

MEETING GUIDE - RETREAT

A Sample Timeline and Discussion Guide

Retreat Objectives

"Jump start" the year with an extended time of sharing and building relationships

A time of refreshing for each of the women

A time to connect with God and each other on a deeper level

A time to have fun!

FRIDAY NIGHT:

6:00 Dinner with discussion of Personal Ministry Plan, part 1

7:30 Group time – Testimonies

10:00 Dismiss

SATURDAY MORNING:

8:00 Breakfast

8:45 Break

9:00 Individual time with the Lord

10:45 Break

11:00 Group time – Sharing from time with the Lord

SATURDAY AFTERNOON:

12:00 Prepare Lunch

12:30 Lunch

1:30 Free time

SATURDAY EVENING:

5:00 Prepare Dinner

6:00 Dinner

7:00 Group time – Session material covered

10:00 Dismiss

SUNDAY MORNING:

8:30 Group prayer time and devotional

9:00 Breakfast and affirmation

10:30 Clean-up

11:30 Head home

Retreat Discussion Guide

Please have the freedom to make this retreat, and how you spend time together, your own. Be yourself and have fun! Remember how great it was to get away from responsibilities at home when you were their age?!

FRIDAY EVENING

6:00 Dinner

Meal times are a great time to get to know each other. To encourage table talk, ask the women about their answers to Part 1 of the Personal Ministry Plan, "Gifts, Talents and Wiring" during the meal time.

7:30 Group Time – Testimonies

During this time you will have each woman share her story. As you get started, emphasize the importance of confidentiality within the group.

You'll want to limit the time you've allotted for each one to tell her story to about 15 to 20 minutes. The reason you want to have a time limit is to keep from getting in a situation where someone rambles and goes so long that women get restless and your time gets eaten up without everyone having a chance to share their story.

It's a good idea to use a timer—you can handle this or let another woman in the group watch the time. Set the timer for 1 or 2 minutes shorter than the total length in order to give them notice they need to be wrapping up.

After someone shares her story, ask if anyone else in the group has any questions for her. This will give time for a little interaction among the women. Have another mentee thank God for how He has worked in this woman's life.

End your time praying together. A suggestion would be for 2 or 3 women to ask His blessing on the weekend.

If you end early, enjoy spending time together talking, playing games—or going to bed early—whichever best suits your group. Remember: you're here for them so be attentive to their wants and needs and consider this a weekend of service and love.

SATURDAY MORNING

8:00 Breakfast

8:45 Break

To prepare for the morning have everyone get her Bible and notebook. You gather your materials: Bible, notebook, Search My Heart handout and anything else you think you'll need.

9:00 Individual time with the Lord

Give each woman a copy of the handout labeled Search My Heart. Ask them to find a quiet place and scan the 13 attributes of God for 10 minutes – circle the ones to come back to. Then have them focus on 3 – 5 questions. Spend the rest of the time reading the verses and responding to the questions. Have them journal what God says to them.

10:45 Break

Time to stretch, walk around, go to the bathroom, and organize thoughts in prep for group time and sharing. This will also give others time to finish up if they need a few more minutes.

11:00 Group time – Sharing from time with the Lord

Reconvene and have each woman share from her time with the Lord. Don't feel rushed. This could be a significant time for the women to express where they are in their lives, and for you and the other women to encourage them. Make this a time of discussion and interaction.

This is a great time for you to share with your mentees about things you have learned as you've grown in your relationship with the Lord in the area of listening to the Lord. This time can also be used to finish up faith stories not shared the night before. Close this time with prayer. This should be open-ended as well. Some women may want to pray for another woman in the group based upon what has been shared.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

12:00 Prepare Lunch

12:30 Lunch

1:30 Free time

Though it is “free time” this can be a very significant time for your group. The women will have shared their stories the night before and spent significant time with the Lord during the morning. Therefore, use this time to “be together” and as a mentor, you’ll want to interact with each woman individually, as well as with the group as a whole.

It’s fun if the weather permits to go outside for some activity, depending upon where the retreat is held. Going out for a hike or just a walk around the area fuels conversation naturally. It’s advisable to stay away from stores so those who don’t enjoy shopping, or don’t have the money to shop, won’t feel left out.

SATURDAY EVENING

5:00 Prepare Dinner

6:00 Dinner

7:00 Group Time – Session material covered

Use your timeline for the session you are currently on.

SUNDAY MORNING

8:30 Group prayer time and devotional

Have one or two of the girls share a verse or short devotional with the group. Spend time praying as a group, opening with adoration to our Lord.

9:00 Breakfast and affirmation

As the women finish eating, have an affirmation and appreciation time. Take time to focus on each woman and let everyone share some encouraging word, appreciation, or affirmation about her.

When all have been encouraged, spend some time praying and thanking the Lord for all He has done over the weekend.

10:30 Clean-up

11:30 Head for home