

Disciple Making

The Importance of Disciple Making

As we have already indicated, all the elements of mDNA belong together and must be present in significant ways for authentic Apostolic Genius to activate. But disciple making is perhaps the most critical element in the mDNA mix, because it involves the critical task of becoming more like our Founder, Jesus—of actually embodying what he was about. When dealing with discipleship, and the related capacity to generate authentic followers of Jesus, we are dealing with the crucial factor that will in the end determine the quality of the whole—if we fail at this point, then we are almost guaranteed to fail in all the others. It is such a critical task that Jesus focused most of his energy on it. The most significant religious movement in history was initiated through the simple act of Jesus investing his life in a small motley group of believers, growing them into authentic disciples. For the follower of Jesus, discipleship is not the first step in a promising career, but the fulfillment of their destiny to be conformed to the image of Christ (Rom. 8:29).

When we look at the stories of Christian movements that change the world, we can say that they are simply disciple-making systems. Everyone is involved at all levels of the community. Disciple making is the starting point, the primary practice, and a very significant key to lasting missional impact. Whether one looks at the Celtic, Wesleyan, Franciscan, or Chinese phenomena, at their core they are led by disciples who are absolutely committed in turn to reproducing disciples.

In contrast, the church in the West has largely forgotten the art of disciple making and has largely reduced it to an intellectual assimilation of theological ideas. As a result, we have a rather anemic cultural Christianity highly susceptible to the lures of consumerism. This in turn works directly against a true following of Jesus. In our desire to be seeker-friendly and attractional, we have largely abandoned the vigorous kind of discipleship that characterized early Christianity and every significant Jesus movement since.

Neil Cole of Church Multiplication Associates (CMA) suggests that the key to CMA's remarkable growth revolved around precisely this issue—reproducing disciples. They adopt the approach of *lowering the bar of how church is done and raising the bar of what it means to be a disciple*.¹ Their reasoning is that if the way we conceive and structure church is simple enough that anyone can reproduce it, and is made up of people who follow Jesus at any cost, the result will be a movement that empowers the common Christian to do the uncommon works of God. In contrast, it seems that many of our current practices seem to run contrary to this—we make church complex and discipleship too easy.

The Challenge of Consumerism

Discipleship is about adherence to Christ and therefore is articulated and embraced over against all other competing claims for our loyalty. It is suggested that the major challenge to our allegiance today, and thus a serious threat to discipleship, is that of consumerism. There is little doubt that in consumerism we are dealing with a very significant religious phenomenon. If the role of religion is to offer a sense of identity, purpose, meaning, and community, then it can be said that

consumerism is a type of religion. Much that goes by the name of advertising is an explicit offer of identity, meaning, purpose, community, and significance. Most marketing strategies appeal to one or more of these religious impulses.

The challenge for the church in this situation is that it is forced to compete with the other invitations for our allegiance and in the end can become just another vendor of goods and services. The church operating in an attractional mode, primarily run by professionals, has always been susceptible to this lure. Furthermore, under the influence of church growth practice, consumerism became the driving ideology of the church's ministry. Its proponents taught us how to market and tailor the church to suit target audiences. By failing to intentionally focus on making disciples, we inadvertently cultivated religious consumerism.

The Embodiment of Jesus

What did Jesus have in mind when he commissioned the church to make disciples of all nations?² A missional understanding of this commission requires us to see Jesus's tactic as to mobilize a whole lot of little versions of himself infiltrating every nook and cranny of society. He seeks to do this by reproducing himself in and through his people. Jesus not only embodies God amongst us, but also provides the image of the perfect human being. Paul tells us that it is our eternal destiny to be conformed to the image of Christ.³ All the spiritual disciplines therefore aim us toward one thing—*Christlikeness*. It is the essential task of discipleship to embody the mission and character of Jesus.

The dangerous stories of Jesus are alive in his people, and in a very real way, we must actually *become the gospel* to the people around us. When we look at the phenomenal movements, we find that these groups found a way to translate the grand themes of the gospel into concrete life through the embodiment of Jesus in ways that were profoundly relational and attractive. This embodiment cannot be passed on through books: it is always communicated through life itself, by the leader to the community, from teacher to disciple, and from believer to believer.

