

# Practicing the Way - Overview

## Leader Guide

Thank you for choosing to lead a Practicing the Way Course. You can find materials for your group at <https://journeychattanooga.com/practicing-the-way>. You can also create a free account at <https://launch.practicingtheway.org/login> for additional resources, too.

There are some different ways to lead your group but at it's core, we will ask group members to watch a session video before coming to your group and be prepared to discuss their insights and questions. There are several resources that are available on the Journey website above that can help them get the most out of this study, too. The suggested process is this.

### **1. Download the Companion Guide or Buy the Book**

To get the most out of the course, the Companion Guide provides material to be read during the week and activities to complete as you reflect about what you are learning. For Group Leaders, it also offers some good discussion questions for your group session if you need them. An alternative is to buy the *Practicing the Way* book and read it throughout the 8 week course. Neither is required to participate in a PTW Group but they will benefit from the investment in time and reflection.

### **2. . Take the Spiritual Health Reflection (Before the First Session)**

The Spiritual Health Reflection is a self-assessment tool designed to help you gauge your inner life with God and the person you are becoming in Christ. It typically takes about 5 – 10 minutes to complete. Instructions to take the assessment are on our PTW webpage.

### **3. Watch the Session Video before your Group Session**

This is a departure from the typical way PTW Groups are led. We are asking them to watch the video before the session so you can spend your time getting to know one another and discuss rather than watch the video together. It also allows group members to reflect on what they have seen so they will be more prepared to discuss.

### **4. Host a Group Session (8 Weeks)**

This time is meant to be a discussion and learning time. Rather than teaching the material, letting group members lead the discussion as they explore and reflect on the material will provide a more meaningful experience. If you need some discussion questions, the companion guide can be very helpful. Session topics, descriptions and weekly practices for each session are listed below.

### **5. Develop a Personal Rule of Life (After the Last Session)**

The Rule of Life Builder allows you to drag and drop spiritual disciplines, relational rhythms, and customized habits into a personal plan of daily, weekly, and monthly practices designed for your individual makeup and stage of life. This tool can be tweaked and revisited over time.

# Sessions

## Session 1....Following Jesus

Following Jesus is more than going to church or believing the right things; it is practicing a way of life. The meaning of “follow Jesus” is rooted in 1st-century practices of rabbis and apprentices, practices that inform our understanding of how to follow Jesus today.

*Practice: Develop a daily time and place to connect with God.*

## Session 2....Formation (Part 1)

Whether we realize it or not, all of us are being formed — by our habits, relationships, the stories we believe, and our environment. This session explores the six primary forces shaping individuals: habits, relationships, stories, environment, time, and experience.

*Practice: Take a “life audit,” an inventory of all the forces that are forming you now and in the past.*

## Session 3....Formation (Part 2)

Many of us desire to become more like Jesus, but we feel stuck. We need a training program, a reliable pathway to transformation. We find this in the Way of Jesus, which shows us how to intentionally engage formation.

*Practice: Replace an old habit with a new spiritual discipline.*

## Session 4....The Practices

The Practices are disciplines that create space for the Spirit to transform us from the inside out. Learn about practicing ancient disciplines that open us up to God to change us at the deepest level.

*Practice: Begin the spiritual discipline of Sabbath.*

## Session 5....Meeting God in Pain and Suffering

The Practices can expose pain as our soul begins to process and discharge suffering. This session explores the three primary ways people deal with pain (deny, detach, or drug), how unhealed pain sabotages transformation, and how God can meet us in pain to bring lasting change.

*Practice: Notice and name your emotions in the presence of God through prayer.*

## **Session 6....Healing from Sin**

This session covers three dimensions of sin — sin done by us, sin done to us, and sin done around us — and explores four layers of sin we move through in our healing: gross sins, conscious sins, unconscious sins, and attachments. Finally, the session covers our part in healing, the practice of confession.

***Practice:** Confess and name your sin to someone you trust.*

## **Session 7....Crafting a Rule of Life**

Transformation is possible, but it's not inevitable. Learn how to build an intentional plan, or what the early Christians called a "Rule of Life": a schedule and a set of practices and relational rhythms that create space for us to be with Jesus, become like him, and do as he did.

***Practice:** Craft a personalized Rule of Life.*

## **Session 8....Life Together**

To sustain a lifelong journey of following Jesus, we need to key in on one final critical truth: You are meant to follow Jesus in community. Learn how to cultivate a community of depth, vulnerability, and commitment to transformation.

***Practice:** Identify your intentional community and begin to meet.*

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**Thank you for investing in our church community and the members of your group. Your PTW Group has the potential to significantly impact the spiritual formation of every member including yourself. It is our hope that we will learn some new lessons about hosting PTW Groups and that we will continue to make them available to a growing number of apprentices to Jesus.**