

**Espresso Shot**

HIGH SCHOOL AND ADULT GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**GROUP PREP**

In preparation for group, [watch Emmanuel's weekend service message](#) and then answer the following discussion questions.

SOCIAL TIME (10-15 minutes) - For Leaders

Have an ice breaker ready, eat a snack together, or go around the circle asking your group members to share any news since your last meeting. Be intentional in helping your group members get to know one another during this time and make it fun.

Use the following ice breaker question, choose from one of the other ice breakers on Emmanuel's [leader tools](#), or create your own.

What is the silliest or most ridiculous thing that you found yourself watching online this week? It could be news related, a social media post or maybe even a funny video.

CHECK-IN (15-20 minutes) - For Leaders

Ask your group what they learned after completing their action step. Last week, we challenged you to develop an action step to begin implementing that strategy in your marriage or relationship this week.

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (45-60 minutes)

During our Espresso Shot weekend we talked about the cost of information overload. We live in a world of a 24-hour news cycle, and seemingly unlimited availability of information of all kinds. This can take a toll on our health and our relationships. Let's spend some time evaluating how this plays out in our own lives.

1. How do you stay informed about what's going on in your community, nation and world and why do you like to use those sources?

In what ways does media help you connect with others?

On the flip-side, in what ways could media distract you from connecting to others?

2. Constantly being inundated with news, tragedy and even silly videos can significantly impact the overall quality of our lives. Information can be powerful or it can bog us down. Moses experienced this long before Facebook and YouTube were a part of life. After the Israelites were freed from Pharaohs' rule, Moses had an important lesson to learn from his father-in-law Jethro.



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Read [Exodus 18:13-18 \(NLT\)](#). Moses was trying to carry the burdens of so many people and Jethro says, “What you are doing is not good.” He had to set limits and it is good for us to evaluate our limits too.

When you think about how you spend time on your phone, computer, television, etc., what limits would help protect you from information overload?

3. When has there been a time that you have needed to take a break and step back from feeling overloaded? What circumstances were going on?

Read [Mark 6:30-32 \(NLT\)](#). Here we see Jesus teaching the disciples to step away and take a break after an intense time of ministry. Why do you think Jesus took this moment to lead his disciples in deliberately taking a break, even from really important work?

Read [Romans 12:1-2 \(NLT\)](#). This verse tells us to be transformed by the renewing of our mind. Oftentimes we reach for our phone or turn on the television out of habit or to fill a gap in time. To renew our mind we can consider filling that time with something that deliberately points us to a life focused on things that God loves.

Let’s compile a list of ideas that would be a good substitute for things like consuming the 24-hour news cycle, scrolling social media or learning the latest TikTok dance.

4. This week we were given some ideas to help us to overcome information fatigue. Those included:

- Take a break.
- Know your limits.
- Change what you bring in.

Which of these areas do you feel could impact your life and your relationships if you deliberately focused on it this week?

Set a SMART goal to work towards one of these ideas. Share this with your group and encourage each other throughout the week to meet your goals.



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ACTION STEP (10-15 minutes)

Choose one of the following or create your own.

- **Read** Atomic Habits by James Clear.
- **Daily time with God.** Determine the type of routine you'd like to have to spend time learning about what pleases God. Here are some ways to do this:
 - o [Download the Emmanuel app](#) and read the One Year New Testament daily.
 - o [Download the YouVersion app](#) and find a devotion you can do daily.
 - o If you recently placed your faith in Christ and texted SAVED to 65248, read the devotional provided in your starter kit.

PRAYER (5-10 minutes)

Give everyone in your group an index card. Ask them to write their name and action step on one side and a prayer request on the other. When finished, have everyone pass their cards to the left. Everyone in the group now has someone to connect with throughout the coming week for three reasons:

- 1) To build the relationship.
- 2) To encourage them to accomplish their action step.
- 3) To pray for in a specific way.

Ask them to place the index card on their nightstand or another place that would allow them to see it and use it every day.

GROUP SERVING OPPORTUNITIES

To determine how your group can serve together in the surrounding community, email Breanne Schafer, Emmanuel's Outreach Coordinator, at bschafer@eclife.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 1 | [Foster and Adoption Care Community Orientations](#)

March 7 | [VERB](#)

March 10 | [Night of Worship](#) and [Singles Happy Hour](#)

March 15 | [Impact Team Night](#)

April 4 | [Baptism Service](#)

You can find more information on all of these events at eclife.org.



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MIDDLE SCHOOL OBJECT LESSON & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

GROUP PREP

In preparation for group, [watch Emmanuel's weekend service message](#) and then answer the following discussion questions.

ACTIVITY:**Materials needed:**

- notecard (1 per person)
- pens

To play:

- Give each student a card and a pen with this challenge: write a "Tweet" describing yourself in less than 40 words. Do not write your name or any other identifying places like your school, last name, etc.
- Keep your tweet hidden and pass it to your leader.
- Leader, mix up all the cards and allow each student to draw one of the tweets. Go around the circle and have the students read their tweet one at a time and attempt to guess which student wrote the tweet. Ask students to raise their hand to answer and to avoid shouting out so that everyone has an opportunity to participate.
- Give the card to the person who guessed correctly. See who can guess the most tweets correctly.

1. Media is a big part of our lives. We get pieces of information from all over just like the Tweets you just made up about yourselves. It is never the whole story but we sometimes might feel like it's too much information to handle. Let's list some kinds of media that you use on a day to day basis. *(If possible, compile this list on a dry erase board or piece of butcher paper so all the kids can see the list throughout the talk.)*

Media is available all over the place and if we are not careful, it can put us in information overload. There is a moral behind every story that you see online. Some stories, though, lead us to ideas or beliefs that are not Christ-like. When you take in media without thinking about it, it can create anxiety or prompt us to play a comparison game.

What kinds of things do you see online that are not true but could make you start to feel worried, anxious, confused or just plain overwhelmed?

2. Even in the Bible we see important people struggling with taking in too much information and feeling overwhelmed. Moses is a major person in God's story and he experienced this long before Facebook and YouTube were a part of life. After the Israelites were freed from Pharaohs' rule, Moses had an important lesson to learn from his father-in-law Jethro.

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Read [Exodus 18:13-18 \(NLT\)](#). All sorts of people were coming to Moses to tell him what was going wrong and wanting him to fix the problem. Moses was trying to carry the burdens of so many people and Jethro says, “What you are doing is not good.” He had to set limits and it is good for us to evaluate our limits too.

When you think about how you spend time on your phone, computer, television, etc. what limits would help protect you from information overload?

3. Imagine you were looking at a photo collage of the best moments of your life up to this point. What photos would be in that collage?

Now consider this: which moments could be in this collage or life’s memories, but you missed them because you are on your phone or some sort of media being overloaded with information?

Read [Romans 12:1-2 \(NLT\)](#). This verse tells us to be transformed by the renewing of our mind. Oftentimes we reach for our phone or turn on the television out of habit or to fill a gap in time. To renew our minds, we can decide to fill that time with something that points us to a life focused on things that God loves and things that will matter in the long run.

Let’s compile a list of ideas that would be a good substitute for things like consuming the 24-hour news cycle, scrolling social media or learning the latest TikTok dance.

4. What is one thing you will commit to do this week that can help you to focus on the things that God loves and protect yourself from overloading on information that can distract or overwhelm you?

PRAYER (5-10 minutes)

Give everyone in your group an index card. Ask them to write their name and action steps on one side and a prayer request on the other. When finished, have everyone pass their cards to the left. Everyone in the group now has someone to connect with throughout the coming week for three reasons:

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