



ENCOUNTER GOD IN THE CITY

Online Supplement

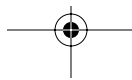
Driver's Ed:
Leader's Guide to Designing
Urban Experiential Discipleship Events





Contents

1. Dynamics of Growth Through Experience	3
2. Choreographing Experiential Discipleship	17
Appendix A: Accumulated Wisdom from Urban Project Directors	42
Appendix B: Tools	48
Appendix C: Formats	54
Notes	74



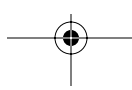
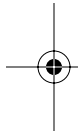


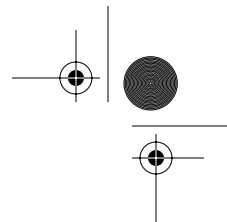
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Dynamics of Growth Through Experience

For those of you who wish to design experiential discipleship events in ways that are transformational for the follower of Jesus and for the city he or she lives in, I ask an important question: What is your goal when you are employing experience as a learning mechanism in the city? Perhaps it is simply to get closer to God, to become more personally in tune with his purpose and his ways. Perhaps you want to help your friends in church or your campus fellowship align their lives more intentionally with God's desire to bring transformation in an American city or somewhere else in the world. Perhaps your goal is to prepare for full-on urban mission. Whatever the objective, you will be helped by understanding some of the basic dynamics of growth as disciples and the strategic role of spontaneous and orchestrated experience in that process.

John Dewey said, "Every experience is a moving force. Its value can be judged only on the ground of what it moves toward and into."¹ Jesus illustrated this very principle when he referred to a dramatic urban tragedy—a tower falling on residents of Siloam (Lk 13:1-5). The sad event itself was undoubtedly regarded by residents as just one of those unfortunate things that happens in a city. But Jesus leveraged it—brought good from it, made the memory of it worth much more—by reflecting on it and by emphasizing a whole-life response. Similarly the apostle James emphasized that





hearing truth is not enough but that the act of *doing* the truth bears a blessing (Jas 1:22-25). Theologian David Bosch has called this “doing theology . . . a hermeneutic of the deed, since doing is more important than knowing or speaking.”² Experiences alone and revelations of truth alone, even dramatic ones, lose their impact over time; their fruit shrivels and diminishes amid the resumption of the normal cadences of life.

It is here that an array of practitioners in education and its fields of service learning, experiential learning and action learning can give us insights into and a contemporary language for what we learn in Scripture about how God has designed us to help each other grow. While those fields stop short of describing what can be accomplished through experiential discipleship, the foundational research they provide is of great help as we seek to choreograph ways for God’s people to be transformed and to participate in the transformation of their communities.

HOT LEAPS

God has designed us to grow; that is our default mode. But how does it happen? The childhood experience of burning our hand on a hot stove gives us a clue. That event is implanted deeply in a way that prevents us from touching a hot stove on purpose again. We truly *learned* about hot stoves. As we watch children grow, seeing them gain skills and knowledge incrementally, we might get the impression that *development* merely implies change that happens in a gradual and linear way. But the truth about the stove was learned in an instant, in what Laurent Daloz calls a “distinct and recognizable leap.”³

I think this leap resembles the development that took place in Peter’s life around the time he first met Jesus (Lk 5:1-11). When Jesus was standing in Peter’s boat, speaking to those on the shore, Peter

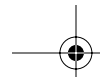


“knew” Jesus as a teacher. When Jesus presumed to tell him where to throw his nets to catch some fish, Peter was undoubtedly incredulous that someone like that would tell him how to do his job, especially since the night of fishing had been completely fruitless. But when Jesus’ instructions led immediately to a huge catch of fish, a miraculous catch, what he “knew” about Jesus instantly changed. He took a hot leap in his knowledge. Jesus reflected openly with Peter on the experience and then invited him into the action of following him. This new knowledge about Jesus was not merely *information*. Peter didn’t just know *more* now than he had when he was rowing his boat into shore that morning. Experience, when coupled with reflection and application, has the power to help us think differently.

THE ROLE OF EMOTION

No Bible study or classroom could have taught my family what we have learned through experience. Our experiences in the city have contained their share of drama, engaging both our minds and our hearts. They have caused us to think and act. Those who would seek the transformation of the city from the inside are faced with a regular parade of vivid and striking experiences that are themselves transformative.

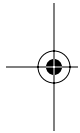
Educational psychologists have demonstrated that our emotional response to dramatic circumstances plays a significant role in learning, that people “learn emotionally as well as cognitively.”⁴ There is strong evidence that “emotional engagement must be a part of the learning process,” according to Daloz.⁵ It is clear that experiences that are part of the process of ministry in the city, when orchestrated in such a way as to engage the emotions, increase a person’s desire to understand. This in itself is the very definition of success when it comes to the educational value of an experience. We will know that



an experience has become transformational by “the extent to which it creates a desire for continued growth.”⁶

Frankly, it often takes an emotional or dramatic experience to confront entrenched forms of thinking or the unexamined assumptions of our upbringing, lifestyle or perspectives, opening us to something new that God has in mind for us. Most of us have an autoimmune-type response to things that would challenge us, disturb us or mess with the beliefs of our family, community or culture.

Emotional experiences often break through the defenses. But emotions are not enough. “Viewpoints that do not fit into the prevailing ideology tend to be dismissed as aberrations or even blocked out entirely,” Jack Mezirow wrote. “We see only what we prefer to see.”⁷ Again, the Scriptures provide an example of this. In John 11, the Pharisees and chief priests practiced this form of dismissal after the dramatic experience of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. The text in this passage contrasts their response with the response of others who saw what Jesus had done and believed in him. After all, a man being brought back to life several days after his death is a fairly dramatic, in-your-face experience. The scene is appropriately described as full of emotion and weeping. But far from believing, the Pharisees and chief priests were more concerned about what this miracle would do to build momentum for Jesus’ ministry, momentum that worried them, threatened them. They brushed aside the miracle itself—dismissed it—for something considered more important—most likely their own preservation. These leaders saw what they wanted—the potential rebellion—rather than seeing God in their midst. This is a helpful reminder to us as we consider the role of experience: Dramatic, emotional experience itself is never enough to create a growth process for the disciple. People have to want to grow.



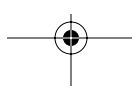


PHASES OF TRANSFORMATION

So if emotion alone is not enough, what is it that causes growth? If it is true that a person's search for meaning drives the learning process,⁸ this explains why we often place ourselves in circumstances that involve a challenge. We intuitively understand that they are fertile ground for the discovery of meaning in our lives. These circumstances certainly have a thousand locations in the city, including various mission opportunities or involvement in civic or social projects. But they can include the seemingly mundane as well, such as the ordinary act of returning to college as an adult learner. Mezirow documented what he calls "phases of transformation,"⁹ which he observed in just such a group. His description of those phases in that population fits with the process of growth we often see demonstrated in well-known individuals in the Bible, who are on a journey of transformation and whose lives lead to the transformation of their circumstances. As we observe some of these phases at work in those adult students' lives, we get essential information that can help us orchestrate effective discipleship experiences, what I have called onramps to transformation.

A disorienting dilemma. Growth and development often begin with what has been called a "disorienting dilemma."¹⁰ For the people Mezirow studied, that meant the upsetting and turbulent experience of becoming a student again after a long hiatus from higher education. This tended to turn their worlds upside down, affecting family life, employment, friendships and sense of self.

The Bible is full of examples of people's worlds being turned upside down, of dilemmas in faith and action. For example, Jesus tells the rich young man, who came to him with a question about eternal life, to give to the poor the very thing his culture considered the mark





of God's blessing: his wealth and possessions (Mk 10:17-21). What a disorienting dilemma for someone who all his life thought wealth was the obvious mark of divine affirmation! Does he take a chance on the person of Jesus or sink back to the comfort of his wealth?

Also consider the apostle Paul, traveling on the road to Damascus on what he thought was a morally right quest to arrest Christians, only to be blinded by the light of Christ, who tells him to completely reverse his course. Not only was he to stop persecuting Christians, he was eventually told to preach Christ's gospel across ethnic lines to a people he once scorned as unclean and outside the family of God (Acts 9). A disorienting dilemma: should he obey the new command, reject everything he knew and give up his position, or choose the familiar where he had prestige and authority?

And consider Nehemiah, who was confronted with the suffering of his people and his growing conviction that he should leave his comfortable position in the court of the king of Persia to lead an impossible effort to rebuild Jerusalem. A disorienting dilemma: if he stays where he is his conscience condemns him; if the king rejects his plan to go and rebuild Jerusalem he could compromise his position and possibly lose his life.

The apostle Peter was told to eat things he had once considered wrong to eat and to accept people whom all his life he had considered unacceptable (Acts 10). A disorienting dilemma means that our beliefs or assumptions are called into question or turned on their head. The dramatic activity of God breaking into our normal existence accomplishes the turning.

Disorientation is par for the course for those doing ministry in the city. I have seen the look of disappointment many times when those who have just given a Christmas basket to a homeless family learn that their acts of charity actually offended or when gifts of spare



change given to a homeless man are turned immediately into alcohol. Do we go on giving? I have seen the look of hurt on the faces of well-meaning helpers when their motives are questioned. I have seen utter bewilderment in the eyes of young urban workers when their tidy explanations of what got people into a state of poverty fall apart and are replaced by complex layers of reality that cloud and confuse their once-settled assumptions. And I have observed and participated in the agony of realizing that sometimes we must choose between two bad choices, between leaving children in a home where there are lots of drugs and little food or ripping them away from their families into protective custody. Disorientation and dilemma are often part of the package. When we get out of our normal circumstances, becoming dislocated or dislodged from the environments we feel most at home in and the situations we most understand, we begin to see how deeply we need to hold on to God.

Self-examination. Mezirow noticed that a disorienting dilemma is often followed by “self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame.”¹¹ The apostle Paul engaged in self-examination when confronted by the disorienting dilemma of his belief system being ripped out from under him. Because he came from a works-based theology, Paul’s world was turned upside down when he was confronted by Christ, then brought face-to-face with the concept that our acceptance before God is based on grace, God’s unmerited favor through Jesus Christ. But dilemma seems to follow dilemma, as seen in his struggle to live fully and consistently committed to God’s Word, even after God’s gracious forgiveness (Rom 7:23). This causes him to declare with shame, “I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. . . . Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?” (Rom 7:18-19, 24). His dilemma naturally led to an exami-



nation of his very being, and he acknowledged that he had fallen short.

Nehemiah responded to his dilemma with an acknowledgment that he shared in the culpability of his ancestors, whose rejection of God had been the basis for their exile in Babylon. He did this even though he was undoubtedly born in either Babylon or Persia, not Israel or Judah. He included himself as a participant in their sin, examining and reflecting on his own role, weeping for days and declaring with shame, "I and my family have sinned" (Neh 1:6).

Along with this self-examination goes what Mezirow calls "a critical assessment of . . . assumptions."¹² I think we can see this in Paul as he reevaluated his assumptions about the place of the Jewish law in his understanding of God, concluding that the answer to his dilemma was in the grace of Jesus Christ (Rom 5:17). Perhaps for Nehemiah it meant reexamining his assumptions about how he would spend the rest of his life. Was he hoping to retire in his royal office?

