

GWAC

Life Groups



How to be a Healthy Life Group Member

**A caring community
making, maturing and mobilising disciples of Jesus Christ
locally and globally.**

LIFE GROUP MEMBER

HEALTH CHECK

Welcome to your regular Life Group Member Health Check. This service is free to all Life group members and can be used at any time. To help self diagnose your state of health please consider the following areas of member health and mark along the continuum where you believe you are today

Remember, this is a snap shot of your health now and there are always things you can do to improve your overall health.



Attitude

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I come mainly for my own growth or benefit

I come mainly to encourage & support others

Attendance

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I come when it is convenient

I never miss a group meeting

Participation in Discussions

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I rarely contribute to a discussion

I always contribute in a discussion

Participation in Prayer

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I rarely contribute in group prayer times

I always contribute in group prayer times

Personal Discipleship

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I spend little time or effort in growing my own faith outside of the group

I spend considerable time or effort in growing my own faith outside of the group

Caring for others

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I have never or rarely shown practical care for another member

I regularly give practical care to other members of the group

Praying for others

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I rarely pray for group members outside our group time

I regularly pray with and for others outside our group time

Relationships

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I spend little or no time engaging with others outside our group time.

I regularly engage with others outside of our group time.

Vulnerability

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I rarely if ever share anything personal in my group

I regularly share my personal life and needs with my group

Serving

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I rarely offer to serve with other group members outside of the group

I regularly serve with other group members outside of the group

Open to others

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I feel very uneasy about welcoming new people into our group

I invite new members into our group and welcome them warmly

Ministry

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I do not have a ministry role or responsibility in my group

I have a ministry role or responsibility in my group

Gifts

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I do not know my spiritual gifts

I know my spiritual gifts and seek to use them in our group life

Supporting My Leader

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

I rarely encourage or pray for my group leader (s)

I regularly encourage and pray for my group leader (s)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

LIFE GROUP MEMBER

HEALTH BENEFITS

There are always benefits associated with living a healthier life. This short Bible study below will help you improve your health as a Life group member by recognising the benefits for you, as an individual, and for your group when you work on improving your personal health.

Read Ephesians 4:11-16 (New Living Translation)

¹¹ Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers.

¹² Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. ¹³ This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

¹⁴ Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. ¹⁵ Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. ¹⁶ He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

1. What are the five gifts Christ has given his Church and what is their role?

2. What is their responsibility? (Verse 12)

3. What is the desired outcome of their ministry? (Verse 13)

**4. Consider your Life group leader for a moment.
What do you think their role or ministry is in your group?**

5. What do you think their purpose or role in the group should be?

6. In what ways can you support, encourage and release them to grow in these areas of ministry in your group?

7. What can you do in the life of your group to enable them to take up this role more fully?

8. In verse 14 what “illnesses” do believers potentially avoid by growing in maturity in the Lord?

9. What are the positive spiritual “health” benefits of growing in maturity? (verse 15)

10. As in verse 12 Paul continues in verse 16 talking about building up or growing the 'body of Christ', the church, under its head, Jesus Christ.

What is the role of each part of the body?

11. What is the outcome of a fully functioning or working body according to Paul?

12. What is the potential outcome if parts of the body do not fulfil their work?

13. How do you see your role in your Life group? What is your purpose or ministry as part of "the body" in your Life group?

14. What decisions and action steps do you need to take to be a fully mature and functioning member of "the body" in your Life group?

Make a time to meet with your Life group leader to share what you have learnt about your Life group member health through this study and what you plan to do about it.

Health Issue: My Attitude

It is part of our sinful human nature, and therefore so easy for us, to go along to our Life group with a 'me first' attitude. We go with the mentality of 'what can I get out of it' rather than 'what can I give'. Imagine if everyone arrived with that attitude. Instead, imagine a group that had the attitude of loving their neighbour as themselves and seeking the best for the other. Now that would be a great group to be a part of.

The Bible

Philippians 2:1-4 (TNIV)

¹ Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

Unhealthy Symptoms

- Lack of encouragement of others
- Prayers are always self-focused and never for others
-

Healthy Symptoms

- Encourages others regularly
- Always listens to others before sharing own needs
-

The Cure

Prayer Points

Health Issue: My Attendance

Regular attendance is vital for both the groups health and the spiritual health and well being of individual group members. Research in large churches shows that when people are not regularly connecting in Life groups their growth as a disciple of Jesus suffers.

