



To: *Regional Pastors, Youth Camp Directors, State Youth Convention Directors, Student Leadership Institute Coordinators and Area Youth Leadership Opportunities Coordinators.*

From: *The Emerging Leadership Team (part of North American Church of God Youth Ministries)*

RE: *The E.L.P. (Emerging Leaders Package)!*

In recent years, there has been a growing vision to see youth who are called to leadership in and outside of the church grow, connect, and be encouraged intentionally! It is out of this vision that the Youth Ministry Team of Church of God Ministries, along with a network of youth pastors from across North America, has been seeking to move forward with purpose and consistency to be the leaders God is calling them to be.

We know that the best way to do this is to get user-friendly information on a familiar and regular basis into the hands of those who pray for and work with these future leaders. You are one of those people! And we are excited to be partnering with you in what God is doing in your state to nurture and encourage future leaders in the Church of God! One way we hope to do this is by introducing the E.L.P. (Emerging Leaders Package).

The E.L.P. has been designed with you in mind. It is our hope that the Emerging Leaders Package you find on the following pages will encourage you to take the opportunity to invest in and encourage the youth in your area to connect, challenge each other, and grow together on their journey of loving and serving God with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength! It is meant to be a tool that you can adopt and shape to fit into your schedule with ease. Please take a few minutes and ask God to show you where this tool would work for maximum impact. It is more than something to add to your schedule; it is a catalyst for student leaders to start leading today!

We are here if you have questions or input (MCrump@chog.org). Please let us know how this E.L.P. (Emerging Leaders Package) worked for you. We are excited to see and hear about what God is doing in the lives of his youth! We have also provided ongoing monthly training for your leaders at www.emergingleaders101.com.

Committed to Raising Up a New Generation of Christ-Centered Leaders!

The Youth Ministry Team of the Church of God



E.L.P.

EMERGING LEADERS PACKAGE

WHAT IS IT?

A time for students who feel called to be leaders to come together for encouragement, growth, connection, and challenge to keep moving forward in their faith journeys.

WHEN IS IT?

The following gathering is meant to take place in a 70–95 minute slot sometime during the course of your scheduled event. (Feel free to adapt it to make it work for you.) You decide! The opening activity can be altered to be an example done upfront by a few students, or it can be done by the entire group.

WHO LEADS IT?

This E.L.P is designed to be largely student led, with one or more adults facilitating transitions between the activities and some group processing time.

WHAT MATERIALS ARE NEEDED?

Very little!

- A large hula hoop or long broom stick for each group of 6–8
- Copies of the Spiritual Gifts Inventory (*One per person. See page 4 for free download information.*)
- Information about how your student leaders can stay connected in your area and through the Emerging Leaders network at www.emergingleaders101.com.



OPENING (5-10 MINUTES): HELIUM STICK/HOOP

- Divide students into groups of 6-8.
- Divide each group in half and line up the students in two rows facing each other.
- Introduce the Helium Stick/Hoop by asking participants to point their index fingers, palms down, and hold their arms out.
- Lay the Helium Stick/Hoop on their extended index fingers. Have the group adjust their finger heights until the Helium Stick/Hoop is horizontal and everyone's index fingers are touching the stick.
- Explain that the challenge is to lower the Helium Stick/Hoop to the ground.
- The catch: Each person's fingers must be in contact with the Helium Stick/Hoop at all times. Pinching or grabbing the pole is not allowed; it must rest on top of fingers.
- Reiterate to the group that if anyone's finger is caught not touching the Helium Stick/Hoop, the task will be restarted. Let the task begin.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

