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CONTENTS

HOST'S GUIDE:

Before you meet

Setting Up

How to lead your eGroup and use the study guide

Suggested time frames for your group

Extras: Keys to a Dynamic eGroup

WEEK ONE:

Tender Love

WEEK TWO:

Tough Love

WEEK THREE:

Sacrificial Love

WEEK FOUR:

Radical Love

This study guide and electronic versions of the videos for this series and the many others produced by Equippers Church can be accessed at www.equipperschurch.com/egroups

HOST'S GUIDE

This study guide is here to help you lead a fun and transformative eGroup study over the next few weeks that will see each person progress and grow. Use this guide, along with the DVDs and weekly Study Guides, for a life-changing, interactive experience.

BEFORE YOU MEET:

- Ask God to prepare the hearts and minds of the people in your eGroup. Ask Him to show each of you how to apply what you learn to your own heart to see growth and to move forward.
- Preview the DVD and read through the study guide for that week. Think about what you might answer for each question. Make notes in your study guide if you want to.

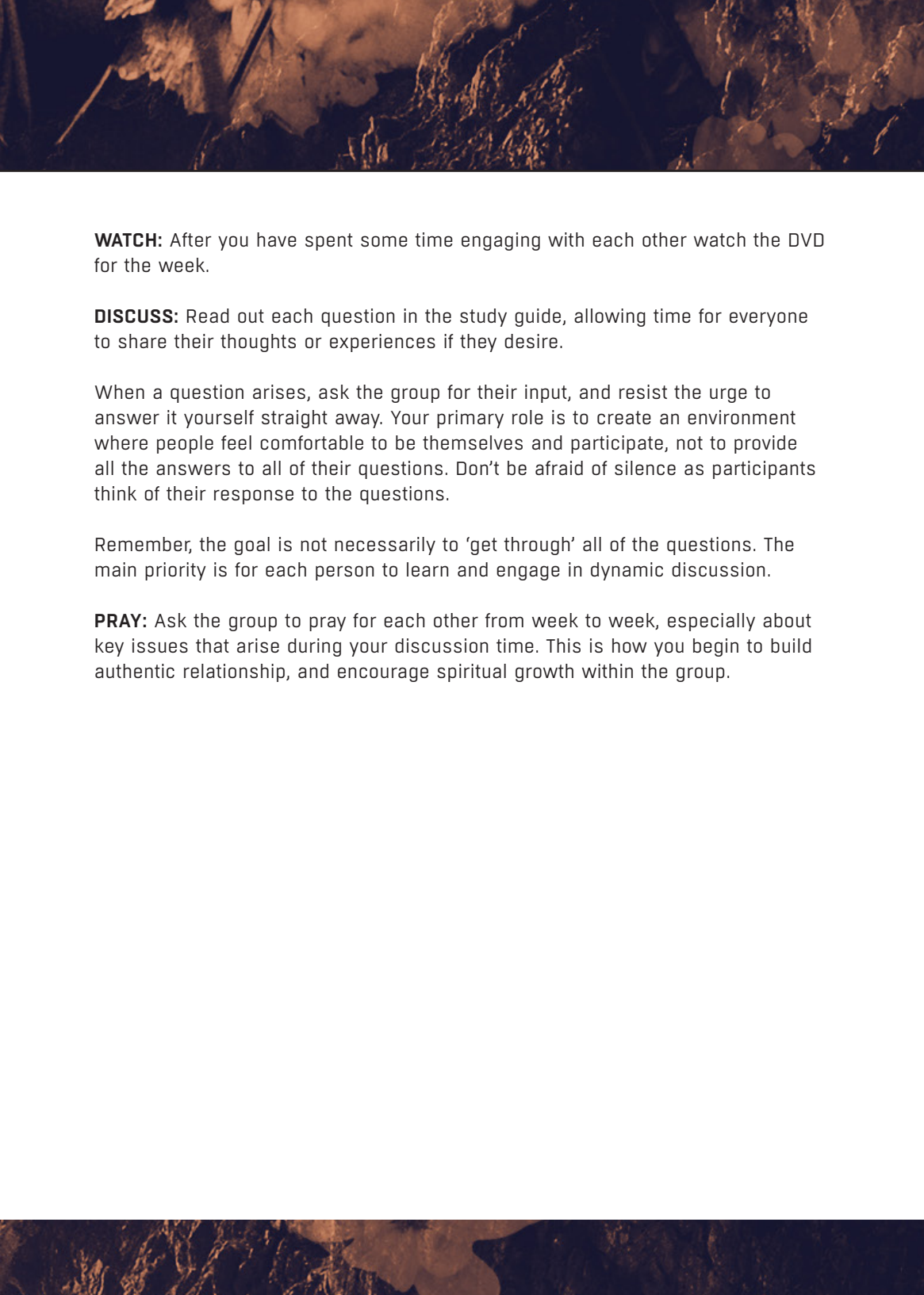
SETTING UP:

