



Tongil Manual

For Youth Education and Development

Written by: Yongil Fleisher
Tomeo Wise



Special Thanks

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Preface

The purpose behind writing the Tongil Manual was to inspire Sunday school teachers and Youth Group Leaders around the world. We realized the Unification movement has no standard curriculum or set youth group activities. In hopes of helping to alleviate this problem we have written down the curriculum that we have developed and have been using for the past two years. Our hope is that this manual will help to inspire others to build their own curriculum, and perhaps become a small stepping stone for the global community to create a standard.

We realize that our experience is very limited and we still have a lot to learn. This is our first attempt at creating anything of this size and depth, and is not intended to be the defining work in this area. Rather it is meant to “get the ball rolling”, to help inspire others to take this manual and build on it.

As youth educators, our goal and desire is to give the second generation all the necessary tools and skills to reach their full potential. This manual is our attempt to pass on what we have learned so that others can inherit and improve on it, and eventually create a system that will allow our goal to become a reality.

A decorative floral arrangement in the upper right quadrant, featuring a large white flower, a smaller dark flower, and a small dark flower on a stem.

Part 1
Sunday School



Mission Statement

The mission of Youth Education is to raise God centered leaders who will build Chun Il Guk (One World Under God).

Statement of Purpose

The goal of our Youth Education program is to create a complete educational experience. We are striving to deliver a program that goes beyond the bounds of a 50 minute Sunday School class and impacts the lifestyles of the participants through:

- Building a support group consisting of their peers
- Growing their life of faith
- Encouraging each participant to be an active member of his or her community
- Learning about the Heart of God
- Gaining a vision for the future

Building a Support Group:

The first and most basic goal of a Youth Education system is to build a family; a place where the participant can come to get the support they need, and a place where they feel their true value as sons and daughters of God.

It is an irrefutable fact that everyone goes through hard times. These difficult times seem much harder during the tumultuous years of high school. When young people are confronted with these struggles they need a place they can go to find support. If they cannot find this support in their church community they will seek support from other, less ideal sources, such as TV and popular culture.

The first goal of a Youth Education system is to create such a support group.

Growing their Life of Faith:

The second goal of the Youth Education system is to help participants develop a life of faith. For those who have a yearning, it must give them the answers they seek. For those with no yearning, it must instill within them a desire to learn.

The high school years are the years of rebellion, the time when youth become disenfranchised with the world, and disappointed in the results they see around them. They begin to question the values of traditional society, and start to seek answers to the most important questions in life. The journey that starts here will likely guide them for the rest of their lives. It is the responsibility of the Youth Education system to give them the answers they need, and to teach

them the skills required to find the answers we cannot directly supply.

Becoming part of the Community:

The third goal of a Youth Education system is to graduate its members. Just as people graduate from high school to college, then college to the working world, participants in a Youth Education system must be able to graduate on to the larger church community.

If this does not happen a rift will form. In today's church society this rift is common place. There are the "young people" and the "old people." The youth do not respect their elders, and the elders do not see the youth as upcoming peers. The direct side effect of this rift is that the knowledge gained, and the hard work done by the older members, is not inherited by the younger members. In simpler terms, all that hard work is lost.

Learning about the Heart of God:

The fourth goal is perhaps the most important of all, and certainly the hardest to put into words. When all else is gone, all that remains is an individual's dreams, hopes, and desires. The difference between a normal person and a great person is his or her dreams. To be able to understand the longing heart of God is perhaps the greatest gift we can give our youth.

It is this, and this alone, that will drive them to create the ideal world.

Gaining a Vision for the Future:

The final goal is to gain a vision for the future. A Youth Education system is not the end point, but rather a launching-pad. The men and women that graduate from it should move on to greater and more beautiful things, and it is the job of a Youth Education system to give them not only the tools, but the vision, to accomplish their dreams.

A vision can be broad or narrow, but it must exist. A narrow vision is something that is curtailed to the actual members of the group. This might include getting a student an internship with the regional chapter of WFWP, or supporting them so they can start a HARP/CARP in their local schools.

A broad vision is something that everyone can relate to, such as building a lasting community, or making the world a place where they would want to raise their children. Ideally a vision should be a little bit of both.

If this vision is not imparted onto the youth, then they will graduate and flounder, not knowing what to do.

Goals and Responsibilities



Goals & Responsibilities of a Teacher

As a Sunday school teacher you are the instrument of God, the vehicle of growth for your students, and a model for what they will become. Your pupils will look up to you, admire you, and when it comes to life of faith, mimic you. In many ways, teaching is the best preparation for being a parent.

A Sunday school teacher has the following responsibilities:

- Be the model
- Know the subject
- Keep the vertical pipeline
- Do everything for your students
- Don't judge participants
- Don't forget your community

Be the Model:

A man by the name of Rev. T.L. Barret once said, "You cannot lead where you will not go, and you cannot teach what you do not know." In this simple quote lies the reason why being a model is so important.

If someone teaches one thing, then does another they are known as a hypocrite. True Father has often stated that one must change oneself before changing the world. This is because a person cannot teach someone to be great if they themselves are mediocre. A teacher cannot teach how to be happy if they are miserable.

In essence, the first step to being a great teacher is to be a great person. If a teacher can really epitomize this one lesson then even the most mediocre of presentations can change the lives of those hearing it.

Know the Subject:

The teacher has a responsibility to know what they are talking about. If they plan to teach someone about flying, they'd better have some experience flying. If they want to teach someone about the Fall of Man, it is a good idea for them to read up on it first. Never underestimate the power of practice or the knowledge a little research can dig up.

There are few things worse than going in front of the class to teach and having nothing to say. A teacher has an obligation to their pupils go give them the truth they are secretly longing for.

In this age of technology and information it is easier to acquire knowledge than ever before. One would be surprised as to what a quick search on Google can turn up.

Keep the Vertical Pipeline:

A teacher is part of a larger entity, a part of an organization whose purpose is to give life to its participants. Remembering that you are a part of this larger organization is sometimes difficult, but none-the-less essential. Ultimately everything boils down to God.

Consider yourself the arm of a larger entity, and the central figures as the nerves connecting that arm to the brain. When you flex your muscles, those nerves go and report it to God. When God needs you to pick something up, he will send that message to you through those nerves. This simple relationship keeps everything running smoothly, and will help your actions become a part of God's larger plan.

Do everything for your students:

Sometimes when you've been teaching long enough you get into what I like to call "teach mode." You teach simply because you are the teacher. While in teach mode you forget why you are teaching, and just teach. Often times to the bewilderment of those around you.

Never forget that the purpose of your teaching is to raise little gods and goddesses. When the bible says that "ye are all gods", it wasn't kidding. Your ultimate responsibility is to God, then to your students.

Keep this in mind when designing your curriculum. Don't teach something just because you know about it, but teach it because your students need to hear about it. More importantly, the reason why God has entrusted this responsibility to you is because he needs you to care for and raise up his children. Never forget that.

Don't Judge

God does not judge people, Satan does. This simple truth should be enough reason in and of itself to not judge those around you.

Quintessentially judgment is a failure to love, when you judge someone you create a barrier between you and them. This barrier is built by the accused to block out the pain of being rejected and hated. When this barrier is in place the accused becomes desensitized to whatever the accuser is attempting to say. This barrier hinders the flow of love and knowledge, and in the long run can suffocate the heart.

Instead of judging, understand. Instead of seeing an action and labeling it as wrong, try to understand the forces behind that action. When you know the purpose of that action, you can support that person to make better decisions. The key is to listen, support, and guide.

As a teacher you must keep an eye out for name calling and teasing. These are one of the many forms judgment can take.

Don't forget your Community:

Sunday school teachers are people, not tanks. We do not have iron plates three inches thick, all we have is a thin layer of skin. We hurt, we feel pain, and we can become burned out. In order to help prevent this, find ways to incorporate the community around you. Take some of the burden off your own shoulders, and let others help in the rearing of your students. There is a very famous idiom that goes, "It takes a village to raise a kid."

Many of the people we meet every day have done and gone through incredible things. One of the members of my church in Denver was a millionaire, twice. Both times he gave it all to the church. My father was a missionary to Israel for four years, studied to be a Rabbi before joining the church, and still prays in Hebrew. You would be amazed by the things people know, and the things they have accomplished.

These wellsprings of knowledge should not be forgotten, and their wisdom should not die with them. A part of teaching is finding others to teach. Try asking others to share the vast amount of knowledge they have acquired through the course of their lives. Having one of these adults give a morning service or testimony can be as beneficial to you as it can be for your students.

Building a Curriculum



Curriculum

The curriculum is one of the most basic parts of Sunday school. As a Sunday school teacher you must decide what topics will have the most impact, but at the same time be interesting, to your students.

Our Curriculum is broken up into five distinct parts:

1. Ice Breakers
2. Teamwork and Bonding
3. Breakout Groups
4. Morning Services
5. Actionizing

This setup is purely structural, and one must always remember that culture drives structure. If you want to throw in regular lectures, or have a Morning Service during the Breakout Groups section, go for it.

It is vital that each year starts with a topic, and that everything done throughout that year reflects that topic. A yearly topic should be something that can have multiple sub-topics, and has to be open ended enough for those involved to be able to build on it.

Some topics we have done in the past include:

1. Life of Faith
2. Inheritance and Development
3. Understanding the Core Values
4. Back to Basics
5. DP for Dummies

The purpose of this yearly topic is that of a guide. If this is not firmly established at the start of the year, then the classes seem disjointed and unorganized. Even if each actual event is perfect, the year itself will come off as chaotic, and the participants will suffer because of it.

When we go into the actual parts of the curriculum, these sub-groups become important. For example, if the yearly topic is “*Back to Basics*”, sub-topics could be:

1. Does God Exist? (How do we know?)
2. Prayer
3. Spirit World
4. Indemnity & Conditions

Each of these sub-topics can be further broken down into multiple Sunday school sessions. For example, in the sub-topic of *Indemnity & Conditions* we could do the following for individual sessions:

1. Indemnity vs. Indumbnity
2. Setting up proper Indemnity Conditions
3. Goal setting and Conditions
4. What is Indemnity anyway?

The purpose of this setup is purely organizational. It helps to keep things organized and allows for multiple people to be involved in the planning process. However, the curriculum we have designed should never leave the object position. It is a supplement meant to help support the instructor. As we mentioned above, changing things and mixing things together is not a problem.

Ice Breakers

The Ice Breakers are one of the two parts of the curriculum that are more or less independent of the yearly topic.

At the start of each new year, new students will be entering the class. These youth will understandably feel shy and out of place. We use Ice Breakers to help each participant break down these barriers. Ice Breakers give everyone a chance to have fun and get to know one another at the same time. If these barriers are not removed, then the students will not feel comfortable sharing with one another later on.

It is suggested that the Ice Breakers be done for 1-2 weeks, and a comprehensive list of possible Ice Breakers can be found starting on page 50.

Teamwork and Bonding:

Teamwork and Bonding is the second part of the curriculum that is independent of the yearly topic. The purpose of the Teamwork and Bonding is to help foster a sense of trust and understanding. Before most people can share deeply about personal feelings, there needs to be a certain level of trust. This level of trust comes from common experiences shared by each student.

Trust is built and bonds are created by these experiences. During Icebreakers, everything is done as a class. However, during the Teamwork and Bonding, everything should be done in teams. This has two benefits:

1. It allows the members to get used to teams, since they will be using them for the rest of the year.
2. It allows for a smaller environment where it is easier for people to express what they think and feel.

We suggest spending 2-3 weeks on this. In general, try to make the Icebreakers and Teamwork and Bonding about a month long. This number is just a suggestion though. If you feel that more time is needed, take it.

The other important thing to remember is that these weeks should be activity oriented. Sharing is a great way to bond, but it must come on the foundation of having done something together. Start shallow and work your way deep. A list of suggested teamwork activities can be found starting on page 67.

Breakout Groups:

Breakout Groups are the bread and butter of our Youth Education system, and the place where the curriculum starts to come into play.

The concept behind Breakout Groups is self-teaching. When I first started teaching high school, I would spend fifty minutes talking, only to later realize there was a huge rift in the knowledge level of the students. When I geared my presentation towards the newer members, the older members would get bored because they had heard it before. When I gave a presentation for the older members, the younger members would give me blank stares.

So why not let the ones who have heard it before teach it? There is a great quote that says, “If you want to learn, teach.”

Then about two years after I started teaching Sunday school, another realization hit me. Most of these kids know this stuff anyway. They deal with the issues we talk about every day of their lives, and they have either triumphed or failed. The older students have the experience the younger student’s need, so why not give them the opportunity to share their knowledge?

Don't get me wrong, this doesn't mean that the students will be able to talk about the purpose of life, but they might understand the importance of prayer. You might be surprised how deeply some of our high school students understand the Fall of Man.

A Breakout Group works something like this:

1. Teacher gives the topic:

The job of the teacher is to set the tone, to give the groups something to work with. It is not to teach the topic, but rather give the groups a little something so they can share about what they have experienced relating to that topic.

When I lead a Breakout Group I usually start by prefacing the topic. Talking about why it is important. If it is something a little more abstract I go into a little detail about the history of it. For example: When we did a Breakout Group about the importance of families I started by explaining that families are the most basic social unit. It is the only social unit that exists in every culture, and that it is our primary

group were we learn the vast majority of our social and ethical norms. From there I asked the students to break into their groups and talk about why family is so important, and whether or not they are greatly influenced by their families (if so, how.)

By brushing the topic you want discussed you give the students something to work with. They get some expectation for what it is they need to talk about. I also usually have a list of example questions that they can discuss in their groups.

2. The class breaks into groups and discusses the topic.
The class breaks into small groups, maybe 5-7 people per group, and talks. Ideally the older members of the group should share what they have already experienced about that topic. The younger members should learn from the older members, and when they become the older members, they should share with the younger members.

3. The class comes back together and shares what they talked about.
The class regroups and shares. There are a couple of ways to go about doing this, depending on the size of the class. If the class is smaller, say 4-15 students, the teacher should take on the job of a Moderator. Have the entire class sit in a large circle and ask the group questions. Try to get them talking as a bigger group. Get them to share what they discussed in their groups. As they become more comfortable, they will need less and less intervention from the instructor.

Make sure to bring up the points that have the most importance. The key points should come up on their own, but if they do not it is the responsibility of the instructor to make sure that they get talked about. This method is actually the preferred method, but it breaks down if the group is much larger than 15 student.

The second method is for classes of 20 or more students. Instead of sitting in a large circle, have the students sit lecture style. Each group should send a representative up to talk about the group's discussion. Groups can send up more than one representative if there is enough time. After each group has gone, you should make sure that any missed points are brought up and talked about.

An alternative method is to break the larger group into 2 or more subgroups and have a moderator for each. The problem with this though is that the topics talked about in one group are not shared with the other groups, and you need a larger teaching staff to make it work.

4. Pray and close.

There are a few general types of Breakout Sessions:

1. **Discussion:** In this type of Breakout Group, the moderator gives a series of questions that the group is to discuss amongst themselves. At the end of the session each group sends up a representative to explain what the group talked about. At the very end, the moderator can add any additional wisdom he or she deems necessary.
2. **List:** In this type of Breakout Group, the moderator explains why a topic is important and each group breaks out to make a list about that topic. At the end of the session the groups come back and take turns sending up a representative to add something to a master list at the front of the room. As the representative adds something he or she must explain why it is important. At the end, the moderator can add any additional items, or extrapolate on key points.
3. **Puzzle:** In this type of Breakout Group, the moderator gives each member of the group some piece of information or a part of the topic. It then becomes the responsibility of each of these members to teach their part to each other member. At the end they come together and share to the larger group what it is they have learned.

Before you actually start using Breakout Groups, we suggest that you spend one class period showing your students the ropes. Do a demo. Run them through the steps so that they understand what to do. If you just send them out, they will just stumble along. We experienced this phenomenon the first year we did this.

This part of the curriculum can run for as long as you like. We suggest about half of the year. If you use a 9 month year, then we suggest 3-4 months of breakout groups.

Morning Services:

As much as we love and support the use of Breakout Groups they have one inherent problem. The students in the Breakout Groups can only teach what they know. It has been our experience that when confronted with more abstract, or high level, topics the Breakout Groups don't end up working to well.

They are ideal for topics like *The Importance of Prayer*, but not so good for topics like *Indemnity vs. Indumbnity*. This is why the later part of the year is spent doing Morning Services.

The key difference between a Morning Service and a lecture is that instead of teaching something, the speaker is sharing something. This may not seem like a huge difference, but it is. When you share something, it comes from the heart, whereas teaching comes mainly from the mind. The giver of the Morning Service talks about a topic, and more importantly why that topic is important to him or her. He or she should share how they overcame a struggle, or how this knowledge helped them in their life of faith.

A Morning Service should generally not be longer than twenty minutes. The rest of this time should be used to discuss what the speaker talked about it. It has been my experience that the struggles many of us go through are not all that different, and hearing about similar struggles from our peers is a great way to help in overcoming them. At the very least, it lets our youth know that they are not alone.

This discussion can be done either in a large group or in the Breakout Groups.

Later in the book we will talk about getting the youth involved in the Education System, and this is a great place to have those youth stand up and talk. It not only helps them to become better public speakers, but it also gives them a chance to give advice to their peers, to share something that is important to them, and help someone at the same time.

Morning Services should make up the rest of the year. If you do not have a summer program, then save the last month or two for Actionizing.

Actionizing:

Actionizing is the final portion of the curriculum, and is a chance for students to put what they have learned into practice. We have found that this is best done in the summer when the students have more free time. If the Sunday school program does not extend into the summer, then the last month or two of the year works just as well.

The events done in the Actionizing section are the hardest to write about because of how different they are. They share the common bond of being the fulfillment of a year spent on a topic, but the similarities end there.

If you spent the year talking about *Life of Faith and World Religions*, then it would be good to spend this time visiting other churches and hearing about them first hand. If you spent time learning about *Creating a Community*, then this time could be spent planning and executing activities for the younger classes.

In general it should be something hands-on, something that the students can feel and touch. Since this is the culmination of the year's topic, it should have a sense of finality to it. Going back to the earlier example, if you have been learning about *Creating a Community*, then during the Actionizing portion of the curriculum you should create that community.

If you do Actionizing over the summer, we have found that it is easier to do activities every other week. Spacing the Actionizing section out allows you to compensate for workshops and vacations.

To help you get a feel for what this section might look like, there is an example curriculum later in this chapter.

Previous Curriculum



Previous Curriculum's

Yearly Topic: Back to Basics

Time Period: 9 Months (36 weeks)

Author: Yongil Fleisher & Tomeo Wise

Icebreakers:

Week 1: Candy Toss and Telephone Charades

Week 2: Guess Who and Name Balloon Pop

Team Building & Bonding:

Week 3: Human Knot and Lap Sit

Week 4: Team Score Basketball and Back to Back

Breakout Groups:

Week 5: Explaining Breakout Groups & Icebreaker

Week 6: God – Does God Exist? How do we know?

Week 7: God – What is He like?

Week 8: Basics – Free Will & the Purpose of Creation

Week 9: God – How Do I Build a Relationship with Him?

