

Amor Europe
Course for leaders of
children and youth

Facilitator's Handbook

for Courses 1, 2, and 3

Edition 8: August 2021

Language: English

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Edition

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■ Welcome

You have in your hand the Facilitator’s Handbook which accompanies the Course for Children’s Workers (1, 2, & 3) published by Amor Europe.^a We hope that with these resources you will find encouragement, inspiration, and empowerment for your work with children and young people.

Note: an ^a in the text means more information is in the Annex.

◆ Purpose

If you are a Christian who would love to see quality children’s work and youth work that enables young people to find and follow Jesus, and if you also want to inspire and equip other leaders in your church or community, then these courses will assist you to fulfil that purpose. In this Handbook, along with the accompanying course materials, you will find all you need for planning and running the courses.

◆ Ethos

We in Amor Europe love and serve Jesus. Our vision and our passion flow from our relationship with God revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.^a

Our intent is to pursue excellence in children’s work and youth work, valuing children and young people as Jesus does,^a recognising the gifts they bring to us and the questions they raise for us.

- We treat them with dignity as created in the image of God — deeply loved by their Heavenly Father.
- We nurture them in the community of Christian faith — in vibrant personal relationship with Christ Jesus.
- We release them into the Christian life — empowered by the Holy Spirit, looking outward to the world around and forward to the coming kingdom of God.

◆ Focus

We serve children and young people by seeking to encourage and inspire those who work with them. Our attention is focused on three things:

- **children and young people:** we focus on their abilities, needs, and rights — to live with hope and to reach their God-given potential.
- **our own life and faith:** we focus on our own daily Christian walk — as we can only lead others on a path we tread ourselves.
- **God:** we focus on God’s character and purposes — helping ensure that every part of our ministry is kept healthy and in balance.

◆ Courses

While each course is complete in itself, our three courses each have a distinctive theme in relation to God as revealed in the Bible. They present a growing maturity in our relationship with God as we look at the Bible together.

Course 1 theme: knowing God as loving Heavenly Father — aims to equip workers to run effective weekly outreach Bible clubs for children and youth.

- we introduce the foundations of effective children’s work and youth work, creating a positive environment where every child and young person can flourish in life and faith, loved by God.
- we rightly begin with knowing God as our own nurturing Heavenly Father and experiencing what it means for us to be a child of God.

Course 2 theme: surrendering to Christ Jesus as Saviour and Lord — aims to equip workers to ensure that children and youth are being effectively disciplined into an active dynamic faith and godly character.

- we build upon the foundations of course 1, equipping us to enable all children and young people to grow as followers of Jesus.
- we rightly begin with laying down our own lives and agendas in humility and surrender to Christ Jesus.

Course 3 theme: overflowing with the Holy Spirit’s empowering and enabling — aims to equip workers to ensure that young people rise up into transforming lives, capable of leadership.

- we complete the building begun in course 2, empowering a new generation to emerge as godly leaders in this world, living in the fruit and gifts of the Spirit .

- we rightly begin with being authentic in our own dynamic witness, serving others while pursuing justice and peace, filled with the Holy Spirit.

We are eager that children, young people, and leaders grow wider and deeper in their experience of God, and so our devotional material for leaders and some content of the training modules reflect these themes.

Rhythm

As you (the facilitator) run each course, you will find a natural rhythm with moments of **encounter** and **earthing** (or grounding).

- In moments of encounter, the presence of God is intentionally sought — we grow in our being (who we are).
- In moments of earthing, core skills are developed — we grow in our doing (what we do, and how we do it).
- Through this rhythm, the course becomes a personally transforming experience ready for effective service — we grow in our relating (how we connect with others).

Modules

While each course is complete, there is also flexibility. Courses include devotions and are divided into modules. This provides a lot of scope to adapt courses to fit the possibilities of your particular local context.

◆ Refresh

Much of the course material has been proven over time through use in many diverse contexts around the world. And those who have used our previous editions will hopefully find the new courses as easy to navigate and deliver as before.

Nonetheless, these are now fresh courses.^a Everything has been carefully considered in the light of our renewed vision and passion, reflecting a culture centred on God's character and purposes. All the modules have undergone a full review. Our devotions (five per course) are not an optional extra, they are integral to an effective course.

We care that those working with children and young people do not simply acquire new skills (earthing), but meet with God afresh (encounter) as they participate in these courses.

Let's get ready!

