



Discussion Guide for Adults
An Out of Order Resource

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Out of Order: Discussion Guide - Adults

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions can help to facilitate an in-depth discussion following your screening of the film.

1. What did you learn from the film? What insights did it provide?
2. If you could ask anyone in the film a single question, whom would you ask? What would you ask?
3. Describe a moment or scene in the film that you found particularly disturbing or moving. What was it about that scene that was especially compelling for you?
4. What feelings did you have as you listened to the different LGBTQ faith leaders tell their stories?
5. Did seeing the difficulty and the pain in these leaders' experiences make you think differently about the place of LGBTQ people in the church or in general?
6. What impact do you think these difficulties have on these individuals, their families, and their church communities?
7. Did anything in the film remind you of an experience in your own life?
8. What is the purpose of church and a church community?
9. Is welcoming people who are different an important part of living in a church community?
10. What kind of welcome would you like to enjoy in your church?
11. Whose responsibility is it to offer welcome in a church community?
12. How should pastors or congregants respond to church leaders or members who don't wish to include LGBTQ people?
13. What are the obstacles to enacting welcome for LGBTQ people?
14. What church policies and practices could be easily changed to increase welcome? What big changes are needed?
15. What could ordinary church members do to welcome LGBTQ people?

Out of Order: Discussion Guidelines

FACILITATION GUIDE

The purpose of this screening is to learn from the experiences of the individuals in the film. The participants in the film hope that by sharing their very personal, and sometimes painful, experiences others might begin to feel empathy for the struggles of LGBTQ people in the church.

Careful facilitation can result in an illuminating discussion. The following guidelines can help you keep your discussion productive.

No jokes or personal attacks

Due to the sensitive nature of the conversation, ask discussion participants to refrain from making jokes, personal attacks, judgments, or sarcastic remarks. These are common but destructive ways individuals avoid dealing with difficult feelings. A passionate discussion can easily become unproductive if participants use these tactics to deflect their discomfort.

Stay on track

LGBTQ individuals are not the only ones who experience difficulties in their church communities. However, the purpose of this discussion is to focus on what can be learned from their specific experiences. Discussion of difficulties faced by other groups are best saved for another time. By making a good faith effort to understand the perspectives presented by the LGBTQ faith leaders in the film, we hope audience members gain empathy that they can ultimately use to make their own church communities more welcoming for all groups.

Know your own triggers

The film can hit raw nerves and raise difficult emotions. Facilitators should view the film before presenting it in order to give themselves time to reflect and to identify and plan how to address issues that might cause strong reactions within their group.

Maintain respect

Participants should agree on rules to keep the tone of the discussion respectful. For example, participants should refrain from yelling, using slurs or derogatory language, and from making universal or generalized statements. Additionally, facilitators should moderate the discussion to allow everyone a chance to contribute and to prevent the conversation from becoming a debate between individuals attempting to convince everyone that they hold the “correct” opinion. Remind the group that the purpose of the discussion is to understand the different viewpoints presented. If the discussion gets too intense or out of hand, take a break.

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RESOURCES

Scriptural Basis for the Welcome and Acceptance of LGBT People

All throughout the Scriptures God affirms over and over again that no one is excluded from God's love, and that our call as people of faith is to welcome the stranger or outsider in our midst. These scriptures, in particular, point toward the inclusiveness of God's love and call to God's people. As you or your group reflect on the passages below, consider where you see God's welcome or love extended to those on the margins. Where are we called to do the same?

Isaiah 56.

The key to this story is God's welcome of foreigners and eunuchs into God's "house of prayer for all peoples."

Micah 6:8.

People devote a lot of their energy to judgement, anxiety, and mistrust. This passage emphasizes that the task of people on earth is to pursue kindness, mercy and humbleness. "God has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Luke 10:25-37.

The key element of the infamous parable of the Good Samaritan is the lesson "love your neighbor as yourself." In the story, a despised person does what a venerated priest and lay priest fail to — assist a man who has been robbed and beaten. Jesus directed his followers to emulate this example of mercy.

Acts 10 and 11.

In this story, uncircumcised Gentiles are fully welcomed into the church, even though their lifestyles were repugnant to Jews.

1 John 4:16b.

One of the central tenants of Christianity is that God is love, and that Christians must live a life of love in order to know and be known by God. This passage says, "And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them."