



## DINNER TABLE LEADER & MODEL

**TIMING:** Friday afternoon; follows the break after Group Building

**EXPECTATION:** Process is committed to memory by Leader; Model has worked through answers with Speaker Coordinator and the Dinner Table Leader to make sure answers are concise, that there's no story-telling, and that it moves along smoothly. These answers should be written out and memorized by the Model. They can also be provided in writing to the Dinner Table Leader for purposes of memorizing the attributes and color of the Model since there will not be any help with memorizing this.

**PURPOSE:** To bring to awareness that the past can still impact the present and that there are messages, positive and negative, that we take into our adult lives from the past. The negative ones can be the foundation upon which we create false selves. This task also begins the process of building a group container. It serves to help the Staff identify where the women are in their journey.

**ENERGY:** intentional, interested and compassionate

### PRE-WEEKEND PREP

#### Dinner Table Leader

- Contact the Dinner Table Model and set up a time to go through the process.
- Help the Model develop clear responses.
- The Model and Leader will run through the process with a Speaker Coordinator prior to the Weekend to rehearse and adjust wording prior to the weekend to insure that the process is done correctly and that responses are succinct.
- Watch this video to re-familiarize yourself with how to lead the Dinner Table Exercise:  
<https://vimeo.com/617271493/5b54177a50>

#### Dinner Table Model

She **MUST** have a compelling and clear Dinner Table story with clear messages that are negative, not positive.

- Go over the Dinner Table Process and come up with your answers prior to the Weekend, working with the Dinner Table Leader to solidify your responses. The Speaker Coordinator will work with both of you on presentation of the process.
- Answers must be succinct without storytelling.
- Connect to your heart during the process.
- Have two to three clear messages that you took away from this time in your life.  
(Examples: "I'm not worth anything, I must earn love.")
- The Model and Leader will run through the process with a Speaker Coordinator prior to the Weekend to ensure that the Process is done correctly and that responses are succinct.

## DINNER TABLE PROCESS

[Note: Role players/attendees sit on floor rather than pulling chairs]

**Dinner Table Leader** calls the women back from break into the large circle and explains to the Attendees,

*“We are now going to do an exercise that helps us to get to know one another. This exercise might also be helpful to you to learn how sometimes we are still impacted in the present by our experiences in the past. I will ask (**the model**) from the Staff to come and help me with this.”*

**Dinner Table Leader** begins the process and says to the **Dinner Table Model**:

*“I invite you to close your eyes. Take a few deep breaths. Imagine your dinner table and who was around it when you were between the ages of eight and 12 years old. (pause) Imagine what the physical table looked like. (pause) Imagine the mood of the people sitting at the table. (pause) Imagine what you were like and how you felt as you sat at that table. (Pause for an extended time to allow them time to access these memories.)*

*When you are present to this time in your life between the ages of eight and 12, go ahead and open your eyes.”*

### 1. Father

- Ask, “Was your father at the dinner table?”
- Say, “Please choose an Attendee to be your father.”
- Ask, “Where would your father have sat at the table?” Move the chair to that position, and have the role player sit there. (Oftentimes, dad was absent. Ask the woman to place her father wherever she wants in the room to symbolize how dad was absent. For example, she could place dad at a distance from the table with her back to the table or off to the side. DO NOT place the role player so far away from the group that they can’t hear.)
- Stand behind the father and motion for the Attendee to come stand beside you so that she is also behind the role player.
- Ask, “What was your father’s mood during this time of your life? How did he show up to the dinner table?” (His mood is his temperament, attitude, a description of his personality. Be careful to lead the woman away from talking about what her father is like currently.)
- Ask the role player to remember what the Attendee says. Repeat back EVERYTHING she says so that everyone can hear and to help the role player remember.
- Ask, “If your dad were a color, what color would he be?” REPEAT back.  
NOTE: Things to avoid: Do not say things like “good” or “that’s great” when a woman describes her father, mother, siblings, etc. Stay away from making comments about what she says. Just keep moving.

## 2. Mom

- Ask, *“Was your mother at the dinner table?”*
- Repeat the above process for mom (Many times mom was busy serving and didn't sit at the table. The Attendee can choose to have her standing at the table or slightly away from the table to indicate this. Again, DO NOT place the role player so far away from the group that they can't hear.)

## 3. Siblings (2)

- Ask, *“Do you have any siblings?”*
- If they have more than two siblings, say, *“Please choose the two siblings who impacted your life or your experience most during this time of your life.”*
- Repeat the above process for each sibling.

## 4. The Model

- Ask, *“Where did you sit at the table?”*
- Have her sit. Stand behind her as you repeat the above process, having her describe herself and choose a color for herself.
- Have another staff member help you remember what she says if necessary.

## 5. Summarize

- Say, *“Take a look at the people sitting around your table.”* (Give her time to look at each person.)
- Say, *“Now I'd like you to close your eyes.”* (Her eyes will **REMAIN CLOSED** for the rest of the process.)
- Say, *“Think back to that time when you were between the ages of 8 and 12. Imagine the people around your dinner table and become present to that time in your life.”*  
(Give her time to become present to this.)
- As the Attendee keeps her eyes closed, recap each family member's mood and color in order (Dad, Mom, Sibling 1, Sibling 2, Attendee) by saying, *“Dad showed up to the table and he was (have role player repeat back what she said) and his color was (insert whatever she said)”*. The last one will be the Attendee. *“You showed up to the table and you were (have staff member help you repeat back what she said) and your color was (insert whatever color she said).”*

## 6. Messages

- **Keeping her eyes closed**, ask *“Based on this time in your life what messages did you receive, either spoken or unspoken, from the people in your life? What were the things you came to believe about yourself?”* (Say these two sentences together. They are not two separate questions. They are the same question asked differently.) The goal is to get two to three clear messages/beliefs about herself. They should refer to something about her BEING – IDENTITY – WORTH/VALUE, etc. For example, if the woman says, “My dad was a jerk to me.” Ask her, “So what does that say about you?” Don’t sell the woman short by settling for something shallow or something about the other person. Probe a bit more if necessary to get to the message she internalized.
- Repeat what the woman says, but change it to a “you” statement. For example, “I am worthless.” Say back to her, “You are worthless.”
- When you have two or three messages, thank her and say “Good work.” **(NO APPLAUSE)**

### AFTER THE DINNER HAS BEEN MODELED

Dinner Table Leader gives the following instructions.

- **Introduce Small Group Leaders (SGLs).**

*Say, “We are now going to give you an opportunity to do this process with a small group. These are the groups you will be meeting with throughout the weekend. The Small Group Leaders are going to now come up and introduce themselves and tell you who is in their group. We will give you further instructions once they have read off who is in their group and where they are meeting.”*

- **Have the Small Group Leaders come up in front of everyone.**  
Each Small Group Leader will read off the names of the women in her group and tell them what part of the room their group will be meeting in throughout the whole weekend.
- **Dinner Table Leader dismisses the women to their Small Groups**

*Say, “Please grab all of your things and go now to the area where your group is meeting.”*