



1. BEFORE YOUR FIRST GROUP MEETING

Well done, leader.

This Journey is going to be an amazing experience, and you're a key part of it. Sustainable life change happens not in big dark rooms, but when we're face to face with other normal human beings.

Way to go creating space for that to happen—and because you did, you get a front row seat to what God is going to do in the lives of other people. Buckle up and get ready to enjoy the ride.

We're going to start simple; just getting to know one another over some food. At some point before the first group meeting, **reach out to your group with the logistics—where and when your group will meet.**

Everybody should bring some kind of food to share—and not just any food, but something that has a *story*. You'll share the stories about the food during your first meeting.

Here's a sample email you can use to reach out to your group, or feel free to write your own:

Welcome to group. Well, not quite yet, but you did the hard part, so well done! We'll be meeting at [ADDRESS] at [TIME], and I'm looking forward to seeing all of you. Prior to that meeting, you've got one job to do.

Bring food.

“Food, you say?” That’s right. This is simple—bring some food to share. Not just any food though—it should be food with a story. It could be your grandma’s prize winning meatloaf, it could be a package of your favorite cookies (Oreos, obviously), or maybe even that fajita recipe you haven’t dusted off in a decade. Whatever you bring, be prepared to tell the story of what makes it so significant, interesting, or meaningful to you.

Sweet? Sweet. See you soon.

2. GROUP ONE: LEADER TIPS

Hey there, leader. Welcome to the first week of group—thanks again for hosting. Two big goals for this week: **make connections** and **plan an adventure**.

Connections: We’ll spend a decent amount of time this week telling stories while we’re eating together—that’s great. Encourage everybody to share as much as they’re comfortable. Remind them that for the next four weeks we’re on a team together as we go through this Journey, and it’s important to know the people you’re on a team with.

Adventure: Toward the end of group, the task will be to plan a fun adventure for the group to do in the next week. Don’t feel like you have to come up with the idea or be the expert, just keep nudging the group toward a game plan. Err on the side of simple and fun; everyone should be able to participate. Also, the word “adventure” is intentional—get outside of the normal. Go canoeing, take a hike, take a pottery class, or even do the treasure hunt. (“Treasure hunt, you say?” Oh yeah. Stay tuned for that one.)

This is going to be awesome—enjoy the ride!

3. GROUP ONE

Leader, Read Out Loud

Hey everybody—welcome to group. Think of this as the lab for all the stuff you're absorbing from the weekend and your individual work. It's a place to talk out ideas, work through questions, and find encouragement. Let's get started.

STEP ONE: If you haven't already, set out the food and start eating. Go around the group and introduce yourself, then tell the story behind the food you brought.

STEP TWO: In order for this group to function well, we need some basic guidelines. Let's agree as a group that we're going to do three things.

First, I'm going to **engage**—watch the weekend message, do the individual guide, and participate while I'm in these group meetings.

Second, I'm going to **listen**—it's not my job to fix anybody, I'm agreeing to just listen and encourage.

Third, I'm going to keep things **confidential**—what's said in this group stays here.

Everybody on board? Great.

STEP THREE: During the service last weekend, we talked a bit about play (and how much we often forget to do it.)

What's something that restores you? Something that you love just because it's fun and brings you life?

STEP FOUR: Gut check time. We all have things we love and are passionate about, but that doesn't mean we're actually doing them.

Go around the circle again, and this time everybody answer the question, "Where is a place in your life where you feel like Purpose or Play is missing? Why?"

STEP FIVE: We all have room to grow in Purpose and Play, so next week we're going to have a group adventure. What kind of adventure? That's up to you—anything from a trip to Dairy Queen to a trip to the Grand Canyon is fair game. Take the next few minutes as a group and come up with a game plan.

A Few Tips:

- This should be fun. If it feels like an obligation or work, try again.
- Everybody should be able to participate.
- The simpler the better. Don't overthink it—the first idea that feels like fun to everybody? Run with that.

STEP SIX: Before we're done, we need to connect in the Crossroads app. This is a huge part of the Journey experience. Everyone get out your phone right now and download and open the Crossroads Anywhere app. (When everyone is in, keep reading).

We're going to set up a group chat and subscribe to get daily prompts about Play & Purpose. This will keep us connected as a group and challenge us along the way.

