



**CHRONIC JOY**  
chronic illness ministry



# Small Groups

## WELCOME

God desires for us to dwell together in community – to share life and discover hope as members of one body, growing in our connection with God and with one another.

Because we each come to the group with varying levels of illness, it's important to share the responsibilities. Clear group roles offer a framework for healthy small group dynamics.

As you read through the group roles, prayerfully consider how God is calling you to serve. Remember that sometimes He calls us to serve in uncomfortable or challenging areas. For example, prayer has been more difficult for me, so it was no surprise that God put me in charge of a monthly prayer newsletter, later nudging me to start a larger prayer ministry. Though I wouldn't have chosen prayer over an area of natural ability, like organizing, God has used it to grow me both in compassion and to deeper into Him.

Depending on the size of your small group, participants may need to assume multiple roles.

## A FEW BASICS

- A maximum group size of six participants will insure that each voice is heard.
- Determine your virtual meeting format (i.e.: Facebook Video, Skype, other).
- Determine day and time of meetings. We recommend meeting every other week for up to 90 minutes.

## GROUP ROLES

**Group Facilitator** – Responsible for facilitating chapters 1 and 2 of the study. This will give everyone with the opportunity to become familiar with the study and group dynamics. The Facilitator is also responsible for general group rules and for helping to keep the group on track during meetings.

**Chapter Facilitator** – Each participant will facilitate one or more chapters, based on group size.

**Organizer** – Will gather participants’ contact information, including phone/text numbers, email addresses, mailing addresses, and any other information pertinent to the group, such as birthdays or social media contact information, compiling it and providing it to each group member. The Organizer will also note which chapter(s) each participant will facilitate, when each group member will share his/her story (generally one per week), and other necessary group information.

**Prayer Coordinator**– Prayer is essential to a healthy group. Using the Prayer Card in the Appendix of your study book, prayer requests can be emailed to the Prayer Coordinator, who will collect then forward them to each group member. The Prayer Coordinator should also reach out to group members who have not submitted a request. Sometimes a little TLC can encourage a more hesitant member to share.

**Encourager** – The Encourager will send regular group messages to each member, including things like:

- a quote or thought from the upcoming chapter
- an image from the Chronic Joy website
- a prompt or question from the study – something the group might be wrestling with
- an encouraging Scripture from the study

**Goodwill Ambassador** – The Ambassador will send personal cards, texts and/or emails to all group participants. (As participants may not in the same state or country, Goodwill Ambassadors may need to rely on email.)

Notes can:

- celebrate a birthday or accomplishment
- acknowledge a brave moment or courageous decision
- compassionately respond to a health crisis, or loss
- be a word of encouragement

Remember that while these roles may seem daunting in a life with chronic illness, everything moves at the pace of grace.

Decide as a group what works best for each of you. These roles are helpful guides to get you started in building the foundation of a group that thrives, and to keep a single leader from burning out.

In God’s economy we are all leaders, some very dynamic like King David, some more reluctant like Moses, and most of us somewhere in between.

First and foremost are groups built on the unshakable foundation of God. As we listen to and lean into Him our groups will engage, grow, mature, flourish and thrive.

*“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.” Matthew 18:20*

**Hope. Purpose. Worth. Joy. THRIVE in a life with chronic illness!**