

Balanced Diet—Session #1



BALANCED DIET OUTLINE

Session #1 - Spiritual Journey

Purpose: Identify ways to nourish your spirit through a balanced diet





TIME in minutes	ACTIVITY	SUPPLIES
5	Soul Food Skit	Skit
15	<p>Introduction of Theme of Balanced Diet to nourish your spirit and grow on your faith journey. Introduction of places on faith journey: use of the labyrinth as a metaphor for the faith journey; (a maze-like outline on the ground through which you move towards God, represented in the center). We will describe some places on the journey (new Christian, life-long Christian, person who receives a calling, person in crisis) and how each place can either move us closer or further from God. Ask the questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Where are you on this path? ▪ What other places have you been on the path? ▪ What are places NOT on the path? ▪ Where are you now?....any of these? <p>Show SLIDE #1 of labyrinth</p>	Flipchart markers labyrinth (large spiral) drawn on flipchart (big)
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pass out Index cards and pencils. ▪ Ask participants to divide up around the room according to their birthday month. Find the person whose birthday is closest to theirs and write that person's name on their index card. 	Index cards Pencils/pens
30	<p>Small Group Process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Divide into small groups of 5-6. Each person needs to stay with their birthday partner. 	



TIME	ACTIVITY	SUPPLIES
Cont'd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Once small groups are formed, explain that their birthday partner will be their prayer partner for the duration of the retreat; and their first night's activity will be to lift up their partner during their evening prayers. ▪ Ask each group to select a facilitator. Hand out to each facilitator the Leader's Guide for Session #1. <p>Activity:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Draw a picture of their idea of spiritual journey. 2) Write on paper where they believe they are, 3) Discuss these drawings in group. 4) When finished each participant goes forward and puts a sticky dot on the drawing of a labyrinth, representing where they are in their personal journey. 	<p>Leader Guide for Session #1</p> <p>colored sticky dots</p>
10 minutes	<p>Call the group back together.</p> <p>Lead a discussion of the various places people found themselves (differences, similarities). Ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can we see each other from these places? ▪ How can we help each other? ▪ Can we share our experience with others and is that helpful? ▪ What can we do to move along our path? 	

Session #1—Leader Notes

- 1) Soul Food Skit

- 2) Refer to Outline for Session 1 to introduce the theme and the concept of the labyrinth. Have a labyrinth (can just be a spiral) drawn on large flipchart to display. You may also copy the examples in this materials to distribute or to enlarge for display. Refer to Outline to move group through the process.

- 3) Explain that first activity is to think about their own spiritual journeys to date. Where have they been, where are they now, what has that journey looked like – all smooth sailing, ups and downs, ins and outs, whatever.

- 4) Instruct group to take the small piece of paper and draw a picture of their idea of a spiritual journey. Tell them it doesn't have to be artistic, but just reflective of what it 'looks like' in their mind. No points for pretty. No deductions for messy! Allow about 7 minutes.

- 5) Next have them write on paper where they believe they are in their spiritual journey – arriving, struggling, growing, stagnating, seeking, lost, moving toward God, away from God, puzzled..... wherever, whatever. (about 7 minutes)