The Power of Spiritual Leadership and Discipleship

Gandhi, the inspirational leader who transformed India, never held political office or headed up a government. And yet he transformed his people and altered the world, not by the normal exercise of power, but through sheer inspirational power based on religious, moral, and social virtues. He based his message solely on what he called moral authority, what we may call spiritual authority or inspirational leadership.

Inspirational leadership can be described as a unique type of social power that comes from the personal integration and embodiment of great ideas, as opposed to power that comes from external authority like that of government, corporations, or religious institutions. It involves a relationship between leaders and followers in which each influences the other to pursue common objectives, with the aim of transforming followers into leaders in their own right. Spiritual authority arises from one's relationship to God and is shaped by one's calling, gifting, and personal integrity. It is a noncoercive power that influences people through spiritual power—it draws people into its influence and changes them by calling out a moral and spiritual response in those who respond.

Here's the rub: the quality of the church's leadership is directly proportional to the quality of its discipleship. If we fail in the area of making disciples, we should not be surprised if we fail in leadership development. Discipleship is primary; leadership is always secondary. And leadership, to be genuinely Christian, must always reflect Christ-likeness and, therefore, discipleship.

Hitting the Road with Jesus

Unfortunately, the church has often replaced life-on-life discipleship with institutional learning based on the principle that if people get the right information, they will change their behavior. This is trying to *think our way into a new way of acting*. Jesus's approach to discipleship is based on the idea that we need to change people's behavior, and their thinking will follow. In other words, we need to *act our way into a new way of thinking*. What we are proposing looks something like this:

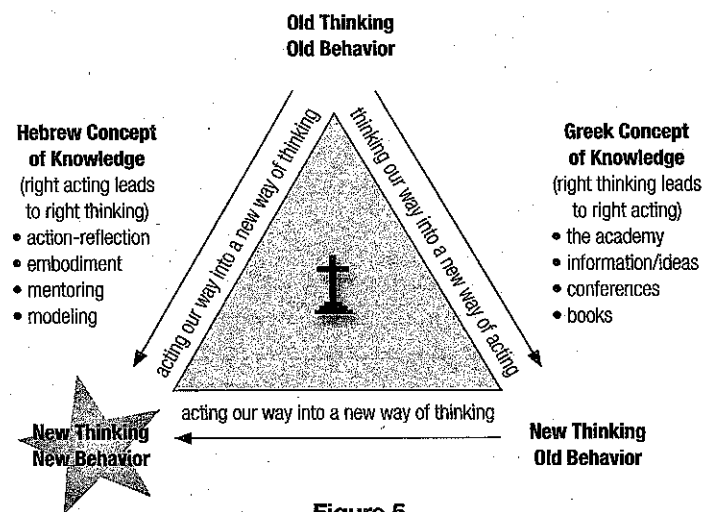


Figure 5
Action-Learning (Discipleship) vs. the Academy

The disciples hit the road with Jesus and learned about discipleship in the rough-and-tumble of life and mission. Let's look at a few suggested disciple-making practices that do the same.

Suggested Habits and Practices

In tackling the various habits and practices associated with disciple making, please note that what follows is not an exhaustive list of individual spiritual disciplines central to discipleship. There are people far more qualified for this task (see the writings of Richard Foster and Dallas Willard, for instance). The focus here, however, will be on creating a *disciple-making environment* for missional communities. Our aim is to construct a broad framework of habits and practices core to setting up a system for discipleship and disciple making. In this light we suggest the following habits and connected practices.

1. Raise the bar on discipleship
2. Develop a set of discipleship practices
3. Activate the priesthood of all believers

Habit 1: Raise the Bar on Discipleship

The first habit we suggest in creating a healthy disciple-making system is to establish specific, well-articulated discipleship standards or norms for your community. These norms will convey what is expected of each member of the community. As such, they should address what is *normative* for Christian discipleship. In doing this, seek to address the question, "What is the everyday requirement for those who consider themselves Christian?" In addition to these basic discipleship commitments, groups may like to add their own norms unique to their context (as seen in the examples in the resource section).

