



Creating Connections-Why Relationships Matter

Session Guide and Review Notes

Creating Connections—Why Relationships Matter

5 min Welcome and Introduction

PowerPoint Presentation: Short (10-15 min.) or Long (30 min.) version

Summary: Creating Connections—Why Relationships Matter

- Positive relationships have a powerful effect on health, well-being, and longevity.
- Data from more than 300,000 people showed that lack of strong relationships increased mortality equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.
PLoS Med. 2010 Jul 27;7(7):Review.
- Whether you are married, live alone, or are part of a family it is important to develop positive social ties.
- Social connectedness is linked to:
 - ✓ Longer, happier lives
 - ✓ Fewer mental and emotional problems
 - ✓ Less depression
 - ✓ Better overall health
- God created us in His own image—with a deep and abiding need to give and share love and friendship as well as receive it.

10 min Discussion Time 1: What are your thoughts?

- ✓ Positive connections don't happen automatically. How do you create or take advantage of opportunities to connect?
- ✓ How do relationships mature us? Create opportunities for growth?

5 min Discussion Time 2: What is your story?

- ✓ You or someone in the group may have a “delivered story” that pertains to the session topic. Take a few minutes for you or a guest to share.

5 min Freedom Journey: Present the following thoughts for reflection prior to next discussion periods to encourage positive discussion for change.

- **Reflect:** Just “showing up” at social functions increases likeability. The more we see each other, listen and interact, the more we connect.
- **Recalculate:** Expecting one person to meet all your needs or you to meet theirs is unrealistic and leads to disappointment.
- **Reframe:** Entering a friendship means accepting the whole person. Commit to learn and grow together. Set healthy personal boundaries.
- **Remember:** God is relational and invites you to be part of His family. “Those who are without friends, God puts in families...He makes Him families like a flock.” Psalm 68:6; 107:41.

10 min Discussion Time 3: What have you learned?

- ✓ What did you hear that deeply moved you?
- ✓ What did you learn that makes you stronger in your resolve?

Lifestyle Links: Lifestyle links for building physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual strength.

Reboot and Rebound: Daily choices build a better brain, body, and habits.

- **Create a Lifestyle:** Create a festive picnic, potluck, or party with healthy foods, and wholesome conversation. Your influence will be uplifting.
- **Create an Environment:** What hobby, class, outdoor activity, or church program have you been considering? Take time to connect.
- **Create Connections:** Spend daily time with God in the Bible, taking time to pray to Him as a Friend. Familiarize yourself with His promises.

10 min Discussion Time 4: What will you do?

- ✓ What is your reason for hope today?
- ✓ Which of the **Lifestyle Links** are your focus right now?
- ✓ What is your first step?

5 min Group Promise, Affirmation, and Prayer to Close Session

Pray and Say: Divine power and daily practice change the brain.

- **Prayer:** “Dear God, thank you that by your power and strength, I am Living Free!”
- **Promise:** “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13.
- **Affirmation:** “Thank you God for my freedom journey to better physical, mental, and spiritual health!”
- **Encourage** participants to review their handout.
- **Close** with prayer.

Handout: Balanced Living Tract: Creating Connections—Why Relationships Matter