

SMALL  GROUP

SMALL GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Red Flags, Respect, & Relationships / Week 2

BEFORE GROUP

BOTTOM LINE

God cares about what we do with our freedom.

SCRIPTURE

1 Corinthians 6:12 NLV
John 10:10 NIV

GOAL OF SMALL GROUP

To help students recognize what their obsessions may be, how they could be impacting their lives, and what healthy boundaries they can set around them.

THINK ABOUT THIS

The goal of this conversation is two-fold. The first is to help students recognize what obsessions they might have. Because self-awareness is still developing in this phase, this first step may be difficult for them to do. Your questions and conversation will help them take steps toward discovering this for themselves, likely for the first time! The second goal is to help students see the connection between their obsessions and their actions. Again, this may be challenging for your middle schoolers as they are still growing in the maturity and brain development it may take to see this for themselves. They may recognize certain behaviors or choices aren't the best, but they may not see the link between those things and the obsessions motivating them. As you facilitate this discovery and discussion for them, be aware of your responses. Be careful not to dismiss any of the things they share that feel like obsessions to them. Even if it seems like not a big deal to you, it definitely is to them! On the other hand, be sure not to overreact to anything they open up about, as that may embarrass or shut them down from continuing the conversation.

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the content as needed, and don't feel like you need to complete everything listed.

DURING GROUP

JUST FOR FUN

What's something you're super passionate about right now?

DISCUSS THIS

1. How can you tell the difference between a passion and an obsession?
2. How can an obsession impact you or the people around you?

DO THIS (EXPERIENCE 1)

Hand out the provided journal page and ask students to privately fill out the "Red Flags" section. Since the topic of obsession can be personal, don't encourage a conversation about each of your students' individual obsessions. Instead, ask students to think about their quiz results and make some healthy changes if they're heading into obsession territory.

DISCUSS THIS

3. Did the results surprise you? Why or why not?
4. What's one way you can tell if something is wise for you to do?
5. How might doing something that isn't wise impact your life?
6. How can creating boundaries help you avoid things that aren't good for you?

DO THIS (EXPERIENCE 2)

Ask your students to fill out the "Respect" and "Relationships" sections of their worksheet. Allow them to complete it privately, and then ask for volunteers to share what they wrote only if they feel comfortable.

LIKE



GOD CARES ABOUT WHAT WE DO WITH OUR FREEDOM

USE THIS SHEET TO IDENTIFY RED FLAGS THAT SHOW YOUR PASSION MIGHT BE TURNING INTO AN OBSESSION, TO SET A BOUNDARY THAT WILL HELP YOU RESPECT OTHERS AND YOURSELF, AND TO RECOGNIZE HOW YOUR OBSESSION MAY BE NEGATIVELY AFFECTING OTHERS.



RED FLAGS

It can be difficult to notice red flags when our passions start turning into obsessions. Complete this quiz to help you figure it out! Think about something you are super passionate about and then circle the answer that best describes your passion.

IS IT AN OBSESSION OR PASSION?

- YES / NO - I talk about this all the time.
- YES / NO - I spend most of my free time doing this.
- YES / NO - I have trouble sleeping because I think about this so much.
- YES / NO - This the last thing I think about when I go to sleep at night and the first thing I think about when I wake up in the morning.
- YES / NO - I feel better or worse when I take part in this.
- YES / NO - I feel really upset, anxious, or angry if I'm not able to take part in this.
- YES / NO - I do this for longer periods of time than I had originally planned.
- YES / NO - People in my life make comments about how much I talk about or spend time doing this.
- YES / NO - I tell myself that I'm not going to spend time doing this anymore, but still end up doing this again.
- YES / NO - This thing impacts my life and relationships with others in negative ways.

If you answered "yes" to more than five of these questions, your passion could actually be turning into an obsession. While that doesn't necessarily mean you have to cut this thing out of your life altogether, it does mean you should start finding more balance and setting boundaries.



RESPECT

Setting boundaries to avoid obsession and make wiser choices helps us give and receive the respect we all deserve, both for ourselves and to others.

THIS IS A BOUNDARY I CAN SET FOR A PASSION I HAVE THAT'S HEADING TOWARD AN OBSESSION: _____



RELATIONSHIPS

Obsessions don't just impact you; they can impact others, too. To better honor God, ourselves, and others, we have to acknowledge the way our obsessions might be affecting other people.

THIS IS ONE WAY MY OBSESSION COULD BE NEGATIVELY AFFECTING OTHERS: _____