PAIN WITH A PURPOSE

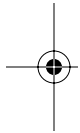
When people face challenges to their way of seeing, which causes a measure of disorientation, and their response is remorse leading to an assessment of who they are or what they think or stand for, what happens at that point in a person's growth and development can be remarkable. Often an awakening of sorts comes when we realize that the turbulence we have just gone through is having a positive outcome. For Mezirow, it is the "recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared."¹³ No pain, no gain.

It was like that for the biblical character Joseph, who had been abandoned by his brothers in a pit and then sold to slave traders who carried him off to Egypt. His world was turned upside down as he went from being his father's favorite son to being a prisoner in a





strange land—"from first to worst," as they say. After a time in jail (that's another story) and a lot more suffering, he found himself placed by Pharaoh himself as a high government official in charge of the nation's agriculture policy. God eventually brought Joseph's brothers to him due to the famine. In allaying their fear that he would exact revenge for their treachery all those years ago, Joseph extended his famous olive branch by saying, "Even though you intended to do harm to me, God intended it for good" (Gen 50:20). In this we see Joseph's acknowledgment that his own difficulties and the process of transformation—his transformation into a sub-Pharaoh and Egypt's transformation into a state of preparedness—were linked. One was necessary for the other to take place. The difficulty led to the birth of something new. Now, the reflection that produced this took twenty years. This perspective didn't dawn on him in the space of a morning prayer time. But in the end, he knew the lesson well enough for it to help him do the right thing.



NEW CHOICES

Such learning breeds a whole new set of possibilities in our lives and can create a flurry of new choices, according to Mezirow. We may create new roles (as Joseph did) or new relationships. We may plan a new course of action and learn the new skills we need to implement this plan. We see this in Nehemiah, for example, as he orchestrated a major public works project in the city (Neh 1—4), took a political office and fought civic corruption (Neh 5). Trying out new roles involves some initial steps. We see this in the newly converted Paul as he traveled to Jerusalem after his experience in Damascus and began immediately to apply his new faith with all the grace of a bull in a china shop (Acts 9:19-30).

Whether or not we follow the phases that Mezirow observed,



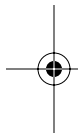


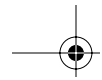
whether or not our experience mirrors that of the people in Scripture, those of us in churches, fellowships and youth groups who would attempt to design creative discipleship experiences will be helped by being able to recognize and anticipate some of those features of transformation in a person's life. Based on those, we will want to construct experiential environments that contribute to effective learning.

MARKS OF EFFECTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Effective learners need four different kinds of abilities, according to David Kolb.¹⁴ The first is in the area of *feeling*, which is engaged by *concrete experience*. Learners pay attention to the feelings that arise in the context of their experience. Paul let this happen in Athens when his very concrete experience of touring the city left him feeling disturbed (Acts 17:16), a feeling the chronicler felt compelled to mention. Nehemiah let this happen as his experience in the process of rebuilding the city of Jerusalem amid opposition and conflict led to fear and frustration, which bubbled over to God (Neh 4:4-5). King David let this happen to him as he considered the violence and treachery of his city, which he acknowledged made him feel as if he wanted to fly away to his place in the country. "O that I had wings like a dove!" he said (Ps 55:6). Habakkuk let the disgust he felt over the moral chaos of the city, the paralyzing fear of an impending invasion ("my steps tremble beneath me" (Hab 3:16)—in other words, "my legs went limp") and his bewilderment at God's attitude toward the invaders be expressed in a cathartic shout to God: "Why do you make me see wrongdoing and look at trouble?" (Hab 1:3).

As we design ministry opportunities that are fertile ground for growth as followers of Christ, there must be space for dealing with the powerful feelings that arise. One of those feelings is fear. Participants may face circumstances that are intimidating or dangerous or

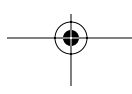


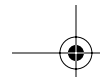


uncomfortable because of unfamiliarity. Daloz reminds us that “fear both blinds and paralyzes. When we are frightened, we don’t want to see too much.”¹⁵ That means our learning environment must include space and patience to help participants come to terms with their fears and find a way ahead. The presence of mentors who will take initiative in the process becomes a crucial strategy for growth.

Reflective observation. True learners don’t let their feelings be the end. They often engage in reflective observation, or watching, according to Kolb.¹⁶ Reflective observation allows us the spiritual space to see the significance of whatever we are observing or experiencing in light of God’s transformational agenda in the world. Paul’s reflective observation of the idols of the city of Athens led to a theological truth about Athenians: they had an instinct to worship. Nehemiah’s reflective observation led him to insight about the motives of Sanballat and Tobiah as they opposed the rebuilding of the wall of the city, alerting him to the need to avoid their treachery. King David’s reflective observation on what he was seeing in his city led him to remember God’s role and to trust that he could be secure where he was. Habakkuk’s reflective observation led him to retain a posture of listening to God and a belief that God would be present even in disaster (“though . . . no fruit is on the vines . . . and there is no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD,” Hab 3:17-18). In his major study of how service learning affects college students, Alexander Astin showed that learning is enhanced and then leveraged by the act of orchestrated reflection, especially when done in a peer-friendly fashion that allows for the processing of the service component.¹⁷

Thinking. According to Kolb, effective learners have developed the skill of abstract conceptualization, that is, thinking. They think about potential frameworks for understanding what they are seeing or experiencing, consider alternative interpretations generated by





that experience, explore potential applications and reframe their beliefs or goals as a result. In a national study of students who had participated in urban experiential discipleship projects sponsored by InterVarsity, students reported that the more cognitive components of those experiences, such as intensive Bible studies, presentations by urban practitioners, group discussions and preliminary reading assignments, formed an important backdrop to the more experiential aspects of the project, such as service components and interactions with children and families.¹⁸ These activities framed the experiences by providing interpretation, explanation, a backdrop of meaning and an overall view. Helping to build a house is an important and gratifying activity, but the effect was amplified as students simultaneously engaged in theological and sociological reflection on the issue of shelter, the question of why families are homeless and the forces in a city that cause certain people to reside in substandard residences. A formal process of considering these questions juxtaposed with actual experiences of meeting needs in the city became a source of transformation.

Doing. Effective learners engage in what Kolb describes as active experimentation or *doing*. This is at the root of what sets experiential discipleship apart from the service, service learning, action learning or experiential learning engaged in by many universities and churches. It is the leveraging and development of personal transformation into a foundation and vehicle for the transformation of neighborhoods and communities. It is the insistence on whole-life application toward the goal of kingdom transformation. It is the promise of Jesus that if we move past acquiring information—hearing—to the point of implementing truth—doing—we will be blessed (Lk 11:28). Ministry opportunities in the city that utilize experience as a foundation for transformation will then by definition go beyond merely painting



a house or doing a neighborhood cleanup. They will direct the disciple to onramps that will lead him or her to actions focused on addressing problems in a holistic manner, with the potential of long-term transformation.

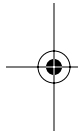
Paul's experience in the city of Philippi is a good example of this. He had just come from Troas, a significant city in Northwest Asia Minor and a Roman seaport, where he'd had a dream (Acts 16:9) that led him to Philippi, a strategic gateway city on the Egnatian Way, "the highway connecting the Roman Empire from East to West."¹⁹ While there, he and Silas engaged in several levels of ministry in the city, which grew out of both chosen and spontaneous experiences there. These included wide-ranging experiences with Lydia, an affluent businesswoman (vv. 14-15),²⁰ and confrontational, liberational and spiritual ministry with an exploited and possessed slave and her owners (vv. 16-19). They included public proclamation in the marketplace, the strategic "center of public life"²¹; redemptive suffering at the hands of the authorities, who beat them and threw them in prison (vv. 22-24); prison ministry and witness (v. 25); and individual witness to a civil servant (vv. 29-32). They also included reciprocal sharing of compassion with the same man (vv. 33-34) and the intentional influencing of the criminal justice system to ensure its integrity (vv. 37-39).

Consider how Paul's *actions* in Philippi contributed to transformation at several levels. The gospel reached across social stratifications from the rich to the poor, from the powerful to the powerless and across gender and class, employing a full range of methodologies from church planting to the confrontation of systemic injustice. Individuals were liberated, communities of faith were begun, secret attempts at circumventing the law were exposed, converts were instantly placed in a position of hospitality and giving, and the power of God was demonstrated over spiritual and physical realms. All of



the *doing* that emerged from Paul's experiences in the city became the basis for long-term influence there.

Nehemiah demonstrated the traits of an effective learner as well. His disorienting dilemma, his strong feelings of remorse, his reflection and self-examination, his critical observation and assessment of the situation on his midnight ride and his corresponding plan of action led to an historic response. He orchestrated the transport of materials, the establishment of a vision, the creation of a labor force, a strategy for defense, a just political system and an environment where people voluntarily repopulated the devastated urban core of the city. The wall of Jerusalem was rebuilt in fifty-two days, but more important, the national identity and social cohesiveness of the whole people were established. Nehemiah felt, he watched, he thought and he acted. As a disciple of Yahweh, his experience of being confronted with the poverty and the social disintegration of Jerusalem resulted in one of the few positive chapters in that nation's history.



ACCEPTING THE BATON

Understanding the dynamics of growth in the life of a disciple, especially growth that leads to transformation, prepares us for orchestrating experiences for our fellowships and churches that can bring transformation at both an individual and a community level. That's the next onramp in our windshield.





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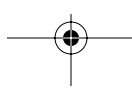
Choreographing Experiential Discipleship

The many spontaneous experiences my family and I have had since moving to Lowell have provided the raw material for God to use in an experiential discipleship process—experience, reflection, whole-life application—to strip away the layers from our lives that cover over and twist the people he wants us to be. I can testify that God has used the experiential discipleship process in response to those experiences in more than our own makeover as well. Through them he has provided clear transformational influence in the community as we have participated with our neighbors in proactive change.

But I have also discovered in fifteen years of leading urban experiential discipleship service and learning programs in Fresno and in twenty-four other U.S. cities that we can *orchestrate* a process of transforming the city while being transformed ourselves. This chapter explores how experiential discipleship programs can be designed by average followers of Christ, including members of campus fellowships, staff of missional agencies, pastors of large or small congregations or of youth, and Christian universities and colleges. Friends who simply wish to help each other grow in Christ and make a difference in their community also can enter into an experiential discipleship process with each other.

MORE THAN SPONTANEOUS EXPERIENCE

What we are suggesting is not merely *experience* or *service*. Scores of

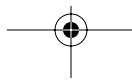




groups across the country send teams on short-term missions with these emphases, and for many people they are significant. One study found that each year, U.S.-based sending entities (for example, mission agencies, churches, universities) send about a million people on such short-term mission experiences.¹ While many of these are overseas, a great number of churches, campus fellowships and universities already conduct “service projects” in the urban core of the United States—America’s inner cities. These often involve participants in neighborhood cleanup, house painting, fence repair, and serving at a soup kitchen or homeless shelter. Participants often report that they are changed by the experience. A few of these projects have a track record over many years, have been thoughtfully constructed and reconstructed, and incorporate complex goals and outcomes beneficial to both the participant and the neighborhoods where they are held.

But in my experience, a significant number are hastily assembled, conceived and constructed without the partnership of the communities where they are held. They often contain little or no preparation for the participants and no evaluation or debriefing, no plan for further steps and no way to evaluate impact in the community. They have the potential for causing harm, and we need to keep that in mind as I outline some of the basic components of an effective experiential discipleship event in a city.