■ Getting Ready

◆ Key Principles

Enjoy! Learning happens best when people are enjoying the process. For this we need fun and good humour throughout. For sure, there are plenty of serious discussions and deeper topics to explore, but even these should be done in a way that is liberating and empowering for those participating. Learning is interspersed by refreshing breaks and crazy games. **Keep it light, not heavy!**

Engage! Learning also happens best when people are actively involved in the process. There are no lectures! Learning occurs together in groups with discovery questions, theatrical sketches, role play, simulations, and other activities, reinforced by pictures and notes. Not everybody learns in the same way. So, by incorporating different learning styles we maximise the opportunity for all to gain from the course. **Keep it active, not passive!**

Environment! Learning which is interactive and enjoyable also requires a secure and safe setting in every sense. This means physical safety — ensuring there are no hazards around. It also means mental and emotional security — ensuring that all participants can freely share ideas and raise questions without being ridiculed or disrespected by others. **Keep it positive, not negative!**

◆ Preparing Yourself

You as Facilitator: you cannot take others on a journey you have not taken (or are not taking) yourself. Your openness and attitude help to set the mood for those who attend the course. Be ready for the moments of encounter (connecting with God) and moments of earthing (learning new

skills). However, you should expect the unexpected! You are not in control! Allow the learning to unfold, led by the wild divine Spirit of Christ.

Your Co-facilitators: we strongly recommend having at least two facilitators working together to run the course. This takes the pressure off you, as you can share out the units between you. It also shows an effective model of team leadership.

◆ Preparing the Course

You need to get this **Facilitator's Handbook** and the **Course Devotions** and the **Course Modules** printed. You will need enough copies for the facilitators. You will also need to print and assemble copies of the wordless **Picture Book**, enough for one for each participant. This is for them to add their own notes throughout the course. And print off one copy of the **Course Supplement** to use with the activities.

Ensure you are familiar with the contents of the devotions and modules, and check you have all the materials you require for each activity in the course, and have prepared (along with your helpers or volunteers) anything that is needed.

Translating

These resources are originally published in English. If this is not the first language for the participants, it will be important to translate this handbook and the devotions and modules into the local language. You can then print your own copies as needed.

When translating, always use an easy-to-read modern version of the Bible for the verses. Also, don't forget to translate any words on the projection slides used in the course.

It is always preferable to have all the materials in the local language that speaks to the heart of those attending. However, if you are running the course with people of more than one language group attending, and using people to translate or interpret for you as you speak, then you will need to allow more time to complete each of the activities.

Source

You can find the latest editions of all the course materials (this handbook, devotions, modules, supplement, presentation slides, picture booklets), and the accompanying Easy Games book online via our website.

Licence

Our licence tells you what you can and can't do with the course material.^a

- *You are free to share and adapt the work; however*
- *you must give credit to the source (Amor Europe); and*
- *you cannot restrict any derivative work; but*
- *you must release it under the same licence.*

See notice in the Annex for more detail.

Usage

Actually, this gives you an enormous amount of freedom with our resources, and much more than a restrictive copyright licence!

We respectfully ask you to keep Amor Europe informed of your use of our material (adaptions, translations, and such). Your great ideas will help us make all our courses better, and we can share these with others.

■ Before the Course

◆ Who to invite?

This course is for those Christian leaders who have a desire for reaching children and young people with the Good News of the love of their Heavenly Father, encouraging them to grow as followers of Jesus Christ, and inspiring them to live in ways which transform their world, serving God in the power of the Holy Spirit.

It may be used for those working with children and youth in a church environment, or else through regular activity clubs in a community context. It may also be useful for leaders in other settings — wherever the needs and

rights of children and young people are being met, and their hopes and dreams being inspired.

Ideally the course should not be exclusively for one particular church or organisation. As Christians from a diversity of backgrounds and traditions, we are all members of God's family and can learn from each other. Persons attending should have the support of the pastor of their church or head of their organisation to implement changes based on what they learn.

However, due to the dynamic learning styles used, you should limit the number of attenders to between 20 and 40, each of whom can attend the entire course. This will allow you to have four small groups of between 5 and 10 members in each (about 7 or 8 is ideal). If there are too many wishing to attend the course, create a waiting list for the next time you run the course.

Also ask: are they committed, intentional, serious about serving children and young people in the Spirit of Christ? If not, then this course may not be for them at this time.

◆ **Where to meet?**

You will need an appropriate venue for your exclusive use, to provide safety and security for the participants. You need space for groups to work together (with movable seating on chairs or floor mats), and also plenty of space to play active games. If projecting pictures, a power supply is needed.

Often a church hall, school hall, or community centre will serve well. An outside space may serve for many activities. However, give consideration to venue privacy, ambient noise, sufficient shelter (shade from sun or rain), and other such factors.

Make sure the venue is not setup like a lecture hall or classroom! You will need four groups of chairs each in an open semicircle facing a space at the front, preferably with a blank wall or screen where you may project the picture slides used in the course. The facilitators must not be on a raised platform or stage, nor behind a lectern or table. Of course, you may use a low stand to place a projector on. You may also need a table to the side to keep to hand any resources you need.

◆ When to meet?

Each course has about 25 hours of interactive learning materials, to which you need to add time for refreshment breaks and games. Some of the administrative matters (registering participants, awarding certificates) take extra time. You may also choose to add a worship song to the devotional time, as appropriate. We normally recommend running the entire course over five days.

However, since the course is modular, it can be run over days that are not consecutive, such as three weekends in one month, or one day per week for five or more weeks. For each of these (and other) options to be effective, keeping the same structure is critically important. Each day begins with the devotions, proceeds to the modular learning (with breaks and games in between) and ends with encouragement to put learning into practice.

