This could be any type of ice-breaker to start the momentum of the discussion group. Choose an exercise that will generate a great deal of conversation and will specifically flow into having a deeper understanding of everyone in your group. (There are many books and websites out there with ice-breaker exercises. Check out *100 Training Games* [McGraw Hill, 1994] or Google "icebreaker games" for ideas.)

### *Create a Context of Leadership*

We also recommend your first meeting allows time to discuss the leadership issues the people in your group are currently faced with. As you move forward in the sessions, you, as the group leader, will want to make sure these issues are discussed and tied in to the sessions when appropriate. This will make the group more purposeful to each member and will also lead to deeper discussions.

### *Create a Flow*

If you have not already done so, firmly agree on your next meeting time and location. Give out any special instructions you have regarding the first session.

## Gaining Participation

It is critical to establish the ideal learning environment from the start. Your goal at the meetings, especially the first meeting, is to engage everyone in the discussion. People want to feel that they are a part of something worthwhile and that their opinions matter. Everyone influences somebody and their individual experiences at work, at home, and elsewhere can add value to each discussion. Here are some ways to gain participation:

- Ask a direct question.
- Give a hypothetical situation and ask for opinions.
- Ask them to tell why they came to that conclusion.

## Tips for Understanding the Adult Learner

To strengthen the conversation, you as group leader will want to know the background, goals, and top leadership issues of each member. To begin, there are some key principles that enable you to be an effective leader. The following principles, if applied, will help assure success with the adult learner:

1. Techniques used to instruct young people are not necessarily effective with adults.
2. More vital and beneficial discussions will result if interested adults are included in the format and planning of your discussion group meetings.
3. Involving adult learners in decisions motivates and stimulates them. As you consider the different elements you plan to include in your discussion group, you may want to select a core planning group. Adults “own” or feel “invested” in the study when they take part in its direction and organization.
4. When planning the discussion group, a primary focus should be to recognize needs. This encourages personal application and assures continued involvement in the study. If adults do not recognize needs and apply the material personally, they will soon become disinterested because it’s not relevant.
5. Learning focused on problem solving is most effective with adult students.
6. Drawing on adult learner’s previous experiences enhances learning.
7. Encouraging adult participation by using icebreakers and group activities helps the individual to avoid embarrassment and a refusal to join in peer discussion and participation. Adults tend to take errors personally.
8. Instruction for adults should lead them to further personal study.

Research studies reveal that adults learn best when:

- Dealing with specific life-changing events.
- Reaching a teachable moment in their lives. This relates to recognizing when individual interest and motivation for study and change is at its highest point.
- Using the knowledge or skill involved and integrating it with their current knowledge. For most adults, learning is not its own reward.
- Focusing on one point.

- Slowing the pace while making the material less complex. Fast-paced, complex, or unusual learning tasks interfere with the understanding of a concept.
- Including helpful aids that relate to previous knowledge makes new information more meaningful.
- Assuring that the information agrees with the learner's values.
- Incorporating "Best Practice" and "How-to" information.
- Offering clear expectations.
- Providing open-ended questions and discussion as the primary instructional method.

## Unpacking the Experience

Here are three basic reflection prompts you can ask that serve as a starting point for any discussion. Feel free to make them your own.

### 1. A question

"After reading this article, I'm wondering what everyone thinks about ..."

### 2. A new thought

"Wow! This had never entered my mind, I learned that ..."

### 3. A challenge

"I can't get this out of my mind. I have to figure out how to live ..."

## Questions & Strategies that Make a Connection

Because each organization, ministry, team, or group has unique leadership challenges, the application of the lesson's leadership topics can take on various forms. Your role as a group leader is to prepare additional discussion questions specific to where your organization or department is currently performing. Some suggested areas of discussion could revolve around:

- **Specific initiatives at work.**
  - How does this topic relate to a specific leadership issue you are going through right now?
  - What does this mean to you in consideration of your responsibilities?
  - Who do you need to share this with on your team?
- **A recent news or media event.**
  - How does what you just learned connect with (current event or news)?
- **Successful leaders who have modeled leadership behavior.**
  - Think of someone who models this behavior or trait. How does he or she model it?
  - How have you seen someone support or violate the key points in the lesson?