The process of putting together an experiential discipleship project that is truly win-win for the participants and the urban community isn’t a mystery or a secret. But it involves a few indispensable components. In this chapter we will look at ways of orchestrating the basic elements of experiential discipleship—experience, reflection, whole-life application—as well as some specific tools to support these elements, based on what I have observed in the best InterVarsity projects I have served in across the country. I will also pay atten-





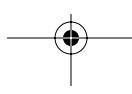
tion to the ways those practices are affirmed by developmental theory. I will outline the essential design features of experiential discipleship events (see “Best Practices,” appendix A) and provide a handful of models and formats that can be used as templates for groups wishing to experience God’s transforming power in the city while contributing to the process of transformation (see appendix C).

DESIGNING EXPERIENCE

We are not God. We can set up the structures, the opportunities, the proximity to a location where something transformational might happen, but ultimately it’s the Spirit of God who makes it happen, not us. As Scott Bessenecker, director of InterVarsity’s Global Projects and Global Urban Trek, said, “As with the ark of the covenant, we can put together all the pieces, but it only has purpose and meaning as God comes to dwell in it.”

For example, in the middle of a one-week urban “plunge,” I had arranged for participants to have an afternoon off. They played volleyball in the run-down gymnasium of the ministry we were partnering with. Some of the windowpanes of that former warehouse were broken out, and right in the middle of one of the games a head poked its way into one of those windows. It freaked some of the students out as it just stayed there, “hanging” on the wall, watching the game. After the shock, we invited it and its body into the gym. That head belonged to a Mexican man who had made his way to Fresno only three weeks earlier and was working in the fields. One of our students translated the dramatic story of his dangerous journey to the city and the reality of his life there as a newcomer. Sometimes the best we can do is design a format in which something like that is likely to happen. We place ourselves in proximity to potential.

Partnership first. How do you place yourself in proximity? You

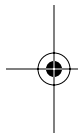




get close. You show up a lot. You partner with a local agency or church that has an ongoing, incarnational presence in the community. You absorb their ethos. You boost their efforts with an infusion of fresh energy, enthusiasm and resources, rather than creating your own thing. Experiential discipleship projects done in partnership build on an existing relational network and allow you to define goals that are determined from local knowledge rather than from the often erroneous assumptions of outsiders, who habitually define urban communities by their most obvious needs, rather than by the natural assets (people, institutions, strengths) they contain.

Developing this kind of relationship takes time. It requires creating a context where trust can develop. We have to trust that the agency or inner-city church has the expertise necessary, that it will care for our participants as well as utilize them for accomplishing their goals. The agency or church has to believe that we will bring participants who have been oriented or briefed on their goals and methods. This means the planners of the project and the director of the agency or pastor of the church need to make some effort to get to know each other and to understand each other's backgrounds and goals. This is especially crucial in crosscultural contexts, where divergent ethnic-specific methodologies are potential landmines.

Exposure to children and families. Once you have the partnership set, a few basic experiences present the most potent opportunities for transformation. These can be mixed and matched, depending on your goals. If possible, priority should always be given to exposing participants to children and families in the city. It's there that the forces that are shaping life are at their clearest. It's in children and families that the drama of the human story makes its most powerful appearance and the needs and the assets of the community are embodied.

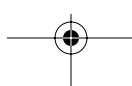


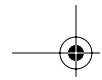


The form this contact takes can vary and be defined in partnership with the agency or church, but it might include simply helping to staff a literacy, mentoring or afterschool program, or working alongside people as they build or repair their homes. It may include attending court appearances with young people as they face sentencing or participating in a program designed to reach out to the families of incarcerated men and women. Or it may involve attending drug rehab or Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, where stories of the fallout of addictions are told.

Those who can, do. Another essential experience is *exposure to practitioners*. This means that, if you are working with a church or agency, you orchestrate opportunities for participants to hear the pastor or the director explain the mission and reflect on why they do what they do, how they do it and what outcomes they are looking for. On one Habitat for Humanity project, participants were hammering drywall in place and making great progress. But the director stopped them for a moment and reminded them, “Your job is not merely to put drywall up on studs. Your job is to build relationships with the family of this home as you work.” Practitioners bring experience and perspective that participants need in order to understand the significance of their actions.

Such input can be the difference between mere service and transformational influence over the long haul. Students serving in InterVarsity’s Pink House, a residential urban ministry training center in Fresno, packed boxes of food at the community food bank. Many of them said it felt good to provide direct service, but the most impact came later when the director of the food bank involved the students in a food insecurity simulation. She provided them with facts about hunger and assigned role-plays that required them to access food resources with limited knowledge, limited language skills, limited





transportation and a limited budget. Students talked about the power of the simulation for many months after.

Holy sweat. Of course there is simply no replacement for offering participants *a chance to work up a sweat*. The act of digging a trench, swinging a hammer, sweeping a floor, demolishing a building, handing out fliers door-to-door, painting a room, planting a tree, cleaning an alley or running a neighborhood carnival employs all the senses and catalyzes the learning process. These activities are inherently satisfying, and the sore muscles afterward are a reminder that something of value was accomplished. The significance of their impact should not be disparaged merely because it is limited. In the middle of such work experiences come unexpected epiphanies that alter participants' perspectives.

That happened to Scott, who participated in a project in Seattle, where he helped a group clear out a house that had been trashed. One room was such a mess, the interns had to shovel debris into bins. In one corner of that room Scott found a teddy bear, one that had been loved way past its time. In the other corner he spotted and carefully picked up a syringe from amid the heaps of trash. Suddenly he realized that the child who had loved that teddy bear had lived in a home with the user of the syringe. Scott's mundane experience of clearing the room of trash was transformed into an occasion for prayer and a reflection on the widespread consequences of addiction. Scott now leads an internship program that places students in such a community.

Tailor-made. The potential transformational impact of any project is extended if we can *match the interests of the participants with an appropriate context*. For example, one project in Philadelphia takes into consideration the majors of the college students applying to its summer program. Students studying premed are placed with a clinic run

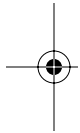


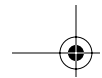


by Christian doctors in the heart of North Philly. Education majors go to a Christian afterschool tutoring program. In a program in New York City, business majors helped an agency for the homeless write a business plan to expand their operation. The students were amazed that such a significant task was being entrusted to them, one that would significantly expand the capacities of the agency, and they were diligent to do an exceptional job.

Lasting impact. The above is an example of providing experiences that *contribute to enhancing or expanding the capacities* of the agency or church where participants are serving. Such transformation increases effects at both ends: participants feel they're doing work that matters and that will last beyond their service, and agencies and churches find their reach extended and their mission strengthened.

Problem solving. Social scientists have demonstrated that experiences *focused on problem solving* provide the most fertile ground for transformation of the participant. Proponents of what has been called "action learning" suggest that both the nature of the problem and the setting in which participants tackle the problem influence the outcome in the life of the participant.² For example, let's say a group of friends from church decides to renovate a building for a charity. They have construction experience and the charity is in a familiar and comfortable part of town. *Familiar* problem, *familiar* setting. This experience likely will not be a source of great transformation in their lives, though their involvement with the charity will deepen their understanding of its issues. Put the project in what they consider to be a dangerous part of town or in a different city, where the building codes are unfamiliar, or make the charity one that requires them to negotiate details across lines of class or race, and you have a *familiar* problem (renovation) in an *unfamiliar* setting. That means they have to be creative, and their learning curve will grow at a tremendous

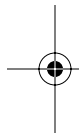




pace. Now remove their construction experience, which means they have an *unfamiliar* problem (renovation) in an *unfamiliar* setting (dangerous neighborhood or new city). It is here that their experience is most likely to give them the broadest knowledge of the problem and lead to the greatest transformation. They are paying attention in every way and having to depend on each other, the charity and God in ways that will change the way they see the problem and the solution. As human-resource developer Michael J. Marquardt said, “We are most challenged when we are in unfamiliar problems in unfamiliar settings, where we can unfreeze some of our previous ways of doing things and develop new ways of thinking.”³

What constitutes an unfamiliar setting will depend on the nature and background of your group. A “dangerous neighborhood” might not be an unfamiliar setting for members of your group. For instance, Fresno’s Hope Now for Youth works with former gang members who know what it’s like to exercise courage in the streets and alleys of the city. The agency assists them by preparing them for the work world, finding them jobs and mentoring them through their first year on the job. Many of them support the agency by speaking to church groups, but they routinely say that standing in front of middle-class people (unfamiliar setting) and having to speak (unfamiliar problem) is terrifying. They would rather walk across an opposing gang’s turf wearing the wrong color. The point is, everything is relative when it comes to defining “unfamiliar territory.” You need to know your group.

Simulated experience. Sometimes we want to give participants the chance to *get into someone else’s experience*. We might want them to understand homelessness better, but giving a talk on the subject isn’t going to cut it. We might want them to understand something of what it means to be marginalized or how it feels to be the victim of an unjust economy or what happens to a person when her or she





is involuntarily displaced. Obviously we can't orchestrate an actual experience like this. Instead we use specially designed incidents: simulations, assignments, games, on-site studies, designated problems and intentional circumstances. These might include setting up an unjust society in which certain participants are given privileges or changing the rules of a familiar board game to teach about economic injustice.⁴

Beyond simulations or games are actual field experiences that are still technically simulations in that they are artificial and have a beginning and end. But the lessons can be deep. Consider what Elizabeth English, an InterVarsity staff person at the University of Redlands, did with her students to help them identify with the poor, learn about Jesus and engage the campus and their hearts with more of the gospel. The fruit of this limited experience went beyond her expectations, and she recently wrote this description:

Twenty University of Redlands students lived in boxes by the library for a week this spring. Besides bundling in blankets for our usual evening Bible studies and prayer times, we threw a creative outreach event, visited local ministries to learn and serve, put on an art exhibit, and enjoyed talking with people about the God who walks among the poor with compassion and justice.

A professor brought his religious experience class to talk with us, and students were drawn into a gospel they had never heard. One student from that class has since joined our fellowship and begun following Jesus, and a woman from his dorm has grown in boldness in prayer and witness as she's watched his interest blossom into faith. A disillusioned Hindu told me he was glad we were raising awareness about social issues, but





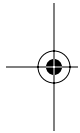
what really fascinated him was this Jesus I described. An international student from Hong Kong, intrigued by our little box city, joined us for the week. A few months later, as she prepared to return home, she had already made plans to attend church with their family's Filipino housekeeper, because she "must know this Jesus for herself."

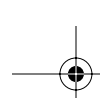
A fraternity pledge class joined us for a night. What more exciting thing is there to do on campus? The InterVarsity student in the fraternity was elated, and grew as he interpreted things for his friends. Why are the poor blessed? What can we do with our privilege? Do we really need all our stuff? What is the gospel? These are among the questions we continue to ask. Conviction abounds. May Jesus lead us to live His answers.

