



# BEING ON THE ALPHA TEAM

## FOUR VALUES ON ALPHA

Alpha is about being **real**, **relational**, **reliant** on the Holy Spirit and **reproducible** by empowering others.

These values shape how and why we do everything on Alpha, and they will set up your team and guests to have the best experience possible.

**Note:** There are 3 Team Training videos to help you learn about Alpha essentials, how to host great small groups, and tips on praying for others. Take some time to discuss these with your team.

## SETTING THE STAGE FOR GREAT SMALL GROUPS

Usually after the first Alpha session, guests are assigned to a small group (by age or with friends). The ideal size for a small group on Alpha is between 8-12 people, including 1 or 2 hosts and helpers. The goal is that the small group would stay together for the duration of Alpha, go on the journey together, and hopefully become friends along the way.

Ideally your groups would sit together, eat together, watch the Alpha talk and then discuss it right where you are. This helps your group connect, and it saves time since there's no transition to another room or space. Your Alpha leader will explain how it will work.

We use the terms 'host' and 'helper' because on Alpha it's less about being a leader and more about helping facilitate a conversation. We want people to feel welcomed and included. The format is not teacher/student, but rather host/guest.

Thank you for saying yes to being on the Alpha team. There are so many benefits to volunteering on Alpha. You'll have an opportunity to make new friends, serve your community, learn or develop a new skill, grow in your own faith and ultimately, make a difference in someone's life.

## What Do Hosts and Helpers Do?

Simply put, hosts are the ones who facilitate the small group discussion. Helpers are there to help the host and the guests with anything that might make the group experience even better. Helpers mostly stay quiet. They listen and pray silently as the discussion is unfolding.

## For the Alpha Youth Series:

Small Group discussion is included throughout each episode. There are 3 pause prompts with questions for you to discuss with your group. Take about 5-10 minutes and if you want more time to chat, there are additional questions in the Discussion Guide to go through afterwards.

### From Good to Great

Show guests that they're important by being 100% committed and consistent. Show genuine care for them by remembering their names and asking how their week is going. Remember, Alpha isn't about 'information transfer' it's about friendship and conversation.

## KEEP THE CONVERSATION ALIVE

SHARE THESE GUIDELINES WITH YOUR SMALL GROUP

- You don't have to talk if you don't want to, but we'd love to hear everyone's thoughts.
- Any question or comment is welcome (just be brief and respectful).
- Respect each other by listening and allowing different opinions.
- Keep things confidential when you leave this group.

# SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

## TIPS FOR FACILITATING DISCUSSION

Use the Discussion Questions in the Team Guide that are provided but don't feel like you have to get through all of them. The questions are simply suggestions to help you spark key conversations. Be open to questions that guests have on their own. It will take practice to keep the conversation balanced. Watch for people who tend to dominate and engage those who seem disengaged or shy.

When guests ask a question, ask the rest of the group what they think or feel about it. If you answer all the questions, there will be no discussion and your answer will be viewed as 'the final answer'. We want to encourage honest conversation.



## CONVERSATION TIPS

### Questions

- Yes, good question! What do the rest of you think?
- Can you explain a bit more, or give an example?
- Are you wondering if... (clarify, rephrase)
- Has anyone else felt that way too?
- And how does that make you feel?
- Can you share with us how that question came up for you?

### Affirmations

- Thank you for sharing that.
- I appreciate your honesty. Tell us more.
- Yes, I can relate to that too!
- It's ok to take a minute and think about it. That's what we're here for. No rush.
- It's ok to have different opinions and disagree. Discussion helps us learn other viewpoints.
- I'm glad you're here!
- I can see why you would feel that way!



# PRAYER ON ALPHA

Here are 4 places we talk about prayer on Alpha:

---

## 1

### Prayer during the first few sessions

Depending on what Alpha series you are watching, there may be a short prayer led by one of the presenters at the end of the talk. This is intended to give guests a chance to pray along silently if they want to.

.....

## 2

### Session 5 is all about prayer

Small groups are encouraged to discuss the topic and then try praying together at the end. Group hosts might simply say a short prayer or give guests an opportunity to pray out loud. In the following weeks hosts can choose to end all small group sessions with prayer.

**Note:** On Alpha we recommend that you do NOT pray before meals or during small group time until Week 5. This allows the topic of prayer to be introduced thoughtfully and discussed thoroughly in small groups.

.....

## 3

### Praying for others on the Alpha Weekend/Day

The Alpha Weekend is usually scheduled about halfway through your Alpha. It's a chance to get away from the

Prayer is an essential part of the Alpha guest experience and it's introduced gradually to guests through four specific moments.

busyness of our lives, where people can take time to relax, think, have fun together, learn more about God, and if they're willing, to experience prayer ministry.

The Alpha talks on the weekend are primarily about the Holy Spirit - who, why, how the Spirit helps us stay focused on Jesus and in relationship with Him. After the last session, there's time for guests to pray and be prayed for by a host or helper. We want to give them an opportunity to experience God's love through the Holy Spirit.

*There is also a Team Training video about Prayer Ministry to watch with your whole team.*

.....

## 4

### Prayer and healing

After the Alpha talk about healing, we encourage small groups to discuss the topic and pray for healing. It's often in those prayer times that God surprises us by what he does in people's hearts and in their bodies. Praying for others can be a bit nerve-wracking but if we have even mustard-seed faith, God will show up. God loves to reveal Himself to those who sincerely seek Him. (Hebrews 11:6)

.....

# PRAYING FOR OTHERS

The word ministry, simply put, means service. So when we talk about prayer ministry, we are talking about serving people through prayer. As a team member, make sure you watch the Team Training video on Prayer Ministry.

After the talk about being filled with the Holy Spirit, groups are encouraged to wait on God, and ask Him to fill them with His Holy Spirit. Since all groups and contexts are unique, there isn't a perfect formula or exact model to do this, but **here are three helpful tips for you:**

**1**

**Invite them into a relationship with Jesus**

Outline what will happen in the next while so they know what to expect. Tell them that you'll watch the Alpha talk, and instead of discussion time, you'll have a time of prayer. Explain that being filled with the Holy Spirit is a gift from God for His followers and then, before a time of prayer, invite people to start a relationship with God. Make sure they know it's optional. Pray a simple prayer of commitment and allow time for them to give their lives to Jesus.

.....

**2**

**Wait on God**

Start with a prayer for everyone in the room, and invite guests to pray on their own. A simple prayer you could pray is, "Come, Holy Spirit and fill our hearts" or something similar. Then just wait on God - and this can be the hard part. Wait for minutes, not just a few seconds. It's amazing how long a minute of silence actually feels - and as you're waiting, encourage guests to be open to what God might want to do and to be patient.

**Note:** Some groups want to have music playing in the background during prayer time, others prefer to have silence. The important thing is that people would be able to focus on God and not get distracted. You might want to encourage people to stand in silence and hold their hands out as if they're about to receive a gift.

.....

**3**

**Invite hosts & helpers to pray for guests**

After some time waiting on God, invite your Alpha hosts and helpers to begin praying with people from their small group. Before you do this, explain to the group what will happen - that hosts and helpers will come around and ask them if they would like prayer, and tell them they can just say 'no thanks' if they prefer not to be prayed for.

Prayer time can take anywhere from 15 minutes to over an hour. After a while, as hosts and helpers are praying for guests, it's great to have someone lead in songs of worship.

This time of prayer ministry takes a bit of preparation, but it is amazing to see all the things God will do. All of this is shaped by a confidence in God and His desire to pour His love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

.....