Also, differ your approach with each lesson. Here are some ideas:

- Since each session covers a lot of material, you may want to predetermine a specific section of the lesson to focus on by scanning the session ahead of time.
- Assign a specific article of the session to a different group member. Group members can then prepare an overview of their article to present at the next meeting.
- Before a discussion group meeting, pull aside one or two members and ask them to share a recent leadership issue that relates to the content of the session. You will quickly find that other members of the discussion group may have similar issues.
- Preview the next lesson and select a specific leadership topic. Ask every group member to share their best practice approaches when dealing with that specific leadership topic. The members will learn from collective experiences of the group.

# GENERAL STRUCTURE AND IDEAS FOR USE

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In each session, you will find these common sections:

## TITLE PAGES

These elements introduce the theme of the entire session, summarizing the heart of the topic. Use these pages to prompt the pre-discussion questions, “What do we know?” and “What do we want to know?” about this topic.

## CATALYST STUDY

This is the first article and primary curriculum in each session. The Catalyst Study overviews the fundamental teaching on the session topic.

## GROUP DISCUSSION

Found at the end of the Catalyst Study, use these questions and journal space to reflect and prepare for group discussion.

## ARTICLES

Writings and stories from our favorite speakers and authors discuss the Elements through the lens of courageous action.

## CATALYST FEATURES

### *TRUE STORIES*

These are stories of next generation leaders and projects that model the topic of the session. Discuss the common qualities of influence you notice in these true stories and how you can apply those qualities in your own lives.

### *CLOSING THOUGHTS*

These pages serve as the final argument on the topic at hand, written by some of the leaders who know the elements best.

## ENGAGE JOURNAL

Use this journal space for pre-thinking before meeting. Come with ideas, insights, questions, and “ah ha” moments to share. Or use it as a note-taking page to record key points gained from group discussion. And don’t forget to take the Challenge. (See all the Challenges on page 16 of this guide.)

# THE ELEMENTS OF A CATALYST LEADER

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## **Intentional about Community**

People are in my life at all levels. Close personal friends that keep me accountable, question my deepest motives, and help me stay true to the wisdom God has imprinted on my heart. I value the people that work for and alongside me, recognizing that I am fulfilling a leadership role with people God has entrusted to my care. I value the wisdom of those more experienced than me and seek out council in all things of importance.

## **Engaged in Culture**

As a leader, I must understand the context God has placed me in. I must know the audience I am connecting with to have any opportunity of relevance. Because God desires that Christ-followers engage and influence their surroundings, I will be a source of hope, redemption, justice and peace in my community, demonstrating a piece of the Kingdom of God in a fallen world.

## **Uncompromising in Integrity**

Character, conviction, discipline, and decision-making—these all make up the inner qualities and integrity of a Catalyst leader. I understand that my character and integrity is the guard to my soul and ultimately my life. This can't be let go or delegated. It's the foundation of who I am as a person and as a leader. It's the basis from which my moral authority is grounded. It must be nurtured, guarded, and found true under testing.

## **Passionate about God**

I must be aware of my small role in God's big, developing story. This is critical to my humility, faith, and trust in Him as the definer of how He will use me and my calling. I must connect with God without ceasing through all of life, whether in study, music, art, film, vocation or relationships. My passion for God to receive Glory must be bigger than my desire for Glory.

## **Courageous in Calling**

God has a unique purpose that He desires to carry out in me. To know this purpose I must first know Him. To fulfill this purpose, I must trust Him and have the courage to act on it, which may feel like a risk. My talents and heart converge to create my calling and purpose. I am competent in my calling because I am committed to further developing and honing my talents and skills. My foundational understanding of how God is working during my current season of life determines the specific way I apply this calling vocationally.