We also suggest that in establishing the standard of discipleship you ensure that mission is a non-negotiable part of what it means to be a disciple. Prevailing conceptions of discipleship rarely focus on mission. Unfortunately, it's often viewed as an optional element within the disciple-making process. However, if we are true to our vocation to fashion a community to continue Jesus's missionary endeavor, mission must become the central theme and organizing principle for discipleship. This is exactly how Jesus formed his disciples, thoroughly around the call to mission. As soon as the disciples were called, Jesus took them on a journey of mission and learning. Straightaway they were involved in proclaiming the kingdom, serving the poor, healing, and casting out demons. It was active and direct disciple making in the context of mission. Even the newest believer should be engaged in mission from the start.

Practice One: Make Discipleship Real Discipleship

In *An Unstoppable Force*, Erwin McManus says that what we have viewed in the past as extraordinary Christianity should in fact be the *radical minimum standard* for all Christians. He writes: "The measure of an apostolic community is not in the legends created by heroic acts but in the quality and texture of what that community considers ordinary living."⁴ He considers it a mistake when we make heroes out of those who were simply living a normal Christian life. We confuse the bare minimum with the extraordinary and keep lowering the bar until we clear it. McManus proposes that there may be no more significant ingredient to an apostolic ethos than establishing a *radical minimum standard* for discipleship.⁵

This will definitely mean raising the bar of current discipleship norms. Jesus called us to deny ourselves, pick up our cross, and follow him. He called us to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. According to God's word, this is basic Christianity. It should be normal for Christians to be hospitable and spend regular time with those beyond the faith. It ought to be typical to be generous with our time and money, to love extravagantly, to care for creation, and share our faith. If you scratch beneath the surface of the many influential Christian movements, you will find a common commitment to this type of radical Christian living.

Astute mission groups will establish a high minimum discipleship standard and ensure it becomes part of the ethos and fabric of the community.

- To do this, make certain that these basic discipleship commitments are ingrained in the church's culture and way of life.
- Later, we will point out that culture is formed primarily through the daily conversations and interactions among the church members. So, in order to embed a discipleship standard, it needs to be talked about regularly as well as enacted.
- Together, as a community, explore the scriptures, pray, collaborate, and establish a radical minimum discipleship norm.

Practice Two: Promote Core Spiritual Disciplines

While we've stated previously that the goal in this section is not to provide a comprehensive list of spiritual practices, we feel we must include a basic list of what we understand to be the core *non-negotiable* disciplines for all Christians, if they are to grow into authentic disciples.

• Engagement with scripture

We begin with engaging the Word of God as a core discipline. In many ways this is a no-brainer, but a discipline that all too often gets left on the shelf—literally! And it is possible to study the Bible and miss the central theme of discipleship and disciple making. The emphasis, therefore, should not simply be on right thinking but on right action. Rather than asking, "What can I get out of

this?" we must ask a new question: "How do the scriptures call, shape, transform, and send us?"⁶ As Darrell Guder suggests, "The Bible must continue to confront, to convert, and to transform the community for faithful witness."⁷

As we advise further in this book, by exploring salvation history described through scripture, the faith community will be able to find itself as part of this ongoing redemptive story. It's imperative to engage scripture this way as a living text. This is why Paul writes to Timothy, his son in the faith, that all scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching and training in righteousness, so that the disciple may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.⁸

- * Read scripture every time you gather, from planning meetings, to small groups, to large gatherings.
- * Provide resources such as study materials, DVDs, reading plans, and the like.
- * Seek commitment from the community to read a certain number of chapters per week.
- * Every day, e-mail or text-message a passage from scripture to each community member.
- * Periodically, host intensives on specific books of the Bible or on biblical themes. Invite an experienced teacher from outside the community to become part of the learning experience.

We have found the Catholic tradition of *praying the scriptures*⁹ helpful, along with journaling and meditation. We've also used Edward de Bono's Six Thinking Hats framework as a different way to explore the Bible¹⁰ There are many ways in which to engage the scriptures, so be creative, and together explore new approaches and customs.