- The secret (keep this to yourself) is that the collective upwards pressure created by everyone's fingers tends to be greater than the weight of the stick. As a result, the more a group tries, the more the stick tends to "float" upwards.
- Warning: Particularly in the early stages, the Helium Stick has a habit of mysteriously "floating" up rather than coming down, causing much laughter. A bit of clever humor can help, e.g., act surprised and ask what are they doing raising the Helium Stick/Hoop instead of lowering it!
- Participants may be confused initially about the paradoxical behavior of the Helium Stick/Hoop.
- Some groups or individuals (most often larger-sized groups) may be inclined to give up after 5 to 10 minutes of trying, believing it not to be possible or that it is too hard.
- The facilitator can offer direct suggestions or suggest that the group stop the task, discuss their strategy, and then try again.
- Less often, a group may appear to be succeeding too fast. In response, be particularly vigilant about fingers touching the stick/hoop. Also, make sure participants lower the pole all the way onto the ground. You can add further difficulty by adding a large washer to each end of the stick and explain that the washers should not fall off during the exercise; otherwise it's a restart.
- Eventually the group needs to calm down, concentrate, and very slowly, patiently lower the Helium Stick/Hoop—easier said than done.
- Give the groups a few minutes to work together and then choose one or two of the questions below. Take a few minutes to process what they just experienced.

PROCESSING QUESTIONS

- How well did the group cope with this challenge?
- What skills did it take to be successful as a group?
- What creative solutions were suggested and how were they received?
- What would an outside observer have seen as the strengths and weaknesses of the group?
- What roles did people play?
- What did each group member learn about him/herself as an individual?
- What other situations (e.g., at school, home or work) are like the Helium Stick/Hoop?



SPIRITUAL GIFTS INVENTORY (40-45 MINUTES)

Something that many of us have heard since we were young is that we were all created different and unique. Guess what? That's true! Every one of us was created with different gifts, talents, passions, and personalities. "For we are God's handiwork created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Eph 2:10 *NIV 2011*).

Beginning to understand these things about us is a huge step in understanding the kind of leader God is calling us to be. So we're going to do something that perhaps you've done before, or maybe this will be your first time: we're going to take a spiritual gifts inventory. This will help us on this journey of discovering how we're wired and what God is calling us to do.

We're going to ask that you spend some time answering these questions. Don't analyze and think about the questions too long; answer with your first instinct. Follow the directions on the inventory, and when we're done, we'll process this in our groups.

Give each student a copy of the Spiritual Gifts Inventory, which can be downloaded at www.chogy.org/spiritual-gifts-inventory or found at the end of the E.L.P.

Once the time allotted is complete, ask students to share their findings (working and waiting gifts) with one other person.



SPIRITUAL GIFTS INVENTORY (40-45 MINUTES)

If you don't have enough time to work through the entire Spiritual Gifts Inventory, we still recommend having them printed out and available for youth to do on their own time. Spend a few minutes talking through spiritual gifts for those who may not be familiar with them. You can find helps for this in the Spiritual Gifts Inventory for Students at www.chogy.org/spiritual-gifts-inventory. Make sure the youth are aware of how to complete the test on their own.



LEADING NOW! (10-15 MINUTES)

If you're here, that means you have probably felt some sort of call to be leader. You've also most likely felt or have been told that one day you'll be a great leader. Sometimes we feel as though we need to wait until we have everything figured out before we can truly lead. We challenge you to find a way to start serving and leading immediately when you get home. The idea that you, the youth, are the church of the future just isn't true. Usually people have their heart in the right place when saying it, but you are the church of today. 4

(LEADING NOW! continued)

We've already talked through spiritual gifts. On top of spiritual gifts, we also have specific passions in life. Your passions may fall under worship, social issues, art, details, or something different. Your passions are what get you pumped up. Your passions are what motivate and inspire you.

We want to encourage you to leave this time together with some ideas on areas within your youth ministry and home church in which your passions and gifts might line up, places where you can begin serving now. If you have the gift of hospitality and you have a passion for people, you should be helping in the greeting ministry in your youth ministry or at church. That's just one example.

For the next few minutes, here's what we want you to do: make two columns on a sheet of paper. On one side, list some of your top gifts. On the other side, list some of your passions. Then spend a few minutes thinking about areas in which you can begin using your gifts and passions to serve the church now. Maybe those ministries already exist. Maybe it's something God will begin to put on your heart to start.