◆ What is needed?

The courses are designed to require minimal equipment, and if you don't have something considered necessary, there is usually scope to improvise.

We suggest the following as helpful for the easy running of the course.

For the facilitators

Each will need:

- access to a copy of this Facilitator's Handbook (translated into the local language);
- a copy of the relevant devotions they may be leading, and the modules in the course.

For the participants

Each will need:

- a name badge with their name (written clearly with a marker pen), either on a lanyard, or else a stick-on or pin-on badge;
- a coloured lanyard (made of ribbon), or else a colour sticker or spot on their name badge, indicating the small group they are in;

- a Picture Book (print or photocopy and assemble these in advance) — if you cannot do this, ensure each person has a notebook;
- a pen for making notes;
- access to a Bible for reading the verses.

For the devotions

For many meditations the following will be useful:

- a music player, using a basic sound system with a quality speaker;
- large printouts of the pictures you need, mounted on a board or the wall (or else use a picture projector);
- long strips of cloth — blue to symbolise a river, and red to symbolise fire;
- a large wooden cross;
- other simple items, such as: a candle, a jug of water, a bottle of oil, a glass of wine, a loaf of bread, a plate or bowl or cup, a mirror, and so on (depending on the meditation).

For the modules

For every group work activity:

- you will find copies of the verse references, context, and questions for the participants in the Course Supplement. You should print out and cut them into strips, ready to give to the groups when needed.

For many activities the following will be useful:

- large sheets of paper (such as from a flipchart pad) for writing up the chat back responses from group work;
- marker pens in different colours;
- sticky tack or pins or tape to attach papers to the wall;
- index cards and sticky post-it notes for some activities, if available.

For games:

In the Easy Games book you will find enormous variety among the 100 games to play. None require any expensive or complex equipment, however some will use batons and balls (that you make cheaply), or other basic items (chairs, string, balloons, a bottle, a ring, and so on).

For picture slides:

If available technology permits, projecting onto a blank wall is easiest. It is also possible to draw the pictures up by hand onto a large sheet of paper, or onto an erasable board (dry-wipe board or chalkboard). If you need to draw pictures for each session, invite a few of the participants to help with this in advance, to save preparation time.

■ Introducing the Course

At the start of the course it is important to begin well. You want every person attending to feel welcomed and included, and also encouraged that they will enjoy their time on the course.

Don't forget to...

- welcome all the attendees, ensure they are greeted as they arrive;
- thank all for committing the time to attend the course;
- pray a prayer of blessing over all who are attending the course, that they might find fresh energy and inspiration for their work with children.

It will also be helpful to provide an outline of the course content (devotions and modules), so that all can see how the course will progress, and get an insight into the topics that will be covered. This can be written up and fixed to the wall.

■ During the Course

Each of the three courses has a set of five devotions and a selection of around fifteen modules.

During the course, as facilitator you will need to engage in the devotions; encourage the groups; energise the activities; keep to time; and emphasise the outcomes.

◆ Engage in the Devotions

Note that the devotions are not an optional extra. Although they differ slightly in style from the modules, they are integral to the course. They offer moments of encounter, inviting us to listen to God, and encourage us to keep our reflective prayer life, and our practical skills, and our active service connected. One devotion should be used at the beginning of each day before you launch into running whichever modules you have selected to do.

◆ Encourage the Groups

At the beginning of the course you will need to allocate each attender to a small group in which they will be for many of the activities. For simplicity, we have used four colour labels (red, yellow, green, and blue).

Allocating groups

Commonly, if choosing their own group, people naturally cluster around their own friends and those they know well, but this can lead to close groups forming which may (however unintentionally) exclude others. So we advise that you as facilitator should decide who should be in each group.

This could be done at random — but better to ensure that there are a good mix of ages and genders in each group. If some churches or organisations have several people attending it is good to separate them. This encourages everybody to interact with new people, and to learn from each other.

Either provide coloured lanyards (they can be made with ribbon) for the participants to indicate their group, or else a sticker or coloured spot on their name badge.

Motivating interaction

Each group needs to be encouraged to interact well, and to involve all of their members. One way to enliven this is by running a competition between the groups, awarding points for completing various activities particularly well, for being ready to start on time each day and after breaks, for leaving their group area tidy at the end of the day, and so on. If you promote a prize for them to share at the end of the week (perhaps a box of chocolates or similar), then this serves as a helpful motivator!

◆ Energise the Activities

Each module opens with “Setting the Scene” and closes with a “Review”. In between the units (or sections) are numbered alphabetically, and may contain several activities. Here we explain what each type of activity is, and offer some ideas on how to run it. For some activities we offer different options on how to do them. We recommend using a variety of approaches to vary the learning style and keep familiar activities fresh.

Setting the Scene

Each module begins with this purpose statement, which serves to indicate the overall intention or objective. It may be helpful to read this out, so that all the participants know what we are aiming to learn in this module.

