

# Community Group Facilitation Guide

Whether this is your first time ever leading a group discussion, or you are a seasoned veteran, here are a few tips for leading discussion in your group this week.

## 1. Prepare

- **Watch/Listen to the Sermon** (<http://www.northridgerochester.com/messages/>)
  - At Northridge, the majority of Community Groups discuss the sermon from Sunday. In order to best prepare to lead a discussion, make sure you watch the sermon either in person or online.
- **Take Notes**
  - You should follow along and take notes on the program provided in the service or included online. This will be a helpful reference for you during discussion.
- **Preview Questions** (<https://www.northridgeleaders.com/questions/>)
  - Each week during our Community Group trimesters, questions are posted on our group leaders page for sermon discussion
  - Make sure to read through the questions before leading discussion.
  - You can download the questions document and edit questions if you would like to change them.
  - Most likely you will not have time for all of the questions, so make sure you choose the questions you think will work best in your group.
- **Bring Questions with you:**
  - Print out a copy of the questions for yourself or multiple copies for the whole group if you'd like them to follow along and see them as you read them.
  - You may also read them on a digital device if you prefer the paperless route

## 2. Discussion Tips

- **Get comfortable with silence**
  - Be ok with silence. Don't be the first to answer your own questions. It usually takes time for people to process the question and think of an answer.
- **Ask followup questions**
  - After someone answers a question, use follow up questions to draw out more thoughts from them or someone else.
  - Use statements like "Tell me more", "What do you mean?", "Anything else?", "Someone else?".
- **Give affirmation whenever you can**
  - You may not always agree with someone's answer, but the more you are able to affirm their thoughts, the more likely everyone will be to keep sharing. Use phrases like "Great question!", "Thanks for sharing!", "I love that", "Very helpful".
- **Try to involve everyone**
  - The more people you can involve in the discussion the better. Use phrases like "Anyone who hasn't shared yet?", "How about someone on this side of the room?", "Guys, any thoughts from you?".
- **Begin and end on time**
  - Know ahead of time when to begin and end discussion. Plan how long you want to discuss each question. It is better to leave people wanting more with a short discussion than to drag on too long.
- **Don't focus on getting through all of the material**
  - The goal of discussion is to help everyone apply their faith, not answer all of the questions. It is ok to only ask a few questions. Make sure to focus on application questions.
- **Get Feedback**
  - After your first time facilitating, ask your leaders for feedback. It's the best way to keep improving.

## **Other Helpful Facilitation Resources:**

### **Blog Posts:**

- Take the Awkward out of Awkward Silences <http://bit.ly/AwkwardSilencesInGroup>
- The 2 Best Words to Boost Discussion: <http://bit.ly/BoostingDiscussions>
- When Discussion Gets off Topic: <http://bit.ly/OffTopicDiscussions>
- Leading Good Discussion Checklist: <http://bit.ly/LeadingGoodCGDiscussion>
- 10 Ways to Squash Group Discussion: <http://bit.ly/SquashingDiscussions>

### **Breakout Audio and Notes:**

- Asking Great Questions <http://bit.ly/AskingGreatQuestionsBreakout>
- Leading Life Changing Discussions <http://bit.ly/LifeChangingDiscussion>

### **Videos:**

- Leading Great Discussions <https://vimeo.com/28415071> (2:37)
- Improving Your Facilitation Skills <https://vimeo.com/28373960> (2:24)
- Dealing with Dominators <https://vimeo.com/29912415> (2:26)

### **Other Group Discussion Curriculum Resources:**

- Some groups choose to discuss a video series (DVD or stream) or book of the Bible instead of sermon discussion.
- Here is a list of curriculum options: <http://bit.ly/GroupCurriculum>
- If interested, leaders can ask their group coach if one of these resources is available or send an email to [CommunityGroups@NorthridgeRochester.com](mailto:CommunityGroups@NorthridgeRochester.com)