## **Authentic in Influence**

Leadership is influence. I am not a leader if others are not following. Influence can't be forced or contrived. It can only be won over time. If I am living out the six elements of a Catalyst Leader, influence will be natural, compelling, and attractive. If not, it will be challenged by others and ineffective. My prayer is that God would continue to expand and entrust me with greater influence.

## SESSION 01. INTENTIONAL ABOUT COMMUNITY

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### CATALYST STUDY

#### **14. Divine Community**

By Andy Stanley

Deeper Discussion:

1. Why have most of us “chosen to do life alone”?
2. Are the unbelievers around you inspired by your deep relationships?
3. How can you help the believers you influence engage in divine community?
4. What is the cost of connecting with people on a deep level? What does it take?
5. What can you do this week to deepen your community?

### WRITINGS

#### **22. Guru Guidance**

By Tim Elmore

Discussion Questions:

1. Do you have a life-giving mentor? Are you mentoring anyone? If not, why not?
2. What can you change in your mentor relationship to make it more life-giving, to take it beyond just “fellowship or facts”?
3. Practically, what do the stages of relationship look like in a mentorship?
4. What stage of relationship are you in with Jesus, the ultimate Mentor?

#### **26. Invisible Boundaries**

By Brenda Salter McNeil

Discussion Questions:

1. What invisible boundaries and cultural differences are there between unbelievers and Christians?
2. How can we get more Christians to engage cross-culturally with outsiders?
3. What is your Samaria, and how can you start connecting with people there?

#### **32. The Rusty Hook Syndrome**

By Anne Jackson

Discussion Questions:

1. As a body, we need each other to stay healthy. How are you functioning in the body to support your fellow believers?
2. What can you change to make your community a safe place for people to confess?
3. What is the proper, biblical response to humble confession?

## SESSION 02. ENGAGED IN CULTURE

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### CATALYST STUDY

#### **38. Ordered by Love**

By Andy Crouch

Deeper Discussion:

1. What kind of cultural change is God calling the Church to make, if any?
2. What kind of cultural change is God calling you to make, if any?
3. Andy's neighbor Beth is, in a sense, more powerful than the president of the United States at their local elementary school. In what arena are you more powerful than the president? How should you use that power?

### WRITINGS

#### **46. A Gathering Force**

By Francis Chan

Discussion Questions:

1. Why are gangs more tightly-knit than churches?
2. How can churches become more like family?
3. What about modern American church culture makes being tightly-knit absent or difficult to attain?
4. What can you do to bind your community of believers together tightly?

#### **52. The Jazz King**

Interview with Bill Strickland

Discussion Questions:

1. Strickland states, "People are remarkably affected by their environments." How has your environment influenced your self-image and habits?
2. What projects do you need to persist through (or quit) in order to see better results?
3. What ingredients can your community of believers use to improvise a strategy for a better future?

## SESSION 03. UNCOMPROMISING IN INTEGRITY

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### CATALYST STUDY

#### **58. Undivided**

By Craig Groeschel

Deeper Discussion:

1. Why is integrity important? Does your private sin still matter if no one knows about it?
2. What are some accountability relationship failures you've experienced? Why did they fail?
3. When is it necessary to confess to each other, and when is it necessary to go to the next level and see a counselor?

### WRITINGS

#### **66. Deadly Viper Character Assassins**

By Mike Foster and Jud Wilhite

Discussion Questions:

1. What charges you up emotionally, physically and spiritually? How can you incorporate those things as regular parts of your week to keep you healthy?
2. How close are you to flaming out? What responsibilities, tasks, or challenges are contributing to this?
3. What suggestions from this article can you practically incorporate into your life to protect you from the Assassin of the Headless Sprinting Chicken? How will you do it?

#### **70. Social Economy**

A roundtable discussion among bloggers

Discussion Questions:

1. Do you blog? Why or why not?
2. How have blogs changed your world?
3. How is your use and interaction with social media affected your relationships offline?

#### **76. Thoughts from a One Track Mind**

By Perry Noble

Discussion Questions:

1. Are you listening to the voice of God? What is He saying lately?
2. What risk(s) is God telling you to take?
3. Are you passionate about your church's vision?
4. What do you believe God has called you to do? Are you pursuing that with all your heart? If not, what's holding you back?