Week 10: Prayer – What is Prayer?

Week 11: Prayer – How do you pray? (Do's and Don'ts of Prayer)

Week 12: Spirit World – Do they exist? How do we know?

Week 13: Spirit World – What really is a Spirit?

Week 14: Spirit World – How do they influence us?

Week 15: Spirit World – How can we influence them?

Week 16: BCSS – What else influences you?

Week 17: BCSS – What is your identity? Where does it come from?

Week 18: BCSS – Changing your identity.

Week 19: BCSS – How do you deal with school/friends?

Week 20: BCSS – Popular Culture (The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly)

Week 21: BCSS – Why Abstinence?

Week 22: BCSS – Dating vs. Arranged Marriages

Week 23: BCSS – Leaders or Followers?

Week 24: BCSS – What makes a good leader?

*BCSS = BC Survival Skills

Morning Services:

Week 25: BCSS – Leaders who inspire me

Week 26: BCSS – Building the culture of heart

Week 27: BCSS – How can we change the world?

Week 28: Goals – Why goals are important

Week 29: Goals – Setting good goals and keeping them
Week 30: Indemnity – What is Indemnity anyway?
Week 31: Indemnity – Setting up an Indemnity Condition
Week 32: Indemnity – Indemnity vs. Indumbnity
Week 33: Indemnity – Real life examples of how indemnity works
Week 34: Inheritance – Learning from the 1st generation
Week 35: Inheritance – Learning from the 1st generation
Week 36: Inheritance – What is the purpose of this movement?
Week 37: Inheritance – How do we create a culture of heart?

Actionizing:

Week 38-52: Building a community.

Yearly Topic: Back to Basics

In modern sociology there are three levels of faith: Pre-Conventional, Conventional, and Principled (also called Post-Conventional). In Pre-Conventional faith, we believe because something because we were told. In Conventional faith, we believe because others believe in it as well (usually our friends.) In Principled faith, we believe because we know.

Hyung Jin Nim once said that “Faith is a bridge; it is something to fill the gap between knowledge and belief.” The purpose of a life of faith is to bridge this gap and to eventually push us to fill up this gap with experience. When our beliefs become knowledge, we have entered the Principled state of faith. Pushing people towards this is the purpose of any education system.

This concept is the very core purpose behind the yearly topic of *Back to Basics*.

As we grow up, we are told that God exists, that Spirit World is a reality, and that Falling is more than just tripping and hurting yourself. However, for many of our second generation this knowledge never grows beyond the realm of Pre-Conventional faith: in other words, it is their parent’s faith and not their own.

The hope of the *Back to Basics* curriculum is that, through sharing with their brothers and sisters, their faith will graduate to conventional faith, than as they mature, turn into principled faith.

This curriculum focuses on basic spiritual principles and the concepts that give us a foundation to understand religion. By hearing the beliefs of their peers the hope is that the students will understand those beliefs because their friends do (Conventional Faith.) As they grow and are forced to explain to others why they believe what they do, these beliefs should sink deeper; becoming beliefs that they know rather than those they just think (Principled Faith.)

Personally I believe this curriculum, or a curriculum similar to it, should be done every two years.

Icebreakers

Week 1: See page 51 and 57

Week 2: See page 60 and 63

Teamwork and Bonding

Week 3: See page 75

Week 4: See page 83

Breakout Groups:

Week 5: Explaining Breakout Groups & Doing an Icebreaker

It has always been my experience that people trying something for the first time need help; they need to see it done. This is not because they are incapable, but because they have no experience. Explaining, and more importantly demonstrating, a Breakout Group really allows the students to start on the right foot.

Luckily, these groups gain power with age, since the older members understand that it is their responsibility to be mentors for the younger members of their group. The first year of running Breakout Groups is always the hardest.

That being said, it is crucial that the teacher explains the purpose of the Breakout Group. I will not do that here because it was explained in depth in the overview of the curriculum.

After explaining what a Breakout Group is and what it is supposed to do, it is very important to demo it. Just telling them to go out and do it doesn't work very well. We learned this the hard way.

Recruit a few of the older/more outgoing students and have them form a mock Breakout Group. Bring up a mock topic and let the rest of the students watch as the Breakout Group does its thing.

After demonstrating the concept, and thanking your helpers, have the students break out into groups. There are two ways to do this: either you can form new groups each week (very good when attendance is sketchy) or form semi-permanent groups (with a lifespan ranging from a couple of weeks to a year.)

The first Breakout Session should always be something light. I would suggest using an Icebreaker like the Candy Toss Game (page 51) or the Toilet Paper Game (page 52).

Week 6: God – Does God Exist? How do we know?

Now that your students have had a taste of what a Breakout Group is, it's time to dig in. There are three questions that all religions (even Atheism) attempt to answer. They are: Does God Exist? What is the Purpose of Life? and Is there an afterlife? The first is probably the most important, because it has an absolute and diverse effect on the other two.

Two examples are Dialectical Materialism and Catholicism. In the case of Materialism: if God does not exist, then the purpose of life is to make yourself happy. Furthermore, there obviously cannot be a spiritual realm, so there is nothing after death. Take this in contrast with the Catholic belief system. Since God exists, our purpose in life is to praise and worship him. Since

we know God exists, and we are his children, we are destined to live for eternity with Him (if we are saved.)

Possible questions for discussion include:

1. Do you think God exists? Why or why not?
2. Have you ever experienced God? If so, how?
3. Why does almost everyone believe in God?

This really shouldn't take more than 15 minutes, but let it go on a little longer because it is their first time in a Breakout Group and it gives them a chance to gain experience. When this is all done, have the groups come back and send up a representative to summarize what happened in the group discussion.

Week 7: God – What is He like?

This is the question of the ages. The first week's Breakout Group is really a setup for the second week, somewhat like a set for a spike in Volleyball. This is the all-important question that all faiths hinge upon. For thousands of years the question has been asked: "What is God like?"

According to Catholicism, God is an all-powerful and omnipotent being who created us so we could worship him. According to Islam, God is our Master and we are his humble servants. Our sole purpose in life is to please Him and listen to his commandments. According to the Unification Church, God is our father and he wants us to be happy and fulfilled in our lives. There are as many interpretations of God as there are religions, but which one is right?

Understanding that God is our Parent is an essential part of understanding the universe. True Father often says that the most important relationship in the universe is the one between parent and child, because it is the one that motivates all else. Understanding God as a parent gives one a deep insight into why God created the world, why He works so hard to help us, and why He wants us to be happy. Understanding God as a being with feelings gives us a glimpse into the reality of God and the hardships and sorrow He has had to face over the countless years.

Possible questions include:

1. Why does God do the things He does?
2. Why is there free will?
3. Is He really a He?
4. Why did God bother to create?
5. Can we know things about God by looking at Creation?

If you are running a Youth Group in tandem with the Sunday School, a great movie to watch is Bruce Almighty. Of all the films I have seen, I think this one gives God the most credit.

Week 8: Free Will & the Purpose of Creation

Hopefully in the previous week the groups went a little into the existence of free will and the purpose of creation. Upon the foundation of understanding God as our parent we can start to examine other fundamentals of faith namely: *Free Will & the Purpose of Creation*.

Once again the beliefs that echo out in faith are a reflection of these bedrock principles. If God created so that he could be worshiped, then the purpose of creation is to worship him. If there is no free will then everything is predestined and meant to be.

Tightly wound with Free Will is the Purpose of Creation. Indeed, the purpose of our creation has everything to do with why we have free will. The ability to choose to whom we give our love to makes our love valuable and real.

“The worst hell is to be alone.” While I do not know who said this, it is a very deep and powerful quote. Within these simple words lies the purpose of creation, a maddening loneliness that drove God to create. The desire to be loved and cherished is universal in all of creation, and it is a reflection of the nature of God. The purpose of creation was love, the desire to love and the need to be loved. Free Will is the tool to achieve that end.

Possible questions include:

1. Is there free will? Why?
2. What would a world with no free will be like?
3. Why did God create?
4. Can God really be lonely?
5. Why are we here?

Week 9: God – How do I build a Relationship with Him?

If God exists, and He is our Parent, then how do we get to know Him better? This is the next question for discussion, and it is a perfectly logical one. The thing to remember is that while there are as many ways to get to know God as there are people, there are some commonalities that are universal.

All relationships hinge on common base. In essence, the more you reflect someone, the easier it is to like them. If two people share the same beliefs, morals, language and hobbies, it is very likely that they will become natural friends. Keeping this in mind, the easiest way to get to know God is to become like Him. The more you can reflect Him, the easier it will be to become His friend.

Once again, these are points that need to be hit, but don't bring them up unless the students themselves fail to do so.

Possible questions include:

1. How do friendships/relationships work?
2. How can this knowledge help me build a relationship with God?

Week 10: Prayer – What is Prayer?

There is one more component in building a relationship with God, and that is Prayer. Chances are it was touched upon in the previous week, but it is still important enough to spend extra time on.

There is more to a relationship than common base. If you had a friend that you never talked to, is he or she really your friend? To some extent you could say they are, but unless you actually do things together the relationship is superficial. A relationship with God is the exact same. Unless you talk with Him and do things with Him, then you really don't know Him.

In its simplest form, prayer is just communicating with God. The form it can take is as variant as the people who do it. This doesn't mean God is just your friend. In reality, He is much more, but the principles that guide relationships are universal.

Possible questions include:

1. What is Prayer?
2. Why does it matter?
3. Can you keep a relationship if you never do things together?
4. Why is talking to people so important?

Week 11: Prayer – How do you pray? (Do's and Don'ts of Prayer)

Great, so now we know that communicating with God is important. But how do we do it?

This is the question that so many people have tried to answer. There are entire books written about praying and how to do it correctly. Some things are common sense, like how it's hard to pray while at a Rock Concert. Other things are useful, like not saying "heavenly father" every other sentence. Imagine talking to someone and after every line they say your name:

"Hey Bill, let's go out to get some food. Ok Bill? Umm... Bill, I think I'm hungry but I'm not really sure what I should do. Bill, I'm really questioning whether to eat a steak or a salad. Come on Bill...." You get the idea (and yes, this is one of my pet peeves.)

Knowing how to pray makes praying much easier. Instead of having questions, have the members break into groups and have them make a do/don't list. At the end of the discussion time, have the teams take turns coming up and adding something to the board. Make sure they explain why the item is a do or a don't.

Week 12: Spirit World – Do they really exist?

Almost every faith has some concept of the spiritual world and the afterlife, even the Neanderthals put gifts into the tombs of their dead. The question of “What happens after we die?” is one of the first we ask right after “What is the purpose of life?”

Understanding what it is exactly is not as important as understanding the effect it has on us. However, before we can go into detail about what it is, we have to agree on whether or not it exists.

Possible questions include:

1. Do you think the SW exists?
2. Have you ever had a spiritual existence, or known someone who has?
3. Have you ever had a creepy feeling or a good feeling just by being in an area?
4. Why are certain places used for certain things (holy grounds, suicide places, burial grounds)
5. What about Out of Body Experiences, Near Death Experiences, and ESP?

It’s a great idea to try to get the kids to learn about their ancestors and their beliefs. A good portion of my family is Jewish, and they used to sleep on the graves of their dead ancestors in order to gain their spiritual wisdom. These kinds of stories are neat and great discussion starters.

Week 13: What is a Spirit really?

Well if the spirit world exists, then spirits must exist... but what exactly are they? This again is a question that is vital to understanding the spirit world. If you understand what exactly a spirit is, then you have a much better idea of why they do what they do and how to work with them in a constructive way.

The simplest way to look at it is that spirits are just people. Well, dead people. They have thoughts, experiences, hopes, aspirations, desires, you name it. Just like people, they want to be happy, and many of them see us as their means to find that happiness. Dead smokers hang around living smokers so they can smoke. Dead preachers hang around living preachers so they can preach. Understanding that spirits are just people takes a lot of the mysticism out of it.

Their reasons for doing things are as varied as our own. Some do things out of vengeance, others out of love, others because they were told to. Understanding this is the key to dealing with spirits and spiritual influences.

Possible questions include:

1. What is a spirit?
2. How different are spirits from you or me?
3. What is the main difference?
4. Why do people do things? Why do spirits do things?

Week 14: Spirit World – How and why do they influence us?

If you've ever watched G.I. Joe, then you know that “Knowing is half the battle.” The other half is actually fighting it, and that can be broken down into two parts: understanding how spirits influence us, and how we can influence them. This can be done in one session, but I like to split it up because I think understanding the spiritual world is very important.

So how do they influence us? The same way our friends do. If spirits are just dead people, then they would affect us like other people would, pushing us to do the things they want us to do. If your friends want you to go to a party, they keep pestering you until you go. The same premise holds true for spirits. If you are spiritually open, they try to talk to you. If you are not, then they must resort to subtler means. These include thoughts, emotions, dreams, and premonitions.

Understanding that a good deal of the action-based thoughts we have (“Swimming seems like a good idea right about now...”) are really spiritual communications makes things easier to deal with.

The other key point to make sure is touched on is why spirits influence us. If you've ever broken a bone and had to wear a cast, this will be easier to understand. When you are wearing a cast, there are things you cannot do, so you have to get other people to help you. When I broke my arm I had to ask my sister to open cereal boxes for me so I could eat breakfast.

Simply put, spirits do not have bodies to do the things they want with, so they use yours. This is because our bodies constantly send out signals. Think of it like a huge radio tower. This is why when we are angry, observant people can 'feel' it. Spirits are very sensitive to these messages and can use them to relive experiences. (That's the simple explanation.)

Possible questions include:

1. Have you ever had random thoughts? What's the weirdest one?
2. How does that relate to this topic?
3. Why would spirits want to talk with us?

Week 15: Spirit World – How can we influence them?

As I mentioned about, the other half of dealing with spirits is the payback. Spirits influence us all the time, so how can we return the favor?

The easiest thing to do is talk back. Doing so out loud gets other people to give you funny looks, but it's easy enough to carry on a conversation in your head. We do it all the time. What most of us don't realize is that some of these conversations are with spirits.

There is however more than one way to skin a rabbit. Communication is not purely verbal, so the actions you do in response to a spirit's inquiries is a form of communicating. When we go along with an idea we are influencing them to come back some other time and do it again. When we repeatedly deny them, the opposite happens: they become uninterested and move on. Some spirits are more stubborn than others, but eventually they'll get the idea.

Possible questions include:

1. How do you influence friends? Does that relate to this topic?
2. Is it possible that the conversations you have in your head aren't just with yourself?
3. If so, how does that relate to this topic?
4. Why is this important?

Week 16: BCSS – What else influences you?

Spirit world does play a large part in our lives, but there are many other things that influence us as well. Understanding what these forces are helps to counter-act the bad ones and embrace the good ones.

In reality, just about everything influences us, from the weather to our choice of music. We are what scientists call an 'open organism', which means a lot of what we are is dictated by the environment we are in. This is easy enough to see: the same person will act different when they are told they are a teacher and when they are told they are a student.

The simplest way to do this is to break into the Breakout Groups and compile a list of things that affect them. Then come back and have representatives of each group add things to a master list. Make sure they explain how each point affects them.

Week 17: BCSS – What is your identity? Where does it come from?

The source of our identity has been the topic of much debate, and a question that religion and science has attempted to answer for countless years.

According to the Divine Principle, all things have a given and perceived value. This is easy enough to see with a computer. When a computer is created, its creator has a purpose in mind

and creates the computer to accomplish this purpose (lets say the purpose is to play computer games.) However, when a person sees this computer, he assigns it a value based upon his or her experience. To a caveman, that computer is a great footrest. To a hacker, the computer is his portal to a great time. To a student, it is a tool for learning and knowledge. The computer's identity shifts as it is used, but no matter what path its user may take, the value imbued by its original creator still exists. In short, the computer is still a great gaming PC.

Human beings are no different. The absolute portion of our identity comes from God. He created us for a specific purpose, and regardless of what we do with our lives, that purpose does not change.

The other half of the picture is how we see ourselves. This is often a reflection of how society and those around us see us, but regardless it is still our self-image. Often times we go to school because society expects it of us, and because we are going to school, our identity is that of a student.

Possible questions include:

1. Who are you? What is your identity?
2. Are you cool? Why or why not?
3. Does your identity come from your friends? Your past? From What?
4. Are you happy with your identity?

Another option for this is to have the groups make lists of the things that define who they are. Then come up and have each member present what is on his or her list.

Week 18: BCSS – Sculpting your identity.

Most people view identity as a stagnant thing, something that is absolute. As mentioned above, this is only true for your given value. Your perceived value changes all the time. The importance of realizing this is that once you know what sculpts your identity, you are no longer a slave to it. Through cognitive effort, you can sculpt an identity that pleases you instead of one that others heap upon you.

Sculpting your identity is simple, since the majority of how we see ourselves is dictated by the actions we do. Simply change your actions. If you wish to be seen as a nerd, wear taped glasses and wear a pocket protector. If you want your identity to be that of someone who serves the community, then serve the community. It really is that simple.

Possible questions include:

1. How do others see me now?
2. How do I want others to see me?
3. What actions can I do to become the kind of person I want to be?

Week 19: BCSS – How do you deal with school/friends?

As social creatures, humans are greatly influenced by our peers. This is especially true in middle and high school. This would be wonderful if the world was a great place; because these peer pressures would be guiding us in a good direction. However, since the world isn't such a great place, most of these pressures tend to lead to bad decisions. Knowing this, it becomes imperative that we understand how to deal with these pressures.

One option is to be a hermit, living away from all the troubles of the world. This is great and all but not a practical solution for most people.

In the Breakout Groups, students should talk about ways they have dealt with peer pressure in the past.

There are a few commonalities that work:

1. Keep friends with high moral standards
2. Have a very strong sense of identity and don't let people push you around
3. Get into the habit of telling people about your beliefs.
4. Be consistent and don't put yourself in stupid situations.

Week 20: BCSS – Popular Culture (The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly)

This is perhaps one of my favorite sections because it relates with the core of everyday life. Understanding the good and the bad points of the culture around us helps us to ground our beliefs. Liking or disliking something without a reason is sort of shallow, so before you can condemn or uplift the culture around us, we need to understand the things we like and don't like about them. More importantly, we have to understand why.

Break out into groups and have the groups make lists. These lists should be broken into three groups: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly.

At the end of the session, have the groups take turns sending up representatives to add something to 'the list' and explain why they are adding it.

Week 21: BCSS – Why Abstinence?

Another thing BCs are constantly confronted with is explaining their beliefs. Most BCs I know of don't go out and explain why they do what they do, because they don't quite understand it themselves. When I was growing up, people constantly made fun of me because I was a virgin and I didn't have a girlfriend. When confronted about why, I could only answer “because it's what my church does.”

This is a great example of Pre-Conventional faith. In order to help move this towards Principled faith, the students need to understand why they are doing what they are doing.

In short, abstinence works because it keeps your heart pure. One Christian youth minister explained that people are like soda bottles, and our love is like the bubbles. Each time we get excited about someone we shake that bottle, and when we have sex with them we open the bottle and let the bubbles out. If you do this enough times the soda becomes flat... and the person is so scared and hurt that they cannot give their heart to anyone.

