

GROUP MODERATION

Group Building Exercises

INTRODUCTION

It is essential for the success of a camp/retreat/seminar to build as soon as possible cohesion and unity in the group.

The stronger the unity, cohesion and a sense of belongingness among the group members, the greater will be the success of the sessions and deeper the impact on the participants. Although exercises like Ice-breakers, Warming-up Games and Group Mixers contribute greatly the building of the group, there are some exercises specifically meant for building up the group. We call them “**Group Building Exercises** because they are rather short and lighter.

In a separate file you will find **11 Building group Sessions** of a more serious nature.. They are longer. They can be used as full-fledged sessions. They may take one or two hours time to go through.

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Exercise 1. CHOOSING PARTNERS FROM WITHIN A CIRCLE

All stand in a circle.

Each one chooses a partner, and both go out of the circle.

For a minute the one who has chosen tells his partner why he has chosen him.

Both will rejoin the circle, and they choose or are chosen again, and so on

After a reasonable time, the moderator will instruct some participants to stop the game. .

Sharing: of experiences and feelings with the whole group will follow.

Exercise 2. WHO ARE YOU?

All choose partners. They sit in twos.

The one who was chosen closes his eyes and will answer the one who has chosen him.

The one who chose him will ask a single question: **who are you?"**

After getting a reply, he keeps on repeating the same question again and again, thus getting more and more personal information about his partner.

After five minutes they exchange roles

The partners will disclose of themselves only what they feel comfortable to disclose.

Next, by turns, all will share with the whole group their personal experiences and feelings about the game.

No personal information of the partners should be shared.

Exercise 3 ASKING SOME PERSONAL QUESTIONS

Divide the large group into sub-groups of 4.

Each member of the group of 4 successively, will put a personal question to each of the other three.

E.g: Do you like yourself? Why have you come for the Camp?, .etc.

The person asked will reply either, "I want to play or I pass. (*According to whether he wants to answer or not.*)

If he wants to play, the person who asked him has to surmise" the answer".

The person asked will agree/disagree/explain/add, etc... to the surmise of his partner.

The four partners keep asking questions to one another in rotation till all have had their chance.

At the end, all will share with the entire group their personal experiences and feelings about the game

No personal information of the partners should be shared.

Exercise 4. WRITING SOME PERSONAL OR INTIMATE STATEMENTS

Introduction

Each one writes two or three personal or intimate statements about himself. The writing is done anonymously.

The statements are kept in a box or basket in the middle of the group.

Each participant in turn picks one paper. Reads it aloud. He and after him, all the rest, are invited to express their reactions, and pass any "favorable" remark. No negative remarks allowed. Anonymity is kept throughout.

Working in Small Groups

Once the reading of the statements is over, the participants meet in groups of 4. They share in the small groups their feelings and experiences.

In the small groups any one is free to disclose his identity and own up some of his statements..

Sharing: The Whole Group and Input.

a) Sharing of feelings and experiences.

b) The Moderator will explain the aims of the exercise.

1. To break inhibitions which prevent us from disclosing our problems to others.

2. To realize that what we consider to be "unique and personal" problems are not so very "personal". They are "common" problems affecting one and all..

Exercise 5. NON-VERBAL SHARING

Divide the group into equal halves.

They stand in two concentric circles facing each other.

The exercise is done in silence.

Those facing each other keep staring at each other's faces and try to communicate with the eyes only their feelings towards one another.

After half a minute or one minute, the inner circle moves one place clockwise and the new partners try to establish eye communication, and so on

Sharing: Of experiences and feelings with the whole group.

Exercise 6 .PAIRS OF DESCRIPTIVE ADJECTIVES

Each participant write two adjectives that describe:

What he feels he is.

What his parents feel he is.

What his superiors feel he is.

What his friends feel he is.

What he would like to be.

Let them choose one partner each, share and discuss with him/her what they wrote.

Sharing with the entire group of my feelings and experiences during the exercise.

How my partner got across to me. Only positive things can be said.

Nothing negative or confidential should mentioned.

Exercise 7. TIN SOLDIERS

All choose partners. They became "A" s and "B" s

All `A" s put their hands on their "B" s' shoulders.

All pairs begin milling around the room. "A" s drive "B"s safely.

All those driven have to keep their eyes shut.

Roles are changed: All "B" s now will drive their "A" s around.

Again all "A" s drive their "B" s, only by whispers, not without putting their hands on their shoulders.

Only if "B" is about to collide. "A" will change his direction with a slight touch.

Roles are reversed. "B" s drive their "A" s.

Sharing and discussion with the whole group.

Exercise 8. CHOOSING A FAMILY

Personal Work:

Participants are instructed to write down in silence, the following: "Had I to choose one of the participants to be my Mother, or Father, or Brother, or Sister. or Grandfather, or Granny, or Uncle, or Auntie, I would choose so and so....

and this is the reason of my choice.

Sharing: with the entire group

In turn, all will share their choices and reasons.

Only the persons alluded to can ask for clarifications.

After all have done their sharing, they will be invited to share their experiences, their feelings, their insights

Exercise 9. HAND TALK

Exercise in twos:

Participants pair off and move apart, Members of each will pair face each other, and catch hands.

This exercise is done in silence and with the eyes closed..

The facilitator announces that each member of the pair should take turns attempting non-verbally to communicate to his/ her partner the feelings that he will mention; for instance: frustration, love, tension, joy, friendliness, anger, hate, etc.

The only communication allowed is by hand touch.

Each feeling will be mentioned separately, and the time given for each feeling to be expressed will be about a minute for each partner.

Group Sharing:

Share your experience, feelings and learning with the entire group

Exercise 10 . POSTURE FEED BACK

Moderator's introduction:

The postures we take while dealing with others powerfully communicate the feelings we have towards them

Six volunteers of our group will go out of the room

One volunteer at a time will step into the room and he/she will receive non-verbal feedback about what the group feels towards him/her, just by the body postures the group members will take. He/she has to guess what's the feeling the group showed towards him/her.

Exercise:

All sit in a circle.

Ask for six volunteers. They will leave the room.

The moderator will instruct the group members, to show different feelings towards the volunteers by just the postures they will take.

The moderator will suggest to the group the following feelings towards the volunteers.

1st volunteer Respect. – Courtesy.

2nd volunteer Affection – Love.

3rd volunteer. Lack of interest - Boredom.

4th Volunteer. Happiness, Joy to have him.

5th volunteer: Anger and animosity.

6th Volunteer Rejection, Non-acceptance.

Call the volunteers in one by one.

They will have to guess what the feelings of the group were toward them.

Processing the Exercise.

Spend time to process what was the experience of each volunteer was
Sharing: Lessons, Experiences, and Feelings.

**EXERCISE 11 WHOM WOULD YOU CHOOSE AMONG
YOUR GROUP MEMBERS?**

First, answer in writing and in silence to the following questions

1. If I had to entrust all my money and my belongings to someone I would chose.....
2. If ever I would be in need of advice I would go to.....
3. If I had to take a partner for a birthday party, I would invite.....
4. If I had to go for a trip abroad I would choose.....
5. If I wanted to enjoy a picnic I would invite.....
6. If I were to be seriously ill, the one I would like most to visit me would be.....
7. If ever I would feel depressed and in the dumps, the one likely to encourage me would be.....
8. The one I would confide all my secrets would be.....
9. If ever I would fall in a serious trouble, I would go for help to.....

Next, after you answered these questions, meet the people concerned and tell them why you have chosen them.