

SESSION 1: WATCHING *THE AMENDMENT* MOVIE

What were your thoughts about the movie? Which scenes were most meaningful for you?



NOTE TO THE GROUP LEADER:

[Before the movie starts, introduce yourself and share why you personally chose to share this movie and start a follow-up faith-based discussion group.]

After watching the movie, note that this movie can evoke all kinds of feelings—from fond memories of parents and childhood to grief over lost loved ones and/or a tug toward considering forgiveness—either asking to be forgiven or granting forgiveness.] Ask:

- ***What were your thoughts about the movie? Which scenes were most meaningful for you?***

If this movie touched your heart in a meaningful way, we hope you will join us for a 10-session faith-based discussion group. The group will focus on grief, forgiveness, and moving forward after loss.

The main reason this movie is named “*The Amendment*” is for the many words and meanings within that word.

- ***Does anyone see additional words and meanings with the word: “Amendment”?***
 - To amend – meaning to make better; to improve
 - To mend – meaning to heal; to recover
 - To make amends – to compensate for injury, loss, or insult
 - Amendment – legislation to protect and serve victims and their families
 - Amen – part of communicating with God

Over the next 10 sessions, we will work toward amending and mending a brokenness that can come with the loss of a loved one through death, divorce, separation, or conflict. We will look at the path Christ laid for us as he helped his disciples prepare for His crucifixion then bravely move on after. Recovering from loss can be a lonely journey, but walking that path with others and with God’s Word can help bring comfort, guidance, and needed support.

We sincerely hope you will join us in this journey toward peace and purpose—toward feeling real joy again and rediscovering what you may have lost through life’s events.

[Pass out a sign-up sheet with space for their phone number and email info if you haven’t already.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Guide to Group Leaders.....	5
Session 1:	Watching <i>The Amendment</i> Movie..... <i>What were your thoughts about the movie? Which scenes were most meaningful for you?</i>	11
Session 2:	Finding Commonalities..... <i>How are your life experiences similar to the love and/or loss of the Douglass Family? How are your life experiences similar to your groupmates'?</i>	13
Session 3:	Tracing Family Influences <i>How has your family of origin—your parents, grandparents, siblings, and childhood events—influenced who you are today?</i>	19
Session 4:	Living With Loss..... <i>How can you find peace and meaning after loss? Where is God while we mourn losses?</i>	25
Session 5:	Allowing Grief..... <i>What is the purpose of grief? When is grief healthy and helpful? When is it not?</i>	31
Session 6:	Letting Go of Anger and Blame <i>How is anger, blame, and/or regret affecting your life? What would life be like without it?</i>	37
Session 7:	Assessing Coping Strategies..... <i>What do you do to soothe stress, frustration, or grief? Is it working?</i>	43
Session 8:	Finding Forgiveness..... <i>Do you need to forgive someone? Do you need to ask for forgiveness? What would forgiveness feel like in your life?</i>	51
Session 9:	Reaching Restoration <i>How do we get back to our core, best selves? What would restoration look and feel like?</i>	59
Session 10:	Moving Forward with Purpose..... <i>Now what? How do we move toward a more meaningful and fulfilling life?</i>	65
Session 11:	Celebrating Together..... <i>What have you learned from this group? And when will you meet again?</i>	71
	Class Evaluation Survey	73
	Follow-Up Reflection	77

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the *Amendment Faith-based Discussion Guide: A Journey Toward Peace and Purpose*. We hope you find this guide comforting and inspirational as you learn more about the movie, yourself, and God's purpose for your life.

After watching *The Amendment* movie, some feel an instant connection. People who have lost a loved one or experienced tragedy and grief themselves can feel their own emotions played out in Brooks' and Leslie's life story. Others cannot imagine enduring such pain and loss. They have not experienced a tragedy so great, and while they sympathize with and support Brooks and Leslie, it's hard to put themselves in their shoes.

This *Amendment Faith-based Guide* is designed to encompass the universal emotions and experiences of joy and pain, anger and forgiveness, loss and healing. While you may not have experienced a loss as profound as Brooks' and Leslie's, we can all relate to a yearning to find peace and purpose amidst disappointment, uncertainty, and challenges.

GUIDELINES

Each chapter is designed to be a 60-to-90-minute discussion. A discussion group is most effective when blanketed in mutual respect and provides opportunities for every member to speak and be heard. We recommend using the **"Think-Pair-Share"** method to keep everyone involved. After seeing the clip, group members write responses to the first few questions (*think*), talk about their answers with a partner (*pair*) then reconvene as a whole group to talk about what they learned (*share*) in order to create the foundation for the rest of the session.

Confidentiality is crucial. Trust amongst members is the lynchpin to a meaningful experience. Remind each other that all conversations are to remain within the group and are not to be discussed outside the group.

Throughout this guide, we ask God to join us in the journey. He is essential to this story, Richard's lifework, and Brooks' healing. Each lesson has a **"Faith Walk"** with scripture to support and reinforce the theme. We recommend you start and end each lesson with prayer. God promises us in Matthew 18:20, *"for when two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."* Invite God to be present in the discussion.

If your group does not have time for all 11 sessions, we suggest choosing four to eight lessons most important to members. It is not necessary to do the previous lesson to be prepared for the next lesson. Although each lesson can stand on its own, Sessions 8 and 9—*Feeling Forgiveness* and *Reaching Restoration*—go well together.

Please schedule time before starting the guide to see all of *The Amendment* movie, which can be viewed in 90 minutes. We also recommend possibly seeing the movie again after you have finished the guide. People consistently tell us that the movie is more powerful for them the second time after they become more familiar with the characters and story.

We would love to hear about your experience with the movie and this guide. Please feel free to e-mail Julea directly (Julea@DouglassHouse.org) and/or join the discussion on our website (www.DouglassHouse.org/Discussion).

We wish you peace and purpose....

Respectfully, Julea & Brooks Douglass