## SESSION 04. PASSIONATE ABOUT GOD

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### CATALYST STUDY

#### **82. The Echoing Anchor**

By Margaret Feinberg

Deeper Discussion:

1. Have you struggled to discover “God’s calling on your life”? If so, why? How does one discover it?
2. How has God spoken to you in the past? Is there anything you can do to more effectively and consistently hear from God?
3. What does it mean to follow Jesus? What changes do you need to make in your life to more closely follow Him?
4. Read Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4. What is your part in the body? How can you work with the other parts to “build up the body in love”?

### WRITINGS

#### **90. Shalom**

By Shauna Niequist

Discussion Questions:

1. When have you felt shalom? How did you achieve it?
2. What do you need to give up or let go in order to experience more shalom?
3. Why does shalom require us to “release our need to be the best, the prettiest, the most perfect”?

#### **96. Alpha Man Omega God**

By Matt Chandler

Discussion Questions:

1. How are you doing with running your race with “faithfulness and perseverance”?
2. How is “studying” Jesus different from “feasting on” Jesus?
3. Are you exhausted? What can we pray for you about?
4. Have you known anyone who was worn down by ministry *or* who has persevered through many years of faithful service? What can we learn from this person’s life?

## SESSION 05. COURAGEOUS IN CALLING

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### CATALYST STUDY

#### **102. The Wild Goose Chase**

By Mark Batterson

Deeper Discussion:

1. What spiritual adventures have you experienced? Share a time you followed the Wild Goose.
2. In what ways might churches do to people what zoos do to animals?
3. How are most of us “educated beyond our level of obedience”? Are you? If so, how so?
4. What interests/passions has God given you that you have deferred or ignored?

### WRITINGS

#### **110. No Outlet**

By Gary Haugen

Discussion Questions:

1. Why does justice seem to take a back seat of importance to many Christians/churches in our culture?
2. How is justice a means of rescue for the powerful?
3. How can you “do justice”?
4. How is the “prosperous cul-de-sac” actually more dangerous for Christians? Have you experienced this? What can you do to move out of the cul-de-sac?

#### **116. Dreaming Wide Awake**

By Erwin McManus

Discussion Questions:

1. Has Christianity rejected the gospel because it demands too much of us?
2. How do you help people to find the dream that matches their life? What dream matches your life?
3. Can a community of faith exist purely for the good of others? What does that look like?
4. What does it mean to live “wide awake”? Are you living “wide awake”? Why or why not?

## SESSION 06. AUTHENTIC IN INFLUENCE

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### CATALYST STUDY

#### **122 How Big is Your Small**

By David Kinnaman

Deeper Discussion:

1. What houses are you building that the Lord is not?
2. Who influences you the most spiritually? Is it true that a few close family members or friends will have greater spiritual influence on someone than their pastor?
3. In what ways was Jesus' leadership style contrary to our ideas of how to gain influence? Despite (or because of) his contrarian tendencies, how did he end up being so influential?
4. Regarding the people you influence spiritually, are you teaching them to be dependent on you, or are you equipping them to grow and become independent?

### WRITINGS

#### **130. The Magic Bread**

By Chris Heuertz

Discussion Questions:

1. What brokenness has God given you that has significantly shaped you?
2. What can you do to help people like Nisha? Do you really have any responsibility or obligation to her or to people like her?
3. Who do you know who has been broken by the world, and how can you worship God by helping this person?

#### **136. The Master of the Dip**

Based on an interview with Seth Godin

Discussion Questions:

1. What have you quit because you've realized it's not worth doing?
2. What dip (or dips) have you overcome or are you facing now?
3. What can you give away to tens of thousands of people in order to end up with one thousand true fans?
4. Seth Godin talks about "respect, patience, and treating people the way they want to be treated." How do these values help you be successful? What can you do, specifically, to better incorporate these values into your life?

