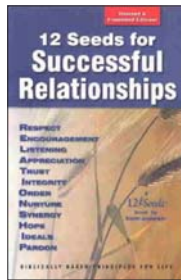




Leader-Mentor Guide

for 12 Seeds Classes, Discussions and Mentoring

ver. 4.0



For use with the manual,
12 Seeds for Successful Relationships,
 BIBLICALLY BASED PRINCIPLES FOR LIFE
 Revised & Expanded Edition
 ISBN 0-9753844-0-6
www.12seeds.com

©2006 12 Seeds International, Inc.
 Permission is granted to make copies of any pages in this
 guide, for use in 12 Seeds training

Contents

A few ways to prepare yourself as a Leader or Mentor 2
 A suggested agenda for your first 12 Seeds session 3
 A suggested agenda for ongoing 12 Seeds sessions 4
 Suggested 12 Seeds “Training Tracks”– different ways to study the seeds 5

Preliminary Notes:

1. This guide expands upon the suggestions given on page 125 in the *12 Seeds* manual.
2. Expect a lot of participation in a 12 Seeds class or discussion. Remember that most people have never studied all 12 principles. You may find participants having various “Aha” realizations as they come to understand more about the dynamics of a growing relationship with the Lord and with one another.
3. A 12 Seeds class or discussion can be an exciting adventure together. Besides being an adventure, ***learning and practicing Biblically based principles is also one of the most rewarding investments a person can make!***

As a 12 Seeds Leader or Mentor . . .

. . . you’re helping people grow in ways that will profoundly affect them,
 and the people around them, for the rest of their lives!

We commend you!

Watch for additional training ideas, tools and updates at: www.12seeds.com

A few ways to prepare yourself as a Leader or Mentor:

- 1. Pray** – Thank the Lord for your relationship with Him, and with others. Thank Him for the privilege of helping others to better understand and practice vital principles that will positively impact them – and everyone around them – all through life. Ask the Lord to be present in your preparation and in your class or discussion.
- 2. Skim through the rest of this guide**, to get familiar with various ways to proceed with your group study.
- 3. Read Part II in the 12 Seeds manual**, to get acquainted with some of the foundational concepts presented in each of the “seed chapters” in Part I. You’ll be more motivated and you’ll have a better grasp of the importance of the seeds.
- 4. Read through the chapter you’ll be discussing** – highlight the sections in the text that you want to be sure are brought out during the class or discussion.
- 5. Remember that you do not need to know all the answers.** Your role is to help participants discover practical insights and applications for themselves. Encourage people to reflect on their own relationships and share their own experiences. Often the comments made by participants are some of the most meaningful parts of a class or discussion. A principle of guided discussion is that the corporate knowledge of the group is always greater than the knowledge of the person leading the group. Seek to keep each person involved.
- 6. Keep in mind that you don’t have to cover all the material** in each chapter. Sometimes the insights and experiences shared by participants will be so numerous and meaningful that much of your time together will be in such sharing. That can be a blessing for all if you keep the sharing relevant. Try to bring out most of the points you’ve previously noted during your preparation time (#3, above). When you aren’t able to cover all the material in your time together, encourage participants to discuss the material later and also to reflect on it during personal quiet time or study time.

“Often the comments made by participants are some of the most meaningful parts of a class or discussion.”

NOTE: A frequent comment from groups studying the 12 Seeds is that there’s far too much discussion to fully cover one seed in a typical one-hour session (in which there’s often only 30-40 minutes of actual study time). If you wish to cover one chapter per session, you’ll have to keep the discussion moving. And again, encourage people to discuss the material together after the class or in personal study or quiet time during the week.

- 7. Memorize the 12 Seeds Acrostic** (optional, but recommended) – if you’re able to recite the acrostic to your group, it will emphasize the importance of the seeds and will demonstrate that you think the principles are worth remembering.
- 8. Select a “Training Track.”** See page 5 of this guide for suggested tracks.
- 9. Consider using various tools** available at no charge in the “Free Tools” area of the 12 Seeds website. These tools include the “Personal Study Guide.”

Suggested Agenda for your first 12 Seeds group session

At the start of your first 12 Seeds class or discussion session, you may want to do some or all of the following:

1. Open with prayer.

A suggested prayer:

“Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for relationships. Thank You for our relationship with You, and for our relationships with one another. Please guide us into a better understanding and application of Your principles for relationships, so that we may please You and be a blessing to other people. In Your Name, Amen.”

2. Ask a few questions to prime the discussion.

Suggested questions:

“Why are relationships so important in our lives?”

“Do blessings come via good relationships? Name some of those blessings.”

“What are some of the qualities that contribute to good relationships?”

3. Make a statement of purpose and objectives.

A suggested statement:

“The purpose of this discussion series (or class) is to study together twelve Biblically based principles that contribute to excellent relationships in every area of life. In our society today, most everyone agrees that relationships are of the highest importance, yet few people ever actually study the Biblically based principles for good relationships. We’ll be studying those principles and discovering together how to better apply them in our daily lives.”

4. (optional) Recite the 12 Seeds acrostic from memory. As noted earlier, this demonstrates to participants that these principles are important to you.

You may want to start reciting the 12 Seeds acrostic in this way:

“The 12 principles we’ll be studying are Respect, Encouragement, Listening . . .”

5. (optional) Use the “Introductory Worksheet” and/or the “Test Your Knowledge” quiz.¹

6. Distribute 12 Seeds manuals – if people don’t already have them.

7. (optional) Pass out the 12 Seeds Study Guide¹ and explain its use.

8. Read the Introduction to the book together and discuss highlights. Or, to save time, briefly point out the things you’ve highlighted there during your prep time.