- Take time before everyone arrives to prepare some snacks to share with everyone, set up the room you will use, check that there are enough seats, and try to create a relaxed and comfortable environment to meet in. You might want to play music quietly to create a relaxed atmosphere when everyone arrives, or move the furniture in your living room to make the space inviting.
- Have a Bible handy for verses that you might want to look up during discussion.

HOW TO HOST YOUR GATHERING AND USE YOUR STUDY GUIDE:

ENGAGE: Welcome each person as they arrive. Spend time chatting, getting to know one another, or just sharing about the week. Your relationships as a group are as important as the time you spend watching the DVD or in discussion. A relaxed and friendly environment is an easy place to learn and hear from God.

RECAP: After the first session you may wish to spend a bit of time each week recapping how your last seven days has been, inviting members to share any opportunities they had throughout the week to apply what they learned and how their individual activation went.



WATCH: After you have spent some time engaging with each other watch the DVD for the week.

DISCUSS: Read out each question in the study guide, allowing time for everyone to share their thoughts or experiences if they desire.

When a question arises, ask the group for their input, and resist the urge to answer it yourself straight away. Your primary role is to create an environment where people feel comfortable to be themselves and participate, not to provide all the answers to all of their questions. Don't be afraid of silence as participants think of their response to the questions.

Remember, the goal is not necessarily to 'get through' all of the questions. The main priority is for each person to learn and engage in dynamic discussion.

PRAY: Ask the group to pray for each other from week to week, especially about key issues that arise during your discussion time. This is how you begin to build authentic relationship, and encourage spiritual growth within the group.



SUGGESTED TIME FRAMES FOR YOUR GATHERING:

ENGAGE: 15 minutes

RECAP: 10 minutes

WATCH: 10 minutes

DISCUSS: 30 minutes

PRAY: 5-10 minutes

ACTIVATE: 5 minutes


(Please note that these are just suggested times, you may wish to take longer in certain areas. However, we do recommend keeping your gathering to a maximum of one and a half hours in consideration of others' time)

KEYS TO A DYNAMIC EGROUP

RELATIONSHIPS: Meaningful, encouraging relationships are the foundation of a dynamic eGroup. Discussion and prayer are important elements of a gathering, but the depth of each part is often dependent upon the depth of the relationships between members.

AVAILABILITY: Building a sense of community within your group requires members to prioritise their relationships with one another. This means being available to listen, care for one another, and meet each other's needs.





MUTUAL RESPECT: Mutual respect is shown when members value others' opinions (even when they disagree) and are careful to never belittle or embarrass others in the group (including their spouses, who may or may not be present).


OPENNESS: A healthy group environment encourages sincerity and transparency. Members treat each other with grace in areas of weakness, allowing each other room to grow.

CONFIDENTIALITY: To develop authenticity and a sense of safety within the group, each member must be able to trust that things discussed within the group will not be shared outside the group.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY: Group members will share the responsibility of gatherings by using their God-given abilities to serve at each meeting. Some may greet, some may prepare food, some may pray, etc. Ideally, each person should be available to care for one another as needed.

SENSITIVITY: Dynamic eGroups are born when the leader consistently seeks and is responsive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, following His leading throughout the meeting as opposed to sticking to the "agenda". This is especially important during the discussion and prayer time.

FUN! Dynamic gatherings take the time to have fun! Create an atmosphere for fun, and be willing to laugh at yourself every now and then!





WEEK ONE:
TENDER LOVE

TENDER LOVE

ENGAGE: Spend time connecting with each other

KEY THOUGHT: People are meant to be the centre of our focus, not part of the landscape.

