

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF SOUL SURFER

BASED ON THE
INCREDIBLE TRUE STORY

SOUL ON FIRE

*You Get One Life.
Make Yours Matter.*

FAITH-LED BUSINESS LEADERS
DISCUSSION GUIDE

EXCLUSIVELY IN THEATERS OCTOBER 10

SOUL ON FIRE

FAITH-LED BUSINESS LEADERS DISCUSSION GUIDE

FILM OVERVIEW

Directed by Sean McNamara (Soul Surfer, Reagan) and inspired by John O’Leary’s bestselling memoir *On Fire*, **SOUL ON FIRE** tells the true story of a boy who survived a near-death accident and went on to live a life defined by resilience, purpose, and extraordinary influence. What began as a tragedy became a testimony—shaped by family, community, mentors, and a relentless pursuit of meaning.

For professionals, leaders, and entrepreneurs, John’s story is more than survival—it’s about how values, perseverance, and relationships fuel success and legacy.

THIS DISCUSSION GUIDE

This guide is designed for individuals and groups to reflect on the themes of **SOUL ON FIRE** through the lens of leadership, resilience, and purpose. It can be used for individual reflection, leadership teams, corporate retreats, or professional groups after seeing the movie. To view the trailer and see where you can watch **SOUL ON FIRE**, visit the website at SoulOnFireMovie.com.

**THIS GUIDE CONTAINS QUOTES AND SPOILERS AND IS
INTENDED TO USE AFTER A GROUP HAS SEEN THE FILM.**

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DISCUSSION ONE

PURPOSE & MOTIVATION

ILLUSTRATION

Early in the film, John struggles to understand why he survived when the odds were against him. Later, he realizes his purpose isn't just survival but living a life that inspires others to find meaning in their own challenges.

SCRIPTURE (ESV)

- “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.” — **Colossians 3:23**
- “But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” — **Matthew 6:33**

KEY TAKEAWAY

Success without purpose is empty. True motivation comes not from fear or pressure, but from living with clarity about why we do what we do.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What fuels your professional journey—fear of failure, recognition, financial security, or a deeper purpose?
2. How do you return to your “why” when facing high-pressure seasons?
3. Colossians 3:23 reminds us to “work heartily, as for the Lord.” How might your motivation shift if you saw your daily work as service to God rather than people?
4. How can purpose-driven leadership inspire teams more than performance-driven leadership?
5. Jesus calls us in Matthew 6:33 to “seek first the kingdom of God.” How might that principle guide the way you set priorities at work?



DISCUSSION TWO

LEADERSHIP UNDER PRESSURE

ILLUSTRATION

During John's long recovery, his parents modeled leadership under pressure—his father offering unconditional love and his mother refusing to lower expectations, teaching John that resilience is forged through high standards, even in suffering..

SCRIPTURE (ESV)

- *“We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.” — Romans 5:3–4*
- *“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” — 2 Corinthians 12:9*

KEY TAKEAWAY

Pressure can either refine leaders or consume them. Resilient leaders transform hardship into growth opportunities—for themselves and their organizations.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. In 2 Corinthians 12:9, God says, *“My grace is sufficient for you.”* How does this truth shape the way you handle pressure or weakness in leadership?
2. Think of a season when you faced professional “fire.” What did it reveal about your leadership?
3. How do you balance transparency about challenges with the responsibility of inspiring confidence in your team?
4. Romans 5:3–4 teaches that suffering produces endurance, character, and hope. How have challenges in your work shaped these qualities in you as a leader?
5. In what ways can setbacks create breakthroughs in business strategy or culture?



DISCUSSION THREE

COMMUNITY & INFLUENCE

ILLUSTRATION

Hall of Fame announcer Jack Buck invested deeply in John, encouraging him through personal visits and gifts when John needed hope most. This act of influence rippled throughout John's career and life, demonstrating how one leader's presence can change everything.

Scripture (ESV)

- *“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” — **Hebrews 10:24–25***
- *“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow.” — **Ecclesiastes 4:9–10***

KEY TAKEAWAY

No leader succeeds alone. Influence grows when we invest in others, receive encouragement, and build communities of support.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Who has played the role of “Jack Buck” in your career—someone who showed up and invested in you unexpectedly?
2. Hebrews 10:24–25 calls us to “*encourage one another*.” What practical ways can you bring encouragement into your workplace?
3. What role does mentorship, encouragement, or networking play in sustaining resilience?
4. How can you as a leader build a culture that lifts people up during adversity?
5. Ecclesiastes 4:9–10 reminds us that if one falls, another can lift them up. Who are you lifting up right now, and who is lifting you?



DISCUSSION FOUR

RESILIENCE & RENEWAL

ILLUSTRATION

In a pivotal moment, John admits to hiding behind his scars and choices, but through encouragement and faith, he learns to transform pain into passion. His resilience doesn't come from avoiding hardship but from finding renewal through it.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Burnout happens when the fire consumes us. Renewal happens when the fire refines us. Resilience is not just about pushing through, but also about creating rhythms that restore purpose and energy.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever experienced burnout? What helped you recover—or what do you wish you had done differently?
2. In your workplace, what practical steps could leaders take to create a healthier culture that prevents burnout and encourages renewal?
3. Isaiah 40:31 promises that those who “wait for the Lord shall renew their strength.” How can you practice waiting on God in the midst of professional stress?
4. How might integrating resilience practices shape the long-term success of your career or business?
5. Jesus offers rest in Matthew 11:28. What would it look like for you to accept that invitation in your daily work rhythms?

CONCLUSION

John O’Leary’s story in **SOUL ON FIRE** reminds us that leadership isn’t ultimately about titles or accomplishments—it’s about living with faith, purpose, resilience, and influence. Every professional will face “fires” that could burn them out or refine them. The choice is whether we surrender those moments to God’s purposes.

As you reflect, consider: What is one area of your professional life where you need to invite God to rekindle purpose, strengthen resilience, or renew your influence?

PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

Thank you for the reminder through John’s story that you bring purpose from pain, strength from weakness, and renewal from hardship. Teach us as business leaders and professionals to work as unto you, to lead with courage, and to build communities of encouragement. When the fires of life threaten to overwhelm us, help us lean on your strength and rest in your promises. Rekindle in us a passion to lead with integrity, serve with humility, and inspire others through faith-filled resilience.

In Jesus’ Name,
Amen.