[Tap Here to Create Your Group Chat](#)

Daily prompts and challenges will start on September 30.

LAST THING: There is a TREASURE HUNT as a part of this Journey! An actual treasure that can be found somewhere in North America. Think of this as an elaborate geocache challenge. You'll solve clues, travel to a physical location, look for objects that lead you to a final location where your group will be eligible to win \$1,000.

Remember step four above? Maybe this is the adventure you'll choose to do together. And, just because you are still reading this, here is a clue to get you started: **The exact location (within 53') of the first clue in the treasure hunt is hidden in your Journey Play & Purpose Guide book.**

Protip: skip the bathroom, you've got the "power" to find the treasure!

Good luck. (BTW, this treasure hunt thing is totally optional for your Journey group experience. It's just a fun thing to do.)

4. GROUP TWO: LEADER TIPS

Welcome back, leader. This week should be fun for you as well as the rest of the group. (So if you're worried about making sure everyone else has fun, stop it.) Make sure that everyone remembers the time/place for your adventure, and then go have a good time!

Once it's done, circle everyone up for a coffee/beer (or dinner, if they're game) after your adventure. Here are some conversation starters to help your group unpack what you just did:

Conversation Starters:

- Was this fun? What about it was fun?
- What did this tell you about yourself? What excited you or drained you about it?
- What stood out about the Journey Prompts this week (they start Sept. 30)?

If that won't work, send them out to everyone and start your time together next week by talking through the experience.

Great work—now go have fun!

5. GROUP TWO

Leader, remember this week is all about fun. Doesn't matter what you do, just as long as everyone is doing it together.

Once the fun is said and done, here are some conversation starters to help your group unpack what you just did:

Conversation Starters:

- Was this fun? What about it was fun?
- What did this tell you about yourself? What excited you or drained you about it?
- What stood out about the Journey Prompts this week (they start Sept. 30)?

6. GROUP THREE: LEADER TIPS

Welcome back, leader. This week is going to be great—we've been building up to it from the very beginning, so expect some cool stuff to happen. During the service last weekend, everybody had a chance to declare the new step they're going to take around Play & Purpose. The big goal for this group meeting, then, is to **encourage** your group in the decisions they've made, and help them **refine** it as needed.

Don't feel like you have to have all the answers, just help people process what they think they've heard from God. Generally, this looks like asking questions like "Why?" and "What are you going to do about that?" There may still be unresolved questions or loose ends, and that's OK. What's important this week is that we're making space to wrestle with these big questions and listen for what God might be saying.

In addition to the weekend message, the group should be actively communicating with the daily Journey Prompts. Feel free to use what's happening in those conversations as a jumping off point in the group.

Amazing stuff is about to happen; keep up the good work!

7. GROUP THREE

Leader, Read Out Loud

Welcome back, everybody. A lot has happened since the last time we were together, and we're going to spend some time unpacking all of it. Let's jump in.

STEP ONE: Last week we had an adventure. If you haven't already talked through it, take a few minutes as a group to talk about how it went.

Was it fun? What parts of it were fun, and why? What parts of it were exciting or draining for you?

STEP TWO: Talk about what stands out from the daily Journey Prompts. Were there any ah-has or surprises? Talk about them.

STEP THREE: During the service last weekend, we had a chance to identify an area where we're lacking Play or Purpose, and commit to doing something about it. Let's take a minute of silence (for the introverts) to reflect on what we decided—and more importantly, why. (If you missed this last weekend, no worries. Use this time to jot down what you think God might be telling you right now.)

STEP FOUR: Go around the circle, and each person should take three minutes to explain their decision to the group. Use these questions to prompt conversation: What was the outage you picked? What was God saying to you about it? What are your initial ideas about how you might do something about it? Specifically, what do you need to start doing, stop doing, and continue doing?

After each person tells their decision, the rest of the group should take two to three minutes to **encourage** them and **refine** their idea.

Keep In Mind:

- Refining looks like helping them better understand what they're thinking, feeling, or hearing from God. Protip: the easiest way to do this is just ask "Why?" as in "Why are you feeling that way?"
- Encouraging looks like calling something out that you've seen in them, it could be helping come up with next steps, or even reminding them of how God will support and equip them along the way.
- No critique or analysis, we're just trying to encourage each other as we follow where God is leading us.

