

HINTS ON HOW TO CONDUCT SESSIONS ON HUMAN, MORAL AND SPIRITUAL VALUES

Part one

Note:

You will find, here below, some hints and guidelines on how to prepare and conduct sessions for any type of event like Retreats, Recollections, Camps, Encounters, Classroom, Value clarification sessions, etc.

You need not slavishly follow all the steps mentioned in these jottings. Take only what is more useful to you keeping in mind the sessions you intend preparing.

PRESUPPOSITION: “What you hear you forget,
What you see you remember,
What you experience you know”.

PRINCIPLES

INVOLVED:

Activity	:	Get the participants involved from the start.
Experience	:	Put them through a real experience.
Relevance	:	Let the topic touch their lives. Be meaningful
Freedom	:	Let them be free to interact, react and share.
Informality	:	No strict and set rules. Spontaneity.

1. STARTER

TRIGGER:

Any item or activity, f.i. a role play, an A/V montage, a game, a fable, a film, a survey, photo language, Bible passage, etc. that may trigger the participants

- to react, think and feel..
- that may hook their feelings and emotions,
- that may break their shyness to share themselves openly,
- that their hidden interests, longings and needs may wake up,
- that may actualize their unknown potentials,
- that may activate their thinking processes,
- that may create new awareness about themselves, others, God & the world.

2. QUESTIONNAIRE

PERSONAL WORK:

- Soon after the starter, a pointed and concise questionnaire should be given to the participants to help them express themselves, their feelings and reactions on the topic or area of life chosen by the moderator.
- Such questionnaire should be worded very carefully.

- As far as possible, every participant should answer personally in writing to the questionnaire and freely express his thoughts, insights, awareness, feelings, reminiscences. Etc.

3. GROUP SHARING & DISCUSSION:

- It can be done with the entire group if the number of participants is not larger than 9 or 10.
- If the number of participants is larger, divide them into smaller groups of 5 /6. The main work to be done is as follows:
 - Sharing of each person's replies to the Questionnaire
 - Offer any clarifications requested by the members of the group.
 - Discussion of the ideas and topics brought up by the participants
 - Correlating the data surfacing from the replies from the group members.
 - Sorting the leading ideas and capital issues.
 - Applying those leading ideas and capital issues to our daily life.
 - The moderator or a person appointed will writes down the main ideas, findings and capital issues of the sharing and discussion.

4. GENERAL SESSION.

- If the number of participants is large and the sharing & discussion has been done in several smaller groups, the following procedure Could be adopted:
 - All the participants come together.
 - The Secretaries of the different groups will read the reports they prepared on the findings of their respective groups.
 - The moderator will collate and write (or have someone write) on the black-board the main findings and ideas of all the groups.

5. . TALK/INPUT TEACHING:

- At this moment an input or talk by the moderator is required.
- The moderator will present the group with the accepted views of religion, tradition, morals, the wisdom of the ages, facts of science – Philosophy, Sociology, History, Biology. Etc. whichever are pertinent to the topic.
- The moderator will gather the findings of the group and compare them with the views and norms mentioned above.
- Like this the participants will be able to confront their views and experiences with the accepted ones by morals, religion and science, and so, if need be, they will be able to change their lives for the better.

6. GROUP ACTIVITIES.

If you have time at your disposal, for instance when you conduct sessions for the entire day or even for longer time, you may hold activities.

(a) Preparation:

- Each small group of 5 or 6, after the input session, will choose any of the key issues or main ideas that surfaced at the sessions and will prepare an activity to exemplify them, and draw further lessons and conclusions from them.
- The activities could be be, F.i. a collage, a role play, skit, a poster, a comic strip, a dance, a drama, a game, a song, etc...
- The purpose of the activities is to highlight the most important points arrived at during the sessions by an active learning participation.

(b) Presentation:

- The activities prepared by the small groups will be presented to the whole house.
- After each presentation, the moderator will lead the house through a short evaluation of the message intended by the presenting group.
- The all important point of the activities is not the artistic or dramatic value of the presentations but their capacity to powerfully convey a message.

7. PERSONAL REFLECTION

DECISION TAKING:

- Towards the close of the sessions, the participants should be led through a serious personal reflection and decision making
- A questionnaire - sort of examination of conscience - is given to them to check on themselves in keeping with the leanings of the day. Needless to say, this questionnaire should be carefully worded.
- Though freedom is not taken away from the participants, they are strongly confronted with the leanings of the sessions and urged to change for the better.
- Motivation has to be worked upon.
- If any resistance is felt, try to check; which? And why?

**8. GOAL SETTING
AND PERSONAL
PRAYER:**

- The participants are given some time for silent personal prayer
- They are requested to prayerfully reflect on the questionnaire given in No- 7 above
- They should be strongly urged to put down in writing some “resolution” to change their life for the better in keeping with the topic of the sessions.
- They will be requested to write a prayer, offering their resolution to God and asking Him for help to keep it.

**9. GROUP PRAYER
SERVICE:**

A general Prayer Service could be prepared by the entire group. It is a highly powerful motivation tool.

- Divide the participants in small groups of 5/6
- Each group will prepare part of the prayer session: say, 5 or 6 minutes each.
- Let the prayer session be informal and shared
- Participants may use symbols, actions, gestures, offerings, etc.. to express their feelings and their commitment.
- They may share with the house the prayers they wrote in step 8 above.
- Appropriate hymns could be sung.