

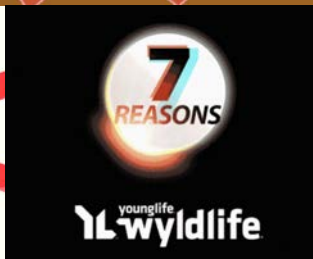
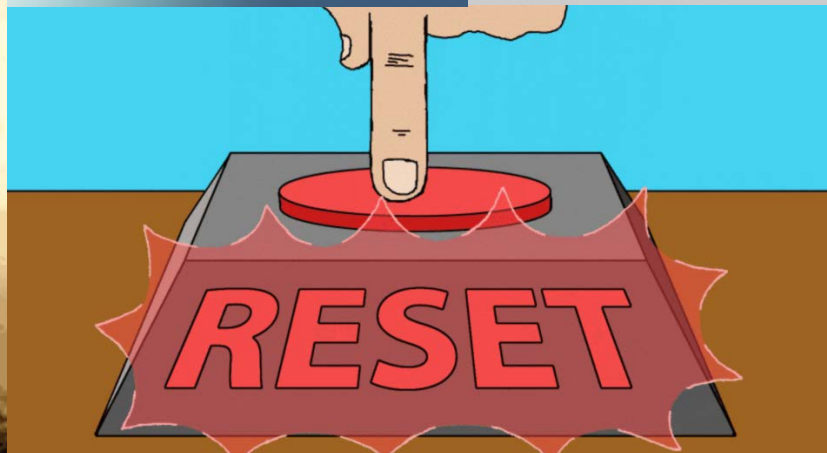


5 FOR FRIDAY

GLOBAL INNOVATION & GROWTH



Global Innovation



Global Innovation

2018

- YOU MAY KNOW THE "NEXT BIG THING" ALREADY!
- ON NEWT'S BOOKSHELF THIS YEAR (2018)
- AN INNOVATIVE ADDITION TO YOUR YL FORWARD PLAN STUDENT LEADERSHIP PROJECT
- YOUNG LIFE SUMMER CAMP PACKING LIST
- MINISTRY IN UNLIKELY PLACES: SERVING THE REFUGEE POPULATION
- THE BIBLICAL MANDATE THAT COMES WITH A HARVEST
- THE NEXT BIG THING IN YOUR REGION
- THE DAY MY VIEW OF YL GOT BIGGER (AND SMALLER) AT THE SAME TIME
- THE COST (AND BENEFIT) OF LIVING IN COMMUNITY
- A 1% DIFFERENCE FOR YOUR MINISTRY
- WHAT TEACHERS THINK ABOUT YOUNG LIFE
- UNWRAPPING THE GIFT OF HEALTHY SUPERVISION

2019

- FINDING HOPE AT THE SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL
- SEE YOU ON BROADWAY: A GLOBAL MINISTRY BUT ONE MISSION
- CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE
- WHAT I LEARNED FROM FIVE YEARS OF GOING TO YOUNG LIFE CAMPS
- A SIMPLE PLAN TO ENGAGE ONE OF THE MOST ISOLATED COMMUNITIES IN THE WORLD
- ARE WE THERE YET? START PLANNING YOUR 2020 DISCIPLESHIP CAMP PLAN
- SHAKING UP THE YOUNG LIFE CAMPING MODEL!
- DID YOU KNOW...? YL MILITARY
- WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF HAD \$\$\$\$ TO REACH MORE KIDS?
- "ARE YOU OPEN TO AN IDEA?"

2020

- THE UPSIDE OF THE NEW NORMAL
- IT'S TIME TO LEARN HOW TO LEAD FROM A DISTANCE!
- GOING AFTER THE ONE
- INCREASING THE AMPLITUDE, AND ADJUSTING THE FREQUENCY OF YOUR CLUB MINISTRY
- THE ART OF A FRIEND-RAISER
- IS YOUR AREA TOO STAFF-CENTRIC?
- THE PERSON YOU MAY NOT HAVE NOTICED IN THE CROWD: TEACHERS
- SEVEN THINGS TO CONSIDER AS YOU STRATEGIZE A VIRTUAL CLUB
- EVERYTHING YOU NEED IN ONE PLACE FOR YOUR VOLUNTEERS: THE STOREHOUSE
- PRAYING WITH PURPOSE

2021

- YOUR AUDIENCE JUST GOT BIGGER
- THE SIMPLE BRILLIANCE OF THE DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY!
- THE ? WE REALLY WOULD LIKE TO BE ASKED
- TRY THIS: DAILY
- THE NEXT BIG THING IN YOUR REGION
- HAVE WE SKIPPED A STEP IN CONTACT WORK?

***PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL ARTICLES WERE ORIGINALLY WRITTEN FOR A DIGITAL CONTEXT. YOU CAN VIEW ALL ARTICLES ON YLACCESS.COM, AND SEE LIVE LINKS WHEREVER THEY ARE REFERENCED ON THE DIGITAL VERSIONS.**



YOU MAY KNOW THE "NEXT BIG THING" ALREADY!

On December 17th, 1903, an amateur photographer named John Thomas Daniels Jr. captured the now-iconic photograph above showing the Wright brothers' first flight on Kill Devil Hill, North Carolina. Interestingly, since Daniels' day job was serving as a member of the Coast Guard, the photograph was the very first one he had ever taken! He ultimately took 3 pictures that day, and it was several weeks before they were ever developed. Sometimes you don't realize that you are in the midst of a transformative 'moment' until much later. The now-famous photograph inspires all who study it to dream, endure, create and imagine the impossible. We are all glad he caught the 'moment.'

Young Life has had its transformative 'moments' over the years which we recognize with the gift of time and reflection. Going where kids are, the wisdom of forming local committees, the elements of our club model are just a few. Young Life at its very core is innovative. You can easily trace many of our ministry models and methods to a creative and entrepreneurial spirit. Even better, theologically — the Incarnation may be the most iconic innovation in all of human history, so we have been taking 'hints' from the Lord since the start of the mission in 1941.

From the beginning of the Young Life Forward Initiative, questions/phrases like those below immediately surfaced:

- "Can we try new things?"
- "Can we experiment with the way we reach kids?"
- "Can we keep the core of the mission but adjust the context of our local community?"

The answer? "Yes," "Yes," "Yes!"

There is a pretty good chance in the new few years Young Life will identify the 'Next Big Thing.' It may be a new ministry initiative, funding model or way to support our volunteers, train our staff or reach more kids. The next big thing will translate across cultures, geographies and leadership styles, too.

Each local Young Life Area is an incubator for creative ideas. Those ideas can become movements which can be formed into a pilot program or model that can bless the whole mission!



YOU MAY KNOW THE "NEXT BIG THING" ALREADY! (CONTINUED)

Below are some new ideas that are being ‘fleshed out’ locally but could quite possibly be the next big thing!

- OUTREACH for Homeless Students, Foster Kids, Gamers, Boarding School students, Deaf students, etc.
- TRAINING for Summer Staff
- DISCIPLESHIP focus for College Students
- SEMINARY education for all staff
- LEGACY FUNDING for Camping, Ministry Start ups and Leadership Development
- FLAGSHIP Club cohorts
- CARE AND DEVELOPMENT of Volunteer Team Leaders
- CREATIVE Camping models
- INTERNATIONAL ‘Fellows’ program
- JUNIOR Regional Boards
- CREATIVE Discipleship camping experiences
- DEVELOPMENT of a Spiritual formation culture
- NURTURING the Committee Chair/Staff relationship
- COACHING and mentoring culture
- SERVICE Projects
-and so many more

We have been given a license to try, to dream, to design and to scale the next big thing, and what’s exciting is that it is probably already happening — locally. Maybe you are doing it. If so, share the wealth, and let’s talk about taking what you’re doing in your area or corner of the world. If you think you have an idea about THE NEXT BIG THING, email TANK and let’s talk. Maybe it's true, ‘The best Young Life is yet to be done!’ and none of us want to miss the ‘moment,’ so bring your camera!



ON NEWT'S BOOKSHELF THIS YEAR (2018):

Mentorship, coaching and leadership development are hot topics in the YL Mission right now. It is probably true that it ‘takes a village’ to develop a YL staffer. Supervisors, coaches, mentors, committee members, peers, etc. all affect the growth of a person. In addition, authors and writers shape how we view the world and how we navigate the challenges of today’s culture. We asked Newt Crenshaw to share a list of books he has learned from over the past year. It’s impressive and gives insight to the heart of our leadership and the direction of our mission. Enjoy!

BOOKS I HAVE READ SINCE JOINING YOUNG LIFE - NEWT CRENSHAW

I confess that I am a “reader” in kind of an extreme sense of the word. I read because I like to learn, because I am curious and want to know “why.” I read because I believe it helps me know God, understand the world we live in, and be a better follower of Jesus and leader of others.

I also like to read in the context of community. So, I have chosen a sample of books that I have read over the last 18 months, and in most cases books that were recommended or given to me by others. I suppose in a broad way, I am now passing them along to you. Let’s learn and grow and follow our Lord together – for His glory!

The Crucifixion by Fleming Rutledge:

I first encountered this book while reading the Gospel Coalition blog, as it won Christian Book of the Year in 2017. Reverend Rutledge does a beautiful job of describing the meaning of the cross, biblically and through the history of the Church, and exploring and explaining the different theories of atonement.

Seeking God’s Face: Praying with the Bible through the Year by Philip Reinders

A wonderful devotional passed along by Lyn Ten Brink, Capernaum Coordinator for the MW Division. Thanks, Lyn! It is scripture-based, follows the Christian calendar, and leads you to deeper reflection, meditation and prayer.

Collected Poems by T.S. Eliot

Eliot’s poetry is deep and inspiring, especially as he became a Christian later in life. His “Four Quartets” are probably my favorite poems of all time. This easy-to-travel-with volume was given to me by Peter and Grace Baughan, wonderful friends of the ministry. Peter loves Eliot’s poetry, too!

A Tale of Three Kings: A study in brokenness by Gene Edwards

Jeff Cole, Young Life Area Director in North Alabama, sent me this book. It is a short but powerful allegorical reflection on the kingships of Saul, David, and for a moment, Absalom.



ON NEWT'S BOOKSHELF THIS YEAR (2018): (CONTINUED)

Genghis Khan Series by Conn Iggulden

Genghis was fierce, fearsome and ruthless – not characteristics to be broadly imitated by leaders. However, he was also brilliant, innovative and adaptive in his methods of war, negotiation and rule. Joe Leininger, a friend and partner in Young Life, recommended this historical fiction series to me.

Waking up White: Finding Myself in the Story of Race by Debby Irving

I heard of this book before coming to Young Life, but saw Pam Harmon's (VP Capernaum) recommendation in an email and ordered it. Debby Irving does an amazingly honest job of telling her story of privilege and relating it to how to live responsibly in a society that has been shaped by race.

The Forgotten Ways by Alan Hirsch

Thanks to Marty Caldwell (EVP of YL International) for recommending this book! Hirsch studies periods of intense growth in the Christian church, and then insightfully distills the core DNA of these movements into a helpful lens through which to view our FORWARD movement in Young Life.

Pacific Crucible and The Conquering Tide by Ian Toll

The first two books in a soon to be finished trilogy of the Battle of the Pacific in WW2. Toll is a thoughtful historian and wonderful story teller with an eye towards the importance of key leaders and those who sacrificed in this pivotal series of battles, set into motion by the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours? by Roland Allen

This book was recommended by Hal Merwald, who served Young Life faithfully for many years. It's a prophetic work written in the early 1900's about the right focus and persistent pitfalls of foreign missions work. His next work, The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church, is also good and more refined.

The Diaries of Jim Rayburn selected and edited by Kit Sublett

This is a must read for every YL staff person, as it is deeply personal and always pointing to Jesus. Rayburn was a man of great vision and passion who was used by God to change the course of millions of people's lives who were introduced to Jesus and grew in their faith through Young Life. Bless the Lord for Jim!

Divided by Faith: Evangelical Religion and the Problem of Race in America by Emerson and Smith

This seminal work, written now close to twenty years ago, sheds light on the role that evangelicals have played and continue to play in the area of race in America. It catalyzed an important conversation and further scholarship that needs be rooted in practice in the church and in ministries like Young Life.



ON NEWT'S BOOKSHELF THIS YEAR (2018): (CONTINUED)

Washed and Waiting: Reflections on Christian Faithfulness and Homosexuality by Wesley Hill

This book was recommended to me by Ann Shackleton (VP of Human Resources) as we have been prayerfully and humbly navigating the issues of sexuality in our ministry. Wesley Hill, who has consulted with us on numerous occasions, writes a book that is sensitive, real and faithful in so many ways.

Humility by Andrew Murray

This short and deep treatise on humility was recommended most recently by Terry Looper, a longtime friend, former board member, and supporter of Young Life. Terry and I have had time to discuss how the Lord wants us to imitate our Savior in being humble servants.

The Prayer Covenant by Jerry Kirk

Jerry himself sent me a copy of his book about a year ago. Jerry met the Lord through Young Life, went on to become a staff member, a pastor of multiple churches and is the founder of "The 40 Day Prayer Covenant," which has been a big blessing to me!

Long Walk to Freedom by Nelson Mandela

I was inspired to read Mandela's profound autobiography prior to my visit to Africa and the Middle East in early 2017. It did not disappoint! His may be the best modern example of long obedience and sacrifice in the same direction that I have ever encountered.

A Secular Age by Charles Taylor

Winner of the 2007 Templeton Prize, this life's work by a leading social philosopher provides the foundation upon which we understand how our western societies have become more secular and less believing in God over the centuries. My wife, Susan, gave me this tome for my birthday!

The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr. edited by Clayborne Carson

As we approach the 50th anniversary of Dr. King's assassination this coming April 4th, I would recommend everyone read (or re-read) this account of his life and work as the leader of the Civil Rights Movement.

AN INNOVATIVE ADDITION TO YOUR YL FORWARD PLAN STUDENT LEADERSHIP PROJECT



"This experience changed the way I saw myself, my life, the world, God's love, and everyone around me!" -2017 SLP Student Session II

Since 2002, the Young Life Student Leadership Project (SLP) has been ushering in God's kingdom by training students to be multi-ethnic leaders and sending them into clubs, communities, and the world.

MAKE SLP PART OF YOUR FORWARD PLAN TO TRANSFORM KIDS WHO WILL TRANSFORM YOUR CLUB, AREA, AND THE WORLD! SLP is a 10-day leadership development/discipleship program for high school students completing their junior or senior year of high school. To promote a deep sense of mission, each SLP group is racially diverse, gender balanced, socio-economically varied, and host students from different parts of the country. This summer approximately 100 students will attend SLP at sites in Grand Rapids, Michigan; Chicago, Illinois; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; St. Paul, Minnesota; and St. Augustine, Florida. Nearly all students who have experienced SLP's transformational program of classroom instruction, service, and personal formation become active professionals and volunteers in ministries and nonprofits in their communities!

The purpose and content of SLP mirrors FORWARD's goals. This makes it easy to include SLP in any FORWARD Plan. SLP has four "Pillars" of learning that interlock with Forward's four strategies.

Deeper – SLP students learn and apply spiritual practices. Students are taught and have quiet times in scripture and prayer each day. In addition, students experience worship and regular prayer times with others.

"I learned hearing God and understanding is a matter of practice."

Together – Cultural Awareness is another pillar of SLP. Students explore the impact of their own ethnicity, learn about healthy interactions with others, and experience cross-cultural life with their SLP peers.

"I found there is something to be learned about God through every brother and sister I have in Christ."

Innovation – SLP students learn to be effective, innovative leaders by understanding their Calling. Primarily called to love God and serve others, SLP students explore how to do successful ministry based on their unique passions, talents, life experiences, and the opportunities God places in their lives.

"Sometimes we decide something for our own future, but God has better plans."

AN INNOVATIVE ADDITION TO YOUR YL FORWARD PLAN STUDENT LEADERSHIP PROJECT (CONTINUED)



Growth – Using the example of Jesus, SLP students learn Servant Leadership principles. Students are challenged to identify a personal mission for the 12 months following SLP. This year this will include organizing a project in their area in conjunction with YL Expeditions “YL Serves” on MLKJ Day, 2019.

HERE ARE SOME PRACTICAL WAYS SLP CAN SERVE YOUR MINISTRY:

- Areas can send a student to SLP to help advance FORWARD in their community.
- Big Areas and Metro Areas can send several students for a shared SLP experience to help initiate multi-ethnic ministry between schools and within a community.
- Regions can send a cohort of students to SLP to create a network of young leaders in the region and promote student led projects.
- Divisions can support an SLP site for their Division, identify and send students who show staff potential as a gateway to staff development.

YOUNG LIFE SUMMER CAMP PACKING LIST



EVER WONDER HOW YOU PACK FOR A YOUNG LIFE CAMP IN UZBEKISTAN?

A YL Staff leader's packing list can include anything from t-shirts to shaving cream to candy and costumes. We asked Gary Parsons to give us a little insight into what goes into packing and preparing for camp over in _____.

GARY SAID...

"You load up the biggest bag you can carry of potatoes on your back and hike up four hours to the site where you will be hosting kids for a week of camp and then you repeat that hike five more times to get the rest of the food and supplies up there before the kids arrive. It's a good time for prayer as you seek God for the hearts and lives of these kids and their families, communities and future of their country. You pray for the wars to stop, for Christian persecution to end and for clubs to be safe from government raids. That's the Uzbek version of our 10 hour bus ride to camp."

The commitment is the same in neighborhoods all over America as it is across the world. Loving kids unconditionally wherever they are and whatever circumstance we find them in, doing everything we can to create an opportunity for them to hear the gospel and to know the love of the Father.