Group Work

This usually consists of reading through a few verses or a passage of the Bible (or on occasions a story script), then working together to answer a few questions. Don't forget to check that everybody understands the task, and tell them how much time they have to come up with their answers. Here are some ways of launching Group Work.

Three ways to do **Group Work**:

- a. Write or print out the verse references and questions. Hand the relevant items to each group to consider. Once in their groups, one person should read out the verses for all in the group to hear, before they discuss the questions.
- b. Project the verse references and questions for all of the groups onto the wall. (You will need to ensure this slide is prepared in

advance.) Ask the participants to get into their groups to consider the questions assigned to them.

- c. If there is a common passage of scripture or story script to read for all groups, you can invite one or two participants to do this out loud in a clear voice before they all divide into their groups.

Note that in the modules, all the questions have suggested answers with them. These serve as a guide for you as the facilitator, to help know what to expect in response. Please **DO NOT** simply read out these answers! However, if needed, you can ask further questions to encourage participants to find the answers for themselves.

Chat Back

This happens after each **Group Work** so that each group can share their answers with everybody. It is important to do this to enable all to learn from what each group has discovered.

Ask the group to note their answers on their notepad (if simple answers), or on a sheet of flipchart paper (if longer complex answers or several answers are required).

Three ways to do **Chat Back**:

- a. Invite each group in turn to get three people to stand: one to read the verses out loud, one to give the questions, and one to share the group's answers with everybody.
- b. Invite one member of the group to hold up their flipchart paper while another briefly outlines the key points of the group's answer for everybody to hear.
- c. If all groups have the same questions, answers maybe written on sticky post-it notes and all stuck onto one piece of flipchart paper as they share their answers.

Note: If there is one common question for all the groups with several possible answers, please **DO NOT** let one group give all the answers. Instead, ensure you cycle through all the groups. Ask the first group to share one or two responses only, then ask the next group to do likewise and so on, until all the unique answers have been shared. This way each group gets a chance to share their responses.

Always thank participants for giving answers and responses (even if it is not the answer you were looking for). Don't say, "No, that's totally wrong!" Instead use an approach such as, "Thank you, can anyone else help?" "What do others suggest for an answer?" Encouraging involvement is more important than getting perfect answers.

With in-depth answers on some topics it maybe appropriate to stick the flipchart papers up on a wall so that everybody may read them during the break time.

Quick Buzz

This is typically one or more short questions with easy answers needing an immediate response. Rather than taking time to answer these in groups it is easier to do them rapidly with everybody together.

Three ways to do **Quick Buzz**:

- a. Read out the verses or scenario, then pose the question to all, and invite anybody to answer. Allow a few people from different groups to offer their responses.
- b. If the participants need to look in the passage for the answer, you could give points to those who respond the quickest.
- c. On occasions, you may get a blank response. In this case, tell everybody to turn and talk to their neighbour (in pairs or trios) and between them find an answer. Again, accept a few different responses.

Info Items

These are where you provide learning points, explain concepts, reinforce ideas, or give facts and figures, directly to the participants. In the course there are very few of these. We want to avoid any kind of a lecture, which can be a very passive experience. So, do not allow your co-facilitators to introduce their own content or to make lengthy speeches. Here are some ways to keep the communication alive.

Three ways to do **Info Items**:

- a. You may have a handful of very short key points or phrases written up (or projected) which you reveal one at a time. Each point may

also be accompanied by a picture or icon, for visual emphasis. Ask participants, “Why do you think this is important?”

- b. If the key points follow a clear progression or sequence, you may have them written up (and read them out), but out of order, and ask the groups to try to number them in the correct order.
- c. Alternatively, you can ask groups to come up with their own thoughts around the topic, before you reveal the key points identified in the course. Then ask the groups which points they found surprising, and whether there are other points that they would add.

Key Points

Throughout the module each unit ends with a list which emphasises the key learning points in that unit. These serve as a useful summary, so strongly encourage the participants to write these down in their notes. This will help to fix the learning experience in their memories

Other Activities

In addition to the frequent **Group Work**, **Chat Back**, **Quick Buzz**, and occasional **Info Items**, there are also a variety of other activities in each module. Some of these offer more encounter with God moments, some are geared towards earthing practical skills. These will become more familiar to you the more frequently you do them. Some are more common than others, but all of them are explained briefly here:

- **Everybody at Once:** activities similar to group activities, but which are done all together, not in groups.
- **Case Study** and **Tough Task:** each group is given stories to consider or scenarios to complete. These are typically based on situations that they may encounter in family life or youth work.
- **Role Play** and **Mini Play:** each group engages in theatrical acting in which they prepare and present a short piece of theatre or mime. This may be either with or without the actors following a script (which may be provided).

Ensure participants understand that they need to use all the group members, including a narrator, extras, and so on. They may need

some theatrical props. Ensure they make the scenes dramatic, using exaggeration and humour to communicate their story.

