

Group Ice Breakers

Tips for using ice breakers: 1) It's not a requirement to do an ice breaker at each meeting but ice breakers are a good way to have fun and get to know the people in your group. 2) In the first couple meetings do ice breakers that are a bit lighter and more fun. As you've met for a few weeks and you know each other more you can start doing some that dig a little deeper into their lives. 3) When possible use ice breakers that connect in some way to the theme of the lesson. 4) If you're using ice breakers be sure that they aren't ice makers (i.e. something that will actually make people not want to open up).

1. Best/Worst

Have each person share their best and worst moments from the previous week. Try to steer the group away from school items. This icebreaker is an easy one to use at first and gives you good feedback concerning their life at the moment. Some veteran groups do this several times a year ... the answers become more honest as you go.

2. Most Unique

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

3. Two Truths and a Lie

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

4. Personal Scavenger Hunt

Take five minutes and find the following items in your wallet or purse: Something that ..

- you've had a long time.
- you're proud of
- reveals a lot about you.
- reminds you of a fun time
- Concerns or worries you.

Have each person share the first item. Go around again on the second item, and again until you have gone through each one. Don't feel like you have to use the whole list because it will take too long.

5. Get To Know You Questions

- What do you do for fun?
- What would be your ideal vacation?
- What is the most memorable activity you did with your family as a child?
- What quality do you appreciate most in a friend?
- What is one characteristic you received from your parents that you want to keep, and one you wish you could change?
- What is a good thing happening in your life right now? What makes it good?
- If you knew you couldn't fail and money was no object, what would you like to do in the next five years?

- What would you like said at your funeral?
- When, if ever, did God become more than a word to you, and how did it happen?

These questions can be spread out over time where everyone answers one and then use another question another week or you can put them in a hat and people answer the one they pick.

6. **Did You Know?**

(a simplified version of this ice breaker is – Have each person write down on a sheet of paper something unique about themselves. Indicate that it doesn't have to be something embarrassing. Then I'll take all of them, read one at a time, and have them guess who it is. They can then explain more about it if they want).

This is great for a group that doesn't know each other well. Find interesting facts about individual group members before the group meets. Try to discover information that sets each person apart from the others, such as "I have a tugboat named after me" or, "I once wrecked the same quarter panel of my car four times" or, "I have a twin."

Then make a sheet with one fact from each person and a blank beside this fact. Give everyone in the group a sheet and five to seven minutes to find who goes in each blank. When they find the right person they must also learn one other fact about that person. At the end, introduce everyone in the group in the order on the list.

7. **Chart Your Life**

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

8. **M&Ms Game**

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

9. **Most Deprived**

Buy a large bag of M&M's and give each person the same amount (try ten M&M's). Start by stating something you've never done that you think everyone else has done (thus the name "Most Deprived").

For example, you might say, "I've never had a birthday party," or some other true statement about yourself that you think everyone else has surely done. Then, everyone who has had a birthday party pays you an M&M. You pay everyone who has not had a party. Keep playing until everyone has a turn or until someone runs out of M&M's. Obviously the idea is to come up with the most M&M's and be most deprived. This activity takes longer...

10. **You Write the Questions**

Give each person a 3X5 card. You pick the topic and let them write the questions. For example, you choose "friendship" as a topic, and they each write out a question for anyone in the group to answer about friendship. For

example, "What do you value most in a friend?" or, "Who was your best friend growing up and why?"

Then pile all the cards face down in the middle of the group and let people draw.

Topic ideas: jobs, life goals, funny stories, hobbies, family, fears, dating issues, significant relationships, relationship with God, etc.

11. **My Life in Pictures**

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

12. **House on Fire**

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

13. **Make Believe**

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

14. **Deserted Island**

Ask, "You've been exiled to a deserted island for a year. You are told you may take three things you want, apart from the essentials. What would you take and why?" Write the three things down and turn them into the leader. The leader will read them and you'll try to guess who wrote them.

15. **Heroes**

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

16. **Pairs – Do ice-breakers in pairs. For example, do the game 2 truths and a lie as a team rather than as individuals.**

17. **Quaker Questions** This can work for any size group but if you have a large group, break it into smaller groups. The amount of time available will determine the size of groups more than anything else

1. Where did you live between the ages of 5 and 12 and what were the winters like. (*Some people may have lived in several places, so tell them to choose one place.*)

2. How was your home heated?

3. Two parts:

- A. What was the center of warmth in your life when you were a child. (*This can be a place in the house, a time of year and perhaps a person.*)
- B. Who was the center of warmth in your life? (*This is a person.*)

4. When did God become a "warm" being to you and how did this happen?

18. Answer these questions. Find a person, who has at least 3 of the answers in common with you:

- What is one thing people always say about you?
- How many pets do you have?
- How many kids do you have?
- Name your most desired place to travel.
- How long have you lived in Bakersfield?
- Do you play any instruments? If yes, what?
- What is your main job during the week?
- What is your favorite sport to play?
- If you won a million dollars what would be the first thing you'd spend it on?

Your new small group has been meeting together since mid-September, but how well have you learned what makes your fellow small-group members tick?

Begin your next several meetings by asking your group members at least one of the following questions, and enjoy the relational growth that results.

- What is your favorite Sunday afternoon pastime and why?
- What hobby did you enjoy most in your teen years?
- What is the one thing that gives you the most satisfaction?
- What is one thing you are good at doing?
- Who is the most influential person in your life?
- When you are (pick an applicable age), what do you hope to be doing?
- What three things do (or did) you most like about your father? About your mother?
- What one thing did you dislike about your parents?
- What is the most frightening experience you've ever had?
- When did God become more than a word to you?
- Describe your ideal house and how you would furnish it.
- If you knew you could not fail and money were no problem, what one thing would you like to do in the next five or ten years?
- When and how did you first meet your spouse?
- What is one thing you worried about this past week?
- What is one thing you are proud of about yourself?