• Prayer

Second, we promote personal and communal prayer as non-negotiable for discipleship. Within the practice of prayer we would include solitude, stillness, contemplation, and petition, as well as confession. Philip Yancey suggests that prayer is the most fundamental, challenging, perplexing, and deeply rewarding aspect of our relationship with God.¹¹

- * Pray every time you meet with others.
- * Create a "prayer of the week" that the entire community commits to each day.
- * Pray at every meal.
- * Educate people about prayer through teaching and books and other helpful resources.

It's important to foster prayer at all levels, individually and corporately, and become a community in regular conversation with God. Spice it up a little and explore different approaches and traditions of prayer, such as the ancient Catholic tradition of examen.¹²

• Worship and service

The next core practice essential for disciple making is the twin discipline of worship and service. In fact, because we view worship as ultimately *offering our world back to God*, it incorporates the vow to service—we see them as one and the same. The practice of worship and service includes commitments to participating in ministry, utilizing spiritual gifts, acts of kindness, generosity, evangelism, pursuing justice, and tithing, as well as meeting with the faith community for communion, praise, celebration, learning, and expression. Again, there are a myriad of ways these commitments can be expressed; the important thing is that they are indeed practiced.

• Stewardship

Stewardship is essentially about each Christian taking personal responsibility for the way he or she uses money, resources, and time, as well as caring for God's creation. In today's climate of consumerism and environmental issues, followers of Christ must exemplify a simple and prophetic life-response to the issues of our day. Here are a few ideas to consider.

- * Watch your use of time and money. Keep one another accountable.
- * Job share or work part-time if possible. Release your time for family, friends, and ministry.

- * Share your resources with those around you. Rent or buy a house with others.
- * Consider the impact your investments have on the environment. What companies benefit from our investment? What do they produce? Are they ethical and environmentally aware?
- * Explore the theme of advocacy. How do we represent and lead against what is wrong in our world? How can we become God's representatives against injustice?
- * Get involved in environmental concerns. Recycle, avoid unnecessary waste, watch your use of nonrenewable energy, and carpool, walk, or ride a bike if possible.
- * Consider the foods and other products you buy. Are they from ethical companies? What impact do production and distribution have on the poor and their local environment?
- * Educate your community about the current environmental issues. Provide resources and examples. Regularly share what people are doing to live simply and care for the earth.

You get the idea. Work out what is best for you and your community, and become responsible, caring stewards of your things and creation.

• *Community*

The final practice central to discipleship is a deep-seated commitment to community. Following Jesus and growing in his likeness cannot be accomplished alone. A call to Christ is a clear summoning to participate in his community. In fact, we see it not only as a commitment but as a spiritual discipline.

The two most common metaphors used in scripture to describe the church are that of the family (household) and the "body of Christ." We are all part of the body of Christ and should have equal concern for one another. If one part suffers, every part suffers; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.¹³ Paul writes that as one body we are held together by every supporting ligament as each part does its work to grow and be built up in love.¹⁴ Jesus set a high standard of devotion to community. He gave us a new commandment to love one another in the same way he loved us,

and by doing so people will know that we are his true disciples.¹⁵ As you can see, commitment to community has far-reaching impact and at the end of the day is highly missional.

Habit 2: Develop a Set of Discipleship Practices

Discipleship practices are basically a set of practical commitments that guide a community in living and growing together as disciples. These practices are best developed through a community-wide collaborative process where all members get the opportunity to have input. This way the practices will receive broader ownership and commitment.

In essence the practices should be shaped by and flow from the specific minimum discipleship standards previously established. We also recommend incorporating these practices with the missional practices mentioned in chapter five. This, then, becomes an intentional way for a community to live out their call and commitment to discipleship *and* disciple making.

Practice One: Create Common Practices

In setting up a healthy disciple-making environment, we recommend developing a set of community discipleship practices. All groups would benefit greatly from this as a way to engage in discipleship in a collective and sustainable manner. Developing practices will also shift discipleship from a programmed activity to a lifestyle and will give everyone in the community a clear framework of how they can participate. Practices create a distinct culture and set a rhythm that shapes communal life.

The leadership task is to

- Educate the group on the importance of discipleship practices.
- Explain that as disciples we act our way into a new way of thinking rather than the other way around.
- Guide the collaborative process in developing the common practices.

