

Ice Breakers

Many times the Small Group needs to “warm-up” before the “exercise” of worship and discussion can begin. This can be accomplished with an effective icebreaker. The list that follows is simply a compilation of ones we have used in the past.

Your Identity

Make a list of 4 items which identify who you are or which tell about significant aspects and roles of your life. (Examples: husband, son, friend, artist, Small Group Leader.) Share one minute about each item.

Exploration

- Where were you born?
- Where did you live between the ages of 7 and 12?
- What stands out most in your mind about the school you attended at that time?
- How many brothers and sisters were in your family between the ages of 7 and 12?
- How did you get warm when you were chilled or cold as a child?
- When was the first time you kissed a member of the opposite sex?
- How old were you when you learned to ride a bike?
- During your childhood, where did you feel the center of human warmth was? Was it a room or a person? (For example, the TV room where your family was all together? the kitchen?) It may not have been a room at all; it may have been a person around whom you sensed safety and warmth. Would you care to share?
- What's the story behind the longest time you've gone without sleep?
- Who is the most famous person you've known or met? How did it happen?
- What do you miss most about childhood?
- What's the biggest lie you ever told?
- What is your biggest fear about death?
- If you could go to college (again), what would you study?
- Who is your number one advisor in life? Why?
- What's the worst storm or disaster you've been in? What was it like?
- Describe the most boring day/event/period of time you can remember.
- What day of your life would you most like to relive? Why?
- What's the smallest space you've lived in? What was it like?
- I was (or would have been) voted “most likely to _____” in high school.
- One of my biggest pet peeves is _____.
- Just for the fun/thrill of it, before I die I'd like to _____.
- My number two career choice would be _____.
- As a time-traveler, I would most like to visit _____ because _____.
- What has been one of the greatest adventures you have ever been on?
- Next year looks better to me because _____.
- Next year may be a problem because _____.
- People might be surprised to find out that I _____.
- I am most like my mom in that I _____.
- I am most like my dad in that I _____.
- I wish before I got married someone told me _____.
- I have never quite gotten the hang of _____.
- I'm a bundle of nerves / all thumbs when it comes to _____.
- I will probably never _____, but it would still be fun if I could.

- If you were going to leave the world one piece of advice before you died (other than become a Christian), what would you say?
- If you were to describe yourself as a flavor, what would your flavor be?
- What was the best gift you ever received as a child?
- Share what you would choose if you had three wishes. Why those three?
- If you could raise one person from the dead, who would you raise and why?
- Who was one of the most interesting persons you or your family ever entertained?
- What is the nicest thing anybody ever said about you?
- What one thing would you like your obituary to say about you? Why?
- What is your favorite city? Why?
- Where do you go or what do you do when life gets too heavy for you? Why?
- When you were growing up, who was the neighborhood bully? What made that person so frightening?
- What is your fondest memory of a picnic? Why was it so special?
- What is the most daring thing you have ever done? What made it so daring?
- What is the best news you have heard this week? The worst news?
- What was your first job? What do you remember most about it?
- Who was the best boss you ever had? What made him or her so good?
- When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up? What did your parents want you to be?
- Who was your hero when you were growing up? How did you try to imitate him or her?
- What is one of your biggest fears about the future?
- Of the things money can buy, what do you long for the most?
- Describe a grade school teacher that made a big impression on you (for good or ill).
- You have been granted one hour with the president of the United States — what would you ask him? What would you tell him?
- You have been given a year sabbatical from work. You can't go more than 150 miles for any one period of time. What would you do?
- My favorite way to waste time is _____.
- I want to be taken more seriously in the following area: _____.

Who am I?

Have each group member complete the following questions on a piece of paper.

- What is your favorite color?
- What's your favorite drink?
- Who was your childhood hero?
- What restaurant do you frequent the most?
- Which comic strip do you read most often?
- What was your most memorable song in high school?

Then the leader should collect the papers and proceed to read the responses, giving group members a chance to guess the "mystery person."