- **Dramatic Point:** you as facilitator act out a brief piece of theatre in order to provoke a response from the participants. This way you can reinforce an important point in an emphatic (and humorous) manner which will be much more memorable.

For some of these you may need a helper, and there may be a script or other instructions to follow.

- **Progress Check:** exercises for evaluating and assessing progress. These may be as a group, or individual.
- **Mirror Moment:** exercises for personal reflection on a theme. These are individual.

The purpose of these is to create an opportunity for each person to reflect on what they are learning in the light of their personal experience, and to invite God to speak into their life.

Do not neglect these moments. Our capacity to reach children and young people with the Good News and introduce them to Jesus is not simply about techniques and knowledge. It is also about who we are as leaders, and whether we have allowed God's Spirit to continue to transform our own lives, so that we can serve others effectively.

- **Pause for Prayer** and **Pause to Share:** exercises which are sometimes individual, but more often in pairs or trios.

The purpose of these is to create an opportunity for mutual encouragement, so participants can share more personally, and then pray for each other.

- **Skill Set:** in groups, a chance to rehearse a new practical skill, to put into immediate practice something they are learning.

The purpose of these is create an opportunity to experiment and try things out in a non-threatening environment where it is OK to make mistakes. This helps to build confidence in doing new things in a new way.

- **Circle Conversation:** in these discussions, participants are not in their usual groups, but maybe separated by age, or gender, or

some other criteria. This enables a deeper conversation around topics that may be sensitive. It also enables you, as facilitator, to highlight useful comparisons between the groups.

- **Presentations:** each group sharing with everybody the results of their exercise or activity.
- **Play This / Puzzle This / Picture This:** exercises which involve some game to play, or puzzle to solve, or picture to draw, following the instructions given.
- **Statues / Snapshot:** This involves getting people in the group to dramatically pose a scene, which may depict a story or scenario they are given. They may either have to stand still for a minute, while others guess what the scene depicts. Alternatively, one person could take a snapshot on a pocket camera.
- **Crazy Challenge:** this is for something a little out of the ordinary! Instructions will be given in the activity.

◆ Keep to Time

Each module has an estimate of the time we expect it will take to complete, assuming nothing is omitted or added. Most are between 60 and 120 minutes long. Within the module each unit also has a time estimate (marked by the clock icon). You may add time for breaks and games where needed.

You will also need to add time if you are working with a translator or in more than one language, for example if those attending do not all share a common language with sufficient fluency.

While not forcing the pace when there are reflective moments or sensitive dialogues, it is essential to keep a sense of momentum with the course moving progressively forward.

◆ Emphasise the Outcomes

Encourage everybody to make their own notes in the Picture Book you have given them. When you project the relevant picture for each activity, you can suggest the participants find the relevant picture to add their notes alongside. These serve as a visual cue to reinforce the things being learnt.

Review: Each module closes with a time for reviewing the module. Ask participants to share what they have learnt. This helps participants recall the key points that have been significant to them, and reinforces the learning. It is helpful for those attending to reflect on the new skills and concepts they have discovered during the day.

You can leave the sheets of flipchart paper with key points up on the wall, and refer to them when needed, or encourage people to read them during break times.

◆ Help for the Facilitator

In the course modules you will find the following highlighted throughout:

- **Facilitator Prep:** something to get ready ahead of time, to remind you what needs to be prepared before the start of the session.
- **Facilitator Hint:** something to give you extra help, useful tips and suggestions to guide you as the facilitator.

In addition there are...

- **texts:** any Bible verses needed for group work are given in full following the reference, so that the facilitator does not have to look up all the different verses. Don't forget: use an easy-to-read modern version of the Bible in the local language.
- **scripts:** any activity involving drama (role play, mini play, dramatic point) may have an accompanying script to be read by the actors or a narrator, to inspire a good performance.
- **pictures:** all throughout the course there are pictures to accompany the activities. You should show these (projected or drawn) at the appropriate point, and encourage participants to use the space next to the same picture in their Picture Books to write their notes.

In a few cases (clearly indicated in the modules) the pictures are for the facilitator only, and not in the participant's Picture Books.

◆ Simulations

Some of the modules are what we call simulations. The entire module is focused on the experience of one single task in which the participants are immersed. Your role as facilitator is to setup and guide the learning experience.

The format of this module is slightly different, consisting of briefing, simulation, and debriefing. Ensure you are fully familiar with the simulation before you launch it:

- **briefing:** this will include any instructions for the facilitator and introductory items for the participants. You should familiarise yourself with the entire simulation task, so you can provide clear directions for participants. Check they have fully understood the task (and clarify if needed) before they begin (but don't give away the solution!).
- **simulation:** this is the task in which the participants all play a part (perhaps a problem to solve or a project to be completed). As they do so, they may compete or cooperate with other teams, or find they have to adapt their approach. All of this will be part of the learning process.
- **debrief:** this is a time for all to reflect on the learning of the session. Ask questions to encourage individuals and teams to reflect on their own involvement in the task and how they felt during the task. Let them share what they have learnt (about themselves, attitudes, teamwork, leadership, and so on).