- Ensure the practices are connected with the overall unique calling for your church.

The process

1. Identify core values through group discussion, prayer, and reflection. These are the values that really grab the community. This process requires that you identify the values and beliefs that are non-negotiable and inspire passion. It might take some time, and we encourage you not to rush it. Many will already have done this, and therefore can jump to #2.
2. Establish your minimum discipleship standards.
3. Brainstorm the different ways these norms and values can be practiced in everyday life. It is important that the group identify everyday things, not just “religious” activities, with the practices. For example, the core value of hospitality might be expressed in eating regularly with Christians and non-Christians or in regularly having the poor in your home. Eating is thus transformed into a culture-making, missional activity. List many possible ways a core value can be embodied.
4. Choose only one or two key practices for each. Make sure they’re achievable and realistic while still raising the bar on discipleship. The practices should require some discipline and commitment.
5. Develop a memorable acronym or simple way to phrase the practices. This is very important, because if they are not easy to remember, people won’t practice them.
6. Expect a common commitment to the practices from all stakeholders. Be careful of legalism, but also don’t lower the bar to simply suit middle-class sensibilities. These practices should entice *and* challenge us.

For examples of discipleship practices, see the resource section at the end of the book.

Practice Two: Develop a Contagious Discipleship Culture

This is essentially about working toward a critical mass of individuals within the community who take their discipleship and disciple mak-

ing seriously enough to make its practice a priority in their lives. The idea is that if you get enough people within a group behaving a certain way, it’s bound to influence and tip the remaining members in the same direction.

If you can mobilize enough people to engage in healthy disciple-making practices, it will have a flow-on effect within the rest of your community. For example, if you can encourage one-quarter of your members to meet regularly in small groups for prayer and accountability, the scales are sure to tip in that direction. When discipleship is expected of everyone, and enough key people are involved in the practices, it will create a culture where discipleship is accepted as the norm and the desired goal.

- *Talk about and Expect Growth*
Word-of-mouth is one of the most powerful activities in which to engender change. Our environment is significantly shaped by what we talk about. So it makes sense that to fashion an ethos and culture for spiritual growth, we need to talk about it regularly. Teach it from the scriptures, speak about it in everyday conversation, provide tangible examples, encourage people to share what they are doing and how they are growing as a result.

By way of regular conversation about the importance of spiritual growth, the community will be reminded of their destiny to become more like Jesus.

DNA Groups at SmallBoatBigSea

In creating an environment for disciple making, SmallBoatBigSea¹⁶ established what they term DNA groups. DNA stands for *discipleship, nurture, and accountability*. Every person in their midst is encouraged to join a DNA, which is made up of two to five people who meet regularly to talk, support, and pray. DNAs meet in many places: some in cafes or pubs, others in homes, and others on the beach. The groups are encouraged to use their community commitments to guide questions for accountability.¹⁷ This week, whom have you blessed? With whom have you eaten? Have you sensed any promptings from God? What passages of scripture have encouraged you, or what other resources have enriched your growth? In what ways have you sensed yourself carrying on the work of God in your daily life?¹⁸

If people are not growing in the faith, they should be encouraged by the group to do so.

- *Practice Together*

Environments are shaped not only by what we talk about, but also by what we do together. Through enacting spiritual practices with others in the church, you will implant a healthy discipleship ethos deep within the community. This will also help us get beyond the individualistic notion of discipleship that pervades Western understandings of church. A simple way for something to become a habit is to do it frequently. And so by acting together as a learning community, people will realize that they're part of a community where it's normal to strive and grow toward Christlikeness.

- *Provide Resources and Tools*

To help people regularly engage in spiritual disciplines, it's a good idea to provide a bank of resources and tools. We have noticed that people in our communities have benefited greatly from engaging the scriptures and prayer through the Catholic traditions of lectio and examen.¹⁹ These are two excellent and simple spiritual exercises you can hand out or e-mail around your community. In fact, they're so simple you could even text them to others in your community.