The Bible

Hebrews 10:24-25 (TNIV)

²⁴ And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Unhealthy Symptoms

- Lack of commitment to attend regularly
- Other priorities regularly take precedent over meeting with the group
- Regularly arrives late
-

Healthy Symptoms

- Rarely misses a group event
- Encourages and follows up others who are less regular
- Enthuses about group to others
- Regularly on time or arrives early
-

The Cure

Prayer Points

Health Issue: Participation in Discussions

One of the greatest health benefits derived from being part of a Life group is being able to study God's Word, the Bible, together, working out what it is saying and seeking to apply it in our lives. We get to hear and see that others are not so different to ourselves, have the same joys and struggles in life and in trying to understand God's Word and put it into practice. Imagine a group where nobody contributed what they thought or, even worse, everyone tried to speak over the top of the others. For the greatest benefit to be derived from the discussion, everyone needs to have the opportunity to have their say.

The Bible

Proverbs 15:22 (TNIV)

²² *Plans fail for lack of counsel,
but with many advisers they succeed.*

Proverbs 27:17 (TNIV)

¹⁷ *As iron sharpens iron,
so one person sharpens another.*

Unhealthy Symptoms

- Rarely contributes to discussions due to fear of getting it wrong
- When questions of personal application arise they avoid answering
- Someone dominates the conversation
- Someone cuts in on others sharing

Healthy Symptoms

- You wait for others to finish before contributing
- You determine practical action steps to apply the teaching
- You encourage others to contribute and value their comments

The Cure

Prayer Points

Health Issue: Participation in Prayer

Prayer is vital for our spiritual health. It is the life-blood of our relationship with our relational God. It is our means of communication with our heavenly Father that allows us to offer up our needs, concerns, thanks and praise to Him. By participating in group prayer we encourage one another to pray in faith that God hears us and answers prayer. It also allows us time and space to hear from God through his Word, the prayers of others and through visions or pictures. Our growth in praying with others in a group helps us to grow further in our confidence so that we are ready to pray for others outside the group when the opportunity arises.

The Bible

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (TNIV)

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray continually, ¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

James 5:16

¹⁶ Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

Unhealthy Symptoms

- Prayer is always self-focused
- Prayer waffles on or over use of 'religious' language
- Never prays aloud over an extended period
- Prayer lacks faith
- No expectation of answers to prayer

Healthy Symptoms

- Prayer is a personal conversation with God, it's real
- Prayers filled with faith & trust in God
- Your prayer encourages faith & trust in God by others
- You come with an expectation you will hear from God in prayer & that he will answer your prayers.

The Cure

Prayer Points

Health Issue: My Personal Discipleship

The health of your Life group, the body, is often determined by the spiritual health of the individuals, the body parts. Sometimes we can become reliant on the spiritual health or strength of others without building up our own spiritual muscles. For your group to grow in health, each member must take responsibility for their own growth and health by regularly feeding yourself through the spiritual disciplines of reading God's Word, spending time in prayer and meeting with other Christians.

The Bible

Acts 2:42-43 (TNIV)

⁴² All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. ⁴³ A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders.

Unhealthy Symptoms

- Group time is the only time you read the Bible
- Group time is the only regular time you pray
- You feel distant from God and wish you had the relationship with God that others in your group seem to have

Healthy Symptoms

- You regularly read your Bible and find yourself applying it to everyday situations
- You regularly pray and feels God's presence with you in your daily activities
- You are encouraging others in your group with what you have read and heard in your quiet times.

The Cure

Prayer Points

Health Issue: Caring for Others

Being a disciple of Christ brings great blessings but also comes with great responsibilities. When we are adopted into God's family we are called to look out for the welfare of our brothers and sisters. That is particularly the case when we are a part of a Life group. We are called to have a loving care for each other and that extends beyond our physical, emotional and relational needs to our spiritual needs as well. We have a responsibility to in the body of Christ to care when someone else is in an unhealthy place in their relationship with God or his people. We cannot turn a blind eye to their needs but must respond with the love and comfort we have ourselves experienced and received from God and others.

