

CHERYL  
RICHARDSON

## Life Makeover Group

*Facilitator Tips*

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## Welcome!

Congratulations on deciding to start your own Life Makeover Group™! I'm sure you'll find, as so many have already, that your life will change in wonderful ways when you join with others who are committed to living high quality lives. The friendship, support, and accountability will give you the edge you need to stop hoping for a better life and start making it happen. In this section we've put together everything you need to know about starting and running a great Life Makeover Group™. Enjoy!

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cheryl". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

## Getting Started

By joining our community you'll have a chance to connect with people in your hometown who are anxious to share their life-changing journeys.

As you sign up to be a Life Makeover Group™ facilitator you become a key link in creating our community of support. Most individuals are very excited (and a little bit nervous) when they request information from a group. It's a big step and they wait for your reply, sometimes checking their e-mail several times a day. Your prompt response is what makes our community run smoothly.

- Remember that this list is only one way to find members. You'll want to use the other ideas found in [Finding New Members](#) as well. The most successful group uses a combination of ways to find members.
- You are welcome to choose a theme, but know the largest number of responses is for Open Discussion Groups.
- Don't wait for several other members before getting started. Keep in mind that once you have one other person, you're set to go! Schedule time to meet so you can review the [guidelines for running a successful group](#), choose a book to work with, and plan your next meeting.

## Facilitator Responsibilities and Guidelines

- List yourself as the facilitator
- Double check that your e-mail address is correct
- Double check that you are listed in the right state or country

Please respond promptly when you receive requests about your group. Simply hit “reply” and make a connection. If you’re not sure what to say, use one of our [sample response letters](#).

If your group is not accepting new members, please list your group as “closed.” This will allow you to still receive information pertaining to facilitators, however you will no longer receive inquiries from those looking to join a group. You can easily update your listing by visiting the Life Makeover Groups section of our website.

If you choose to stop being a facilitator for the group, email [LMG@cherylrichardson.com](mailto:LMG@cherylrichardson.com) to have your name removed.

By entering your information and adding your name in our database as a Life Makeover Group™ facilitator, you hereby acknowledge and agree that there will be no charge or fee whatsoever associated with your group, and that your group will always remain free to all Life Makeover Group™ members. Email addresses sent to you are to be used for the sole purpose of Life Makeover Group correspondence ONLY.

## Response Letters

Here are some sample emails for you to use when responding to potential new members (don't forget to change the names and details ☺).

Dear Jane,

I received your information request regarding the Life Makeover Group™ via the Cheryl Richardson website. We are in the process of forming a new group that will be using "Stand Up For Your Life" as a format for discussion. Overall, the group is intended to provide a positive forum where members support one another in defining and taking action steps towards their goals. Our first meeting is Monday, April 12 from 7-9 pm at Mary's house, 1234 Broadway, please let me know if you need directions.

After the initial meeting, the group will decide on a regular schedule that works for everyone. If you have any questions or would like additional information, please don't hesitate to contact me via e-mail or by calling (555) 555-5555.

Kind regards,

Susie

\*~\*~\*~\*~\*

Dear Kathy

Great to hear from you. We're a group of women who meet every two weeks at a member's home and we're working on Cheryl Richardson's book Life Makeovers. The chapters are fairly independent so you can join in at any time! Our next meeting is Saturday April 17 from 2-4 pm at the Barnes & Noble on North Street. Please let me know if you'd like to join us or if you have any other questions.

Hope to hear from you soon,

Jennifer

\*~\*~\*~\*~\*

Hi Bob,

I received your information request from the Cheryl Richardson site. This is the first time that I've done this ... made contact with someone from the site. I don't have a group yet, but I'd like to work through "Take Time for Your Life" over the next year. I think that it would be easier working with another person (or more). Let's arrange to meet somewhere so we can discuss how we'd like to proceed.

Look forward to hearing back from you,

John

\*~\*~\*~\*~\*

# Tools for Finding New Members

## ***Know Your Ideal Member***

It's important to consider the qualities you most want in a fellow group member. Our readers tell us that the best members are:

- Committed to taking action
- Excited about making changes
- Good listeners
- Open minded

Be sure to listen for these qualities when interviewing potential new members.

## ***Finding Members***

Besides listing your group on our site (the easiest way to find new members) there are a number of other things you can do. Here are 4 examples:

1. **Create a flyer.** Be sure to include tear-tabs at the bottom of your flyer with your contact info and [www.cherylrichardson.com](http://www.cherylrichardson.com), so people leave with all the info they need, not your flyer!

[View a sample flyer](#)

2. **Send an invitation.** Invite friends, colleagues, family members or acquaintances to an informal evening discussion so you can talk about the idea of forming a group and determine the level of interest.

[View a sample invitation](#)

3. **Have a friend ask a friend.** One of the quickest ways to get a group going is to invite one or two friends and ask them to bring along a friend.
4. **Start a book study group at your local bookstore.** Some bookstores require permission from an author to hold book study groups in their stores. You have my full permission to do so. Please do not imply that I have trained you in any way. Feel free to print this permission statement and bring it to your local bookstore!

## ***Post Your Flyer***

Here are some places you can post your flyer:

- \* Library
- \* Church
- \* Senior citizen centers
- \* Women's centers
- \* YWCA/YMCA
- \* Community service centers
- \* Hospitals, HMO's, Health centers
- \* Health food stores
- \* Yoga centers
- \* Bookstores
- \* Health Clubs
- \* Community Colleges & Universities
- \* Local spas
- \* Recreation Centers
- \* Bulletin boards at grocery stores
- \* Hair/Nail Salons
- \* Lunch/break rooms at work
- \* Cafeterias
- \* Daycare centers
- \* Children's school
- \* Massage centers

Some of these places may even allow you to use their space for meetings. Be creative! For example, if you start a group for moms, see if you can use space in a church that has a room for kids. Share the cost of hiring a babysitter. Or, you might even check out a local health club that provides childcare. One reader found a health club that was happy to offer space and a babysitter!

