

Running Partners Starter Kit

What is the “Starter Kit”?

The purpose of this document is to give you a runway for getting started with your Running Partners. It is based on the principles of the **Running Partners Guide**, but the Starter Kit has specific instructions for your first 8 meetings that will help you build a strong relational and scriptural foundation for your Running Partners.

Healthy Running Partners learn to share the **truth about themselves** as they discover the **Truth about God**. Transformational growth happens in our lives when these truths intersect. The Lifeline Exercise and the weekly Icebreakers are meant to encourage some vulnerability which will lead to increasing levels of trust. The weekly study of Scripture will help you learn how to listen to God and to take steps to follow Him. The book of 1 John will have some specific truth about fellowship with God and with one another that is important for new Running Partners.

Refer to the **Running Partners Guide** (p.1) for information on how to find a Running Partner. You are looking for 2 other people who will commit to going through this Starter Kit in 8 weekly meetings of about 1 hour.

Preparation for the first Running Partner meeting:

Each person should prepare to share the **Lifeline Exercise** on the next page.

Instructions: Using the Lifeline Exercise, create a simple timeline that highlights 10-12 of the most significant "turning points" and/or "defining moments" of your life.

"Turning points" are key events or seasons in which your life took a significant turn in a new or different direction. For example, moving to a new city, stepping out of or into a key relationship, or a big career change. These can be positive or negative.

"Defining moments" are key experiences that shaped your sense of who you are. For example, taking a class in college & discovering your passion, experiencing abuse as a child, having a breakthrough in your understanding of God, having your first child, etc. These also can be positive or negative.

There is definitely overlap between the two— sometimes a turning point and a defining moment happen at the same time or in the same event. So don't get stuck on trying to figure out the difference.

Choose 10-12 turning points or defining moments that seem to be the most significant and plot them on the timeline. Be prepared to take 15 minutes to show and share your timeline. Share as deeply as you feel comfortable; however stretch yourself 10%.

Lifeline Exercise

Choose 10-12 turning points or defining moments that seem to be the most significant and plot them on the timeline. Prepare to take 15 minutes to show and share your timeline. Share as deeply as you feel comfortable; however stretch yourself 10%.

Positive experiences	0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 40 45 50 55 60 65 70 +	Negative experiences
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Before each of the next 7 Running Partner meetings:

-Read the icebreaker question and ponder the answer until you meet.

-Read the assigned passage at least 3 times, and answer these questions:

What does this reveal about God?

What does it reveal about people?

What does it reveal about the life God desires for us?

What do I hear God saying to me in this Scripture?

During each of the 7 Running Partner meetings:

-Take turns having a different person serve as the facilitator of the conversation.

-Begin by reading the following "Rules for Running"

- **Listen carefully.** Listen to what the person is saying without giving advice or telling your own story. Only give advice sparingly and with permission. *"Be quick to listen and slow to speak."* (James 1:19)
- **Ask questions wisely.** Help the person discern what God is doing and what He wants them to do. *"The purposes of a person's heart are deep waters, but one who has insight draws them out."* (Proverbs 20:5)
- **Encourage generously.** Speak words of affirmation that God would want this person to hear at this time. *"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, ...encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."* (Hebrews 10:24-25)
- **Restore gently.** Be gracious and humble when reproof or correction is needed. *"If someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted."* (Galatians 6:1)
- **Keep confidentiality.** Guard each other's privacy and be sensitive with sensitive information. *"A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret."* (Proverbs 11:13)

-Have each person answer the icebreaker question. Keep responses to 1-2 minutes per person.

-Based on the Scripture passage you read, have each person answer the following questions:

- **What do I hear God saying?** As I read Scripture and listened for the Spirit's prompting in my life, what do I hear God saying?
- **What is the big thing God has in front of me right now?** Either a place where He is at work around me, or a circumstance or struggle I am faced with this week.
- **What is God asking me to do (or stop doing)?** Be specific. What attitude, belief, or behavior is God calling you to change?
- **How did it go with the step God asked me to take last week?** Did I take the steps God asked me to take, or did I fall short?
- **How can your Running Partners pray for you this week?**
- **What is our path ahead for next week?**
 - **What scripture are we going to read?** Do we need to move on in Scripture or are we still struggling to put into practice what God invited us to do last week?
 - **With whom do I need to share what God is saying to me?** Is there a family member, friend, neighbor, or co-worker who needs to hear what you are learning from God?

Icebreakers and Scriptures for the next 7 meetings:

2nd Meeting

Icebreaker: *Share about a time where you forgave someone, and a time where you were forgiven (other than God)...*

Scripture: 1 John 1:5-10 Walking in the Light

3rd Meeting

Icebreaker: *One thing that I have put above (love more than) God was/is...*

A time that I put God above everything else was/is...

Scripture: 1 John 2:15-17 Not Loving the World

4th Meeting

Icebreaker: *Share a time where you went along with a group doing something that you knew was wrong.*

Share a time where you resisted going along with a group that was going to do something wrong.

Scripture: 1 John 2:24-28 Abiding / Remaining in Christ

5th Meeting

Icebreaker: *Share a time when you missed an opportunity to share Christ with someone...what kept you from sharing?*

Scripture: 1 John 3:1-3 Called to be Children of God

6th Meeting

Icebreaker: *When I actively engage in sin, I...*

When I intentionally resist sin, I...

Scripture: 1 John 3:4-9; 5:1-4 Not Continuing in Sin

7th Meeting

Icebreaker: *To me, love is...*

My first love was...

Scripture: 1 John 4:7-12, 16-19 Love One Another

8th Meeting:

Icebreaker: *A prayer that I asked for that was answered was...*

A prayer that I asked for that didn't get answered was...

Scripture: 1 John 5:11-15 Confidence in Christ

After 8 meetings take time for evaluation of the Running Partner experience.

We suggest that you use the following questions as a guide:

- What was valuable to you about this experience?
- In what areas would you say that you saw growth in your life?
- What growth did you see in the other participants?
- What would you say that you need more of (or less of) to continue to grow?
- What are your next steps as Running Partners?