

DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

Thank you for agreeing to be a small group discussion facilitator. As the facilitator, it is not your job to be the expert on the topic of the course or to answer questions. It is simply your job to help keep the discussion at your table on track and ensure that everyone has a chance to share. Included below are a few guidelines that will hopefully help you in this task.

- ❖ Please encourage people to mention their names each time they speak, until everyone knows the others' names.
- ❖ Encourage everyone at the table to use “I” statements, and to speak from their own experience and perspective. Talking about “other people” is rarely helpful, and doesn’t allow personal engagement with these important questions.
- ❖ Make sure everyone who wishes to speak has a chance to speak. This may mean asking someone who has already spoken to wait until others have had a chance to share, or directly asking someone who has been quiet if they have anything to add.
- ❖ Try to keep the discussion on topic. If the answers are wandering too far astray, re-read the question to the group, and encourage them to return to the topic at hand. If you have finished all of the suggested discussion questions, you can return to the topic of interest, if it is appropriate.
- ❖ Be aware of the time, so that your group is able to address all of the questions. If you get bogged down in a question, encourage the group to move on to the next one. You can always come back to a particularly important question if you have time remaining at the end.
- ❖ Share anything that seems important with the Leader. If you are having trouble facilitating your table group, ask for his/her help in working toward a solution.