

## Small Group Leader Guide

WAVE is about being welcomed home by God, and extending that welcome to others. Our hope is that this won't simply be conceptual - but people who come will experience God's love and welcome. While everything in the conference (hopefully) will work towards this end - the small groups have the potential to be the place people feel most "at home." Your role is really significant.

What makes people feel welcome?

- Vulnerability - A sense that people can be real with each other. You'll need to model this - trust the group and they will trust you. Go first the first meeting. (This allows you to model appropriate vulnerability and length of sharing.)
- No fixing - it's easy to want to give advice when someone shares a problem, but what most people actually need is a safe place where they can be accepted as who they are. (There may be an appropriate time to problem-solve, but it's not small group). People will watch: if you or others "fix" they'll know it's not safe to simply "be." Note --> if someone in your group is a fixer/advice king or queen, gently stop them and remind them that in these times you simply want to listen and support one another.
- Good listening - to everyone, by everyone. You may need to invite the more talkative to listen and the more reserved to take a risk and share. You could pitch these invitations as an invitation as a way to experience/demonstrate God's love as a group.

## Friday Night Small Group

Time is short tonight (roughly 30 min), so while you want to encourage depth, you will also serve people by keeping the sharing moving and making sure everyone gets to talk. And, as you share, feel free to try the diversity and tastiness of God's creation (fruit). Encourage laughter and honest responses.

In your 30 minutes you have three questions and one task:

- Intro's: Share name, year, school, and something that makes you feel welcome.
- What about God's nature intrigued you from Genesis 1-3? What about it peaked your interest?
- What do you hope God will do this weekend: for you? for your campus? → Each person should use a sharpie to write what they want to see God do on a "garden" shape and stick it to the wall.

**Pray for each other.** If time is short you can pray for the group, or have everyone pray in pairs, or have people pray silently for the person on their right. (Be aware that some folk may not feel comfortable praying out loud, make sure there is a safe/no-shame option for them - even if others are praying out loud.)

### **Saturday Morning Small Group**

*This session follows the Retreat of Silence, and will continue to help people internalize the idea of being seen and welcomed by Jesus and others. By discussing the last three questions from the retreat of silence (with a few key additions - underlined) you'll help people integrate what they are experiencing into the overall message of the conference. Feel free to make other connections to the content, or to what is going on for people that you think would be helpful. If time is short, prioritize the underlined questions.*

What was it like to be asked deep questions and listened to well? Did you feel "seen"? What did the other person do to make you feel this? How did it impact you? How did you sense Jesus at work?

If you didn't feel seen, why not? What do you wish would have happened? How might you appropriate this lesson the next time you're listening to another?

What was it like to carefully listen to your partner? What did you learn about yourself as a listener? What came easily? Were there times you had to work at it? Where there parts of you resisted truly "seeing" the other? (e.g. assumptions you had to overcome? Thought patterns you had to discipline?) What did you see happen as a result of pressing past these barriers? How did you sense Jesus at work?

What was your time with Jesus like? Anything you'd like to share with us?

Did this experience flesh out or help you understand what you've been hearing this weekend about God's love for you? If so how? Which, if any, of the things you longed for are happening?

What is standing out to you so far? How do you want to respond? How can we pray for you?

## **Saturday Night Small Group**

*This is your last time together, and a chance for your people to reflect on what they've learned and how they want to respond. Here are some questions that can help. The third (bolded) is the most important one - prioritize it if we don't have much time ☺.*

Are there things that God has been telling you, (or reminding you), about what he is like? How would it impact you if you lived as if they were true? (e.g. your relationship with God, or others, your self understanding, decisions you make...)

What ideas, images, or stories have intrigued or captivated you? Why? Which feel challenging? Do any feel threatening? If so, why? How might these ideas impact your day to day life? Do you want this? why or why not?

**What invitation(s) is God extending to you? (Think deeply about this: something that feels scary might also be an invitation to courage; something you need to let go of might also be an invitation to freedom...) What might change if you said yes? What might that feel like? What could be lost if you said no? How do you want to respond?**

What help do you need to engage with, or live in, any of the commitments you contemplated above? Encouragement? Accountability? Prayer? Time management skills? To rethink your schedule? Something you want to remind yourself of every morning (phone? Sticky note?) A buddy to do it with? Where will you get this help?