In Matthew 4:19-20 Jesus calls us to be fishers of people, "'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will send you out to fish for people.' At once they left their nets and followed him." Dale Bruner said it best when talking about this portion from Matthew, "Come be my students and I will turn you into fishers of people. Jesus furnishes his invitation with an exciting promise. It is the promise of catching persons and of being effective with people." As leaders go off to camp this summer across the globe we must hold on to this central truth, that every day we must follow Jesus with all that we have and trust his life living in and through us to bring the gospel alive in the lives of kids we serve.

The calling is the same across the world whether it be in Uzbekistan, Nicaragua or Texas. What we pack in our bags physically may look very different, but what we pack spiritually is filled with the same life of the Holy Spirit and the same calling to be fishers of people. In John's gospel chapter 15:16, Jesus says, "you did not choose me but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit - fruit that will last and the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name." This summer all of God's resources, wherever you serve in the world are available to you through this truth. Ask God and he will supply all your needs. Camping Internationally may require some creativity in what we pack but no matter where you are we BRING the same thing- a heart devoted to Christ and passionate toward adolescents.

Author: Gary Parsons

MINISTRY IN UNLIKELY PLACES: SERVING THE REFUGEE POPULATION

We all have pictures in our mind of what Young Life camp looks like, right? However, there are a few camps happening this summer that look a little different from what we typically picture in our minds. Let's take a look at two camps to see what I mean: one you know and one you don't know.

Let's start with the one camp you probably don't know: Nyarugusu. You don't know it because it's not a Young Life camp; it's a refugee camp. Located in western Tanzania, between 139,000 and 400,000 refugees from DR Congo and Burundi live here in tents. Some have been here for over 20 years and some have just arrived. Over half of these residents are under 18 years old. They have fled warlords, rebel groups, tribal wars, genocides and food shortages.

One of these residents is a Young Life leader Pascal (name changed). He decided to follow Jesus at a Young Life camp in Congo and became a Young Life leader before he and his family were forced to flee insecurity caused by rebel groups. Pascal is recruiting leaders and working with our team in Tanzania to begin Young Life in Nyarugusu. We hope to bring kids from this camp to a very different kind of camp soon.

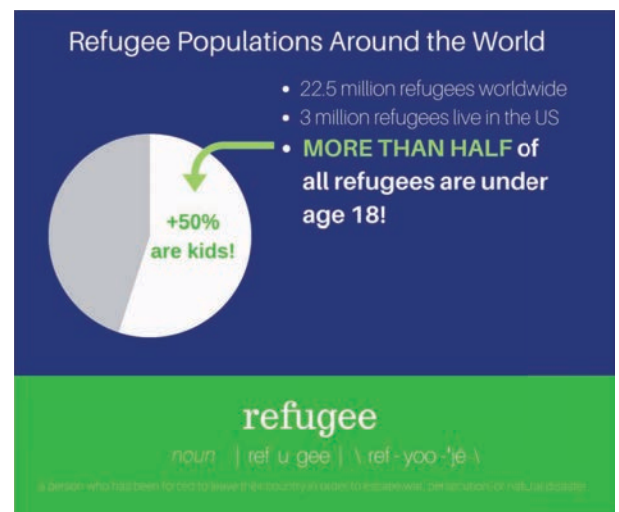
Now let's look at the camp you know: Timber Wolf Lake. Fast forward to July 3rd of this year. Picture 46 kids rolling off a bus at the welcome. Some are in headscarves, most laughing and speaking to each other in Arabic, a Burmese dialect or in Kiswahili. They are from Syria, Myanmar, Congo and half a dozen other places. All of them are from Southport High School in Indianapolis. Their leaders, Joe and Rachel Snyder, direct the area on the south side of Indianapolis where tens of thousands of these refugees have been placed. Many of them are part of the club at Southport High School. On July 3, 2018, they will experience a new type of camp...and Jesus' love for them.

- Across the world there are currently 22.5 million refugees and over 65 million people displaced internally in their own countries. More than half of these people are kids.
- Over 56% refugees live in sprawling tent camps in Africa and the Middle East.
- Over 3 million refugees live in the US.

There are hundreds of thousands of kids, most of whom have experienced trauma people in Western Europe or the US cannot imagine. Most of these kids do not know, or may not have even heard of Jesus, and are being gathered in unprecedented numbers into our countries and neighborhoods. What an opportunity we have as a mission that cares for kids who are lost and looking for a place to belong!

In YL Africa/ME we are committed to figuring out how to reach these kids. And people like Joe and Rachel are showing us all how to do it in our own cities. Ministry to widows, orphans, strangers and captives—this is real gospel ministry. God has positioned Young Life perfectly to be His hand in the lives of these kids and God is literally dropping these kids from the worst and hardest places on the planet into our backyards.

Written By: Steve Larmey. steve@ylafrica.com





THE BIBLICAL MANDATE THAT COMES WITH A HARVEST

“Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” (Matthew 9:38)

"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their words; that they may all be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in you; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me" (John 17:20, 21)
Lists. We use them all the time. Every time I go to Costco I have a hand-scribed list from Marni. I see others just like me in the grocery store... lists on paper, lists on phones, and calling in for a verbal list. Everyone in the famous movie that was on Schindler's "list" actually lived. It was a powerful list.

More than fifteen years ago, I challenged a campaigner group to pray for ten of their unsaved friends. A mom called me and asked if I could come by while her son was in school. I came by and she marched me into her son's bathroom and there on the mirror was a scrappy piece of paper list of ten kids names. "What is this?" I told her that these were the kids her son was praying for... all were in 9th grade. Today, everyone on that list knows Jesus and 4 of them are on Young Life staff.

We list out projects. We list out prayers. We list out who can come to a gathering. We have wedding lists. We have Christmas card lists. We are list people... and today, I want to challenge you to consider a new type of a list. The "Discipleship List." The Discipleship List was an assignment that really stuck with me when I went through the official "Young Life Practicum I and II" sometime in the late 80's. This list has two parts. First, who are the kids that you are discipling? Second, what are you wanting them to learn, experience, and do while they are under your tutelage?

It starts with YOU knowing the kids that you are discipling. (Discipling means teaching them to follow Jesus with their life, to love the word, prayer, to have fellowship, to be obedient, and to strive to follow the great commission.) The famous quote, "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail." You want to have a plan for who you are discipling.

Again, it starts with a list. Who has the Lord laid on your heart to "pour into." We call it so many things in Young Life. There are phrases you might use that I don't: my campaigners, small group, discipleship group, student leadership team, green beret campaigners, student leaders, etc. I would say it is as simple as a list. Who are the kids that you are going to give it all to? You are pouring your life into them - you are available to them always, and your life is an open book. They know they are on your list, and you know they are on the list.

I remember going to a restaurant that was owned by long-time Young Life supporter Bob Farrell. Sometimes when you went to his Stanford's restaurant you would see a person following the waiter or waitress around the restaurant. They literally just followed. At times, it even felt a little awkward. Well, it was actually a beautiful thing. They were "in training." Bob wanted them to see it all, the full scope of what it meant to take care of multiple tables, crunch time, mistake orders, etc. Who is following you around? What are you wanting to make sure they see?



THE BIBLICAL MANDATE THAT COMES WITH A HARVEST (CONTINUED)

My first year of Young Life training my trainer Jeff said, “What do you want to make sure your sophomore followers of Christ leave with in two-years?” Oh my, did this open up my mind of the possibilities! I wanted them to know so, so much. You could, and should, make some notes right now, on what you want your kids leaving within 6 months, in a year, in 2, or even 3 years. (If you have a WyldLife and a College ministry – you could have a 6-year plan.) What do you want to make sure they know about Jesus? About the Holy Spirit? About the Word? About scripture? About lifestyle evangelism? About service? About how to “do Young Life?”

In Young Life, at least in this 5 for Friday, I would hope people would make a “list.” Who is in your life? What list do you want to make sure they end up learning, experiencing, and doing?

My brainstorming of what a list could look like of what to impart:

- Have an accountability relationship/partner
- Treat your body with respect – temple of the Spirit
- Be able to write down 50-75 high school/junior high students by name from memory
- Develop a plan for your disciples
- Practice Spiritual Disciplines:
 - Reading
 - Memorizing
 - Church
 - Prayer
 - Journaling
 - Solitude
 - Sabbath
- Be a “come with person” – bring people with you to club, church, run errands
- Memorize TMS
- Lead a Campaigner Group
- Give your testimony
- Go on Work Crew (Summer)
- Go on Work Crew (Weekend)
- Do a service project
- Have a quiet time for 30 straight days.
- Do the Thread Journal — and give one away
- Have a list of 10 non-believing friends
- Be a student leader for Monday Club
- Speak well of others

Written by Eric Scofield (escofield@sc.younglife.org)



THE NEXT BIG THING IN YOUR REGION

How are we fostering innovation?

Is it just some lofty idea or something that truly impacts our local ministry?

The team over in Oregon got serious about this concept of innovation back in 2019 when they launched a Regional Innovation Team. Chris Herb raised a chunk of funds and deployed a team led by Area Director, Justin Scott, to foster innovation and help support these new ideas.

What Does an Innovation Team Do?

Justin and his crew focus on supporting their regional staff's crazy, new ideas to reach kids. Their goal is to fund ideas within the region that will help them reach new, and more kids. They provide support and feedback for new ideas throughout the region. They poke holes, listen, and throw out supporting ideas. They also help staff get the right people "in the room" to make those ideas come to fruition.

They also help FUND these innovative ideas. This team has an allocation of grant funds from their Regional Director to give to innovative ideas and projects throughout the year.

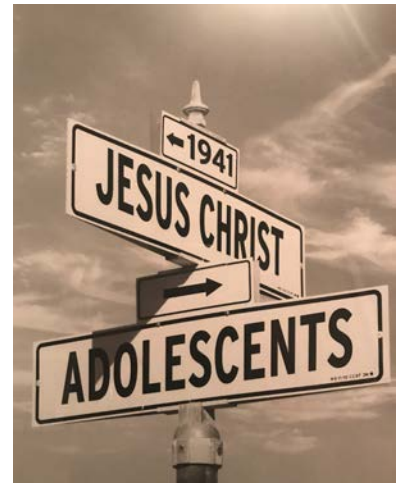
What Has Come Out of This Innovation Team?

Justin Scott shared some of the ways they've worked to reach kids in new, innovative ways. Obviously, COVID-19 threw a wrench in so many of "our" plans, but remember all of this was no surprise to God! In the past two years, and throughout the pandemic, this region has seen some pretty creative strategies come to life. The result: reaching MORE KIDS!

Here are a few of the new ministry approaches that have evolved:

- Gaming Ministry: Club anchored around a building that serves as an after school space.
- Angling Ministry: An avid fisherman takes leaders and kids out on the water and to learn how to fish and share the gospel in the process.
- 'Basketball in the Park' Park Cleanup: An under-resourced club in a bigger city had a local park where kids hung out consistently. The local team built up a basketball program, tournament, and club centered around this park!
- International Focus: One college director is thinking creatively around strategies for reaching international students on campus; she's building up a program aimed at engaging with international students that are on their campus.
- Skating Ministry: One community leveraged the skate parks in their community and set up ministry to reach this group of kids.

Innovation can happen anywhere. Sometimes when we are faced with the tightest constraints, we experience the biggest breakthroughs. The last year or so forced us all to do this in our local ministry. Odds are, you have innovative ideas happening in your own region. Our question is "do you have the support system to help you turn these ideas into real-life ministries?" Justin, Chris, and the rest of Oregon Cascades region are reaching new, and more, kids than ever before because they're leaning into new ideas. If you are interested in how your own region can build an innovation team or want to learn more about the structure of their innovation grants, reach out to Justin (scottyounglife@me.com)!



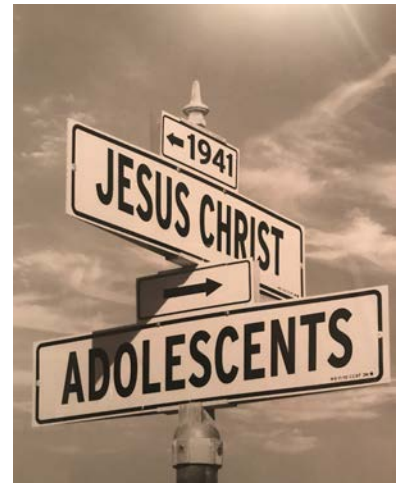
THE DAY MY VIEW OF YL GOT BIGGER (AND SMALLER) AT THE SAME TIME

YOUNG LIFE INTEREST MEETING, SEPTEMBER 1999

- The Time: 7-9 p.m.
- The Town: Mackay, Idaho
- The Location: According to my handwritten directions — the house 5 miles down a county road on the left-hand side just passed the split rail fence.
- The Purpose: Interest meeting to start Young Life.
- The Agenda: Starting club at Mackay Junior/Senior High School — enrollment: 92.
 - Prayer
 - Coffee, pie and brownies
 - Introduction and sharing
 - Discussion about kids at the local school (Mackay High — Home of the fighting Musersh!)
 - What is Young Life?
- The Attendees:
 - 12 adults (1 local pastor, 2 ranchers, 3 teachers, 5 parents and 1 forest ranger)
 - 3 dogs were left in trucks parked outside.

For much of my more than 40-year career with Young Life, this has been my life. It involves driving a few nights each week from small town to small town all over the Western United States with names you have never heard of and on county roads you have never been on. It involves traveling with the hope of getting to talk with people about bringing Young Life to their community. One of many pivotal moments was at a Young Life interest meeting sitting in Hilda Goddard's living room one fall evening. "We need to tell our neighbors in Challis, Idaho, about this Young Life thing!" was the reaction of Harold, (one man in attendance) at the end of the night. I soon discovered that the "neighbors" in Challis lived at least 60 miles away! My understanding of the word "neighbor" began to grow that night. The gap of distance was overcome by the closeness of circumstance. Even internationally, I have been struck by the countless villages, townships and small towns dotted all around the globe that share common traits and challenges. My constant prayer is that there are people in these places who will reach out to these kids to love them, walk with them and tell them about the hope that comes with a faith in Christ.

Harold, whether he knew it or not, shared the heart and vision of Jesus. He understood how God works through the ministry of Young Life to not only transform individual lives of students who attended Mackay Junior/Senior High School, but to a greater extent, the entire community. The book of Matthew tells us that "Jesus made a circuit of all the towns and villages. He taught in their meeting places, reported kingdom news, and healed their diseased bodies, healed their bruised and hurt lives" (Matthew 9:35, MSG). Jesus wanted His message to get to everyone, so He went places most people would pass by. He had a heart and vision for the next small town!



THE DAY MY VIEW OF YL GOT BIGGER (AND SMALLER) AT THE SAME TIME (CONTINUED)

We pass by our small towns and villages every day, giving them very little thought, but there are so many!

HERE ARE A FEW INTERESTING OBSERVATIONS THAT I HAVE LEARNED IN THE PAST YEAR.

- In the United States there are 18,025 small towns.
- There are over 32,000 schools in small towns; 18,000 are secondary schools.
- 21 percent of the U.S. population lives in small towns.
- 94 percent of the total square miles of the U.S. (3.4 million square miles) are considered rural.
- At-risk behavior statistics in rural communities are identical to urban centers.

HERE ARE SOME FACTS THAT YOU WON'T FIND ON ANY U.S. GOVERNMENT WEBSITE.

- Many small town high schools adjust schedules around the harvest or hunting seasons.
- The nearest Walmart may be over an hour away.
- The local high school may have special parking for students' tractors or horses.
- It is a community event when a new fast-food restaurant opens!
- Young Life leaders have been known to reschedule summer camp dates to not interfere with the County Fair.

... And there is a pretty good chance that you have a small town "neighbor" right down the street within 60 miles or less. So what do you do? Four steps to think about the NEXT school!

- Never Forget to Pray — Get a map and draw a circle with your town in the center of a 60-mile radius. Pray for towns in this circle; pray for the towns that jump out at you; pray as you drive through them; pray for the Lord of the Harvest to raise up workers. Do a prayer walk through the town. TRY THIS: Set an alarm on your watch to remind you to pray at 9:38 (Matthew 9:38). Pray each day for one or two of the towns in the circle of your "neighborhood."

— Ask your committee, leaders, friends, who knows somebody in these towns? TRY THIS: Contact Young Life Alumni & Friends to help you find people in town who may have a Young Life background. Make some calls to pastors, civic leaders, and business people.

- Extend a Hand — Get a leader, a committee member, club kid, friend and make a road trip! TRY THIS: Go to the town; spend time in the community. 1. Pray at the school. 2. Eat at a local restaurant. 3. Meet with a local pastor.
- Take the Next Step — Mobilize someone in the town to host a meeting of people who care about the kids in their community and need to know more about Young Life. You can check out the Small Towns Tool Box to give you ideas for this meeting.

There are Small Towns everywhere we go. Slow down, take some time to notice them and then do the NEXT steps. Email me if you would like to receive the Small Towns Newsletter or would like to attend the Small Towns Summit in December. To learn more or if you have any questions, check out the resources below for help.

Resources to Help: Small Towns — The Atlantic Magazine

Small Towns Director — J.C. Bowman — jcb31954@gmail.com, 208-866-0540

Jump Starts — Don Stuber — dstuber@sc.younglife.org, 360-789-6676

Ken Purnell — kendpurnell@gmail.com, 541-620-0270

Written By J.C. Bowman



THE COST (AND BENEFIT) OF LIVING IN COMMUNITY

- The Global Cities Fellows - Hong Kong -

“This is a true story of six strangers picked to live in community and work together to find out what happens when people start getting REAL!”

