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DIVORCECARE PARTICIPANT GUIDE
(included in the back of this book)
DIVORCECARE COACHES – FREE ACCESS!

Have questions or concerns? Our DivorceCare coaches have worked with thousands of leaders like you to successfully launch DivorceCare ministries. They’ll give you support, encouragement, and answers as you start and run your group. They’ve been where you are and would love to help. Reach a coach by phone at 800-489-7778, email info@divorcecare.org, or schedule an appointment at divorcecare.org/leaderzone/appointment. It’s always free to talk with a coach.
YOUR FIRST 3 STEPS

1 - JOIN OR LOG IN TO THE LEADERZONE
Visit divorcecare.org/leaderzone. If it’s your first time, follow the instructions to sign up for an account and join the LeaderZone.

2 - COMPLETE THE ONLINE TRAINING
The online training is found on the LeaderZone. You’ll learn what DivorceCare is, how it works, how to set it up at your church, how to find people to help you, and key skills for running a group. Each person on your ministry team should complete this training.

3 - REVIEW YOUR LEADER’S GUIDE
With its weekly agendas, discussion questions, and participant workbook (inserted in the back), you’ll use this book during each group meeting. Plus you’ll find short, helpful articles that will prepare you and your team to have a positive impact on participants.

HOW DIVORCECARE WORKS

3-PART DESIGN
Your weekly DivorceCare program has three components, which work together to help group members get (and stay!) on the path of growth and recovery. When group members are committed to all three parts, they experience the deepest levels of peace and healing possible through DivorceCare.

Video seminar
At each session you’ll show a 30-minute video with insights from Christian counselors, pastors, and teachers, as well as personal stories of people who’ve found healing after divorce. Encourage group members to take notes using the video outlines in their participant guide. Be sure to model note-taking during the video and refer to your notes during the discussion time.
Small-group discussion

After the video, it’s time for group members to share their reactions to the video and talk about what they learned. Use the questions found in the session agendas (pp. 9–35) to facilitate discussion. Group members will also share updates on their trials and experiences from the past week. If your group is larger than eight, consider breaking into two groups for the discussion time to give everyone a chance to share.

Participant guide

Encourage participants to do the exercises and read the brief articles in their participant guide between meetings. The questions and activities are designed to move them through the healing process. During the weekly meeting, you’ll spend time talking about what participants learned from their exercises (see the session agendas, pp. 9–35).

WHAT EVERY LEADER NEEDS TO KNOW

Leading a successful DivorceCare group is something you can look forward to. These key points will set you up for success:

You need to be trained

The online training is easy, convenient, and thorough. You and your volunteers should complete the training to understand the basics of DivorceCare and how to run a group at your church.

In the training, you’ll progress through a series of short, 2- to 5-minute videos and articles. You can start and stop the training at any time and pick up where you left off. Plus, you can train anywhere you can get online—on a phone, tablet, or computer.

You can also direct your volunteers to sections in the training that address their area of responsibility. For instance, the people handling refreshments and child care will find the hospitality section helpful. Your publicity volunteers will want to review the section on how to promote DivorceCare. Those facilitating a discussion will find the group discussion modules to be helpful.

Don’t lead alone

DivorceCare isn’t a solo sport. Just as the members need support, so do the leaders. Don’t try to do it alone. Recruit others to help you. Why?

- **You need a backup**: It’s always good to have backup. If someone is sick or running late, another leader can step in to avoid cancellations. As Ecclesiastes 4:9–10a says, “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.”

- **You’ll avoid burnout**: When one person tries to do everything, the heavy load leads to burnout. Working with DivorceCare can be emotionally challenging, so lighten the burden by sharing responsibilities, from administrative tasks to emotional support. In the Bible, Moses’ father-in-law wisely advised him to share his responsibilities: “What you are doing is not good. You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone” (Exodus 18:17b–18).

