

Leading a Small Group

Creative Icebreakers: Getting to Know Each Other

Did You Know?

Find interesting facts about individual group members before the group meets. Try to discover information that sets each person apart from the others, such as "I have a tugboat named after me" or "I once wrecked the same quarter panel of my car four times." Make a sheet with one fact from each person and a blank beside this fact. Give everyone in the group a sheet and five to seven minutes to find who goes in each blank. When they find the right person they must also learn one other fact about that person.

Most Unique

Go around the room and have each person share something that makes them different from anyone in the group, like, "I've never left the state I was born in" or, "I am one of ten kids."

House on Fire

Ask, "Your house is on fire, and everyone is safe. You have thirty seconds to run through the house and collect three or four articles you want to save. What would you grab? Why?" After everyone has done this, the group can discuss what they learned about the things they value.

Two Truths and a Lie

Have each person make three statements about themselves: two true statements and one lie. For example, "I've never broken a bone. I have five sisters. I was born in Yugoslavia." The group tries to guess which statement is the lie.

M&Ms Game

Pass a bag of M&Ms around and tell everyone to take a few. Then, before they eat them ask them to share something for every M&M. For example, something about their family for every red one, something about their plans for the future for every green one, etc.

Chart Your Life

Thinking back as far as you can, draw a line graph to represent your life. Consider the high points, the low points, moments of inspiration, moments of despair, leveling off times, and where you are now. After you've drawn it, share what it means to you with the group.

My Life in Pictures

Bring a newspaper or magazine. Have each person tear out a picture, article or anything they think tells something about themselves. If there's enough time they can make a collage that tells more about themselves.

Best/Worst

Have each person share their best and worst moments from the previous week. Try to steer your group away from school items. It can get boring to hear, "My best was an A in calculus, and my worst was a D in biology." This icebreaker is an easy one to use at first and gives you good feedback concerning their life at the moment. Some veteran groups do this every week. Their bests and worsts will become more honest.

Deserted Island

Ask, "You've been exiled to a deserted island for a year. You are told you may take three things you want, apart from the essentials. What would you take and why?"

Heroes

Ask each member to name three people, past or present, they admire. Why? Or, ask them if they could interview anyone in history, who would that be and why? What one or two questions would they want to ask?

Most Deprived

Give each person the same amount of M&Ms (try ten). Start by stating something you've never done that you think everyone else has done. You might say, "I've never had a birthday party," or some other true statement about yourself that you think everyone else has surely done. Then, everyone who has had a birthday party pays you an M&M. You pay everyone who has not had a party. Keep playing until everyone has a turn or until someone runs out of M&Ms. Obviously the idea is to come up with the most M&Ms and be the most deprived.

You Write the Question

Give each person a 3x5 card. You pick the topic and let them write the questions. For example, you choose "friendship" as a topic, and they each write out a question for anyone in the group to answer about friendship. For example, "What do you value most in a friend?" Then pile all the cards face down in the middle of the group and let people draw.

Personal Scavenger Hunt

Take five minutes and find the following items in your wallet or purse: Something that...
* You've had a long time
* You're proud of
* Reveals a lot about you
* Reminds you of a fun time
* Concerns or worries you

Have each person share the first item. Repeat with the second and so on.

Make Believe

If you could go anywhere in the world now, where would you go and why? If you could talk to anyone in the world, who would it be? Why? If you could talk to any person who has died, who would you talk to and why? If you could wish one thing to come true about your upcoming summer, what would it be?

You Write the Question 2

Play "You Write the Question" again by changing the topic. Topic ideas on the lighter side: jobs, life goals, funny stories, hobbies, etc. Topic ideas on the more vulnerable side: family, fears, dating issues, significant relationships, relationship with God, etc.