There are tons of reasons, ranging from the fact that it is only way to guarantee you won't have kids until you're ready, to a slew of facts showing that sexually active teens are more likely to do drugs, run away from home, fail school, commit crimes, and kill themselves. However, I like the bubble example the best because it is the most heartistic.

Possible questions include:

1. Why are you Abstinent?
2. What are the benefits of waiting?
3. How do you explain this to your friends?

Week 22: BCSS – Arranged Marriages vs. Dating

The other thing the students are constantly confronted with is why they don't date. It is the common cultural belief that dating is the best way to find your future spouse, yet statistically speaking it is a dismal failure. Dating is a relatively new invention, and while the idea of searching the world for the perfect spouse is romantic, it takes the focus away from where it needs to be.

As Rev. Phillip Shanker puts it, "Love isn't about finding the right person, but being the right person." Even if you find a great and wonderful person, what makes you think they want to be involved with a self-centered egotistical jerk?

There is far too much information on this topic for me to squeeze into such a small section, but if you have not researched this before, you should before you give this topic. Understanding the differences between love and lust, the concept of soul mates, and the statistics between arranged and dating relationships is key.

Testimonies are the greatest persuader. It is a commonly held misconception that you cannot love someone you are told to marry. However, statistically this is simply not true. I love my wife dearly and my marriage was arranged by my parents.

Possible questions include:

1. Problems with dating?
2. Problems with arranged marriages?
3. Where is the focus of dating? More physical or more complete?
4. Where is the focus of AM? More physical or more complete?
5. What do I want to do and why?

The other way you can do this is to use the list method. Have each group write a list about pro's and con's of each. Then at the end of the session, have them come back and compile a master list. Make sure they explain each entry.

Week 23: BCSS – Leaders or Followers?

Operation Sudan (www.operationsudan.org) has a wonderful snippet on leaders and followers. It states that:

There are two types of people in the world: leaders and followers. Leaders voice their opinions regardless of possible consequences. Leaders are not deterred nor discouraged by an apathetic majority, because leaders understand the incredible power of one. Leaders tread their own path, and take action when action is due. Followers do not.

This statement captures the power of leadership. Another famous quote goes “Never doubt that a small group of dedicated individuals can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever does.”

These and other quotes capture the power of leadership. Leaders guide and shape the world, set trends, and change culture. Every choice we make either upholds or alters the society around us. To become a leader means to understand this and make those choices that move the world in the right direction.

The question then becomes: do you want to be a leader or a follower?

Possible questions include:

1. What is a leader?
2. What is a follower?
3. Which do you want to be? And why?

Week 24: BCSS – What makes a good leader?

Hopefully everyone wants to be a leader. If not, they don't understand the freedom and happiness that comes from being a change maker.

So the question then becomes, what makes a good leader?

Heart. A true leader isn't the leader because he was made the leader, but because he loves the project the most. She or he is the most passionate about it, and cares the most for it. In a group of people, the true leader is the one that loves the people the most. In a company, the true leader is the person who loves the company the most. This is just natural.

However, there are many other qualities that make a good leader. Just loving something doesn't mean you know how to do it the best, or how to influence other people to do it their best. A leader really is a plethora of characteristics.

The Breakout Groups should compile lists of what traits they think make up a good leader. At the end of the session, they should come back and create a master list. Once again, make sure they explain each topic as they add them.

Morning Services:

Week 25: BCSS – Leaders who inspire me

In this morning service, someone should talk about a leader, or a person, who has inspired them. A great example is Martin Luther King Jr. He had a dream of a world where people could look beyond the color of the skin and into the content of the heart, where people would not judge one another based upon looks but rather based upon actions. To me this is a beautiful dream. Not only did he have this dream, but he shared his dream. To me this is the most inspiring thing about him. He took that passion and fire he had within himself and he shared it with those around them. He instilled within others the hope and the passion to overcome insurmountable odds, to fight back against violence with love.

There are countless leaders in the world, men and women who have shaped and changed the course of history for the better or for the worse. Pick one of the many and speak about why this person was a great leader.

If there is time, have the students talk about leaders that have inspired them, and more importantly, about what characteristics they can inherit and learn from.

Week 26: BCSS – Building the culture of heart

The purpose of being a leader is to lead people towards the culture of heart: To be an example and roll model and to pass on the dream of a better world. Each of us should become leaders and carry on the vision of a heavenly place.

In this morning service, the speaker should talk about how we as people can build the kingdom of heaven and how it is on us to realize our dreams and make the effort to fulfill them. There is a quote that I love; it goes "If not you, then who?"

If you don't make something better, then who will? If you don't make the change or become the example, then who else will? How many years will it take for that other person to be able to do what you can do today? How many more people have to suffer while that person is being raised up? The answer of course is too many.

Make sure that the speaker hits upon the point that building a culture of heart is a choice we make every day. It is reflected in every action we do.

Week 27: BCSS – How can we change the world?

This is one of my favorite morning services because it touches upon the power that we have within ourselves. In this morning service, the speaker talks about how we can become change makers.

It was best explained to me by a man named David Mahardy. He said that each of us are co-creators. Every thought we have and every action we do creates something, either something good or something bad. It is a choice we make every day.

The things we create ripple out, much like the waves cast by a rock thrown into a serene mountain lake. They ripple forth until they have reached all around the pond. When we do an action, it effects those around us, and the people we affect, affect other people. Every action we do echoes into eternity.

It may seem that the things we do have a small scope, but in reality they cause a domino effect that we cannot see the outcome of. There was a poem I read when I was in high school, and for all my effort I cannot find it again, that talked about this. One person smiled to another, and this person passed that smile on. This person smiled to another person, who felt good because someone smiled at him and left a larger tip than usual. The waiter, inspired by the larger tip, gave a small amount to charity. With the extra money the charity was able to buy a dog. The dog barked and woke everyone up during a fire, and one of the children saved by the dog ended up becoming the president. All of this because of one little smile.

The point of this morning service is to help people understand that they can and do make a change in the world.

Week 28: Goals – Why goals are important

Unfortunately it is harder to make a change than it appears. It is simple to say that one will change, but it is very hard to do. Just look at all the people who make a New Year's Resolution to lose weight, then a week later are back to their glutinous selves.

Goals are perhaps the best way to facilitate a change, and the point of this morning service is to help others realize that.

Draw an X on a piece of paper and ask someone how you get there. Well, you can't. You can say whatever you want but unless you know where you are you can't say how to reach that point. Draw a second X and then ask how to get there. It then becomes a simple matter of drawing a line.

This simple exercise shows the power of goal-setting. Once you know where you are and where you want to go, it a simple matter of going there. The going there is the purpose of goal setting. By keeping on the path you made for yourself (the line between the two X's,) you will eventually reach your destination.

At this point it might be a good idea to break up into groups and talk about what kinds of goals people want to set for themselves. Start off by asking what kind of person they want to become. Then ask them how they get there from where they are, what kinds of things they need to learn or achieve.

Also try to tie this back with the previous topics. In order to become a leader and build a better world, what do I need to do? This is a very important question.

Week 29: Goals – Setting good goals and keeping them

As we all know, making goals is not the same as keeping goals. Anyone can make a goal, but if we want to succeed we have to keep our goals. We need to accomplish and fulfill them.

There are many books on goal setting that one can read. The advice I like to give was given to me by John Redmond, a man who in his youth lead many leadership training seminars for young adults. His advice was that a goal has to be four things:

1. Achievable
2. Measurable
3. Specific
4. Meaningful

First off, any goal you set has to be achievable. It has to be something you know you can accomplish. Otherwise, you are simply setting yourself up for failure. Try breaking it down into smaller components and working on those components.

Secondly, a goal must be measurable. If you cannot measure how you are doing, then you have no idea whether you are doing it or not. If your goal is to be a nice guy, you really have no idea whether or not you are doing it. If your goal is to be a nice guy by helping others to do the dishes, you can easily tell whether or not you are accomplishing your goal.

Thirdly, a goal must be specific. If your goal is to run, then it is a pretty worthless goal. A person can run for thirty seconds and still accomplish that goal. However if the goal is to run a

mile every day, then it is something that is doable. In short, you know what you are aiming for.

Lastly, a good goal must be meaningful. If a goal doesn't mean anything to you, there is no power behind completing it. If a person is not serious about achieving a goal, chances are that they will not achieve it. Just look at all the New Year's Resolutions people make, and how many of them fail because they just don't care about them.

If these things are done, then goal setting becomes useful and realistic. If there is time, have the groups meet again and this time, refine their goals to become something manageable.

Week 30: Indemnity – What is Indemnity anyway?

Everyone in our church has heard about indemnity, but almost nobody knows what it is; all we know is that we are supposed to pay it. The purpose of this morning service is to remove some of the mystery from it to help the students understand that it is not something to be afraid of.

Simply put, Indemnity is the restitution of sin. It is the restoring of an object to its pre-accident state. I look at Indemnity as a coin: it has two sides. One side is for us, the other for those around us. If I break someone's window, not only do I have to seek their forgiveness, but I have to learn from the mistake and not do it again. The person we wronged forgiving us is one side of the Indemnity coin; us learning from the mistake is the other.

The most common form of indemnity is the second side of the coin, the one for those around you. If you have done something bad to someone, this is the act that you do to find their forgiveness. If you broke someone's window, paying for a new one is one way to indemnify the mistake.

As we all know there is more than one type of sin. The sins we alone commit only make up a small portion of the weight we carry around every day. Indemnity relates to these other forms of sin as well. If I attended a Sun Dance Ceremony at a local Native-American tribe, it could act as a form of indemnity for the mistakes of my ancestors. By loving and serving them, I can make up for the mistakes of my Native-American hating great-great-grand father.

Understanding this dynamic will help you understand why we do so many conditions. These conditions are a way for us to ask forgiveness for not only the sins we have committed, but for the sins that weigh upon us from previous generations.

The other side of the coin is the personal one. All things have a perceived and a given value. When we do a condition we do it for a reason, and hopefully we have learned from the experience. This is the second form of Indemnity: the things we take with us from what we have experienced. This is why Father says anything can be indemnity... we can learn from any experience. It can help us to become closer to God.

In this morning service you should try to hit upon those points.

Week 31: Indemnity – Types of Indemnity

With a basic understanding of what Indemnity is, we can go into more depth about the mechanics of it. I like to break this into two morning services: one on the types of Indemnity and on how to set up a proper Indemnity Condition.

The Divine Principle says that there are three types of Indemnity: lesser, equal, and greater. This makes perfect sense when you think about it. If you make a mistake, there are three amounts of effort you can put forth to make up for it. The act of restitution must require either less, equal, or more energy than the original action.

The point of this morning service is to explain this. Indemnity is a very simple concept when handled correctly, and understanding how it works allows us to fix many problems. Whoever gives this morning service should focus on examples; if I were doing it I would use skits. Have three skits showing the types of Indemnity.

Make sure you use real world examples, and try to keep them simple.

Week 32: Indemnity – Setting up an Indemnity Condition

This Morning Service can be broken up into two parts: why and how.

The “why” portion is a simple explanation of why using a condition helps. The simplest way to look at it is by relating it with goal setting. What is Indemnity but a type of goal setting? The easiest way to solve a problem is to figure out what caused the problem, and then take actions to fix whatever the source is. The ultimate goal is to receive forgiveness from those hurt by the original action.

The “how” is little more complicated. An Indemnity Condition has a few steps involved:

1. Name a Central Figure: This is always you. You are the one doing the condition and it is your goal. We add this because it helps to keep things in perspective.
2. Time Period: Any goal should have a time period; otherwise you will be doing it forever.
3. Condition: Whatever action it is you are doing to fix the problem.

As with any other type of goal, it should be Achievable, Measurable, Specific, and Meaningful. In order to create an Indemnity Condition you need to know what it is you’re fixing, where you are now in relation to fixing it, and the steps that need to be taken to fix the problem.

Fixing a problem often requires more than one indemnity condition. Think of it like pecking away at a wall of ice. Each condition brings you that much closer to breaking through. This is

because many cuts are deep and painful.

Week 33: Indemnity – Indemnity vs. Indumbnity

This is one of my personal favorite topics, so I like to add it in whenever I talk about Indemnity. I have seen people in our movement have something bad happen to them and the first words out of their mouth are “Ha! I just paid indemnity!” My first reply is, “No, you just paid indumbnity.”

Not all actions are the result of some cosmic will. Sometimes we just do stupid things. If you leave your door unlocked and someone steals your things, you did not just pay indemnity. You did something stupid and paid indumbnity.

Now, this can be turned into indemnity if you learn from the experience, but that usually doesn't happen. In short, the purpose of this morning service is to help people understand the difference between paying Indemnity and paying Indumbnity.

I like to list a few situations and have the students say which is which.

Week 34: Inheritance – Learning from the 1st generation.

The last part of this curriculum is about inheritance. We've talked a lot about second generation, even touched briefly on their purpose, and now towards the end of the year we revisit purpose.

If we indeed want to fix the world, why start over from scratch?

As second generation, our parents have been striving for a better world for the better part of forty years. There are so many things they have learned, so many experiences that can help us in our own struggles. Honestly, there is enough here for many weeks. However, since there is so little time, this curriculum only has it for two week.

In this morning service, ask one or more of the elder first generation to either give a testimony or share some bits of wisdom.

Week 35: Inheritance – Learning from the 1st generation.

Just like the week before, find one or more elder first generation in your area and ask them to share some pearls of wisdom to the youth.

Week 36: Inheritance – What is the purpose of this movement?

With only two weeks left before summer it becomes increasingly important to revisit the roots. Not history, but vision. Everything has a vision. When anyone builds anything, they do so with a purpose in mind, a hope for the future. It is this vision that allows us to overcome the struggles that we find along the way to completing whatever it is that our hearts are set upon.

If people really want to be a part of this movement, they must understand what its purpose is, what it is here to do. If they cannot grasp this vision, then this movement has failed.

To me, this church has one purpose: to create a better world. To create a place where people really and truly care about one another, a place where people respect and love each other, a place free of bigotry and racism, a world devoid of hate and bias, a place where our children can walk the streets at night, a place we can finally be free.

Everything we do, from the peace rallies in Israel, to the service projects in our neighborhood, have this common linking purpose. To create, in a very real sense, the Kingdom of God on Earth.

There is a great quote from Father that fits in with this. It goes: “Do not follow me. See what I am doing, and if you want to do the same, then let us do it together.”

There is also a Native-American proverb that fits: “Do not walk behind me, for I may not lead. Do not walk in front of me, for I may not follow. Walk besides me so we may go together.”

Week 37: Inheritance – How do we create a culture of heart?

Understanding the vision is the first step to doing it. The next step to doing it is to understand how to do it. Luckily, many great minds have been working on this problem and there is a lot of material out there. The one that I agree with the most comes from Heung Jin Nim.

Mahatma Gandhi said it best when he said, “Be the change you want to see in the world.”

This simple quote has become a sort of guide post for me, a simple saying that exemplifies Father's life. By becoming people of true character, we can inspire and uplift those around us, showing them by our own example how to become better and happier people.

By becoming the best in our chosen field, we raise the bar, we set the trends. We become the ones that decide what is cool and what is socially acceptable. In short, we have the ability to create a culture of heart just by becoming the people who live in such a culture.

By creating that culture in ourselves we can spread it out to our families, and our families can spread it out to our society, our society to our nation, and our nation to our world.

Actionizing

Actionizing is an old MFT expression for putting what you've learned into practice. In our church's history, as people finished the forty-day workshop, they would go actionizing so they could get a chance to put the principle into action. That is exactly what we are doing here.

To me, the most important job of this curriculum is to impart a dream, to give the youth a vision of a better world, and to hopefully give them fire to want to build it. To this end, the Actionizing program for this curriculum is designed to help them build that kind of a community at the church.

I am not naive enough to think that a few activities will build an ideal world, but the hope is that it will be a step in the right direction.

In the ideal world, the older brothers and sisters would take care of the younger. This is the natural order of things. For our Actionizing, the high school class took the elementary school class out on excursions once or twice a month.

The first month was a Water-day and a Carnival. The high school broke into two teams, each team responsible for one of the events. The church purchased supplies (candy, water balloons, card board, etc.).

The second month was a trip to a park near a lake. Once again there were two groups, one group took the kids that wanted to play sports, and the other group took the kids who wanted to play in the playground.

The final month was this Museum of Natural History. The high school class broke into four groups, and each group was in charge of a small group of elementary school children.

Designing a Curriculum

Having read through an example Curriculum, hopefully your next question is: “How do I create one of my own?” Face it, ours is nice, but you could do a much better job.

The first step is to figure out what it is your students need. Luckily, there are a lot of ways to do this. You can do a survey, ask questions, give a test, or just sit down with the other Sunday school teachers and go through a list of students and write down what they each need.

Once you have some general idea of what the most prevalent topics are, you need to find some encompassing theme for the year. This isn't strictly needed. You can just go through the list you've come up with, but I believe having a theme helps in that it creates a sort of guide post.

This overall topic should be broken down into its more general components, then these more general components broken down into specific lessons. The actual structure was covered in detail in the “Curriculum” section on page 13.

You can try to plan out the entire year if you want, but this usually doesn't work so well. There is a common saying that goes: “No plan survives first contact with the enemy.”

We have found that it is easier to plan things one or two months ahead. I try to plan on sub-topic at a time, but planning it by month works equally as well. Doing things this way keeps things dynamic and allows you alter topics to make sure they have the most impact. Constant reassessment is one of the keys to an effective curriculum.

Through trial and error we have found that it is best to plan one or two months ahead. If you start the year with a two month plan, then after one month, plan for the next-next month. This allows you to easily stay on top of things. It also keeps last-minute planning sessions to a minimum.

It is a good idea to constantly ask for feedback. Franklin Covey, the author of *Seven Habits for Highly Successful People*, often says that if an organization is not growing it is dying. I have always taken this to mean that if an organization is not constantly improving itself it is decaying and falling behind the times and needs of those involved in it.

One final note on creating a Curriculum: It is a guide. The curriculum should never leave the object position; the content the students need to learn is and should always remain in the subject position. Do not hesitate to change things if that is what is needed.

Adding a Morning Service to the Breakout Group part of the curriculum is fine. This curriculum design is only meant as a guide post. The moment it stops being that is the moment it stops being helpful and becomes a hindrance.

Part 2

UPN



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Preface

Background

UPN or Ultimate Prayer Night is a Colorado based Youth Group at the Denver Family Church, founded by Tomeo Wise and Yongil Fleisher on February 7, 2004. The reason for creating the program was a lack of any form of fellowship among the second generation in Colorado. Because of their extensive two year training program on STF, Tomeo and Yongil decided to create a program that would emphasize the importance of a spiritual life and still be fun for the youth. Initially the program started out a weekly Hoon Dok Hae meeting. Overtime the program developed to become more activity-based, reinforced by Hoon Dok Hae.

Mission Statement:

To raise God centered leaders who will build Chun Il Guk (One World Under God.)

Purpose:

In a world where many of our youth are subjected to drugs, violence, and sexual promiscuity there is an every rising need for a God centered community, a culture of heart. Through fellowship, study of God's Word, heart felt discussion, and community service, UPN wishes to create such a culture.