- **You’ll cover your bases**: It’s best to have a team to cover all the bases. Having both male and female team members makes it easier and safer to come alongside and support group members of each gender. Having multiple volunteers allows you to designate tasks such as promotion, refreshments, greeting, and facilitating the discussion time.

Remember, if you need guidance on building your team, our DivorceCare coaches are available to help you. You can also find resources at the DivorceCare LeaderZone.
The importance of self-care in ministry

As you care for others in your DivorceCare group, it’s important to take care of yourself too. This not only keeps you healthy, but also lets you better serve the people in your group.

To help keep your experience positive, fulfilling, and something you look forward to each week, we’ve prepared a “LeaderCare” section for you online.

Visit the LeaderCare section of the LeaderZone to see videos featuring DivorceCare experts and leaders who explain how to grow spiritually, deal with conflict, manage stress, and wisely handle dating and new relationships. Come back anytime you need some refreshing!

Healing takes time

As you lead DivorceCare, keep in mind that this 13-week program won’t be an instant fix, as people process circumstances and new ideas at different rates. Expect ups and downs and zigs and zags as people progress. And remain patient, because these stops and starts are normal.

Our DivorceCare leaders frequently share stories of transformations that occur in group members, but these usually don’t happen the first week. And, as you know, it typically takes longer than 13 weeks to heal.

It’s common for people to go through the group two or three times. Let members know they are welcome to do this! Many churches offer their 13-week cycle two to three times yearly to keep this support system constantly available.

“People come in hurt and broken. Through the process of DivorceCare, each week they gain a little bit more hope, a little bit more healing.” – Becky, DivorceCare leader
TOOLS TO MAKE YOUR LIFE EASIER

We've created free, powerful online tools that make it easy for you to promote your group, train your team, give your participants free bonus content, offer online groups, and much more. Here's a short description of each of the tools.

LEADERZONE – divorcecare.org/leaderzone

You'll find the tools you need to run your group.

**Online leader training**

Training your ministry team is easy with these online videos, and it's a must for ensuring a successful ministry. Have all your DivorceCare volunteers complete the online training as soon as possible.

**Free online Find a Group search engine listing**

People will discover your group when they use the Find a Group search engine at divorcecare.org. You'll want to make sure your group is listed and the information is current! Do this at divorcecare.org/leaderzone/my.

This listing is important for two added reasons:

1. It gives your group members the potential to access the MyDivorceCare bonus content.
2. It allows you to take advantage of online participant registration options.

**Online participant registration**

Once your group is listed on the DivorceCare website (see above), here's what happens:

- People searching for groups online can find and register for your group.
- You can also send an invitation from the LeaderZone to everyone who plans to come to your group or who shows interest. They'll follow a link to register for your group.
- When people register online for your group, they'll gain access to the free bonus content at MyDivorceCare. Registering online is the only way they can access the exclusive DivorceCare participant content.
- Group members can purchase a single copy of the participant guide online for shipment directly to their homes.
- People can register for your group anytime before or during your group's life cycle.

**Keep in mind:** All online group registration will be pending your approval. You'll need to approve group registrations for those participants to have access to the bonus content.

**MyDivorceCare – Free online resources for your participants**

MyDivorceCare (divorcecare.org/my) is filled with free and exclusive bonus content for group participants. They'll have access to:

- **Helpful videos:** Bonus clips from the experts and others featured in the session videos. Popular clips from previous versions of DivorceCare.
• **Daily encouraging emails:** They can sign up for One Day at a Time email messages for daily strength and help.

• **Single & Parenting:** A free online self-study course to help single parents with the common challenges they face.

• **Articles:** Information on topics relevant to people experiencing separation or divorce.

Again, registering for your group online is the only way for participants to gain access to the free online resources at MyDivorceCare. Remind them to do this!

**Promo materials**
Promote your DivorceCare group with free, ready-made promo videos, social media ads, newspaper ads, and bulletin inserts.

**Forms and articles**
Save time by using the forms, checklists, and email templates to help with the logistics of running a group. Find helpful articles in the LeaderZone Library on how to lead DivorceCare.

