

STUMIN

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

MIDDLE
SCHOOL
FOCUS

CHEAT CODES

MARCH 15, 2023

Week 3 of a 4-week series
about the relationship
between wisdom and faith

BOTTOM LINE

Patience matters.

SCRIPTURE

*A person's wisdom yields
patience; it is to one's glory
to overlook an offense.*

- Proverbs 19:11 NIV

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students see the
benefits of developing
and applying patience
in their lives

>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: Patience is certainly something your students know a thing or two about. More likely, they know a little bit about what it means to be impatient! That's because every element of patience—self-control, calmness, restraint, and more—is challenging for teenagers. They simply haven't developed the cognitive skills to exercise patience naturally. So, be patient (yes, patient!) with them as they grow in this skill, both this week and beyond. Specifically, you're encouraging them to practice patience with the people in their lives. This can be especially challenging for kids at this age as they have very little control or authority over who is or isn't in their lives. They can't easily distance from the people who might test their patience, and that can be a frustrating reality. Remind your group that patience isn't just for the sake of the other person; it's good for them, too! But be clear: If they're in a situation where someone is hurting or bullying them, practicing patience isn't the first line of defense. In that situation, they need to speak up to get the help and distance they may need. After all, that's using their God-given wisdom, too!

>> DURING GROUP

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here.

DO THIS:

Ask everyone in your group to find and show a GIF that represents how they feel when they're impatient, and then another one that shows how they respond when they're impatient. (For a low-tech option, ask students to pick a word from the provided Feelings Wheel to describe what they feel when they're impatient and then just share how they respond in those situations.)

DISCUSS THIS:

- What do you think wisdom and patience have to do with each other?
- Think of one situation where you need patience. How might patience help the situation?
- What's one thing you can do to practice being patient?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how good are you at being patient with . . .
 - Your family?
 - Your friends?
 - Your teammates?
 - Your teachers/coaches?
 - Your pets?
- What's one thing that makes it difficult to be patient with people?

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HIGH SCHOOL FOCUS

CHEAT CODES

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>> DURING GROUP

Create meaningful conversations. Adjust the questions as needed and ask thoughtful follow-up questions as the conversation unfolds. Don't feel like you need to answer every question.

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DISCUSS THIS:

- Share a story about a time you were impatient with ...
 - a friend or classmate
 - a parent
 - yourself
 - God
- Share about a time that a natural response to a frustrating person or situation (such as impatience, complaining, getting annoyed, or giving up) made the situation worse. How might practicing patience have been a better option in that particular situation?
- What are some factors that make it difficult for you to be patient with people?
- What is one practical thing you can do this week to practice patience?
- How might practicing patience help you move towards the abundant life that God wants for you.