Challenge and support. Simulations such as these require a combination of challenge and support to be effective. Support, according to Laurent Daloz, consists of those things that lead to trust and a sense of safety, such as listening, understanding, sharing and advocating. Challenge consists of

creating a cognitive dissonance, a gap between one's perceptions and expectations ("I think I should be there, but I see myself here"). . . . Mentors toss little bits of disturbing information in their students' paths, little facts and observations, insights and perceptions, theories and interpretations—cow plops on the road to truth—that raise questions about their students' current worldviews and invite them to entertain alternatives to close the dissonance, accommodate their structures, think afresh.⁵

Daloz has demonstrated that without high simultaneous levels of



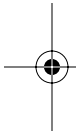


challenge and support our influence on others is diminished in specific ways. If we provide low levels of challenge and low levels of support, the result is *stasis*—no change. If we provide lots of support but little challenge, the result is worse than stasis. It is what Daloz calls *confirmation*. This means our participants' perceptions and assumptions are more deeply ingrained—confirmed in their minds. If we have high challenge but low support for those we are trying to mentor in a growth process, the result is withdrawal or *retreat*. When someone's in our face all the time, it's like touching a hot stove; we pull back. For growth to take place, there must be equal levels of challenge and support, preferably “both going on at once.”⁶

Onramps to relationships. Finally, experiences that have potential for *developing into ongoing relationships* with agencies, churches or key individuals in the city should be given priority over splashy, one-time events that provide instant bang but little chance for longer-term decisions on the part of participants about further service or vocational choices. We want those in our experiential discipleship projects to have options for further vocational or volunteer service in the church or agency they worked with or alongside individuals they met.

DESIGNING REFLECTION

InterVarsity recently commissioned a national task force on experiential discipleship projects. Some interesting facts emerged about the importance of reflection in the process of transformation.⁷ InterVarsity staff leading these projects discovered that, rather than merely teaching their students that sometimes children pick up a breakfast of potato chips, a candy bar or a soda on their way to school, they can actually feed the participants those things on one morning of the project and have them reflect on how well they did, how well they felt, how well they concentrated for the rest of the morning. The staff discovered that





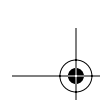
when they taught the students, gave them an experience, then led them in reflection, something more permanent was achieved.

Urban project staff discovered that they could just teach participants about the difficulty of obtaining housing for the poor, or they could also send those participants out to find housing themselves with some binding limitations (for example, “you don’t speak English,” “you don’t have transportation,” “you don’t have child care”). Again, when they did both, and added reflection, the impact was far greater. Rather than only teaching students about limited health-care options, they sent their students to an emergency room in a poor neighborhood for the morning. In the afternoon the students interviewed a specialist in medical technology, asking him or her to identify the people for whom the latest advances would be available. Finally, they debriefed the experiences.

A reflective environment. Reflection can come spontaneously, as it did for Scott as he held the teddy bear and syringe, but we should never assume it will happen on its own. Instead, those of us who are attempting to leverage experience to produce transformation should design a process of reflection. As some have noted, “Reflection must be an intentional event and complex activity in which feelings and cognition are closely interrelated and interactive.”⁸ This means at the very least that we work with participants to relive the experience, debriefing the feelings associated with it and drawing conclusions through discussion, prayer and interaction.

The environment in which we conduct an orchestrated process of reflection is important, as are the other components of any transformational learning process. Mezirow has shown that there must be a warm and supportive learning community as well as reflective discourse and the possibility of committed action growing out of the reflection.⁹ In other words, reflection isn’t just “navel gazing.” In addi-

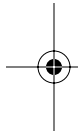




tion, Mezirow says it's important in the process of reflection that participants get accurate and complete information, that they are free from coercion and self-deception, that they have the ability to weigh evidence and evaluate arguments, and that they are presented with alternative perspectives.¹⁰ Participants need space, permission and tools to help them make their own decisions about what they are seeing or experiencing, rather than feeling pressured to adopt a party line. This breeds true ownership of the conclusions that are reached and a longer shelf life for those conclusions after the event has ended.

The role of Scripture in reflection. Interaction with God's Word is an irreplaceable feature of experiential discipleship, forming the foundation for the reflective process. It is what separates experiential discipleship events from what academic institutions often call service learning or action learning. The interaction with Scripture necessary to inaugurate real transformation in the lives of participants requires a significant portion of time, a high level of competence by a leader and a serious commitment on the part of participants to understand and apply what is being studied. True experiential discipleship projects will never settle for brief devotional presentations.

The biblical texts chosen for this exploration may vary but will often be ones that focus on themes of justice, God's concern for the poor and oppressed, the ministry of Jesus or the message of the prophets. Certainly the format chosen for this exploration should be one in which participants can be engaged at many levels, including individual study, small-group discussion and whole-group dialogue. Certainly they must be helped to observe what is in the text, be given tools necessary to interpret and consider the implications of the text in the context of their service in the city and then be helped to apply the example given, the principle outlined, the behavior to imitate, the command to obey, the pattern to follow or the strategy to employ.



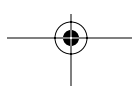


Scripture is a double-edged sword, one that cuts to the core of issues in our lives as disciples and in the city as well.

Those facilitating the study of Scripture can carefully link biblical text to the experiences they know their participants will have in the city. For example, if they know that those experiences will be characterized by crosscultural or cross-class features, they may want to choose passages of Scripture that explore racial reconciliation and solidarity. If they know the nature of their service in the city deals with some form of human bondage or addiction, they may want to explore biblical passages that emphasize liberation. If they know they will be working with agencies addressing issues of housing or job creation, they might want to explore biblical themes of systemic justice. The biblical text chosen forms the bedrock of meaning that helps to support the experience of the participants, gives them a spiritual lens for what they are observing and, most important, offers a way for them to interact with that experience at a *soul* level, where all true transformation occurs.

The role of prayer in reflection. Some urban experiences are so troubling that there must be an avenue for reflection that engages the spirit, not the intellect alone. On one such project, a child told some students that there were no groceries in her house, so they took her to buy a few bags of basic supplies. When they entered the front door of the child's apartment, they saw a living room full of adults sprawled on couches, doing drugs. On another occasion, students arrived at the home of some children who had been part of a weekly reading program at the exact moment Child Protective Services had arrived to extract the children from the home. They were crying, saying through hot tears, "But today is reading club!" as the officials dragged them into the van.

In both cases the students were traumatized. Though we had stud-

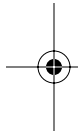




ied biblical themes that might have helped them interpret what they were seeing, and though we had led a process of debriefing the experience, what helped the students most was a time of prayer for the children and their families, for wisdom about what to do in the future and for other children in the neighborhood who might be in similar situations. Prayer brings perspective, reminds us that we are not in charge, helps us overcome discouragement and gives us hope that God has other resources available.

Sometimes it is even difficult to pray through issues we are exposed to. Our prayers seem shallow and superficial. We have found that the recorded prayers of God's people throughout history who have struggled through dramatic circumstances and dark nights of the soul can provide a level and depth of reflection that exceeds our own. People such as Martin Luther King Jr., Mother Teresa, Teresa of Avila, Francis of Assisi and Sojourner Truth have prayed prayers that we can take sustenance from.

Principles of debriefing. A reflective feature should be woven into the fabric of any experiential discipleship project—at any moment the leader deems it appropriate. At the very least, a choreographed debriefing should follow every significant planned experience (such as a city tour or a whole-group service component) or a simulated situation (such as a game, role-play or interactive feature designed to teach on a particular theme or issue). A debriefing process is best supported by a few key principles. Aside from asking pointed questions, leaders should enter the discussion only when necessary. Participants should be made to feel free to process their experience openly with each other at a peer level. Leaders must provide guidelines for the peer interaction, such as how to disagree without offending or alienating others, how important it is to share honestly without trying first to polish opinions and how to focus





on what the experience made them feel.

Trainer Jonathan French contends that those who facilitate debriefing should ask participants what they thought the planners wanted them to learn. The facilitator must then tie participant comments together, weaving a holistic picture of the issue or theme they are trying to highlight. Leaders must remember that debriefings are not a critique of the experience itself. Organizational developers Townsend and Gebhardt remind us that debriefings are not a pronouncement of success or failure or an opportunity to place blame for a negative experience reaction.¹¹ Instead facilitators must steer the evaluation to help participants see the hand of God in bringing insights to the surface or to highlight some aspect of God's work in the community or to feature an aspect of growth. Facilitators can leverage the experience for greater effect if they can help participants discover aspects of their own participation that either helped or hindered the process of learning or their ability to receive the lesson that the Spirit of God was trying to convey.

Debriefing must always contain a chance to write down thoughts and feelings, perhaps in a journal or in a letter that can be mailed by the leader at a later date. Finally, the debriefing should prepare participants to tell their story to family or friends when they return. It helps to have several versions handy, from a few sentences in summary to a more thorough explanation. Looking beyond immediate reentry to "normal" life, leaders should help participants create an expectation for employing an intentional strategy of response over the following months.

DESIGNING WHOLE-LIFE APPLICATION

Whole-life application is where the rubber meets the road in the quest for kingdom transformation. We design experiences in the city



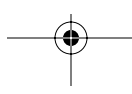


and then lead a process of reflection and debriefing in order to escort God's people through some initial steps of obedience to his mission. Our aim is whole-life application of the things participants learned in a manner that helps them progress in God's kingdom work of establishing justice and building communities where shalom is present.

Application requires more than the *intent* to apply a lesson learned. A Bible study on love might lead someone to say, "I will apply this by being more loving," but we all know how generic applications such as that fade from memory the second they leave our mouths. Application that leads to transformational influence in the kingdom of God requires a few key onramps. As we plan projects, whether long or limited, simple or sophisticated in their design, we need to give thought to these onramps.

First, we will want to prepare to link participants in *relationships* with potential partners, mentors or sponsors who will walk with them in their response, receive their enthusiasm, temper it with wisdom and help them deepen their experience beyond the confines of the event itself. This might mean setting up ongoing volunteer opportunities for participants at the agency or church where they served or investigating options for future internships or even full-time employment there. At the very least it means being sure participants were introduced to someone with expertise in the response they are seeking to make.

For example, Katie Parker lived in an InterVarsity ministry house in an inner-city neighborhood. There she began to experience a growing awakening regarding God's work among the urban poor and the options for serving in those contexts. Her InterVarsity campus minister introduced her to a program that placed students for a summer in squatter communities in one of eight megacities in the developing world. That summer she served in a garbage community in





Cairo, then returned to the States to pray about her next steps.

Katie accepted a year-long urban internship position that deepened her sense of call to minister among the urban poor vocationally. After further prayer she accepted the directorship of the Cairo program the following year. Her campus minister then connected her to a handful of agencies that specialize in incarnational ministry among the urban poor. She is now applying to serve a longer term working with an agency doing HIV/AIDS work and community development in one of the largest slums in the world. At every step her campus minister was being proactive in making potential connections.

Such connections should provide options for further exploration that are appropriate to the response each participant is ready to make. This means we should be ready with alternatives for various *levels* of response—onramps with inclines from gentle to steep.

What do these look like? We need to be ready with forms of response that can be *woven into* the fabric of “normal” life once the event is over. They might include options for weekly or monthly service in the city or ways to place a participant’s knowledge, education, skill set or network in the service of a ministry. We also need to be ready with a handful of compelling options that call people to radical decisions requiring them to *leave* normal life. This might include anything from changing majors to signing up for limited-term, full-time internships. But it could also mean adopting new lifestyle options, such as taking public transportation, joining a church of an ethnicity different than their own or taking on new leadership roles.