**Leaders’ forum**
Connect with other DivorceCare leaders, team members, and coaches. Ask questions. Share concerns. Get support and tips!

**Online video access**
You’re no longer limited to watching the videos on DVD! Your DivorceCare kit includes access to the 13 video sessions online. With the online videos, you can:

• **Preview the weekly video before each session.** Watch anytime, anywhere, on your phone, tablet, or other electronic device.

• **Allow participants to watch the videos ahead of time.** This will allow more time for discussion during your meeting.

• **Let your group members catch up on missed sessions.** They can watch at their convenience and won’t miss important insights from the videos.

• **Give participants the option of seeing the videos again.** They can review helpful sections and go back to stories they’d like to hear again. And you can too!

• **Host an online group.** People who can’t get to an in-person group will still receive needed help. Online groups open up the opportunity for people to attend who are out of town.

**Interested in offering an online group?**
For more information on hosting an online group, visit the LeaderZone for articles, videos, and webinars with easy, step-by-step instructions and tips. Or feel free to call a coach!
PROMOTING YOUR GROUP IS KEY

Each year, over a half million people search the DivorceCare website looking for groups. And that number continues to grow. People in your church and community are looking for help! That’s why it’s important to promote your group.

Here’s where to start:

1. Review the online training module on promotion.
2. Check out the free promo tools on the LeaderZone, divorcecare.org/leaderzone/promotion.

What’s available? Promo videos to show during church announcements, post on social media, and put on your church website. Flyers to print and distribute in your church and throughout your community. Newspaper ads and emails to send to local papers; online community event listings; and doctors, attorneys, and social services offices.

Consider having a volunteer in charge of promoting your group!
SURVIVING THE HOLIDAYS
INCLUDED IN YOUR DIVORCECARE KIT

If you’re hosting a DivorceCare group in the fall, we encourage you to plan a 14th group meeting (sometime before Thanksgiving or Christmas) to show the Surviving the Holidays video, which is included in your DivorceCare kit. A participant holiday Survival Guide is also in your kit.

What is Surviving the Holidays?
It’s a 2-hour, stand-alone seminar for people experiencing separation or divorce who are facing the holiday season without their former spouse. It’s filled with practical strategies for dealing with the changes and emotions that come with the season.

“Attendees see things they can do to make their Christmas or Thanksgiving better. They go home with hope and a plan for the holidays.” – Janis, DivorceCare leader

How does it work?
It’s run like a typical DivorceCare meeting. Participants will watch the holiday video, have small-group discussion time, and go home with a holiday Survival Guide—a book filled with practical ideas, encouraging words, and tips for handling tough situations that might come up. A sample Survival Guide is in your kit.

Who should attend?
Invite your DivorceCare group members, as well as other divorced and separated people in your church and community. It’s a great way to ease people into your DivorceCare group who might otherwise hesitate to commit to the 13 weeks.

Can I offer an online group?
You can! It’s just like hosting a DivorceCare online group. Visit the LeaderZone to share the video with people who’ve registered for your event online.

Visit divorcecare.org/leaderzone/holidays to learn how to plan and host a Surviving the Holidays event. Or call a DivorceCare coach at 800-489-7778.
## MEETING Tools

