



Host's Guide to Relational Conversation and Connection

God is relational and our hope is that as you get to know one another in your online group that you can use this time of social distancing to form new God-honoring relationships in the church. Below are some suggestions as to how you can facilitate simple, yet meaningful conversation, build relationships, practice reflection on scripture, and pray for each other.

Tools:

As you start new groups or as new people join your group it is helpful to have everyone share three pieces of information about themselves. This helps new people connect and existing members to learn more about each other.

Question

1. What is your name?
2. Where were you born/raised?
3. Choose a new one each time and have fun coming up with your own questions.

Favorite desserts, first car, favorite band of all time, ice cream, restaurant, way to have potatoes, favorite childhood memory, the worst job you have ever had, how long have you been coming to Northeast.

Describe one or two ways your life looks different today than it did one month ago.

Best and Worst

A great way for groups to connect, share, listen, and support each other is by sharing the best and worst thing from the week. Start by asking, "what was the worst part of your week?" Encourage people to be specific and have everyone respond. Then, after everyone has answered ask, "what was the best part of your week?" This wraps up the conversation on a positive note. As a host, it is always good to go first, as this sets the tone and pace.

Many groups use this tool on a regular basis. It helps the group develop good listening skills and teaches individuals to be specific and vulnerable.

If you hear a challenge that is particularly heavy, it is appropriate to stop and ask someone to pray. Keep the prayer simple and to the point.

Active listening will give you information on how to pray for those in your group during the week and things to check-in on.

Scripture

Once your group has gotten to meet a few times and had the chance to get to know each other, here are short ways to introduce time in scripture.

You could end a session by sharing a scripture. Try to keep the passage short, under 20 verses or so. You could ask people for the next meeting to find a scripture that is meaningful to them to share. Be ready to share again yourself.

Another method could be to have people get out a pen and paper, share a passage of scripture, perhaps a story from the Gospels or Acts. Ask people as you are reading it to write down things that stand out to them. Give some time at the end to write some more reflections. Ask if anyone wants to share an observation or reflection, be willing to go first yourself and share something like. "In that passage I noticed God was for justice"

You could go even further by asking them specifics about the passage, always answering first yourself. Asking what does this passage teach about God? What does this passage teach about people? What does this passage teach about obedience? These are some of the key questions we encourage our face-to-face groups to ask.

Closing

Ask the folks in your group to share a challenge they will be facing in the coming week. This is an open way of finding out what is concerning people. It gives you something to pray about and for follow-up later.

Close the meeting by praying for the group.