

EATING & DRINKING: WEEK 2

ADAPTED FROM PRACTICINGTHEWAY.ORG

BEGIN WITH PRAYER (5 MINUTES)

Gather together as a Connect Group in a comfortable setting (around a table, on the couch, the floor of a living room, etc.). Have somebody lead a prayer asking the Holy Spirit to lead and guide your time together.

DEBRIEF LAST WEEK'S PRACTICE (15-20 MINUTES)

Note: if you're short on time, skip this and go to the next section.

If you are in a Connect Group of seven or more, divide into small groups of 3–4 people each. Spend a few minutes catching up on life. Then talk through the following debrief questions:

1. Did you get a chance to eat and drink with somebody who doesn't follow Jesus? How did it go?
2. What was/is the most difficult part of this Practice for you?

TRANSITION BACK TO ONE LARGE GROUP (15-20 MINUTES)

Have a conversation around the following questions:

1. Any stories from the last week's Practice that you would like to encourage the whole group with?
2. Did you listen to the second teaching on neighboring, based on Luke 10:25-37? (Feel free to read that section again for a refresher). What did you think?
3. Do you view your home as an outpost of the kingdom? Or more of a castle to hide away in?
4. How well do you know your neighbors?
5. What's the spiritual climate of your neighborhood? What are the challenges you face there as an apprentice of Jesus?


READ THIS OVERVIEW

Jesus said the second most important command in all of the Torah (the Bible of his day) was Leviticus 19:18: "Love your neighbor as yourself." We usually generalize neighbor to mean anybody, and that's fine. Jesus himself said the word is so wide it encompasses our enemy. But if our neighbor is everybody, then it's kind of nobody. What if Jesus meant our actual neighbor? As in the people who live on our street? In our apartment complex or condo tower? What if he intended for them to be the primary recipients of our love? In week two of our Practice of eating and drinking (or its synonym: hospitality), we explore the idea of recapturing the home as an outpost for the kingdom in our neighborhood and the table as a tangible expression of neighbor love.

TALK ABOUT THE COMING WEEK'S PRACTICE AS A COMMUNITY (10-30 MINUTES)

Here's the Practice for the coming week:

Exercise #1: Block Map

a. b. c.	a. b. c.	a. b. c.
a. b. c.		a. b. c.
a. b. c.	a. b. c.	a. b. c.

- The center square is your home or apartment. The eight squares around it are your eight closest neighbors. Do the following for each neighbor:
 - On line A, fill in their name. Ideally first and last, but just put down what you know. If you don't know their name yet, just put down question mark, or leave it blank. Do the same for the next two lines.
 - On line B, fill in any factoids you know that you couldn't get from waving across the street: where they work, where they are from, how long they've lived there, what they do for fun, etc.
 - On line C, see if you can fill in any in-depth information: their dreams for the future, relationship status, their faith (or lack of it), experience with God or church, their childhood story, any pain, etc.
- As a general rule, only 10% of people can fill in line A, only 3% can fill in line B, and less than 1% can fill in line C. The point here isn't guilt and shame; it's simply to plot out just how well you know (or don't know) your neighbors, to get you started on the journey to loving them.
- If you want to take this exercise even further, head to artofneighboring.com for more info or resources such as their block party kit, which is a great primer on how to throw your first block party.

Exercise #2: Brainstorming Session

- Get out a whiteboard, journal, evernote file, or your word doc of choice, and brainstorm a list of creative ideas for neighboring (i.e., how to love your neighbors well by creating an environment of hospitality).
- Feel free to do this by yourself via prayer or over food or drinks with your family, friends, or a few close neighbors, and the music cranked.
- Here's our list to get you started:
 - Prayer walk your neighborhood and ask Jesus for his eyes and heart for your place.
 - Go meet one of your neighbors that you don't know yet.
 - Invite all eight neighbors from your block map over for dinner over the next few months.
 - Throw a block party on the next major holiday.
 - Plan out holiday parties: 4th of July, Christmas, Super Bowl Sunday, May the 4th, etc.
 - Run a weekly neighbor night or BBQ through the summer.
 - Start a Sunday dinner or sabbath dinner, where your table is open to family and friends.
 - Do whatever you like to do, but *with* your neighbors: Into sports? Watch football. More of a reader? Start a book club. Like to cook? Start a supper club. Etc.
 - Make your home the hang out place for your kids' friends. Invite kids over for a movie night. Have a special snack box in the pantry. Etc.
 - Redo your budget and schedule to make room for hospitality.
 - Practice reverse hospitality, where you bring food to someone – a sick neighbor, new mom/dad, someone out of work, etc.
 - Bring back Taco Tuesday!
- Once you have your list, pick out a few ideas and implement them in the coming weeks and/or months. Be intentional. Put it into your calendar!
- As you practice hospitality, remember *why* we eat and drink with our neighbors, to “welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you.” (Romans 15:7)
- And don't forget to have fun as you go out and love your neighbors!

WORK THROUGH THESE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (10-15 MINUTES)

1. Any thoughts, creative ideas, or feedback on this coming week's Practice?
2. How do you feel about viewing your neighborhood as one of your primary callings from Jesus to love well?

CLOSE IN PRAYER (10 MINUTES)