



# DEBRIEFING YOUR TRIP AND SHARING YOUR STORY

**SUMMER 2014**

Taking time to debrief the mission trip with your students will increase the value of their experience and help to stretch what they learned beyond the one-week trip. We want to help you make the most of your experience before, during and after the trip. The following are a few ways you, as the Trip Leader, can put just a little more intentionality around what happens after your trip.

## **FACILITATOR**

### ***Preparation for this meeting:***

- ✧ In addition to this document, review the “Continuing the Journey” resource and prepare to lead your group through the evening.
- ✧ Select or ask 5 volunteers to share their 2-Minute Story with one picture from their trip. Plan for how you will project the picture for your whole group to see.
- ✧ Choose and prepare small-group facilitators (enough for small groups of about five participants each). See the notes for these leaders provided in this packet.
- ✧ Select a worship leader and songs for the evening.
- ✧ Make a few posters with the heading “Continuing the Journey” and get Post-it notes and pencils for the “What’s Next” activity.
- ✧ Create a slideshow from group pictures.

## **STUDENTS and LEADERS**

### ***Ways your participants should prepare for this session:***

- ✧ Complete the “Share Your Story” questions provided (pages 3–4 of this document).
- ✧ Read the copy of Reverb Magazine they each received at the end of the week.
- ✧ Prepare the 2-Minute Story provided below.
- ✧ If selected, provide one picture to show while they share their 2-Minute Story.
- ✧ Email pictures to you (or whoever is making the slideshow).

## EXAMPLE SCHEDULE

### WELCOME (15 MINUTES)

- There's a reason this is first Thank the group for coming and share the purposes for the evening: to unpack the mission trip (what the trip was all about) and to talk about ways to continue the journey we have started back at home (what's next for our group).
- 2-Minute Stories (15 minutes)
  - 5 participants share their 2-Minute Story with one picture representative of the trip projected as they do.

### SMALL GROUP DEBRIEFING – WHAT HAPPENED (35 MINUTES)

Small Group Debriefing in groups of about five participants plus a facilitator designed to get the group talking about their mission trip experience.

- See Facilitator Notes (Page 5) for tips on leading small groups and discussion questions.
- Give the Small Group Discussion Format (Page 6) to each of your facilitators. It will help them guide their small group time.

### WORSHIP (13–18 MINUTES)

- Sing two favorite songs from the mission trip as a group.
- Introduce the idea of continuing what was learned. During the third song, give participants the chance to reflect and write on Post-it notes their ideas of how God is moving in and around us and how we can be a part of that movement or create movement right here in our own community. How can we “Continue the Journey”? Is it serving people at church? Or maybe assisting a community organization that already is up and running but needs some extra energy and encouragement? Remember what your group talked about during the YW week in Church Group Time or on the van ride home and build off that.
- Play 1–2 reflective song(s) in the background while the group is writing and posting their ideas.

### DISCUSSION (15–20 MINUTES)

Hold a large-group brainstorming session to envision what's next for your group. Review some of the ideas/thoughts they wrote on the Post-it notes. Keep your eye out for students that are ready to help and be activators with the rest of the group. Also, think strategically about how you can incorporate future conversations based on how this one goes.

- Where do you see a movement in our own community that we could be a part of?  
*This might be a great question to tie in Reverb Magazine content about how to start a movement.*
- How can we do justice in our church, school or community?
- How did Jesus set an example for us in love, service and humility? In what ways will you practice these things now that you are home?
- How do we keep sharing our stories?

### CLOSING/SLIDESHOW (10 MINUTES)

# SHARE YOUR STORY

## PREPARING YOUR STORY

Although your weeklong mission trip is over, God is still moving in and through you! Think about how this experience has changed you.

How has it changed...

...your understanding of God?

...your understanding of yourself and how God sees you?

...your view of the world?

What have you learned about serving?

What have you learned about following Jesus?

## REMEMBER YOUR STORY

What are a few small things you can do to keep fresh in your mind what you've learned during your trip?

**The 2-Minute Story:** Often you will be asked to share about your mission experience at youth group, a family gathering, at the lunch table or even in a class. While people are genuinely interested in what you have to say, these are not usually the people who want to hear the play-by-play of what you experienced, who you encountered, or how you were changed. Challenge yourself to come up with a 2-minute description of your trip. Share one meaningful story and what God taught you through that story instead of rushing through all the details of the week. You might determine what you want to include in your 2-minute story by asking the following questions:

1. What did you learn from people in the community?
2. Whom/what do you specifically want to pray for after you return home?
3. What did you learn about yourself this week?
4. What new things did you learn about God?
5. How are you a different person now compared to when you first signed up for this mission trip?
6. How do you want your youth group to be involved in service at home?
7. When you think of your mission trip, what is one "snapshot" that comes to mind?

# SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

## FACILITATOR NOTES

We recommend small groups of 5 or so, plus a facilitator who may or may not have been on the trip. Each facilitator will meet for about 30 minutes with their small group, using the following information as their guide.

1. **Your role: to ask questions and listen.** You need not be an expert in short-term missions, mission leadership or any particular cultural group. You simply need to ask and listen.
2. **Use the Small-Group Discussion Format provided as a guide.**
3. **Follow the conversation's flow.** Listen to what comes up in discussion and ask basic follow-up question...

Some questions to help go deeper:

- What do you think about that?
- How did that affect you?
- What did you notice about that?
- How are you dealing with that now?

Some questions to shift gears to a new topic or invite other students into the discussion:

- What did you sense God doing in you?
- Tell me about a memory that will stay with you for a while.
- What stood out to you about \_\_\_\_\_?

#### 4. **Pay attention to who is talking.**

- Manage talkative students. They can be helpful, but they can also dominate the conversation.
- Draw out quieter students, if possible. Ask them direct questions.
  - You may have a student who is closed off (not just quiet) and doesn't want to participate in the discussion. Since this is such a short time, you probably won't be able to help them let their guard down. Be sure to let the youth leader know if you think they need to follow up.

## SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION FORMAT

### Team Processing (10 minutes)

- Introduce yourself and what you do (if participants don't know you).
- Small Group Introductions – Name and favorite YouthWorks Meal
- How did it go with your group (meaning your church group)?
  1. What did you most appreciate about your group?
  2. What did you find most difficult about your group?
  3. What did you learn about yourself from your group?
  4. What will you really miss about your group being together in [site name]?

### Ministry Reflections (10 minutes)

- What did you learn about ministry?
  1. What/who made the biggest impact on you?
  2. What surprised you about ministry in [site name]?
  3. What thought(s) or question(s) have stuck with you since you've been back?
  4. How do you think God will use this trip to shape your future (where you live, where you spend your money and on what, how you treat people, your career)?

### Coming Home Reflections (10 minutes)

- How was your first (week or however long it has been) back home?
  1. What have you enjoyed the most?
  2. What things have most gotten on your nerves?
  3. What do you anticipate others' responses will be to changes in you?
  4. How are you personally going to continue on this journey?
  5. Who can you look to for support at home?

### Close in prayer for the group.