



PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

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## WELCOME

The earliest months of the year set the tone for the whole year. Start strong there, and the later months hold high promise.

That's why, from the beginning of February for 6 weeks, 1000s of Common Grounders and friends explore what the Scriptures say about thriving in the essential areas of life and health: spiritual, physical, emotional, mental, relational, financial and vocational.

**The world of Self-Help promises to provide answers to our relationship struggles, financial trouble, and search for life's meaning. Helpful as those answers may be, they fall far short of the transformative power of the Gospel and the holistic perspective of God's Word – which teaches us the timeless and time-tested habits that will make us thrive.**

The content unfolds in both Sunday preaching and in Life Group videos. This booklet assists in taking notes in the Life Groups, as well as capturing core wisdom for further reflection and future reference.

Have a pen/pencil in hand as you watch the videos.

Thanks to Saddleback Church's 2013 Transformation series, from which the Thrive series has been adapted.

The biblical version predominantly used is the NIV.

## SESSION ONE

# 6 HABITS TO THRIVE SPIRITUALLY

Before we can take steps to become more spiritually fit, we need two things.

### **1) We need God's gift of forgiveness.**

Christ died for our sins once and for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. (1 Peter 3:18)

### **2) We need God's gift of life.**

God gives us new birth into living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. (1 Peter 1:3)

He wants to free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. (Hebrews 2:15)

Though you have not seen him, you love him and are filled with inexpressible joy. (1 Peter 1:8)

### **HABIT 1: Love Jesus supremely.**

If you want to be my follower you must love me more than your own father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters – yes, more than your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:26)

Spiritual maturity is measured by love.

The most important commandment is this ... you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, [passionately], all your soul, [willfully], all your mind, [thoughtfully], and all your strength [practically-live like you love him].” (Mark 12:39-40)

### **HABIT 2: Meet with God daily.**

Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway. (Proverbs 8:34)

### **HABIT 3: Study and do God's Word.**

Blessed is the man ... [whose] delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. (Psalm 1:1-3)

You are my friends if you do what I command. (John 15:14)

The man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it – he will be blessed in what he does. (James 1:25)

**HABIT 4: Learn to love others.**

If you have love for one another, then everyone will know that you are my disciples. (John 13:35)

If someone says, "I love God," but hates a Christian brother or sister, that person is a liar; for if we don't love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we have not seen? (1 John 4:20)

Spiritual growth happens in community.

**HABIT 5: Serve others unselfishly.**

For even I, the Son of Man, came here not to be served but to serve others, and to give my life as a ransom for many. (Mark 10:45)

**HABIT 6: Pass on the good news.**

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others. (2 Timothy 2:2)

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (Matthew 28:18-20)

**Prayer for salvation**

*'God, thank you that you love me. Jesus, thank you that you died for our sins. Please grant me forgiveness for all my sins and failures. Jesus, you rose again from the dead. You are alive. Come and live inside me. Grant me spiritual life. Take me into your family. Teach me to trust you and follow you. Amen.'*



**ADDITIONAL NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

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## SESSION TWO

# SPIRITUALLY MOTIVATED TO CARE FOR OUR BODY.

I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well. (3 John 2)

God wants us to take care of our bodies, not just because that's where we live, but also because that's where He lives.

Physical health is a spiritual discipline.

"Everything is permissible for me" – but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible for me" but I will not be mastered by anything. "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food" – but God will destroy them both. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself?... Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside of his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:12-20)

## SEVEN THINGS GOD SAYS ABOUT MY BODY

### 1. My body is God's property.

You created every part of me; you put me together in my mother's womb... I am fearfully and wonderfully made. (Psalm 139:13-14)

### 2. God expects me to steward my body.

I will not be mastered by anything. (1 Corinthians 6:12)

### 3. My body will be resurrected after I die.

By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. (1 Corinthians 6:14)

### 4. My body is connected to the body of Christ.

Do you know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? (1 Corinthians 6:15)



## SESSION THREE

# 5 HABITS TO THRIVE EMOTIONALLY

Everyone has wounds. They take a long time to heal. Jesus wants to heal them.