WATCH: Watch 'Session One' of the video.


Question 1: What did you think of the video? Did anything particularly stand out?

Question 2: Are you naturally a tender hearted person, or a tough love person?

We are called to live with tender love in every part of our lives: at work, with our family and even at restaurants.

Question 3: In what situations or at what times do you find it hard to act with tender love?

Question 4: What things in life have you experienced that help you to have compassion for others?





Read Luke 10:30-37.

Question 5: Are you making excuses for not showing tender love to someone in your life, like the priest and the Levite in the Good Samaritan parable? If so, who, and why?

People are the object of God's greatest affection, and we are called to show his love to them.

Question 6: What can you do this week to show tender love to someone who needs it?

PRAY: Ask God to break your heart for what breaks his, that you would see the hurting people around you, and for the humility to show them tender love.



WEEK TWO:
TOUGH LOVE

TOUGH LOVE

ENGAGE: Spend time connecting with each other

KEY THOUGHT: Without tough love we won't be able to share the truth when it hurts, and our relationships are destined to remain surface level.

WATCH: Watch 'Session Two' of the video.


Question 1: What did you think of the video? Did anything particularly stand out?


Question 2: Can you remember any tough love experiences in your life when either someone has shown tough love to you, or you have done so to someone else?

Question 3: In tough situations do you find yourself trying to keep the peace, or being able to confront others?

Read Matthew 18:15-17.

Question 4: Can you think of a time when you confronted someone in love? How did they respond?






Choosing the right moment to have a tough conversation is key to having a good response from them.

Question 5: What moments have you found that worked well for you in the past?

Question 6: Discuss a time when you have chosen not to show tough love. Why did you choose not to do so?

Question 7: Are there any situations in which you are currently avoiding having those tough love conversations?

PRAY: Ask God for opportunities this week to have the tough conversations you need to have, and for the boldness to have them.





WEEK THREE:
SACRIFICIAL LOVE

SACRIFICIAL LOVE

ENGAGE: Spend time connecting with each other

KEY THOUGHT: We are not called to rescue, but to serve those around us.

WATCH: Watch 'Session Three' of the video.


Question 1: What did you think of the video? Did anything particularly stand out?

Question 2: What is a time you have experienced sacrificial love from someone else?

Often we think we're living life by the Golden Rule, but we're actually living by the Silver Rule. Pastor Esther talked of thinking about how we love others.

Question 3: Have you ever thought about this?

What are some examples of how you show love sacrificially to others?



Read Matthew 16:24-25. Jesus talks about ‘taking up our cross and following him.’


Question 4: What do you think it means to take up your cross and follow him? What does this look like for you?

Pastor Sam said, “My greatest gift to you is a healthy me.” To be able to love well we need to remain healthy ourselves.

Question 5: What boundaries or input do you need to establish in your life to be able to love more sacrificially?

Questions 6: What are some ways you could show love sacrificially to others this week?

PRAY: Ask God to fill you to overflowing, that you may be able to love even more sacrificially from a place of health this week.



RADICAL LOVE

ENGAGE: Spend time connecting with each other

KEY THOUGHT: Radical love makes no sense until you yourself have been radically loved.


WATCH: Watch 'Session Four' of the video.

Question 1: What did you think of the video? Did anything particularly stand out?

Question 2: Can you think of any times you have been able to cut through a 'hostile' situation? Or any times you wish you had done so?

Question 3: Have you had any big arguments that have resulted from a small, insignificant thing?

Question 4: Can you think of a time when you were frustrated or even angry and someone showed radical love to you?
What effect did that have on you?





Read Matthew 5:38-48. Jesus tells us to 'turn the other cheek' when often everything in us tells us to do the opposite.

Question 5: Have you ever felt put in your place, perhaps by someone 'slapping you'? Describe the feelings and the urges that rise up inside of you when this happens.

Radical love comes from an overflow of Jesus' love for us.

Question 6: How has Jesus' radical love changed your life? What is something specific that he has set you free from?

Question 7: Who is in your world who is not like you, or is even an 'enemy' to you, who you could show radical love to?

PRAY: Ask God for greater revelation or understanding of how radically he loves you. If there is something specific in your life that you would like to be free from, get the other members in the group to pray for God's radical love to set you free.





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