2019 Nurture and Retention Summit
Discipling, Nurturing, and Reclaiming

The Power of Discipleship
The Limitation of Retention Rates

Retention rates can help us to identify a problem, but they don’t give us the solution. Our goal is greater than retaining members. Just like the law is our tutor to lead us to Christ, retention rates are merely a tutor to lead us back to the mission of making disciples!
Luke 17:33

“Whoever seeks to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life will preserve it.”
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If we want our members to stay, we need to send them out. If we want them to hold on to the truth, we need to teach them to give it away.
The Church Board

Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual, p. 129

“Its chief concern is having an active discipleship plan in place, which includes both the spiritual nurture of the church and the work of planning and fostering evangelism.

Included in church board responsibilities are:

1. An active discipleship plan.
2. Evangelism in all of its phases.
3. Spiritual nurturing and mentoring of members.”
A False Dichotomy

Community
- Evangelism
- Outreach
- Soul-winner
- Numerical Growth

Church
- Nurture
- Inreach
- Mentoring
- Spiritual Growth
Matthew 28:19-20

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.”
Luke 6:40

“A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.”
Luke 6:40

“A disciple is . . . like his teacher.”
John 13:35

“By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”
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Matthew 16:24

“Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.’”
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SELF-DENYING
Mark 1:17

“Then Jesus said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.’”
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SOUL-WINNER
“It is evident that all the sermons that have been preached have **not developed** a large class of **self-denying workers**. . . . Our future for eternity is at stake. The churches are withering up **because they have failed to use their talents in diffusing light**.”
PREPARE

Make friends

Serve others
PLANT

Spiritual conversations
Share literature/media
CULTIVATE

Give Bible studies
Give spiritual guidance
HARVEST

Appeal for decisions
Public and personal
PREPARE
Mentor and train
Involve in soul-winning
“After individuals have been converted to the truth, they need to be looked after. . . . These newly converted ones need nursing, watchful attention, help, and encouragement. These should not be left alone, a prey to Satan’s most powerful temptations;
“they need to be educated in regard to their duties, to be kindly dealt with, to be led along, and to be visited and prayed with.”
Make Disciples

Serve
Share
Study
Appeal
Mentor
“One soul, won to the truth, will be instrumental in winning others, and there will be an ever-increasing result of blessing and salvation.”
Make Disciples

Serve
Share
Study
Mentor
“Go . . . Make Disciples” Matthew 28:19

Train Members To...
- Labor according to their ability ✔
- Work for souls who need help ✔
- Explain the Word of God to others ✔
- Lead souls into the truth ✔
- Work to win souls ✔
“When souls are converted, set them to work at once. And as they labor according to their ability, they will grow stronger. It is by meeting opposing influences that we become confirmed in the faith.”
“There is but one genuine cure for spiritual laziness, and that is work,—working for souls who need your help.”
“The more one tries to explain the Word of God to others, with a love for souls, the plainer it becomes to himself. The more we use our knowledge and exercise our powers, the more knowledge and power we shall have.”
“Let ministers teach church members that in order to grow in spirituality, they must carry the burden that the Lord has laid upon them—the burden of leading souls into the truth.”
“Those who are most actively employed in doing with interested fidelity their work to win souls to Jesus Christ are the best developed in spirituality and devotion.”
“Go . . . Make Disciples”  Matthew 28:19

Train Members To...

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- Lead souls into the truth
- Work to win souls
“Go . . . Make Disciples” Matthew 28:19

Train Members To...

- Pray and read Bible regularly ✓ ✓
- Show kindness, love, and support ✓ ✓
- Be hospitable ✓ ✓
- Forgive and be merciful ✓ ✓
Two Sides of the Same Coin

We can’t truly NURTURE church members . . . without training and equipping them to WIN SOULS.
Two Sides of the Same Coin

We can’t truly NURTURE church members . . . without training and equipping them to WIN SOULS.

We can’t truly WIN SOULS . . . if we don’t LOVE and CARE for one another.
Two Sides of the Same Coin

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We can’t truly WIN SOULS . . . if we don’t LOVE and CARE for one another.

There is NO SUCH THING as nurture without evangelism . . . or evangelism without nurture.
Final Question

Could it be that the best strategy for church growth is at the same time the best strategy for the nurture and retention of our members?
GROW: GO MAKE DISCIPLES

GROW.adventist.org