God

- When in your life, if ever, did God become more than a word to you?
- Using a one-sentence prayer, thank God for something or invite Him to come to your meeting tonight.
- Describe an experience when the Holy Spirit has been your comforter.

Fire Drill

Your house is on fire. Your family members are all safe. You have one minute to run through the house and collect three articles you want to save. Allow one minute for each member to write down what those things would be. Let each person tell what items are on their list and why.

Baby Pictures

Have each person bring a baby picture to the meeting. Arrange them on a coffee table with some identification system (numbers or letters, but no names). Each person should try to match names and faces.

“What would you do if...”

- “You could take an extra day off work?”
- “You could go anywhere in the world?”
- “You could become an animal for one day?”
- “A picture you were looking at came to life?”
- “Your wildest dreams came true?”

Mood

- What was the high point and low point of this week for you? day?
- What color best describes your week? day?
- What one word best describes your week? day?
- Have group members report their feelings by using weather terminology - partly cloudy, sunny, and so on.

True/False

Have each person write four statements about themselves on a piece of paper, three of them true and one false. Each should be plausible. Don't label them T or F.

- Going in a circle, have each person read their statements. The group members then guess which is the false statement and tell why they chose that one. See if your group can reach a consensus. The person should then tell which were true and which were false.
- Place all the papers in a hat. The reader pulls one, reads it, and the group attempts to identify the author. Do five or six of these.

Values

Ask each person to share a situation from the last week where one of their values was either threatened or affirmed.

Daring Questions

- Whom do you admire most? In what ways does that person inspire you?
- If at birth you could select the profession your child would eventually pursue, would you do so?
- Do you feel ill or at ease going alone to either a movie or dinner? What about going on a vacation by yourself?
- If you knew that in one year you would die suddenly, would you change anything about the way you are now living?
- Would you like to be famous? In what way?
- What do you strive for most in your life: accomplishment, security, love, power, excitement, knowledge, or something else?
- You are invited to a party that will be attended by many fascinating people you've never met. Would you want to go if you had to go by yourself?

- Given your ability to project yourself into the past but not return, would you do so? Where would you go and what would you try to accomplish if you knew you might change the course of history?
- Would you be willing to make a substantial sacrifice to have any of the following: your picture on a postage stamp, your statue in a park, a college named after you, a Nobel prize, or a national holiday in your honor?
- How many of your friendships have lasted more than ten years? Which of your current friends do you feel will still be important to you ten years from now?

Ice Breaker Game

This game is especially appropriate for young marrieds Small Groups. Play Pictionary with two teams (men vs. women is fun). Write the following words on 3x5 index cards. Tell the teams that the subject is wedding and marriage. Send one member from each team up to see the card, then they must run back to their team and draw the object or idea using no numbers or letters. Keep score and award the winning team something fun like a bag of Hershey kisses. Supplies — 3x5 cards, plenty of blank paper, markers, pens, or pencils.

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| 1. Carrying the bride | 11. The organist |
| 2. The honeymoon | 12. A marriage proposal |
| 3. Early pregnancy test | 13. The engagement ring |
| 4. Diaper | 14. The best man |
| 5. Baby bottle | 15. The newlywed's picture in the paper |
| 6. You (The SG Leader) | 16. Ring bearers |
| 7. Bag of rice | 17. The Bible |
| 8. The maid of honor | 18. The Minister (Pastor) |
| 9. A love song | 19. Marriage Certificate |
| 10. The blushing bride | 20. Kissing of the bride at the wedding |

Ice Breaker Resources

Serendipity Bible for Groups. (Serendipity House; Littleton, CO, 1981.) This is a great resource for Small Group Leaders.

Stock, Gregory. *The Book of Questions*. (Workman Publishing; New York, 1985.) This is a book of 200 questions similar to the above, some not appropriate for Small Groups but others quite good.

A Small Group, *Good Things Come In Small Groups*. (IVP; Downer's Grove, IL, 1985.) This is a great resource for ideas on Bible study, discussion, openers, and the like.