The Bible

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 (TNIV)

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

James 2:14-17

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if people claim to have faith but have no deeds? Can such faith save them? ¹⁵ Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶ If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? ¹⁷ In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

Unhealthy Symptoms

- You fail to respond to the practical needs of others
- You avoid talking to someone who is clearly having a hard time in their faith

Healthy Symptoms

- You see someone struggling you come alongside them & offer our support & prayer

The Cure

Prayer Points

Health Issue: Praying for Others

This is an area where you can have a huge impact on the lives of other members your group. But prayer for each other is not just limited to when you meet. You can stand in the gap for each member of your group by praying that God will encourage, empower, guide and sustain them in their daily lives and for the things they have shared in the group. A healthy Life group member loves and cares for their fellow group members enough to uphold them regularly in prayer.

The Bible

James 5:13-16 (TNIV)

¹³ Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. ¹⁴ Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ And the prayer offered in faith will make them well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. ¹⁶ Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

Unhealthy Symptoms

- I forget to pray for group members during the week
- My prayer times are mainly about me and my needs
- I ask for prayer from my group members but I don't pray for them or their needs

Healthy Symptoms

- I regularly pray for my fellow group members whether I know of specific needs or not
- Sometimes one of my fellow group members comes to mind and I stop and pray for them
- I set time aside in my regular prayer time to pray for each member

The Cure

Prayer Points

Health Issue: Growing Relationships

The only way to really grow in a relationship is to spend time with a person. That's the way it is in your relationship with God and it's the same in your relationships with others. Imagine trying to get to know someone you have never met. It takes time, commitment and effort to get to know the members of your Life group, but it is always rewarding. As you commit the time to make a personal connection you invest in life-long friendships in Christ. Anyway, you might as well get to know those you are going to spend an eternity with!

The Bible

Proverbs 17:17 (TNIV)

¹⁷ *A friend loves at all times,
and a brother is born for a time of adversity.*

John 13:34-35 (TNIV)

³⁴ *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

Unhealthy Symptoms

- I never spend anytime with other members outside group time
- I don't have time to invest in the lives of others

Healthy Symptoms

- I deliberately set aside time to connect with group members outside of the group
- I call members during the week to see how they are going

The Cure

Prayer Points

Health Issue: My Vulnerability

This can be a real challenge for some, if not all, of us. Christ is our example. The Son of God made himself vulnerable by coming and living as one of us, sharing his life with day to day with all kinds of people. Opening up our lives, our deepest thoughts and emotions to others can leave us vulnerable to criticism and rejection. But if we agree to care for, love and trust each other, the sharing of our deepest fears, concerns, needs and joys can be one of the greatest experiences of our lives.

The Bible

Philippians 2:5-8 (TNIV)

⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same attitude of mind Christ Jesus had:

⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.⁸ And being found in appearance as a human being, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Unhealthy Symptoms

- I never share anything personal in the group
- I don't share because I don't have confidence in or trust the other members
- I fear I might be judged

Healthy Symptoms

- I take the risk of sharing of myself in the group
- I trust the group that what I share will be kept in confidence
- I receive what others share with grace, love and acceptance

The Cure

Prayer Points

Health Issue: Serving

Serving others can be a great source of joy. Serving with others in some form of ministry beyond the group grows relationships, fellowship and can give you and the group a sense of purpose. Often it takes just one persons passion in the group to help move the group to serve others. Are you involved in serving others in some way as a group? Could you encourage the group to serve in some way. A great way to do this is to serve our Mission Partners by supporting them in different ways. Or you could set yourself the goal of being a servant to those in your group, looking for opportunities to set an example of serving others.

The Bible

Galatians 5:13-14 (TNIV)

¹³ You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another humbly in love. ¹⁴ For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbour as yourself."

Unhealthy Symptoms

- I rarely offer practical assistance to anyone in the group
- I do not look to serve or help others alongside other group members

Healthy Symptoms

- I look for ways to serve others inside and outside the group
- I encourage others group members in word and/or example to serve beyond our group, either together or individually

The Cure

Prayer Points

Health Issue: Being Open to Others

One of the big challenges for groups and their members is when intimacy and openness collide. We love our friendships and fellowship we have developed over time and we trust those we have opened up to and shared our lives with. But then there are those who are outside our group and who might like to join us. Won't their joining us affect the fellowship we value so much? If you think back through the history of your group and remember when each member you love so much joined, it is likely that most joined sometime after the group was started. Did their joining you affect your fellowship in the medium or long term? No, in fact it enhanced it. So to will those who long to enjoy your fellowship and come to value what you value. God made us to be an open and inclusive community, welcoming in the stranger at all costs. Does your heart attitude reflect that of our accepting, inclusive Father?

