

Leader Resources: Discover Your Passion

Permission to photocopy this handout granted for local church use. Copyright © Doug Fields. Published in Youth Leader Training on the Go by Group Publishing, Inc., P.O. Box 481, Loveland, CO 80539. www.youthministry.com and www.simplyyouthministry.com. Modified for use in the Diocese of Algoma.

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.”

1 Corinthians 12:7

RON’S STORY:

Ron has been a youth ministry volunteer for over 10 years. He’s done everything in our ministry; he’s the type of guy who will plug himself in wherever there’s a need. But after years and years of doing anything, he began to realize there were elements of youth ministry that triggered his passion and others that didn’t (actually, some areas he even despised!). Ron didn’t love crowds, going on overnight trips, or making phone calls to students he didn’t know. He did love teaching and spending quality time with students he knew, and he became passionate about those things. Because of Ron’s desire to spend more time doing what he loved, we created a new teaching role in our ministry. Now, each week Ron shows up at a different small group (as a guest leader) and conducts a Bible study and discussion. Not only is Ron feeling more fulfilled as a volunteer, but he’s also more effective because he’s meeting needs that weren’t being met before. Because of his passion, students and other volunteers benefit from his newfound ministry passion.

WHAT ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT?

If you could make your youth ministry achieve three things, and you didn’t have any limitations, what would they be? (Space is provided in the side column) The answer to this question will identify some of your personal passions. It’s not unusual for a youth worker to just go along with a youth ministry program or yearly calendar because of a sincere desire to serve. That’s a great motivation, and your youth ministry needs this type of attitude. So, if that describes you, thank you. However, it’ll benefit you, your fellow youth ministry leaders, and the ministry if you spend some time defining and pursuing your passions.

LIST 3 THINGS YOU WANT TO ACCOMPLISH IN YOUR MINISTRY WITH CHILDREN/YOUTH:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

LIST 3 ASPECTS OF CHILD/YOUTH MINISTRY THAT YOU ENJOY:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

LIST 3 ASPECTS OF CHILD/YOUTH MINISTRY THAT FRUSTRATE YOU:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

While you may share similar interests with other people, God designed you with a unique personality and skills that add twists and depth to how you contribute. By paying attention to what you're passionate about, you'll discover ways to minister that will be more fulfilling to you, more effective to students, and more honouring to God. On the surface, it might seem that the discovery of individual passions could be an action that may divide your ministry team. Actually, the opposite result usually occurs. God brings volunteers together because each has something special to offer. A healthy youth ministry team needs a variety of passions to minister to a variety of students who have a variety of needs—definitely more needs than one person can meet. If all the youth ministry volunteers are passionate about music, your ministry may have a lot of singing but you'll most likely struggle in areas such as discipleship, outreach, and service. Singular passion leaves you with a lopsided and unhealthy ministry; while variety creates a healthy and vibrant ministry.

Once you discover your passion, you'll be released to pursue and develop your unique design—and you'll soon find yourself more focused, energized, and effective. When you understand your God-given passions, you'll see that you don't need to be at every program or feel guilty about not doing everything on the youth ministry calendar. In some cases, discovering what you're passionate about may lead you to change your current involvements and responsibilities. So, how might you need to adjust your youth ministry activities? How could you expand your ministry into new areas and cut back on other areas? When you, and the other volunteers, are inspired by individual passion and create an orchestra of passions—wow! You'll hear some beautiful youth ministry noise.