9. Then, go into the first chapter to be discussed. On the next page of this guide there’s a suggested agenda for a typical session. How you proceed will depend upon which of the various “Training Tracks” (see page 5 of this guide) you plan to follow.

¹These items are found on the “Free Tools” area of the 12 Seeds website.

A suggested agenda for ongoing 12 Seeds group sessions

1. **Open in prayer.** There are suggested prayers in the Practical Applications section of each seed chapter. You may want to ask for a volunteer to open in prayer.
2. **Review** the 12 Seeds RELATIONSHIP acrostic – perhaps recite it together. Also, review the material studied in the previous session. Ask for any added insights since last session, such as any experiences in practicing a seed or in seeing it practiced.
3. **Announce the new seed (or chapter) to be studied** in this session. If studying a seed, give the “working definition” for the seed, printed below the name of the seed at the start of the chapter. Ex: For “Respect,” it’s “regard, esteem, honor.”
4. **Ask for a volunteer to read the theme verse** for the seed.
5. **Ask for someone to read the first section** of the chapter aloud. Discuss briefly. Ask good questions to stimulate discussion and draw out insights and applications from the group. Some suggested questions:
 - “Any comments on that?” “What does this mean to you?” “Have you found this to be true in your life?” “Have you ever had an experience like that? Tell us about it.”
 For additional ideas, refer to the material about “Discussion” on pages 100 and 101 of the manual.
6. **Continue through the chapter**, rotating the reading of the text among different people. Discuss each section briefly. Encourage participants to highlight material that is especially meaningful to them, and to also make notes in the margins.
7. **In the Practical Applications section of each “seed chapter,”** ask for volunteers to lead in one or more of the suggested prayers. Then, ask different people to look up the suggested Scriptures.

You may want to use one of these ways to proceed:

 - 1) Ask each person to read their passage aloud, in succession. This gives an overall context for the Scripture references relating to the seed. Then, ask the first reader to reread their verse. Discuss briefly. Continue through the rest of the verses in a similar way; OR:
 - 2) Ask the person with the first Scripture passage to read it aloud. Discuss briefly. Then ask the person with the next passage to read it aloud. Discuss briefly. Continue through all the passages.

Next, discuss the suggested **thoughts, words and actions**. You could have one person read all the listed thoughts and attitudes. Then discuss as a group briefly, sharing personal experiences, insights and applications. Do the same with “Words” and “Actions.”

Then, discuss the suggested **discussion** questions. You may have already covered some of these as you went through the chapter. In that case, reinforce the point and move on to the next question.

Remind people that the Practical Applications are there to provide:

 - 1) examples
 - 2) added material for study/reflection
 - 3) a “menu” of specific suggestions

See note on the bottom of p. 16 in the *12 Seeds* manual for more about this.
8. **Close in prayer.** Again, you may want to ask for a volunteer.

Suggested 12 Seeds “Training Tracks”

There are a variety of ways to study the *12 Seeds*. You may want to have your group vote on a track they prefer. Or, design your own track. *Some suggestions:*

Track 1: Sequential – Start at front of the *12 Seeds* manual and go through all the chapters in order. Participants will gain new insights about each seed and about how to better practice them in their lives. They may also discover which seed or seeds they most need to work on.

Track 2: Foundational – Start with Part II in the manual, to learn some of the foundational concepts presented there before studying the “seed chapters” in Part I. In Part II, participants will learn some basics about seeds, about the weeds that challenge the seeds, about ways to plant and cultivate the seeds and about the harvest. After studying Part II, go into Part I and study the “seed chapters.” Later, study Part III.

Track 3: Use the “Grow One” method to focus on one seed – This track can be used before, during or after either of the tracks above. It can be done as a group or individually. It’s especially useful in mentoring or in any accountability relationship.

As a group: Identify the one seed that, if it grew, would most benefit your group. Guide your group through the “3 Ways to Identify the Seed to Study First,” steps in the box at right. Then, you may want to have a discussion and vote on one seed to focus upon.

Individually: Encourage people to use the “Grow One” method to identify the seed that most needs to grow in their lives. It’s best if you establish accountability for this, either to a partner or to the entire group.

3 Ways to Identify the Seed to Study First

- ▶ **Identify a “Bad Seed”** to overcome: Go to page 93 in the *12 Seeds* manual. Review list of “Bad Seeds.” If you see one that’s in your life, select the corresponding “Good Seed.”
- ▶ **Identify a need** to fill: Go to page 113 in the manual. Find a need you’d like to help fill, select the related seed.
- ▶ **Ask someone** (*only for the brave*): Ask a person close to you to identify a seed you should study. *Thank that person, graciously.*

The idea here is that if each person could start making progress in the one seed they most need to grow, there would be almost immediate benefits for the individual, for others and for the entire group. Plus, as they enjoy the benefits of growing one seed, they’ll be more motivated to tackle other seeds. In group sessions, you may want to ask for volunteers to report on experiences and progress – this will be encouraging to others.

NOTE: The “Grow One” Personal Seedgrowing Guide is a handy tool that can be downloaded from the “Free Tools” area on the *12 Seeds* website.

Imagine if each person made progress in even one seed!

Track 4: Refresher Course – This is the “Ongoing Maintenance” track, similar to a maintenance program in dieting. Use it after completing Tracks 1 or 2, above. One way to follow this track is to devote 5 to 15 minutes in your regular weekly or monthly meetings to study the “Seed of the Month” – in January study Respect; in February study Encouragement, and so on. Briefly review the basics about the seed, then invite people to share new insights and experiences related to the seed. Another way to do “ongoing maintenance” is to conduct periodic workshops or retreats devoted to refreshing the understanding and practice of the seeds.

Since challenges to relationships are continual, it makes sense to refresh the 12 Seeds often.