When we kicked off the GLOBAL CITIES FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM in Hong Kong we felt like we were getting ready to live a season of MTV’s Real World “Young Life Young Life.” We didn’t know exactly what would happen if we put three 22-year-olds from all corners of the earth in one global city to live and work together for two years. It had the potential of getting messy really quick. What happened was nothing less than a miracle and far exceeded our hopes and dreams!

There are primarily two needs of every Young Life area: 1) People, and 2) Resources. Since Hong Kong Young Life’s beginning five years ago, our biggest need has been — PEOPLE! People who understand Young Life and the unique culture of Hong Kong. We had open doors at schools but didn’t have the people to walk through those doors. Since we were too young to have “grown our own,” we needed to find a creative solution, which birthed the Global Cities Fellowship. The fellowship was initially a two-year program designed for young people with Young Life experience to come to Hong Kong to be team leaders and be a part of a training leadership program all done in community to eliminate loneliness and build a greater sense of team. Time, Experience, Responsibility, Community and Fellowship became some of the tenants of this program.

We expected to have all Americans but ended up with one American, one Thai and one of Nigerian-British heritage. We couldn’t have designed things any better. Why? Because of their intentional community! They each were able to bring and share their knowledge and experience of Young Life, Hong Kong culture, and youth culture. Each week they spent three hours in training together growing in Christ, learning Young Life principles, and discussing how to implement them in Hong Kong in their individual school context. They also lived life together — shared apartments by gender, socially hung out, were inclusive of each other and treated each other like family. We learned that the combination of experience and background was far greater than just having people come who know Young Life. The fellows’ diversity has made us a much stronger team and continues to breed more diversity and unity as we identify future cohorts. “How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity” (Psalm 133: 1).

The benefits far outweigh the costs of the fellowship, but they are still a reality. Hong Kong is the third most expensive city in the world, and providing housing for the fellows is expensive. Also Hong Kong Young Life currently carries a majority of the burden of their cost as opposed to the traditional Young Life sending process, and your situation may be different. That being said, the fellowship answers our need for a pipeline of staff associates and helps us “grow our own” faster and develop a rich environment of diversity and cultural understanding, making our team stronger together.

Cohort 2 (Hong Kong Young Life Season 2) launched this past month with the orientation of three more fellows each with their unique background to Young Life, Asian culture, Hong Kong school culture, and Hong Kong culture. We are excited to see the outcome of this group’s community. There is a cost to community — but it is a small price to pay!

If you are interested in talking more, please feel free to email me at suzanne@hongkong.younglife.org.

Some other useful information Hong Kong Young Life Website — GCF or follow them on Instagram at [younglifegcf](https://www.instagram.com/younglifegcf).

Written by Suzanne Sittko (suzanne@hongkong.younglife.org)



A 1% DIFFERENCE FOR YOUR MINISTRY

Football has started, kids are in school, and fall is in full swing. Of course the reality of Young Life is that “fall” is in full swing by mid-August. Here at the “beginning” of the year I’d like to offer a few thoughts, things that might make your year more productive.

An idea that has captivated me recently: Kaizen (the term means small continuous improvements).

“Put simply, the Kaizen approach is based on the belief that continuous, incremental improvement adds up to substantial change over time.”

Small adjustments can make a BIG impact:

Here’s the effect of a one-degree change in a flight plan:

- After 100 yards, you’ll be off by 5.2 feet. Not huge, but noticeable.
- After a mile, you’ll be off by 92.2 feet. One degree is starting to make a difference.
- After traveling from San Francisco to L.A., you’ll be off by 6 miles.
- If you were trying to get from San Francisco to Washington, D.C., you’d end up on the other side of Baltimore: 42.6 miles away.
- Traveling around the globe from Washington, D.C., you’d miss by 435 miles and end up in Boston!

Sometimes this is called “1 Percent Improvement.” Over time, 1 percent can make a big difference. The question is: WHAT 1 percent are you going to focus on? What small thing could make a big difference for your area, committee or club next year? What would produce the greatest impact if you focused your energies on a few critical small changes*, and didn’t get distracted by the hundred loose ends tugging on you daily?

*Notice I didn’t say “easy changes,” (they never are), and you have to stay with them doggedly to get the benefit.

ACTION STEP: What if next year ... ?

- You spent more time planning committee (or club) meetings and always finished on time?
- Every adult meeting started with a great devotional, a kid sharing, or a leader giving a ministry update?
- A group of adults prayed for club every week?
- You identified the 10 most important donor relationships for the area and did a great job thanking them and keeping them informed?
- You identified the three critical things that would make your area/club better and focused on that till it happened?

You get the idea. I don’t know what your 1 percenters are, but you do. Think about it. It’s worth it.

A lot of people are focused on football right now, but I’m thinking, what will be the few “1 percenters” that will be my highest priority this year?

— Written by John Evans (jevans80@mac.com)



WHAT TEACHERS THINK ABOUT YOUNG LIFE:

There is a large pool of potential volunteer leaders in your area right under your nose. Many have a vibrant faith, love teenagers and all of them are on campus doing contact work every day.

Who would that be? Teachers!!

Let me ask you a few questions:

- Do you actively seek out teachers to be members of your team?
- Do you do contact work with teachers, seeking out believers, striving to know them and helping them to become missionaries to their classroom?

I highly encourage you to do this. Teachers do more contact work with kids day in and day out than you or I would ever be able to accomplish. Partnering with teachers to know more kids will help ministry grow and go deeper.

During my 11 years in the classroom, I found myself connected much deeper to kids than my 10 years as a non-teacher volunteer or my last five years on full-time staff.

Our area has been blessed to currently have over a dozen teachers actively serving in my area. Some of these teachers simply lead a Campaigners group, while others serve in a full-on capacity. Many of our teacher-leaders have a minimal role in club but a considerable role in introducing our other volunteers to kids from their classroom.

When allowed, our teachers champion club and Young Life events. In more closed schools, they merely introduce kids to leaders at after-school events. I spend much of my time with teacher-leaders, encouraging them on how to be intentional with kids.

Here are just a few examples of the impact teachers can have when they are involved in their local Young Life area:

- They can spend one passing period per day being intentional in the hallway.
- They can use their before-school duty station to start conversations with kids they don't know well.
- They can spend one planning period per week connecting with other Christian teachers to pray for the school.
- Imagine what happens when a new teacher catches a vision to invite a cabin full of kids to summer camp.

Much of the expectations for teachers is the same as is for my other leaders, but some of it is more flexible. I seek to be intentional to avoid events during busier school times (quarterly exams, meet the teacher night) or not expect to see them at club on those days.

Ultimately, I discovered during my time as a teacher-leader that ministry gave me life even when I was overwhelmed by my teaching load. Being connected to students deeply through the Young Life ministry gave me a greater purpose and led me to pursue my calling versus just having a teaching career. Leading Young Life during those years kept me in the classroom for years longer than if had I simply been teaching my subject.

Seek to help teachers find their calling and fulfill the calling to truly be missionaries in the classroom through the mission of Young Life. For more information or resources for connecting to this vast pool of potential volunteers in your area, contact Carrolton Area Director Michael Cone at younglifecone@gmail.com.



UNWRAPPING THE GIFT OF HEALTHY SUPERVISION

A recent 5 for Friday 'ONE QUESTION SURVEY' asked a simple question about supervision:

"What are the top three qualities you want in a supervisor?" Hundreds of you responded! Thank You, for responding! Below are the qualities that were listed to choose from:

- strong leadership
- emotional stability
- encouragement and affirmation
- clarity on expectations
- empathy and compassion
- integrity
- disciplined and focused
- solid communication skills
- coaching and mentoring skills
- flexibility and accessibility
- clarity on expectations
- wise and strong knowledge base
- Confident
- Others? _____

AND THE TOP 3 ANSWERS WERE.....

- FLEXIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY
- STRONG LEADERSHIP
- SOLID COMMUNICATION SKILLS

T

he results may not be surprising because the qualities we want from a boss are understandable.

- We want to be noticed so we want someone to SEE us, (Accessibility)
- We want to give input so we want someone to HEAR us. (Communication)
- We want to learn and grow so it makes sense that we want someone to stretch, develop and CHALLENGE us. (Leadership)

But wait, in the COMMENTS section these desired qualities were also suggested:

- Spiritually mature
- Humble
- Macro-manager
- Detail oriented
- Visionary
- Speaks truth in love
- Servant leader
- Innovative/creative



UNWRAPPING THE GIFT OF HEALTHY SUPERVISION

And what about these attributes that didn't make the list:

- Loyal/committed
- Teacher
- Courageous
- Listener
- High EQ, CQ, OQ, SQ (all the Q's)
- Holds accountability
- Health conscious
- Learner/listener
- Professional
- Authentic
- Trainer

So, what about a second question- "How do you 'get' what you need from a supervisor?"

We know that no one can be all of the things listed above. Besides, our ability to receive good supervision is filtered through our own perspective. Although we may never agree on the most important qualities in a supervisor because of our own uniqueness, there are different qualities we need in a supervisor as we grow, mature and change.

Bottom line: You can't design your supervisor, but you can design your supervision.

Supervisors, have the conversation with the people you lead. Let them know what you expect and what you can offer them. Let staff know why you believe what you believe about supervision. Importantly, it's not just up to the supervisor to design.

Staff person, a form of "leading up" is letting your supervisor know what you need in supervision. In no way is it a demand, it is a conversation. Sure, you won't be asking your supervisor to be MORE confident, but you can ask them to be clear regarding expectations. Maybe you let them know you respond best when you have time to ask questions for clarity or that mentorship is of great value to you. Together, you can work to meet the needs.

Now what? So, do you as the supervisor or staff person need to have a conversation? Is it a good time to provide clarity or ask for what you need? If you think yes, then do something about it right now. Make a call now, set up a check-in, write out what would be helpful and discuss supervision. Supervisors want to be effective and as staff people we need to be supported----Have a conversation.

Written by Reid Estes estescoaching@gmail.com



FINDING HOPE AT THE SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL

In late January, I experienced my YL Training Timeline class at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City UT. One day as I waited in line for my 3rd film of the day, the person next to me leaned over and asked, "Are you a filmmaker?" I laughed, "Me? Nope! I'm here with Young Life staff for training!" Another "Only in Young Life" moment.

A group of 15 YL staff joined 250 Students from 22 Organizations, Seminaries, and Universities for a week of looking at the intersection of Faith and Film through conversations with each other Directors, Producers, Screenwriters and Actors. It was amazing and so instrumental in equipping me in my day to day work with kids. Robert Redford is credited with starting the festival in 1985 believing that "society relies on storytellers". Over the last several decades, the chance to share your story at Sundance has become a filmmaker's dream. Over the course of the Festival over 40,000 people descend on Park City, UT (pop. 8,378). This year, there was an astonishing 14,259 film submissions, of which only a select 112 feature-length films were chosen! The filmmakers are truly cultural theologians in how they identify longing, brokenness, need, and hope. One short film "Period. End of Sentence" was founded by a high school, listing a bake sale and yogathons as funding in the end credits. It felt like "us," how we'll do whatever it takes to fundraise get a kid to camp.

So....how did we end up there? The Windrider Forum gathers a group of believers at the Festival to explore faith in the midst of culture's primary form of storytelling - film. The group was named after the Hebrew word 'ruach', meaning "wind" or "spirit." The class was engaging, challenging and informative. Truly, the Sundance Film Festival may be one of the last cultural events that allow the YL Staffer to truly be 1 step ahead of the culture. We were challenged to have eyes to see and ears to hear where the Spirit of God was moving as we watched.

"Filmmakers are the poets and sages of our time" was a mantra we kept hearing. Each filmmaker risks to say something, to tell a story, to ask a question about real issues - mental illness, the death penalty, race, immigration, disability. And yet so many directors paint the world as they see it - broken, dark, unjust, without any sign of hope. The average Netflix user watches 71 minutes per day....numbing, consuming, grasping for something, being spoon-fed some version of truth. When I think about my Young Life kids' learning about life through a screen, it doesn't seem fair, it's not the whole story, it's not often a complete picture.

One film called "Gaza," showed raw and broken snapshots of daily life in a war-torn streets of the Gaza Strip. I was trying to have eyes to find a glimmer of hope amidst scenes of wreckage, but I struggled. Another YL staffer later said, "You know, they have Young Life in Gaza." Young Life in Gaza!! I got tears in my eyes, there it is: hope! God's writing a way bigger story sending light onto the streets of the Gaza strip. So we wrestled with questions - how can we, as believers, become redemptive storytellers? How do not only be students of students but also be students of the culture? It's what YL does so well, we go into the world of kids. What if we watched with a different lens - looking for hope? Then we would truly have a message worth seeing and sharing.

Keep an eye out:

Some of our favorite films to look out for include "The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind," "The Farewell," "Luce," and "Moonlight Sinata." Missed it this year? No fear, you should save the date for the next year it is offered.

Written by: Kaitlyn Ousley (kaitlyn.ousley3@gmail.com)



SEE YOU ON BROADWAY: A GLOBAL MINISTRY BUT ONE MISSION

“Broadway” to Africa and the Middle East...How did that happen?” What do Broadway Musicals and ministry in Africa/Middle East have in common? Well, at first glance...not much. However, this innovative fundraising event actually makes perfect sense. In the greater Denver area, there is a dynamic faith community of music lovers, theater goers, and committed Young Life fans who get together each year to put on a performance like none other. The ‘Big Idea’ surrounding Broadway to Africa (BTA) (a vision started by Shelley Sadler and a few others) was simply to have a musical experience, focused on Broadway show tunes, with the proceeds from the performances going to support ministry in Africa and the Middle East. What could be easier? ...just wait.

Young Life is present all over the country and around the world. From small towns to International, cities to college communities, to 103+ countries around the globe to over 1,300 YL Areas, 81,000 Volunteers and 5000 staff. In the midst of being in so many locations it can become a challenge to be truly together as ONE MISSION. The scripture verse that has surrounded BTA over the years has been Zephaniah 3:17, “...ours is a God who is with us...is mighty to save...delights in us...quiets us with His love...and (even) rejoices over us with singing”--a message we long to share. Ours... We... Us... Together language!

When BTA began in 2011, there were 18 cast members, one performance, one dress rehearsal, and the event raised funding to offset the cost of one Young Life Africa Women’s Leadership Summit serving 35 staff.

Now, 8 years later there are:

- 92 cast members,
- 4 months of rehearsals
- 10 sponsored Camps (8 in Africa, and 2 in the Middle East).
- 4 performances
- 3000 campers who will experience summer camp

Without a doubt, the most beautiful part of the Broadway to Africa experience over the years has been the privilege of watching the Lord move in and tangibly affect not only students in Africa and the Middle East. However, the 125+ people involved in production (i.e., cast and crew, band, costume designers, directors, and “sponsors”) and the hundreds in the audience are also deeply impacted. Broadway to Africa is a really creative and powerful tool in helping change lives both in the US and all over Africa and the Middle East. Steve Larmey (SVP A/ME) reminds the audience each year that “literally thousands of young people go to camp and have an experience that, in Africa and the Middle East, they rarely get to have. When they may otherwise live in utter poverty, war zones, or orphanages, at camp these kids are are fed, cared for, safe, loved, known, and noticed, all in the name of Jesus.” On the US-side Senior Director, Jennifer Condrey who has given her time to BTA since the beginning celebrates that “each year our practice and rehearsal season is an amazing 16 weeks of hard work, joy, and fellowship!”

It may be true that it takes a whole community to reach a community and when you do EVERYONE IS CHANGED! That is what we have seen happen each year at Broadway to Africa.

For more information about how you create your own ‘Kingdom-minded’ event contact Shelley Sadler or to learn more about the production, just click here. This year the production in Denver is June 7-9th. Being one mission is not easy, but it really can be beautiful and you may just find yourself singing. See you on Broadway!



CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE

“As pain often opens the heart of an adult, fun and laughter pry the lids off the hearts of kids.” — Charley Patten

“So you’re tellin’ me there’s a chance?!” In 1994, the movie “Dumb and Dumber” had every high school guy in America quoting that line and dreaming of riding a moped to Aspen, Colorado. At the time, my friend Tim was about to enter his senior year of high school in Raleigh, North Carolina. One of his Young Life leaders, Eric, invited Tim and his buddy Jason, on the adventure of a lifetime: a road trip to Aspen.

Eric made the guys clear it with their parents, but later Tim confessed that he’d just ask his mom if he “could go to the mountains with Eric.” He didn’t tell her he meant the Rocky Mountains.

Their four-day road trip began with a 24-hour sprint to Colorado, only stopping when they needed gas. Once they hit the Rockies, they decided to keep going and eventually detoured through Mexico on their way to L.A. and the Pacific Ocean. On the way home, instead of stopping in Raleigh, they passed through their hometown and added four more hours to the drive, just to put their feet in the Atlantic Ocean and make it official that they’d driven “coast-to-coast.”

6,000 miles. 26 states. 4 days. 3 friends. 2 countries. 1 Ford Explorer.

Tim is now 40 and has been doing Young Life for close to two decades. I once asked him when he started following Christ. That’s when he told me the story of their trip. Tim told me, “Over those four days, Eric not only talked with us about Jesus, but he showed us Jesus. And that trip sealed the deal for me. After that, I was all in with Christ. Cold turkey. My life has never been the same.”

When you read the Gospels, you may notice another road trip: one that happened 2,000 years ago.

3,000 miles. 13 friends. 3 years. 1 Rabbi.