One of the best new tools around is Exilio—a resource based on the book *Exiles* by Michael Frost. It involves thorough group

Life Transformation Groups at CMA

With the core task of discipleship in mind, Neil Cole, from Church Multiplication Associates,²⁰ developed Life Transformation Groups, a simple and reproducible disciple-making system involving Bible reading, personal accountability, and prayer. An LTG is made up of two to three people of the same gender, who meet weekly for accountability for their spiritual growth. It is recommended that a group not grow past three, but rather multiply into two groups. In the CMA movement, all are expected to be in an LTG.

reflection and action and includes video material as well.²¹ Shapevine also has a wealth of online resources through the training modules available there.²² We're sure that without too much effort you could compile an excellent resource library for your group. Study materials, DVDs, information on conferences, Web sites, networks, books, and traditions from other cultures are helpful and within easy reach.

- *Lead by Example*

If you want to set up a culture for spiritual growth, make sure the key leaders and stakeholders model it in their own lives. You simply cannot expect others to engage a way of life that the leaders themselves do not practice. As the saying goes, habits are more easily caught than taught. It's a good idea to set a basic discipleship standard for leaders and stakeholders that is above the minimum standard, as mentioned before. Lead by example and allow others to be inspired to follow.

- * Develop a leadership covenant based on agreed-upon norms of discipleship. All leaders should commit to adhering to this covenant.
- * Hold one another accountable to the standards set in the covenant.

Habit 3: Activate the Priesthood of All Believers

Movements that change the world are essentially what sociologists call "people movements," that is, they engage all the people as significant agents in the system. Translated to apostolic movements, we can say that every believer is a minister of Jesus Christ and ought to be released as such. This is based squarely on the profound revolutionary doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. Every participant in the Jesus movement is a player, someone who can change the world. God created us this way for this very purpose. Paul highlights this in Ephesians 2:10 when he wrote, "we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." If this is the case, then empowerment is one of the most significant leadership functions.

This is exactly how Jesus personally equipped the first disciples. Not long after initially calling the Twelve, Jesus sent them out into active service, not for menial tasks, but to drive out demons, to heal the sick, and to preach the gospel.²³ Talk about a baptism by fire! And after just three short years, he entrusted to them the entire future of his movement. Now, that's true empowerment! Groups seeking to grow genuine disciples will provide a setting that inspires people to take responsibility for their own growth and exercise of their God-given gifts.

Practice One: Empower People to Utilize Their Gifts

As highlighted in Ephesians 4, disciple making is focused on equipping God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ might mature.²⁴ It's also clear from scripture that God has individually gifted each believer for this purpose. In fact, God has personally arranged each part of his church and gifted every disciple just the way he wants them to be.²⁵ Furthermore, we believe that when people discover their gifts and calling, they connect directly with God's purpose for their life. If empowerment is a key leadership function, then helping people locate their gifts, abilities, and passions, and providing a context in which to serve, is the way to do it.

As we suggest in chapter 5, encourage as many people in your community to complete a gift analysis like the one Alan developed at www.theforgottenways.org/apest/.²⁶ This analysis will profile the primary gifts and calling for each person. It's a helpful place to start, but empowering people to discover and use their gifts is not as simple as answering a few questions and printing off the results. It is not the privilege solely of leadership, but of the whole faith community, to confirm, encourage, and equip people for service. That is why in the online profile tool just mentioned, there is a 360-degree evaluation that invites others around you into the process.

- Encourage those in your community to complete a gift analysis course.
- Map the gifts on a graph or table for a broad overview. Then organize a weekend retreat to explore the map and to brainstorm how these gifts might be used in connection with the group's specific calling.

- Periodically gather those with similar gifts to continue dreaming and encouraging one another to grow and exercise their gifts and calling.
- Locate people's innate passions and energy, and begin to structure mission and ministry around those.
- Commission every member for service in some form or another. Whether in the world of business, health, education, trades, or church, everyone should know they are an agent of the kingdom and should be recognized as such by their faith community. Don't wait too long; as soon as people come to faith, they should become part of the conspiracy of Little Jesuses.

Practice Two: Action Reflection

Discipleship and disciple making are best forged in the everyday context of life. The ancient text of Deuteronomy said as much when it implored the Jewish people to wear their faith upon their hearts, to impress it on their children, to talk about it when they sit at home and when they walk along the road, when they lie down and when they get up.²⁷ In other words, they were to pass on their faith through the normal experiences of life, an action-reflection type process. They were to form their actions and thinking at the same time in the flow of life, instead of shaping their thinking hoping that new behavior would follow.

