

FAMILY GROUP LEADERS MEETING

Self starters and the rest of mankind



THE
80-20
RULE

Self starters and the rest of mankind

by Gordon Ferguson

According to the Marriage Dynamics facilitators, nearly all marriages fall into 1 of 3 categories: 25% are good; 50% are stagnant; and 25% are on the verge of breaking up. They say that the 25% good ones are good because the spouses in these unions are *self-starters*. They hear marriage lessons and put the suggestions into practice. They read the recommended books; talk to others; and get help. Taking this at face value, about one-fourth of all people are *self starters* and the remainder are not. From my experiences in life, I would agree that this is likely an accurate figure.

By applying this principle to the church generally, we as leaders (*self-starters*) may be expecting virtually every member to become a self-starter spiritually. Expect people to take responsibility for themselves and their spiritual growth and not be dependent on leaders. That sounds noble and righteous, but is it actually in touch with reality? What we are really saying to people is "Be like me" - a self-starter. People keep saying things like "I'm not tied in to relationships." "I don't have any friends." "I'm isolated." We keep replying, "Well, have you initiated with anyone; have you sought out help, etc." Are we expecting the impossible?

How do the Marriage Dynamics people handle the fact that 75% of all people are not self-starters? They provide very **detailed structure**, with **specific expectations** and **accountability**. Otherwise, that large percentage of people will not get help in their marriages, and many will end in divorce. What did we as a movement provide for our church membership in past years? Detailed **structure**, with **specific expectations** and **accountability**. Was that wrong? No, it was necessary. What was wrong? The types of expectations, accountability and motivation used. Strong directive leadership was not what was wrong; I think it was what was right -- another right thing often done in wrong ways.

Our people who are complaining about us not helping them with relationships and other components of the Christian life sound like complainers who won't take responsibility for themselves. Could it be that they are simply crying out for help -- the kind of help that non-self starters always have needed and will likely always need (at least at points in their lives until they reach real maturity)? The ideal is that all disciples should become self-starters, and hopefully with time and good direction to help mature them, many will. But if we don't lead people from where they currently are to where they need to be, they may never even stay in the church. If many leaders keep leading like they are, the church may well end up with only self-starter type members, and quite long lists of immature or otherwise weaker disciples who have died on the vine.

THE PARABLE



OF THE SOWER



OR THE PARABLE OF THE FOUR TYPES OF SOIL

Biblical Perspective

- Romans 15.1
 - ▣ We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak
- Galatians 6.1
 - ▣ Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently.
- 1 Peter 4.8-9
 - ▣ Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.

Group discussion

- Are you a self starter?
 - What's stopping you?
- Identify the self starters in your group = **Future leaders**
- Meet the needs of the rest, the 75% - they need your help!
 - ▣ How do you feel about getting more involved in their lives?
 - ▣ What is needed to make this happen?
 - What barriers could there be to doing this?
 - What might be needed in peoples lives?
 - Discipling; Friendship
 - **Structure; Expectation; Accountability**

Encouragement

- Hebrews 10:25
 - ▣ Let us **consider** how we can **spur** one another on towards love and good deeds
- I Thessalonians 5.12
 - ▣ Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you.
- Romans 16.12
 - ▣ Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord. Greet my dear friend Persis, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord.
- Hebrews 6.10-11
 - ▣ God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure.

Practicals

1. Develop a conviction - be the leader you need to be
2. Discuss with your co-leaders - help each other
3. Pray for the needs/individuals of your group
4. Seek specific input outside