Also, UPN works hand in hand with Sunday School to reinforce the lessons taught within the classroom. It is an excellent opportunity to watch movies and do activities that can not fit into a 50 minute Sunday school lesson.

Goals:

1. For participants to end, and begin, their week with God.
2. To prepare our high schoolers for STF, public mission, or college.
3. Provide an environment that encourages our Youth to stay strong.

Ice Breakers



The purpose of an Ice Breaker is to help the members of a group get to know one another. It is suggested to play these games during the first several weeks, or whenever new groups are being formed. They help participants get past those first awkward moments.

Candy Toss

Objective

To learn more about the interest and hobbies of group members and discover what group members have in common.

Group Size

8 to 20

Materials

10 pieces of wrapped candy per person.

Description

Have the group sit in a circle. Give each person ten pieces of wrapped candy. Tell the group that they may not eat any of the candy until the end of the game.

One person starts the game by telling the group something unique he or she has done, accomplished, or experienced in life. Anyone in the group who has not done the same thing must throw (or gently toss) a piece of candy at this person. Continue in this manner around the circle until everyone had had a turn. There should be four or five rounds of varying topics. At the end of the game, players may eat the candy they collected.

Suggested Questions/Topics

- Name one thing that you've done that you are proud of?
- Name the strangest thing you have ever ate?
- What is the strangest compliment you have received?
- What is one thing you want to accomplish before you die?
- What are you most afraid of?

Toilet Paper Game

Objective

To allow people to open up about themselves.

Group Size

6 to 15

Materials

A roll of toilet paper.

Description

Start by telling a story. You are a group about to embark on a journey through the wilderness. You will be gone for a week and you will be camping out every night. Then reveal the toilet paper to the group members and tell them to take as much toilet paper as they think they will need for the journey. After each member has taken how much they think they will need. Tell them that they must now share on thing about themselves for each sheet of toilet paper they took. This game is great for “class clowns” because most likely they have a huge wad of toilet paper.

One Common Goal

Objective

For group members to learn more about each other and find things they have in common.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

Paper

Pens or Pencils

Description

Break the groups into teams of two to six people each. Give each team a piece of paper and pen or pencil and ask them to make a list of all the things they can think of that are common traits among all the team members. Set a time limit for this activity. At the end of the time limit, ask each group to read their list to the rest of the group. For added fun and competition, see which group had the longest list and declare them the winning team.

Mix It Up

Objective

To mix up the people in a group, to have fun, and to create an atmosphere that is comfortable for everyone. This ideal for a large group meeting together for the first time.

Group Size

20 or more

Materials

A loud voice or amplifier

Description

Designate an area for this game to take place in and ask everyone to stand within this area. When you (or a selected person) says “go”, everyone must walk around in the area (in no particular direction) saying “mingle, mingle, mingle...” until the leader yells a number. When a number is given, everyone must quickly try to get into a group of people that matches the given number.

For instance, the number five is called out then everyone tried to get into a group, cluster, or clump of five people(no more and no less). After a few seconds anyone not in a group is “out”. Those who are “out” should stand outside the play area so they can still watch and enjoy the reset of the game. Keep playing until there are only two people left.

After playing one round by the above rule, play another round with other characteristics that people must group up by. A list of ideas follows.

- People of the same age
- People who live in the same city
- People with the same shoe size
- People with the same eye color
- People with a single letter that is the same in their first names
- People who love the same food
- People who root for the same sports team
- People who have the same favorite restaurant
- People who have vacationed in the same place
- People who have been in the same foreign country

Name Tag Grab

Objective

To get to know each other's names while trying to find your own name tag.

Group Size

8 or more

Materials

Sticky-back name tags
Marking Pens

Description

Gather the group into a circle and hand out name tags. Pass the marking pens around and ask each person to write his/her name on one tag (don't take the back off yet). The leader then collects all the name tags, mixes them up, and redistributes them so each person in the group has someone else's name tag (you can't have your name tag or the name tag standing to the person to your right). Ask the group members not to reveal to anyone whose name tag they are holding.

At this point, ask the group to place the name tag that they are holding on the back of the person to their right. On the “go” signal, everyone must move among the group members and try to locate their own name while at the same time trying to avoid having someone find his/her own name on their back. Once a person finds their own name tag they grab it off the back of the person who had it a place it on their own chest for all to see. Each person stays in the game until they find their own name the person whose name was on their back finds his/her own name.

Since nobody knows whose name is on their own back, everyone should try to avoid having people look at their backs. The person who keeps the name on his/her back the longest is the winner.

Variation

The leader can collect all of the name tags and then redistribute them randomly on the backs of the group members.

Sing a Song

Objective

To get people talking with one another in a group and make group members feel more comfortable with each other.

Group Size

4 or more

Material

A list of words

Description

Break the groups into teams of two or more.(At least four teams with four or more members is best, but you can play this game with a small group as well.) Each team should be in a group and the leader stands in the middle of the room. The leader calls out a word (a list of suggestions follow) and the points to a group. That group has until the count of 10 to come up with a song that has the stated word in it and must sing that part of the song. At least two people in the group must know the song, and everyone who know is it must sing. Then the leader points to the next group, who has until the count of 10 to think of a song with the same word in it. If a group fails to sing a song before the time is up, they are eliminated. Continue around the room until there is one group remaining. You may want to count to 5 instead of 10 to speed it up at the end. After the first round, select another word with every team back in the game at the beginning of each new round.

Word Suggestions

walk love child up dance
girl hot in go sun blue

Telephone Charades

Objective

To allow people to come out of their shell and have fun doing it

Group Size

10 or more

Materials

A list of funny scenarios

Description

Divide the group into groups of 4 or 5. Select one group to go first. Ask all but one member of that group to leave the room, making sure they can't hear what is going on. After, all but one member of that group has left. Tell the remaining member and the other teams a scenario. For example, "You are taking a dump, and the toilet clogs when you try to flush it." Then tell the rest of the group to come back and all of them must face the opposite direction at the first member. The first person (the one that knows the scenario) taps the second person in line and acts out the scene. The other remaining member must face the other direction so they can not see what is going on. Then after the first member has acted out the scene the second member turns and taps the third member and they face each other. The second member then tries to reenact what they remember. And this trend continues until it reaches the last member and they try to guess the scene. If they don't get it then the 4th member tries to guess and so on until someone guesses it or gets fairly close. If the 5th member guesses right it's worth 4 points. If the 4th member guesses right, it's worth 3 points and so on. Then the next group tries a different scenario. The team with most points wins. It is quite hilarious to watch people trying to act out what they saw. It should provide a bunch of laughs.

Suggested Scenes

A ballet dancer rips her tights
Spider man swallows a bug while flying through the air
Superman breaks his car
A mime gets caught in a box

What Can You Do With This?

Objective

For people to begin to feel comfortable around one another and for everyone to give input when in a group discussion.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

Any odd object you can find

Paper

Pens or Pencils

Description

Select an odd object prior to the activity that can be used to do many different things – a stapler remover, a wire whisk, kitchen tongs, a strainer, or anything else. Place the object in a paper bag.

Divide the large group into teams and give each team a piece of paper and pen or pencil. Pull the object out of the bag and say, “ Each group needs to make a list of all the things that this object can be used for – and be creative!” Give a time limit. At the end of the time ask the groups to come back together and have one representative from each team share his/her team's list with the larger group. You may give points for each original item found on each list, for each item on a list, or no points at all and simply laugh at all the crazy ideas.

Personal Trivia

Objective

To learn interesting, little known fact about each other so group members can become more comfortable around one another.

Group Size

4 to 20 (or a larger group can be broken into smaller groups for this activity)

Materials

One 3x5 index card or small piece of paper per person

Paper

Pens or pencils

Description

Pass out the index cards and pens or pencils to the group members. Each person must write down his/her name and five little-known facts about him/herself. Then collect all of the cards. Read aloud the facts found on a single card, but do not reveal whose card it is. At this point members try to guess whose card was just read. It is best to have each card numbered and ask group members to write down whose card they think was just read on a piece of paper next to the corresponding number. This way, when the last card is read, people cannot simply figure out who it belongs to through process of elimination.

After reading all the cards once through and allowing people time to write down their guesses, read them again and ask each person to acknowledge which card was their own and to give themselves a point for each correct guess.

Guess Who

Objective

To become more familiar with one another once everyone already know each other's names.

Group Size

8 or more

Materials

Sticky name tags or masking tape

Pens

Description

Hand out the name tags and ask each person to write down his/her name on their own tag. Then collect all the tags, mix them up, and put one tag on each person's back without letting them know whose name you are placing on their back.

Each person must then mingle with the other group members and ask different people yes or no questions to try and find out whose name they have on their back. If you have a large group, only allow people to ask each person one question. Once a person correctly guesses the name that is on his/her back they may put it on the front of the shirt. If you need to get the group into a circle for the next activity, you may have them sit in a circle by sitting to the right of the person who is wearing their name tag.

Name Game

Objective

For group members to learn each other's names.

Group Size

12 or more

Materials

Paper

Pens, Pencils or Colored Markers.

Description

Ask group members to break into small groups by finding people who have the same number of letters in their first name as they do. For small groups you may have to balance out the number of people in each group before the rest of the activity by moving people from a large group to a small group. For really large groups you may want to ask them to get into groups based on the number of letters in their full name.

Once small groups have been formed. Instruct each group to first create a banner that contains all of their names. Each person must then find an object in the room that starts with the same letter as the first letter of his/her name. After finding the objects the group must work together to create a song, rhyme, rap, story, etc. that contains every person's name and each object that was found.

After all the groups have completed the task, allow time for each group to share creations and present their story, song, rhyme, etc. with everyone else.

Four Corners

Objective

To increase group interaction, mix people up, and help people learn more about one another.

Group Size

8 or more

Materials

4 large sheets of paper

Marker

One die with the 6 and 5 covered up

Description

In a large room or gym, place one sheet of paper on each corner. Write different number in each corner (1 through 4) so that everyone can see. To start the game, gather the group together in the middle of the room and point out the four corners. Read one of the sets of choices and ask people to go to the corner that best represents them (see list of suggestions). After the question has been read, everyone goes to the corner of their choice and once there they may talk about why they chose that corner with the rest of the group.

Once everyone is in a corner, roll the die (with the 5 and 6 covered) and whatever number it lands on is the “unlucky number.” Everyone in that corner is eliminated and must move to the side. (You may also do a “lucky number” and that corner stays while everyone else leaves the floor.) Continue in this manner until a handful of people remain and declare them the winners.

Suggestions

1. Would you most likely be found in a 1. Sports Car 2. luxury car 3. four wheel drive 4. pick up truck.
2. Are you most like 1. summer 2. winter 3. spring 4. fall
3. Would you most likely be found watching 1. the news 2. sports 3. cartoons 4. a soap opera
4. Would you most likely be found drinking 1. soda 2. juice 3. coffee 4. water
5. Would you most likely be found in a 1. sailboat 2. canoe 3. yacht 4. ski boat
6. Are you more like a 1. potato 2. banana 3. bowl of spaghetti 4. piece of pie
7. Would you most likely be found in 1. sandals 2. bare feet 3. high heels 4. tennis shoes
8. Where would you most like to go on vacation 1. tropical island 2. ski resort 3. amusement park 4. campground.
9. Would you most likely listen to 1. country 2. alternative 3. Rap/hip-hop 4. Pop music
10. Would you rather eat 1. worms 2. rocky mountain oysters 3. snails 4. cockroaches

Name Balloon Pop

Objective

To become familiar with each other's name

Group Size

12 or more

Materials

Balloons (all the same color is best)

Small strips of paper

Pens or pencils

Description

Divide the group into two or more teams of six or more people each. Each team must select the person in the group who has the easiest name to remember. After this, each team sits in a circle and everyone (except for the person who was selected) is given a balloon, slip of paper and pen or pencil. Everyone, now writes down his/her name on the paper, puts the slip of paper into his/her balloon, then blows it up and ties it. Each team piles all of their balloons in the middle of their circle and mixes them up.

The person on each team who had the easiest name to remember starts the game by selecting a balloon out of the pile. This game is a race. On the signal "go", the person holding the balloon must pop it anyway he or she can and then call out the name that is inside on the slip of paper. The person whose name was called then must grab a balloon and do the same. Continue in this until all the balloons have been popped. The first team that finishes wins.

Mafia

Objective

To have fun and get to know one another

Group Size

15 to 40

Materials

Cd player with speakers or some sort of device to play

A deck of cards

Scary music

Description

Tell the group to sit in a circle. You should delegate one person to be a narrator (preferably someone who has played the game or someone who is good at storytelling). Then explain the game to everyone else.

In this game you can be one of four different people, a killer, a cop, a doctor, or a civilian. Then tell them that a King card represents a killer, An Ace is a cop, A Jack is a doctor and a number card is a civilian. Then count how many people are in the group and start to compile the same amount of cards. The number of killers, cops, and doctors should vary based on the size of the group. Is there are 20 people there should be 3 killers, 2 cops and 1 doctor. If there are 30 people there should be 4 killers, 2 cops, and 2 doctors. And if there are 40 people there should be 5 killers, 4 cops and three doctors. Pass out the cards accordingly so everyone has a card. Tell them to keep the card and not to show anyone what it is.

Then explain when the music starts and the lights go out, all the people must put their heads down and close their eyes. The narrator will ask all the killers to raise their head. The killers must then point unanimously to one person they want to “kill”. Once the narrator sees who it is the killers can put their head down. Then the narrator will tell the cops to raise their heads and point to who they think the killer is. Then put their heads down. Finally, the doctor(s) will raise their heads and point to who they think was “killed,” then put their heads down. Afterwards, the narrator will stop the music and tell a elaborate story of what happened. Who was killed, if the cops spotted a killer, and if the doctor was able to save the person. If a person is killed they must leave the circle and watch from the side.

Following that, there is a discussion on who the group thinks is a killer. Once 3 people have been nominated (a vote and a second) as suspected killers. The narrator tells everyone one to put their head down and vote for the person out of the 3 nominated that they think is the killer. Who ever has the most votes is executed and must sit on the side.

The goal of the game as a civilian, cop, or doctor is to get all the killers. As a killer, you have to kill everyone and be the last one standing.

There is a lot of strategy involved in this game but it should be a lot of fun.

Pictionary

Objective

To have fun

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

The game pictionary

Description

Split the group into two teams. Then play the game of pictionary ^_^.

Teamwork



The purpose of teamwork games is to allow each group to tackle a tough challenge together. Through teamwork games participants learn of their own personalities, as well as the personalities of those around them. Often during these activities participants will not realize they are learning, which enforces the importance of discussion at the end.

Marshmallow Soak' Em

Objective

To increase to comfort level in the group through fun interactive play.

Group Size

20 or more is ideal

Materials

2 bags of large marshmallow

Description

Divide the group into two teams and give each team a bag of marshmallows. The play area should be a large open space with a line across the center to divide in into two areas. Each team is on a different side and cannot cross the line to the other side. On the signal “go” the members of each team try to eliminate the members of the opposite team by hitting them with marshmallows. If a marshmallow is thrown at you and you are hit, you must go to the sideline and get into line with your other teammates that have been hit. When a person on your own team catches a marshmallow that was thrown by someone on the other team, the first person in line may return to the game. The object is to eliminate the other team entirely!

Piggyback Tape Pull

Objective

To create an atmosphere among group members that is fun, wild, and interactive.

Group Size

8 or more

Materials

1 roll of masking tape

Description

Break the group into pairs and ask them to select one partner to ride piggyback on the other partner. Place a piece of masking tape on the back of each person who is riding piggyback. The tape should be about four inches long, and it works best to turn the end under so a tab is sticking out.

Designate a playing area that everyone must stay in for the game. On the “go” signal, each pair tries to grab the tape off anyone they can while at the same time protecting their own tape anyway they can. Once your tape is pulled off, you and your partner must leave the play area and can watch the rest of the game from there. The game is over when one pair remains in the middle with tape on the back and with everyone else eliminated!

Dragon Tails

Objective

To create teamwork and have fun doing it.

Group Size

20 or more

Material

A bandanna or small cloth

Description

Break the group into teams of 6 to 8. Tell each group to line up and place their hands on the person in front of them. Tell the last person in line to place the cloth in their back pocket or in the back of their pants. When the game begins the teams must move around, staying connected, and try to grab other team's tails. Only the head (person in front) is allowed to grab a tail from another team. If the a head grabs a tail and is not fully connected then it does not count. Once a tail is grabbed from a team that team is out. The game continues until there is one team left.

Discussion Questions

How did you feel being if front?

What was is like being the tail?

What did it feel like being in the middle?

Do you think you could have done something differently?

Who's the Leader?

Objective:

To have fun

Group Size

10 or larger

Materials

A pillow

A music source

Objective

Gather the group and send one person out of the room, so they can not hear what is being said. Then select one person in the group to be the leader. Then tell the rest of the group that they are to follow the movements of the leader. Start by clapping and bring the person who was sent out back in. The person who was brought back in walks around the group and tries to figure out who the leader is. Once they think they have found the leader they can take a swing at the person with a pillow. This continues until they hit the right person. Then that person is sent outside and the game starts again.

Let's Go This Way

Objective

To create teamwork

Group Size

10 or more

Materials

A long rope

Description

This game need to be played in a large area or park. Tell the group to get together in a tight clump. Once they have done that tie a rope around the whole group. Once they have been tied together, tell them to start moving to a certain point. Once they have moved to several points, you can untie them and have a discussion.

Discussion Questions

Was it hard to get going?

How did you feel in the back?

How did you feel in the front?

Was their a clear leader? How did you feel being the leader?

Newspaper Hockey

Objective

To mix up the group in a rowdy, fun, and interactive way.

Group Size

12 or more

Materials

A large pile of old newspapers

Masking Tape

Plastic Baseball

Description

Divide the group into two teams and give each team a pile of old newspaper and at least one roll of masking tape. Each person needs to take some newspaper, roll it up and tape it so it can be used as a hockey stick. Mark off a large area inside or outside that can be used to play hockey with two small goals.

The group is now ready to play newspaper hockey. You may play the game with one or more plastic baseballs. Each team is trying to hit the ball with their hockey sticks into the other goal.

Water in the Face

Objective

To bring laughter to a group and for everyone to participate in a fun, interactive game.

Group Size

10 or more

Materials

Paper Cup

Jug of water (or water source)

Towels

Description

Gather the group into a circle where people can stand or sit. Ask for a volunteer to stand in the middle and give him or her a paper cup with a small amount of water in it. The person in the middle must select a category (i.e. type car, color, kind of cereal, candy, etc.) and tell the group what the category is.

The person in the middle then secretly thinks of an item in that category (you may have this person whisper it into the ear of the leader so you know they won't lie). Each person in the circle takes a guess at what the person is thinking of in that category. Each person gets one guess and cannot say anything that has already been said. As soon as someone correctly guesses what the person was thinking of, the person in the middle throws the water in his or her face!

The person who guessed correctly then gets to be the one in the middle with the water and may select a different category. Start with the person in the circle whose turn it was supposed to be next and move on around the circle until someone else gets water thrown into his/her face.

