



## Facilitators' Guide

Consider your role before even stepping into the classroom or discussion setting. It is essential that a leader spend time preparing by, first, submitting their preparation time and teaching time to God, and giving themselves adequate time and space to listen to and be led by the Holy Spirit. In the course of your preparation, this may lead you to add or remove parts of the given material. And this will be good practice for being led in the actual teaching time. Always listen to the Holy Spirit! He will help you speak truth, encourage, and challenge appropriately.

### Qualities and practices of a good discussion leader and/or facilitator:

- **Providing frequent and sincere encouragement as well as positive feedback:** Take care to notice people and the things they share. When you do, you will be able to encourage them in their gifts and their thoughts and point out the positive aspects of their communication. Do this often and for each person in the class as much as you are able. Tell your group when they have helped you learn something new or acquire a new perspective.
- **Being hospitable:** Being prepared ahead of time will give you the space you need to do this well. One of the best ways to do this is just to smile and introduce yourself to each person who walks into the room, welcoming them into the classroom and engage them at break times. In discussion and in teaching moments, this will mean being present and engaged with others, talking 30 percent of the time and listening 70 percent of the time.
- **Establishing a safe learning environment:** Offering your own struggles or confusion about certain subjects, first is another good way to do this. This will require you to be vulnerable, but will give others the gift of being able to say something uncomfortable or

difficult after someone else has broken the ice. Spend time with difficult questions, even if you can't or don't agree on an answer.

- **Knowing your material:** Be very familiar with the material to answer any potential questions about it and to also present it in the most fluid way possible.
- **Being a good communicator:** In this context, communicating well will mean asking good follow-up questions, being comfortable with silence, tactfully handling conflict in the group or dominant sharers, being able to summarize others' thoughts effectively, and pulling out the common themes of the discussion.

**Be prepared to consider the following questions that will help you design and plan your groups' meeting<sup>1</sup>:**

- **Who are they?** Who are the kinds of people that will be making up your group and how do these characteristics affect what their needs might be from the material itself, the design of the learning time and the facilitator? As much as possible, before meeting with a group of people, try to find out from their ministry leader who might be making up this group.
- **Why do they need this training?** What is the purpose for this training and what potential goals might the group want to have met as a result?
- **When is this happening?** Is this happening right after lunch, right before dinner? Is it an hour or three hours? Is this happening just this once or multiple times over several

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<sup>1</sup> 8 Elements of Design based on:

"The 8 Steps of Design." *Global Learning Partners*. Global Learning Partners, n.d. Web. 29 Apr. 2016. <<http://www.globallearningpartners.com/about/about-dialogue-education/the-8-steps-of-design>>.

weeks? These things will affect the needs of the group and how you organize and structure the time given!

- **Where is this happening?** What kind of room will you be in? What are the seating arrangements? What is the lighting like? Will there be WiFi? Which aspects of this location might help people learn or feel comfortable and which might not?
- **What is the content of this material?** What are the skills, the knowledge or attitudes that will be imparted or encouraged in the material presented? Do these effectively address the goals and purpose for the group attending?
- **What's next?** What might the group expect to do with this material after they leave the classroom? What do you hope they will do with their learning?
- **How will the group accomplish goals of the program in the context of this experience?** What activities will reinforce learning and will apply what has been learned and in what ways?
- **So what?** What evidence will indicate that change or learning has happened as a result of this experience? How can or will you document it?