After a few minutes, begin to share your discoveries with those in your group.



CROSS-MODEL MENTORING (10 MINUTES)

Throughout the Bible, we see examples of godly men and women raising up the next generation of God-centered or Christ-centered leaders. Sadly, we also have examples of what happens when biblical leaders fail to pass on the baton of leadership to the next generation of leaders. To be the most effective and complete leader possible, it is essential to have a 360° view of leadership, with someone below, above, and beside you in leadership. We should be coaching and mentoring younger leaders to take on the responsibility of teaching, leading, and working with the next generation of leaders. It is also necessary and biblical to have leaders with more wisdom and experience leading and teaching us as leaders. There is definitely a need for all of us to have peers walking along side of us and encouraging us and holding us accountable as we journey in our leadership role.

We have a great tool to help us recognize these different relationships. Take a look at the Cross Model Mentoring handout.* (Note to Leader: For each of the following relationships, we encourage you to share who these people are in your life or find a student leader to share his or her story.) As you can see, the challenge is for us to have four specific relationships that will help us develop as leaders. One of those is having a mentor, someone who is older than us who has gone before us and would allow us to learn from them. On the flip side of that, we should have someone in our lives whom we are pouring into in those same ways. The side pieces of the cross represent those relationships we need to have with the peers and friends we partner with and receive encouragement from.

At this point, we want to take some time for you to think through who fits these roles in your life, or whom God might be placing in your life to ask to have these roles in your lives.

* The cross model mentoring handout can be found at the end of the PDF download at www.chogy.org/5-principle-training named "leadership" and also attached to the E.L.P. There is a lot of great information in this PDF that could lead to an entire session on this topic, but the handout towards the end is all that is necessary for this piece of the E.L.P.



CHALLENGE, COMMISSION, CONNECTING, & CLOSE (10-15 MINUTES)

We hope you've created some new relationships today and that you've also learned a little bit about how you're wired and what that means for your leadership. A big part of leadership is staying connected to groups of other leaders, learning from one another about how to do what God is calling us to do. Another important aspect of leadership is that leaders are learners. We need to continually be doing things that help us understand how we're wired and how we can be better equipped.

We're all in different places in our journeys—in our journeys with God and in our journeys as leaders. Some of us have felt a call to vocational ministry and to leadership for a few years. Some of us are just starting to wrestle with what it means to be Christ-centered leaders who influence those around them. The truth is, we're all still developing as leaders and as followers of Christ. As we continue to develop, it's important that we're journeying together. Just as our Christian faith cannot be lived out alone, we cannot develop into the leaders we're called to be if we try to go it alone.

There are several resources available to you that we want you to be aware of. They exist (1) to help train and equip you and (2) to help keep you connected with each other and with emerging leaders throughout North America.

The Emerging Leaders gathering at IYC (www.iyc2012.org, www.iyc2014.org) and Leadership Summit (www.chogy.org/leadership-summit) are both resources that exist to help shape you and equip you as leaders. There is also the Emerging Leaders Facebook page, www.facebook.com/EmergingLeaders101, which keeps you in contact with a network of emerging leaders from all over the country.

What we want you to remember today is EmergingLeaders101.com: the Emerging Leaders 101 website. There are a lot of opportunities for you, but this website is the hub to get information for all of them. Don't forget about the monthly training provided for you to grow as well! So just remember that EmergingLeaders101.com is the hub that connects and informs you about everything else. *(Note to Leader: Take advantage of this opportunity to plug any local or regional opportunities that you are aware of as well.)*

As we close, we're going to ask that you get back into your groups and spend a couple minutes praying for each other. Pray for wisdom, clarity, and motivation to move forward with the challenge to start serving and leading in our home ministries. You may also want to ask someone to be a peer-to-peer accountability support during this time. After prayer, you are dismissed, but leave quietly as others may continue to be praying.

Thank you for taking the step to be here!