Use these tools to keep your weekly group meetings running smoothly

### VIDEO SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK &amp; TITLE</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>PARTICIPANTS WILL DISCOVER &amp; DISCUSS…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Deep Hurt</strong></td>
<td>27 min.</td>
<td>That overwhelming emotions are normal</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Healthy practices for a successful recovery</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How God can help them recover</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. Road to Recovery</strong></td>
<td>26 min.</td>
<td>Common roadblocks to recovery</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Mile markers” of progress</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Why trusting God is a practical choice</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3. Anger</strong></td>
<td>27 min.</td>
<td>How anger might be helpful</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How anger might be harmful</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How to manage their anger</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4. Grief &amp; Depression</strong></td>
<td>30 min.</td>
<td>What to expect with grief</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>How to know if sadness has turned into depression</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>What to do when guilt complicates things</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>How they can grow through sadness or depression</td>
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<td><strong>5. Loneliness</strong></td>
<td>26 min.</td>
<td>Why loneliness hurts so much</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>What temptations to avoid when lonely</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Healthy ways to overcome loneliness</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6. Fears &amp; Anxiety</strong></td>
<td>25 min.</td>
<td>How to reduce worrying</td>
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<td>How to deal with an immediate threat</td>
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<td>When to consider medication</td>
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<td><strong>7. Family &amp; Friends</strong></td>
<td>27 min.</td>
<td>Emotionally “detaching” from their former spouse</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Whether to include former in-laws in their lives</td>
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<td>How to co-parent</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>How to ease their friends’ discomfort</td>
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<td><strong>8. Financial &amp; Legal Issues</strong></td>
<td>31 min.</td>
<td>How to regain their financial footing</td>
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<td>How to avoid common legal mistakes</td>
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<td>How to think biblically about debt</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>9. Conflict</strong></td>
<td>29 min.</td>
<td>How to plan for difficult conversations</td>
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<td>How to be a good listener</td>
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<td>How to respond well in conflict</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>10. Forgiveness</strong></td>
<td>29 min.</td>
<td>What forgiveness really is and its benefits</td>
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<td>What happens if they don’t forgive</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How to receive God’s forgiveness and salvation</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>11. Your Former Spouse</strong></td>
<td>25 min.</td>
<td>What a civil relationship with their ex might look like</td>
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<td></td>
<td>When a friendship with their ex might be possible</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Considerations before remarrying their former spouse</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>12. Single Living</strong></td>
<td>35 min.</td>
<td>How to rethink life as an unmarried person</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How to trust others again</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What it means to be content</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The purpose and pitfalls of dating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>13. Brighter Days</strong></td>
<td>32 min.</td>
<td>How others are using lessons God taught them through divorce</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How to find hope when difficulties arise</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>How serving others contributes to recovery</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
SESSION AGENDAS & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Use these 13 session agendas to help your participants get the most out of the meetings and keep on schedule. Each agenda includes video discussion questions that will give you ideas to jump-start the small-group discussion time. You don’t need to try and get through each question. Be sensitive to what is on the hearts of group members; at the same time, don’t completely abandon your agenda unless you see a clear benefit in doing so.

Before each group meeting
Your leaders need time to process and absorb the material in order to lead more effectively. To best prepare for small-group discussion, you and your leaders should:

1. View the session video – This will prepare you for topics that group members might bring up. Videos are available online on the LeaderZone to watch at your convenience!

2. Look over the discussion questions – Think about which questions apply to people in your group.

3. Choose the questions – Select the ones that best fit the needs and concerns of your current group members.

Set up a sign-in table
It’s always a good idea to have an easy-to-find sign-in table. Having a sign-in table:

- Helps new attendees know where to go to get started
- Ensures someone from your team will greet new attendees
- Gives you a great place to set up a laptop to allow guests to register online for your group
- Makes it easy to take attendance and give out name tags

Sample schedules
These schedules give an overview of how long each portion of your group meeting should take. Most DivorceCare groups use the two-hour schedule, which is preferred. An alternative 90-minute schedule is also available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2-hour meeting</th>
<th>90-minute meeting*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open the session</td>
<td>10 min.</td>
<td>5 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss On My Own exercises</td>
<td>15 min.</td>
<td>10 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch video</td>
<td>30 min.</td>
<td>30 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss video</td>
<td>60 min.</td>
<td>40 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrap up</td>
<td>5 min.</td>
<td>5 min.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*When offering a 90-minute schedule, breaking into groups of 3–4 will increase each participant’s talk time. You will need a facilitator for each small group, so continue to take steps to add new leaders to your leadership team.

MUST-READ for small-group leaders
See the “Top 5 Tips for Leading Group Discussions” (p. 37).