Toilet Paper Wrap

Objective

To play a crazy game as a team that is fun and an easy way to start using teamwork.

Group Size

6 or more

Materials

1 roll of toilet paper per team

Description

Divide the group into teams of three to eight members each and give each group one roll of toilet paper. Give the groups ten minutes to decorate one member of their group using the toilet paper. The person may be decorated with anything the group comes up with – nurse, sailor, statue of liberty, tree, etc. Encourage the groups to be creative and hold a fashion show at the end with each group explaining its creation.

Human Knot

Objective

To promote teamwork and working together

Group Size

10 or more

Materials

none

Description

Break the group into group or 10 to 15 and tell them to get together in a big clump. Then tell them to grab arms with people across from them. They must lock hands with two different people. Then tell them on “go”. They must try to untie themselves and make a circle. The team that finishes the fastest wins.

Discussion Questions

Were you frustrated? Why?

What was the key to your success?

Is there anything that you would do differently?

Do you feel like there was good communication among your group?

Rubber Band Wars

Objective

To have fun and work together as a team.

Group Size

10 or more

Materials

Rubber Bands

Description

Before the game designate an big area with certain obstacles to hide behind (upturned tables, chairs work great.) You should draw a center line that the teams cannot cross. Then scatter around rubber bands all over the playing field. Then divide the team into two teams. Tell them that they must try to hit the other team. Once a person is “hit” they must leave the playing area. The object is to eliminate everyone from the opposing team. Here are a few scenarios you can play.

Scenarios

Team vs. Team

Protect the VIP (designate one team to be assassins who's job is to kill the VIP. Designate one person on the other team to be the VIP and the other team member must protect the VIP. The objective is to get the VIP to a certain point.)

Free for All

Team Musical Chairs

Objective

To play a fun game in which everyone is included.

Group Size

8 or more is best

Materials

A music source (radio, stereo, etc.)

chairs (one less than the number of people in a group)

Description

Set the game up as you would a regular game of musical chairs. Place all of the chairs in a circle facing outward with room for people to walk around the circle of chairs. There should be one less chair in the circle than there are people in the group.

Divide the group into two teams for this game. It is the easiest to play guys versus girls because people need to easily identify who is on which team. Start each round with everyone standing in a circle around the chairs (spread the team members out so they aren't all standing next to each other) and start the music. Everyone starts walking in the same direction around the chairs until the music stops. Once the music stops, everyone quickly tries to find a vacant chair to sit in. In this game of musical chairs no one ever gets out, but if you are left standing after the music stops the other team gets a point.

Continue to play many rounds of this game, giving a point to the appropriate team after each round.

Balloon Stomp

Objective

To have fun and work as a team.

Group Size

10 or more (the more the better).

Materials

Balloons

2 two feet of strings for each pair

Description

This game must be played in an open field or gym. Divide the group into 4 groups, within the groups divide them into pairs. The pairs must tie one foot with the other member. Then they must tie a inflated balloon to only one members free foot. The other member who has a free foot is the “stomper”.

Once the game begins each pair moves around and tries to pop other pairs balloons. The group with the most remaining pairs wins. Once the game is done switch roles and try again.

Discussion Questions

Did you have trouble protecting your balloon?

What kind of strategies did you group use?

How does this relate to everyday life?

Paper Wrap Game

Objective

To build a teamwork and have fun.

Group Size

2 or more

Materials

Wrapping Paper

Scissors

Scotch Tape

A small empty box for each pair

Pieces of rope or bandannas

Description

Break the group into teams of two. Once they have been divided tell the team members to face each other and place their arms out. Then the group leader ties their wrists together. Give each pair wrapping papers, scotch tape, scissors, and a small empty box. Tell them they must wrap the box as nicely as they can while still tied together. The team's box that looks the best is the winner.

Discussion Questions

Were you frustrated? Why?

Was there any communication involved?

How can you relate this to everyday life?

Build It

Objective

To build a structure as a group without touching anyone else's building materials.

Group Size

2 or more

Materials

Building blocks (or other building materials)

Description

Prior to this activity, the leader builds a structure out of some blocks and makes a pile of the exact same blocks for the group members to each select one or more of the blocks for themselves until there are no remaining blocks.

Now the group must try to build the structure exactly like the original. Each person may only touch his/her own block/s and none of the other blocks. If at anytime someone touches a block that does not belong to him/her the group must start over.

Discussion Questions

How did the group decide how to divide up the pile of blocks?

Was this an easy task for the group or difficult? Why?

What would have happened differently if everyone could have touched all the blocks? Would this task be easier or harder?

Did you have to use patience during this activity? Was this hard or easy for you?

When in life do you need to use patience when working with a group of people? Why?

Team Card Tower

Objective

To work together to accomplish a difficult task.

Group Size

2 or more

Materials

One deck of playing cards per team

Description

Divide the group into smaller groups to two to four people each, giving each group a deck of cards. Instruct the group that their task is to build the highest tower of cards they can.

When building the tower, each person may use only one hand and must place the other hand behind his/her back. The teams must start over each time the cards fall. It is a good idea to set a time limit for this activity and see who has the tallest tower one the time is up.

Discussion Questions

What was needed from you and your team members to accomplish this task?

Was anyone frustrated at any time during the activity? If so, how was it handled?

How important would you teammate's help have been if you all could have used two hands?

Variations

Start with both hands, then halfway through switch to one hand and compare the difference.

Use your dominant hand part of the time and your other hand part of the time and compare the two.

Foothold

Objective

For the group to learn to work together as a team.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

None

Description

Break a large group into smaller teams of four to eight members. Each team must stand in a circle and select one person to be in the middle. The person in the middle can keep both feet on the ground, but everyone else may only keep one foot on the ground and the person in the middle must somehow hold or carry each group member's remaining foot (or leg). The challenge for the group is to move as a unit in one direction without the person in the middle dropping anyone's foot or leg in the process.

Discussion Questions

Did one person have to work harder than the rest of your team for your group to be successful? Why?

How do you feel when you have to do more work than others who are on your team? Why?

How do you feel when others have to do more work in order to make up for you?

Is it OK for different people to work harder or less hard when non a team? Why or Why not?

What are some teams that you can contribute more to than others in the same group?

Back to Back

Objective

To learn to lean on one another for support

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

None

Description

Divide the group into smaller teams of two to three people each. Challenge each group to sit down on the floor with their backs to each other, link elbows, and then stand up without unlinking arms. Once a team successfully stands up, they need to find another team that was also successful and for a larger group together, sit back to back, and attempt to stand up all together. The smaller the groups should continue joining together until the entire group is back to back and working together to stand up as one big team.

Discussion Questions

Why do you think it is better to start this activity in a small groups?

Was it easier at first or harder? Why?

Would you rather be on a small team or a large team? Why?

How are small and large teams different?

When are teams the most effective?

Tall Tower

Objective

For everyone on a team to contribute to the completion of a challenging task.

Group Size

2 or more

Materials

Varied (see ideal list below)

Description

Prior to the activity, gather supplies together that can be used to make a tall tower but are not conventional things to build with.

Some ideas are...

Paper (and noting else)

Raw spaghetti and marshmallows

Gumdrops and toothpicks

Drinking straws and paper clips

Drinking straws and tape

Paper cup and a pack of chewing gum

String, paper cups, and drinking straws

Break the group into teams of two to six members each. Give each group a pile of the supplies you have gathered and challenge them to build the tallest tower they can using only the supplies given to them. Give the group a time limit. At the end of the allotted time, ask the groups to show their creations.

Discussion Questions

How did you start the project?

Was getting started harder or easier than actually building the structure?

Did you have a plan or did everyone just start building? Was your group successful with the strategy that you chose?

Did anyone in your group emerge as a leader? If so, how did you feel about this? If not, do you wish someone had?

Swamp Crossing

Objective

To solve problems as a team.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

Pieces of cardboard about 1 foot by 1 foot (larger for adults and smaller for children).
A least three 2-liter plastic jugs with water with the lids on

Description

Break the group into teams of four to eight people each and tell them the following story: “Your group is stranded on an island and you need fresh water. The only water is in jugs on the other side of the salt-water, alligator-infested swamp. You must go and get it. You must do this as a group because the island gorillas are on the other side and are protective of their water but are afraid of large groups. You may use these special floating stepping stones (give them one or two fewer pieces of cardboard than there are people) that you can move across the water. The stones may be moved only by being picked up and set back down. You may not slide them because this will cause them to sink into the swamp.”

Place the water jugs on the other side of the area and mark off a line that designates the beginning of the swamp. Remember, the group must bring the jugs of water back to the other side before the task is finished. If a member touches “the swamp” the group must start over. For added fun you may put soda or other tasty drinks on the other side that group can drink after bringing them back safely.

Discussion Questions

Was this activity frustrating for anyone? Why or why not?

How did your group decide what to do next?

Was anyone more of a leader or did everyone give equal input?

What was the easiest part of this challenge? What was the hardest?

How did you feel when you had successfully completed the task?

Are you on any teams that have had to deal with difficult situations? How does this team handle it and how do you feel about it?

Egg Construction

Objective

For team members to problem-solve when working together.

Group Size

8 or more

Materials

Raw Eggs

As many different things as you can find that can be used to build an egg protection cover: drinking straws, tape, string, paper, cardboard tubes, popsicle sticks, masking tape glue, etc.

Description

Break the groups into teams of four or more members each. Give each team a raw egg and tell them that they must not let their egg break, but they have to do one of the following with their egg (you choose):

Drop the egg from at least eight feet off the ground.

Drop the egg from your team lies on the ground below – with or without getting splatter on!

Dropped from the top of a building

Give the teams any of the materials you have gathered, or make a pile and allow them to select four items to use in the construction of their “egg protector”. Once everyone has finished the project (or they run out of time), have the groups gather together and put their constructed egg protectors to the test!

Discussion Questions

Was trust involved in this activity at all? Why or why not?

How did your group make decisions together?

How did you feel about your final product? Why?

Lap Sit

Objective

For each person to do his/her part when working with a group to successfully a task.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

None

Description

This is one of the old favorites but it's still a good challenge for any size group! Start with everyone standing in a circle shoulder to shoulder. Now ask everyone to turn a quarter to the right so that each person is facing the back of the person to his/her right. If there is a lot of space between each person ask the group to take a small step towards the center while still facing right. Once you are in a tight circle you are ready for the lap sit. At the same time, everyone sits down on the lap of the person behind him/her. If successful everyone will be on his/her neighbor's lap and no one will be on the ground!

Discussion Questions

Did everyone that was in the circle have to participate in this activity in order for it to work? Why or why not?

What happened if on person decided not to cooperate?

Are you ever in a group where one person doesn't participate and it affects the entire team? Are you ever that person?

How do you feel when you are part of a group that accomplished a task that is difficult

Can Walk

Objective

To work as a team to accomplish a goal.

Group Size

3 or more

Materials

Large coffee cans

Rope

Description

Gather together large coffee-type cans and punch two holes in the side-walls, opposite of each other near the closed end of the can. Place a thin rope through the holes and tie the rope in a loop that is long enough to hold onto when standing on the can. Make several of these for you group.

Divide the group together into teams of two or three. Give each team one more coffee can than there are people. The teams stand on top of the coffee cans, holding onto the handles and walking. Each person shares the can with his/her neighbor so that they are walking together (with the exception of those who are on the outside edge – the outside foot is by itself on one team).

Once the group is successful at walking on the cans in teams of two or three, challenge them to walk in as big a group as possible.

Discussion Questions

How did you feel when your group was walking together?

Was this easy or difficult for your group?

What would have made it easier?

What would have made it more difficult?

What made doing this activity as a team better than doing it by yourself?

Cup Stack

Objective

For people to work together on a fun but frustrating and challenging task without giving up or cheating.

Group Size

6 or more

Materials

Scissors

FOR EACH GROUP OF SIX

10 paper cups of equal size

one rubber band (must fit around the cup)

6 pieces of string

Description

Prior to the activity, cut string into two-foot to three-foot long pieces. Tie six pieces of string to a rubber band with six pieces of string attached to it (it should look like a sunshine with six sun rays going out in all directions). Make one of these for every six people.

Divide your group into a smaller group of six (or as close to this as possible). Give each group a stack of ten paper cups and one of the rubber band/string implements that you have prepared. Place the paper cups on the table, spread out and upside down.

Challenge the group to build a pyramid out of the paper cups (four on the bottom, three on the next row, then two, and finally one on the top). Group members may not touch the cups with their hands, or any other part of their bodies for that matter, even if a cup falls on the floor.

Each person should hold onto one of the strings that are attached to the rubber band and the group uses this device to pick up the cups and place them on top of each other (by pulling the rubber band apart and then bring it back together over the cups). If there are fewer than six people on any team, some team members may have to hold more than one string (but this does not make it easier).

Discussion Questions

Was anyone frustrated at all during this activity? If so, how was it handled?

Why was teamwork so important for this activity?

Are you ever in a situation where you must use teamwork? Is this always easy for you? Why or Why not?

What are some skills need to be good at teamwork?

What did you do today to contribute to the teamwork on you team?

Take the Challenge

Objective

For people to contribute their individual talents and skills to the group.

Group Size

10 or more

Materials

Paper

Pens or pencils

Description

Divide the group into teams of five to fifteen members each (the bigger the teams the better). Give each group paper and a pen or pencil and give them five minutes to come up with five challenges for the other groups to attempt to successfully accomplish. The group creating the challenge must be able to demonstrate that they can do it before another team is challenged. The challenges may be physical (build a pyramid, one person can carry five people, everyone stands on his/her head, etc.) Or challenges may be anything else (our group has the most birthdays in one month, our group can sing any TV theme song you name, etc). The challenge must not be obviously impossible for the other groups to accomplish (our group has the person with the longest hair).

Once the challenges are written down, each group gives out one challenge at a time and demonstrates it, then the other groups get a chance to try to accomplish this task in a given amount of time. You may give points to teams who can “take the challenge” successfully.

Discussion Questions

Was it easy for your group to find things that everyone could successfully do? Why or why not?

Did you have to rely on the talents of the group members?

Did any team feel like it was hard to find talents within your group? If so, why?

How much do you rely on the talents of others or of yourself when you are in a group?

Do you always let your talents be known? Why or why not?

The Great Shoe Tie

Objective

For team members to help one another during a challenging task.

Group Size

6 or more

Materials

Masking Tape

Optional: Rope or string

Description

Ask everyone to unfasten their own shoes. Instruct the group to stand in a clump as close together as possible (everyone's feet should be together and there should be no open space left on the ground at all).

The leader then take the masking tape and makes a tight circle around the group on the floor, leaving no space for the group to move at all. Challenge the group to tie or buckle everyone's shoe without anyone falling out of the circle. (If anyone does fall out of the circle, the whole group must start over). If your group can do this easily, you may tie some rope around the group at the waist level and give them the same challenge again.

Discussion Questions

Did anyone feel uncomfortable with being close to each other? Why or why not?

Did you need to help each other, or did everyone do his/her own thing?

Are you in any close group that you work with? If so, how do you feel about this? If not, do you wish you were in more close groups?

Sneak a Peek

Objective

For each person to do his/her part when solving a problem as a group.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

Building blocks or something similar (i.e. Lego's, Popsicle sticks, etc.)

Description

Build a small sculpture or design with some of the building materials and hide it from the group. Divide the group into small teams of two to eight members each. Give each team enough building materials so that they could duplicate what you have already created.

Place the original sculpture in a place that is hidden but at an equal distance from all the groups. Ask one member from each team to come at the same time to look at the sculpture for five seconds in order to try to memorize it as much as possible before returning to his/her team.

After they run back to their teams, they have twenty-five seconds to instruct their teams how to build the structure so that it looks like the the one that has been hidden. After the twenty-five seconds, ask each team to send up another member of their group who gets a chance to “sneak a peek” before returning to their team. Continue in this pattern until one of the teams successfully duplicates the original sculpture.

Build different sculptures for any additional rounds of this game.

Discussion Questions

What part of this activity involved teamwork?

What did each person in your group do to help?

Why is teamwork important when working with a group?

What are some important elements of teamwork?

How can being good at teamwork help you in your daily life?

Push and Pull

Objective

For group members to figure out how to work together rather than work against each other.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

None

Description

Divide the group into pairs (the closer in physical strength people are to each other, the better) and ask each pair to face each other and to reach out their right hands. Each person grabs his/her partner's hand by making a C shape with their fingers and hooking hand with their thumbs loose.

The Object of this activity is to demonstrate how people work against each other when they should be working together (but don't tell the group this). Once everyone is hooked up with his/her partner, tell them, "The object of the game is to touch your partner's right shoulder with your hands that are locked (no letting go)". Then say, "the way to win this game is to get the most touches, so make sure and count each time you touch your partner's shoulder." Most people will think that they are going against their partners and will be pushing against each other, but really the team with the most total touches wins!

After one minute, ask each team how many touches they had total and declare the winning team the one with the most touches.

Discussion Questions

Why were you working against each other during this activity?

Did any team work with each other to get as many points as possible? Why?

Do you usually work against people when you are on a team or with them?

What happens when people are working against each other but are on the same team?

What happened when people work with each other when they are on the same team?

Our Hands Are Tied

Objective

To help one another when presented with a challenging task.

Group Size

3 or more

Materials

None

Description

Everyone takes off their shoes, places them in a big pile, and then stands in a circle around the shoes. Challenge the group to hold hands in a circle and for each person to retrieve his/her own shoes, put them on and tie or buckle them without anyone letting go of the hands they are holding onto!

You may do this in separate teams as a race for added fun and competition.

Discussion Questions

Did your teammates work with each other or against each other? Why?

What was the hardest part of this activity?

How was communication a factor in this activity?

Why is communication important when working with others?

Do you feel that you communicate well with others? How does this affect your life?

Points of Contact

Objective

For a group to communicate and problem solve when given a challenging task.

Group Size

6 to 20 is ideal

Materials

None

Description

Mark off an area with two lines about ten yards apart. Challenge the group to get from one line to the other using limited “points of contact”. A point of contact is any part of a person's body that is touching the ground (foot, hand, etc.). Allow the group a specific number of contact points (a good number is the amount of people in the group minus one to three depending on how hard you want to make the challenge). For instance a group of eight might get five points of contact. The group must move as a unit, and once a foot or other body part touches the ground, that foot or body can be used over and over again and it counts as only one point of contact.

Discussion Questions

Did anyone want to give up at anytime during this activity? Why or why not?

Did you have to attempt this challenge more than once before you were successful?

What happens if you are on a team and you want to quit or give up?

Is the rest of the team affected by your actions when you are on a team?

How can you affect a team in a positive manner?

Puppet Show

Objective

For a group of people to pool their resources and be creative when solving a problem.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

A table or large desk that you cannot see under (use a tablecloth or sheet if necessary)

Paper

Pens or Pencils

Description

Divide the group into teams of two to eight people each and give each group paper and a pen or pencil. Each group needs to create a short puppet show to be performed for the rest of the group. Each person must participate in his/her own team's puppet show. The group must create the puppets out of whatever they can find (socks, hats, hands, etc.) You may or may not provide a pile of odds and ends for them to use. After a given amount of time use a desk or table for the stage and ask each team to present their unique puppet show.

