

# Sacred Spaces ★ Discussion Guide

## GETTING STARTED GUIDE

For additional support or discussion group ideas, please contact Elva Resa Publishing: [pr@elvaresa.com](mailto:pr@elvaresa.com), 651-357-8770

### GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSION GROUPS

Book clubs, church small groups, and discussion groups are a valuable way to foster friendships, share ideas, and create a sense of community. Whether you are in an existing group or creating a new one, here are a few suggestions for reading and discussing *Sacred Spaces: My Journey to the Heart of Military Marriage* by Corie Weathers in a group setting.

**Leader preparation:** Read *Sacred Spaces* and the discussion guide before beginning, so you can answer questions from potential members about the subject matter. Knowing the content will also allow you to make informed decisions about group size, meeting locations, and discussion format.

**Location:** Choose a relaxing place that will encourage discussion with few distractions. Be sensitive to the private nature of this topic when choosing your location. Match your group size with the space available.

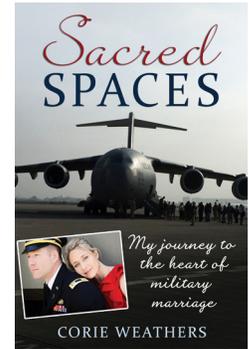
**Frequency:** Some groups meet weekly. Once or twice a month may be a better fit for busy lives. Select a time period that allows members to read the material and reflect between meetings, while maintaining the continuity of discussion and application.

**Moderator:** The discussion leader can be one person or couple, or group members may want to share leadership responsibilities. Having more than one discussion leader ensures the group will hear different perspectives. It also helps keep the responsibilities manageable. Don't pressure everyone to take a turn. Not all couples will be ready to lead these discussions. Consider asking a gentle time keeper to help your group stick to the time you've allotted for the discussion. Create an environment where everyone has a chance to contribute and feels comfortable sharing insights.

**Refreshments:** Take turns hosting and providing snacks. Engage your members and enhance the discussion by matching munchies to the ideas presented in the book.

**Discussion format:** Based on how often your group plans to meet and how much reading the participants can accomplish between meetings, decide ahead of time how many sessions you can devote to this book. Options to consider:

- » Assign one or two chapters for each meeting. Meet as many times as it takes to finish the book.
- » Discuss the entire book in one sitting. Ask participants to complete some or all of the exercises from each chapter or section before the meeting. This format works best for marriage retreats in which a session or two can be devoted to the book discussion.
- » Select chapters or topics that appeal to your group, and meet once for each chapter or section selected. Reading the entire book is recommended, even if the discussion only covers select portions.



The **Sacred Spaces Discussion Guide** will help participants:

- » Identify the unshared sacred spaces in their marriages.
- » Leverage empathy to hear and understand their spouse's stories and communicate their own stories more effectively.
- » Create more shared sacred spaces with their spouse.

**Find the book at:**

**MilitaryFamilyBooks.com**

ISBN 978-1-934617-33-5

Paperback \$16.95

Ebook \$9.99

**Personal introductions:** Before you begin discussing the book, take a few minutes for each person or couple to share a bit about their family life, hobbies, and interests.

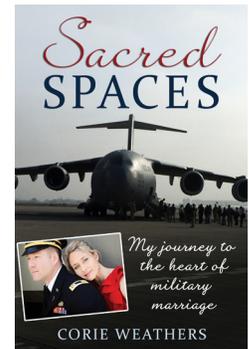
**Privacy/trusted circle:** Some discussions may involve experiences that are emotionally difficult to share or that may be very private. Encourage participants to honor the privacy of others by keeping all discussions within the group unless both married spouses give consent for their story to be shared outside the group.

**Traumatic experiences:** Some participants may have experienced traumatic events. Be aware of situations that may require professional help or intervention. Do not pressure anyone to talk about their trauma. Be sensitive to others who may not be prepared to listen to discussions about traumatic experiences.

**Journaling:** This discussion guide lists questions for participants to consider prior to the group discussion. Some questions are directed to military spouses, some to service members, and some for couples to consider together. Lines are provided to encourage participants to write out thoughts they want to share with the group. You may also suggest keeping a separate journal to write out longer answers, explore feelings about the topic discussed, and write notes about perspectives gained in discussions between spouses or within the discussion group.

Additional copies of the discussion guide can be found at:

[SharedSacredSpaces.com](http://SharedSacredSpaces.com)



## Supplemental Materials:

» **Corie Weathers, LPC, YouTube Channel.** “Sacred Spaces Journey” videos range 20-45 minutes and cover various topics in the book. Leaders: Watch and select appropriate videos before the start of the session.

» **CorieWeathers.com Sacred Spaces Campaign.** Each participant receives a Sacred Spaces Intentional Marriage Commitment Card, which provides space for individuals to write their commitments and goals, and a paracord bracelet. Participants can post their commitment cards in their homes and wear their bracelets as reminders of their commitments. Your group can also help one another be accountable to these commitments.