

# There's No Perfect Movement Recipe

BY C. ANDERSON

website: [Dmmsfrontiermissions.com](http://Dmmsfrontiermissions.com)

**C. Anderson** is an experienced field practitioner and leader. The past 27 years, she served in Asia with YWAM Frontier Missions. Anderson trains and coaches both international and indigenous church planters toward the launching of Disciple Making Movements. She blogs weekly about DMM related issues at [Dmmsfrontiermissions.com](http://Dmmsfrontiermissions.com). Other articles on member care, language learning, visa stress, etc. are available at [missionarylifeline.org](http://missionarylifeline.org). Her 30-day devotional for church planters, *Faith to Move Mountains*, can be purchased on [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).



When first married, I was a terrible cook. A friend of my mom gave us a Betty Crocker Cookbook as a wedding gift. I used it for years. It's still in my kitchen drawer, looking like it's been through World War Two with crumpled edges and soiled pages. Full of easy recipes, it will take you step-by-step through the process needed to make a wonderful entree or dessert. Read the directions, follow the steps, and voila...something delicious to eat was on the table.

Starting a Disciple Making Movement isn't like following a recipe. I wish there were a few simple steps we could follow and out pops a movement. It's not that easy. There are a host of recipes out there to compare. They may or may not lead to a movement in your location. Don't get fixated on the DMM recipe. Starting movements is not about methods or formulas. Movements start through people.

Focus on people, prayer and a few core multiplication principles, and you'll be more likely to see the multiplication growth you dream of. There is also just plain grit and perseverance needed. Let's save that topic for another time. In this article, I want to

focus on the vital importance of making deep, long-term investments in apostolically gifted disciples. These people are vital to seeing a movement take off. They may be rough around the edges and need lots of loving input, but it's your job to find those people and raise them up.

Whether you are a trainer who walks alongside an indigenous leader, or a movement leader yourself, the multiplication of movements in your region will depend on the depth of investment you make in apostolically gifted people God gives you to mentor.

## **Jesus and Paul**

Jesus poured His life into a group of rough fishermen and a tax collector. He built deep relationships of love, trust, and mentoring with this group of men. When He left, they carried on the movement He had begun. Barnabas invested in Paul. The Apostle then mentored young Timothy and many others. They, in turn, trained other disciples. Those he'd traveled with, loved on, believed in, and poured into, passed on Paul's message, life and teachings to thousands of others. 2 Tim. 2:2 is an important verse for us who are working to start movements. We use it to talk about generational growth and disciples making disciples. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others. (2 Tim. 2:2. NIV)

In starting and sustaining Disciple Making Movements, remember...it's all about people. A long-term, intensive investment in a few apostolically gifted men or women over the long-haul, is far more important than the exact methodology (recipe) you use to catalyze and grow a movement.

## **Two Men, Two Strategies, Same Results**

I recently was at a conference where movement leaders gathered to learn and collaborate. After one session, I sat at a table chatting with two leaders who had come. One had started 750 house churches in the last few years. The other man had started over 200. Both led notable movements in the same state of their country, among the same Unreached People Group. It was interesting to me that their methodologies varied significantly. One had used a storytelling approach, the other a community development strategy. What they had in common was that the same

mentor invested and believed in them. Movements are being released around the world using various means. Some use this set of questions, some use that. Some train with these principles first, others emphasize other things. Many have an emphasis on the supernatural, some do not. Don't get stuck on methodology! We get bogged down in those details so easily.

## **Investing in a Rebel**

He'd been branded a rebel, and not without reason. Strong in personality and opinions, not everyone liked him. I wasn't sure why I did. I guess I saw something in him. He was determined and had a deep passion for the lost. He was willing to do what others weren't. Going to a tough city that was known to be resistant to Christianity, he was kicked out of the apartments he rented more than 20 times. They would move yet again until they found new lodging. He wasn't about to give up. Finances were tough, so he went to the big city and bought rolls of cloth. Going door to door he sold the material. He made enough money to provide for his wife and young kids in at least a minimal way.

When my husband and I visited their home, things shifted. We listened and prayed and trust developed. He somehow knew that I believed in him and his wife. Others in our organization didn't think very highly of him. He didn't fit the mold. Many had tried to "coach" him, but he had not been open to that. He resisted any form of control and was a bit of a tough personality to work with. Slowly, our relationship grew.

