



# NCD Headlines

Growing Healthy Adventist Churches Through Natural Church Development

## What Pastors of NCD Churches Have to Say

When Pastor Darrel Lindensmith discovered the Natural Church Development process, he thought it might be a useful tool for his church. "It looked like a well proven way to get a snapshot statistically where the church was," he said. The Mandan, North Dakota church took the NCD survey for the first time in 2000. The survey indicated that the church's minimum factor was Gift-Oriented Ministry. The members immediately set out to improve that area of their church. They restructured the way members are placed in church ministry. Instead of using the traditional nominating committee that meets once every year or two to fill all the church offices, the members formed a personnel committee which meets on an ongoing basis to address the needs of the church ministries. "The committee administers *Connections* and interviews people about their gifts," explained Pastor Lindensmith, "The board then places people in ministry based on their gifts and interest survey."

When the Mandan church retook the survey a few months ago, they had raised the Gift-Oriented Ministry factor by ten points. "I think it gives the church a sense that we're going somewhere," said Pastor Lindensmith, "We have a plan and we're making efforts to fine tune that plan. There has been interest spurred just by taking the surveys and making efforts to improve."

Three years after The Adventure was planted in Greeley, Colorado, Pastor Roger Walter encouraged the congregation to use the NCD survey as a means of measuring the new company's health. For The Adventure, the NCD survey served as a gauge and a boost to church planters who had tired from all the work involved in starting a new church. "It really raised us up and said we're doing an awesome job," explained Pastor Walter of NCD survey scores that averaged in the low 60's.

"Two years into the church plant people were saying, 'I'm tired. Are we doing this right?' It helps them understand that we are doing well—we have weak spots, but we're doing well. It's a good measurement tool. What gets measured gets done."

Pastor Rod Long has long been familiar with NCD and had used it in several churches. When the Scottsbluff, Nebraska church took the survey last April, the congregation was very happy to see the results—a 59 average. As expected, the minimum factor was Gift-Oriented Ministry. The members had already been going through a spiritual gifts training class and now have voted to work on the spiritual gifts model like the Mandan, North Dakota church is using.

"It has convinced our church and solidified them in moving toward a New Testament model where the lay people are involved and support the pastor," explains Pastor Long. "That allows me as the pastor to focus on areas that I need to focus on."

Pastor Long offers this advice for those who are considering using the NCD survey: "If you are wondering where your church is headed and you want a tool to see where you are right now, there is no better tool than NCD. It helps you work on your weak spots without weakening your strengths. You can be a turnaround church if you use the tool properly."

—Taken from an article by Doug Kilcher printed in *Outlook*. Used with permission.

## Editor's Note

Welcome to another edition of *NCD Headlines*! Circumstances have demanded that the *Headlines* be on hiatus for a while, as many new developments in the area of Natural Church Development have required all of our time. As you read this issue, you will see for yourself how NCD is progressing in Adventist churches and local conferences, and learn of positive occurrences that are taking place as a result of NCD. We are pleased and thankful to again be able to make *NCD Headlines* available to you on a quarterly basis.

I want to introduce you to Tamyra Horst, our new *NCD Headlines* editor. Tami has accepted our invitation to fill several roles to help with the administrative details required by NCD. She is also the network administrator for the Adventist Forum on CoachNet ([www.CoachNet.org](http://www.CoachNet.org)) and manager of the NCD portion of the NADEI webpage ([www.NADEI.org](http://www.NADEI.org)).

Tami lives in Paradise, Pennsylvania, with her husband Tim, and two sons Josh and Zack. She serves the Pennsylvania Conference, working in the areas of Communication, NCD, Church Planting, and Church Growth. Tami is also frequently invited to speak at various Adventist and non-Adventist churches, as well as internationally as a speaker for Women's Ministries events. She is the author of seven books published by Pacific Press, Review and Herald and Advent Source. God has blessed Tami with multiple and varied gifts and she is committed to using all of them for His glory.

We became acquainted with Tami when we did the NCD Pilot Project (with Pennsylvania and Mountain View Conferences.) Impressed by her grasp of NCD and natural coaching abilities, we invited Tami to become one of our NCD Coach Trainers. We have been blessed by working with Tami, and know that she will be a blessing to you through the pages of the *NCD Headlines*.

## Coaching Tips

by Sher Carlton, *Destination Coaching*

We forget to pray. In Christian circles it's easy to remember to *start* an event or meeting with prayer. Prayer is a habit in these settings. And a good one. But how many times do we remember to pray, on our own, *beforehand*?

A great coach I know told me just last week that he was coming up to a coaching appointment with a bit of dread. He loves coaching, but he was exhausted and he knew the conversation was going to be an intense one. You know how it is – coaching is such a cerebral process that if you are running low on fuel it will be like slogging through a marsh in January.

This coach went on to tell me that he realized he'd been forgetting to pray for the conversation and coachee on his own *before* his calls and decided to do it this time. He sent up a quick prayer, about all his tired self could manage, and went into the call. It turned out to be one of the most powerful, significant exchanges he had had with this particular coachee.

Don't forget to pray. Put up a sticky note (like I do!) if you have to. But please pray *before* your coaching meeting. Prayer is integral to what we do. Without it, we are diving into a pool with no water.

