

Many of our leaders take a well needed break over the summer to get ready for the launch of groups in September. The care giving that we do in groups is physically, emotionally and spiritually draining - and very rewarding. How do you care for others without losing yourself? Sandy Burdick, OHM Ministry Director with 20 years of Grace Group experience, shares some thoughts to help you refocus and recharge.

1. Slow down and identify the stress.

There was a season in my life when I was in a lot of stress: our house burned down, our church folded, our ministry team was struggling. What I felt eventually was what I called flat. But really it was depression. I went to two doctors and a counselor friend... they said reduce stress. How do you do that?



LAUNCHING FALL GRACE GROUPS:

Come Join Us for Our Great Lakes Retreat



Amy Anderson

After completing our 12 weeks of Grace Groups this spring, I checked in with all my leaders to see if they were interested in leading again in the fall. One of my new leaders seemed really hesitant. I was surprised at this and questioned her further. She talked about being tired and just not wanting to even think about doing this again. I laughed and asked her if she thought she was the only one feeling this way. She seemed surprised and relieved to find out that all of us veteran leaders felt the same. We need a break. I am so looking forward to summer; a slower pace, doing a Beth Moore Bible study, and being with my friends and kids.

Come August, the natural rhythm of life will draw me to feel the need to prepare and gear up for the fall. In our

desire to assist many of you in this process of launching fall grace groups, we are planning a one day retreat. We have shortened it to one day to keep the cost down and to encourage many local grace group teams to drive in for the day. This is a great opportunity to come together and get our hearts and minds prepared for the fall.

The focus of our retreat will be:

to prepare you to lead grace groups in the fall. This will be a time of teaching, training (model small groups), and personal development (small group time).

The focus of our teaching will be:

to glean the most out of your journey guides. We will provide ideas on how to utilize some of the exercises in the book. We will offer ideas on how to make your teachings more effective.

The focus of the training will be:

to use model small groups to demonstrate group dynamics, reminders, tips, and techniques for helping a group to run smoothly. We will model "Conflict Resolution" for your Grace Groups and with your co-leader.

The focus of the small groups will be:

to dig deeper into your story and examine the themes that you live out, many times unknowingly.

RETREAT AT-A-GLANCE

Where:
Third Reformed Church
2345 N. 10th Street, Kalamazoo, MI

When:
Saturday, August 23, 2008

Time:
9 am – 6 pm

Cost:
\$35.00

Sign up:
Register on line @ www.ohmin.org;
if internet is unavailable,
call the office @ 269-383-3597

Food:
Catered lunch, morning and
afternoon refreshments

What to bring:
Journey Guides and writing
materials

Start up kits including brochures, application forms, waivers, etc. will be available for purchase. This kit is designed to help you to get your groups started in the fall.

We are looking forward to spending the day with you!



Mark Bonham

BOOK REVIEW: "EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY SPIRITUALITY"

For Your Summer Reading List

Peter Scazzero knows what it's like to hit bottom. As a pastor, no failure could seem more devastating than having his wife announce that she is leaving his church. He discovered that doing ministry had become a driving force, to the neglect of his family and his own emotional health. His journey toward recovery has given insight into what he calls "Emotionally Healthy Spirituality," also the title of his book.

His list of the top ten symptoms of emotionally unhealthy spirituality is a great check list for a leader's personal evaluation. Here's a synopsis:

1. Using God to run from God. Scazzero defines this as creating a great deal of "God activity" and ignoring the difficult area of my life that God wants to change.

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