

Small Group Leader Guidelines

Immanuel Prayer Minister Training
Alive and Well, Inc.

Description of the Leader Role

- To guide the small group practice component of each class session
- To clarify concepts taught in that session to the extent you are able
- To help the students practice the skills
- To give them constructive feedback
- To model lifestyle and facilitator skills, e.g., attunement, staying relational, being open to feedback

General Principles

1. We are all learning Immanuel together: teachers, leaders, and students.
2. You do not have to be an expert or feel like you know everything to be a small group leader in this training.
3. The primary qualification for this role is willingness to share what you do know, to be vulnerable as a wounded healer, and to encourage students as they practice what they are learning.

Small Group Structure

1. Each group will have approximately 6 students. Groups will remain together throughout.
2. Small Groups will meet every week during the second half of class time.

Small Group Process

1. Especially the first couple weeks, and in subsequent weeks if there is time, take a few minutes at the beginning to learn names, share housekeeping details, and respond to questions about the teaching. Limit this to about 10 minutes. Do not let it encroach on practice time, where many questions may be answered experientially.
2. In the first couple weeks in class and/or in small groups, there may be specific practice assignments in partners. These assignments will coincide with the skill being focused on that morning, e.g., recognize/develop a connection experience, express appreciation, ask open-ended questions.
3. During the earlier weeks (especially weeks 2-5), keep the practice segments shorter (25-40 min) and process them more thoroughly (30-40 min).

4. More experienced students can move forward more quickly, but they still need lots of feedback and processing. The facilitator and group may learn as much from the debrief as from the session.
5. When student facilitating begins, don't intervene during the practice segment unless absolutely necessary, but keep good notes for giving feedback.
6. Identify roles for the practice session:
 - Facilitator
 - Recipient
 - Note-taker for recipient
 - Time-keeper (if desired)
7. If possible, record in some way the flow of the session so you can place your feedback in context. Use a code in the margin of your notes. Be able to quickly pull out
 - things they did well
 - the sequence of events and main elements – interactive/appreciation connection, build capacity, memory, PB, etc.
 - places they got stuck
 - places where they missed important clues
 - places they used non-Immanuel methods, e.g., suggesting material, giving advice, focusing on pain
8. Before giving your feedback, ask the students to critique themselves.
Ask the facilitator:
 - what they think they did well
 - where they struggled
 - what they think they need to change (and how, if they have ideas)
Ask the recipient:
 - what it felt like to be facilitated by this person
 - what worked for them and what didn't
 - recommendations for the facilitator
9. Then give your feedback. In the early weeks, keep the feedback focused on the skill for that class.
 - Begin with positive feedback. Be specific.
 - For constructive feedback, choose the 1 or 2 things that are the most important. You don't have to mention everything each time.
 - Include positive suggestions when addressing what didn't work.
 - In this time, co-mentors and mentor/apprentice teams can work with each other to balance positive and negative feedback, varying facilitator styles, and timeliness.

10. A major challenge will be to move the process along to get the practice session and feedback session finished on time.

11. Close the small group time with prayer.

Personal Growth Component for Students

1. Encourage all students to notice when and how they get triggered. Mention Immanuel Journaling, recommend personal ministry, etc.
2. We can model this by telling on ourselves when we get triggered or make mistakes, and encouraging student facilitators to do the same.
3. Ask each student to think and pray about how the Lord wants them to use Immanuel after the class is over. We will encourage students to form or join an Immanuel practice group and to take the risk to offer to pray for others.

Personal Growth Component for Leaders

1. Continue your own growth toward spiritual, relational and emotional maturity. Notice when and how you get triggered and where your maturity gaps are. Find a setting where you can receive ministry regularly. Keep practicing Immanuel as a lifestyle.
2. During or after this course, find ways to keep your own facilitator skills sharp by offering ministry, attending a practice group, and/or seeking feedback.
3. Think and pray about how the Lord wants to you to use Immanuel after this class is over. Consider hosting a practice group to grow in your own facilitator and leader skills. Also be aware of when you need to take a break.