## Adventist Forum

*Are you training to be a NCD Coach? Take part in this quarter's Adventist Forum on CoachNet!*

*Tell us what you liked about the training: What did you like? What was helpful? What wasn't? What would you do differently?*

*Log on to [www.coachnet.org](http://www.coachnet.org). Click on "Forums" Scroll down to the forum for coaches. Add your comments. Read comments left by others.*

# Coach Multiplication Moves to New Level

The dream of multiplying NCD coaches using denominational networks has become a reality. The first denominational group to strategize for an intentional multiplying network of NCD coaches has just launched their pilot project, and two more denominations are close on their heels. The strategic key to this new movement is the development of Certified NCD Coach Trainers within the denomination. These NCD Coach Trainers are released to train and mentor NCD coaches within the denomination, using existing networks and ongoing ministry relationships as tracks to run on.

What is the process for a denomination to enter this level of NCD involvement? Beginning with a vision born in the hearts of key leaders who have the influence to shape revitalization and planting ministries, NCD Coach Training involves both the identification and training of competent teaching leaders and the development of a denomination-wide delivery system for NCD.

Coach Trainers are required to be experienced NCD coaches who are then developed personally and professionally in their coaching skills and NCD understanding. The CoachNet team works closely with these Coach Trainers, as well as with a designated Design Team of key denominational leaders, to strategize a pilot project for the initial training and deployment of NCD coaches. Very quickly a cadre of effective NCD coaches are released throughout the denomination.

What are the benefits of this kind of multiplication strategy? The natural webs of communication, mission and relationships are already in place to support a richer network of mentoring in the Coach Training phase. Curriculum is able to become denomination-specific, using the language and theology familiar through ongoing relationships and reporting. Training events can be tied to denominational gatherings, keeping costs low and schedules simple. But most importantly, a network of skilled NCD coaches are developed and churches are revitalized through effective NCD implementation.

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## New Hope Finds New Hope in NCD

“Is this all there is to church? Is this all God expects of us?” questioned Casey McCall, a member at the New Hope Adventist Church, as she began to wonder if New Hope was the place for her. But just before the pastor moved away, McCall discovered a brochure on an extension school being offered that caught her eye. She enrolled. During her first semester, McCall learned about Natural Church Development. With her former pastor’s urging to key members of the New Hope church to listen to McCall’s NCD presentation, McCall shared the NCD process with her church and they agreed to take the survey.

Just after the church took the survey, a new pastor joined the New Hope team. McCall shared the survey’s findings, indicating that their minimum factor was holistic small groups. The new pastor knew about NCD and was enthusiastic about the process which was just beginning. He was able to encourage those who were skeptical of NCD to give it a try.

McCall and two others drew up a plan for the year which included: mandatory training for all leadership on how to facilitate holistic small groups; leadership training for small group leaders and a series of sermons by the pastor on Christian community found in small groups. They continue to find various ways of talking about holistic small groups throughout the year.

An instructor had taught McCall that “you don’t *go* into small groups, you *grow* into small groups”—a reminder that it would take time to grow a small group ministry. McCall realized that change is not easy and not always welcome. But the strength of loving relationships within the church made the process easier.

The church found the biotic principles the hardest part of NCD. McCall states, “Because the biotic principles get to the root of the thinking that affects how you *do church*—and that’s the hardest part—*wanting* to make changes and *making* changes are not always in sync. It takes time. Part of my job as NCD Coordinator is to find ways to keep our focus on NCD and help us purposely engage biotic principle-style thinking into our plans.”

New Hope is currently in the process of taking their third survey. The second survey showed improvement in seven of the quality characteristics. Holistic Small Groups was still the minimum factor, but had grown. The church has grown as well, to the point where they are considering having three services! The church continues to improve strategies to grow small groups, knowing that they aren’t to focus on numbers, but on creating a healthy atmosphere, and allow God to increase the numbers and opportunities to share the gospel. McCall believes NCD has helped their church grow. Not only through holistic small groups, but in teaching them the eight quality characteristics and challenging them to focus on inspiring worship, need-oriented evangelism and empowering leadership, all of which have contributed to their growth.

## Books and Resources

How are you growing your coaching skills?

The NADEI Resource Center has a number of books available for coaches. A recommended reading list for coaches is available on the NCD web page at [www.nadei.org](http://www.nadei.org). To order a resource, call 269-471-8303 or email [resources@nadei.org](mailto:resources@nadei.org).

One of the resources available is *Jesus Life Coach: Learn From the Best* by Laurie Beth Jones. Jones writes answering the question, “What would it be like to have Jesus as a life coach?”

The book is divided into four sections covering what Jones deems as the most important life factors: Focus; Balance; Productivity; and Fulfillment. She writes, “Following in Jesus’ footsteps, following His advice, is the way to fulfillment and true success.” She knows that God knows us each intimately and uniquely, and is interested in every part of our lives. And that He will do all He can to help us live abundantly, writing that “Jesus gave us His mission statement when He said, ‘I have come that you might have life, and have it abundantly.’”

Each chapter includes questions that help coach you through what you’ve just read and concludes with a prayer. While the book is designed to coach you in your own life, you will also learn skills and insights that will help you coach in the style that Jesus did and continues to do for us today.

Other NCD resources:

- [www.coachnet.org](http://www.coachnet.org)
- [www.ncdnet.org](http://www.ncdnet.org)
- [www.nadei.org](http://www.nadei.org)

### NCD Headlines

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