God heals the broken-hearted and bandages their wounds. (Psalm 147:3)

### **HABIT 1: Reveal my hurts.**

You'll never be emotionally healthy until you face your feelings straight-on. So I remained utterly silent, not even saying anything good. But my anguish increased; my heart grew hot within me. While I meditated, the fire burned. (Psalm 39:2-3)

Holding on to emotional pain is like carrying hot coals inside you – you're the one who's going to get burned. When you swallow your hurt, your stomach keeps score. If you do not talk it out, you will take it out on yourself or others.

Honesty is essential across the board - with God, with yourself, and with at least one other person who you trust.

When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. (Psalm 32:3)

### **HABIT 2: Release those who have hurt you.**

One of the most difficult questions you will ever have to answer is, "Do I want to get well or do I want to get even?" We do not have enough emotional energy to do both, and getting even will not dull the pain in our heart. We must let go of our "right" to get even.

While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:31-32)

List my tears on your scroll — are they not in your record? (Psalm 56:8)

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. (Romans 12:17-19)

Why should I forgive those who have hurt me?  
+ God forgave you  
+ You will need forgiveness in the future!  
+ It is the only way to get well

**HABIT 3: Replace old lies with God's truth.**

Be transformed by the renewing of your mind. (Romans 12:2)

Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters (Hebrews 2:11)

**HABIT 4.: Refocus on the future.**

Yet if you devote your heart to him and stretch out your hands to him, if you put away the sin that is in your hand and allow no evil to dwell in your tent, then, free of fault, you will lift up your face; you will stand firm and without fear. You will surely forget your trouble, recalling it only as waters gone by. (Job 11:13-16)

Let your eyes look straight ahead; fix your gaze directly before you. (Proverbs 4:25)

**HABIT 5.: Reach out to help others.**

Ministry is about God using your experiences - in some cases, your pain - to help other people. Your pain can be redeemed by God.

God... comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. (2 Corinthians 1:4)

Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. (Psalm 82:3)

To care for the most vulnerable of all in our city, go to [www.commongood.org](http://www.commongood.org) and click on the 'early life' banner.



**ADDITIONAL NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

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## SESSION FOUR

# 6 HABITS TO THRIVE RELATIONALLY

If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honourable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you are bitterly jealous and there is selfish ambition in your heart, don't cover up the truth with boasting and lying. For jealousy and selfishness are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind. But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness. (James 3:13-18 NLT)

Wisdom is not what you know, it is how you relate to others. Verse 17 gives us 6 wiser ways to relate to others

**HABIT 1: I will be honest with you. I won't compromise my integrity.**

The wisdom from above is first of all pure. (James 3:17)

You must stop telling lies. Tell each other the truth because you all belong to each other in the same body. (Ephesians 4:25)

God grants a treasure of good sense to the godly. He is their shield, protecting those who walk with integrity. (Proverbs 2:7)

**HABIT 2: I will be peace loving with you. I won't antagonize your anger.**

The wisdom from above is ... peace loving. (James 3:17)

Any fool can start arguments. The wise thing to do is to stay out of them. (Proverbs 20:3)

A wise man controls his temper. He knows that anger causes mistakes. (Proverbs 14:29)

**HABIT 3: I will be considerate to you. I won't minimize your feelings.**

The wisdom from above is ... gentle at all times. (James 3:17)

Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. (Philippians 4:5)

We must be considerate of the fears and doubts of others. Let's please the other person not ourselves, doing what is good for him and build him up in the Lord. (Rom 15:2)

Kind words bring life, but cruel words crush your spirit. (Proverbs 15:4)

**HABIT 4: I will listen to you. I won't criticize your suggestions.**

The wisdom from above is ... willing to yield to others. (James 3:17)

Intelligent people are always open to new ideas. In fact, they look for them. (Proverbs 18:15)