STEP FIVE: Once you've gone all the way around, grab a sheet of paper. Tear it into strips, write everyone's name on one, and throw them in a hat. Once everybody has a name in hand, here's the deal. For the next week, you're their pep squad. Pray for them, send them an encouraging text or email, and so on. In fact, let's start now. Go around the circle, and everybody say a simple prayer for the person whose name you drew.

STEP SIX: Next week, we're back one last time to celebrate this journey we've been on, and it's no celebration without something to eat. Just like at the beginning, everybody bring something to share—this time, instead of something with a story, bring the thing you're craving right now. Whatever your go-to food is these days, bring some to share.

8. GROUP FOUR: LEADER TIPS

Well done, leader. We're almost there. God is doing amazing stuff in the people around you, and it's happening because you were willing to step up and lead—well, well done. Two big goals for this final week: **next steps** for each person, and deciding **what's next** for the group as a whole.

The bulk of this week's conversation will center around helping people nail down exactly what their initial step toward more Play or Purpose will be. Don't feel like you need to be the final authority on it—this is ultimately between them and God. Focus on encouraging them to make their next step concrete (as in, put in on the calendar and in the budget), and immediate (don't wait till next month to do it—do it this week.)

As you wrap up, there will also be time to discuss what's next for this group. Assuming that this group has been a positive experience for everybody, consider trying it out for a bit longer. For example, you could say to the group, "What about if we try continuing to meet as a group for the next three months?" That gives everybody a better chance to know and connect with each other, but with a clear end date that doesn't make it feel like a permanent commitment.

Also, it's entirely possible that some members of your group will want to break off and do something different—that's totally fine. Encourage them to be in a group of some kind; it doesn't have to be this one, but everybody needs people around them to support and encourage them. We can't do this thing alone.

For an easy next step, consider clicking the settings icon in your group chat and subscribing to Weekend Prompts. It's an easy way to get the most out of the next series.

Great work—we're heading to the finish line now!

9. GROUP FOUR

Leader, Read Out Loud

Welcome back, everybody. It's the last week of the Journey, and we want to finish strong—let's jump in.

STEP ONE: If you haven't started eating already, what are you waiting for? Dig in, and while you're eating, go around the circle and share what food you brought, and why it's your favorite.

STEP TWO: Talk about what stands out from the daily Journey Prompts. Were there any ah-has or surprises? Talk about them.

STEP THREE: We're going to make some pretty important decisions today. Somebody pray for the group and ask God to give us wisdom and guidance while we do.

Pro tip: it doesn't have to be anything fancy; a simple, *"God, we're trying to follow where you're leading, please help us to make the right decisions,"* will do just fine.

STEP FOUR: OK, now the rubber meets the road. Last week, we all identified a new thing we could do to push us toward more Play or Purpose. Now, we want to figure out what the next step is for that. Everybody take two minutes to think through the Play or Purpose outage you identified, and decide what you're going to do to make it happen **this week, this month, and this year**.

Once the time is up, let's go around the circle and share. As each person shares, the group's job is to add fuel to the fire. Our goal is forward movement, not perfection. If the plan still has some gaps, that's fine. What's important is that it moves us toward Play or Purpose. Your job is to offer encouragement. Remind your groupmates that they can do this, that God will be with them, and that there is joyous, wonderful stuff on the other side of the unknown. Any critique should be helping the person get the ball rolling sooner or to take on a more manageable step.

STEP FIVE: This is all exciting stuff, but it's going to require some intentional change. For most of us, this requires a change in priorities—we will spend money and time differently as a result of this decision. Let's go around the circle again, and everybody answer the question, "What am I going to change about my budget and/or schedule to make space for this new thing?"

STEP SIX: Well done everybody. Very few people in our culture are willing to do the hard work required for real life change, and you all jumped in with both feet. Well, well done. Now, there's one more decision for this group to make—what's next for us?

All of us need community, and hopefully you've experienced some of the benefits of it in the last month. If everybody's game to keep this group going a bit longer, let's spend a few minutes to plan our next adventure together. (Don't worry yet about a long term plan—just plan a next step, and see where things go.)

If you're looking for a nice and easy next step, click the settings icon in your group chat and subscribe to Weekend Prompts. It's a great way to unpack weekend and help your group get the most out of our next series.