



Discipleship Journey Guide #2 Prep: Sharing Our Life Stories

“Talking points” for the person leading the Equipping Time; prepared by (doesn’t need to be stated): Tim Dorsch

Objective

The goal of this guide is to help you and your discipleship partners share your life stories with one another.

Motivation

Discipleship in Scripture is “life on life, heart with heart, eyeball to eyeball” because God knows that’s what we need to grow. So getting to know each other as we actually are is crucial.

Benefits include:

1. **From our experience, discipleship partners sharing their stories speeds up the process of truly knowing one another. Guys say it’s a gratifying experience.**
2. Each one of us has a unique life story that both **demonstrates the fallenness of humanity and God’s specific power and specific grace toward each of us.**
3. We underestimate just how much of **how we are wired is shaped by our personal histories.**
4. Sharing our stories **helps give us context for the strengths and weaknesses of our discipleship partners.** For example, in the future, we might be able to help “connect the dots” for things that lie behind a struggle for a guy in our group.

Equipping

How can we lead our discipleship groups in sharing their life stories well?

1. **Introduce it well this week. State that you think it’ll be a really valuable thing to do as a group.**
2. It’d be good for you to **go first and model sharing your story** in the manner described in the guide—paying attention to the time, being vulnerable, etc.
3. **If a guy is still sharing at the twenty-minute mark,** you can say “I’m enjoying hearing your story and wanted to let you know it’s been twenty minutes and for the sake of time it’d be great if you could wrap up your story soon. I’m sure we can hear more details in the future.”
4. **If a guy shares his story too briefly** and doesn’t go “deep enough” consider asking questions like:

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- A. What other specific people or life events have played a role in shaping your life?
 - B. What (other) areas of struggle have you experienced?
 - C. Can you tell us more about your spiritual journey and God's hand in your life?
 5. Make sure your guys are mostly **listening and *not* offering counsel** during the time.
 6. **When a guy's turn is over, affirm and thank him for sharing.** E.g., if he is vulnerable, thank him for being vulnerable. Then, pray for him.
 7. **If a guy *doesn't* have much to say about his spiritual journey, faith, or God's hand in your life, think about whether it's possible that he hasn't entered into a relationship with Christ.**
 - A. If you think that's possible, invite him to get together with you outside of the group time and discuss his spiritual journey and the gospel with him.
 - B. Or, if you feel unequipped to do that, please discuss the situation with a hub leader or minister.
 8. **This would be a natural time to ask for the dates of guys' birthdays.** Write them down and try to recognize them on their birthday (guys often don't mention that their birthdays are coming up).
 9. **You may need to have someone share their story the following week. Make sure that everyone shares their story at some point soon.**

In conclusion, pray that God will use the sharing of life stories in a dynamic way.