For added team-building you may ask the group to create a puppet show about the group itself and to include any observations the team has about the group as a whole.

Discussion Questions

Is it easy or difficult to be creative when with a group of people? Why?

What part of this activity did your group have the most trouble with? Why?

What part of this activity was easy and went smoothly? Why?

Was communication important for this activity?

What is the most important element of communication when working with any team?

Flip

Objective

For everyone on a team to do his/her part when solving a problem.

Group Size

10 or more

Materials

One or more large tarps, old sheet, or blanket

Description

Find a tarp (or old sheet or blanket) that is large enough for the whole group to stand on while leaving about a quarter of it empty. (If the group is large, break it into smaller teams.) Once the group is standing on top of the tarp, challenge them to completely flip it over so that everyone is standing on the other side of the tarp. At no time may anyone get off of the tarp or touch the ground during the activity.

Discussion Questions

Did anyone get in your way during this activity?

How did you come up with a plan with such a large group?

Did anyone emerge as a leader? Who and what did they do?

Do all problem solving activities need a leader? Why or why not?

Do you feel like more or less a part of the group after doing this activity? Why?

Circle Walk

Objective

For a team of people to work together under challenging circumstances.

Group Size

6 or more

Materials

None

Description

Have the group stand in a circle shoulder to shoulder. Tell everyone to reach between their own legs, and join hands with their neighbors on both sides. The group will end up in a squatting position and connected in an awkward manner. Now, challenge to group to move in a circle to the right, completely around so that everyone ends up in the same spot that they started in – without anyone letting go or falling over!

Discussion Questions

Was this easy or difficult for you individually?

Was this easy or difficult for the group as a whole? Why or why not?

Do you ever feel like you affect what the rests of a group does?

Is this a positive thing or a negative thing for you? Why?

How do you use teamwork to overcome differences people have when working together?

Earthquake Escape

Objective

To build trust and to learn to work together in a situation in which people's abilities and needs are different.

Group Size

6 to 10 participants (or break large groups into small groups of 6 to 10 each)

Materials

Cardboard
Small flat wood pieces
Cloth Strips
Cotton Balls

Description

Explain to the group that there has just been a major earthquake and that many of the group members have sustained injuries. Select different group members to have different injuries and instruct them to act out these injuries during the course of the activity. One person may be deaf with cotton balls in his/her ears, another person is blind with a blindfold on. Someone may be unconscious and must lie on the ground. Others may have broken legs or arms with splints made out of cloth strips and cardboard or wood pieces, or you may tie someone's arms to his/her side. You may or may not appoint one or more people to have no injuries.

Once each person is set up with his/her injuries, tell the group you just got word that we are expecting aftershocks and they are in a dangerous area and must move to safety. Designate an area that has been declared safe at least twenty yards away. Prior to the activity, set up obstacles such as tables, overturned chairs, and other objects between the danger zone and the "safe area". The group must move everyone to safety without causing any further injury.

Discussion Questions

How did you feel when helping others get you to safety?

How did you feel if others had to help you?

Do you have any disabilities that require you to accept help from others? If so, how do you deal with this?

How do you react to someone else who is working with you who has a disability that requires your help?

Shoe Tie You Bother Me

Objective

For people to help one another and to build communication and problem-solving skills among group members.

Group Size

8 or more

Materials

None

Description

Divide the group into two or more teams of at least four people on each team. Everyone must lie on the floor as a group with legs in the air (no wearing skirts or dresses for this one!) On the “go signal, each team tries to get all their shoes on their team untied before one of the other teams does. No using hands during this activity, and your feet must stay off the ground. (If anyone has a double knot in his/her shoe it may be untied before the game begins and made into a single knot.)

Discussion Questions

Was this activity frustrating for anyone? If so, how did your teammates help you?

Could you have done this challenge by yourself? Why or why not?

What did you do to help each other?

Are you on any teams in your life in which you rely on others for help and others rely on you? If so, does your team help each other or work against each other? If not, would you like to be on this kind of team?

Create A Country

Objective

For people to get together as a group and participate in a group discussion.

Group Size

2 or more

Materials

Paper

Pens or Pencils

Colored Markers, colored pencils or crayons

Description

Divide the group into smaller groups or two to ten members each. Provide each group with the following information and all the materials listed above.

“You and a group of people have claimed an uninhabited island as a new country. You have been selected to be the new government. Your first assignment is to make the following decisions and accomplish the following tasks...”

Name the country

Nickname of the country

Design a License Plate

Design a flag

Choose a national bird

Choose a national flower

Write a national anthem

Appoint yourselves to government offices

Create any laws that you feel are necessary

In addition to government positions each person must pick a job serving the needs of the country

The group must work together to complete the task and then present it to the leaders of to the rest of the group when finished. This activity may take more than one session to complete or you may wish to have the group simply select the things from the list that they can complete in the time given to them.

Discussion Questions

How were decisions made in your group?

Is everyone happy with what was decided? Why or why not?

What things are important to remember when making group decisions?

What role do you usually take when making decisions with others?

Why is it important to be able to make decisions as a member of a group?

Group Transformation

Objective

To work as a team to create a group sculpture that includes everyone in the group

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

None

Description

Create a list of objects that a group can create a sculpture of using only their bodies. Each sculpture must include everyone in the group and may be moving or still. Some sculpture ideas are typewriter, computer, semi-truck, bulldozer, sink, helicopter, food processor, shower, etc. If this is done in teams there is more incentive for each group to work quickly and efficiently in response to the added competition of others. You may wish to have a time limit in which the sculpture must be created and give points to teams that do it quickly.

Discussion Questions

Did everyone feel included in this activity? Why or why not?

How did you decide who did what in your group?

How do you usually make decisions when with a group? Is this a good or bad way? Why?

What are some good ways to make decisions as a group?

Radio Broadcast

Objective

To show teamwork by working together as a group to create a radio broadcast. To promote group bonding by sharing what it is that people how and observe about each other.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

Paper
Pens or Pencils

Description

Divide the group into a least two smaller groups with two to six people on each team. Give each group a list of the names of the people on one of the other teams and instruct them that they must create a radio broadcast about that group and give them the following specific instructions.

As a group you have twenty minutes to create a radio broadcast about the events and activities that have occurred over the past couple of days (or whatever you choose to use). You may include poems, sound effects, songs, weather, sports cast, etc. You must include an update about each person from the other group who is on the list you were given. (Sometimes you may want to add a not about the presentation being appropriate if you thing the group could use the reminder.)

Give each group a place to work that is separate from the other so they can work without being heard.

After the twenty minutes bring the groups back together and ask them to present their radio broadcast. You may allow one person to present the entire thing or for added teamwork, ownership and participation require each person to take a part in some aspect of the broadcast that they have helped to create.

Discussion Questions

Was everyone included creating your broadcast? If so, why? If not, why?

How did each person contribute to the final product?

What can you do if you find yourself on a team or in a group that you don't want to be a part of anymore because you don't agree with what they are doing?

Do you have a group or team in your life that you feel proud to belong to? Why?

Team Score Basketball

Objective

To use every member of your team to accomplish a group goal.

Group Size

6 to 10 is ideal or you can split them into smaller groups

Materials

Basketball

Basketball court

Description

Divide the group into teams of no more than 5 per team. Play basketball by normal rules.

However, in order to win this game each and every person on your team must score one basket, and no more.

If the game goes quickly, change the rules so a point is scored each time every person on a team successfully scores a basket.

Discussion Questions

How was this different from a normal basketball game? How was your participation different?

Was this harder or easier and why?

Is it hard sometimes to include everyone? Why or why not?

Why is it important to include others?

How can you help to include others or include yourself in an activity?

Paper Tower

Objective

To work as a part of a team and to problem solve as a team. To continue an activity even if it is frustrating.

Group Size

2 or more

Materials

A stack of 8x11 pieces of paper.

Description

Divide the group into teams of 4 to 10 people. Simply give the group a stack of about 15 sheets of paper and nothing else. Instruct the group that they must build the tallest tower that they possibly can, using only the paper given to them. No tape, gum, paper clips, etc. allowed.

There are many different way this activity can be done, but I find people work even harder at it if I give them a goal (i.e. "I've seen a tower five sheets high (the long ways) before"). When I say this, everyone want to get at least five and hopefully more. The goal must be challenging but also realistic for the group to reach.

Hint: There are many ways to build a paper tower but one of the better ways is to fold each piece into three sections then up the paper slightly and stack them on top of each other or place a horizontal sheet between each stacked paper.

Discussion Questions

What steps did the group take in order to solve this problem?

Did everyone contribute? If so, how? If not, why?

Did anyone in the group get frustrated at any point? If so, how was it handled?

What things did the group do to show teamwork?

When in your life is it important to use teamwork?

Trust



One of the most important dynamics of a group is trust. Once a group has developed trust between its members they will be able to accomplish great things. Trust is the bedrock upon which growth depends. These games are designed to encourage participants to learn to trust one another.

Trust Fall

Objective

To learn to trust your group members.

Group Size

6 or more

Materials

A sturdy table about 4 feet off the ground for each group

Description

Divide the group into teams of 10 people (There should be two fairly strong people on each team.) Then instruct each group to a table and tell them one at a time each group member will be falling backwards and the rest of the team will catch them.

Make sure you instruct each “faller” to fall back as straight as possible and cross their arms during the fall. If they flail their arms they might hurt one of their team members. The rest of the team will stand face to face with their arms out and palms up. Then the faller will say “are you ready” and the rest of the team will respond “yes”. Then the faller will say “falling”. And proceed with the fall. This is done until everyone has had a turn.

Discussion Questions

Did you trust you team to catch you?

How does it feel you trust your team with your saftey?

Did anyone have trouble trusting their team? Why?

How does trust play a role in our everyday life?

Balance Me

Objective

For team members to learn to give and accept support from one another.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

None

Description

Divide the group in two. Both groups stand in a line, shoulder to shoulder. The groups should be facing each other and about three feet apart. Challenge the group to lean on each other and support each other's weight without falling. Each person holds up his/her hands with palms facing the opposite team. Everyone must fall forward and lean on each other's hands for support. Each person's right hand should be on the right hand of the person across from them, and their left hand should be leaning on a different person's left hand. The people on the ends will have one free hand. All legs should be straight with no bent knees.

To make this more challenging, set marks of where they must stand. The group may practice in smaller groups and/or at a closer distance before attempting the challenge.

Discussion Questions

Was this harder or easier than it seemed?

How was teamwork a factor in this activity?

How did the group go about successfully accomplishing this challenge?

What did you learn about each other as a result of this activity?

Shoe Pile

Objective

For group members to build trust and communication skills.

Group Size

6 or more

Materials

2 blindfolds

Description

Ask everyone in the group to take off his/her shoes and to put them into a big pile. Ask for a volunteer and blindfold that person. Mix up the shoes in the pile and ask the rest of the group members to verbally direct this person to his/her shoes. The directions must be purely verbal without any touching, guiding, or moving of the shoes. Once the person finds his/her shoes he or she must put them on while still blindfolded.

For added fun divide the group into two teams and time each group as they guide their own team members through the shoes.

Discussion Questions

How did you feel when you were blindfolded?

Could a person easily find his/her own shoes without any help from the group when blindfolded?

How was teamwork a factor in this activity?

How does this activity relate to your own life, if at all?

Cannon Ball

Objective

To start building trust among group members.

Group Size

10 or more

Materials

Blindfolds

Balled up newspaper with masking tape wrapped around it

Description

This game must be played in a wide open area. Before beginning scatter around balled up newspapers around the area. Break the group into pairs, and then explain the rules of the game. Each group will have one member who is blindfolded (the cannon) and the one person who can see. The person who can see has two jobs. First, to tell their cannon where to go and throw using only their voice and second, to block shots from other teams. The person who can see is not allowed to touch the cannon. When you say, “go” teams may move around and the cannon can start picking up balls on the floor. When the cannon get hit with a ball that team is out and must go to sideline and watch the rest of the game. The game continues until there is one team remaining. Once the game has ended switch roles and play again.

Discussion Questions

Did you trust your partner?

As a spotter did you really care for you cannon?

What did it feel like running around completely blind?

Gladiator

Objective:

To learn to trust your team.

Group Size

15 or more

Materials

Newspapers

Cardboard

Blindfolds

Scissors

Masking Tape

Description

Before starting roll the newspaper into long sticks (Swords) and tape it together. Divide the group into teams of 5 to 8 people. Assign each person in the team a number 1 through however many people are in a group. The give each team a designated amount of card board and tell them that they must make a shield and helmet. Give them about 30 minutes to complete the task.

Then gather them in a large area (a portion of it should be taped off for the arena part.) Then select a number and the person designated that number in each team will be suited up. Put a blindfold on the person selected, give them the shield that was made, the helmet and a sword. Then each suited up person will enter the arena. Begin and tell each team the only way to guide their member is through vocal commands. The rest of the team must stay out of the designated fighting area. Once a person is hit they are out. If the shield or the helmet is hit, the person is still in the game. The object is to eliminate everyone in the round by hitting them with your sword. Continue to play rounds until everyone has had a chance to be the gladiator.

Discussion

Did you trust your team?

Was it hard to hear what your team was telling you to do?

Did you feel confused at anytime?

How would you improve if you could play this game again?

Trust Tag

Objective

To build trust among group members

Group Size

8 to 20 is ideal

Materials

Blindfolds

Description

Divide the group into pairs and ask one person from each pair to be blindfolded. Designate a playing area that the group must stay in for the game and select one pair to be “it”. Those who are blindfolded play a game of tag while their partners verbally guide them during the game. The sighted partners must keep their blindfolded partners safe and try to guide them away from the person who is “it”. If your partner is “it”, your job is to guide him/her towards the others.

Only verbal guidance may be given with no touching allowed (unless necessary for the safety of your partner or others). Everyone must stay in the designated playing area for the game. If your blindfolded partner is tagged then they join the “its”. Sooner or later there will be a lot of “its” and very few non “its”. Last team left that is not tagged wins.

Once then game has ended. Switch roles and play again.

Discussion Questions

Did you trust your partner?

Was it harder to be the leader or the blindfolded person?

Do you have trouble trusting other or do you trust everyone?

Is trust important when you are working together with others or in a relationship with others? Why?

End Over End

Objective

To build between team members and two work together.

Group Size

10 or more

Materials

Optional: a stiff plastic or metal chair

Description

Start by explaining the activity and then ask for a volunteer. The person who volunteers stands straight with their hands across their chest. The challenge for the rest of the group is to turn this person end over end and back to a standing position safely.

This may also be done while the person sits in a chair, only the person holds onto the seat of the chair while the group turns the person and the chair end over end.

Discussion Questions

If you were the person who was turned end over end, how did you feel about this?

Did you trust your team members? Why or why not?

Did everyone in the group have to contribute? Why or why not?

Are you ever on a team where the safety of others is in your hands?

Are you trustworthy? Why or why not?

Why is trust important when you are a part of a team?

Crossing the Line

DISCLAIMER: DO NOT PLAY THIS GAME UNLESS THE GROUP HAS BUILT A STRONG LEVEL OF TRUST AND UNDERSTANDING!

Objective

To give people a chance to share the feeling and emotions with one another.

Materials

Something to make a line

Description

This activity is designed to give people a chance to share and understand one another. The real object is to show second generation that we are all going through the same thing. To start this activity tell everyone to stand on one side of the line. Then briefly discuss that everything that happens in the room will stay in this room. Also stress the fact that if someone feels uncomfortable sharing they are not obligated. Start of with easy questions such as, "Cross the line if you have ever felt lonely." Select a few people who have crossed the line to share their experience with the group. Gradually ask harder questions. Listed below are some suggestions. Afterward gather the group and reiterate that we are all in this together and here to support one another. It is also strongly recommended to give people adequate time to digest what has happened. Also instruct the group leaders or youth ministers to seek out people who seem distraught and share with them more intimately.

Suggestions

Cross the line if you...

- Have ever felt judged in the church
- Have ever lost a best friend
- Ever been hurt by someone you loved
- Wondered why you parents joined this church
- Contemplated leaving the church
- Have ever drank alcohol
- Done drugs
- Contemplated committing suicide

Communication



Communication is one of the most important skills one can learn in life. In these games participants will learn the importance of listening, and hone the skill of using the correct words to communicate what they intend.

Blind Square

Objective

To accomplish a challenging task using verbal communication.

Group Size

4 to 20 is ideal

Materials

A long piece of rope or string tied together at the ends to form a loop
Blindfolds

Description

Blindfold everyone in the group and place the rope (with the ends tied together) at their feet of the group members. Challenge the group to form a square out the rope. Once the group thinks it has created a square, allow everyone to take off their blindfolds and to look at what shape they actually created. You may do this with other shapes and letters too.

Discussion Prompts

How did you start this activity?

Did anyone emerge as a leader? If so, why – and why didn't others take a lead?

Do you tend to lead or follow when in a group? Why?

Variation

Videotape the group without them knowing it. Show the tape to the group after they are done and observe the different roles people took on during the activity.

Twenty-one

Objective

For team members to problem-solve and to communicate non-verbally with one another during an activity.

Group Size

6 to 27 is ideal

Material

None

Description

Divide the group into two or three teams of three to nine members each. Each team appoints a “counter” who will add up the number of fingers held up by the group.

Prior to giving the directions of the game, instruct the group that there is no talking allowed for the remainder of this activity, with the exception of counting by the team “counter”. The “counter” may participate or watch.

Each team stands in a circle, facing each other, with their hands behind their backs. The leader counts “one, two, three” and on “three” each person holds out zero to ten fingers together equal to exactly twenty-one, everyone immediately puts their hands back behind their back and continues to play until one team comes up with twenty-one. Remember, no talking!

Discussion Questions

Was it hard not to talk?

How did you communicate since you couldn’t talk? Or did your team just hope to win through luck?

What happens when you are on a team and there is a lack of communication?

Now do you deal with a group of people who have trouble communicating?

Line up

Objective

To communicate with each other in a unique way.

Group Size

8 or more

Materials

Blindfolds

Description

Gather the group together and ask everyone to close his/her eyes (or use blindfolds). Instruct the group to arrange themselves into a line, using any of the following criteria. For added challenge, give the group a time limit.

Line Up Ideas

Shortest to tallest

By birth dates

Number of letters in your full name (shortest name to longest name)

Number of people in your immediate family (smallest to biggest)

By first letter in your name (alphabetical)

Discussion Questions

Did one person act more as a leader in this activity?

It is sometimes necessary to have a leader?

What happens when everyone acts like a leader?

What happens when everyone waits for someone else to lead?

Are you more a leader or a follower? Do you like being in this role, or do you want to change? Why?

Sounds Around

Objective

For people to recognize how much they really listen to and hear the sounds around them. To understand how important it is to listen to one sound without without being distracted by all the outhr different sounds that are occurring at the same time.

Group Size

1 or more

Materials

Paper
Pen or pencil

Description

The leader has a piece of paper and a pen or pencil so s/he can make a list of all the sounds that the group hears. Start out inside if possible and ask the group to listen carefully and identify any sounds they hear. The leader then adds each new sound mentioned to the list. Then go outside if possible and continue to add to the list while taking a walk. After ten to twenty minutes of this activity you will probably have quite an extensive list.