I threw out the word coaching and just asked if I could call him sometimes to hear how he was doing and pray. As I started doing this, he began to share the dreams God had put in his heart for his region. They were God-sized dreams. Our families grew close as we spent more time together. He began to listen to me differently as I shared principles with him. I listened to his ideas as well.

Defending him to the organizational leaders became part of my job. This brother and his wife needed freedom to move in apostolic ways without the normal restrictions and regulations common for most. That is not to say that he never needed correction or rebuke. It had to come from a place of trust and relationship though. His movement

grew as miracles began to happen. Couples who couldn't get pregnant began to receive healing and conceive. Demons were cast out.

He needed help in multiplying leaders and not holding on to all the power. We worked on that. I challenged him from the Word as we studied together. We visited his home many times and he ours. I bought gifts for his kids and we shared many meals. His movement grew rapidly. I had the privilege of being a small part of it. "Apostolically Gifted" Leaders

I don't use the term apostle as an office. The moment you start calling yourself "apostle this" or "apostle that" it raises major concern for me. What I am referring to in this article is the spiritual gift of the apostle as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:28. All spiritual gifts are needed and important in launching a movement, but without an apostolically gifted person, a movement will struggle to take off. Identify people with this gift and invest in mentoring them toward multiplication growth.

## **Things to Remember When Mentoring Pioneer/Apostle-Type People**

### **1. Discipleship is messy.**

Apostles seem to create messier situations than others. As they launch into new things, take risks of faith, see miracles and operate in radical obedience, many unusual things happen. Some are exciting breakthroughs; others are messes that need to be sorted. If you are mentoring and walking with this kind of person, they may need wisdom for how to untangle messes in their own lives, and the lives of others.

Don't be put off by the problems they create, or when they rub others around them wrong. This is normal. These people don't fit naturally in organizational structures and are often branded as radical. They need those who serve as go-betweens for them to help others understand them. Sometimes they need protection or for you to create a barrier between them and the organizational structure.

## 2. Even strong people are fragile.

Those with an apostolic spiritual gift can come across as very strong. Apostolically gifted people need love and care as much as the next person. They are vulnerable to isolation due to the powerful ways God uses them. Having loving mentors who gently correct, notice when they aren't doing well, and ask tough questions is important. They also need those who affirm and encourage them in a personal way.

## 3. Learn from and with them.

Coaching approaches are being embraced in many movements. A coach learns to ask good questions that help the coaches discover their own solutions. Apostolically gifted people are entrepreneurial. If you lead or mentor this kind of person, give them the freedom to experiment and try new things. Champion their effort, then help them evaluate. Don't feel like you have to be the "teacher." You may have more experience, but pull out the gold within them. Listen well to what they are thinking and doing.

## 4. Giving access makes people feel valued.

There are a few emerging leaders to whom I give an exceptional level of access. They can drop in on me, text and ask for a call on the weekend, or message me early in the morning. I will call them back right away. You can't do that with everyone, but when you find someone with strong apostolic anointing, you may need to give them greater access to your time. In my experience, these people are not very good at scheduling appointments or coaching calls. Make space for that and be patient with them. This will be necessary if you want your relationship to go deep and for them to feel you value them.

## 5. Give those you mentor room to fail.

Model a lifestyle of risk-taking. If they see that you sometimes fail, they will gain the courage to try new things. Tell stories of your church-planting and evangelism failures as well as successes. Particularly with younger people you are mentoring, create a safe place for them to share freely when they have blown it whether in a ministry-related task or personally.

## 6. It has to be more than just ministry.

If you want to go deep in disciple-making relationships with the kind of people who will become leaders of thousands or tens of thousands, it will have to be about more than ministry.

You need to become true friends. The relationship becomes like family. That means spending lots of time together, relaxing, playing and working. Taking time to do this is part of what makes the kinds of mentoring relationships that lead to multiplication.

## A Consistent Investment

Filtering for the faithful and fruitful is an important movement principle. Once you find those entrepreneurial people, invest consistently. Love on them. Encourage and affirm. Spend time and money to build deep relationships that go the long haul.

Challenge and correct. Rebuke and exhort. Train and empower. The fruit will be multiplication. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11:1, "Follow my example, as I follow Christ." Behind him came Timothy, Titus, Silas and a host of others. They followed him because he had invested in them. He had taught them how to live, start churches, make disciples, and do the work of the kingdom.

Who are you training and investing in? Could they say the same?

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**This article was first published in Mission Frontiers, May June 2020 issue**

**Website: <https://www.missionfrontiers.org/>**