The Teacher had a few years before He was heading off to His Father’s house, so He invited 12 guys, maybe some around the same ages as Jason and Tim, to take a three-year road trip with him. The plan was to go about 3,000 miles on foot. The Rabbi asked them to drop everything, to abandon their jobs, leave their families, and to follow Him. And they did.

Isn’t that what most teenagers would’ve done when given the choice between responsibility and adventure? Over the course of those next three years, the Teacher showed them what real love looked like. That trip sealed the deal for 11 of them. After those three years, they were all-in with the Teacher. So much so, that 10 of them died a martyr’s death. They were so convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, they gave up their very lives, cold turkey.



CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE (CONTINUED)

What would it look like for you to tap into your teenage friends' instinct for adventure?

The summer offers great opportunities for spontaneity, and it doesn't just have to happen at a Young Life property. For the past 20 years, I've been taking guys on a summer adventure trip in the North Carolina mountains. We hike, camp, fish, jump off cliffs, and ride down waterfalls. We sleep in ENOs, build campfires and have cabin time under the stars. And it usually only costs about \$75/person.

Here's a link to help you plan your own mini-camp.

The best way to begin is to simply make a list of 10 names you'd like to invite.

Start praying for them (and the trip) now. Brainstorm with them.

Few things are as bonding as choosing your own adventure.

Written by Drew Hill (yldrew@gmail.com). Drew is a pastor in Greensboro, North Carolina, and has been doing Young Life since the '90s. Ten years ago, he started the The Young Life Leader Blog and last year released a book for Young Life leaders called "Alongside: Loving Teenagers with the Gospel."



WHAT I LEARNED FROM FIVE YEARS OF GOING TO YOUNG LIFE CAMPS

I have been on staff for 28 years. That's a lot of contact work, J.V. sports, Chipotle burrito bowls, last-minute mixers, whipped cream, and Monday night clubs.

When I add up all the summer assignments, fall weekend camps and countless summer experiences, I realized that I have been on a trip, at a camp, sleeping under the stars or on a bottom bunk for over 4.5 years of my adult life. Literally that is "years of camping." With so many trips over the last few decades, you would imagine that they are all a blur, however, it is not hard for me to identify my favorite type of trip. NOT favorite property, adolescent generation or graduating class, but my favorite style of camping.

The answer? **Adventure camps!** Whether backpacking, houseboats, mission trips or sea kayaking, those have been some of the richest experiences I have ever had with students.

What happens on these trips that is different?

- The 168 hours (a seven day week) of an adventure camp is a rare un-programmed event so you have to be **INTENTIONAL**.
- On a trail, or in a boat you are forced to talk, and over time the conversations go from the superficial to the **REAL**.
- Most of these trips are designed toward second-timers or students at an "**AGE AND STAGE**" that is pivotal in their discipleship and maturity. Those "crossroad" moments are few and far between.
- In a culture that can be comfortable and numb (physically, emotionally and spiritually), **BROKENNESS** is rare.
- Jesus was "dangerous" in a few contexts: when He asked questions, when you were with Him one on one, and when you encountered Him on a road or trail. **ALL THREE** of those happen during an adventure camping week.
- Believers grow when they ask heartfelt, sincere **QUESTIONS** too. It takes time to ask the question behind the question.

Over the past few years we have had an opportunity to focus on the second half of the mission statement through discipleship experiences. When you design your camping plan for all 11 years of ministry (from junior high to college) it makes sense to include some of the gems of our adventure camps.

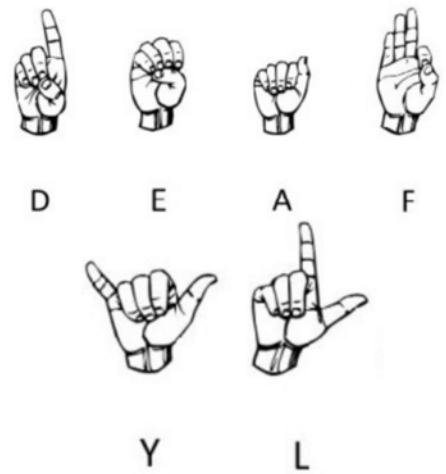
ANNOUNCING THE ADVENTURE CAMPING PILOT PROGRAM

This fall you will have the opportunity to apply to be part of an adventure camping pilot where Young Life areas that have not yet had a long history of camping at these camps would be given the opportunity to schedule trips, receive a discount and foster a culture of discipleship camping.

The draft application is on this [link](#). The application opens up in September and each U.S. region can submit one area that fits the criteria. We want Young Life areas that have NOT traditionally utilized adventure camps to start fostering a culture of discipleship camping. The pilot application process opens in the early fall of 2019, but look over this [LINK](#) and contact your regional director.

Hope to see you on the trail!

Written by: Ken Tankersley



A SIMPLE PLAN TO ENGAGE ONE OF THE MOST ISOLATED COMMUNITIES IN THE WORLD

Around the world, it is estimated that anywhere from 0.2%-2% of Deaf people say they know Jesus. In the USA, that statistic is slightly higher at 2%-4%, but when you consider that 96% of Deaf people would say they DON'T know Jesus, that makes the Deaf community one of the most unreached people groups in our communities. That's what makes Deaf Young Life so special and so needed.

I'm honored to be part of this unique and special ministry. As a senior in high school, I found myself on a soccer bus with a Deaf freshman who had made the team. My school had a mainstream program, so I went to school with Deaf students right in my own classrooms for years. As I got to know this girl, I invited her to come to Young Life and eventually she started bringing a few other Deaf friends to club too.

I felt a distinct tug from God to start a club just for this community, so in 1997, we started the first club at the Oregon School for the Deaf in Salem, Oregon. A few years later I stumbled upon a club happening at the California School for the Deaf in Fremont. We started collaborating with the California club for camp and other club ideas.

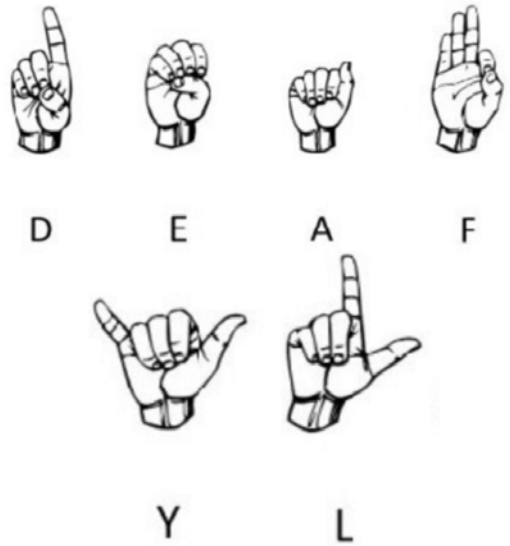
Deaf Young Life club looks a lot like any other Young Life club you'd walk into on a Monday night. It's the same everywhere, but different everywhere at the same time!

The logistics of an all-Deaf club is where it starts to look a little different. Deaf kids often live further away from the actual school they attend because school districts will often place all Deaf kids in one school to help meet their needs. Travel to club can be a little tricky. Music sounds a little different sometimes with mainly a drum beat that kids can feel, and it's really loud. Physical touch (tap on the shoulder) or flashing lights is how we get everyone's attention.

Theater, improv and story is important in Deaf culture, and we incorporate that into club. Deaf culture is highly interactive and interrupting with questions is not uncommon at an all-Deaf club.

I remember being just shocked to learn one of my girls didn't know what the cross meant. Around Easter, one of the girls finally heard the gospel through sign language and said "THAT'S what the cross is about? I had no idea." She had been going to church with her family for years and never fully understood it because English was not her first language, and no one had ever shared it with her in her main language.

I've learned so much more about this community over the years. Deaf people are so unreached, and starting down this path raised that awareness tenfold. My eyes were opened to the fact there simply are not many resources focused on reaching Deaf teens.



A SIMPLE PLAN TO ENGAGE ONE OF THE MOST ISOLATED COMMUNITIES IN THE WORLD (CONTINUED)

In a lot of ways, we're building something new here. There's a lot of potential, with 100 Deaf schools in the United States and only a handful of ministries. Young Life has four active Deaf Young Life ministries and countless clubs around the world who have Deaf students popping in.

But, we can do so much more!

Where to start?

Do you want to plug into Young Life ministry to the Deaf? Do you want to help start a club specifically for Deaf teens? I'd love to help you find a way to plug in.

Be aware. For Deaf students, being Deaf is how they identify culturally. The culturally correct term is Deaf or hard-of-hearing, not "hearing impaired." If you aren't sure, use what term they use or use "Deaf."

Remember that visual cues are vitally important for anyone with hearing loss. Don't assume everyone can read lips, or even if they do, that they understood 100% of the message.

Pray for our Deaf teens. Be aware of the needs in your own town and ask God if there are ways He wants you to get involved.

Written by Araya Williams (info@sonshineinterpreting.com)



ARE WE THERE YET? START PLANNING YOUR 2020 DISCIPLESHIP CAMP PLAN

“Are we there yet” echoes through the forest up the mountain, across the glacier, up the inlets on a daily even hourly basis on our Beyond Malibu trips. The answer is often “no” followed by “it’s just around the corner,” “it’s when we get out of the forest,” or “it’s not long now.” These responses are more describing the journey rather than the end.

Adventure camping experiences are a great opportunity to turn the “Are we there Yet?” question into a conversation about how the journey we are on can translate to our journey of faith and our journey in life.

Adventure camping experiences are in large part about the journey. On adventure experiences you do the best you can with what you’ve got, from where you are, right now. You are focused in the moment on solving the next step. Soliciting help from those around. You are embracing the moment and journey.

These are tangible experiences that serve as a great metaphor for our lives and faith.

Young Life Beyond Malibu seeks to change lives through adventure ministry. Week-long challenging sea kayaking and mountain adventures in British Columbia, Canada are designed to challenge high school and college students, and adults of all ages to explore who they are in Jesus Christ and their relationship to God.

Looking for an adventure of a lifetime?

We have 8 National Young Life Adventure camps that are designed to help you encourage your high school friends in their journey with Jesus Christ. They range from camp based adventures to Pioneer experiences to hiking on islands in Lake Superior, or in the San Juan mountains of Colorado or the coastal mountains of British Columbia Canada to sea kayaking on Lake Powell and the inlets of the coast of British Columbia. There is something for everyone.

Considering going Beyond your regular camping plan? As you contemplate the journey that you are taking your Young Life friends on whether students, leader or committees and you think of Going Deeper in your area, consider including one of these adventure camps, which are focused on providing discipleship experiences for your participants, in your camping strategy. Start planning now! Consider a graduating senior trip or a student leader trip as they go into their senior year, or a milestone trip as students move from accepting to walking with Christ.



ARE WE THERE YET? START PLANNING YOUR 2020 DISCIPLESHIP CAMP PLAN

Young Life Adventure Camps:

YL Adventures Baja
Scotts Valley, CA
530.448.6026
info@adventures.younglife.org

YL Adventures Beyond Malibu
Seattle, WA
206.525.0791
beyondmalibu@beyondmalibu.younglife.org

YL Adventures Northbound
Lake City, MI
231.839.7552
bsharp@twl.younglife.org

YL Adventures RMR Backcountry
Fraser, CO
970.726.6690
admin@rmr.younglife.org

YL Adventures Santa Cruz
Scotts Valley, CA
530.448.6026
info@adventures.younglife.org

YL Adventures Wild Ridge
Mt. Nebo, WV
304.404.2005
dbaumann@awr.younglife.org

YL Adventures Wilderness Ranch
Creede, CO
719.395.6602
wilderness@wilderness.younglife.org

YL Adventures Pioneer Plunge.
Weaverville, NC
828.645.7187
kfarren@wg.younglife.org

Written by Rob Duyker (rduyker@beyondmalibu.younglife.org)



SHAKING UP THE YOUNG LIFE CAMPING MODEL!

I have the privilege of hearing incredible stories from around the globe of leaders and staff using camping activities with friends of every age. There have been some amazing sightings of innovation in action, as we all strive to maximize every opportunity to share the Good News! Let me share with you just a few...

Did you hear the one about...?

1. 217 young men and 40 of their leaders attended Young Life's Basketball Camp in Erie, PA.
2. "Fowling" became a new free time activity at Timber Wolf Lake. It was a big hit!
3. Escape Rooms have been a great cabin unity game at Cairn Brae.
4. Kids of all ages and abilities went Adventure Camping this summer with their leaders! Of note,
 - WyldLife kids went backcountry hut camping, a brand new trip option with Adventures RMR Backcountry this summer.
 - Capernaum kids went Adventure Camping at Pioneer Plunge, Adventures Northbound, and Adventures Wild Ridge.
5. Young Life College students helped 17 camps prepare for summer by serving at "Work Week." All combined, they performed over 50,000 hours of labor to help prepare an extraordinary environment for kids to encounter Jesus!
6. 360 families experienced camp and heard the Good News together at Trail West this summer. They came from 26 states and 79 of those families have a spouse serving in the military!
7. 202 kids came to camp in the U.S. from overseas this summer. And, 1,321 Americans have traveled to 28 countries so far this year with YL Expeditions. YL kids, leaders, adults and families are connecting around the world!
8. Macedonia hosted its first summer Young Life camp ever! There were 63 campers and over half chose to receive a Bible.
9. 58 Capernaum friends and 23 YoungLives teen moms served on either Work Crew, Summer Staff, or Assignment Team this summer. That is the most ever in one summer!
10. Over 9,500 volunteers and staff shared a common daily devotional this summer – Rooted, by Crystal Kirgiss.
11. This school season, our camps are planning to serve around 230 YL weekends. All combined, at our camps and through the other creative ways you are camping with kids, we will exceed 103,000 Young Life guests in the U.S. this school year!

What a privilege it is to work together to extend appealing and meaningful invitations to kids to encounter Jesus and grow in their faith. Thank you for striving after the best ways to reach kids in your community. I can't wait to see what we say yes to next, as we continue to serve Christ together and set leaders free to minister to every kind of kid!

With Gratitude,
Chad Sievert
VP of Camping
csievert@sc.younglife.org



DID YOU KNOW...?

Did you know?

- The hardest question for a military teen is “where are you from?”
- 1 of 5 Military teens has made a plan to end their own life (USC survey)
- Military teens move 10 times more often than civilian families - on average every 2-3 years. every 18- to 30-months, and start all over again...
- Since 2001, more than 2 million American children have had a parent deployed at least once.
- More than 900,000 children have experienced the deployment of one or both parents multiple times.
- Young Life has focused on military teens since 1959

Young Life has been working to reach military teens since 1959 when Jim Rayburn identified the teen-aged children of U.S. Military Families stationed in Europe as a unique demographic that Young Life needed to reach, reporting to the YL Board of Trustees that, “...these kids are stranded. If we don’t go after them, no one will.”

Since Sept. 11, 2001, the U.S. Military has endured the longest period of sustained armed conflict in the history of our nation, according to the Department of Defense. The current generation of teenagers has known only a post-9/11 world, which has been characterized by the frequent extended deployments of their military parents.

As the “Did you know?” opening statements share, military teens face unique challenges, but the broadening experiences of military life and the military community values of resiliency, service, and sacrifice give these teens high potential to become leaders and world-changers. Helping these teens find faith can help them avoid the negative factors of their high-risk profile and can help them fulfill their full God-given potential.

Young Life Military is authorized to bring the Club Beyond ministry on-installation, “inside the gate,” at individual military installations around the world, and conducts ministry to military teens at these installations in close coordination with Military Chaplains and Installation Commanders. Young Life Military has staff openings at installations in the United States and around the globe, and filling these openings to keep up with the military’s demand for Club Beyond ministry is YL Military’s #1 challenge. Perhaps you are hearing the “call of duty” to serve in ministry to military teens, or you know someone who is hearing that call. If so, please contact Phil Alfrey at palfrey@military.younglife.org

Please see this month’s survey question, which asks you about personal connections you may have to the Military. We’d love to hear your story!

Written by Marty McCarty, VP YL Military (mmccarty@military.younglife.org)

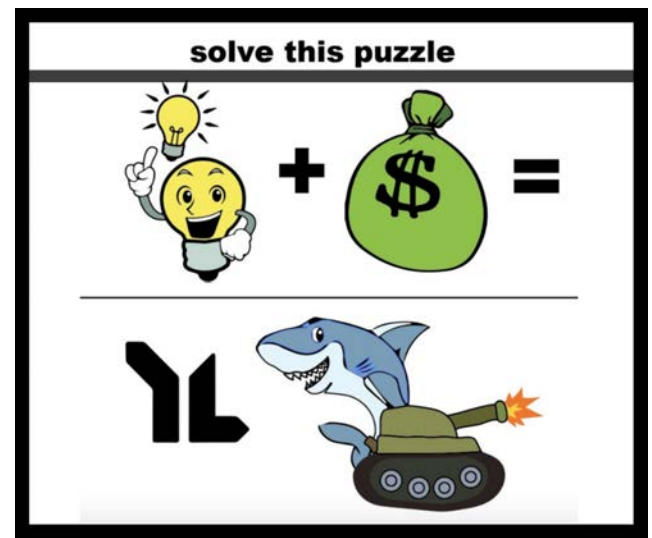
WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF HAD \$\$\$\$\$ TO REACH MORE KIDS?

Ok, made you 'click!' We may have gotten your attention with the title, but it's going to be worth it.

Now let's give you the big vision: YOUNG LIFE INNOVATION SHARK TANK! In a mission full of ENTREPRENEURS we are hoping to identify The Next Big Thing. It could be a new ministry model, game-changing idea, or training approach that will go viral across the mission. In our- close to 80 years of history as a mission, the list of innovations is impressive: Young Life College, YoungLives, 15 minutes of silence, The Crud War, The Big Cookie, 'Got milk?' Club, Capernaum, Oct-a-Ball, YL Connect, Deaf YL, ...and the list just goes on and on.