NEED COPIES?
Download the 13 session agendas from the LeaderZone Library: divorcecare.org/leaderzone
Session 1

DEEP HURT

OVERVIEW

You’ll help participants discover and discuss:
• That overwhelming emotions are normal
• Healthy practices for a successful recovery
• How God can help them recover

Leaders set up and pray:
Volunteers arrive 30–60 minutes before your session begins to set up the room, test the video, and pray. As participants arrive, focus on greeting them with warmth and compassion.

OPEN THE SESSION (10 min.)

Start the session on time. Remind people where restrooms are and to silence cell phones.
• Introduce your leadership team
• Briefly share your experience with divorce
• Briefly describe the DivorceCare program and what to expect each week
  • Video seminar
  • Discussion time
  • Participant guide – Show the main sections and discuss their importance
• Go over group guidelines (p. viii)
• Tell them about MyDivorceCare (divorcecare.org/my) and the free daily emails you can sign up for there
• Have a leader pray

WATCH VIDEO (30 min.)

DISCUSS VIDEO (60 min.)

Remind participants about the group guidelines.

Icebreaker
Icebreakers help group members relax (especially important if you’re leading an online group). Start by having participants give (in two to three sentences) their first name and their situation (separated or divorced). Find sample icebreakers in the LeaderZone Library, divorcecare.org/leaderzone, and write them in your weekly agenda.

EXTRA 15 MINUTES TODAY!
Since you won’t be discussing the previous week’s homework, you could have an extended “Open the session” time.
Leading the discussion
Here are a few things to keep in mind:
- Keep your input to a minimum
- Focus on listening and asking good follow-up questions
- Make sure everyone has the opportunity to share

Video discussion questions
Tip: Don’t ask members to “share their stories”; that will eat up your discussion time. Portions of people’s stories will come out naturally while discussing this week’s topic.

1. In today’s video, which person’s experience with divorce were you able to identify with most? Why?
2. What was your reaction to the idea that rebuilding takes time?
3. We’re all dealing with questions right now. Share one question you’ve been struggling with.
4. What idea or suggestion from the video was the most helpful, interesting, or encouraging to you? How can this be added to your plan for rebuilding your life?

Answers to your group’s toughest questions
Want help with common questions that participants ask? Visit the LeaderZone to be ready with answers: divorcecare.org/leaderzone/ready

WRAP UP (5 min.)

Prayer requests
Close with prayer (a ministry team member should always lead the prayer).

Participant reminders:
- Do the On My Own exercises in the participant guide for next week
- Check out MyDivorceCare (divorcecare.org/my) to access bonus content not found in the weekly videos
- Return for the next session and invite a friend who might be experiencing separation or divorce to attend as well
- Join us for Surviving the Holidays (if applicable) – For fall groups, let participants know when this seminar will be offered

Note: Make sure your group is listed on the DivorceCare public website (do this at divorcecare.org/leaderzone/my), so your group members can access the exclusive participant content at MyDivorceCare.

DID YOU KNOW ...
The key to leading an effective group is talking less! Find more tips on pages 37–38 and in the online training.

QUESTIONS?
We’re here to help. Contact a DivorceCare coach anytime:
800-489-7778 or info@divorcecare.org
Leading YOUR GROUP
Provide the best small-group experience possible for participants and leaders

WHAT TO EXPECT

Your group will likely include a mixture of people who are divorced or separated, and occasionally people who have experienced the breakup of a long-term relationship (typically one that’s lasted five or more years). Many may be nervous about being there that first meeting—especially about the group sharing time. Let them know you understand this and encourage them to stick with the group. It’s important to work on helping each person feel comfortable and accepted. While many will feel better by the end of the first session, others will take two to three sessions to become comfortable with the group process. Encourage them to commit to attending at least three sessions.

By the third or fourth meeting, your group members are getting to know each other and are becoming comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings. As new members join, look for ways to make them feel welcome. One way to do this is to have everyone introduce themselves and share (in two to three sentences) their first name and their situation (separated or divorced). Train your current members to welcome and include new participants who join the group.

