

# Think Small

By: Pastor of Connections Casey Graham &  
Spiritual Growth Director Renee Weber

## Think Casey's Blog...

Title: NEW!

Well, the summer is almost over... The only people who are happy about this are parents who want to send their kids back to school. In a way, I am happy too. Here is the way I see it. Kids are headed back to school, tax free week is coming soon, and college football is right around the corner. Now that I think about it, I love this time of year. For some reason this time of year feels new and fresh. I feel like I have a blank page to start back with my goals and life with a new passion and zeal for doing new things. I believe that God created days and nights and different seasons so we can constantly have a "new" chance to get things right. I love that a new day and a new season is never too far away. Some people look at life like one big occurrence; I look at life chopped up into millions of ways to start fresh. The past is behind us and the future is waiting to be crafted by our thoughts and habits of today. I like starting back. I like launch. I like lift off. I like the first inning. I like the first bite. I like the first group. I like the first goal. I like new and new likes me.

As I was thinking about groups starting back I have some new thoughts...

1. **I can't believe how much the quality of our leadership has improved in the last twelve months.** If you are reading this, I am talking about you. You guys are the next level leaders in our church and you really have great potential. Getting to hang out with you all at Shawn's house was a blast and I really appreciate your commitment to helping others grow spiritually. I gained a new appreciation for all of you and your commitment. It doesn't go unnoticed!
2. **We are going to accomplish our church-wide goals.** Here is the bottom line, we are going to succeed. I have no doubt in my mind that you guys are ready to lead your group through a spiritual journey over the next couple of weeks during the Think Small series. We aren't doing a program over the next few weeks... We are doing life on purpose. We are narrowing down our focus to what Christ cares about, people. Christ cares about our world, our church family, our students and our community. Do you care about these things? I sure do. Start asking yourself, "God what do you want to do through me and God what do you want to do through us?" Don't delay thinking through what God wants you to give on Impact Day on August 26 & 27. I am not one bit hesitant to talk with you guys about coming through on this offering of \$150,000. You have come through for the past 6 years and I think this year will be no different. Let's win together.

3. *I am pumped about the Google Groups GOAL OF STARTING 25 GROUPS IN ONE DAY.* Yeah, you heard me right, 25 groups in one day. That is insane and I love it. I love knowing that you, me and everyone in the Growth Group ministry have to start the process of praying, "God how do you want to use me to connect with disconnected people." Listen, YOU ARE THE ANSWER TO SOMEONE'S LONELINESS. The way you answer their need is to multiply your leadership to someone else. Guys, I know what people think... "I don't want to leave." "We just got started not too long ago." "I think we have further to go in community." "We have worked so hard to establish what we have here." I am so glad Jesus didn't say that same thing about leaving Heaven. He is our model on how to leave what we love in order to be a solution for someone else's spiritual emptiness. 25 Groups is insane and I want you to be insane with me. Let's get nuts and start these groups. Here is where we stand. Email [casey@mountainlakechurch.org](mailto:casey@mountainlakechurch.org) and tell me that you want to be the answer for someone's loneliness!



The Search for Real Relationships

Google Search

I'm Feeling Lucky

Transferring data...12% complete  
3 out of 25 leaders committed



## Objectives

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- Hang out and catch up from the summer break.
- Talk about the "Think Small" series introduction.
- Evaluate how God has worked in our lives and our church by using the small things.
- Emphasize announcements of what is going on the next couple of weeks in groups.

**\*\*Please make arrangements to pick up your groups Because We Care packets on August 5 & 6 at the Connection Group table located in the lobby. These are the Message Based Curriculum for next week's groups and contain all the information that we shared at the**

**Lovejoy's house this summer. If you are unable, please contact Renee Weber immediately at 770-888-2513 ext. 21.**

### **Special Announcements/Dates:**

**\*During the worship services on August 5 & 6, we are sharing some "VERY BIG" news. You will not want to miss it!**

**\*Next week in group** we will talk about very important material based on the weekend worship service. You will definitely want to be in group.

**\*Wednesday Night Live** will be August 23rd at 6:45 p.m. Our group will meet on campus that week instead of in our host home for time to worship together as a group with other Growth Groups and to hear Shawn Lovejoy's heart for the future of MLC.

### **Facilitators' Guide**

- Spend the first 45 minutes hanging out and enjoying some good food. Ease back into Growth Groups with this non-structured time.
  - After 45 minutes gather your group together to go through these questions. Open with prayer thanking God for the summer break and for the time to get back together as a group.
  - Go over the special announcements and dates. Talk about how you are excited about this series and next weekend's service. Tell them that you had dinner at the Lovejoy's house this summer and Shawn shared some really exciting things that you can't wait for everyone to find out about. Remember: Shawn shared that information to you because you are a core leader in our church, but it is all confidential. People may beg you to tell them, but please do not share anything that was shared. Everyone will find out all the details on August 5 & 6.
1. **Take time to catch up and share about your summer. What has your overall summer been like? Where have you gone? What have you done?**
    - Ease into the discussion this week and make sure your group members catch up with each other from the summer break. People can share their trips, family events, most unusual vacation spot, or busiest summer schedule. Some people may have had a very difficult summer with illness or death, so be sensitive to these people. Do not rush over what they share, but take time to care and pray for them.
  2. **What did you like best about this weekend's worship service?**
    - This could be a song, the verses Shawn teaches, a silly sketch starring some of our own pastors, or the Bite-Size Potluck on Saturday night.

**3. "Think Small" is the idea that God can take small things and make a big difference with them. Share about how you have seen God work this principle out in and around your life.**

- God uses the smallest inanimate objects, the less recognized people, and the least likely candidates to make a difference in the world. God uses our lives, just one out of 6 billion, to reach our neighbor or family member that is disconnected from Christ and the church. He uses your life to lead a group of people to healthy relationships with others and with God, to ultimately become more like Jesus Christ. Your life has lasting impact because you are willing and available to God.
- You may want to start with your own thoughts to get the ball rolling. People are a little rusty with the group discussion from a long break. Think through ways that God has worked in and through your life this last year and the difference it has made in you and your family.
- You have the chance here to encourage the heart of your group members by pointing out the small things in their lives that God has used to make a difference. Think through 2-3 people in your group and how you've seen God use their lives. It may be how they've reached out to a neighbor or family member. If they serve in any weekend volunteer area, their life is making a difference for disconnected people in our community that walk through the doors. Someone in your group may be spending alone time with God for the first time and you've seen the difference that small amount of time has made in their relationship with God and others.

**4. Share about how you have seen God work this principle out in and around our church here at Mountain Lake.**

- I know I immediately think of how God has used the small lives of Shawn Lovejoy & Chad Ward to start a church six years ago that is having an impact not only in our community, but in our nation and world. MLC has strategic partnerships with other church plants in Georgia, New York, and Jamaica. We have partnered with North Shore Church in Slidell, LA for the past year since Hurricane Katrina hit. This is a huge difference that came from by using two willing lives and their families.
- Think about the difference made by having multiple worship services on Saturdays and Sundays. It seems like a small thing, but we have been able to reach hundreds more people and still feel like a small church where they can belong and become. Where I can belong and become. Where you can belong and become.
- The answers for this are endless. God uses so many small things in people's lives differently. We'd love to hear some of the things that people have shared for questions three and four on your group report this week.