Finally, a crucial element in providing transformational ministry options in the city is the creation of a *community of peers* who want to journey on an onramp together. God certainly calls individuals. He called Abraham out of Ur and Joseph into Egypt. He called Nehemiah to Jerusalem and Jonah to Nineveh. But he also calls teams



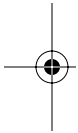


of people. He called Paul and Silas to Philippi, Paul and Barnabas to Antioch and a multiethnic team to accompany Paul and Luke as they ministered in multiple cities, as recorded in the book of Acts. Increasingly the postmodern context in which we minister requires that the call of God we verbalize be more than the extension of propositional truths. It requires the additional validation of community.

After spending two years in InterVarsity's Pink House, Saji and Bindhu Oommen worked for two ministry organizations; one focused on refugee resettlement and another on mission and service opportunities with a denomination. During that time they prayed and built relationships in the hopes of constructing a team with which they would go into an international urban setting to engage in a unique ministry linking the middle class to the poor. They did not see themselves initiating this ministry alone. And God has answered their prayer; today they are launching their ministry in New Delhi, India, with a team of friends.

MODELS AND FORMATS

Orchestrating experiential discipleship events requires matching your basic goals for the group with a format that has the best chance of achieving those goals. There may be factors that influence the size or sophistication of your goals, such as limitations of financial resources or the particular confines of the agency or church you are working with. The following are models of urban experiential discipleship projects designed to achieve various degrees of transformation in participants and to lead to onramps for transformational engagement with the city. They were developed through more than thirty years of experimentation in InterVarsity's national program of urban projects, which involved twenty-six cities and more than one thousand participants annually.¹²

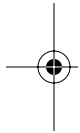


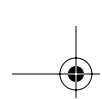


Tours. What can be accomplished in a one-day project? One gentle onramp can give people who have little experience—and perhaps no previous interest—in the city a brief introduction to God’s concern for the urban poor and to the agencies and churches making a difference in that context. On one such tour, sixty church members in Fresno spent the morning studying the book of Jonah in the heart of a downtown church. They discovered God’s concern for a very wicked city and his call to Jonah to see that city as God himself saw it. They considered the ways human beings tend to run away from God when he calls them to a difficult task.

Then the tour group walked out the door of the church and into a downtown farmers’ market, where they bought lunch from Hmong, Laotian, Russian, Mexican and Armenian farmers. They ate that lunch in a controversial area of the city, where revitalization efforts were being debated. From there they boarded a bus and toured three high-poverty, high-crime neighborhoods, stopping in each to meet representatives of ministries there. As a result, those ministries signed up about forty new volunteers. A year later, those volunteers were still hard at work.

Dips. Your goals may be focused mostly on team building and direct service or perhaps on the evangelistic opportunity created when Christians and non-Christians work side-by-side on a project. A short, intense format such as a weekend project might serve these goals best, allowing participants to “dip their toes” in God’s mission. An advantage of this “dip” format is that it is accessible to many people, even to non-Christians. It is also easy to fit dips into the context of your other goals during the year. They are fairly cost-effective and easy to administer. Short formats such as this are especially adept at opening new categories in the minds of participants and for creating new relationships, because people tend to invite their friends to dips.





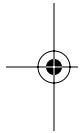
In addition, dips attract a broad cross-section of people, even including those of limited or no faith. However, dips do have limitations: they can't go very deeply into issues or Scripture, they may give the false impression that this is all there is to ministry in the city, and they provide very limited exposure to ministries active in the city.

Dip formats most often include a brief, Friday-evening orientation, which contains such features as worship, a welcome and brief orientation by agency or church staff and small-group interaction or prayer. Leaders should express their hopes for the participants, make reference to components of the schedule and state expectations for behavior, emergency procedures and so on. A portion of Saturday morning should be reserved for significant interaction with Scripture, preferably on a theme that applies to the service component later in the day. Late morning and afternoon are dedicated to service.

Dinner might be taken at an ethnic restaurant or cooked by members of the neighborhood in which the project takes place. Saturday evening might be spent hearing a speaker on an urban ministry subject, watching a video on an urban ministry theme or hearing a testimony from someone in the neighborhood whose life has been transformed. The evening might conclude with discussion and reflection in small groups.

Sunday morning might include worship at a church whose ministry you want to feature, followed by a guided reflection on what God was saying during the weekend and an invitation to select an appropriate onramp for further service.

Plunges. Perhaps your goals include something more substantial than can be achieved in a weekend, such as exposing your participants to a range of urban ministry models or a broader cross-section of Scripture, or creating meaningful interactions with residents in a distressed neighborhood. At a minimum you'll need a week or two





for a “plunge.” A plunge can fit in a limited span of time, such as over spring break or a weeklong vacation. Its schedule can be more diverse than a dip’s, giving time for deeper exploration of Scriptures and greater exposure to urban churches and agencies. It also allows for conflict and community issues to arise among participants (which is actually a good thing) and the space to deal with them.

Though plunges are long enough for participants to gain more exposure to the experiences and issues of the city, they are not long enough to explore those issues and experiences very deeply, which may be frustrating to some. Also, because plunges are longer than dips, they are slightly less accessible to people.

Often the first full day of a plunge is dedicated to orientation. This orientation includes what happens during a dip format but often goes beyond that by sending participants out in groups into the city to become familiar with its assets and needs. This might include experiential features from the very beginning, such as assignments to take public transportation on a certain route or to engage in an informational scavenger hunt designed to orchestrate interactions with various sectors of the city. These experiential features should be followed by a debriefing in which participants gather to discuss what they learned.

The daily schedule of a plunge ideally includes a significant portion of time (two to three hours) for in-depth Scripture study, followed by relational engagement in an urban neighborhood through the auspices of a local agency or church. This might include an afterschool kids club, a neighborhood outreach event or a renovation project with chances to work alongside a family. The options are endless.

Leaders can schedule a series of evening events to accomplish a mix of goals. Some evenings might include special speakers or media, while others might utilize role-plays or simulations. Given the in-





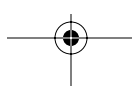
tense nature of the subjects participants are exploring, it's always a good strategy to schedule a night off with no planned activities. At the end of the plunge, a significant amount of time is reserved for debriefing and response.

Immersion. Maybe your goal is to develop relationships with individuals in neighborhoods and agencies, making a difference long term. Perhaps you want to include an unhurried context in which participants can deal deeply with the issues they are seeing in the city, matching those issues with a comprehensive biblical exploration. You might hope to create a living situation among participants that challenges their comfort zones and forces them to deal with interpersonal issues as well as the challenging nature of God's work in the city. These goals may require several weeks or perhaps an entire summer. The immersion, or internship, format may be most appropriate.

This format allows for the slow and sure acquisition of ministry values by placing participants in the equivalent of full-time internships with agencies or churches. It gives participants a realistic view and experience of the city. It also provides a context for developing relationships between participants and the space and structure necessary for conflict resolution. Of all the formats, immersion has the greatest potential for exposing participants to a wide spectrum of urban leaders, agencies and churches, as well as allowing methodical and in-depth exploration of biblical themes.

This format is limited mostly to students who can afford to lose a summer's income. It also assumes that someone is available from year to year to plan and execute the event. In fact, it depends on it. Agencies and churches need to come to trust the directors of such events and to know they will build expertise from year to year. Not every pastor or staff of a missional agency is in a position to do this.

The immersion, or internship, format includes the basic compo-





nents of the other formats but allows for greater breadth and depth in each. Orientations can include far more significant cross-class or crosscultural training. Debriefings can include more peer-to-peer interactions, more leader-to-participant counseling and more detailed references to potential onramps for response, including agency and church representatives extending specific invitations for involvement or employment. Also, pairs or small teams of participants in immersions can be placed for periods with agencies or churches working in a variety of urban settings.

The best of these immersion formats attempt to match the interests of the participants with the nature of the ministry. The educational component of these formats can be offered in a classroom setting and involve a steady stream of practitioners as instructors. We can build experiential features into the instruction and, as discussed earlier, conducting these on-site (at either a specific agency or a noteworthy part of a neighborhood) will increase their effectiveness. Formats of up to eight weeks provide the best opportunity for exploring the themes relevant to transformational ministry in the city comprehensively, while still being accessible to students and young emerging leaders.

Weekly. Finally, it may be that your goals include involving your friends or your group in weekly experiential discipleship. You want them to learn how to weave discipleship in the city into the fabric of their lives. The chief advantage of this format is that it sends a signal that regular involvement in urban ministry can be a normal part of life in Christ. Your small-group Bible study or college group's participation in a literacy program, in providing weekly outreach to a family shelter, in mentoring children of prisoners or in assisting an inner-city mission's teen outreach would be an acknowledgment that our own welfare is tied to the city's (Jer 29:7). Another advantage to the weekly format is that, though it requires a long-term commitment,





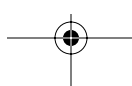
the moderate amount of time required (usually one evening per week) makes it accessible to the average Christian.

The chief limitation of the weekly format is that it may become merely one option among many for occasional service. And spotty attendance is more likely. This always has negative consequences for the ministry and neighborhood, as I discussed in part three.

The experiential discipleship cycle of experience plus reflection plus whole-life application must be compressed into the space of an evening. Participants should gather to pray before the event, even if briefly. After the event, participants should gather to reflect. The leader should ask, “Where was God present tonight?” and “Where was God most needed tonight?” Participants should be led in a brief Bible meditation that speaks to the context of the ministry or an exercise that connects the experience to their lives. Inviting the director of the agency or the pastor of the church you are partnering with will help leverage the time for greater effectiveness.

SUMMARY

Choreographing experiential discipleship events that are transformational for both the participant and the community begins with the acknowledgment that it is the Spirit of God who brings transformation. These events build on the strength of our partnerships with agencies and churches. They require focusing on experiences that most specifically connect to the central problems, issues and assets of the city. They are most effective when they involve participants in solving unfamiliar problems in unfamiliar settings. Leaders can leverage experience for greater effectiveness if they intentionally employ a balance of challenge and support in relating to participants, especially as they help them reflect on their experience using prayer, Scripture and debriefing, then provide steps for further response.





Appendix A

ACCUMULATED WISDOM FROM URBAN PROJECT DIRECTORS

The following data was drawn from a 2005 survey of InterVarsity's urban project directors who work in twenty-six U.S. cities and train more than 1,200 students every year.¹

THE FIVE BEST PRACTICES FOR URBAN EXPERIENTIAL DISCIPLESHIP EVENTS:

1. In-depth study of Scripture, integrated fully into the schedule of the project and linked to the subjects and mission context of the event
2. An authentic, highly relational community experience among participants during the event
3. High-quality, consistent agency and community partnerships where participants will serve
4. Well-planned experiential features and pedagogies
5. An intentional showcasing of the city, its needs and especially its assets

THE TOP FIVE THINGS DIRECTORS CAN DO TO EQUIP PARTICIPANTS FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL MINISTRY:

1. Interpret the experience for participants, including articulating





Appendix A

43

various perspectives, providing vision, communicating well, exhorting, encouraging and giving feedback.

2. Connect participants to opportunities for learning and serving after the event.
3. Integrate lessons from the event back into the normal rhythm of participants' lives, whether on campus or in church.
4. Systematically lengthen events, as more time helps broaden and deepen the experience.
5. Involve participants in the planning, execution and debriefing of future events.