Going forward, your group will begin to develop patterns and its own personality. Look for unhealthy patterns (such as group members who dominate conversation), and do your best to keep the group healthy and focused on its purpose. For help, see the articles on pp. 37–40 and the online training modules on leading a group discussion.

GROUP GUIDELINES

It’s important to talk about group guidelines during your first group meeting (and in those that follow, especially as newcomers join). Group members will feel more comfortable knowing there are expectations for people to follow regarding sharing, listening, giving advice, confidentiality, etc. See the DivorceCare participant guide (p. viii) for some recommended group guidelines, which cover:

- Confidentiality
- Listening and sharing
- Acceptable (and unacceptable) behavior
- Giving and receiving advice
- Dating within the group
- And more

You may want to include additional guidelines for your particular group. Be sure to remain consistent with the policies of your church.

When you go over the guidelines with the group, clearly communicate that these are guidelines for acceptable behavior in your group and that anyone who does not comply will be asked to leave. This will help ensure that participants have a healing, supportive experience with DivorceCare.
TOP 5 TIPS FOR LEADING GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Whether you’ve led group discussions for years or it’s your first time ever, these tips will help you create a supportive, more comfortable environment for your group members.

1. Don’t try to counsel

The pressure is off! Your job is to facilitate discussion—not counsel. This is a support group, and you’re here to encourage discussion, sharing, and learning, not solve everyone’s problems.

2. Be okay with silence

Many times in a small group, people are uncomfortable with silence. Let your group know how valuable silence can be and how to use it. They can pray for those around them, pray for their situation, listen for God, or sort through feelings. Reassure them that you don’t expect them to answer right away. They can slow down and think before responding. (And don’t feel compelled to fill the silence with your own thoughts or story! Your primary job is to encourage others to share.)

3. Encourage participation

Use eye contact to encourage people to talk. Hesitant talkers may need a verbal prompt: “Jen, it looks like you wanted to add something.” But be careful not to pressure anyone to speak who is not ready. If one or more “talkers” start to monopolize discussion time, you can ask the next question and say, “Let’s hear from some others who have not had the opportunity to share much yet.”

4. Watch body language to guide discussions

You’ll want to keep your group on track, but sometimes a tangent can be good. It may get people to participate. Just be careful not to let it go too far or long. Watch people’s eyes and posture. Being conscious of everyone’s eye contact and body language will help you determine if the group is discussing something helpful and of interest or if you need to redirect the conversation.

5. Avoid debates

Remember, your role is facilitator. That means drawing people out and helping them share. Debates, theological or otherwise, aren’t helpful for this process. Avoid engaging in a debate with a group member, and if a debate begins between members, gently remind them that you’re all there to support one another. Then, steer the conversation back to the original question or topic.

And remember, your group is ultimately in God’s hands. Trust Him to meet the group’s needs. Pray, pray, pray for your group, and be prepared to see God do amazing things!

For more helpful tips, refer to your online leader training or visit the LeaderZone Library.
HOW TO HANDLE SMALL-GROUP CHALLENGES

Wondering about potential challenges? Use these questions and answers to help you and your group members have a safe, supportive DivorceCare experience.

What if I don’t know how to answer a question?

Deal with difficult questions honestly and biblically. Be willing to say, “I don’t know,” “Does anyone else have input?” or “That’s a good question.” Members are more likely to share with someone who is honest about his or her limitations than with someone who pretends to know all the answers. And if you don’t know the answer to a question, be sure to add, “But I am willing to find out.” You can check the LeaderZone or ask a DivorceCare ministry coach, your pastor, or other church leaders.

How do I deal with the person who talks too much? (And the one who doesn’t talk at all?)

Going over group guidelines with your group at the beginning of each session reminds everyone about the importance of listening, being respectful, providing a safe place, and allowing everyone the chance to share (see participant guide, p. viii).

