

FAMILYLIFE® presents

**LEADER'S GUIDE**

# **STEPPING UP™**

**A CALL TO COURAGEOUS MANHOOD**

**VIDEO SERIES**

## ROLE OF THE LEADER

Hundreds of hours of planning and thought were put into the DVDs and the workbook for this series. As important as these tools are for the journey of discovery that the men in your group will undergo, your leadership is just as critical for bringing about real life-change. You are the connection between the ideas and the relationships that will help the ideas stick.

When it comes to leading the group, you can simply play the DVD and then ask the questions in the Base Camp section of your workbook. Even if that's all you do, great things can happen in the lives of your men. But you also have an amazing opportunity to take your group deeper than they could ever go on their own.

This leader's guide will give you tips and direction for making the most of your time together. Of foremost importance is the influence you will have through leading by example. If you want men to think deeply about the at-home exercises (Logging Time on the Trail), then make sure your effort matches what you want from them. As far as your group time is concerned, remember the two Ts:

- **Transparency**—Be open with your men about your own journey, including the struggles you've faced and the questions you've wrestled. Of course, be careful not to share too much too soon, or you might shut down the guys who are hesitant to talk.



- **Trust**—Men will only go deep with those they trust. Start by asking yourself, “Am I trustworthy? Can a guy believe that his secrets are safe with me?” Also establish the importance of confidence during the group discussion time. Make sure the men know that what is said in Base Camp stays in Base Camp.

While you have taken on a significant role in leading a group of men through Stepping Up™, we’re going to challenge you to go yet one step further. Make it your goal to meet with each man one-to-one at some point during this series. The purpose of these meetings is to see if each man is getting the most he can from the study, or if there are any issues he needs to discuss with you that he is reluctant to bring up in the group. At the very least, he will be encouraged by your display of friendship.

## GOALS OF THE SERIES

By the end of this series, each man should

- know the five steps of manhood and understand the importance of continually progressing upward through his journey as a man;
- know the meaning of the acronym S.T.E.P. and how to apply it to the question, “Am I stepping up right now?”; and
- identify a clear action step through the development of his Stepping Up Plan.

Most men want to change something in their lives, but taking the steps to do so may be too daunting. Some have no idea where to begin. Each week the guys in your group will be identifying things they need to address in their lives, areas where they need to step up. As the group leader, help your men process these issues by encouraging them to narrow down the many needs to the most important one. Some of this processing will happen naturally during the group time, but some of this can only happen one-to-one.



## LIFE IN THE GROUP

**Group size:** We recommend groups of no more than eight. If your group grows beyond that, you might consider one of the following options:

- Have all the men meet together once a week to view the video, and then break into smaller groups to discuss the Base Camp questions. This format works best when the same group members are maintained throughout all ten weeks rather than meeting with a different mix of group members each week. The group/discussion leader should remain the same as well.
- Have the men meet in smaller groups at times and locations that are convenient for them. This requires that they have access to a device that can play DVDs and a setting that does not distract from the discussion. (Given the personal nature of some topics, it is not recommended to meet in public settings where the discussion could easily be overheard.)

**Inviting men:** Nothing beats a personal invitation, either by phone or in person. E-mails, texts, and online messages all have their place, but person-to-person contact is more meaningful and will set the tone for the relationship building you want to occur in your group.

**Time frame:** The video sessions run about thirty-five minutes each, and discussion time afterward will take an additional thirty to forty-five minutes. To be safe, and to allow for settling-in time up front, you'll want to plan for a total of ninety minutes.



**The workbook:** At your first group meeting you'll want to orient the guys to the workbook. Begin by pointing out the "How to Use This Workbook" section. Also, show them that each session has two sections: Base Camp (group discussion questions) and Logging Time on the Trail (individual exercises). The Logging Time on the Trail section consists of three days' worth of exercises that are to be completed between group meetings. Also, emphasize the importance of keeping up with the development of their Stepping Up Plan, which will be part of each session's Day Three assignment. You might even take them to the Stepping Up Plan in the back of the book and show them the topics they will be addressing. (Most sessions also include A Step Beyond section for those who may want to read and work through additional content.)

In session 6 you will find a special assignment, the 360 review. Your men will be asked to make copies of this review and pass it on to a few of their close friends. They will then evaluate the completed reviews as part of their work in session 8. As the group leader, you will want to emphasize the value of this assignment when the time comes.

**Group discussion:** Be prepared each week to lead the Base Camp group discussion, which will immediately follow the viewing of the video. The discussion questions

provided in your workbook address the video session and the previous week's homework that the men have completed in their workbooks (Logging Time on the Trail). If you feel additional questions are needed for your group discussion, you can either select questions that were especially meaningful to you from your own homework or ask broader questions:

- What question from Logging Time on the Trail most got your attention? How did you answer it?
- Have you made any commitments you would like to discuss with the group? (Obviously, a question like this would require a high level of trust within the group.)
- In what ways are your thoughts about manhood being challenged or reinforced?

## SERIES OPTIONS

**Retreat:** Many men's groups like to get away for weekend retreats. One option for this series is to present some of the material during a retreat, which will then launch small groups to complete the series. If you choose to do this, we recommend using the first three or four sessions during the retreat by viewing a video, working on one day's worth of homework, and then coming back together as a group for discussion and to view the next video. (You will want the men to go back and complete the missing days of homework later in their small groups after the retreat.)

Another option is to end the series with a retreat. Show the last session, give guys time to work on their Stepping Up Plans, and have them share what they've experienced over the course of the series.

**Commissioning ceremony:** You could also arrange a ceremony of some type to commemorate the completion of the series. There are a number of different ways to approach this. We have posted a recommended ceremony structure on our website [FamilyLife.com/SteppingUp](http://FamilyLife.com/SteppingUp).