Gather the group together for discussion afterwards and discuss the wide variety of sounds that are constantly going on around use and how difficult it may be to focus on one important sound at a time.

Discussion Prompts

Were you surprised by the number of sounds you heard?

Did you hear sounds today that you don't usually notice?

What is the difference between hearing something or someone and listening to someone or something?

Do you feel that you are good listener? Why or why not?

How can you focus on one sound when there are many different sounds going on around you at one time?

Mystery Object

Objective

For participants to show good listening skills when listening to a conversation.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

None

Description

Select two individuals who must secretly select an object in the room. In attempt to get the rest of the group to guess what the object is, they must carry on a conversation about the object without directly saying what it is. Meanwhile the rest of the group is listening and attempting to identify the mystery object.

Once the group has correctly guessed the object, select two more individuals to select a new object and start a new conversation.

Discussion Questions

What did you have to do in order to figure out what the object was?

Were you able to detect what the word was by reading body language?

When is it important to listen to others?

Why should you listen carefully to others when they are talking?

Variations

Select anything to talk about rather than just an object in the room.

Write down different objects on paper and allow each pair to draw a slip on paper and discuss the object written down.

Crazy Sentence

Objective

To you good listening skills in order to win the game.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

Paper
Pens or pencils
2 chairs

Description

Prior to this activity make up a dozen or so sentences that are complete and correct but make them crazy and random; then write each sentence on a small piece of paper. Some examples of crazy sentences are:

“My prom date had a large tattoo”

“Big Bird is my idol”

“The blue cow swam over the moon”

“It is good to eat spiders and caterpillars for breakfast”

“Rubber bands stick on the ceiling on Christmas Day”

Be creative and come up with many more. Also, prior to the game set up two chairs in front of the room.

For the activity select two people from the group and ask them to sit in the chairs that you have set up in the front of the room. Give each person a piece of paper with one of the crazy sentences on it. The two players must read the sentence to themselves and then engage in a conversation. Each player attempts to state his/her sentence in the course of the conversation. The object is to slip in the sentence without the other person guessing what it is. You may wish to give them a topic to start with such as fishing, country music, bowling, buying shoes, or anything else that has nothing to do with the sentence. Also give them a one or two minute time limit, allow people in the audience to guess what the crazy sentence is and whoever guesses correctly is give the opportunity to play the game for the next round.

Discussion Questions

What did you have to do in order to detect the hidden sentence?

When do you use your best listening skills? Why?

When is it important for you to show good listening skills?

Crazy Comic

Objective

To communicate ideas with others and make group decisions based upon discussion.

Group Size

3 or more

Materials

Paper

Pens or pencils

Colored markers, crayons, or colored pencils

Description

Divide the group into smaller groups of three to six members each. Supply each person in each group with a piece of paper and writing utensil. Instruct the group that they are to create an original comic strip and each person in the group must draw one frame of the strip (if there are four people in a group, the comic strip will contain four frames). The group must decide what to draw, the story line and who will draw what (there is a lot of communication involved in this one)!

Once the discussion had taken place about the comic strip and then decisions have been made, each person draws the frame s/he is responsible for on his/her own piece of paper. Everyone should be drawing at the same time and not taking turns with their group members. If you want to make it really challenging, don't allow group members to see each other's papers when they are drawing.

After the comic strips are completed, allow time for sharing and give each group a chance to show their comic strip to the other groups.

Discussion Questions

What different communication skills were needed for this activity?

How important was communication during this activity?

Did your comic strip flow? Why or why not?

When involved in part of a group process, do you want things to always go your way or do you allow others to contribute?

Why is it important to be able to make decisions with other people?

What things do you need to do when making decisions with others?

Ducks Fly

Objective

To keep from becoming “it” by listening carefully.

Group Size

3 or more

Materials

None

Description

Select someone to be “it” and ask s/he to stand in front of the group. This person calls out “Ducks fly!, Seagulls Fly!, Ladybugs fly!, Cows fly!”. Whenever “it” says an animal that flies everyone flaps their wing in a flying motion. As soon as s/he says an animal that doesn’t fly, then everyone should stop “flying” and put their arms down on their sides. Whoever keeps “flying” when a non-flying animal is mentioned is eliminated. The game should keep going until one person remains who then gets to be “it” for the next round.

The person who is “it” can say any animals they think of, not just the ones listed, or use animals that jump, crawl, roar, etc.

Discussion Questions

What did you have to do in this game if you wanted to become “it”?

What can you do to help yourself listen to others and follow directions?

Talk To Me

Objective

For individuals to be able to listen to directions and to show the ability to follow the directions that are given to them.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

Small slips of paper
Pens or pencils

Description

Divide the group into two teams. Use the directions listed (or make up your own) and write each one down on a separate slip of paper. Fold each piece of paper in half so that the directions can not be seen and ask one member from the first team to come forward. This person unfolds the directions and reads it to the second team one time (and no more). The second team must wait for the directions to be read entirely and then the group they must attempt to follow the exact directions given to them.

If everyone is successful in completing the directions, then the team receives one point, but if any of the team members does not follow the direction completely, there is no point earned for that round.

Allow the teams to go back and forth in this manner until all of the directions are used up. At this point each team must get together and create a new list of directions to be given to the opposite team. Each direction may have no more than three steps (maybe more for higher functioning groups) and must be something that the other group can do safely.

Directions

- Everyone has to give everyone else on your team a “high five” and the whole team must sit in a circle.
- Three people on your team must sing the alphabet and then the whole team must get in a huddle and yell “break”.
- Your team must form a line from shortest to tallest, then everyone must stay in the line and as a group jump up and down four times.
- One person on your team must do five sit ups while the rest of the group cheers for this person while standing in a circle around him/her.

Discussion Questions

How can you show others that you are listening to them when they are talking or giving directions?
Did your team help you follow directions or hinder you? Why?

Secret Word

Objective

To encourage interactive conversation among group members and to help people openly discuss how they feel when talking about “secrets” from their own lives.

Group Size

3 or more

Materials

None

Description

Select one person from the group to leave the room or to go away from the group so s/he can not hear the discussion. The remaining group members select a “secret” word (this can be any word). When the individual who left the room returns, everyone attempts to get this person to say the “secret” word.

The group may ask the person questions, engage the person in conversation or whatever else they can think of in order to get this person to say the “secret” word. The individual who doesn't know the word tries to talk as much as possible without saying the word.

Once the word has been said, select a new person to leave the room for another round of the game.

Discussion Questions

Do you wish you had more people in your life to talk to?

Do people ever try to get you to say “secret” words? Who? Why?

To whom would you tell your secrets and why?

Why don't you share your secrets with others?

Emotions



Emotions help us to define who we are. Yet at times it becomes very difficult to express and interpret certain emotions. These activities allow participants the opportunity to start developing these vital skills.

Action Emotions

Objective

To show the ability to express a wide variety of emotions and to be able to recognize emotions that are expressed by others.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

Paper

Pens or pencils

Description

Break the group up into smaller teams of two to six members each. Provide each team with a list of emotions (with at least enough for one per person) and a piece of paper with a place listing on it. For example on team may get: happy, frustrated, jealous, scared and the place is a bowling alley.

All at least five minutes for each team to meet, look at their list, and create a skit. Each skit must contain all of the emotions from the group's list, the emotions must be acted out, and the skit must take place at the give location. Also, each person must have a a role in the skit that is created by his/her own groups back together and allow time for each group to present their skit. At the end of each skit, those who were watching guess what emotions were being acted out.

Discussion Questions

Is it easy for you to show your emotions? Why or why not?

Does anyone wish that others around them would show their emotions more or less? Why?

Why is it important to let others know how you are feeling?

Are there times when it is better for you to hide how you feel? Why?

What can you do to let others know how you feel (if they can't tell by your body language)?

Emotion Bench

Objective

To practice expressing feeling and emotions to others.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

2 chairs

Description

In front of the room set up two chairs next to each other and facing all of the participants who should be sitting on the floor, or in chairs, facing the front. Select two individuals to sit in the chairs and inform them that they are sitting on the “emotion bench”.

Whisper a different emotion into the ear of each person who is sitting on the “bench”. Each person must act out the emotion they have been given while those in the audience try to guess what emotion each person is acting out. The two on the bench are to engage in impromptu dialog, and the only rule is that someone must say “hi” first. Once dialog starts, the two people on the bench may be at a bust stop, at the movies, or wherever their imagination takes them. Allow the two to dialog for a while before asking the audience to guess the emotions. Those who guess correctly become the next participants to sit on the “emotion bench” (or may select someone else to take a turn if they are uncomfortable with acting).

Ideas For the Emotion Bench

Upset – Excited

Agitated – Assertive

Frustrated – Self-assured

In love – Angry

Nervous – Sad

Hyper – Insecure

Discussion Questions

Was it easy to guess the emotions or difficult? Why?

Do you think people can easily read what emotions you are feeling?

Do you want others to know what you are feeling? Why or why not?

Can allowing others to know what you are feeling help you? Why?

How can you find out what feelings and emotions others are experiencing?

Emotions in Motion

Objective

To show appropriate body language to coincide with a stated emotion and for people to practice showing emotions and sharing feelings.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

None

Description

Gather the group into a circle with everyone standing. Ask an individual to state an emotion and to act out this emotion through his/her body language (no words allowed). Then the next person in the circle acts out the same emotion in his or her own way. This continues around the circle until everyone has had an opportunity to show the emotion. Continue in this manner with different people choosing emotions that are to be passed around the circle.

Discussion Questions

Is it ever hard for you to show your true emotions? Why?

Is it always easy to tell what someone is feeling by reading their body language?

What is the best way to find out who an individual is feeling?

Why is it important for our words to match our actions?

Guess the Feeling

Objective

To discover the importance of stating your feelings because if you expect others to guess how you are feeling but your feelings are not obvious then nobody will know what your needs are. To understand how we communicate with our body language and actions.

Group Size

6 to 25 is ideal

Materials

Paper
Pens or pencils

Description

Give each person in the group a small piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Select one person in the group, and ask this person to write down how s/he is feeling at the time (this must be done as a feeling word). Ask the rest of the group to try and guess how the selected person is feeling and to write down a feeling word on their paper as their guess and sign their name on it.

The leader then collects all of the paper and mixes them up before reading them to the group. Read them once through so everyone can hear what all of the options are before they attempt to guess the one that was actually written by the selected person. As you read the papers through a second time, ask each person to vote for the one that s/he thinks was written by the selected individual. Give a point to anyone who guesses correctly. Give a bonus point to any one who wrote down the correct feeling on his/her paper. Do this for each person in the group if possible.

Discussion Questions

Who in the group was the easiest to guess about how they were feeling? Who was the most difficult?

Do you think others always know how you are feeling?

Do you hide your feelings from others? Why or why not?

Is there ever a time when it may be OK to hide your feelings? If so, when? If not, why?

When can showing and stating your feelings help you in your life?

Feelings Shot

Objective

For people to show the ability to appropriately express their feelings and to be able to recognize what emotion is being expressed by others in the group.

Group Size

3 or more

Materials

Basketball
Basketball hoop

Description

Select one member of the group at a time to secretly select a feeling or emotion (they may need a list to select from). Once the individual has chosen an emotion give him/her the basketball and instruct him/her to act out this feeling when dribbling the ball and shooting at the basket. Allow the rest of the group to guess which emotion is being acted out and the one who guesses correctly gets to go next.

Discussion Questions

Was it easy or hard for you to act out the different emotions? Why
Do you show your emotions easily or hide them by acting out other emotions? Why?
When is it important to not hide your emotions? Why?

Identity



Adolescence is a vital time where teenagers come to identify who they are. By the time a person has reached the age of 18 most of their identity has been set in stone. These games are designed to help teens think deeply about what really defines them, and have fun while doing so.

Who Are You at the Zoo?

Objective

To explore how people are feeling as individuals and as a part of a group.

Group Size

4 to 10 (or a larger group can be broken into smaller groups)

Materials

1 large sheet of white paper for each group colored markers, crayons, or colored pencils

Colored markers, crayons, or colored pencils

Optional: colored paper, glue, yarn, glitter, ribbons, scissors, tape

Description

Divide a large group into smaller groups of ten or less people each and give each group a large sheet of white paper, colored markers and/or anything else you have gathered together.

Each groups need to work together to create a zoo on the large piece of paper using the materials they have been given. The zoo should be given a name that reflects the characteristics or the group. Each person needs to select an animal or person (zoo keeper, popcorn vendor, animal cage-cleaner, etc.) who is found at the zoo that represents how they see themselves.

You may be very specific with your directions about what the animal or character represents based upon your group. For a church group you may select animals that represent your relationship with God; for a corporate group you may look for things that represent how you feel when you work. Each person should draw or place his/her own animal on the paper drawing of the zoo.

Ask each person to explain their choice of animal or person and to write this down or verbally share it with the rest of the group. If you have more than one small group, allow time for each group to share their creations with the rest of the group.

Discussion Questions

What did you learn about yourself while doing this activity?

What did you learn about the group or about other members of the group today?

Is there a different animal or person that you would rather be? Why or why not?

Group Symbols

Objective

For group members to talk about the strengths and weaknesses they possess and to recognize the strengths and weaknesses of the whole group.

Group Size

2 or more

Materials

None

Description

Each person in the group must find something to symbolize how they see the group. They are to then find something else that represents their individual role in the group. The objects can be some that can be held in their hand, or they can be something nearby that can be pointed to (clouds, trees, lights, etc.) or something they think of. Allow enough time for everyone to find both symbols. A great way to do this is to go for a walk as a group.

Once everyone has collected two things, bring the group together and ask each person to share what they have collected with the group and to explain its meaning.

Discussion Questions

Discuss each symbol after it has been shared by allowing people to ask questions about what each person shares.

Same Letter, Different Name

Objective

For group members to recognize the positive traits that exist in each other.

Group Size

4 to 25

Materials

Paper

Pens or pencils

A timer or stopwatch

An envelope filled with the letters of the alphabet (written on small slips of paper)

Description

Divide the group into two even teams and ask each team to write down on one piece of paper all the names of the people on their team and on the other team. Once all the names are written down, select a letter of the alphabet for the envelope. Inform the teams what letter was chosen and give them two minutes to work as a team to think of a positive word or words beginning with the chosen letter that describes each person. For example, if the letter H was chosen and the names John, Amy, and Craig were on the list my team may come up with:

John: Hard Worker

Amy: Honest, Humble

Craig: Handsome

Once the time limit is up bring the two teams together and ask them to each read their list to the group. For added fun and competition you may give each team a point for every word on their list that isn't on the other team's list.

Play as many rounds of this game as you have time for. You may want to make specific rules for the activity (i.e. You must think of at least one word for each person on the list). The discussion may be held at the end or hold a short discussion after each round.

Discussion Questions

How do you feel about the words that were chosen to describe you?

Were you surprised by any of the words used to describe you? If so, why?

Is it easy or hard to think of positive words to describe others? Yourself? Why?

Variations

With a large group don't include you own team on your list, instead just think of words to describe the members of the other team, or break your group into more than one team. Also you can select 2 or 3 letters that can be used.

Snowball Fight

Objective

For group members to share their thought and feelings with each other anonymously.

Group Size

8 or more is ideal

Materials

Paper
Pens and pencils

Description

Give everyone a piece of paper and pen or pencil. Ask them to write down something specific on this piece of paper that you want them to share but that may be difficult to share, such as:

How you feel when with this group?

How are you feeling right now?

What do you do when you become really angry?

What makes you feel really sad?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of this group?

Make sure nobody puts his/her name on the papers because everything should be anonymous. Once everyone has finished writing, tell the group that they will be having a snowball fight and to crumple up their papers and, on the count of three, start throwing. After the snowball fight has gone on for a while, yell “stop,” and ask each person to pick up one “snowball.” Gather the group together and ask group members to take turns reading the paper that they ended up with to the group. You may discuss each response that is read or wait until all the papers have been read before having a discussion.

Discussion Questions

What did you hear that surprised you?

How do you feel about what people shared today?

How did you feel about the way you shared your feelings?

Does anyone want to comment on or add to what was said?

Group Sculptures

Objective

To learn how different members of the group view the dynamics of the group.

Group Size

6 or more

Materials

None

Description

Group members take turns “sculpting” the other group members into a life-size sculpture that represents how they see the group dynamics and personalities.

When it is your turn, you may position each person in a pose or place in relation to the others in the group. Once everyone is in place, the person who put them there explains why they see the group that way. For example someone might group three friends together and put others spread out across the room and explain that the three people are so close that others feel left out. The next person may see the group dynamics totally differently and have those three people mixed in with others in the group or spread apart.

For small groups give everyone a chance to make a sculpture, but for larger groups you may have a handful of people create sculptures and then ask for input after each one.

Discussion Questions

Why do you see the group differently?

Do you feel this was a healthy activity for the group to do? Why or why not?

How do group dynamics affect the team?

What if everyone on the team was exactly the same?

What are the positive dynamics of this group?

Award Ceremony

Objective

For group members to affirm one another

Group Size

2 or more

Materials

A large stack of old newspapers

Scissors

Tape

Description

Put stacks of old newspapers in the middle of the floor and have group members sit in a circle around them. Tell the group that each person must create a trophy for the person on his/her right. The trophy should be made out of newspaper and reflect the positive qualities of the person it is for. People may fold, crumple, or tear the newspaper to create a trophy.

Once everyone has created a trophy for the person on his/her right, hold an award ceremony. One person at a time stands up and explains what the trophy is, who it is for, and why this person deserves this award.

Discussion Questions

How does it feel to be recognized for the good things that you do?

How does it feel to give compliments to others? Why don't we do this more?

How would it benefit our group to compliment each other more?

Choices

Objective

For group members to talk about their perceptions of the group and about themselves.

Group Size

2 or more

Materials

None

Description

Give group members a choice between two different things and ask them to select the thing that they feel best represents the group (or themselves). For example, say “When this group is making a decision, is it like (A) a river or (B) a lake?” Designate a place to stand on one room for people who select A and on the other side of the room for people who select B. Once people make their choices, ask some members of the group to explain why they chose what they did. You may do several rounds of this with different choices to select from.

Group Choice Ideas

When this group must complete a task is it more like (A) a sloth or (B) a cheetah?

Would you describe your leadership skills as (A) a hammer (B) a nail?

Would you describe your following skills as (A) thunder (B) rain?

Would you say this group is (A) balanced (B) off balance?

Create more choices to fit your group's needs, issues, and experiences. Using a metaphor is a good way to get people talking about group dynamics in an indirect and non-threatening manner.

Group Labels

Objective

To talk about how we treat one another in the group.

Group Size

6 or more

Materials

Sticky back labels
Black marking pens

Description

To prepare for this activity, fill our sticky-back labels with titles (see list of suggestions below). Choose a game for the teamwork chapter, or you may choose another game, such as volleyball, basketball or even a board game. Before playing, put a label on each person's forehead or back. They must wear the label throughout the game, and people must treat them as they would treat someone with that label in real life. Don't let the players know what label they are wearing and others should not tell them what it is. After the game, give each person a chance to guess what label they were wearing and have them tell how it felt to be treated the way they were.