**HABIT 5: I will be merciful to you. I won't emphasize your mistakes.**

The wisdom from above is ... full of mercy. (James 3:17)

Love forgets mistakes; nagging about them parts the best of friends. (Proverbs 17:9)

**HABIT 6: I will be sincere with you. I won't disguise my intentions.**

The wisdom from above is ... shows no favoritism and is always sincere. (James 3:17)

The lips of a liar conceals hostility and whoever spreads accusations is a fool. (Proverbs 10:18)



**ADDITIONAL NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

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## SESSION FIVE

# 7 HABITS TO THRIVE FINANCIALLY

### **HABIT 1: Trust God as your source and supplier.**

Just as your kitchen tap is not the ultimate source of water, your job is not the ultimate source of your provision - God is. He provides our energy, our intelligence... everything we need.

For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen. (Romans 11:36)

Remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth. (Deuteronomy 8:18)

### **HABIT 2: Keep good records.**

Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; for riches do not endure forever, and a crown is not secure for all generations. (Proverbs 27:23-24)

We should know exactly what 1) we own 2) we owe 3) comes in monthly and from where 4) goes out monthly, and where to.

### **HABIT 3: Give the first portion of my income back to God.**

Eat the tithe of your grain, new wine and olive oil, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks in the presence of the Lord your God at the place he will choose as a dwelling for his Name, so that you may learn to revere the Lord your God always. (Deuteronomy 14:23)

Honour the Lord with your wealth, with the first-fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine. (Proverbs 3:9-10)

### **HABIT 4: I must save and invest for the future.**

The wise store up choice food and olive oil, but fools gulp theirs down. (Proverbs 21:20)

Dishonest money dwindles away, but whoever gathers money little by little makes it grow. (Proverbs 13:11)

Develop your business first before building your house. (Proverbs 24:27)

**HABIT 5: I must set up a repayment plan to get myself out of debt.**

Do not withhold repayment of your debt. (Proverbs 3:27)

Let no debt remain outstanding. (Romans 13:8)

**HABIT 6: I must budget my spending.**

Tell your money where you want it to go, rather than wondering where it went. Plan carefully and you will have plenty, if you act too quickly you will never have enough. (Proverbs 21:5)

**HABIT 6: I must enjoy what I have.**

Godliness with contentment is great gain. (1 Timothy 6:6)

It is better to be satisfied with what you have than to always be wanting something else. (Ecclesiastes 6:9)

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5)

Do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. (Matthew 6:31-33)

We have to make a decision when it comes to our finances: do we trust ourselves, or do we trust God? Will we manage our money our way, or His way?



**ADDITIONAL NOTES AND REFLECTIONS**

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## SESSION SIX

# 6 HABITS TO THRIVE VOCATIONALLY

'Vocational' refers to our work-life. It includes all the major roles and functions that fill up most of our time. We will focus on our life at work in this session. There might be 100 different jobs or careers God has for you. Regardless of which job you're in...

### **HABIT 1: Work enthusiastically wherever you are.**

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart. (Colossians 3:23)  
To grow enthusiasm for work, remember 3 things...

#### **+ This job is a test from God.**

Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much... If you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own? (Luke 16: 10-12)

#### **+ God is watching.**

Work hard so God can say to you, "Well done." Be a good workman, one who does not need to be ashamed when God examines your work.  
(2 Timothy 2:15 TLB)

#### **+ My attitude determines my joy.**

The diligent find freedom in their work; the lazy are oppressed by work.  
(Proverbs 12:24 MSG)

Never be lazy in your work, but serve the Lord enthusiastically.  
(Romans 12:11 TLB)

### **HABIT 2: Understand who you are really working for.**

Work hard and cheerfully at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and the Master you are serving is Christ.  
(Colossians 3:23-24 NLT)

### **HABIT 3: Concentrate on building your character, especially caring for people you work with.**

In God's economy, success is more about character than career. What you become in your work is more important than what you do. This especially applies to how I treat people I work with.



