

D-GROUPS

Best Practices

How do I lead the discussion on assigned readings?

Everyone in the group should read the articles and make note of three takeaways. We recommend reading the articles with a pen in hand and your HEAR Journal open to write down your observations. Ask your group to bring the takeaways to the group time ready to discuss. The three takeaways will allow you to discuss the main ideas of the articles and not get bogged down by trying to discuss every little detail. Here are some of the questions to help spur conversation:

- 1) What was something you read that you have never considered?
- 2) What was something that affirmed something you already knew?
- 3) What was something you want to discuss?
- 4) What action step will you take based on what you read?

How do I lead the discussion about HEAR Journals?

There is the potential for people to have completed around 10 HEAR journal entries before attending a D-Group meeting. Ask your group to share three entries that were most impactful to them. It will be important for the first few meetings that the leader is checking on people new to the HEAR Journal method. Ask some of the following questions and be prepared to lead out:

- 1) What day was most impactful?
- 2) Was there anything new you noticed in any of the "Explanation" sections?
- 3) Was there an application that has stuck with you?
- 4) How has the HEAR Journal helped your time with God? Has it been easy or difficult for you to do the HEAR Journal? Why?
- 5) How has reading God's Word challenged or changed you in the last month?

Best practices for Scripture memorization

First West's pastors preach from the ESV translation of the Bible at all our campuses, so the ESV is the preferred translation for Scripture memory. Memorizing from the ESV would promote cohesiveness among our D-Groups. However, if your group chooses to use another translation, that is fine. Here are some good translations we recommend: NASB, NIV, CSB, and NKJV. Here are some tips for Scripture memorization:

- 1) Write the verse down on a note card. Keep it with you and take the time to read it throughout the day.
- 2) Don't forget to memorize the reference (book, chapter, and verse).
- 3) Read it out loud multiple times.
- 4) Memorize the passage in small chunks.
- 5) Use a Scripture memory app: Bible Memory Scripture Typer, Fighter Verses, Verses, etc.
- 6) Write out the passage on a sticky note to place on your desk, refrigerator, or in your car. Each time you see it, say the verse three times before moving on to something else.
- 7) Use a dry erase marker to write the verse on your bathroom mirror. Say it three times in the morning and evening.
- 8) Set a "reminder" in your phone with the verse attached to it. If you set multiple reminders each day, you will find you are constantly thinking about God's Word throughout your day.
- 9) Set the passage as the lock screen picture on your phone.

What is the best way to do accountability?

Accountability is an important aspect of the D-Group time. We want to encourage people to build deep and meaningful relationships with one another. Here are some tips for accountability:

- 1) Don't worry if you don't hit every question on the accountability sheet. The accountability sheet serves as a guide for the discussion.
- 2) Allow everyone to speak. Don't try and monopolize the time.
- 3) Don't try and fix the problem. It is easy to hear someone else's struggle and give a quick "Christian" answer. Instead of fixing the problem, take time to listen to them and ask them what action step they are going to take to address what's going on. After you talk about the problem, pray with them. Over the next few weeks, commit to follow up with them and encourage them—either through prayer, a text, or meeting up for lunch to check up.
- 4) Understand that deeper accountability takes time. It may take a couple of meeting sessions for people to open up, and that is ok!
- 5) Lead out in this time. The more open and honest you are in the accountability time, the more your group will open up. As the leader, you will set the tone and the pace for this moment.
- 6) Trust is everything. What is shared in accountability meetings—unless there are legal ramifications—should be kept completely confidential. Do not discuss issues about each other outside of the meeting or with your spouse.