

Gathering Your "Smooth Stones"

A Resource to Help Navigate Harder Conversations or Sharings

As you develop as a *Journey* group facilitator, you may notice times when it would be nice to have a better closure or transition, or way to honor someone during your group session. This may be noticeable after someone has shared something difficult or something especially meaningful. The narrative sharing also invites opportunity for intentional caring of group participants.

VP3 Coach and seasoned VP3 Pathway Facilitator, Deborah Carnduff of Calgary, refers to the intentionality with which she pays attention to these ministering moments, as "Smooth Stones." Deborah prepares her heart as a facilitator to foster what God is up to in each participants' lives.

Deborah explains, "For me, gathering intentional 'smooth stones'—like the five smooth stones that David kept with him to defeat the enemy—David trusted his use of what was before him to do God's good work." As a facilitator, Deborah humbly prepares for her group time by carrying symbolic ways to remind the group of God's faithfulness, power, and love. Deborah continues, "Having these stones can also serve as a reminder to honor YOUR priestly presence in the room in cooperation with the Holy Spirit."

Some ideas for "smooth stones" to carry in your pocket may include:

A Smooth Stone of Scripture

Scripture can remind group members of the care, patience, power and love of God.

- *Ephesians 1:17-23* —"I keep asking God...that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened know the hope to which He has called you..."
- *Ephesians 3:16-21* —"I pray that out of His glorious riches He may strengthen you with Power...., May your roots go down deep into the soil of God's love... Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think..."
- *Philippians 1:6-11* —"being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion..."
- *Colossians 1:9-12*
- *Psalms 27* —"The Lord is my light and salvation; whom shall I fear?..."
- *Psalms 29, 95:1-7a, 96, 100* —to bring us into God's presence
- *Psalms 3:14, 22, 37:1-11, 42, 46* —for times of troubles
- *Romans 8* —Nothing can separate me from God...parts of this chapter are gold in many situations.

A Smooth Stone of a Group Member's Biblical Mandate

This can be used to remind the group member that God is already using His word in the life of this believer. Notice themes and any similarities and common ground of the scripture verses of the group as a whole.

A Smooth Stone of Worship Songs and Hymns

Lifting voices in song is a beautiful way to unify and praise together

- *God of Angel Armies – Whom Shall I Fear* by Chris Tomlin
- *More than Conquerors* – By Rend Collective
- *Great is Thy Faithfulness* – Hymnal and Chris Rice
- *What a Beautiful Name* – Hillsong
- *Everlasting God* – by Chris Tomlin

A Smooth Stone of Blessings/Benedictions to proclaim over the group

- *Thessalonians 3:16* — “Now may the Lord of Peace Himself give you peace...”
- *Colossians 2:6-7* — “...just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him...”
- *2 Peter 3:18* — “Grow in the grace and knowledge...to Him be the glory both now and forever.”
- *Revelation 7:12* — “Blessing and glory and wisdom, thanksgiving...be unto Him forever...”
- *2 Corinthians 1:3:14* — “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God ...”

A Smooth Stone of Biblical Affirmation

You can use either written words in some creative way or go around the circle and hear from others with focus on who we are now.

- *John 1:12* — I am a child of God.
- *Romans 8:1* — I am justified and completely forgiven.
- *1 Corinthians 2:16* — I have the mind of Christ.
- *1 Corinthians 5:21* — I have been made righteous.
- *Ephesians 1:3* — I have been blessed with every spiritual blessing.
- *Colossians 1:14* — I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins.
- *Colossians 1:27* — I am a dwelling place for Christ. He lives in me.

A Smooth Stone of the RED DOT

Maps often have red dots, that tell you where you are right now. Ask each participant to identify where they are right now. What are their feelings/emotions? Where is your Red Dot right now? Where is God? Two or three words are sufficient.

A Smooth Stone of Prayer

Ending with the *Lord's Prayer* or other prayers from the Bible is quite powerful!

Final Thoughts...

Your role as a facilitator is to care for you group. “Smooth Stones” are ideas to encourage you. They are not required. They are offered to you by the VP3 Coaching Team to support your care for others in your groups. The use of a “smooth stone” is never meant to take center stage over a group member’s sharing. Trust the Spirit’s leading and the heart of those in your group to care well for one another.