After participants have shared their own learning, you as facilitator may summarise, and also add any observations of your own. Also ensure you end on a positive thought for everyone.

■ Concluding the Course

At the end of the course it is important to conclude well. You want every person attending to leave feeling inspired and empowered for the work that God has called them to do.

Don't forget to...

- thank everybody for all their energy and contributions;

- award certificates, as a reminder of what they have achieved;
- hand out prizes to the winning teams;
- pray a prayer of blessing over the participants as they leave to return to their churches and communities.

If appropriate you may want to have a brief time of worship, thanksgiving, and commissioning.

■ After the Course

Once the course is concluded, the real work begins: that of raising the quality of our work with children and young people in our churches and communities, and also the launching of new outreach groups for children and youth.

◆ Encouragement and Action Plans

After the course, you could offer to form a local network for participants to keep in touch, perhaps through a social media group, or online, or by exchanging contact details. This might be especially helpful for children's workers and youth workers who are in remote or isolated locations and do not easily have contact with others who can offer mutual support. However, participants need to give permission for their contact details to be shared, and inclusion in such a group should be voluntary.

It may also be helpful to encourage attenders to make an action plan to implement some of the ideas they have learnt. Some changes may easily be put in place immediately, however some ideas may require careful thought, and cooperation with others in their church or organisation.

◆ Feedback and Follow Up

It is worth getting some immediate feedback from the participants about their experience of the course. We recommend asking them to fill in (before they leave the venue) a brief feedback form that asks some key questions.

Questions about the course content (devotions and modules) will be especially helpful. For example: What did you find most inspiring or

empowering? What will you now do differently as a result of what you have learnt? and so on.

Questions about the course logistics may also be helpful to you as facilitator. For example: How did you first hear about the course? How was the timing, or location, or facilities?

It is also worth checking in with each of the participants at a later date, perhaps after a period of two or three months, to ask: How are things going since you attended the course? What has been challenging, and what has gone well? If needed, offer any support that you can give.

◆ **New Facilitators and New Courses**

After the course, you should plan for further courses, taking note of the feedback you've received to adapt and improve. Those who have attended course 1 will look forward to being invited to the next level course, perhaps the following year.

Also you should plan to run the first course again for others who will be keen to attend. As you make more contacts in new locations, these people will benefit from the learning. This will also be an opportunity to mentor more course facilitators, so that you begin to develop more good teams who can run these courses.

■ **Facilitator Know-How**

You will need adaptability for several scenarios that may arise on the course. Here are some hints for handling common situations.

◆ **How to Encourage Participation**

Course participants are divided into four teams or small groups. The ideal size for each group is about 7 or 8 people, up to a maximum of 10 people to ensure everybody takes part. Make sure participants respect others when they are speaking.

- Some people may dominate the discussions or answer times, which may mean the less confident don't speak up. So invite a

different person to speak for the group, so everyone in the group can gain some experience of speaking in front of others.

- If you feel there are a wider diversity of voices that are not being heard, or responses that are not being shared, a useful tactic may be to say, for example, “Not everybody has had a chance to speak yet. Can anyone add a different perspective?”
- For some activities, it will help if you appoint selected group members as leaders or co-leaders within each group for that activity. This ensures that leadership of activities isn’t always assumed by a more dominant group member.
- Give extra points to the groups that make good use of all their group members during the cooperative activities and tasks.

◆ How to Keep Interest and Attention

Try to be alert to the dynamic of the group interactions, and be aware when change is needed. And keep a good sense of humour!

- If discussion is getting too long or too intense, ensure you change the focus and pace with the next activity.
- If you get a weak answer to a question, you can inspire deeper engagement by asking, “Why do you imagine that is?” or “What does that look like in reality?”
- If the groups are getting tired and losing focus, it is better to take a short break than keep going. You can then restart with an energising game.
- During the course, it may help to change the layout of the room occasionally. If one or two groups are further away from you as the facilitator, then swap the group positions around half way through the course.

◆ How to Save Time

Sometimes an activity takes longer than expected and you may find that an important discussion overruns the time allocated.

- Don’t cut out the times for sharing responses. These are important.

- You can do some of the simpler Group Work activities with each person turning to their neighbour in a Quick Buzz style or with Everybody at Once, instead of as a group.
- If absolutely necessary you may have skip an activity. It is better to do less material well than trying to fit in everything with the result that the pace feels rushed.
- Key Points can be written up on a sheet of paper, or projected on the wall, for participants to copy down (or take a snapshot) during the break, reducing time used for making notes.

◆ Experiment and Adapt

As you run the courses you will discover more methods and techniques that ensure smooth running and enhance the learning experience. Don't be afraid to experiment and adapt to find what works best in your own context.

■ Annexes...

◆ Who is Amor Europe?

Our history and origins.