Different groups need to deal with different types of labels; you should fill out your labels based on your group's needs.

Teenage groups may deal with cliques: jocks, nerd, popular, druggie, cowboy, brain, etc.

This also works for different culture groups or society stigmas: Latino, Asian, African Americans, Caucasian, Jew, Christian, Muslim, woman, man, famous person, homeless person, person with AIDS, etc.

Discussion Questions

How do you feel after this activity?

What surprised you the most?

Do you think that in our culture people treat others who are different from them differently? Why or why not?

How do these differences affect our group?

Glory Story

Objective

For people to compliment each other and to share what they see as the positive traits of the group.

Group Size

2 or more

Materials

Paper

Pens or pencils

Description

Divide the group into small groups of one to six participants each. Separate the groups so that they cannot hear each other. Supply each group with a couple sheets of paper and a pen or pencil. Assign each group to one of the other groups and ask them to write down all of the names of the people from that other group on their paper.

Ask each group to write a story that includes all of the members of the other group as the characters, with each character in the story using his/her positive traits, strong points, and assets as a part of the story line. Once all the stories are written, ask each group to read their story to the entire group.

Discussion Questions

Were you surprised by any of the attributes that the other group gave to your character?

Can you think of any more positive traits that you would add to your character or to anyone else's character in the group?

How can you use your strong points to improve the group or to improve yourself?

Our House

Objective

For group members to share how they see others in the group and what role they think each person has on the team.

Group Size

6 to 20 is ideal

Materials

Stack of 3x5 index cards

Tape

Scissors

Pens or pencils

Optional: Colored markers, glue

Description

This can be done individually or in small groups.

Give each group a stack of 3x5 cards, tape, scissors, and a pen or pencil. Each group must create a house out of the cards by taping, folding, cutting, or anything else they can think of to do the cards in order to form a small model of a house.

Each person in the large group should somehow be represented in the construction of the house by having his/her name written on a part of the house that reflects his/her role in the group. Some one who is a good leader may be the foundation of the house. Someone who welcomes newcomers may be the door to the house. Besides just parts of the house, people may be items in the house, such as a comfortable chair, lamp, phone, etc.

Encourage groups or individuals to be creative and allow time for sharing once everyone has completed building their house.

Be a Light

Objective

To talk about the group in a fun, descriptive, yet non-threatening manner.

Group Size

2 or more

Materials

None

Description

Gather the group together and ask people to take turns answering the question: “If the light in our office(schoolroom, family room, youth group room, etc.) could talk, what would it say about our group?” Do several rounds of this and replace the word “light” with different objects that the group comes in contact with frequently.

Discussion Questions

Allow group members to ask questions about the answers given and hold a group discussion about any unusual or interesting answers.

Will Away

Objective

To explore the characteristics that each person in the group feels that they have that are positive. For people to think about the people in their lives and the different characteristics that they notice in them.

Group Size

1 or more

Materials

Paper
Pens or pencils

Description

Start the activity by explaining what a will is and how it is used to ensure that a person's valuables are passed on to the important people in his/her life after death. Ask the group to think about the qualities and attributes that they have, that they feel are valuable, and to think about who it is that they would want to pass these traits on to if it were possible. Pass out paper and pens or pencils and instruct the group that they are to draft a will stating their traits that they will be giving away and to whom each one will go.

For example... "I give my football skills to Sung hoon my football skill so he can be a better player. I give my mom my English skills so she can sound less like a FOB. I want to give my sister my patience, although she has a little she could use some more. Finally I give Yongil my good looks cuz good lord does he need it."

Allow enough time for people to think about this and write down, then ask each person to share their will with the group. For added fun you may make an official looking seal or get a sticker to put on it when it has been completed.

Discussion Questions

Was it easy or hard for you to think of attributes that you have that would be of value to others? Why?

What does your will say about you and the people that you know?

What trait does someone else have that you know you would like to have passed on to you? Why?

Spirit World



The Spiritual World is a very real part of our every day existence. These games are designed to help the participants to better see and understand how the Spirit World affects our everyday lives.

Spiritual Influence

Objective

To show the importance of spiritual influences

Group Size

3 or more

Materials

Candy
A blindfold

Description

Select three people out of the group. Send out one of three selected so they can not hear. Then select one of the two remaining people and designate them an “evil spirit” and the other a “good spirit”. Then tell the person to come back and blindfold him/her. Then place a piece of candy somewhere in the room. The job of the “evil spirit” is to guide the person away from the candy. The job of the “good spirit” is to guide the person to the candy. They are not allowed to touch the blindfolded person. They can only use vocal commands. The person who is blindfolded doesn't know which person is the “good spirit” and which one is the “evil spirit.”

Once the person has retrieved the candy select three new people to play.

Discussion Questions

How did it feel having two people giving you completely different directions?

How does this relate to spirit world's influence on us?

How can you listen to the good spirit?

Prayer



Prayer is a vital part of everyday life. These games are designed to allow participants to see how prayer works in a fun and engaging way.

Prayer Toss

Objective

To show how prayer gets easier as you keep trying.

Group Size

4 or more

Materials

A big bag of M&M's
Small Dixie Cups

Description

Break the group into pairs. Instruct the pairs to line up across from each other about 15 feet apart. Then give one of the members of the pair a Dixie cup and the other member a handful of M&M's. Instruct the pairs to toss an M&M into the cup. Every time the M&M lands and stay in the cup the thrower can take a step forward. This happens until the thrower can reach out and put an M&M into the cup. Then the pair switches roles.

Discussion Questions

Do you feel that prayer is important? Why?

How does this relate to prayer?

What can you do in order to deepen your prayers?

Anger Management



Anger Management is key in learning to deal with, and control, your emotions. These activities are designed to help the participants see how anger can affect relationships, and teach them techniques to properly cope with their emotions.

Out of Control

Objective

For people to realize that they cannot control everything in their lives and that they must learn how to heal with things that seem out of control, rather than giving in to anger and frustration.

Group Size

4 to 15 or split the large group into smaller groups

Materials

Several small prizes (any items the group members would like) wrapped in wrapping paper
One pair of dice

Description

Prior to the activity gather together some small prize items and wrap them. There should be at least one prize for each participant plus a few extra. Place all of the prizes on a table and gather the group around.

Instruct the group that the game will be played in two different parts (do not explain the second part until the first part is completed). In the first round of the game one person starts with a pair of dice and rolls them once. If s/he rolls a double, s/he may select a prize from the pile, unwrap it and set it on the table in front of him/her for the rest of the group to see. If a double is not rolled, the dice are passed to the next person who attempts to roll a double in order to get a prize. Everyone in the group continues to roll and pass the dice (collecting prizes for a double) until all of the prizes in the middle are gone. In the end one person may end up with two or three prizes while others may end up with nothing.

Introduce the second part of the game at this point. This half is timed (for a smaller group use about five minutes and about ten minutes for a larger group.) The game is played in the same manner as it was for the first part only now instead of selecting a prize from the middle when a double is rolled, a prize may be selected from anyone else in the group. This continues until the allotted time is up. Again some people may end up with more prizes in front of them than others.

This is a fun, high-energy activity; be prepared for the group to get a bit loud with excitement.

Discussion Questions

What do you do when “the luck of the roll” does not always go your way?

Do you feel like you have control over your life?

How do you handle things when life feels out of control or unfair?

Does anyone feel angry about this game? If so, how have you handled this feeling?

What can you do when life feels unfair and things do not go your way?

Variations

Candy bars may be used in place of prizes and do not need to be wrapped in wrapping paper but should be left in the candy bar wrapping.

Mad Music

Objective

To explore feelings that different people have when angry and explore how music can affect these feelings.

Group Size

1 or more

Materials

A stereo, tape player, or CD player

A selection of Rock, Rap, or any kind of music that has a negative message.

Paper

Pens or pencils

Description

Prior to this activity gather together a selection of songs that have a negative message or story in them.

Gather the group together and simply explain to the group that they will be listening to different songs and that you want them to draw a picture of what the song is about, of what the person singing the song must look like or how they are feeling while listening to the music. Do not inform the group that the songs are all about negative topics. After listening to all the music, allow for each person to share the feelings that they had written down on their paper before asking the group the discussion questions.

Discussion Questions

If any of this music made you feel good, why do you think this?

Can your environment affect how you feel?

How can your simple choice of music affect your life?

Do you think you need to change the type of music that you listen to? Why or why not? What would you like to change it to?

Good, Bad, and Ugly

Objective

To determine positive ways of handling anger as opposed to negative ways

Group Size

1 or more

Materials

3x5 cards or small pieces of paper

Pens or pencils

3 small boxes

Description

Give each person in the group a pile of 3x5 cards or small pieces of paper and a pen or pencil. Then write on the three boxes good, bad, and ugly.

Then read a scenario to the group that you know the group will get angry about and ask them to write a 3 solutions to the problem. One of them good, one bad, and one ugly. Do this for several scenarios and then read all the cards in the ugly box. After each solution has been read ask if anyone has solved a problem that way and how it turned out.

Discussion Questions

What did you learn as a result of this activity?

Do you tend to express your anger in a good, bad or ugly manner most often? Why?

Which way works best for you? Is this a good way?

What would be the best way for you to handle your anger?

Part 3
The Rest
of the Story



The Rest of the Story

There is more to this story than just having a Sunday school and a Youth Group, as we mentioned in the first part of this manual, it is about creating a total education experience. Something that goes beyond a fifty minute class and transforms our youth into true sons and daughters of God. People of unquestionable integrity and love.

To create such a system requires the building of a community, a group of friends that can come to one another for support. It also requires a mechanism for continuation, a way to raise new and more talented leaders. As great as we are, our goal needs to be to make our students better. Finally it must incorporate things outside of the class room, events such as parties and service projects.

In this spirit we will attempt to cover the Rest of the Story.

Youth Participation

The Importance of Youth Leaders:

One of a leader's main responsibilities is to raise up more leaders, to pass on the torch so to speak. Face it, we aren't as young as we used to be, and in all honesty we are not qualified to be doing our jobs. We aren't perfect, and we need be.

As a parent our heart is to raise our children to surpass us in all ways, to be everything we were unable to become. As a teacher our heart remains the same; for our youth to grow up and become the things we only dreamed of. This is the corner stone of our mission.

We must approach our jobs as custodians, much like a regent awaiting the return of his or her king. As the youth grow and mature we must step back, giving them the guidance they need to do our jobs. I don't mean jump ship, but slowly pass on the responsibility to the young people with the ability and desire. As we back off they should step forward, and as we take on an advisory role, they should become the active leaders.

This cycle should not stop with us but should be continuous. As the youth grow older and raise new leaders they should take a step back and allow others to take on their job.

This step back does not mean a step away from responsibility, in fact it should be a launch pad into new and greater things. As we move away from a position as Sunday school teachers we can start taking the responsibilities of a Regional Director, or a SFP Coordinator, or if our passion is in youth education we can continue to teach. We can lead a college group, or stay as

an adviser and a coordinator helping the youth on their way to perfection.

Regardless, it is our mission to raise new and better leaders.

Benefits of Youth Leadership

The major benefit of a Youth Leader is that they have a controlled environment in which to learn. They have peers who can support them, elders that can guide them, and a limited amount of responsibility. They do not need to fear failure because it is a learning experience.

By giving the older youth more and more responsibility you give them the tools they need to achieve in life. They learn accountability, planning, public speaking, diplomacy, organizational skills, and team leading. These abilities will be invaluable in life, and give a strong foundation of future leadership positions.

Above all it gives them a chance to learn from other leaders.

Leadership Council

The concept behind the Leadership council is very simple, teach leadership by giving the youth an opportunity to lead. Not the jump in the lake and see if they can swim kind, but the slow and progressive kind that will hopefully give them the skills they need to be successful.

Before creating a Leadership Council make sure you are ready to pass on some of your responsibility as a teacher. The Leadership Council is exactly what it sounds like, a board of older students chaired by a teacher that leads the Sunday school. By the end of your first year the students should be helping in the designing of curriculums, teaching classes, and deeply discussing the wellbeing of the other students.

Having said that, there are three stages in the creation of a fully functioning Leadership Council: Formation, Growth, and Completion.

Formation Stage:

Creating the council is the hard part, once it is in place keeping it running is simple.

I would suggest testing the waters before taking the plunge; ask a couple of the older students if they would be interested in the idea. If the feedback is positive you can just go ahead and create it, putting the offer on the table for all juniors and seniors. If the feedback is more neutral you can warm them up to it by slowly giving them more and more responsibility. If they are negative to the idea, bench it for a few months then bring it up again.

Once a council is in place, and has been running for a while, the students will join without thinking about it. It simply becomes what is expected of the older students, and this is exactly what you want. Leadership should be something that is expected of our youth, not something that emerges in a select few.

Once you have students who want to be in the council you can organize your first few meetings. I have always found it easier to have the meetings once a month, but sometimes we need to meet almost weekly.

The first meeting should be light, basically an orientation. Explain to them the idea behind the leadership council: the fact that we think they are old and mature enough to help teach their younger brothers and sisters. Also make sure they understand that this is not being forced on them, they can do as little or as much as they want. This of course is a lie, but they don't need to know that. We as teachers will not push them to do things they do not want to do, but the beauty of peer pressure is that they will be pushed regardless.

Growth Stage:

Once you feel that the group is comfortable with the idea you can do one of two things:

If the group is really inspired by the idea then you can immediately delve in. You can start talking about the curriculum you have planned, getting feedback on your ideas; work together to design activities, games, and lesson plans. They should not be teaching the classes yet, but they should be working with you on it so they know how it is done.

Once you have talked about these things for a while make groups. Encourage the leadership to be group leaders and group assistants, and if you feel comfortable enough you can have them talk to one another and create their groups. Your role in this is more or less that of a mediator. Set the pace, keep things on topic, and watch them grow.

The second thing you can do is when the group is a little more neutral. Explain to them the curriculum you have planned and ask them to be group leaders. By taking the first step it then becomes easier to take other steps, this is a method perfected by the United Way.

When the United Way goes fund raising it doesn't do it by first asking for donations. It first goes around and asks people to wear their pin, and maybe put their bumper sticker on their car or door. This first step is absolutely free and non-offensive; it is something almost anyone will do. Once this is done all they have to do is sit back and watch the beauty of a concept called incremental investment. When their fundraisers come around a second time and ask for money they usually get it. They have been so successful that they have been investigated under anti-monopoly laws.

Much like a frog and boiling water, a person asked to give a large investment will almost immediately jump away from the idea. However if you slowly turn up the temperature of the water the frog does not jump away and you can cook it. Likewise if you slowly give someone more and more responsibility they are much less likely to run away from it.

Being group leaders is something most youth in our church will gladly do; in fact it is something that many have grown to expect. Not only should they lead the groups, but they should help organize them. In many cases they know the younger participants better than you do.

With the more neutral group you have to slowly give them responsibility. Start by asking them to report on their groups, then ask them what kind of activities their groups want to do, and finally have them help in the planning of those activities.

Later on we will go into more depth on the groups and the role of the group leaders. Eventually both groups, the dedicated and the neutral, will get to the point where they have helped in the planning of activities. From here it is a natural progression to have them help run some of these activities. Once again this is not a sink-or-swim proposition, but rather a progressive learning experience.

Ask for volunteers. Once you have a volunteer work with him to design and run an activity. Let him or her be your co-host. After one student has succeeded, it becomes easier for the other students. Peer pressure starts to kick in and after a few weeks of this they get comfortable with the idea.

Within a couple of months they will be able to plan and run events all on their own.

Completion Stage:

The completion stage is more a maintenance stage than anything else. As the Leadership Council becomes more and more experienced it requires less and less hands-on-guidance and more delegation. Passing on responsibility is one of the hardest things for a leader to do, but something that every good leader must do. Your role should become that of a supervisor, the man or woman behind the curtain.

Organizing and chairing meetings, keeping the group focused, and helping with the planning of events.

As the class graduates the new juniors should just be able to plug-in. Have the new seniors create the groups with the new juniors help, and have the juniors be the seniors assistants. They should learn the ropes from their elders, just like in a family.

Small Group Leadership

One of the huge advantages to breakout groups is that it allows for the youth leaders to be leaders. It gives them a controlled environment where they are accountable to a group of their peers, in other words a perfect training ground.

As leaders it is their responsibility to be role models and mentors. If they can accomplish these three things they are well on the road to becoming inspiring leaders.

Role Model:

While working on a project for a college group I happened across a quote calendar, the kind that has a different quote for each day of the year. I was so stunned by the quote on it that I immediately asked if I could take it, and I have kept it to this day. The quote is, “Since people learn the most by imitation, they need models rather than critics.”

These words capture the true purpose of role models, and by extension leaders. People look up to and imitate the people they respect; they even go as far as to wear their shoes (think basketball.)

As group leaders it gives the youth a chance to learn this, and to start building the habits that will guide them for the rest of their lives. As they are asked to lead discussions about certain topics it forces them to reaffirm their own faith and live the life they preach.

Mentors:

As older siblings it is their responsibility to nurture and raise their young brothers and sisters. One of the goals of our movement is to create a global family, and this is the way to do it. As group leaders it is their responsibility to get involved in the lives of their group members, to check up on their goals and to help them when they are in need of help.

These groups are to become support centers, places where people can come for strength and companionship. Ideally they should have their own mini-mailing list and each others Instant Messenger accounts. If done correctly these groups can be the basis of long and fruitful friendships.

Community Service

Importance of community service

Community service is a vital part in the education of our youth. Through community service participant learn to actualize what they have learned. As the Principle teaches, there is no greater feeling than living for the sake of others.

Tips on choosing a good community service project

Although clean up projects are a good service project to begin with, it is not recommended to do them on a continues basis. Many people choose this type of project because it is easy to organize but it has a tendency to cause some resentment if done over and over again. It is recommended to mix up each project and strongly suggested to find a project that involves creating or making something. Work with you service for peace director to find affective and attractive projects.

Also it is very important to follow up each project with some form of reflection. This allows the participants to internalize what they have learned and where else they can apply their new found knowledge.

Other Events

There are also other events that don't really fit in any category, but are excellent opportunities for bonding and having fun.

Super Bowl Party

An excellent time to gather people together, have fun, and watch the big game.

Sleepovers / Brother and Sister Nights

These events allow Second Generation to share more intimately with their fellow brothers and sisters. It is strongly suggested to split brothers and sisters up with a few older Second Gen to facilitate each talk. The main point of these types of talks is to let everyone know that they are not alone in their journey. It also gives older second generation a chance to share some of the decisions they made in their lifetime and hopefully the younger second generation can learn from those decisions.

Barbecues

Sometimes is just fun to have some hot dogs and hamburgers and just have fun with outdoor activities. We suggest group games like Volleyball or Kickball. Games like Football are nice but tend to exclude the sisters.

Birthday parties

Birthday parties are a great way of giving love to your youth group. If you have a large group, it is probably best to have monthly birthday parties, celebrating everyone's birthday in that month.

Fun Nights

During UPN sometimes its a good idea to just have fun. Go see a movie, go bowling, or play laser tag and share laughs with one another.