But if someone monopolizes the discussion time, express appreciation for what the person shared and ask other people for more thoughts on the topic. Breaking eye contact with someone who is talking too much can sometimes give him or her a cue that it’s time to stop talking. At times you may simply need to interrupt someone. Say, “I’m sorry to interrupt you.” Thank the person for what was shared, and remind the group that you want to make sure everyone has time to talk. While you may hesitate to do this, trust us—many of your group members will be hoping you’ll speak up so they will have the opportunity to share.

If you sense that someone would like to say something but is hesitant, call on that person by name. But don’t pressure the person to share if he or she is not ready. Sometimes quiet people are listening intently and receiving much from the conversation, but they may not be able to verbalize their own ideas at that point.

What if the conversation goes off track?

If the conversation goes in a different direction from the video, be willing to let it run for a time. It may be just what the group needs. The idea is to remain flexible. That said, you must recognize when it’s time to bring the discussion back to the session’s topic. Do this by watching people’s eyes and posture and gauging whether it’s providing an opportunity for less talkative people to participate. But don’t let tangents take up too much time or become the norm. Members are counting on you to bring the group back on track.

How do I handle emotional participants?

Don’t be surprised if someone begins to cry during a meeting. It’s normal. Just keep a box of tissues on hand in case they’re needed. Then, let people cry. Tell them it’s okay and that it’s good for them to cry it out.

For more direction on handling challenges, see the online leader training and LeaderZone Library.
ENCOURAGING MEMBERS TO SERVE

A great way to help group members heal and grow is to encourage them to serve in the community or in the church when they are ready. Consider inviting group members to get involved with your DivorceCare ministry. There are opportunities for all talents, skill levels, availability, and levels of healing. Here are a few ideas:

- **Administrative tasks** – Registration, email reminders, scheduling
- **Publicity** – Use the tools DivorceCare provides to spread the word about your ministry
- **Hospitality** – Greeter, check-in, snacks, setup/takedown, child care, parking lot attendants
- **Group facilitator** – Those who’ve experienced substantial healing could be mentored to lead the discussion time; talk to a DivorceCare coach for help in choosing group members who might be good small-group facilitators. Usually a person who’s ready for this role has been divorced for at least two years.

Keep your eyes open for people who could serve on your DivorceCare team and which areas you think would be a good fit. During the later weeks of your DivorceCare cycle, let your group know you are looking for volunteers.

**Two cautions**

As you encourage people to seek serving opportunities, keep two things in mind:

- **Their motivation**: Participants should be volunteering in order to help others. As they serve, their motivation should be to honor God and help others, not pursue any selfish agenda.
- **Their limits**: Participants who are already feeling overwhelmed may not be able to handle something else on their plate right now.

You should also check with your primary DivorceCare leader or ministry overseer before asking a participant to serve—to make sure everyone is on the same page about the member’s readiness and level of involvement.

**Create a legacy – Keep DivorceCare going at your church**

With the right guidance, and in the right role, your group members can grow and heal through service. And this will also help your ministry grow and stay strong. As participants give back, you’ll have more support for your DivorceCare ministry, and you can build up new leaders to offer additional groups—so there’s always a DivorceCare group available for those who need it, even in years to come.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

30-day satisfaction guarantee

The DivorceCare kits are sold with a 30-day guarantee. If you are not satisfied with your purchase, return it to us for a refund (excluding shipping charges). The 30-day return policy does not apply to items purchased in addition to the kit. Returns for other materials will be accepted only if they are damaged or defective.

Important: It is ESSENTIAL that you view your DVDs within 30 days of receipt to confirm quality. We will be happy to replace any defective DVDs within 30 days after you have received your DivorceCare kit. Replacement cannot be made beyond this 30-day period.

DVD not playing?

Your DivorceCare DVDs will function properly in most laptop computers; however, they are optimized to play in stand-alone DVD players. If you have difficulty playing your DivorceCare DVD from a laptop computer, check to see if it will play in a stand-alone DVD player before contacting us. You can also try cleaning the DVD with a soft cloth to see if that helps.