## Running a Successful Group

We've learned a lot about what makes for a successful group experience. Members who take their participation seriously and do what it takes to get their needs met have the most success. Some members prefer to form groups with people who share certain lifestyle issues or situations — moms with small children, business owners, or empty nesters. Others prefer to be part of a more diverse group. The size of the group is important too. Experience has shown that the most productive and effective groups have 6 to 8 members. However you'll want to get started as soon as you have one other person and then add people as they show up.

Since the intention is to create community and to stay in action, it's important for your group to meet regularly. Weekly is best, biweekly is next to best, and monthly works well when you buddy up with someone you can check in with by phone every week. Commitment is the key to success. If you decide to start a group, have members make a commitment to attend for at least three months, and schedule these meetings in advance to make planning easy and to demonstrate your commitment to the group.

### *Follow Smart Group Guidelines*

The following guidelines not only help create a safe place for a productive and enjoyable meeting, they help to eliminate the kind of habits that quickly dissolve a group. I recommend that you review the following guidelines at the start of every meeting:

1. **Commit to Confidentiality.** Everything that is said at a Life Makeover Group™ meeting is strictly confidential.
2. **Give Everyone Equal Time.** Be sure that each person has a chance to speak. While there may certainly be times when a member needs extra attention, it's important to prevent members from continuously dominating the conversation. This is the one problem that I've seen ruin a group quicker than any other. To ensure that everyone gets equal time, use a timer or an alarm clock to keep members on track. Make sure that it sounds an alarm when time is up. Remember that your meeting should be focused on action not social chitchat.
3. **Don't be critical or give unsolicited advice.** Let each person ask for what they need.
4. **Share Facilitation.** Have someone new facilitate your meetings each time you meet to prevent the group from having a "boss." This is also important for those members who have a tendency to get caught up in the "teacher" role and end up not getting the support they need. Too often a member who needs the most

support is the one who will take on the caretaker role of the group. Avoid this tendency by rotating leadership.

5. **Focus on the positive.** Put the attention on what works. Look for and acknowledge a member's strengths. Keep complaining and whining to a minimum — one minute or less (we all need to do it sometimes). If someone continuously comes to a meeting complaining or crying about the same problem without taking action to remedy the situation, this may be an indication that the member needs therapy or some other kind of individual support. Do this member a favor and be honest. Have someone from the group contact the person privately and offer to help them get the support they need. Don't let a fellow member suffer by being "nice." Tell the truth.
6. **Speak from your own experience.** Use the word "I" not "you" when speaking to other members.
7. **Honor the group.** Hold a regular "check-in" meeting to be sure that all members are satisfied with how the meetings are run. Tell the truth about how you feel (gracefully, of course). You might also check in at the end of each meeting, once a month, or once a quarter. If there is a problem, address it immediately! For example, if someone talks too much or ignores group guidelines by gossiping, you need to honor your group by telling the truth.

### ***Group Facilitation***

There are many formats you can use to run a successful group meeting. Some groups are working with the books (Stand Up for Your Life, Life Makeovers and Take Time for Your Life), while other groups have formed around a particular subject. For example, a popular topic is money. Readers are using Chapter Four in Take Time for Your Life (Invest in Your Financial Health) to help each other improve their finances.

### ***Meeting Format***

1. Negotiate equal time for each member.
2. Review group guidelines.
3. Start with 15 minutes of success stories, catch up, or letting go of anything that might prevent you from being fully present.
4. Begin the group discussion. The first person might talk about their reactions to a chapter, the homework they've completed, or the places where they got stuck. Allow the first person to speak without interruption for the allotted time. When finished, allow this member to ask for feedback and/or support from others. Challenge them to be specific!

5. Commit to homework for the next meeting.
6. Move on to the next person.
7. Needs/Resources – When each member has had a chance to be fully heard, open the meeting and allow members to ask for and receive any additional help. For example, a member might need a supportive phone call before taking a difficult action, or contact information that will allow him or her to move forward.

## Downloads

### Sample Flyer

# Join a Life Makeover Group!

If you'd like a better life . . .

If you're interested in connecting with people who are committed to making positive changes in their lives . . .

If you want to reconnect with your desires, clean up the clutter, and take on the challenges of high-quality living .

..

Then join us for some fun and support!

*Please call Mary Smith for more info at:*

***(999) 555-1111***

*~\*~ There is no fee to participate ~\*~*

(Add tear-off tabs at the bottom with the following info)

Life Makeover Groups at: [www.cherylrichardson.com](http://www.cherylrichardson.com)

Mary

(999) 555-1111

## **Sample Invitation**

(You might want to print the invitation on nice, pre-designed paper)

(Date)

Dear Friend (or specific name),

I'd like to invite you to an evening discussion about creating community. I'm interested in forming a "Life Makeover" group that will bring together like-minded friends who are interested in improving the quality of their lives. This group (which will be free to all members) could help us to do things like:

- Clarify our priorities
- Improve our financial health
- Set better boundaries
- End procrastination
- Clear up clutter
- Make more time for our self care

And so on . . .

If this idea interests you, then I'd love to have you join us for a discussion on how we might begin. The evening is scheduled for (date), from (xx pm to xx pm), at my home (address). I'll be serving tea and snacks.

Please RSVP by (date). Thanks -- I look forward to hearing from you!

Warmly,

(Your Name)