

A GUIDE TO CONNECTING WITH YOUR SMALL GROUP IN A ZOOM CALL

TIPS AND BEST PRACTICES

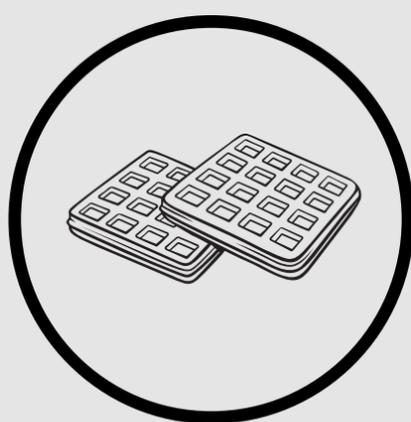


1

CONSIDER YOUR ENVIRONMENT

Just like you would prepare your space for your group to physically gather in, consider your "digital square" that your students will see you in.

Broadcast from a space that is clean, bright, and welcoming. Broadcast from areas in your home that are not private areas like your personal bedroom. Consider your appearance as well. Set the tone by the way you show up, that this is important to you.



2

CONNECT THE SQUARES

As we appear as "digital squares" in these online environments, try to figure out ways to connect the squares. Students understand the term "waffling" when they grab hands to pray with each other.

Explain that we may not be able to "hold hands" but these squares look like waffles, and we are praying they know they aren't just a digital square but they are part of the waffle. 😊

Example of waffling:

1. Begin your meeting time by asking each person to write on a sheet of paper their response to a question and then ask everyone to show their paper at the same time.
2. Host a theme night. Share the theme for the night before you gather. It will make for a fun night and allows you to have some unique memories as a group.



3

COMMUNICATE IN TWO CHANNELS

In zoom there is a chat space that can be very helpful for conversation. If you have more than one leader in your small group, decide which one will be facilitating the Bible Study portion, and who will be hosting the chat.

1. Use the chat to post the bible passages.
2. Use the chat to post questions you are wanting the group to discuss.
3. Use the chat for students to respond with questions if someone is talking.
4. Use the chat for prayer requests.



4

NO ZOOM FOR TWO

In order to protect our students and our leaders, we are asking that you apply the same filters to digital spaces as we ask you to do with physical spaces. We do not allow one on one private meetings with a student and an adult in the our regularly scheduled lifegroup times. The same is true for our Zoom spaces. As a group concludes, do not find yourself the only leader with one student left in the call. When the meeting is over, everyone leaves the space.



5

CREATE COURTESY RULES

It can be challenging to have conversation within a small group online. Students will be tempted to talk over each other. Others will be tempted to not speak at all. Some will monopolize the whole conversation. And sometimes, **leaders**, that can become you if you are not careful and intentional. Put into place some courtesy rules. Establish those rules on the front end. Let the students help create the courtesy rules.

Examples:

1. Be present and participate during the group call.
2. Do not talk over each other. Use the chat for a question if someone else is talking.
3. What's said in the zoom, stays in the zoom.
4. No screenshots of the group, without group consent.
5. No screen recording.
6. practice demonstrating the "one anothers" within the small group. (There are 59 commands in scripture about how to "one another" well..use some of those for a courtesy rule. ie. "Be kind and compassionate to one another..." (Ephesians 4:32)



6

DISABLE FILE SHARING

Within Zoom calls, participants by default have the ability to upload files and share their screens. If the zoom call is public, strangers (trolls) can gain access and begin zoombombing your call with inappropriate content. The only way to end a zoombomb is by ending the call. To protect against these attacks or students distracting the call with personal file uploads or images, you will need to disable the zoom defaults for screen sharing, virtual backgrounds, and file sharing. See Zoombomb protection guide for instructions in disabling this in your zoom calls.



7

BE LIKE ACTS, ONLINE

Students are having Zoom calls for all sorts of things right now. Be intentional about why they need to be a part of **this** zoom call. In days like these, as the church is scattered to gather online, let's not forget to be like the early Christians in the book of Acts. Make Acts 2:42 your aim for Lifegroups online. "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to the prayers."

The 3 part agenda of an opening, a bible study, and the prayer/care time will look a little different in this space. Don't plan on a 40 minute lecture, but create a space where God's word is shared, fellowship happens, and you pray for one another.

Think less of a teaching, and more of a conversation. Make sure that you are allowing each person to have a chance to participate. Have students take turns reading the scripture. Have students take turns praying. Find out what each of your students favorite snack is and mail it to them with instructions to not open until zoom call. Then you can fellowship about your food. Think different about this, and have fun!

You got this! Now go make disciples that make disciples...ONLINE.