

LEADER GUIDE – SESSION 1

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LEADER GUIDE – SESSION 1

Introduction

This Leader Guide is a tool to help facilitate your time together as a group. You'll have some extra resources and tips available to you here but you'll still want to use a Discussion Guide yourself in conjunction with this guide. Weeks 1-5 will focus on discussion, while week 6 is a group potluck!

The Three Sections

Each Discussion Guide will have three sections: *Getting Started*, *Take It In (Watch The Video)*, and *Talk About It!*. Below is a quick breakdown of each section and how it can help facilitate your time together as a group.

GETTING STARTED

Oftentimes, before we dive into discussion the group will be socializing, connecting, and getting to know each other in a deeper way - and this is great and intended! However, eventually, you'll want to get everyone's attention and bring the group together. Before you watch the video, this section will contain an idea on how to transition from that time of socializing to a time of intentional group discussion, usually through some form of an icebreaker.

TAKE IT IN (WATCH THE VIDEO)

This section is simply used to take notes during the 5-10 minute video of Pastor John. Use this space to write down interesting thoughts, key points, or anything that stands out to you that might be a good point of discussion. Be sure to review the videos beforehand and you have a means of showing the video.

TALK ABOUT IT!

This section will have questions to help guide the discussion. These questions are meant to be helpful, but answering all of them is not the goal. The goal is for a healthy, fruitful conversation to take place. Review these questions prior to your group meeting and prioritize questions you think would be best for your group, if you have a new group, you'll get a better idea as time goes on.

Making the Most of Your Time Together

Read this section on your discussion guide with the group on the first night.

- Be involved
- Be a good listener
- Be courteous
- Be focused
- Be careful not to dominate
- Be a learner

LEADER GUIDE – SESSION 1

About this session:

This first week is mostly about connection and the group getting to know each other, so expect your time together to look more like building relationships and setting group expectations than diving into deep conversation (though that may happen too!).

This week we're diving into a conversation about friendship. These types of relationships play a major role in our experience of life. You may have people in your group that are new to the community, healing from unhealthy relationships, or find it difficult to meet new people - or all of the above. Be mindful of this during the *Talk About It!* time and be sure to welcome people as they arrive and facilitate connection by introducing people. This is especially important during your first session together or if you're an existing group with new members. We want everyone to feel like they belong and have the chance to foster friendship with those in the group! Don't forget to make sure you have everyone's contact info before they go (see Appendix #5)

If you're newer to leading a group, check out Appendix #1-3 for some helpful tips or ask your group coach - they're here to support you!

Getting Started

Since this is Week 1 of this study, there may be people in the group who do not know each other very well or even at all. To help create an environment where people feel a little more comfortable with one another, start with a simple icebreaker!

In groups of 2-3 answer the following question:

What are a couple of things that people in this group may not know about you but you don't mind them knowing? Think of something they might not guess! (Middle name, hobby, hidden talent, etc.)

After about a minute (or the room gets quiet, whichever comes first), have each person share one thing they learned about a person they talked to.

NEXT - take time to discuss some sort of group agreement (see Appendix #4). Be sure to talk about the importance of confidentiality and group participation. It doesn't need to all fall on you! So ask people to sign up for at least one responsibility on one of the weeks (see Appendix #6). When people take a level of ownership in the group it goes from *your* group to *our* group. That is a win.

SESSION 1 – FRIENDSHIP

Take It In (Watch the Video):

- *write out your notes*

Talk About it!

Remember... This section is meant to be a helpful tool to facilitate discussion. Use the provided questions and ask the Holy Spirit to guide the group during this time to bring about fruitful conversation that will help everyone in the group grow as disciples of Jesus, even in their relationships.

- **Who were one or two of your best friends growing up? What kinds of things did you do together?**
- **How loved and supported do you feel through the friendships you currently have in your life?**
- **Why have friendships been difficult for you? Or, if friendships are going great, why do you think that is?**
- **What would be one improvement you would like to see in your life in the realm of friendships? What is one thing you can do to make your friendships better?**