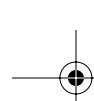
THE TOP FIVE SKILLS AN URBAN EXPERIENTIAL DISCIPLESHIP PROJECT SHOULD CREATE IN PARTICIPANTS:

1. Crosscultural relational skills and a commitment to solidarity and reconciliation
2. Leadership skills, including Bible study and prayer
3. An understanding of God's commitment to the poor, willingness to act on that understanding and appreciation for the need for justice in the systems of the city
4. The ability to place themselves intentionally in the posture of a learner, even as they serve
5. The ability to communicate what they've learned

THE TOP FIVE THEMES THAT SHAPE THE CURRICULUM OF AN URBAN EXPERIENTIAL DISCIPLESHIP EVENT:

1. Justice
2. Ethnic reconciliation, race, multiethnicity
3. Poverty, the poor





4. Community
5. Compassion

THE TOP FIVE THINGS DIRECTORS CAN DO TO SHAPE THEIR PROJECTS TO PRODUCE TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERS:

1. Create an environment of networking between participants and agencies or community leaders.
2. Introduce participants to city systems.
3. Establish key relationships with potential mentors.
4. Build a theological framework for ministry in the city.
5. Connect the projects to the majors or vocations of participants.

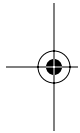
FULL LIST OF BEST PRACTICES (NOT PRIORITIZED):

1. Projects are designed by leaders in consultation with local partner agencies or churches.
2. Projects have clear support from the sponsoring church or fellowship, which becomes a partner in the recruiting process and recycles leaders through from year to year on a rotating basis.
3. Projects have a “champion” who builds continuity from year to year and develops healthy relationships with partnering agencies and churches.
4. Design of projects includes a healthy cycle of action, reflection and action.
5. Projects include a variety of delivery systems for the message, including Bible studies, videos, speakers, exposure to indigenous leaders, prayerwalks, guided tours and service opportunities that are debriefed.
6. Specific opportunities for response and continued involvement



are presented during and at the end of the project, as is a mechanism for further study.

7. A scheduled period for rest and reflection is placed in the middle of the project.
8. Prepared materials are used (packets, handouts, lists, resources).
9. Leaders model ministry among the poor and a commitment to reconciliation and justice throughout the year, beyond the confines of the project.
10. Attempts are made to recruit teams that resemble as closely as possible the ethnic mix of the communities in which they will minister.
11. Pejorative attitudes toward the urban poor and naive savior mentalities of well-meaning participants are addressed head-on in the orientation.
12. Leaders employ dialogue and interactive teaching methods that allow students to question the material openly.
13. A spectrum of theological positions is acknowledged.
14. Director works systematically through a written preparation schedule over a period of several months prior to the project.
15. Goals are defined prior to choosing a project format or content.
16. Director keeps the Word of God and the work of God in close proximity, as well as chances to reflect and interpret.
17. Director defines outcomes and creates mechanisms for achieving them.
18. Director creates a direct feedback loop with partnering agencies, including post-project reporting and evaluation (internal and external).

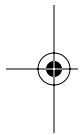




19. Financial accountability is paramount.
20. Interaction with city residents guarantees soul-to-soul contact.
21. Projects have a good balance between cognitive and experiential design components.
22. Training and support structures are in place for directors.
23. Leaders are prepared for the spiritual aspects of what happens on an urban project.

WORST PRACTICES (NOT PRIORITIZED):

1. Creating a special, nonreproducible event just for the project, in isolation from the ongoing efforts of an indigenous agency or church
2. Creating discontentment with or judgment of the church, local agency or campus fellowship, without defining pathways for proactive responses
3. Not conducting orientation or debriefing with participants
4. Not addressing pejorative attitudes of participants toward the city or its people
5. Designing a project that consists of all action and no reflection
6. Not preparing participants for their return to campus or church
7. Having any activity that fosters “group think” or pressure to conform to an “approved” theological or political position
8. Not leaving enough space in the schedule to allow participants to recharge their emotional and physical energy
9. Leaving risk management or personal health and safety issues of participants unaddressed



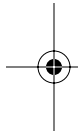


Appendix A

47

10. Not evaluating with partnering agencies, churches or ministry sites after the project

11. Having an insufficient balance between challenge and support





Appendix B

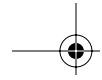
TOOLS

MANIPULATED MONOPOLY

Barb Weidman of the Gateway Philadelphia urban project has been using an adapted version of the Milton Bradley game Monopoly with her urban project participants. (She got the idea from Carolyn Carney of New Jersey.) She says, "I don't know of another game that has given so much mileage in helping our students understand the connectedness of economics to opportunity, oppression, hopelessness, lack of options and anger. The parallels of this game to real life are endless." The following gives you the new, "manipulated" rules for the game, debriefing hints, and Barb's observations.

Fundamental Lessons

1. Within two hours, students learn that there are only so many resources to go around: rich getting richer, poor getting poorer, the power of owning and the powerlessness of renting with no hope of moving ahead.
2. Students learn that, contrary to what they were taught about the American Dream, not everyone starts at the same point, and so not everyone has the same opportunities.



3. They learn that financial decisions are not made in a vacuum but have consequences on other people. (Most have never considered this before.) This has massive implications for lifestyle issues: how money is used, and so on.

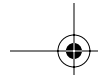
HOW TO PLAY MANIPULATED MONOPOLY

The Manipulated Part

1. Let people pick their game pieces.
2. The shoe and the car get 300 dollars each for passing Go and are never charged for a utility or railroad. In fact, they get free passes. They can build as soon as even one piece of property is owned. They may build unevenly (that is, build a hotel on a plot before or without a house, and on any plot).
3. The dog gets 100 dollars for passing Go. The dog must have two of three (or one of two) of a set before building. The dog may build unevenly but can buy, sell or build only on its own turn.
4. The hat and the horse get 50 dollars for passing Go. They must have two of three (or one of two) of a set before building. They must build evenly (that is, one house on each plot of like property, then two, then three, and so on). They can buy, sell, etc., only on their own turn.

General Rules

1. *No one may quit the game.*
2. *Loans.* Any player may borrow up to, but not exceeding, 1,000 dollars from the bank. Every time a player who is in debt passes Go, half of the money he or she would otherwise have received goes toward paying off the debt. Do this until the debt is cleared.



(The debtor may pay off the debt in one payment directly to the bank.) Note: the banker must keep track of the debt. Loans of any amount may be transacted between players, with terms of repayment set by the lender.

3. *Mortgage properties and buildings.* Follow official Monopoly rules (that is, houses are torn down for half the price of purchase, properties are mortgaged for half their value, etc.).
4. *Multiple buildings.* More than one hotel may be built on a property; rents are increased accordingly.
5. *Selling and trading properties.* All sales and trades of properties are permitted. Note: no player may sell or give away his or her last piece of property.

Running the Game

1. Staff are the bankers, and their decisions are final.
2. The shoe, dog, car, hat and horse pieces must be used.
3. Play for at least one hour.
4. As the game starts, give no hint that special rules are being used; slowly reveal these as the game progresses. When the first piece of property is bought, explain that in order to speed up the game, only two of three pieces of property need to be owned in order to build.
5. Observe the “special pass” rule for the Shoe and Car when they land on a utility or railroad.
6. After several players have passed Go, tell everyone of the special building rules. You may, however, privately explain these special privileges to the appropriate players when they begin to build.
7. When you sense that the “oppressed” players are running out of



money (or patience!), explain the special loan rules.

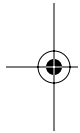
8. Be vague about the rules until you want to be clear.

Personal Responses

1. Students learn that it is humiliating to be at the mercy of the rich and degrading to be given “breaks” but not real chances.
2. They experience a taste of hopelessness when they can’t see a way out. They often withdraw and want to quit.
3. Some students who have been given the “rich” pieces look for ways to give breaks to students with the “poorer” pieces (for example, asking for less rent), but their attempts are limited. They never think to help those students own property to gain their own income. Also, they always check their financial security before they help others. (Interestingly these are students who are in the third or fourth week of the project and are often good friends by then. Imagine their “eagerness” to help strangers in real life!)
4. “Rich” students are horrified as tension grows between them and their “poorer” friends. A sense of “don’t be angry with me, I can’t help it, I was assigned this role” emerges. Meanwhile the poorer students can’t believe how selfish their rich friends are and how unwilling they are to share or to redistribute wealth or power, or at least to use their power to fight against an unjust system.

Debriefing

1. Have players describe their roles in the game and the sequence of feelings generated.
2. What did the players learn about themselves from the roles they played? Were any alliances formed?





3. What modern parallels were noticed in relation to real life?
4. Allow those who wanted to quit to express their feelings.

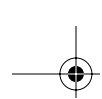
Note: Debriefing is key. This game exposes pride, self-centeredness, self-protection, envy, deceit and more. This needs to be worked through! Be sure to allow time for reconciliation afterward between players; sometimes things are said and done during the game that call for repentance.

Exploring the Hood: Simulations from Pasadena

These seven assignments offer a chance to learn about common human situations in the city. The InterVarsity's Los Angeles urban project and others have used them during project orientations to introduce students to the lives behind the faces of many inner-city people. They send out students in teams, each of which is given one of these seven assignments:

1. You are a single parent with two children. You just found a job that will barely cover your bills, but your children are too young to go to school. Find information on child care in northwest Pasadena (a distressed part of Pasadena).
2. Research demographic information on Northwest Pasadena and compare it with that of South Pasadena.
3. You are an undocumented immigrant who speaks only Spanish. Find three locations where you can cash a check. What are the costs involved? What is needed for a bank account? What are the implications of not having one?
4. You have no medical insurance, but your child is very ill. Where can you get free or low-cost emergency care? How long is the wait?
5. Interview ten people from various parts of Pasadena and assemble





a composite picture of the core values of its people. What do people think defines the community? What are its chief characteristics?

6. You are a mother with three children, and you are on welfare. You have two weeks left on your apartment lease. Find some affordable housing that is immediately available.
7. You have recently been released from jail. You have nowhere to stay, thus no way for a potential employer to contact you, and no way to get cleaned up for an interview. What are your options? What's needed to utilize them?

Debriefing

When participants return from these assignments, we ask them these questions and have them reflect on their answers in journals, in small groups and in a whole-group dialogue format.

1. What happened? Tell your story.
2. What feelings came to the surface?
3. What questions did the exercise leave you asking? Where will you go to answer these?
4. What were some of the things God was saying to you through this experience?