So, if you have an idea that could be a game-changer as we endeavor to reach more kids than ever, THIS IS YOUR CHANCE! If you can dream it, then we can help you build it! So here are the details:

- INNOVATION SHARK TANK - All across the mission, staff are submitting ideas that will help us reach more kids than ever and we will help the most compelling ideas scale across contexts, Regions, and Divisions. We are essentially creating a YL version of SHARK TANK!
- GOAL- Identify some the next innovations that could be a game changer in 'reaching more kids" than ever before.
- WHO CAN WIN? Anyone! Just have a well-thought-through model in your local context that can be scaled.
- WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO? The first step of the process is a simple email to TANK (kenbtank@gmail.com) and answer the following questions. .
 - 1. Your Name, email, and contact phone #.
 - 2. Division, Region, Area name
 - 3. Brief description of the idea. (2-3 Sentences)
- WHAT KIND OF IDEAS DO WE WANT? We want well thought out, compelling, scalable project ideas. We want something that you have been doing locally would be the best. If you win, you will get coaching and design support, as well as possible funding to help scale your project. Some SAMPLE IDEAS that others have suggested are:
 - A new ministry model
 - Student leadership initiative
 - A camping model, tweak, or new design
 - Volunteer Team Leader training
 - A contact work initiative
 - Creative club ministry (lunch, school or community based etc.)
 - Ministry cohort training for a Region or Division
 - A volunteer leader recruitment/training or development idea
 - Contact Work initiative within a Division or Region
 - Campaigner vision initiative tied to evangelism and discipleship
 - Creative core ministry/specialized ministry growth initiative
 - Student Staff Pilot (new model or curriculum)
 - Teacher/Coach volunteer initiative



WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF HAD \$\$\$\$\$ TO REACH MORE KIDS? (CONTINUED)

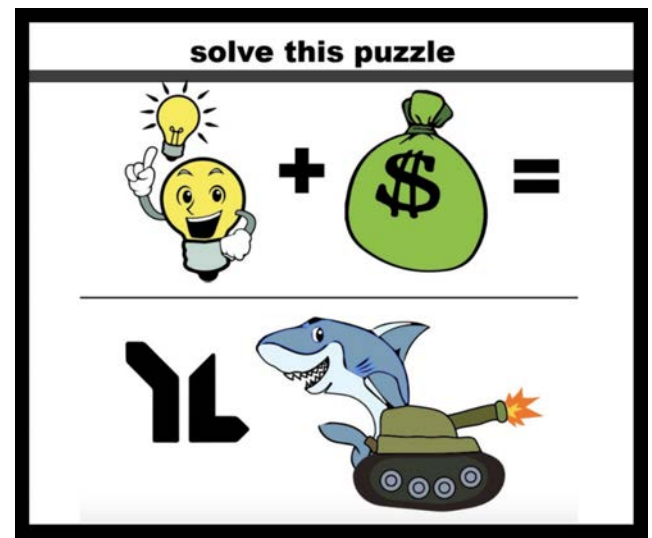
You get the idea?

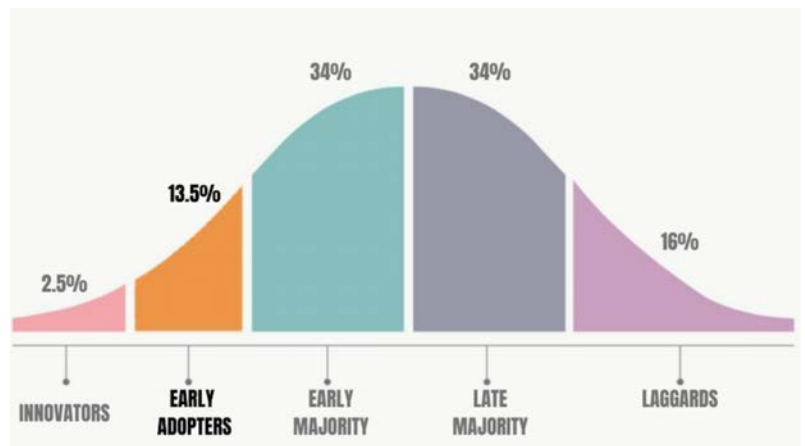
What we know for sure is that...

A good IDEA, can become a MOVEMENT,
MOVEMENTS help design PILOTS,
PILOTS that work, become MODELS and,
MODELS can then become a MINISTRY,
And a good MINISTRY could be THE NEXT BIG THING!

Come with your best, game changing, exponential, leveraged effect idea! Help us reach the next kid through the next big thing and change the world! We will wait for your email!

- Young Life, Global Innovation and Growth Office
(kenbtank@gmail.com)





"ARE YOU OPEN TO AN IDEA?"

I was described by a friend last month as an 'early adopter.' I understood the term but hadn't really thought about it much. I asked why he would describe me that way and he said, "because every time we try to solve a problem you always say phrases like 'what if?,' 'let's try it,' and 'why not?'" I guess that's true and I probably have at least one person to thank. You see, for more than 20 years I've had the privilege of being mentored by Ted Johnson, former interim President of Young Life and "encourager-in-chief" for the mission. There have been many times in that 20 years when I needed advice. Sometimes the situation was work-related and sometimes personal. Most of the time, upon approaching Ted for help, he started his thoughts by asking me a question - "are you open to an idea?" My response to that simple question would change everything. Because of my respect for Ted, I almost always said 'yes' and that response changed the course of the conversation to a new approach, plan or path.

YL is full of early adopters who are open to ideas.

I am thankful that we embraced the list below:

Contact work

The 'Clubble' and the Big Cookie

Summer Camp obstacle course and Real Life

Multi-Ethnic Student Staff

The Local Committee model

WyldLife

Capernaum

YoungLives

Young Life College

...And the list goes on and on, ideas that gain traction and become part of the fabric of the mission. I guess we all have benefited from someone who was open to an idea. It seems like early adopters are always trying to find a new way... see a way... or make a way to get things accomplished. We need that creativity now more than ever in the mission of YL. We are in a time where more and more is asked of everyone on staff, and our openness to ideas becomes increasingly relevant to our individual and corporate success. A humility, flexibility and teachable spirit, need to continue to be the mark of the culture of YL.



"ARE YOU OPEN TO AN IDEA?"

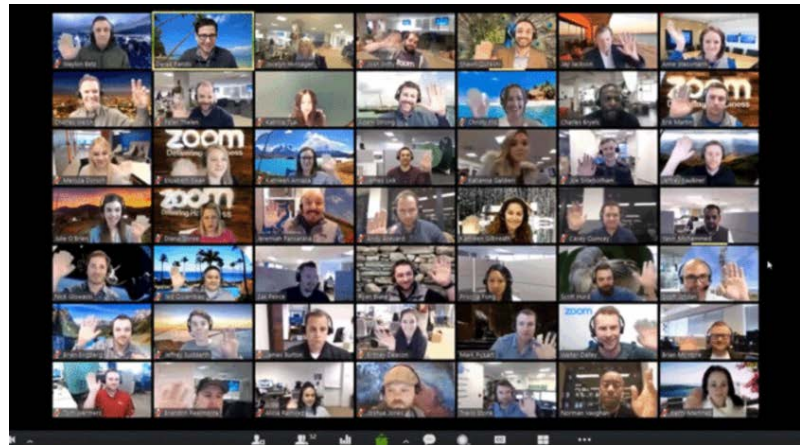
One of the great attractions to being on Young Life staff is that often our entrepreneurial spirit is able to shine through. We get to make decisions about how we function in the day to day. Busy ministry entrepreneurs must always be looking for an opportunity to create, innovate, and improve. If we don't, we miss out on game-changing ideas simply because someone else invented them or we didn't take the time to educate ourselves.

For the last few years I have been a member of YL's Innovation Team. I have been impressed that we are surrounded by game-changing ideas in this mission. In a time where building relationships with kids is more difficult than ever, we create 'Brilliant at the Basics' and see dozens of Regions benefit from this cohort training. During a time of unprecedented growth in the mission, Volunteer 101 gets developed so that we are able to give every leader in the mission- core and principled training. With camp costs and transportation costs rising, ideas like the Campership Legacy Fund are developed with currently over 25,000 kids to camp. Lastly, in a time where the priority of discipleship is paramount, tools like The Good Way, the Rooted Devotional, and Summer Staff training arrive.

Adopting new ideas is hard work. The process can feel a bit like leaning backwards off the cliff at Frontier Ranch with your first repel alongside kids. It can be scary! However, if we can become an 'idea culture' that looks for the very best of what other people are inventing and incorporate those great ideas into the way we operate as a mission we can potentially become even more fruitful than we already are. Ultimately, God is the Lord of the harvest. But we can and should work to do our part as thoughtfully, prayerfully, and efficiently as possible. That may mean looking outside ourselves for the very best of ideas that others have to offer. Together!

So if you are open to new ideas - we have them. Currently there are dozens of initiatives around the mission that range from ministry models to funding structures and from volunteer leader recruitment to staff development and spiritual growth. 'Are you open to an idea?'

Let's talk - Jeff Rudder (JRudder@sc.younglife.org) Executive Director, The Young Life Foundation



THE UPSIDE OF THE NEW NORMAL

“WOW! What a couple of weeks!” That is how most emails, texts, calls and virtual conversations start now.

All of us have been affected by CV-19. Our families, our schedule, our work, our finances, and health are all in flux. We have even had to adjust to a new lexicon of words as well: ‘Contagion,’ ‘Pandemic,’ ‘Social Distance,’ ‘Shelter in Place,’ are a few. Those words have disrupted our natural routine, made us pivot as a ministry, inclined us toward the Lord and given us fodder for animated ‘kitchen table’ conversations with family. Some vocabulary that we have had to familiarize ourselves with are below.

VOCABULARY SURROUNDING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

- **ASYMPTOMATIC** (adjective): showing no symptoms of a particular disease
- **CARRIER** (noun): a person that transmits a disease to others, whether suffering from it themselves or not
- **COVID-19** (noun): official name for the novel coronavirus disease **COVID-19 = CO**rona**VI**rus **D**isease-20**19**
- **EPIDEMIC** (noun): occurrence of a particular disease in a large number of people in a particular area
- **INCUBATION PERIOD** (noun): the time from first exposure to a disease to the time when symptoms develop
- **INFECTIOUS** (adjective): describing a disease that can be transmitted through the environment
- **ISOLATION** (noun): separation of infected people from healthy people for serious contagious diseases
- **NOVEL** (noun): the word novel means “new”
- **OUTBREAK** (noun): a sudden occurrence of a disease (or other unpleasant thing)
- **QUARANTINE** (noun): isolation of people exposed to an infectious disease to see if they develop symptoms
- **SHELTER IN PLACE** (verb): isolate oneself; put oneself in quarantine, away from other people
- **SOCIAL DISTANCING** (noun): practice of minimizing contact, by banning large or small groups/meetings
- **SYMPTOMATIC** (adjective): showing symptoms of a particular disease
- **VACCINE** (noun): a substance used to protect humans and animals from a disease
- **VIRUS** (noun): a living thing, too small to be seen without a microscope, that causes infectious disease

How does a relational ministry thrive in a social distancing world. All of us have pondered, “how will we reach more kids when we can’t even be in a room with them?” But maybe there is another perspective that we can embrace? The phrase I have heard this week is “new normal.” I’ve been told we need to accept it, acknowledge it, get used to it, and adjust to it. The new normal could be a world with 6 feet of personal space, masks, essential travel, and governmental directives but here is the part of the new normal that I think could be helpful.

Written by Ken Tankersley



THE UPSIDE OF THE NEW NORMAL

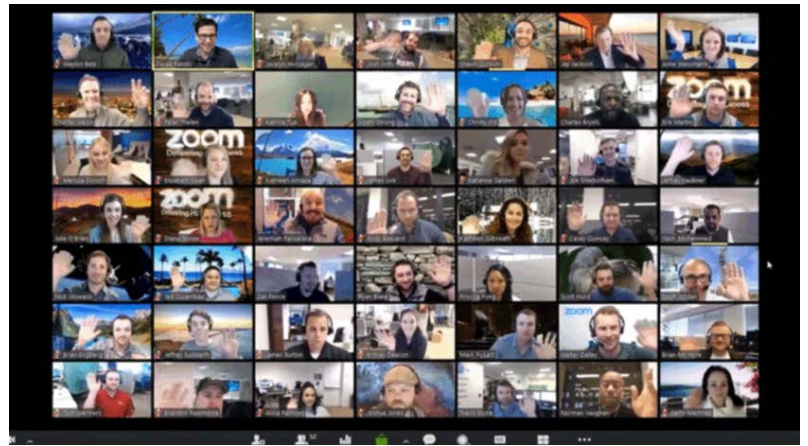
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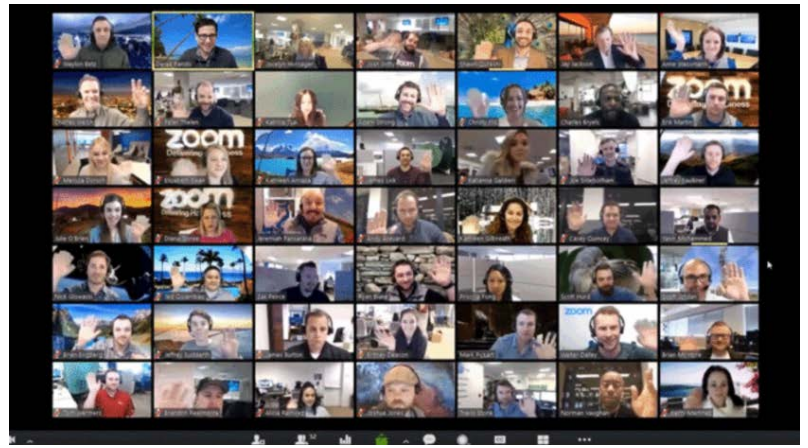
THE UPSIDE OF THE NEW NORMAL (CONTINUED)

- A new normal where our rhythm is slower
- A new normal where our families are closer
- A new normal where rich conversations are daily
- A new normal where relationships are deeper
- A new normal where hope and peace resurface
- A new normal where every day we are finding new ways to meet more kids
- A new normal where a hunger for God's will grows -- globally
- A new normal where we are as comfortable being 'together and with' as 'off and alone'

You see, Social Distance by its definition is exclusively PHYSICAL, but YL's model of ministry is way more comprehensive. There is a closeness that is physical but also, RELATIONAL, SPIRITUAL, AND EMOTIONAL. Those connections can still happen with a potency and intentionality that hasn't been experienced recently. As we all are aware, if we take away one faculty, other capabilities have the opportunity to become more acute.

The world has been forced to stop and it is not over. What if we saw our current situation as an opportunity to stop, assess, talk, train, listen, and learn. In short-RESET. As we go forward in slow motion, the adjustment in speed may give us a window to see in detail. With restrictions we face - we will find a way. There is nothing more innovative and GOSPEL-centered than that! This global crisis could be one of the greatest opportunities for the mission and for that hope to spring from this tragedy has precedent all throughout the Bible- let's not miss it.

In the early days of COVID 19's growing presence in the US, Lynn Unger penned a simple poem about a virus that went viral on social media. It catches the tension of socially distancing and relationally connecting. Maybe we could adopt her words in our prayers.



THE UPSIDE OF THE NEW NORMAL (CONTINUED)

PANDEMIC

What if you thought of it
as the Jews consider the Sabbath —
the most sacred of times?

Cease from travel.

Cease from buying and selling.

Give up, just for now,
on trying to make the world
different than it is.

Sing. Pray. Touch only those
to whom you commit your life.

Center down.

And when your body has become still,
reach out with your heart.

Know that we are connected
in ways that are terrifying and beautiful.
(You could hardly deny it now.)

Know that our lives
are in one another's hands.
(Surely, that has come clear.)

Do not reach out your hands.

Reach out your heart.

Reach out your words.

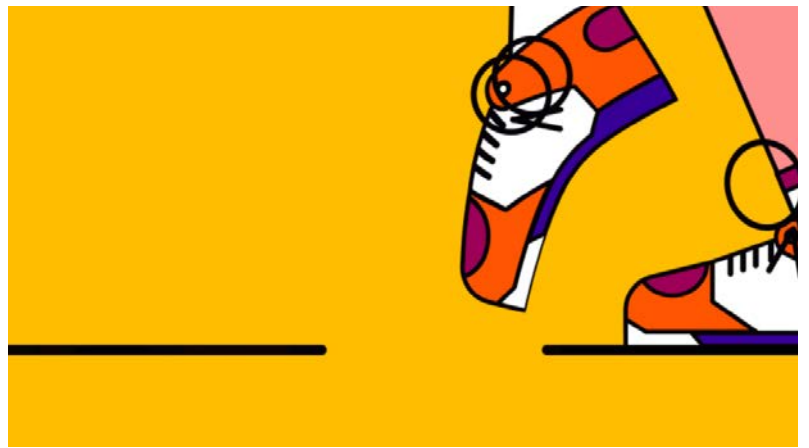
Reach out all the tendrils
of compassion that move, invisibly,
where we cannot touch.

Promise this world your love —

for better or for worse,
in sickness and in health,
so long as we all shall live.

— Lynn Ungar 3/11/20

As the YL mission has wrapped its collective heart around Psalm 91, it may be helpful to remember that in the back and forth rhythm of "He will" and "You will" in the 16 verses of that passage, the Lord's role is action and our role is to not fear and observe. We were made for this! Let's wash our hands and get to work if this is going to be THE NEW NORMAL!



