

# ▣ Introduction ▣

FREE  
FAITH/LIFE BIBLE STUDIES  
FROM THE YOUTH & FAMILY INSTITUTE

Combining Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets™ with biblical texts, discussion and prayer.

Written by Peer Ministry leadership students from classes at  
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*Send us a note and let us know how, where and what kinds of impacts these may have on your group!*

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## *Dedication*

In memory of Randi Sundet-Griner. Randi touched thousands of peoples lives through her passion and ministry. This project combines her work at Search Institute with Lyle Griner's work in Peer Ministry.

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## *Background*

For years my passion has been to train kids to facilitate discussions around faith and life with their peers. In the midst of these discussions, leaders share prayers, discoveries in the Bible, and genuine care and support with participants.

My amazement is in watching how quickly participating kids begin to use and appreciate faith practices. Prayer, Bible reading, worship and service when they experience other kids whom genuinely live with a faith that matters. Exposure to such models has a bigger impact and a more life-changing effect than any words that I could speak or creative lessons I could teach.

## *Lyle Griner*

National Peer Ministry Director - The Youth & Family Institute

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## *40 Developmental Assets™*

Search Institute has surveyed over two million youth across the United States and Canada since 1989. These studies use the significant framework of *40 Developmental Assets™* which are positive experiences and personal qualities that young people need to grow up healthy, caring, and responsible. To learn more go to...

<http://www.search-institute.org/>

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## *Suggested training for your leaders!*

Peer Ministry Training - "You aren't doing youth ministry until kids are doing the ministry."  
Growing Groups- "Facilitating Small Groups"

[www.peerministry.org](http://www.peerministry.org)

## *Atmosphere*

- Small groups, 6 to 8 people is ideal, quiet space on the floor, a candle lit in the center. Everyone has a Bible, colorful highlighters and pens for scribbling.
  - Retreats
  - Camps
  - Home gatherings
  - Youth Ministry nights
  - Where ever kids can gather in groups
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## *Facilitators*

Facilitators need to be facilitated.

Never hand a curriculum to a facilitator and think they can “wing it.” Places that have successful small group programs provide time for the facilitators to meet and be led through the discussion. This changes the facilitators’ experience from leading something off a piece of paper to a dynamic, heart-felt, personalized experience. This meeting time with facilitators also gives them a time to pray, problem solve, share success stories, be further equipped, and motivate each other.

# *Elements*

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## *Key Scripture*

Each study has one key passage. It is from this passage that the rest of the discussion guide was formed. Use this passage to introduce and motivate the topic. Refer back to it in the discussion. Encourage participants to open Bibles and highlight it.

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## *Chat Time*

Chat time is a list of discussion questions. There are no right or wrong answers for these questions. They invite exploration of ideas, values, reflections and stories. Such discussion leads to discovery, and the “Ah-ha” moments of learning. This style of learning comes not from lecture, or moralizing leaders, but from the inner pondering of the mind, soul and spirit.

The facilitator is a guide for the learning of the group and each individual in the group. The facilitator helps participants discover what is being learned by naming, affirming, restating, highlighting and challenging “Ah-ha” moments. These highlighting skills are often referred to as **pinning ideas on the line**. The **line** being the main learning points and the **pinning** being the highlighting skills such as affirming head nods, the high-fives, the verbal “That’s a great thought” and writing ideas on chart paper.

Curriculum questions are not meant to be a list to *get through*. They are not a liner list. The question list is only a guide. Facilitators use first questions to begin a discussion and then listen closely and deeply to the group. Questions that follow come from what is said in the group. With practice facilitators learn an intuitive sense of which question to ask next. When facilitators know the topic and the main points they hope will be discovered, they will have a better sense of what to ask and when to ask it.

When the participants are given a copy of the discussion sheet they often look at the question list and choose the one that first grabs attention. When this happens, begin with that question. Always honor what the group needs to talk about within the parameters of the topic.

## *So What*

The only time anything is learned is when it is reflected back on. The “So What” is a time to name what was most significant during the discussion and name applications for daily life. Use the questions and activities here to recap and name what was most important to remember and apply.

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## *Candle Time*

Candle time is prayer time. Prayers at the end of the group time become a spiritual ritual in naming the importance of your discussion and recognizing God’s presence in the group’s midst. Light a candle as part of your time for prayer.

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## *Explore*

Here is a list of six scriptures that may weave into your discussion. It is the facilitators job to know, read and reflect on these scriptures before the discussion. Conveniently, there are seven verses including the key verse, one for each day of the week for facilitators to ponder. It is not the intent that all of these scriptures be read or used in the discussion. It is the intent that as the discussion progresses the facilitator will be able to say, “I read something in the Bible this week about what we are talking about,” inviting everyone to flip open and read a biblical text that informs the discussion. In so doing participants begin to learn the value of scripture guiding daily life. Participants also experience a facilitator who values daily scripture reading.

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## *Leaders Page*

## *Background*

This section expresses the importance of the particular asset and the key scripture verse. It helps the facilitator understand why this discussion topic is significant.

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## *Motivation*

Groups do not just begin talking. Interest in the topic needs to be motivated. The motivation offers a method such as a game, creative story, or other activity to draw participants in. Such methods work well but never replace the passion, enthusiasm and relational ability of the facilitator. *Kids don t care what you know, until they know you care.*

