

# STUMIN

## SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

MIDDLE  
SCHOOL  
FOCUS

### LET'S TALK ABOUT... SMALL GROUP

OCTOBER 4, 2023

Week 1 of a 3-week series  
about important conversations

### BOTTOM LINE

When it comes to small group,  
you get out what you put in.

### SCRIPTURE

*"It is not good  
for the man to be alone."*

- Genesis 2:18a NLT

*Let us hold tightly without  
wavering to the hope we  
affirm. Let us think of ways  
to motivate one another to  
acts of love and good works.  
And let us not neglect our  
meeting together.*

- Hebrews 10:23-25 NLT  
(abridged)

### GOALS OF SMALL GROUP

To show students the value  
of doing life together with  
others, and to encourage  
them to take ownership of  
making their group  
the best it can be

### >> BEFORE GROUP

**THINK ABOUT THIS:** This is a great week to really let your students take the lead in the conversation. Let them talk openly about what they love, what they don't love, and what they wish for their small group. Take mental notes on what they say because they're giving you an inside look into what's working for them, what they're struggling with, and what they want to see happen in their group. Noting this stuff will not only help you create the kind of community they're looking for in your small group, it will also help you understand your students' needs, wants, and apprehensions in an individual way. Finally, encourage students to take ownership of their small group. While you can certainly lead by example and facilitate the kind of group they want, they have a role to play as well! Empower them to make their small group the kind of group they want it to be together!

### >> 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.*

#### DISCUSS THIS:

- What's one thing that would be easier to do with a friend? Share a story about a time you did something hard, but it was easier because you were with somebody.
- What's one thing you like about our small group?
- What's one reason someone might not like small group?
- What's one way you can show up for our small group outside of StuMin?
- What do you want our small group to be like?
- How can you be a part of making that happen?

#### DO THIS:

Read Colossians 3:12-14: *Therefore, as God's choice, holy and loved, put on **compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience**. Be **tolerant** with each other and, if someone has a complaint against anyone, **forgive** each other. As the Lord forgave you, so also forgive each other. And over all these things put on **love**, which is the perfect bond of unity.*

Discuss the importance of the bolded words in the context of your small group. For example: you could work together to rank them in order of importance, have everyone score themselves on a scale of 1-10 as to how strongly they feel they currently display each characteristic in small group, share stories about times in the past that your group did one or more of these well, etc.

#### DO THIS:

"We want our small group to be known for . . ." Ask your students to brainstorm and share values and characteristics they want for their small group. Write down their responses and discuss together how you can all play a part in making the group you described a reality!

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**PRINCE  
OF PEACE**  
Called to Connect

#### >> BEFORE GROUP

**THINK ABOUT THIS:** This week's conversation encourages students to take a step toward contributing to and taking ownership of doing life together with others through small group ministry. This may be a new or even challenging viewpoint for your students, as they likely see small group as a place they show up to receive rather than to give. The goal this week is to show them both things are true! They're in a small group to receive the support, friendship, encouragement, and wisdom of those around them, but they're also a part to give those same things in return. Challenge your group to change their perspective on small group by showing up open handed and open hearted, ready to pour into making the group for others what they want it to be for themselves.

#### >> 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.*

#### DISCUSS THIS:

- Share about an awesome time you had with a group of friends. What made it awesome?
- In your own words, what's the point of small groups at StuMin?
- Why do you think being in authentic community with other people is important? Besides our small group, what other authentic communities are you part of? How have they positively impacted your life?
- What might make somebody hesitant to want to be a part of an authentic community like our small group?
- Does knowing God made us to be connected with others change the way you see the groups you're a part of? Why or why not?
- What's one positive thing you've seen come from meeting with this small group consistently?
- What's one way you want to see our group become a more authentic community?
- How can you be a part of contributing to making that change happen for this group as we live life together?

#### DO THIS:

This is a great opportunity to cast vision for small group - not FOR your students but WITH your students. To close the conversation this week, open the floor to your students. Ask them to come up with a list of values together as a group that they want to see define their small group. Think about things like showing up, keeping the conversation private, respecting each other, praying for each other, being inclusive, etc. Come up with a list of 5-10 and then send it out to your group. Keep it handy throughout the year to refer back to as needed. This is a great opportunity for teens to take a step toward putting into small group what they hope to get out of it!