IT'S TIME TO LEARN HOW TO LEAD FROM A DISTANCE!

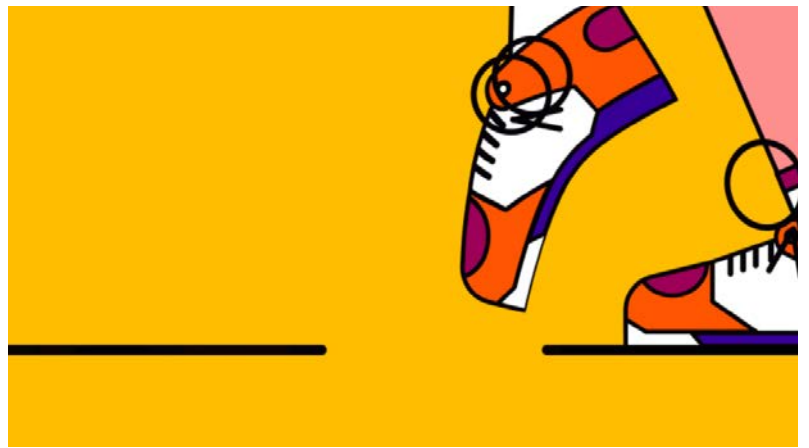
William Wallace is 'da man!! You know, half his face painted blue, big ole stallion, Goliath sized sword in hand, riding back and forth in front of the troops, leading a scared rag-tag collection of misfits, yelling "give me one chance, just one chance,...to tell them, they may take our lives...but they will never take (say it with me...) our freedom!!!"

We all learned to do Young Life this way, on the ground, in the game, at the school, walking the barrio, building teams, having meals, Bible studies at a kids house, picking up kids, and driving them to club. We all learned leadership the "incarnational" way, being with, living life together, on the front lines, shoulder to shoulder.

But what happens when you have to lead people you don't live near? What happens when a Global Pandemic 'socially distances' us from one another? What kind of leadership adaptations must you make to lead from a distance, be it down the street or across the Pacific Ocean? How can you learn Apostolic Leadership like the apostle Paul?

When I took over as the SVP for Latin America, it became very clear, very quickly, that the Lord was going to need to teach me a new way to lead...from a distance. The truth is, when I was the Regional Director for parts of Colorado, New Mexico, and El Paso, TX, living in Colorado Springs, I had to muddle my way through the early stages of Apostolic Leadership. The challenge was, there was no RD school class on the necessity of morphing leadership for RD's. I initially tried to lead the way I had always led, and soon became frustrated, confused and discouraged. Can I get an "AMEN?!"

Think about it - Paul led differently than Jesus. Jesus had the twelve with him 24/7 for three years, day in and day out, much like an excellent YL leader living in the community where they do YL. But after Paul's conversion, his home base was Antioch. From here he was deployed on at least three different journeys, walking, sailing, riding some 10,000 miles to lead the New Testament church spreading throughout Asia Minor and into Europe. Some places he stayed a day or two, some like Corinthians and Ephesus he stayed longer. Sometimes Paul was in charge of his movement and sometimes a Roman prison controlled his schedule. The truth is, whether he was on the go, or locked in chains, Paul's ministry was going forth in power and strength, with or without physical presence.



IT'S TIME TO LEARN HOW TO LEAD FROM A DISTANCE!

There is not much room to elaborate on this here, but I will give five basic principles of Apostolic Leadership to chew on...pre and post COVID 19.

- Realize your calling. If you are leading more than one ministry you must learn to lead in an Apostolic fashion. If you are an RD, VP, SVP, GSVP, or the President, all you do is apostolic leadership, and it the Lord who has chosen you!!
- Set clear expectations with your team. Many are frustrated by their supervisor because they see them so little. Perhaps your “sup” needs to get off their tail and spend some time with you in your turf! Just sayin.’ Or, perhaps they need to align expectations so the team knows the realities of apostolic leadership.
- Be more organized and more intentional – set your travel and communication strategy and share it with your team. This takes exceptional planning and execution, but is critical for fruit-bearing distance leadership. Write letters...really, write them. Seemed to work for Paul.
- Take people with you. The disciples and apostles rarely traveled alone. Might be something to learn here. Not only are we better together, you will be equipping someone (or a bunch of people) to take your place one day.
- Find your joy. Yes, this is a different way to lead. If you can't find joy in this type of leadership then take another job. Oh that our RD's, all the way up the chain, would be known for their joy and courage IN THEIR WORK. This is a different way to lead, it's a good way. Truth be known, the days of our being Braveheart are behind us. We now are inspiring, equipping, motivating others to paint the face and get after the next kid, leader or staff!

Yes, apostolic leadership can be learned, can be joyful, can be fruitful, and is exactly what many of us in this mission have been called to. I am fairly sure this is some of what the Apostle Paul was talking about in Eph 2:10!!

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Adelante!!

Dan Jessup

djessup@sc.younglife.org



GOING AFTER THE ONE

“Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’” Luke 15:4-7

This is one of my favorite passages in the Bible. It’s one many if not all of us have read, given Young Life Club talks on and shared with kids one-on-one. But recently it’s begun to take on an even more practical meaning for me.

I get to lead a ministry for kids who are or have formerly been homeless. They all live far below the poverty line, which means technology is spotty, at best, so when our current pandemic hit, our ministry initially all but disappeared. I was at a loss. I’d watch friends post about their Zoom clubs or campaigners with tears in my eyes, feeling like we’d lost all of our kids, and truthfully I wanted to give up.

And then one morning I came across these words again. I started asking myself what it would mean to look for us to look for our lost sheep. As a team, we started

- Making countless calls and texts.
- Driving around to the various locations that have served as ‘home’ for a night.
- Buying food and other essential supplies.
- Filling in the gaps that were missing when the aid that they previously depended on became over-burdened and under-resourced.

One afternoon I got into my car and just started to drive. It felt a little rebellious as we sheltered in place, but my heart wouldn’t let me sit still. I went to a store and bought food, drove to the area that some of our kids stay and sent a text to the team I work with. “I’m in Lemon Grove,” I texted, “Who lives near here?” One of my leaders responded with a name and address and I went there.

I knocked on the door and was greeted by ten family members. I told them I was there to bring them a present, after awkwardly explaining to them who I was and how I knew Jeremiah. They responded by all filing outside, into the courtyard of the apartment complex and we sat on the grass and talked. It was a little uncomfortable. And so sweet.

I was reminded that while the circumstances are strikingly different. We may all be lost sheep. I know that I was that lost sheep. I went through years of being all over the dang map; struggling with faith, doubts in that faith, and deep-seated insecurities that led me to make some very poor and dangerous choices in my earlier years.

But God never gave up.



GOING AFTER THE ONE

He never stopped coming after me, showing me His face when finding me curled up behind life's dumpsters and ditches. He never said, "Well shoot, looks like I lost her—but whatever, look at all these other wonderful children I have!" I don't know if anyone would have blamed Him if He had.

But He didn't.

He kept looking for His lost sheep until He found her. She was messy and dirty and full of shame, but He didn't care, he was just happy she was coming home where she belonged. And because of that, we too are called to keep going, we get to keep looking for the lost ones who need comfort and hope in the name of Jesus.

And the amazing thing is, we get to do the same. With the strength of our sweet Shepherd, we too are equipped to go out, find, and care for the lost ones. To those who have been shunned or forgotten by many. To bring them into our arms and show them the goodness and grace of our Father.

It's not easy work, this journey we are called to, but it's precious and holy. Keep going.

"I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord."

Psalm 27:13-14

Written by Rachel Karman



INCREASING THE AMPLITUDE, AND ADJUSTING THE FREQUENCY OF YOUR CLUB MINISTRY

Young Life's mission statement is to introduce adolescents to Jesus Christ and help them grow in their faith. Too often we equate the motion of planning/prepping/running clubs with the achievement toward our ultimate goal of kids coming into a saving relationship with Jesus! There is freedom within this mission to modify the methods of ministry while still fulfilling the mission statement.

AM/FM waves modulate their amplitude and frequency, and similarly we can modulate the AM/FM of our programmatic events. Modifying clubs in both their energetic feel (AM) and frequency (FM) can free leaders up to achieve our mission more effectively and broadly.

Amplitude Modulation: Changing how amped up club feels. Three modulations can be Pep-Rally, Hang Out, and Service.

1. **Pep-Rally** - Traditional clubs feel like pep-rallies (lots of energy, loud, laughter, cheering) and they usually require a large crowd to feel right.
2. **Hang Out** - This can be anything that best fits kids in your school (3-on-3 basketball tournament, fishing expedition, or a backyard bonfire with an unplugged guitar set). Any platform that offers a gospel proclamation can aid in reaching varying types of kids so that they can hear about Jesus in a more conducive setting.
3. **Service** - This has the least energetic feel but can work on occasion. Post-Christian European Young Life does this often and has had great success in their specific ministry field. This can also work for affluent highly entertained kids who are hard to impress, but service is universally agreed upon in culture as altruistic and good.

Frequency Modulation: Changing how often club occurs. Three modulations can be Weekly, Bi-Weekly, and Monthly.

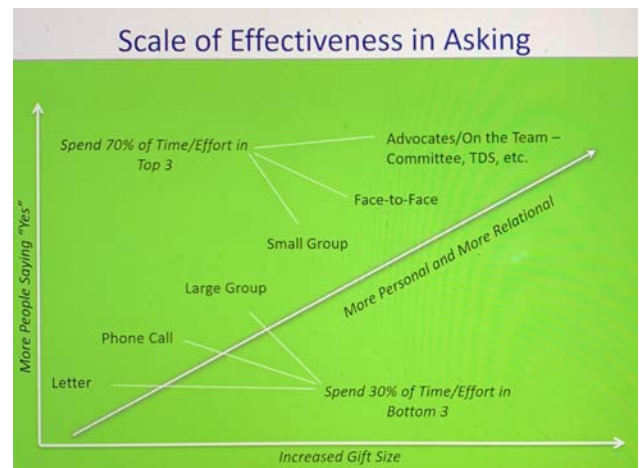
1. **Weekly** - The traditional way in which most areas have run club. This works best when kids have easy access to transportation and the population is dense, so they can get to club in within 15-20 minutes.
2. **Bi-Weekly** - This rhythm has benefits when transportation is a strain. In rural settings, kids face large geographical distances to get to a central club location. Modulating the frequency of programmatic events might also help busy non-college volunteers. Areas can run a pattern of alternating weeks between Campaigners and Club to free volunteers to invest their time more wisely in the heartbeat of Young Life, incarnational evangelism.
3. **Monthly** - Once a month clubs become a don't miss event. This might be longer than the typical club and can include food. This is for more extreme circumstances based on kids and leaders. For example, busy young professional leaders with families or kids in rural settings with huge distance obstacles.

This idea of modulating the amplitude and/or frequency of programmatic events can help achieve our mission better! Our goal is not to run the most pristine events, but it is to give kids a chance to hear the gospel and respond.

Gospel proclamation should never be relegated solely to club talks and AM/FM modulation gives the power of evangelism to more of the one-on-one/small group settings between leaders and kids. By modifying the amplitude and frequency of clubs frees leaders to increase time to meet more kids and deepen already existing relationships. With this freedom to change the AM/FM of events the leaders can then intensify intentional gospel conversation in their contact work.

Truly, the best Young Life is yet to be done!

-Mountain State Region



THE ART OF A FRIEND-RAISER

THE FRIEND-RAISER OVERVIEW : A Funding Option in lieu of a Large Group Banquet this Fall. With many Large Group Gatherings being banned, let's see this as opportunity. A Small Group Friend-Raiser may be exactly what our area needs right now. As we've been separated, this format will bring people together as well as be...more:

- RELATIONSHIP-CENTERED: Guests are relaxed, and comfortable being in a friend's home.
- ENGAGING: Without the normal event fanfare, guests arrive with their hearts open to Young Life.
- CONVERSATIONAL: There can be questions asked and clarity given.
- EFFECTIVE: We have found more people are inclined to partner & gifts tend to be larger.

WHAT:

friend-rais-er /frend/räzer/ noun

an event that increases the amount, or strength, of friendships; i.e. individuals who act as supporters of a cause, by giving financial or other help.

WHY: There are individuals in our communities who will never join us at a large group banquet or as an adult guest at camp. Maybe it's the size of the event, or misconceptions they have about Young Life, but the event may seem too big. They may, however, agree to a small dinner party with friends, where they'll experience Young Life in a new way. Imagine the potential leaders, committee members, donors and prayer warriors your area can develop by simply gathering around a table, sharing a meal while explaining your local vision for this mission.

Large group meetings (e.g. camp or club) aren't our only means of connecting with kids, so why are we okay with our Banquet being our one and only means of connecting with and sharing vision to adults? Imagine - we wouldn't dream of hosting Campaigners with 250 kids without breaking down into small groups and connecting kids with a leader.

We aren't asking you to learn something new, simply we want you to see that what you do extremely well with kids, you can do extremely well with Adults. (... grown-up Kids)

Did you hear that? It's the SECRET! We can do ministry with adults in the same way we do ministry with kids, all while multiplying our kid impact! From Inviting In to Sharing the Gospel to Celebrating Growth in Christ. It's simply the same. So, perhaps, this fall will be the year when our Volunteer Teams grow, Committees grow.



THE ART OF A FRIEND-RAISER

HOW: Begin with a host from your Committee and follow these simple steps:

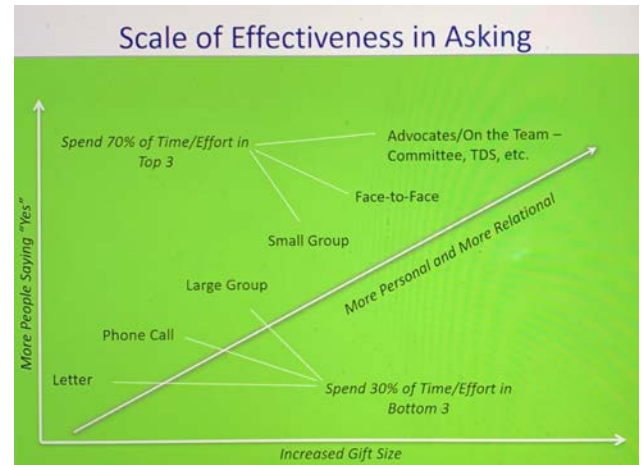
- Find a Date - identify a person or couple who will Host “Friendraiser Dinner Party” in their home. (You may wish to plan a Friendraiser every other month, or perhaps they will be quarterly, but start with one.)
- Create a List - Who should your host invite? How many? Your guest list should be friends of the host or your committee members who will be familiar with each other. *Note: you want to keep this dinner intimate, so invite no more than 8-12 people.
- Personally Invite - Your host should invite, by phone, then followed with a text with pertinent information, and then a follow up phone call as the day approaches.
- Order of Events - Partner with your Committee to create an order for the evening that includes good food, family time, storytelling, vision-casting, with an invitation to partner.
- Follow Up - After sharing the Young Life story, sharing your vision, (& needs), and personally invite your guests to partner with you and your team! It is imperative to follow through with these relationships.

& (Another) WHY: The reason we break down large groups of kids at camp (cabin time) or club (campaigners or small groups) into smaller groups, or even a one on one meeting is for relational investment as well as clarity in communication. We have seen, as we continue to develop Young Life’s Relational Centered Engagement [RCE], that the same is true with our work with adults in our community. The smaller the group, the more personal and relational the time is, has generally helped provide more Yes’s with greater impact.

This “Scale of Effectiveness in Asking” is from the Relationship Centered Engagement (RCE) training from Young Life’s Field Development team. It shows us that the more intimate the group, more people are saying yes with increased gift sizes. The “Friendraiser” small group gathering may be exactly what your Area needs to add to your Financial Strategy to take your Area to the next level; especially in the aftermath of the recent pandemic.

Written by: Kent Williams

THE ART OF A FRIEND-RAISER (CONTINUED)



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Written by: Kent Williams



IS YOUR AREA TOO STAFF-CENTRIC ?

All throughout scripture God works within a community. People that relate to him through trust and each other through love. In Young Life, we realized very early on that "It takes a community to reach a community - because when you do that, everyone is changed!" By its very nature, Young Life is a call to live 'on mission' in your town. So what does that look like?

A missional community (MC) is a group of people who are committed to living out the vision and values of the local YL area by taking ACTION. When the values and vision are shared, a vibrant ministry presence is born. When the local ministry is not owned by the MC it can make the local ministry staff-centric. Simply stated, a group of people committed to a common vision and serving in their gifting will outperform a lone staff person every time! Who are the red-hot vision holders in your context? If it's just you -then it is time to start sharing the vision with others. Over the past few months, I have been involved as a YL +1 volunteer pilot. The goal of the pilot is to double the # of volunteers in a local area. It is a painfully simple exercise of discipline, ownership, and invitation. To be honest, fostering community ownership has been one of YL's area's of brilliance for decades.

Here is what we did:

1. Created a Matthew 9:38 List of potential volunteers.
2. Faithfully prayed for that list of people daily!
3. Broadened the ownership of the list to the larger Mission community. (team leaders, stakeholders, Committee, leaders, etc.)
4. Personally invited others into volunteer service and living out their calling.

