

# TABLE DISCUSSION GUIDELINES & SUGGESTIONS

1. The primary purpose of discussion is to encourage individual participation. Table leaders will be successful only when they keep positive and let the group members be involved in the discussion. A test of a good table leader would be how much silence you can stand. Silence is not always wrong and should be used if necessary.
2. Table leaders should avoid trying to force their ideas on the group. Present definite ideas to the group by citing a specific case which involves the discussed idea.
3. It is very important that table leaders do not answer all the questions but refer them to the group or a specific individual. A table leader that monopolizes answers will discourage the group from thinking, and the residents will listen only to the table leader's thought.
4. There will be times when the group will stray from the main topic of a talk. Table leaders should always keep the discussion focused on the primary theme.
5. Successful dialogue occurs when all table members are permitted to share in the discussion. Encourage reluctant residents to engage in conversation.
6. Table leaders should support all thoughts presented by table members regardless of their timidity or feebly stated ideas. Assistance should be provided when an opinion is not clearly offered or irrelevant to the topic.
7. Avoid asking questions which require simple "yes" or "no" answers. Questions should be phrased to encourage thought and inspire table discussion.
8. Objective thinking is a slow, sometimes painful process to many people. Table leaders should be alert to a potential situation which might destroy opportunities of keeping the discussion on a frank and open basis. (Examples:

members begin to indulge in personalities, insist on discussing materials unrelated to the topic, or participate in side discussions)

9. Table leaders should allow the residents time to think matters through and not rush the thought process. Focus on the positive; stay away from the negative because it is easier to think of things that are wrong than right.

## TABLE TALK

Your weekend will consist of two types of residents at your table: **talkers** and **non-talkers**.

## GROUND RULES

- You will need to establish with your table partner guidelines for discussion. Tell your table members how you plan to exchange ideas during the weekend.
- Ensure that each table member has an equal amount of time to contribute to the discussion. Each resident should know their ideas are important. Meal time and breaks are good opportunities to speak with them on a personal basis. This can be used to draw a shy person out of their shell.
- Sometimes it may be necessary to accept short one line responses and return to the discussion at a later time.

## LEADER'S STRATEGY

- Have a plan for each session
- Name a discussion leader
- Alternate leadership
- Allow one table leader to direct the discussion
- Permit the assistant discussion leader to speak

## **GOALS OF TABLE DISCUSSION**

- Hear the residents' thoughts and feelings
- Become acquainted with residents
- Build trust and encourage
- Direct them to follow God and obey His Word

**Do not to rehash the talk, preach, or give advice or counsel.**

***Be friendly and loving!***

# TABLE LEADERS

There will be six residents per table with two team members assigned as Table Leaders. Residents will not be given team assignments to work tables or give talks during REC weekend. The weekend is designed to serve the residents and demonstrate Christ's love.

Table leaders become instruments in Christ for passing His love to the residents. St. Francis stated that we should not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love.

During talks, table leaders should be role models in taking notes, showing a notebook to illiterate residents, and allowing residents to copy notes. Sensitivity should be considered to feelings of the uneducated resident.

Table leaders should assist in preparation of summaries and posters. They should be at their table during the talk, discussion and poster times (unless they are in the prayer chapel). Their responsibility is to keep discussions on topic and ensure all major points are covered from the talk. Table leaders are not responsible for reciting the talk word-for-word to the residents, or they will not have the opportunity to express their own ideas.

Poster parties should be a time when table leaders allow residents to be creative. You should not force your ideas on the table members but allow them to visualize what they have heard, transferring the image to a poster. Volunteers are not called to re-experience their weekend or give lofty ideas. They are beckoned to serve the residents and enable them to fully experience the REC weekend.

Table leaders must be available to all residents during breaks while respecting the desire for privacy among other tables.

Speech is not as important as actions. Human teaching does not change the hearts of men and women, but God can use us as we listen and love the residents. Love is the fact most mentioned during the closing Sunday afternoon in response to what did the REC weekend mean to me.

# TABLE LEADER TALK QUESTIONS

## **#1 Goals Talk**

1. Why should I bother to set goals?
2. What are my short term goals? (1 year) Long term goals? (1-5 years) Life goals?
3. What goals can I set that are too **Easy? Realistic? Too difficult?**
4. Can you think of dangers of going through life without any goals?
5. How can we be sure our goal priorities are sound?

## **#2 God is Calling**

1. What is the first call all of us receive from God and how did He call me?
2. Why would the God who created the universe want to bother calling on me?
3. When God calls, how does He speak to you?
4. Would you like to share an experience of God calling you to something specific?
5. What are some of the results of not hearing God calling? Hearing but not obeying?

## **#3 Prodigal**

1. All of us have been prodigal at some point in our lives. Would you care to share one of your moments?
2. What sustained you through this time?
3. How have you experienced forgiveness for the blunders? Have you chosen to follow Him?
4. What is my reaction to someone that has been prodigal and returned to the family of God?
5. Why do you think a prodigal that turns to the Lord always seems to have such a strong testimony?

## **#4 A Change of Heart**

1. When we become one of God's children why does He pursue us even when we stumble and fall?
2. Wonder why God wants us to confess before conversion can occur?
3. What has He done for me that strengthens the faith required to follow Him?
4. What has God accomplished in my life that demonstrates I have had a change of heart?
5. How should I live my life now that my heart has been changed?

## **#5 Discovery**

1. What does the word discovery mean to me?
2. What does discovery require from me to get to know the Lord in a more intimate and personal way?
3. Besides Bible study and prayer, what is my greatest source of discovery? Why?
4. What event in your life made you realize you need to know more about God and His ways?
5. How do I plan to change my habits to discover more of what God has in store for me?

## **#6 God is Love**

1. What image of God did you have before getting to know Him? (Policeman, far away, competitor or He is somewhere)
2. When you think of God being love, what is the first thought that comes to your mind?
3. If God is love where does that put satan?
4. What does God's love mean when things are going well? How about not so well?
5. Why is it important for me to show God's love to people who really are not loved?

## **#7 Means of Grace**

1. Why do we sometimes confuse the means of grace with freely given salvation?
2. Why is being a member of a church family so very important?
3. What would be my reaction to God's grace if I knew that baptism was not accepted by my family, illegal in my country and possibly resulting in death?
4. What does "call to minister" mean in my situation?
5. Why do you think marriage represents Christ and the body of the church?

## **#8 Prayer**

1. He gave us the opportunity to pray and Jesus taught us how to pray. Why do I think prayer is such an important thing to God?
2. **(1 Th 5:17 KJV) "Pray without ceasing."** What do you think Paul was telling the Thessalonians?
3. Why do you think God wants us to pray for our enemies?
4. Sometimes a response from the Lord is not obvious or detected. What action do I take when my prayers seem to be bouncing off the ceiling?
5. How do I react when God says: "Later or never?" **(Example: 2 Corinthians 12:7 Paul's response to his thorn in the flesh.)**

## **#9 Christian in the World**

1. Why does the secular world want us to separate Christianity from our everyday lives?
2. What causes us to occasionally forget to take Christ with us every place we go?
3. What is my first mission, first thing I should do, if I am to be a Christian in the World?
4. What does **know the way, show the way and walk the way** mean to me?
5. How should I bring Christ into the world where I am presently residing?

## **#10 Beyond REC**

- No Discussion