Amor Europe was registered as an independent charity in late 2017, yet our history has much earlier roots. We emerge from some 20 years of evolution within Urban Saints (a UK youth and children's charity), where we nurtured our expertise in Global Development, working with partners around the world. Over several years we forged a link with Amor Ministries (based in the USA), exploring a deeper emphasis on justice as integral to discipleship. With a common ethos and values, we launched the European based charity under the Amor name.

There are three strands to our mission: TRAIN (training partners), PURE (purifying water), BUILD (building houses).

TRAIN: With our courses we train workers who serve children and young people, and we encourage the establishment of high quality, inclusive provision for all children. This is a significant factor in building community cohesion.

PURE: We provide water filters to improve health for entire households in a community. This eliminates water-borne diseases, raises life expectancy for infants, increases the capability of children to attend school, and the capacity of adults to work.

BUILD: We work alongside local church leaders to build houses for families facing destitution, providing the basic need for shelter and keeping the family together. Our team members (many from the UK and Europe) learn citizenship skills and gain a heart for justice on these projects.

How to connect with us further:

Amor Europe can be contacted via our website « amoreurope.org ».

◆ Our Ethos

We are inspired towards this: for the next generation to gain the rights that God has freely granted to every human being, that they might attain the fullness of all that God intends for them as good citizens of this world, and of the world which is to come.

We are motivated to do this: to bring people together to make Jesus visible. In all our planning and work, our conversations and relationships, we seek to live by the

Spirit of Christ, exhibiting Christ-like character and bearing the fruit of the Spirit, promoting justice, righteousness, and peace in the communities with whom we connect, bringing Glory to God our Heavenly Father.

◆ Our Values

We hold these to be important...

- **Knowing God** — we centre our life on God and serve others with God's enabling. We intentionally seek to deepen our relationship with God personally and together.
- **Local Relationships** — we respectfully seek to develop genuine friendships with church and community leaders wherever we work. We serve the local churches that God is building in the places where we are invited to go.
- **Global Partnerships** — we are called to collaborate with partners around the world. We enable people from one country to serve those in another, for the mutual benefit of all involved.
- **Distributed Power** — we empower our teams and our partners, equipping others, sharing skills and resources, and promoting competence. We seek to learn from others in an attitude of humility.
- **Transformative Experiences** — we anticipate change in people and their situations as the gospel of the kingdom is spread abroad. We gratefully play our part in serving the purposes of Jesus as his Holy Spirit works in us and through us.

◆ Our Vision

As a Christian charity we are committed to seeing young people develop mentally, emotionally, spiritually, physically, and socially, to become the very best they can be. In a world troubled by injustice towards children, we see this injustice, and we empower ordinary people to make a difference.

Our vision is all about bringing transformation with young people in challenging places. We bring people together to make visible the presence of Christ Jesus who is the Prince of Peace among the next generation.

◆ Esteeming Children

We value all the children and young people we encounter in the life of our communities and churches, recognising the gifts they bring to us and the questions they raise for us, as well as their needs and aspirations. We welcome them with all their openness yet hiddenness, vulnerability yet resilience, aware that this challenges us to reflect on our own relationship with God.

We learn from scripture that...

- Children are given as a blessing from God (Genesis 17:16, 24:60; Deuteronomy 7:14; 1 Samuel 1:15–20; Psalm 127:4–5).
- Children who are especially at risk are to be a priority, seen in numerous references to God’s concern for orphans and desire for people to care for them (Exodus 22:22; Deuteronomy 10:8, 24:17–21, 26:12–13; Psalm 68:5, 82:3–4, 146:9; Isaiah 10:1–2; Jeremiah 7:5–8; Zechariah 7:9–10; Malachi 3:5).
- Families are the place where children are nurtured, in an attitude of mutual respect between children and parents (Colossians 3:20–21; Ephesians 6:1–4).
- Church life is intended to reflect this healthy family ideal (2 Corinthians 12:14–15; 1 Thessalonians 2:7–8, 2:11–12).
- God’s desire is that broken relationships between children and parents should be reconciled, where appropriate and possible (Luke 1:17; see also Malachi 4:5–6).
- Jesus welcomed children at any opportunity, did not exclude them on any basis, always treated them with the utmost respect and dignity, and expects us to do likewise (Matthew 18:2–5, 19:13–14; Mark 9:36–37, 10:13–16; Luke 9:46–48, 18:15–17).
- Jesus sought children’s health and well-being, physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially, as seen in many occasions when he heals a sick child, even raises a child from death, and restores the child to the family’s care (Mark 5:38–42; Luke 7:11–15, 8:51–56; John 4:47–51).
- Jesus reserves his harshest words of judgement for people who seek to lead children astray (Matthew 18:6).
- Jesus defended children’s creative spontaneity, and their right to have a voice (Matthew 21:15–16).
- Jesus made clear that children can relate to God, and have spiritual insight (Matthew 11:25; Luke 10:21).

- Children can know and trust God at a young age, in a manner authentic and appropriate to their stage of development (2 Kings 5:2–3; 2 Chronicles 34:1–3).
- Children can be filled with the Holy Spirit, even at a young age (1 Samuel 16:11–13; Luke 1:15, 41–44).

