

3 Ways to Get Out of a Small Group Rut

by Jim Egli



Jim Egli explains how to break out of your small group routine and add some spice to your meetings.

Even great small groups like yours can easily get into a rut where things are too predictable and routine. If your group is in this situation now and you need to mix things up to create more fun, outreach and relationship, here are three things you can do to get out or stay out of a small group rut:

1. **Party!** Everyone, including small groups, loves to party! Every month or two you should do something just for fun. The possibilities are endless. Do a game night or picnic. Or go bowling, mini-golfing or to a ball game together. One thing to keep in mind is that besides building relationships between members, parties can provide a wonderful opportunity for outreach. Do you have a new Christian or another group member with lots of relationships with unbelievers? Do your cookout or game night at their home. Or ask, what would the “people who need God” that our group is praying for enjoy doing? Then plan a fun event to coincide with their interests.
2. **Reach out.** Do something as a group to show Jesus’ love to others. Go to a nursing home. Help at a homeless shelter. Or serve through one of the outreach ministries of your church. Probably there are people in your group with a passion for helping a certain group of people like single mom’s, AID’s victims, or the hungry. Maybe you could join them in an outreach that corresponds to their heart and calling. It’s not always possible, but ideally it’s best to find an activity that you can do at the same time as your usual group meeting. Doing that ensures that you’ll

get maximum participation since your group members already have that time carved out of their schedule.

3. **Do some ministry nights.** One thing I have frequently done in small groups that I have led is to have “ministry nights” where we just pray for one another. A lot of times our Bible discussions go too long and our pray times become too short as a result. So I like to take two or three sessions just to pray for members one at a time, listening to God for them, blessing them and lifting their lives and their needs to God. A while back I did [a blog post](#) on how to do this. It’s really very simple. We take the person whose birthday is next and put them in a chair in the center while the rest of us stand around them and bless them and pray for them, saying things that are on our heart or God’s. There is no hurry and when we are done and that person is thoroughly encouraged, we move to the person with the next birthday. It typically takes two or three meetings to get through the group, depending on how many members you have. I tell guests that they can participate or pass. But I’ve never had a small group member or guest pass up this opportunity for personal prayer and blessings.

Talk it over with your small group and put one or two of these things in your small group schedule in the coming weeks. Not only will they add some fun and energy to your group, but you’ll find yourself relating to God and one another in new and deeper ways.

What questions do you about these ideas? What are your insights and suggestions for getting out or staying out of a small group rut? 

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