



Leader Notes /Agenda—1st Night

MAKE YOUR FIRST NIGHT GREAT

Goals of the First Meeting

- Rekindle relationships and meet new members
- Clarify your group's direction / expectations / commitments using the covenant
- Briefly discuss the sermon topic (if there is time)
- Pray for the building of relationships and spiritual growth of the group

Items Needed for the First Meeting

- Dinner / dessert plans decided
- Growth Group covenants – small ones to handout and a large one for everyone to sign
- Nametags (host should write them out ahead of time)

Contact Your Group in Advance

- Contact all members one week before the first meeting to welcome them to the group and inform them of the location and time of your group, as well as any entrees to bring for dinner

3 ESSENTIAL PARTS OF YOUR EVENING AGENDA

#1 Welcome, mingle and talk while you eat

⇒ **Leadership tip** – Studies show that the first 7 seconds a person spends in a room can make or break the remainder of their experience in that room.

- People greeted when they arrive
- Drinks available when people arrive
- Upbeat music playing
- House cleaned, phone off if possible

#2 Think through the uniqueness of your first group discussion *GOING OVER THE COVENANT IS CRUCIAL*

- Let people know your meeting is going to start in about 5 minutes
- Why it is unique – getting to know each other, setting expectations

a) Sharing

- **Refer to homework** – Take time to do a few of the getting to know you questions
- **Sharing guidelines** – Explain the purpose of sharing exercises: Getting to know one another casually in (new groups) or reacquainting with each other (continuing groups)
- **Note to returning leaders** – feel free to adapt the sharing exercises based on the number of new members. All groups are encouraged to do some of the getting to know me questions

b) Worship (optional)

c) THE COVENANT - SET THE EXPECTATIONS AND VISION

- *Everything rises and falls on how this is communicated*
- Distribute the Covenant
- Go over the Covenant (see Leader's Guide)
- MAKE PLANS FOR YOUR SOCIAL

d) Prayer

For New groups... Introduce the idea of topical prayer

- Everyone participates
- Brief, one topic at a time
- Pray as many times as you want
- Ask your host to close in a brief prayer dedicating the next quarter to God

For Continuing groups...

- You are encouraged to do something (prayer booklet or sheet) that will help people record their prayer requests and answers to prayer during the quarter (refer to leader audio)

#3 Know that your dessert conversations are just as important as your meeting discussions

⇒ **Leadership tip** – Never underestimate the significance of the time after the meeting. It is key to connect with people and find out more what people are all about.