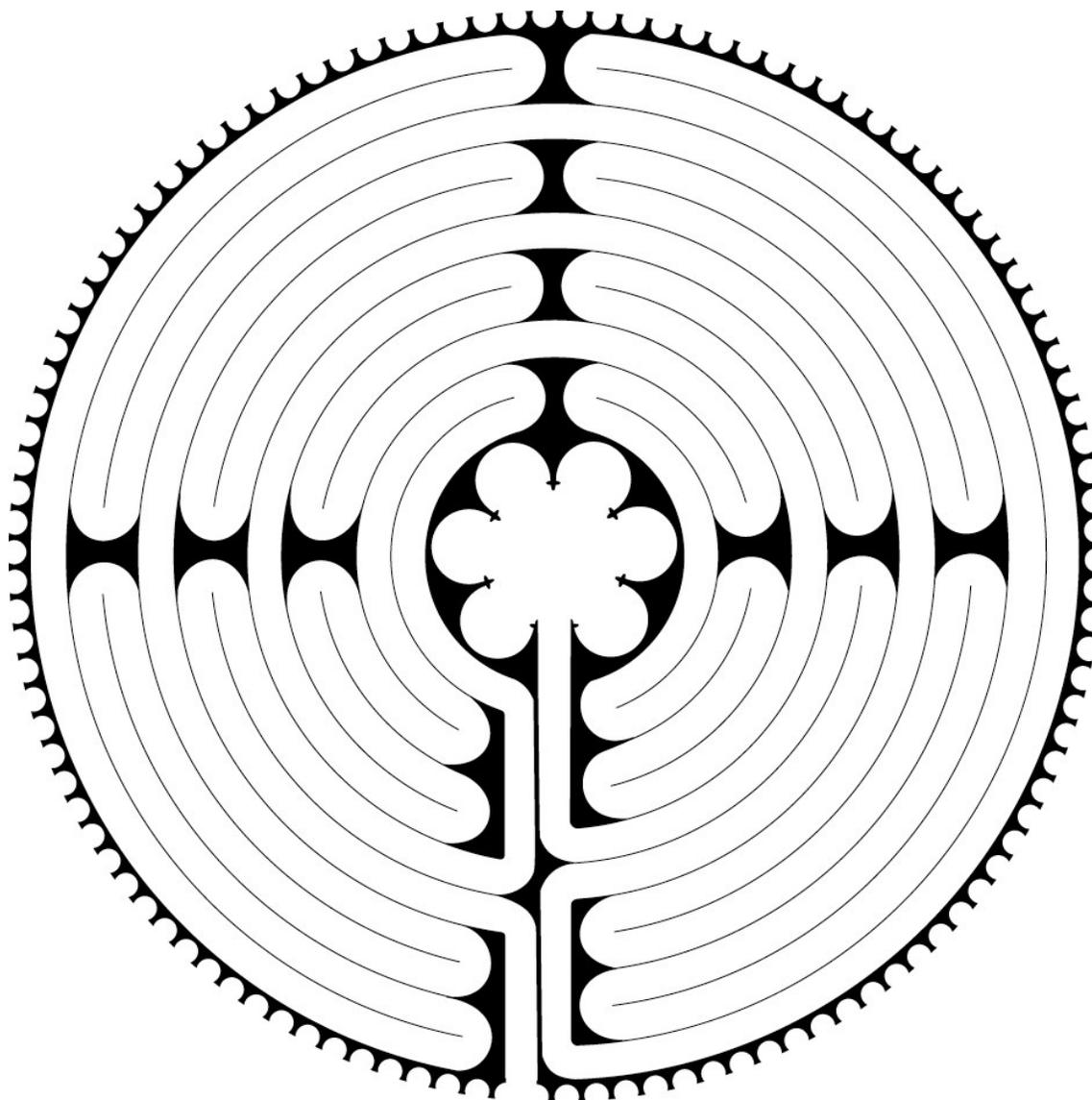
- 6) Discuss in group. Go around your group and ask people to share their pictures and explain (very briefly) what it means to them. Next ask people where they think they are right now and why. (About 15 minutes)



- 7) When finished with discussion, have each one of your members take a colored dot (provided to them by group leaders) and place the dot on labyrinth that reflects where they believe they are on this visualization of a spiritual journey. Make sure they are quiet as other groups may not be done with their discussion.

- 8) Call them back to the large group setting and lead discussion of the various places people found them selves (differences, similarities). Ask the following questions:
 - a. Can we see each other from these places?
 - b. How can we help each other along?
 - c. Can we share our experience with others and is that helpful?
 - d. What can we do to move along our path?

- 9) Close with prayer.



Session #1 Skit – Soul Food

Setting the stage:

- Requires 2 players
- First player walks on and appears to be busy – reading book on nutrition or something similar.
- Second player walks on and begins speaking

SPEAKER #1: Hi Megan. I wanted to know if you'd like to go to Bible study with me.

SPEAKER #2: No, I don't think so. I don't need to study the Bible, since I go to church on Sundays. The pastor always reads a Bible passage with his message. Besides I'm really busy.

SPEAKER #1: You really do look busy. What are you doing?

SPEAKER #2: Oh, I am reading and researching all of these nutrition books.

SPEAKER #1: Why?

SPEAKER #2: I read an article in the paper recently and I realized that the foods I was eating didn't provide me all the nourishment my body needs. So I started getting concerned and thought I should do something about it! All



these books say I should have a balanced diet.

SPEAKER #1: What do you mean? Your diet is balanced... you have chocolate morning, noon and night!

SPEAKER #2: Well according to all these experts, as good as chocolate is, it's not enough.

SPEAKER #1: Wow, that's hard to believe. So, if chocolate's not good, what would happen if you ate ice cream all day, every day?

