



DISCUSSION GUIDE

::Week 1::

::January 23rd & 24th, 2010::

Small Group Warm-Up

::Tell us about a time when you have been physically stuck. Stuck in an airport, stuck in traffic, stuck in an awkward situation, stuck in a dead-end relationship, or... How did you get un-stuck?::

Opening Prayer

::Lord, we want to invite you to help us get past the obstacles that cause relational breakdowns. We open our hearts and minds to what you would want us to learn from your Word today::

Discussion Questions

1. ::Read Ephesians 3:18 through Ephesians 4:6::

::This weekend, Pastor Mike reminded us that we have all been created with the capacity to connect with a God who loves us, and to experience close and healthy relationships with others. For those of us who are not married, we need to commit to building growing friendships in order to thrive in life.

Do you think it's possible to build the following kinds of intimacy with friends? Why or why not?

- Emotional intimacy (sharing feelings)
- Physical intimacy (touches and hugs that are healthy and appropriate for friends)
- Spiritual intimacy (praying together and encouraging each other's walk with Christ)
- Intellectual intimacy (someone to share ideas and problem-solve with)::

2. ::Read Galatians 5:13-15::

::We live in a culture that encourages us to please ourselves first. This is the opposite of what the Bible teaches. We are called by God to "serve one another in love." This is vital to healthy relationships. Talk about some ways you can go first and lead the way in serving friends, family members, co-workers or neighbors.

Sometimes it's easier to serve than to be served. Healthy relationships include give and take. Is it hard for you to receive help from others? Why? This week, allow someone else to help you with a challenging project. (You may even have to ask someone for help.)::

3. ::*"I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)."*

John 10:10 Amplified Version::

::An important element of getting un-stuck is learning how to enjoy life with others. Sometimes as we get older, we forget how to enjoy life. We get focused and serious about our adult responsibilities and we forget to build in time to simply enjoy life. Do you consider yourself more of the serious type or more of the life of the party? What do you like to do for fun? What could your growth group do together--just for fun?::

4. ::Read 1 John 1:5-7 and Galatians 5:22-23::

::When we invite God into our lives and into our relationships something amazing happens. We have a resource beyond ourselves for guidance, for grace, for forgiveness, for strength. A relationship with God is both a one-time decision and a life-long journey. What do you do on a day-by-day basis to keep your relationship with God healthy and growing? How can we continue to make our relationship with God a priority when life gets super busy?::

5. ::Pastor Mike closed his talk this weekend by disclosing how he has struggled to connect in an emotionally deep way as a result of growing up in a home where he was on his own from an early age. Does something from your past still cause problems in your ability to connect in meaningful relationships? If you feel comfortable, tell us about it::

Closing Prayer

::Father God, thank you for loving us and for empowering us to connect in healthy, loving relationships::



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