Appendix C

FORMATS

FRESNO ONE-DAY TOUR FORMAT

8:30 a.m.	Registration
9:00 a.m.	Intensive study of the book of Jonah, exploring the themes of God's heart for the city, ethnic fear and reconciliation, and obedience to God's call
10:30 a.m.	Break
10:45 a.m.	Presentation regarding the current needs of the city and the implications of future trends
11:45 a.m.	Walk to multicultural outdoor farmers' market to buy lunch
12:00 p.m.	Fulton Mall game: a scavenger hunt to discover hidden treasures and facts about Fresno's most diverse outdoor mall in the heart of downtown
1:30 p.m.	Driving tour (known as "window surveys") to three urban neighborhoods, featuring the work of three faith-based nonprofits. Routes to these neighborhoods include scripts providing commentary.
3:00 p.m.	Debrief and present alternatives for further involvement.
3:45 p.m.	Depart



Appendix C

55

MILWAUKEE URBAN DIP

Friday

7:30 p.m. Service at Word is God Church
Afterward Hanging out at El Greco Restaurant

Saturday

9:45 a.m. Arrive at City on a Hill
10:00 a.m. Orientation
Bible study: Jeremiah 22, part 1
11:00 a.m. Begin work at City on a Hill
12:30 p.m. Lunch
5:00 p.m. Dinner
6:45 p.m. Arrive at Kidz in the Hood, meet the Godseys and
Kidz, clean the facilities
10:30 p.m. Return to City on a Hill, go to bed

Sunday

8:30 a.m. Breakfast
9:00 a.m. Quiet times
9:30 a.m. Bible study: Jeremiah 22, part 2
10:30 a.m. Depart for Centrob Brook Church
11:00 a.m. Service at Centrob Brook
After service: Lunch at Mercado El Rey Restaurant; debrief





DIP EXAMPLE FROM MINNEAPOLIS

Friday

3:30 p.m.	Grocery shop
5:00 p.m.	Pick up dinner
5:15 p.m.	Staff meeting
6:30 p.m.	Set up at church
7:00 p.m.	Check-in
7:30 p.m.	Welcome, orientation, rules, why we're here
7:45 p.m.	Mixer/ice-breaker game
8:15 p.m.	Video (2100 production): "Just the Facts" and teaching on what Jesus says regarding the poor and his reaction to the poor
8:35 p.m.	Discussion of ideas regarding the poor, city, etc. Debrief of video and teaching
9:00 p.m.	Snack/break
9:15 p.m.	Divide into worksite groups
9:40 p.m.	Movie: <i>Romero</i>
11:00 p.m.	Games, chill, bed

Saturday

7:30 a.m.	Breakfast
8:00 a.m.	Bible study on Matthew 5
9:00 a.m.	Serve at work sites
12:00 p.m.	Sack lunch and discussion





Appendix C

57

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| 4:30 p.m. | Break into dinner groups; Somalian and Mexican focus |
| 6:45 p.m. | Discuss urban hike to dinner and questions regarding what they saw |

Sunday

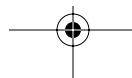
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|------------|---|
| 7:30 a.m. | Breakfast |
| 8:00 a.m. | Informal processing stations with art, writing, listening wall, collage. Discuss who Jesus is and his view of the poor. |
| 9:00 a.m. | Load up cars and clean church |
| 10:30 a.m. | Worship |
| 12:00 p.m. | Sack lunches and debrief |
| 12:30 p.m. | Call to commitment, evaluation and next steps |
| 1:00 p.m. | Depart |

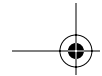
DIP EXAMPLE FROM TUCSON

The idea of this project was to introduce students to ministries in Tucson and to open their eyes to the reality that the city is not quite what they think. In fact, there are many ministry opportunities in their own backyard if they would take the time to look. The project followed the model of the Center for Student Mission in Los Angeles. Participants partnered with existing ministries and ate out at ethnic restaurants to give them an idea of the different cultures and subcultures that exist in Tucson.

Friday

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| 4:00 p.m. | Manipulated Monopoly |
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58

ENCOUNTER GOD IN THE CITY

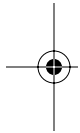
- 6:30 p.m. Dinner at Ethiopian restaurant
- 8:00 p.m. Amos manuscript study
- 9:30 p.m. Downtown prayerwalk with the living-room outreach

Saturday

- 8:00 a.m. Devotions
- 8:30 a.m. Take breakfast to homeless
- 11:30 a.m. Casa Gloriosa Mission—AIDS kids and families
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch at Casa Gloriosa
- 1:00 p.m. Work project at Casa Gloriosa
- 5:00 p.m. Dinner at Brooklyn Pizza
- 7:30 p.m. Street evangelism with the living-room outreach

Sunday

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast at TTT Truck Stop
- 8:00 a.m. Victory Trucker Outreach
- 10:00 a.m. Service at Agape Christian Community African American Church
- 1:30 p.m. Lunch at El Guero Canelo Restaurant
- 2:30 p.m. Break and devotions
- 4:30 p.m. Church on the Street homeless feeding ministry
- 6:30 p.m. Dinner at Alibaba Market—Middle Eastern cuisine
- 7:30 p.m. Worship and prayer overlooking the city





Appendix C

59

Monday

- 8:00 a.m. Devotions
- 8:30 a.m. Breakfast—bagels
- 9:00 a.m. City tour with Corazon Ministries
- 12:30 p.m. Finish

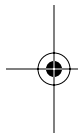
PLUNGE EXAMPLE FROM FRESNO

Monday

- 11:45 a.m. Staff lunch and meeting
- 2:00 p.m. Arrival/check-in at World Impact
- 3:00 p.m. Orientation (including Jesus and bleeding woman story)
- 3:55 p.m. Driving tour
- 5:40 p.m. Multimedia—Fresno Institute for Urban Leadership PowerPoint with music
- 6:00 p.m. Dinner at Al Rico's, El Socio or Robertito's
- 7:15 p.m. "God's Love for the City" speaker
- 9:00 p.m. Processing and prayer groups
- 10:00 p.m. Simmer down time
- 11:00 p.m. Lights out

Tuesday

- 8:15 a.m. Breakfast and staff meeting
- 8:45 a.m. Quiet time—Psalm 10





60

ENCOUNTER GOD IN THE CITY

- 9:30 a.m. Worship
- 10:00 a.m. Manuscript study—portions of Amos
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. Service projects at five different sites
- 5:15 p.m. Debrief
- 6:00 p.m. Laotian dinner with Pink House
- 7:15 p.m. “4 Cultures Exercise” by local professor
- Video: Race, Power of an Illusion 2
- 9:00 p.m. Processing and prayer groups
- 10:00 p.m. Simmer down time
- 11:00 p.m. Lights out



Wednesday

- 8:15 a.m. Breakfast and staff meeting
- 8:45 a.m. Quiet time—Psalm 46
- 9:30 a.m. Worship
- 10:00 a.m. Manuscript study—portions of Amos
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch
- 1:30 p.m. Kids’ Club prep and service projects
- 3:00 p.m. Kids’ Club
- 6:00 p.m. Dinner—Gonzalez BBQ
- 7:15 p.m. Video: “A Day Without a Mexican”
- “Mexicans in Lowell” by speaker Cece Vega
- 9:00 p.m. Processing and prayer groups





Appendix C

61

10:00 p.m. Simmer down time

11:00 p.m. Lights out

Thursday

8:15 a.m. Breakfast and staff meeting

8:45 a.m. Quiet time—Psalm 72

9:30 a.m. Worship

10:00 a.m. Manuscript study—portions of Amos

12:30 p.m. Lunch

1:30 p.m. Kids' Club prep and service projects

3:00 p.m. Kids' Club

5:00 p.m. BBQ for kids and families

7:15 p.m. Video: Race, Power of an Illusion 3

8:00 p.m. "God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation" by Pink House director

9:00 p.m. Processing and prayer groups

10:00 p.m. Simmer down time

Story Time: *The Three Little Wolves and the Big Bad Pig*

11:00 p.m. Lights out

Friday

8:15 a.m. Breakfast and staff meeting

8:45 a.m. Quiet time—Psalm 146

9:30 a.m. Worship





10:00 a.m.	Fulton Mall scavenger hunt and lunch
	Debrief on the mall
12:45 p.m.	Pack and clean up
1:00 p.m.	Closure
1:45 p.m.	Response options, testimony sheets and debrief
2:30 p.m.	Departure
2:45 p.m.	Brief staff meeting

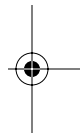
PLUNGE EXAMPLE FROM MILWAUKEE

Saturday

4:00 p.m.	Students arrive
4:30 p.m.	Introduction to Centrob Brook
5:30 p.m.	Dinner
6:30 p.m.	Orientation, grocery shopping, movie, discussion
10:00 p.m.	Free time
11:00 p.m.	Lights out/quiet

Sunday

11:00 a.m.	Worship at Centrob Brook
1:00 p.m.	Lunch
2:30 p.m.	Free time
4:00 p.m.	Church anniversary service
6:00 p.m.	Dinner





Appendix C

63

7:00 p.m. Seminar on African American culture
9:00 p.m. Free time
11:00 p.m. Lights out/quiet

Monday

7:45 a.m. Rise/breakfast
8:15 a.m. Quiet time
9:00 a.m. Worship and group Bible study
11:30 a.m. Lunch
12:15 p.m. Work projects at Centrobroom
3:30 p.m. Prepare for New Beginnings
4:30 p.m. New Beginnings (including dinner)
6:30 p.m. Movie (or home with host families)
9:30 p.m. Return and free time
11:00 p.m. Lights out/quiet

Tuesday

7:45 a.m. Rise/breakfast
8:15 a.m. Quiet time
9:00 a.m. Worship and group Bible study
10:20 a.m. United Community Center
3:30 p.m. Prepare for New Beginnings
4:30 p.m. New Beginnings
6:30 p.m. Dinner at Casa Maria or home with host families



64

ENCOUNTER GOD IN THE CITY

9:30 p.m. Return and free time

11:00 p.m. Lights out/quiet

Wednesday

7:45 a.m. Rise/breakfast

8:15 a.m. Quiet time

9:00 a.m. Worship and prayer

10:30 a.m. The Black Holocaust Museum

12:00 p.m. Lunch

1:30 p.m. Scavenger hunt

4:00 p.m. Free time

5:30 p.m. Dinner and fellowship with Eastbrook
Relocators

9:30 p.m. Return and free time

11:00 p.m. Lights out/quiet

Thursday

7:45 a.m. Rise/breakfast

8:15 a.m. Quiet time

9:00 a.m. Worship and group Bible study

11:30 a.m. Lunch

12:15 p.m. Work projects at Centrobroom

3:30 p.m. Prepare for New Beginnings

4:30 p.m. New Beginnings (including dinner)

6:30 p.m. Worship service at Centrobroom





Appendix C

65

9:00 p.m. Free time
11:00 p.m. Lights out/quiet

Friday

7:45 a.m. Rise/breakfast
8:15 a.m. Quiet time
9:00 a.m. Group Bible study
10:20 a.m. Small groups
11:30 a.m. Debriefing and evaluations
12:15 p.m. Lunch
1:00 p.m. Pack up/clean up
2:00 p.m. Depart



SIX-WEEK SUMMER PROJECT EXAMPLE FROM PHILADELPHIA

Tuesday Staff meeting
Wednesday Set up
Students arrive
Dinner
Introductions
Overview to orientation
Thursday Student orientation
Friday Student orientation
Saturday Bible study—Matthew 25
Introduction to Poverty
Orientation





WEEKS 1-6 PATTERN

<i>Sundays</i>	Church, sabbath and prayer for the week
<i>Mondays</i>	Work at ministry site and free night or planned activity
<i>Tuesdays</i>	Work at ministry site
<i>Wednesdays</i>	Work at ministry site and free night or planned activity
<i>Thursdays</i>	Staff meeting, work at ministry site, small-group sharing and prayer
<i>Fridays</i>	Work at ministry site and free night or planned activity
<i>Saturdays</i>	Bible study and outings
<i>See below for other activities</i>	



WEEK 1—POVERTY

<i>Tuesday</i>	Hunger banquet and debriefing
<i>Wednesday</i>	Scriptures on the poor
<i>Friday</i>	Movie discussion— <i>Super Size Me</i>
<i>Saturday</i>	Bible study—Psalm 139, ethnic identity Philadelphia mural tour