Children and young people have often served God’s plans and purposes at significant points in the history of God’s people (some examples: Miriam, Samuel, Naaman’s servant girl, David, Josiah, Joash, Esther, to name a few).

We esteem children and young people as equally made in God’s image for God’s glory, and equally part of today’s church in today’s world, and equally to share in the life of the coming kingdom.

◆ God as Trinity

We worship God revealed to us in the Bible as Three-in-One: Father, Son, and Spirit — the source of life, the fountain of life, and the living water.

Our hope is that we and all children and young people will come to encounter the true living God, and experience what it is to be...

- adopted as daughters and sons of their nurturing heavenly Father, experiencing God’s protective care;
- welcomed as sisters and brothers into the life of Christ Jesus, experiencing God’s loving embrace; and
- affirmed as unique human beings under the anointing of the Holy Spirit, experiencing God’s dynamic creativity;

... eager to serve others in the freedom of divine wisdom, to the glory of God and in anticipation of the coming kingdom.

◆ Our Christian Basis

Along with all our sisters and brothers in the worldwide Christian community, we accept and proclaim the historic and timeless truths of the Christian life and faith... *

a. God and the human race

We believe that the Lord our God is eternally one God:
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
and that he fulfils the sovereign purposes of his providence
— in creation, revelation, redemption, judgement,
and the coming of his kingdom —
calling out from the world a people,
united to himself and to each other in love.

We acknowledge that though God made humanity
in his own likeness and image,
conferring on us dignity and worth
and enabling us to respond to himself,
we are now members of a fallen race,
who have sinned and come short of his glory.

We believe that the Father's holy love is shown supremely
in that he gave Jesus Christ, his only Son, for us
when, through our sinfulness and guilt, we were subject
to his wrath and condemnation;
and that his grace is shown supremely
by his putting sinners right with himself
when they place their trust in his Son.

We confess Jesus Christ
as Lord and God, the eternal Son of the Father;
as truly human, born of the virgin Mary;
as Servant, sinless, full of grace and truth;
as only Mediator and Saviour of the whole world,
dying on the cross in our place,
representing us to God,
redeeming us from the grip, guilt, and punishment of sin;
as the Second Adam, the head of a new humanity,
living a life of perfect obedience,
overcoming death and decay,
rising from the dead with a glorious body,
being taken up to be with the Father,
one day returning personally in glory and judgement
to bring eternal life to the redeemed and eternal death to the lost
to establish a new heaven and a new earth,
the home of righteousness,
where there will be no more evil, suffering, or death.
as Victor over Satan and all his forces,
rescuing us from the dominion of darkness, and
bringing us into his own kingdom;

as the Word who makes God known.

We believe in the Holy Spirit
who with the Father and the Son is worthy of our worship,
who convicts the world of guilt
 in regard to sin, righteousness, and judgement,
who makes the death of Christ effective to sinners,
 enabling them to turn to God in repentance
 and directing their trust towards the Lord Jesus Christ;
who through the new birth unites us with Christ,
who is present within all believers;
and makes us partake in Christ's risen life,
 pointing us to Jesus,
 freeing us from slavery to sin,
 producing in us his fruit,
 granting to us his gifts, and
 empowering us for service in the world.

b. The Scriptures

We believe that the Old and New Testament Scriptures
are God-breathed since their writers spoke from God
 as they were moved by the Holy Spirit;
hence, they are fully trustworthy in all that they affirm;
and as the written Word of God they are our supreme authority
 for faith and conduct.

We acknowledge the need for the Scriptures to be rightly interpreted
 under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and
 using the gifts of understanding and scholarship
 that God has given to his people.

c. The Church and its Mission

We recognise the Church
 as the body of Christ, of which he is the head,
 held together and growing up in him through the one Spirit; both
 as a total fellowship throughout the world, and
 as local congregations in which believers gather to worship God,
 growing in grace through Word, prayer and sacrament.

We acknowledge the commission of Christ
 to proclaim the Good News to all people,
 making them disciples, baptising them, and

teaching them to obey him.

We acknowledge the command of Christ
to love our neighbours,
resulting in service to the Church and to society
in seeking reconciliation for all with God and their fellows,
in proclaiming liberty from every kind of oppression; and
in spreading Christ's justice in an unjust world

...until he comes again.

* source: Basis of Faith of the London School of Theology, February 1998, used with permission.

◆ Edition

As of 2021, the current version of the courses = **Edition 8**.

This includes: Facilitator's Handbook, Course Devotions, Course Modules, Course Picture Slides, and Course Picture Books (for participants).

◆ Translations

The original course is written in English. Each of the devotions and modules in the course will have an edition number provided.

Note: It will be helpful if you keep this number on any translated publication of the module, so that you will be able to confirm that these are effectively the same version in different languages.

Published editions of any translation should be forwarded to Amor Europe as an electronic copy (in pdf and Word format), along with any non-roman fonts required. Thank you.

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