Guess what? It worked! When Jesus asked the disciples to 'Follow Me' he not only required their presence, he implied a deeper and more compelling cost. As a global mission we are inviting people into the high calling of leadership. Where is your bar when it comes to volunteer leaders? Are you inviting people to a 'come die with us' type of community? Or are you setting the bar to the lowest common denominators? A transformative community requires a deep investment from the volunteers as well as those tasked with training, supporting and caring for the group. In Matthew 9:38 (MSG) Jesus says, "What a huge harvest!" Jesus said to the disciples. "How few workers! On your knees and pray for harvest hands!" Matthew 9:38 msg. Each missional community begins with this realization - the NEED is huge & the workers are FEW. Jesus tells his disciples the key is PRAYER. May we begin with making a list of potential harvest hands and commit to praying for them?! We are called to have workers, not just one worker!



IS YOUR AREA TOO STAFF-CENTRIC ? (CONTINUED)

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF AND YOUR TEAM-

Q. Are we staff-centric as a YL Area? Who owns the vision? Who does the work? Who carries the message? Your answer to these questions will give you a clear sense of the broad ownership of the local ministry.

Q. What is our vision? Is it Clear? Compelling? God-sized? Comprehensive? Broadly owned? If not, what changes need to occur?

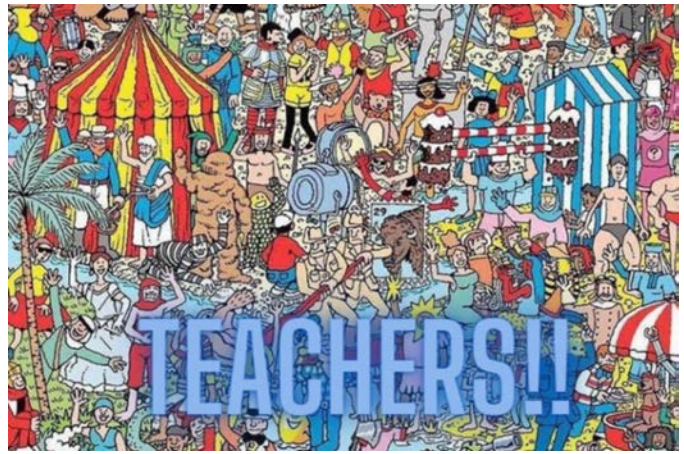
Q. What are some 'today' changes we could make to foster ownership? Who could we engage for input? How can we empower? What skills do we lack? Who do we need to invite into the room?

Q. Who is on your Matthew 9:38 List? Have one list that is kept by everyone. Pivotal moments occur in response to vision. Add to the list, pray, reference it constantly, and give God's spirit room to move in your community.

Lastly, we know that a missional community isn't born overnight but you were never meant to do it alone. It can take years to build a team, catch a vision or shift a culture. Give yourself grace in the process. Write down the wins along the way so that you see God's hand in the midst. When done well, you will have a mission that is Staff/Committee led, Community owned and Christ-o-centric.

Written by:

- Jayme Eichler jayme.eichler@gmail.com
- Ken Tankersley Kenbtank@gmail.com



THE PERSON YOU MAY NOT HAVE NOTICED IN THE CROWD: TEACHERS

Background: Within every school, there are teachers who love Jesus and who have chosen their career (at least in part) because education allows them to impact students in the name of the Lord. Teaching, coaching, etc. gives them daily opportunities to spread the gospel through their actions. They have an active ministry in their classrooms. Some venture out into outreach ministries and some choose to simply live out their ministry daily as a part of their job. We, as Young Life staff and volunteers, can grow our ministry team and exponentially increase the impact of our ministries by acknowledging and supporting these missionaries. Our gospel outreach efforts are not novel nor foremost in the schools we enter. There are teachers attempting it every day. We must listen, learn, and invest first before we ever invite them to take part in the pieces of ministry we implement. Our tools (Club, Campaigners, and Camp) might indeed be a blessing to their personal ministries, but that should be a secondary goal. Our primary goal should be to help grow a community of believers set on reaching each kid with the gospel of Jesus.

Avengers Unite

I have a confession to make. I wasn't comfortable crying until my daughters were born. My oldest is one of the 2020 graduates who tires of being told that COVID-19 will make her stronger one day, so my acceptance of public personal tears turned eighteen this year. Don't get me wrong, I'm not moved to tears every day, however, I consistently cry in front of others weekly.

Needless to say, I'm okay with it.

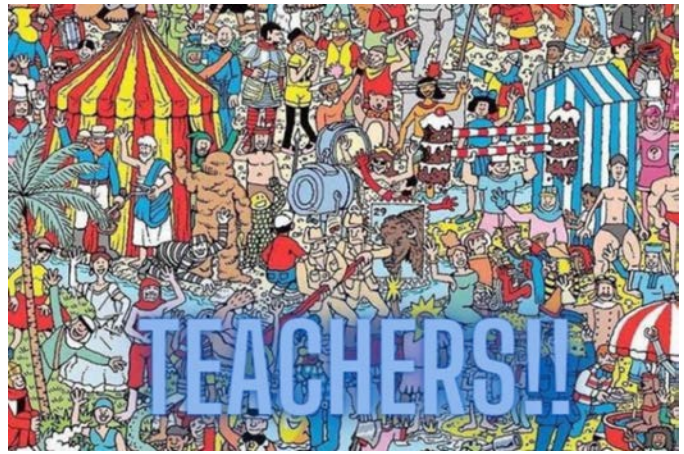
However, there is one time of tears that somewhat shames me. I took my twins (now sophomores in high school) to a midnight showing of Avengers: Infinity War, and during the iconic scene where Captain America, Tony Stark, and their team of failing heroes is about to fall at the hand of Thanos and his cohorts and the sky opens in seemingly countless spinning time portals of hope and all of the heroes, once thought dead, came back to life . . . I lost it. Openly. Loudly. Bawling. Ugly crying.

That vision of the entire team, united, back together moved me.

Fast forward to March of 2020. The reality of COVID-19 quickly spread from the coasts to the plains, and my state, Kansas, made a firm and decisive decision to close schools for the rest of the year. I was shocked, stunned, and saddened. And yes, I ugly cried - numerous times. Having taught in the same district for almost twenty years, my routine, my friends, my way of life were all hurting, almost as bad as the Captain, Tony, and the gang in Infinity War. I needed rescue, a group of heroes to save me.

This was our unlikely team.

- A retiring high school librarian.
- Two tired high school counselors.
- A weary special education teacher.
- Three reenergized middle school math, science, and history teachers.
- Five veteran high school English and history teachers.
- A second-year band teacher.
- A first-year PE teacher.
- A displaced paraprofessional.
- And a newly valued online technology director.



THE PERSON YOU MAY NOT HAVE NOTICED IN THE CROWD: TEACHERS (CONTINUED)

Not quite the appearing Avengers coming to the rescue in the climactic scene of Infinity War. But we were ready for battle. Our battle plan was prayer. No swords, no superheroes. A Friday morning Zoom call to pray was our weapon against the undefinable effects of the COVID-19 shutdown.

Somewhat skeptical of corporate prayer over Zoom, I was joyful after our first meeting. Grace, faith, passion, and transparency ruled the day with this group of Jesus-loving-kid-loving (JLKL) educators. I knew (or at least knew of) all team members. However, I didn't anticipate the impact of the volume of our resounding cry to the Lord.

Entering school buildings across our Young Life region for the last decade, recruiting teacher staff and volunteers, my defined goal was to headhunt the educators who were willing and able to fill a role. While success stories abound, this consumer-mindedness blew right past this treasured team of educators, and others like them. Besides myself, none on our team is on Young Life staff, yet each has a powerful ministry, alive and active, in his or her classroom.

Our Friday Zoom calls revealed that JLKL educators have a profound personal, daily impact on every student in our school district - over 5,000 students. Every student is prayed for by an educator who loves them in the name of Jesus.

Do you, as Young Life staff, realize that in every school across your city resides teachers who chose education to impact kids in the name of Jesus?

Not all of them will choose to partner with Young Life to reach them; however, we can choose to partner with them to reach kids.

I'm sure you're aware that next year could be overwhelmingly complicated for those in education. Pour into them as they pour into their students, families, and community. Like the returning Avengers, step into their world and engage in battle with them. Clouds of uncertainty envelope the fall of 2020. Schools may not allow any outsiders inside. JLKL educators may very well be the only points of contact with daily access to the very kids we're trying to reach.

May we, all who love Jesus and seek to love students in His name, come together to create a ministry community, a team, of heroes.

Resources and Tips for Talking to JLKL Teachers:

First - Pray for all teachers

Always - Spend time doing contact work with teachers

Regularly - Offer to partner with them in their personal ministry

When/If right - Offer Young Life as a vehicle to further their mission

Want to continue the conversation? Contact your regional Young Life Teacher Champion or contact Tanya Huber at tanyahuber76@gmail.com or Mark Fleske at markfleske@gmail.com.

Written by: Mark Fleske



SEVEN THINGS TO CONSIDER AS YOU STRATEGIZE A VIRTUAL CLUB

Here are seven things to consider as you strategize a virtual club for your own state, region, or division.

1. **IDENTIFY THE WHY** - Do your kids, leaders and staff need this tool? Have they not been able to have a club? Have they tried and it's difficult? Would leaders love to have deeper conversations with students? Are they tired and could use a tool like a virtual club? Do they struggle to have the time or resources to put on something like this? Would this help them reach students they know and maybe some they don't?
2. **STRATEGIZE THE TIMING** - If yes, then when? When the pandemic hit, many of our staff were asking "how do we finish the semester strong?" We scheduled our All-U.S. Club to provide closure as students transition into summer. Our next club came in August, the most strategic month of the year for meeting new students during "welcome" weeks. Timing is everything!
3. **DEFINE YOUR AUDIENCE** - Our audience was college students seeking community, adventure, and significance. It was also graduating high school seniors and incoming freshmen all across the country. For you, maybe it's your state, region, or your entire division? Maybe you engage incoming 6th graders or high school freshmen? While you define a certain audience and direct production accordingly, know that it can also be used to bridge incoming students or even reach donors, adult support, friends, and families.
4. **UTILIZE SMALL GROUPS** - This was our biggest "why!" The small group post-club discussion is crucial for utilizing virtual clubs to launch relationships! Our videos ended with a prompt for groups and questions on the screen. All our best stories from our two virtual clubs came out of discussion during post-club small group time! Staff and volunteers must be prepared to lead these conversations.
5. **PLAN THE PROGRAM** - Plan everything (music, humor, games, skits, and talk) with your entire audience in mind including kids that don't know Young Life or Jesus. Get as many faces and people involved as possible. Think through the use of live interaction through social media, Zoom, commenting, or texting and aim for less than an hour in length.
6. **MAKE IT ACCESSIBLE** - We pre-recorded the Club and streamed live on YouTube through OneStream.com. We utilized Instagram to provide the direct link and make it easy to access 15 minutes before the start. The video went "live" with pre-recorded "commercials" 15 minutes before advertised start time to allow a window for accessing the direct link.
7. **MAKE IT WORTH IT** - Create a budget that includes high quality video editing. Prioritize buy-in from staff and leaders. Plan to use the virtual club video after for virtual banquets, newsletters, etc. If you're going to do a large-scale club, maximize value and excellence!



EVERYTHING YOU NEED IN ONE PLACE FOR YOUR VOLUNTEERS: THE STOREHOUSE

Volunteer leaders are the backbone of Young Life. Without a leader inviting us to coffee, or club, or camp - and ultimately into a relationship with Jesus - many of us would not be in ministry today.

The leaders we have in Young Life are incredible! They have busy lives, jobs, families, school- and yet they go above and beyond to do something that very few adults do - pursue relationships with kids.

What if we could make their jobs easier so they could actually spend even more time with kids?

What if we could create one single place, with our best resources and training - so they no longer have to go on internet scavenger hunts to find what they need?

Here's a picture of what it currently looks like for a leader to try and find resources and training:

- Google searches
- Searching regional and area Dropbox folders
- Checking the Young Life Leader Blog and YLhelp on Mondays at 5pm for last-minute club ideas
- Logging in to Right Now Media and YL Access training
- Listening to old Young Life podcast episodes
- Signing up for Volunteer 101 training and a Brilliant at the Basics cohort

It's a ton of voices spread across a lot of platforms...

But what if we could create a reliable one-stop-shop that brought together our best resources, innovation, training and encouragement for leaders? And what if we had a diverse team, representative of the global mission, that was laser-focused on **SERVING THE VOLUNTEER?**

That's the vision of The Storehouse.

For decades, The Storehouse was a place at Frontier Ranch where leaders could go to get what they needed: t-shirts for kids, songbooks, Campaigner handbooks, or even sunscreen for the hike. Over the years, Storehouse became a camper cabin where kids and leaders had life-changing conversations.

We need a place in Young Life where leaders can come to get what they need.

A place where significant conversations can take place and ideas are exchanged.

A place not to stay, but that equips and sends our volunteers back into the world of kids.



EVERYTHING YOU NEED IN ONE PLACE FOR YOUR VOLUNTEERS: THE STOREHOUSE (CONTINUED)

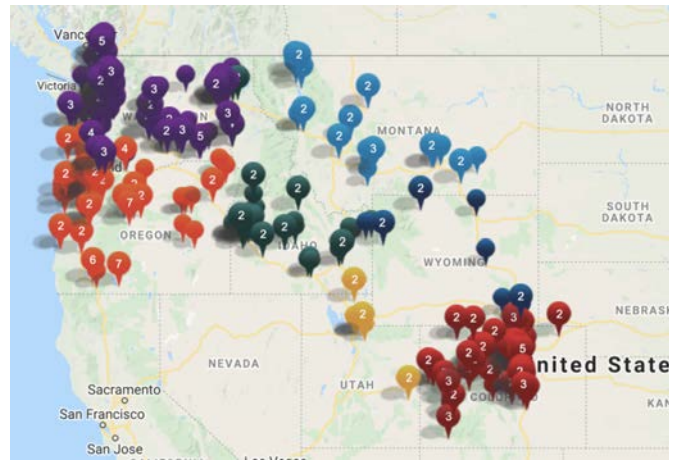
I sensed this need in 2010 and it led me to start The Young Life Leader Blog. At the time I was a middle-aged, white, volunteer leader and youth pastor living smack in the middle of the Bible belt. Over the past decade, I've written 1500+ articles and used a dinosaur of a platform called Blogger.

Over the past six months, with the help of your donations and money raised through The Next Big Thing, we've rebuilt the site using WordPress. It's far from done, but it's a step closer to making the dream of The Storehouse become a reality.

Over the next year, our plan is to continue to gather the best of the best resources and training into a single one-stop-shop where you can quickly find what you need when you need it.

In order for this to happen, The Storehouse needs YOU! It can't be a solo effort. It has to be a chorus of unified voices representing the breadth of the diversity of the mission.

Written by Drew Hill (yldrew@gmail.com)



PRAYING WITH PURPOSE

Have you ever asked a question not getting the answer you wanted only to find out later it was the answer you needed?

In May, I was in the place where I was saying to the Lord “A pandemic? Really?” He gently directed me to Ecclesiastes 3, “A time for everything under heaven.” Respectfully I continued to ask, “But Lord, why a pandemic?” Not having my full attention, Jesus took me to the second half of the second verse. “A time to plant and a time to harvest” (NLT). Being somewhat seasoned in life, I remembered the song “Turn, Turn, Turn” and the phrase ‘a time to reap and a time to sow.’ Trivia question, who was the band that released this song in 1965? There is a time for everything, you have to read to the end for the answer!

I continued with the Lord, and with a grumbling spirit I said, “I can’t sow. I am an Area Developer and I sow by going and meeting people and building relationships and building teams that start Young Life. I can’t sow right now because of this blasted pandemic.” Thankfully the Lord is patient and I felt like he said to me, “Steve, we sow in prayer.”

So, I got to work and assembled a list of the schools that do not have Young Life in our region. Contacting some nearby staff we scheduled days to pray together onsite, at schools. Ten weeks and ten prayer tours later the Lord had taken me to 118 middle schools, high schools and colleges covering 3,738 miles. I was humbled by the magnitude of the task before us while standing in school parking lots to pray for kids, teachers, coaches, parents, churches and entire communities.

I might never see the full impact of these prayer tours, but the Lord has already connected provided people in two new communities where info meetings are happening. More importantly, we have seen one college junior come to Christ! Young Life’s history rests on prayer. Clara Frasher and her prayer circle were critical to Jim Rayburn’s first club at Gainesville HS. Every kid we desire to know Christ is moved by prayer.

Here is a confession. I only prayed at schools in the western and central part of our region. I plan to get with the staff in the northern part of our region to pray with them at the remaining 80 schools that are without Young Life.

This leads me to wonder if as a mission could we possibly pray at every school this school year? I don’t know what this might mean for our international partners but in the US there are roughly 22,000 high schools, 16,000 middle / junior highs and 4,400 colleges. That is 42,400 prayer opportunities for our staff, leaders and committee in the US. 200 down, 42,200 left. Let’s Go!

Oh, the band that released “Turn, Turn, Turn?” The Byrd’s.

Written by: Steve Schmitt (steveschmitt57@gmail.com)



YOUR AUDIENCE JUST GOT BIGGER

(COHORT REPORT ON LARGE VIRTUAL CLUBS)

In a season where so much has been postponed, disrupted, cancelled, and retooled, we want to give some good news! THE LARGE VIRTUAL CLUB PILOT WAS A SUCCESS!! With the success of the Young Life College and University National (US) virtual clubs, there has been tremendous interest from other mission leaders in getting their State, Division, Country all in one room and the 6 summaries below are the result.

Campaigners, Military students, Young Life, Capernaum, and Assigned Team Members were just some of the Global audiences that our cohort connected with a larger group than ever, and some students that would have never had the opportunity to be together otherwise. While so many have done creative things over the past year with all things "virtual," we have been reminded and encouraged through our Virtual Club Cohort of "every kid!" Six ministries took part in our cohort reaching thousands of students virtually.