WEEK 2—ETHNIC IDENTITY

<i>Tuesday</i>	White privilege, reading and discussion
<i>Friday</i>	Movie discussion— <i>Crash</i>





Appendix C

67

Saturday Bible study—Acts 10–11, introduction to racism
Live 8 concert

WEEK 3—RACE AND RECONCILIATION

Tuesday “Race Matters” video and discussion

Friday Bible study—Amos 5, introduction to systemic injustice

Saturday Beach outing

WEEK 4—SYSTEMIC INJUSTICE

Tuesday Speaker Shane Claiborne, “Systemic Injustice”

Wednesday Manipulated Monopoly

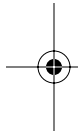
Saturday Bible study—Jeremiah 29, introduction to reneighboring
Friends and family get-together

WEEK 5—RENEIGHBORING

Monday Book discussion of *Return Flight*

Tuesday Dinner out: Go in small groups to have dinner with folks who are reneighboring, hang out and interview them

Saturday Bible study—Matthew 6, simplicity/lifestyle
Begin work on debrief packet
Evening outing





WEEK 6—DEBRIEF/LIFESTYLE CHOICES

- Tuesday** Discussion: Application of urban project in post-graduate life (budget, job choice, work, rest, where to live, etc.)
- Wednesday** Reading of *Seedfolks*
- Saturday** Bible study—Isaiah 58, giving our lives to shalom building
Cleanup
Prayer for Philadelphia overlooking the city
Celebration



SUMMER PROJECT (FIVE AND A HALF WEEKS) EXAMPLE FROM FRESNO



Wednesday (Staff Orientation)

- 2:00 p.m. Student leaders and staff arrive
- 2:30 p.m. Get to know one another, share and prayer
- 3:00 p.m. Retreat of silence
- 5:30 p.m. Review staff responsibilities sheet
- 6:00 p.m. Dinner at Minturn's with relocators
- 7:00 p.m. Team-building experience
- 8:00 p.m. Announcements for Thursday

Thursday

- 9:30 a.m. Breakfast





Appendix C

69

10:00 a.m.	Devotions
10:30 a.m.	Prayer for ministries and interns
11:00 a.m.	Lunch in Tower District
12:00 p.m.	Prepare for interns' arrival
1:00 p.m.	Interns arrive and settle into Pink House
1:30 p.m.	Snacks and introductory game
2:30 p.m.	Fulton Mall game
(Student Orientation Begins)	
5:30 p.m.	"History of Internship and What God Is Doing in Fresno"
6:00 p.m.	Dinner
7:00 p.m.	Receive training binders, information on roommates and risk management, Q and A time, prayer

Friday (Student Orientation)

8:00 a.m.	Make your own breakfast; initial shopping supplied
8:45 a.m.	Worship
9:00 a.m.	Time with Jesus
9:30 a.m.	Scripture study
11:30 a.m.	Lunch with ministry site representatives
1:30 p.m.	Get to Know the City driving tour
4:00 p.m.	Regather and debrief
5:30 p.m.	Special dinner
7:00 p.m.	"4 Cultures/Frame of Reference Diagram"



8:45 p.m. Announcements and prayer

Saturday (Student Orientation)

8:00 a.m. Breakfast
8:30 a.m. Time with Jesus
9:00 a.m. Lowell cleanup with Fresno police department
12:30 p.m. Lunch at Al Rico's Taco
4:00 p.m. *Theirs Is the Kingdom* discussion
5:00 p.m. Approaching Differences diagram
6:00 p.m. Dinner
7:00 p.m. Video: "A Day Without a Mexican"
Discussion



Remaining five weeks:

During the day the students work at their ministry sites, and in the evenings, they participate in various activities.

Mondays Process groups
Tuesdays Internship class (with assigned readings; see below)
Thursdays Internship class (with assigned readings; see below)
Fridays Two of the Fridays have a video and discussion
Saturdays Free time, except for one, which is a manuscript study of the book of Habakkuk from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and one which is a Visitor Day for friends and family





Appendix C

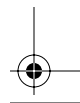
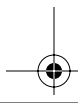
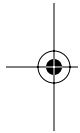
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Sundays

Worship at a different church each Sunday. The first Sunday afternoon is their first shopping trip for groceries.

Debriefing:

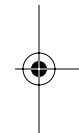
Final two days are dedicated to debriefing, including:
Back to campus and beyond discussion
Personal response sheet and evaluation
Review of Engaging Differences diagram
Closing luncheon with agency representatives
Final process groups, sharing and prayer
Commissioning prayer



**Curriculum:****Reading Assignments:**

(bold = mandatory reading)

A Biblical Understanding of Shalom and the City The overarching biblical themes of shalom, the city, broken shalom in the city, God's call for restorers of shalom in the city	1. All of Lupton's <i>Theirs Is the Kingdom</i> 2. <i>Journey to the Center of the City</i> , chapter 3 3. "Searching for Shalom" 4. "Our City: God's Creation" 5. "Why Are So Many Urban People Poor?" 6. "The Bible and the Poor" 7. "It's Not the Time to Abandon Our Cities"
A Biblical Understanding of Shalom and the City (continuation)	1. "Code of the Streets" 2. "Cities Don't Suck" 3. "God and Mammon" 4. "The Invitation of the Widows" 5. "Biblical Mandates and Resources for Urban Ministry" 6. <i>Street Saints</i> , chapter 3 (Brian King)
Understanding the Powers and Principalities A biblical understanding of the powers and principalities	1. <i>The Powers That Be</i> , chapters 8–10 2. "Prayer: The Power That Wields the Weapon" 3. "Prayer is Social Action"
Bringing Shalom to Systems and Structures I A biblical basis for shalom justice The need for urban ministry to account for the systems and structures of the city	1. <i>Journey to the Center of the City</i> , chapter 6 2. "Why the Devil Takes Visa" 3. <i>Street Saints</i> , chapter 11 (One by One)
Bringing Shalom to Systems and Structures I Church-based approach to restoring justice/shalom	1. <i>Restoring At-Risk Communities</i> , chapter 8 2. Questions: "The Role of the Urban Church in CCD" 3. "The Largest Company in Your City," Doswald 4. "Want Better Grades? Go to Church" 5. "What Is Christian Community Development?" 6. "Re-Neighboring our Cities"



Habakkuk Manuscript Study: Where is the God of heaven and why is he taking so long?	1. "Healing as Justice" 2. "Disorientation Diary" 3. "America the Brutal" 4. "Defending the Oppressed" 5. "Putting to Death the Enmity" 6. "To Break the Chains of Violence"
Shalom Reconciliation—Becoming a Full-orbed Reconciler: Restoring Shalom A biblical basis of ethnic identity, reconciliation and justice	1. <i>Divided by Faith</i> , chapter 1 and response sheet 2. Ethnic Identity Development handouts 3. "The Development of White Identity" 4. "Whiteness" 5. "Restorer" articles 6. "Do You Know Why They All Talk at the Same Time?" 7. Individualism/Collectivism 8. "Race in America" 9. "Justice Is Not Colorblind"
Shalom Reconciliation—The Myth of Race: Shalom Shattered Filling out the picture of broken racial and ethnic shalom Implications for restoring and advocating for racial/ethnic shalom	1. <i>Divided by Faith</i> , chapter 6 2. "Uprooting Racism" 3. "White Responsibility in Racial Reconciliation" 4. "Reconciliation Rumba for Euro-Americans" 5. Billy Graham article 6. "Confessions of a Racist" 7. Affirmative Action discussion
Bringing Shalom to Systems and Structures II Models of CCD and an asset-based approach to urban transformation	1. <i>Journey to the Center of the City</i> , chapter 5 2. <i>Restoring At-Risk Communities</i> , chapter 5 3. <i>Restoring At-Risk Communities</i> , chapter 7 4. <i>Building Communities from the Inside Out</i> , pp. 1-10 5. "What's Right in This City?"
Finding Your Place in Shalom Building Responding to the call of God to be shalom builders Possible onramps and pathways of response	1. "Insecurity as a Way of Life" 2. "Notes on 'Bridging the Gap'" 3. "Speaking Their Language: Working with Students and Adults from Poverty"



Notes

Chapter 1: Dynamics of Growth Through Experience

¹John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1916), p. 38.

²David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2001), p. 424.

³Laurent Daloz, *Mentor* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999), p. 23.

⁴Timothy Stanton, Dwight Giles and Nadinne Cruz, *Service-Learning: A Movement's Pioneers Reflect on Its Origins, Practice, and Future* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1999).

⁵Daloz, *Mentor*, p. 34.

⁶Dewey, *Experience and Education*, p. 62.

⁷Jack Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991), p. 135.

⁸Daloz, *Mentor*, p. 12.

⁹Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions*, p. 168.

¹⁰*Ibid.*

¹¹*Ibid.*

¹²*Ibid.*

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴David A. Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1984).

¹⁵Daloz, *Mentor*, p. 93.

¹⁶Kolb, *Experiential Learning*.

¹⁷Alexander Astin et al., *How Service Learning Affects Students*, Higher Education Research Institute, University of California, Los Angeles, 2000 <www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/PDFs/rhowas.pdf>.

¹⁸Randy White, "Outcomes Study of Urban Project Alumni" (an InterVarsity Christian Fellowship internal publication, 2002), p. 15.

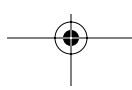
¹⁹*The Word in Life Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1996), p. 1978.

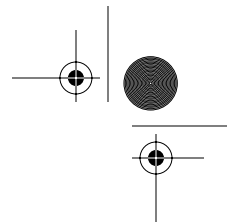
²⁰John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Acts* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1990), p. 263.

²¹*Ibid.*, p. 266.

Chapter 2: Choreographing Experiential Discipleship

¹Roger Peterson, Gordon Aeschliman and R. Wayne Sneed, *Maximum Impact* (Min-





neapolis: STEMPress, 2003), p. 7.

²Michael J. Marquardt, *Action Learning in Action* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Davies-Black, 1999), p. 26.

³*Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁴See appendix B for rules for the game Manipulated Monopoly.

⁵Laurent Daloz, *Mentor* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999), pp. 216-17.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 207.

⁷Scott Bessenecker, "Experiential Discipleship Task Force Report" (an internal InterVarsity Christian Fellowship publication), September 8, 2003, p. 4.

⁸D. Boud, R. Keogh and D. Walker, *Reflection: Turning Experience into Learning* (London: Kogan Page, 1985).

⁹Jack Mezirow, *Learning As Transformation* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1978).

¹⁰Jack Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991), p. 198.

¹¹Patrick L. Townsend and Joan E. Gebhardt, *How Organizations Learn* (Menlo Park, Calif.: Crisp Publications, 1999).

¹²See appendixes A and C for a host of models and formats to help usher participants onto an appropriate onramp for transformational ministry in the city.

Appendix A

¹Research from Randy White, "Student Power in Urban Transformation: Assessing InterVarsity Urban Project Training Systems for Their Potential in Generating Next Generation Leadership for the New Global City," (D.Min. diss., Bakke Graduate University, June 2005), pp. 137-53. For those who want to engage young leaders in short-term social-action projects, the British program Faithworks produces high-quality materials and guidance in their Passion Manual (oasistrust.org).