Again, this is how Jesus equipped the first disciples—it was on the road, in the hub of life, not in the temple. The world was Jesus's classroom. Our recommendation is to establish a practice of action-reflection within your community. It's simple to do; engage in discipleship and

Third Place Communities Coaching

TPC have established a coaching ethos as part of their disciple making. They provide their members with a pool of experienced coaches, many of whom exist outside their immediate community. They also encourage people to find their own coach if that's more appropriate. Coaches are encouraged to probe a deep exploration of what "God is brewing" by using the following three questions in each session.

- Q. What is God brewing within you? (transformation)
- Q. What is God brewing amongst you? (participation)
- Q. What is God brewing around you? (contribution)

Great Coaching Habits

Steve Ogne of CRM has been coaching church planters and training coaches for a number of years. He suggests the following seven habits for great coaching.²⁸

- LISTEN for where God is working!
- CARE for personal needs!
- CELEBRATE what God is doing!
- STRATEGIZE for missional effectiveness!
- TRAIN in essential ministry skills!
- DISCIPLE the whole person!
- CHALLENGE specifically!

disciple making, then together reflect, pray, and establish theological frameworks. It's good to do this formally, as well as informally through everyday interactions.

Practice Three: Coaching

Coaching is one of the most important aspects in the discipleship process. It's an intentional relationship in which a coach seeks to empower, equip, and energize the individual to grow in Christlikeness. It seeks to empower the individual to evolve skillfully, theologically, and spiritually, to increase their discipleship and disciple-making capacity.

Coaching is largely an action-reflection process in which a coach guides an individual in setting goals and evaluating progress. The individual engages in discipleship and disciple making, and then together with the coach reflects on her experiences and development. The role of the coach is to guide the person through a process of critical reflection on his practice and spirituality—his strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This approach allows the individual freedom to experiment and then reflect with her coach. This process should also stimulate imagination and help probe alternative perspectives and approaches.

- Provide a pool of coaches for your group, which may mean finding and training them.

- Coaches don't necessarily need to be from your community. In fact, there are many benefits in having a coach from outside your immediate context.
- The best coaches are those who are attentive, who ask great questions and listen well. Great coaches know how to guide a person in establishing goals, evaluating those goals, and then helping to state them clearly in a memorable way.
- Make it compulsory for all stakeholders and leaders to receive coaching once per month.

Group Processing

Session 1: *Explore: (talk about it)*

- If you had to highlight one idea from this section, what would it be? Why?
- In your own words, explain discipleship and disciple making to another person in the group. What ideas excite you? Concern you?
- What are the best habits and practices to consider? We have provided a few. Can you think of any others?
- What questions do you have?
- How can you imagine the group growing in this area?

Session 2: *Evaluate (reflect deeper)*

- Is discipleship and disciple making a strength or weakness for your group?
- Does the majority of the group understand and believe in this concept?
- How is commitment to these ideas already demonstrated in your group? Give examples.
- When was the community best at discipleship and disciple making? What were the contributing factors? What was happening at the time?
- In your opinion, what are the most important issues for discipleship and disciple making?
- What challenges are ahead? What are the barriers? Where do you anticipate resistance?

Session 3: *Employ (act on it)*

- What needs to happen during the next twelve months? What do you need to do that you're not currently doing?
- What will you need to let go of?
- What information and resources will you need? Who else needs to be involved?
- How will you know if you have grown in these areas? What will the key indicators be?
- What habits and practices will you seek to integrate during the next twelve months? List them here.

Action Plans

What are the first steps you will take to achieve these goals? Looking at your past, are they realistic?

What—Activity/Action	When—Date	Who—Leader/Participants
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		

Session 4: *Personal Journal*

After processing much information, take some time to pray, listen, and respond to God. How is God prompting you, and how will you respond? Take time to record your impressions as well as insights from the group. Write a prayer expressing your desires to God. If appropriate, share your thoughts in the group, and then pray together.

- What am I sensing from God?
- What is my prayer?