The Bible

Acts 10:34-35 (TNIV)

³⁴ Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritism ³⁵ but accepts those from every nation who fear him and do what is right.

Unhealthy Symptoms

- I have not invited anyone to my Life group in the last 12 months
- I am fearful of inviting someone to my group as I do not feel they will be made welcome

Healthy Symptoms

- I have recent invited someone to join my Life group
- I am always on the look out for someone to invite
- I am confident if I brought a new person to my group they would love and accepted

The Cure

Prayer Points

Health Issue: My Ministry

Do you have a role to play in or a ministry to give to your group? Do you have particular responsibilities in the life of your group? It will not surprise you to learn that your group leader cannot do it all. They cannot be pastor, Bible study leader, prayer convenor, pastoral carer, mission partner contact and host for all people every week. Each one of us has a part to play so that the body functions to its capacity and maintains prime health. Talk to your group leader and see how you might serve both them and the group. Both you and the group will be healthier for it.

The Bible

Ephesians 4:16 (TNIV)

He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

Unhealthy Symptoms

- Our leader has too much to do and seems tired
- I have no particular role in the group
- I am happy just to attend

Healthy Symptoms

- I have a ministry role in the group
- I encourage others to serve in various ways in the group
- I look for new ways to minister in my group

The Cure

Prayer Points

Health Issue: Using My Gifts

Scripture is clear - we have all been given at least one gift for use in the growing of God's kingdom. In 1 Corinthians 12:31 Paul encourages us to seek after the 'greater gifts' which suggests that we can have more than one and can gain more gifts for the works of the kingdom. Do you know what your gifts are? No, then be encouraged to find out by doing the Heart Beat course. If you do know what your spiritual gifts are, are you using them in your Life group? Your group is a great place to 'cut your teeth' to see if you have certain gifts and to develop them and mature in them. Talk to your Life group leader and see if there are ways you can use your gifts in the group. Remember the 'body' is much healthier and functions better if each member uses their gifts to the glory of God.

The Bible

Romans 12:4-8 (TNIV)

⁴ For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; ⁷ if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; ⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

Unhealthy Symptoms

- I don't know what my spiritual gifts are
- I know my gifts but I am not using them in my group
- I do not have an opportunity to use my gifts in the group

Healthy Symptoms

- I know what my gifts are and I am using them in my group
- I encourage others in identifying and using their gifts in the group
- I am asking God for more gifts to serve him

The Cure

Prayer Points

Health Issue: Supporting My Leader

Do you prayerfully and actively support your group leader? Do you know that those who lead find themselves in a spiritual battle. Satan knows that if he can tempt a leader to fall, those who follow will be disheartened and may lose faith. Your leader needs your prayers and support, not just at your regular group gathering but during the week as well. They need your support when they bring something new to discuss with the group. They need your support when they themselves are facing difficulties. They need your prayers constantly.

The Bible

Hebrews 13:17 (TNIV)

¹⁷ Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 (TNIV)

¹² Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. ¹³ Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.

Unhealthy Symptoms

- My leader seems like they have it together and doesn't need my support
- I haven't got time to pray for my leader
- I don't think they would accept my support

Healthy Symptoms

- I pray regularly for my leader
- I look for ways to support my leader
- I have offered to be an assistant leader

The Cure

Prayer Points

Health Issue:

The Bible
(TNIV)

• **Unhealthy Symptoms**

• **Healthy Symptoms**

The Cure

Prayer Points

LIFE GROUP MEMBER

HEALTH ACTION PLAN

Everyone knows that we do not stay healthy by accident. We need to look after ourselves and plan to eat healthy and exercise. So here is your exercise and eating plan. Make a plan to get healthy in at least one area of your Life group membership with the following time goals. By the end of the year you will be a much healthier Life group member.

My goals in the next ...

1 month:

3 months:

6 months:

9 months:

Make a time to talk to your Life group leader and share your plans with them. They will be both excited and encouraged that you are planning to get healthier in your Life group experience. Ask them to pray for you as you set out.



Produced by Stephen Petering for exclusive use by
Glen Waverley Anglican Church
Permission must be sought to use or reproduce this material in any way.