## ENGAGE: CHALLENGES

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### **Session 01: Intentional about Community**

Commit to spending one month intentionally building community with those closest to you. Assign a group to each week (such as your church friends, your neighbors, your co-workers, and your extended family) and schedule specific times during the week to connect with them. To make the most of your time, plan to accomplish a project together, serve together in some capacity, learn or experience a new thing together, or organize your time in some other way. You may find that it's best to just schedule time to be together, eating and talking. At the end of the month, journal about what you experienced—how did you come to know these people more fully? What would you have been doing had you *not* spent this time with friends? Did you miss those other activities? What can you do to incorporate more times of intentional community into your life?

### **Session 02: Engaged in Culture**

Create culture by getting together with two other visionary leaders and brainstorming ways you can improve the culture around you, whether in your office, church, city, or a larger area. Narrow your brainstorming down to one project and begin to create an action plan for making the idea a reality. List people who would be valuable to the project as members of the twelve. Meet with the twelve, line out your plan, and gather suggestions for the one hundred twenty who will ultimately make the vision a reality, and begin to implement the plan.

### **Session 03: Uncompromising in Integrity**

List your “give up” goals, as Zig Ziglar describes them, and share them with someone you trust. If you're married, share them with your spouse. If you aren't, find someone who will hold you accountable for your actions. Talk with this person at least once each week and confess the things you have not given up that week. List the safeguards you will put in place that will prevent you from going down the path of having a divided heart.

### **Session 04: Passionate about God**

Write a few questions that act as a survey of your spiritual anchor. You might ask, “Based on my daily activity, what might someone say is the anchor of my life?” or “When a close friend thinks of what is most important to me, what one word comes to mind? What would a co-worker say? A family member?” Then, give the survey to someone who knows you well, asking that person to answer the questions as they pertain to you. Discuss the person's responses and consider what you can do to make following Jesus your primary anchor.

### **Session 05: Courageous in Calling**

Gary Haugen observes, “We can't franchise evangelism to the eleven people on the ‘evangelism committee,’ or compassion to the ‘mercy ministries.’ ... Healthy churches equip all members to share their faith and to love needy people.” Do you see your church equipping its members to courageously share their faith and love needy people unabashedly? If not, gather a group of people and commit to creating a method for accomplishing this within your church. Examine

other ways this group can lead your church in following the Spirit rather than asking the Spirit to follow your church.

### **Session 06: Authentic in Influence**

The easiest and best way to measure your influence is to examine your effectiveness in discipling a small group. Stretch yourself to begin mentoring a group of people younger than you are, whether they're younger age-wise or younger in the faith. Teach them the things you wish someone had taught you when you were young, and equip them to be the best followers of Christ they can be. Encourage your friends and peers to do likewise, and you may end up with a self-sustaining mentoring network.

## NEXT STEPS

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Now that you've completed a process of leadership growth, join thousands of other revolutionaries for a leadership event unlike any other! Attend the **Catalyst Conference** in Atlanta, Georgia, on October 7–9, 2009, or make plans to be at our first ever **Catalyst West Coast** in Orange County, California, on April 22–24, 2009. Visit [catalystconference.com](http://catalystconference.com) for more information and to register for either of these events.

Catalyst is the leadership filter for what's next in the Church. It is more than a resource or conference ... it is a community of Christ-followers who are called to excellence, creativity, and leadership.

Learning to be a leader requires both head knowledge and heart conditioning. At the Catalyst Conference you will learn how to be courageous in your calling, engaged in culture, passionate about God, uncompromising in integrity, and intentional about community from today's most influential communicators, as well as engage with the Father in one of the most memorable worship experiences you can imagine.

For more information and to learn about special group pricing, visit [catalystspace.com](http://catalystspace.com) or call 888.334.6569.

2. Visit [catalystspace.com](http://catalystspace.com) and check out the **Catalyst Podcast**, subscribe to the **Catalyst Monthly** online magazine, or join the conversation at the **Catalyst Blog**.

3. We want to know your stories. Let us know how you are using this resource in your community. Please send feedback, questions, or comments to [feedback@catalystspace.com](mailto:feedback@catalystspace.com).