

SESSION 1: Learning together

Notes for Group Leaders with Young People



LIVING IN LOVE & FAITH

Overview of the session

After the introductory section which gives an outline of the course and introduces the Pastoral Principles and the Commitments, the session continues as follows:

- Pastoral Principle: listening & speaking
(addressing ignorance & paying attention to power)
- Learning together: called to be learners
- Bible study: Matthew 7.24-29
- Learning together: identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage
- The story films: a preview
- Reflection and prayer

You might want to consider having food (pizza, snacks etc) as part of your group. These help young people relax and feel grounded in the group.

The following notes relate to the interactive elements at the end of each of the sections.

Ice Breaker: A listening exercise

Allow at least 30 minutes for this activity.

This activity is about each person having the opportunity to experience:

- being listened to, and
- being a good listener
- discovering what they have in common

It's also an opportunity for the members of the group to get to know each other and to start building relationships that will help them to engage well with each other as the course progresses.

Icebreaker suggestion: Three's a Crowd – have the group split off in threes and find three things in common (besides the obvious gender or hair/eye colour) such as: favourite holiday, season of the year, hobby, phone app, movie, etc. One person then introduces the group to everyone else and shares the three things they have in common.

Make sure that all young people have the chance to speak and be heard – it's imperative that they feel they have the chance to share their views and are not left out.

Bible study: Matthew 7.24-29

Allow about 15 minutes for this discussion.

Encourage the group to re-read Matthew 7.24-29.

Allow the conversation to be quite free flowing, using the following questions as prompts if necessary:

- What do you think it tells us about learning and about life as a follower of Jesus?
- How does this relate to the authority of Scripture?
- Can you remember a time when you were 'astounded' by Jesus' teaching?

Discussing together: thinking about learning and experience

Allow about 15 minutes for this discussion.

The 'teaser film' may have affected people in different ways. Allow time for the group to absorb what they have seen before encouraging some reflections and discussion. You may want to start by asking:

- We've been talking about what's involved in learning. Can you remember a time when you learned something significant that affected your life? What helped you to come to that understanding?
- We'll be exploring questions of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage in this course. What questions do you have in these areas that you're looking forward to exploring?

You might want to offer an option of writing down responses if your group is feeling anxious/embarrassed about sharing out loud.

Reflection and prayer

This is an opportunity to thank God for each other in the group. Here is one way you might do this.

Have enough tea lights so there is one for each person in the group. Invite everyone to take turns to light a candle while praying quietly or out loud, 'Thank you, Jesus, for _____', naming the person on their right.