SPEAKER #2: I'd be a blimp or a zit-faced pig!

SPEAKER #1: Well what if you just ate potato chips?

SPEAKER #2: Hmm. I think my arteries would go from being a four-lane freeway to a one-lane dirt road----with potholes!

SPEAKER #1: What if you only ate regurgitated food?

SPEAKER #2: Yuck. That's gross.

SPEAKER #1: Birds do it!

SPEAKER #2: I am NOT a bird.....(*Pause, looks around at herself while a little bird puppets come on stage*) It's still gross.

SPEAKER #1: Well, what if you ate nothing at all?

SPEAKER #2: Obviously, I wouldn't survive very long on



nothing! You're just not getting it. The idea is that I need to eat a variety of foods from different food groups so my body is nourished properly – that's what makes it balanced!

SPEAKER #1: Oh, so you're saying you don't want to live every day on a poor diet?

SPEAKER #2: Exactly! And I am ready to make the change.

SPEAKER #1: Yet, every day many Christians are living malnourished lives, including you!

SPEAKER #2: Well now that I know so much, I could share my nutrition books,...Hey, what do you mean me? I'm the one who's changing to a balanced, nutritional diet! I'm not malnourished!

SPEAKER #1: I'm not talking about food for the body, but food for the soul.

SPEAKER #2: Huh?

SPEAKER #1: We fill our lives with spiritual junk food – things like TV, movies or music that talks about things that go against what God wants for us.

SPEAKER #2: Does being addicted to the Home and Garden Network count against me?



- SPEAKER #1: *(gives SPEAKER #2 a look)* OR our only spiritual food is what we get from the pastor on Sunday.
- SPEAKER #2: But, his sermons are really good!
- SPEAKER #1: I'm sure they are, but listening to sermons is not enough to keep you spiritually nourished. Just like real food, you need to chew spiritual food yourself, getting your nourishment directly from God and God's word.
- SPEAKER #2: How do I do that? Chew on the Bible?
- SPEAKER #1: Not exactly. You do that by having a balanced diet of soul food!
- SPEAKER #2: Soul food....okay, I'll BITE. What's on the menu?
- SPEAKER #1: Talking to God and listening for His voice. So, that includes prayer – any and all kinds of prayer. And meditation to really listen – silent or guided or even written meditations.
- SPEAKER #2: Okay – prayer. Is that like the first course?
- SPEAKER #1: Prayer is probably more like how you eat, *used to eat*, chocolate--- morning, noon and night!
- SPEAKER #2: OH! Got it! What else is on this menu?



- SPEAKER #1: Studying the Bible. You have one don't you?
- SPEAKER #2: Oh yeah.. of course...yes, I have a Bible, it's.....
- SPEAKER #1: (interrupts) Well what's the first thing you would have to do to begin your Bible study.
- SPEAKER #2: Find my Bible?
- SPEAKER #1: Well, that would be good, but after that?
- SPEAKER #2: Open it and read it?!
- SPEAKER #1: YES! Read it, study it, discuss it, memorize passages, reflect on it and do what it says! Even attend a Bible study class, if one of your friends invites you!
- SPEAKER #2: Point taken. Now, if I do these things, is that the balanced diet?
- SPEAKER #1: Well that and so many more options. You can add courses to your meal with daily devotions, journals, worship, quiet times, music, and retreats.
- SPEAKER #2: Wow, that's a lot. I don't think I can do everything.
- SPEAKER #1: Does your nutritional book say you have to eat every kind of food every day to be nourished?



SPEAKER #2: No, just try and get the best balance you can.

SPEAKER #1: Spiritual nourishment is the same. Pick and choose from the whole menu – find what nourishes you, what helps you grow closer to God – but pick a balanced diet, with heavier portions of prayer, of course.

SPEAKER #2: Ok. Well maybe I should start balancing my spiritual menu by reconsidering my answer to your earlier invitation. I would LOVE to join you at Bible study, but can we make one stop on the way?

SPEAKER #1: Great! Where do you need to stop?

SPEAKER #2: At the candy store. I need some chocolate!

Balanced Diet for Spiritual Nourishment

1. Talk to God
2. Listen for His voice
3. Meditation to really listen – silent or guided or even written meditations
4. Prayer (morning, noon and night!)
5. Study the Bible – open it and read it! Study, discuss, memorize, and reflect.
6. Daily devotions or quiet times
7. Journals
8. Worship
9. Music
10. Retreats

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