While the numbers were exciting, the diverse reach was even better. Our staff invested their time and energy to produce a high quality on-line experience to reach students all over the world! As we imagined the process, we mostly thought about the "how" and "why" to make it happen. In the end, we were reminded of the "who" that we pursue all over our world and the God that causes students to say after their virtual event... "I hope if I ever get to go to heaven that Jesus would call me daughter!"

*More links included in the digital version of this article.



THE SIMPLE BRILLIANCE OF THE DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY!

Before we unpack the wisdom and power behind the Discovery Bible Study method Young Life International has been using over many years (as have many leaders and staff in the US), I want to be sure we are ‘thinking well about discipleship.’ In Young Life, we have ‘believed these things throughout the history of the mission but it is always good to remind and remember before we multiply.

Discipleship Assumptions:

1. Discipleship is Relational.
2. Discipleship is “follow me as I follow Christ.” (I Corinthians 11:1)
3. Discipleship is transforming lives. (Romans 12:2)
4. Discipleship is lifestyle patterns, values, actions, and commitments.
5. Disciplines of the Spirit are modeled, caught, taught, and “owned.”
6. A healthy disciple knows how to develop a constellation of mentors.

The Discovery Bible study aligns well with these assumptions and can encourage a trajectory of a lifetime being a discipler and being a disciple.

All of the elements of the DBS are important. Each step builds from the previous step and leaving out a step or minimizing it short circuits the power.

The beauty of DBS is the empowerment it brings to those who learn how to lead one. I have witnessed, hundreds of times, a young man or woman who met Jesus a year ago at a YL camp in Nicaragua or Kenya, Ukraine or the Philippines, Northern Ireland, or Zimbabwe, leading elders or Young Life veterans in a DBS that was on fire with God’s Spirit and His Word. EVERYONE can and should be able to lead a DBS in Young Life because the Holy Spirit is in charge: revealing, training, reconciling, redeeming, transforming, shaping the character of Christ in us.

THE SIMPLE BRILLIANCE OF THE DISCOVERY BIBLE STUDY! (CONTINUED)



Here are the steps (Remember how much EACH step matters):

- Pray, seriously, attentively to the Holy Spirit. As Dale Bruner says, “the shy member of the Trinity.” Pay attention within this process to the prompts, the pictures, the Words, and the visions the Holy Spirit bubbles up in the reading of God’s Word. Really listen to the Holy Spirit.
- Have someone read aloud the chosen verses and state what translation. No comment, just read well. Then, have another person read the same passage in different translation. Then, have another person tell the passage. (It is ok if they miss things or even add, trust that the Holy Spirit is leading.) Create freedom in this “telling” so people relax rather than “get it right.” My experience is the God often does amazing things with the “telling.”
- Now that we have heard the Holy Spirit through three versions of the passage, ask two questions for reflection:
 - What did I learn/experience about God/Jesus in this passage?
 - What did I learn about me (or humankind) in this passage?
- Final discussion: What does God want me to do from what I experienced today in this DBS?
- Close in an attentive, grateful prayer to the Holy Spirit.

Teach people, old and young, how to lead a DBS, have them practice it frequently. Watch what God does! if every leader, every staff, every committee person, every campaigner did this, we would be amazed at the fruit the Holy Spirit produced in our mission.

Sidenote: This is not to be dismissive of other study tools or commentaries or practices but this is a practice that multiples because of its simplicity AND the Holy Spirit.

Written by: Marty Caldwell

HEAR ABOUT YL1: YOUNG LIFE'S NEXT MOVE TO REACH EVERY KID

Over Young Life's 80 year history as a mission, the heart for the 'furthest out' kid has been beautifully evident. Recently, there has been a growing conversation to coordinate an effort among YL staff to share insights and best practices of ministries for kids served by various social service systems. Although these efforts haven't always been widely known, they represent the heart of the mission's desire to reach 'Every Kid' and address a growing crisis in our culture.

As the dialogue grew, God moved through the heart of a generous group of women, who invested in the development and resourcing of these ministry types as they develop in scope and presence and that's how YOUNG LIFE ONE was born! As a mission we say we want to love all adolescents and YL1 aims to honor that posture by reaching out to kids who have been impacted by our cultural challenges. There are currently four different demographics we aim to reach out to: teenagers impacted by homelessness, trafficking, incarceration, and/or the foster care system.

It has been clearly evident that the Lord has affirmed Young Life's presence in serving students in these unique contexts over the decades and chosen our current season as an opportunity to provide structure, systems, and resources as we move into coming years.

Our goal is to train leaders and staff in how to love and care for kids in these governmental systems in an effort to communicate the message that tells each teenager "we love you, we believe in you, and we want to see you survive and thrive now and into adulthood." We want these teenagers who are so often overlooked or misunderstood to know that the God we know and serve loves them beyond comprehension.

Written by: Rachel Karman



THE ? WE REALLY WOULD LIKE TO BE ASKED

-THE EFFECT OF 7 WORDS ON EVERY CONVERSATION-

Jesus asked great questions! He didn't mince words and was masterful at getting to the point. He listened well, created safety and space, and was absolutely the best at the 'mic drop' question. He knew how to engage, was comfortable in silence, and somehow posed the question someone really wanted to be asked.

Questions like:

- 'Are you hungry?'
- 'Are you thirsty?'
- 'Do you want to get well?'
- 'What can I do for you?'

Jesus' words cut through the relational minutia and went straight to the heart because he asked the question beneath the question. We would do well to learn from his style. One challenge that has surfaced globally is the cultural inability to engage in healthy civil discourse or question asking. Dynamic, two-way conversations have been replaced with one sided debates, and subsequently left us with the inability to truly listen.

Conversely we may be talking more than ever...

- Zoom fatigue and 'white noise effect' are real conditions as a result of the significant increases in communication platforms, and methods.
- The average YouTube length is 12 minutes, with 1 billion daily mobile video views.
- TikTok reached 700,000,000 active users in 5 years making it the 7th largest social media platform.
- In recent years, TV watching has dropped by 4% (18-49 yr olds) BUT jumped by 74% on online platforms.
- Snapchat has over 265 million users who prefer messages with filters, shortened stories, and disappearing content.

Bottom line: We tend to talk at, rather than talk to and because we have lost our ability to listen, conversations have lost their power. They have become, superficial, one-sided, and far from transformative. Verbal Interactions are supposed to be refining, precious, disruptive, compelling, and thought provoking. In a world where tensions feel 'heavier' there is a profound need to empathize, connect and resonate which comes from an ability to ask the good question and truly hear others. Over the last several years we have slowly LOST OUR ABILITY TO LISTEN.

This year I conducted a personal 'case study.' Basically, I identified a phrase/question that I wanted to be known for asking. I wanted to have the opportunity to ask it in every conversation I was in. Nothing too ornate or refined but just simple enough to be compelling: 7 words in the form of a question.

My measurements were simple:

- How often do I ask this question?
- How often was it posed to me?



THE ? WE REALLY WOULD LIKE TO BE ASKED (CONTINUED)

The question?

“TELL ME WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT THIS?”

Every conversation I had, I committed to asking this question at least once. Any meeting that I attended, I made a mental note of how many times the 7 words were used. The question elevated the recipient and fostered humility from the questioner. What the question was stating was, “I want to know your thoughts.” “I want to learn from you.” I was stunned by the response every time I posed the question, and I was on my heels every time I was asked. In honor of the 7 words, here are 7 things I learned from using this phrase.

- **BE ‘OTHER’ FOCUSED:** If it is true that our favorite word is our own name then it seems fair that our favorite sound is our own voice. Imagine the opportunity we are given to hear a different voice, perspective, view. There is something healthy about giving up significant ‘time of possession’ in a conversation.
- **CURIOSITY IS COMPELLING:** The world has become myopic and resistant to input. It is also growing in scope, diversity and breadth. Those that will thrive in a changing world will be those who seek input to improve in their skills and grow in their awareness by being comfortable in silence, and committed to seeking to understand.
- **THE VALUE OF BEING SPECIFIC:** Jesus was the best at asking the right question at the right time and oftentimes, the question that others wanted to be asked. It takes thought, work, and discernment but WOW asking good questions is a lost art form and the conversation moves quicker and deeper.
- **THE MARKS OF A DISCIPLE:** The question doesn’t just request advice, it actually gives the other person’s view ‘weight’ and welcomes input, teaching and instruction.
- **PING-PONG vs PITCH & CATCH:** Some conversations are barely an exchange of ideas but more a swapping of views where the loudest and last view tends to win (ping-pong). This question forces a slower, lingering conversation where thoughts can settle (pitch and catch).
- **MOVE THE NEEDLE:** A question that is a request elicits a response. A jaw drop, awkward silence, a sigh, highlighting its uniqueness. To share thoughts, be heard, and acknowledged for our own wisdom is a rarity. Let’s be unique.
- **YOU WILL LOOK DIFFERENT:** Our posture is external and internal. When you ask this question, you are leaning in, sitting back, taking mental (or physical) notes, making eye contact and reacting in hundreds of non-verbal ways..

As a mission, asking this question and listening to the answer may be our superpower! Relational ministry cannot survive on soundbites and there is a great need for understanding in the world of kids. These 7 words could be a starting point to some great conversations.

- If you ask profound questions- you will get profound answers
- if you ask shallow questions, you will get shallow answers
- if you ask no questions at all, you get no answers at all!

TRY THIS CHALLENGE! Try this personal case study for yourself for one week. Ask the question in every conversation. Keep track of when you hear it asked of you too. Take notes. Then call me, text me or email and tell me what you learned? I’d love to know what YOU think. -Tank

Kenbtank@gmail.com
(303) 472-8140



TRY THIS: DAILY

“If what you are doing now is not working, try this.”

When I grow up, I want to be like Tom Raley. I had the privilege of serving with Tom during my first years on staff. Tom was a club kid from East Texas who met the Lord through Young Life and joined staff in 1953. We met when Tom led spiritual formation for staff in Dallas, and I'm grateful for the seven years I spent learning from him until his death in 2008.

It wasn't the number of clubs he started or the number of kids he reached during 55 years on staff that made me want to be like Tom. It was his steadfast commitment to following Jesus. Tom read his Bible, and he prayed. Every. Single. Day.

Tom attended a staff conference in 1970 where the speaker talked about the spiritual lives of those in ministry. Tom remembered him saying, “If what you are doing now is not working, try this.” Tom made a decision that day to spend the first hour of every day with Jesus. Early morning meetings and late night clubs were never an excuse – he simply adjusted his alarm.

Tom was a voracious reader of authors like Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Henri Nouwen, but he rarely used devotionals. All Tom needed was his Bible, a journal, an hour each morning, and 30 minutes each evening. He adapted practices shared at the conference to create his own spiritual rhythm.

Here's how Tom described his routine:

“I settle down in a quiet place with a cup of tea. First, I read the Scriptures and ask God to speak to me – usually a chapter, but this varies. I record in my journal His Word to me that day. I then follow a 7-step format for my morning prayer. I record each step in my journal. It helps me to write down very specifically what I am saying to the Lord as well as what I hear Him saying to me. In the evening, I look back on the day and follow four specific steps.”

Those who knew Tom saw the fruit of his daily time with Jesus. When he passed away, it didn't surprise us when people described Tom as “a man who loved the Lord more than anything” and “a wonderful model of Christ-likeness.”

Tom created space so that he could be “transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” (2 Corinthians 3:18)

I still have the piece of paper Tom gave me outlining his prayer time. I redesigned it as a bookmark and now I try to make his routines, my routines. I watched Tom become more like Jesus, and I hope God will do the same for me.

You can download Tom's steps for morning and evening prayer [HERE](#). If you'd like a bookmark, LET US KNOW and we'll mail you one.

Written by: Julie Clapp, Vice President of WyldLife



THE NEXT BIG THING IN YOUR REGION

How are we fostering innovation?

Is it just some lofty idea or something that truly impacts our local ministry?

The team over in Oregon got serious about this concept of innovation back in 2019 when they launched a Regional Innovation Team. Chris Herb raised a chunk of funds and deployed a team led by Area Director, Justin Scott, to foster innovation and help support these new ideas. What Does an Innovation Team Do?

Justin and his crew focus on supporting their regional staff's crazy, new ideas to reach kids. Their goal is to fund ideas within the region that will help them reach new, and more kids. They provide support and feedback for new ideas throughout the region. They poke holes, listen, and throw out supporting ideas. They also help staff get the right people "in the room" to make those ideas come to fruition. They also help FUND these innovative ideas. This team has an allocation of grant funds from their Regional Director to give to innovative ideas and projects throughout the year.

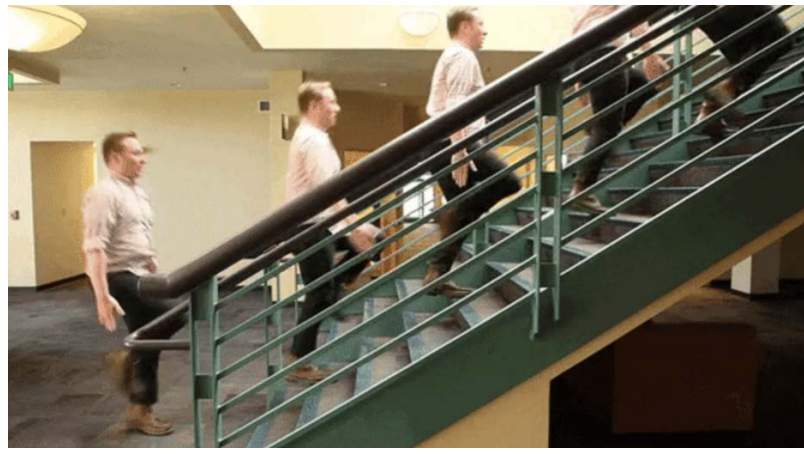
What Has Come Out of This Innovation Team?

Justin Scott shared some of the ways they've worked to reach kids in new, innovative ways. Obviously, COVID-19 threw a wrench in so many of "our" plans, but remember all of this was no surprise to God! In the past two years, and throughout the pandemic, this region has seen some pretty creative strategies come to life. The result: reaching MORE KIDS!

Here are a few of the new ministry approaches that have evolved:

- Gaming Ministry: Club anchored around a building that serves as an after school space.
- Angling Ministry: An avid fisherman takes leaders and kids out on the water and to learn how to fish and share the gospel in the process.
- 'Basketball in the Park' Park Cleanup: An under-resourced club in a bigger city had a local park where kids hung out consistently. The local team built up a basketball program, tournament, and club centered around this park!
- International Focus: One college director is thinking creatively around strategies for reaching international students on campus; she's building up a program aimed at engaging with international students that are on their campus.
- Skating Ministry: One community leveraged the skate parks in their community and set up ministry to reach this group of kids.

Innovation can happen anywhere. Sometimes when we are faced with the tightest constraints, we experience the biggest breakthroughs. The last year or so forced us all to do this in our local ministry. Odds are, you have innovative ideas happening in your own region. Our question is "do you have the support system to help you turn these ideas into real-life ministries?" Justin, Chris, and the rest of Oregon Cascades region are reaching new, and more, kids than ever before because they're leaning into new ideas. If you are interested in how your own region can build an innovation team or want to learn more about the structure of their innovation grants, reach out to Justin (scottyounlife@me.com)!



HAVE WE SKIPPED A STEP IN CONTACT WORK?

Whether you are just starting Young Life, or have been doing it for a while, you know that this ministry thrives because of its commitment to relationships. In fact, one of Young Life's major C's for ministry is Contact Work.

This is the intentional commitment to do what Jesus did. Go where people (adolescents) are and initiate relationships with them. Contact work has three levels:

LEVEL ONE: SEE & BE SEEN. Start by showing you are interested in their lives.

LEVEL TWO: TALK WITH KIDS. Talk to kids about the things that interest them. Be a good listener.

LEVEL THREE: DO THINGS WITH KIDS. Build a deeper level of friendship.

Although showing up to be seen by our adolescent friends is relatively easy, having the opportunity to engage in the deepest level of contact work (do something) is not possible without crossing the often scary bridge of the second stage of contact work: talk, or say something. I sometimes wonder if we tend to skip the 2nd level of Contact Work?!

Jesus didn't just go where people were, He crossed the bridge of talking to people so that He could do something with and for them. When I think of the power of saying, engaging in conversation after we have shown up, in the hopes of making a deeper impact in someone's life, I think of Jesus and Philip. John 1:43 says, "The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, 'come follow me.'" Jesus shows up in Galilee but he didn't stop there, he spoke words to Philip that changed his life, come follow me.

Without Jesus saying something to Philip, Philip would not have later had the opportunity to witness and share in the feeding of the 5,000 in John 6. Jesus' verbal engagement with Philip changed everything and was so impactful that later we see Philip mimicking his Savior-Mentor-Teacher.

Later on we see another Phillip of the Bible! In Acts 8:26-38, we find Philip being led by the Holy Spirit to "go south down the desert road that runs from Jerusalem to Gaza." Philip goes, shows up, is seen. There, he sees an Ethiopian eunuch reading the scriptures. I'm so glad the story doesn't end there because Philip SAYS something that will forever change the Ethiopian man's life. He asks him if he understands what he is reading.

Philip's willingness to ask the question, say something after having shown up results in this Ethiopian's understanding of salvation and the privilege of being baptized as a believer and follower of Christ. But what if Philip only showed up and never said anything?

Friends, as you continue to show up in the world of adolescents, be encouraged to be led by the Holy Spirit and brave enough to open your mouth to talk to those around you. Ask questions, engage in conversation, and trust that the LORD will use your words to change the lives of those who are seen by you.

Written by Sophia Cox