

LIFE GROUP

CONVERSATION STARTERS AND GAMES

Conversation Starters

Conversation Starters require no explanation or preparation. They are simply designed to get a good conversation going! Here are a few:

- Who has been a spiritual hero in your life?
- What's your most memorable summer vacation—maybe a good time or something funny happened? (Take some time to enjoy those moments!)
- Memorial Day: Have you had a family member who served in the military, even giving their life for our freedom? (Take some time to honor those!)
- If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?
- If your house was burning down, what three objects would you save and why?
- If you could talk to any one person now living, who would it be and why?
- One Word. What is one word to describe the state of your home right now? Briefly explain. (Crazy, peaceful, stressful, joyful...)
- What is something in your home that you want to get rid of, but maybe you cannot? (Please no naming your spouse or children).
- If you could eat only one food for the rest of your life, what would it be?
- As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up, and why?
- What is a home project, craft, or hobby that you tried that didn't go so well?
- High/Low. This is a good warm-up for groups that are familiar. Instructions: Each member simply shares their high (best moment) and their low (not-so-best moment) for the week.
- Most Embarrassing Moments. Challenge the group to see who can tell the most embarrassing moment they've ever experienced. Lead off by telling your most embarrassing moment! Whoever has the funniest story wins bragging rights!

Ice Breakers That Need at Least Some Explanation

- **Word Link.** Ask the group to sit in a circle. The first person starts with any word they choose (ex: "red"). The next person repeats the first word and adds another word which links to the first (ex: "red tomato"). The next person repeats the previous words and adds another word link (ex: "red tomato soup"), and so on. To keep this moving, only allow five seconds for each word link.
- **Name That Person.** Divide into two teams.
 - » Give each person a blank card and ask each person to write five little known facts about themselves on their card. Include all leaders in this game, too. Ex: "I have a pet iguana, I was born in Iceland, my favorite food is Spam, my grandmother is called Doris, and my favorite color is red." Collect the cards into two team piles.
 - » Draw one card from the opposing team pile. Each team tries to name the person in as few clues as possible. Five points if they get it on the first clue, then 4, 3, 2, 1, 0. The team with the most points wins. (Note: If you select the most obscure facts first, it will increase the level of competition!)
- **Two Truths and a Dream** (a variation of "Two Truths and a Lie")
 - » Each person prepares three statements, two true, and one that is not true, yet something they dream was true. In any order, the person shares the three statements to the entire group. The object of the game is to figure out which statement is the dream.
 - » The rest of the group votes on each statement, and the person reveals which one is the dream. The interesting spin often leads to unexpected, fascinating results, as people often share touching dreams for their lives.
- **The Awards Ceremony.** Give each person an opportunity to introduce themselves, stating their name, and if they were to be given an award, what would it be? For example, "most Oreos eaten in one sitting," or "most likely to burp the alphabet in a public place." If there is time, let them share any story they may have that supports their award choice.
- **Sit Down If.** Get everyone to stand up, then read through the following list. The last person standing is the winner! Sit down if...

» ...you have eaten chocolate today.	» ...you are wearing purple.
» ...you were born in September.	» ...you have blue eyes.
» ...you have broken a bone.	» ...you are the youngest child.
» ...you have gone two weeks without a shower.	» ...you can speak more than two languages.
- **Desert Island.** You've been exiled to a deserted island for a year. In addition to the essentials, you may take one piece of music, one book (not including the Bible) and one luxury item you can carry with you, (but not a boat to leave the island!). What would you take and why? Share your answers.
- **Categories.** Divide your group into four or more teams of about five members each. Encourage them to team with people they know the least. Instruct each team to find at least six things in common with every team member. Don't allow teams to use simple things like height, hair color, or clothing worn. Limiting the similarities to non-material things helps people learn more about each other and engage in active, more meaningful conversations that will promote inclusion and lasting connections. The game ends once every team has come up with six things they have in common; the winner is the team that achieves the objective first.

Holiday or Seasonal Ice-Breakers

- **Funny Vacations.** Challenge the group to see who can tell the funniest vacation story!
- **Childhood Summers.** Since we are nearing the end of a school year, let's reminisce for a second. When school was letting out when you were a kid, what were you excited to spend all summer doing (e.g. trips, friends, TV shows, activities, etc.)?
- **MOTHER'S DAY: Find Someone Whose Mom.** The facilitator will prepare a questionnaire ahead of time that will include 5-10 descriptions of someone each person will be looking for in the group. The participants will go around the room with the goal of finding someone whose Mom matches the descriptions listed. Sample questions (feel free to make up your own): Find someone whose Mom...
 - » Has a birthday the same month as yours
 - » Does not leave the house without red lipstick
 - » Makes the best chicken casserole
 - » Has a Bundt cake for everything
 - » Is the best (or worst) cook
 - » Has the most kids.
 - » Loves (or hates) cats.
 - » Loves to ride motorcycles.
 - » Has the biggest rose garden.
- **My Name Is.** Ask each person in the group to state his/her name and attach an adjective that not only describes a dominant characteristic, but also starts with the same letter of his name. For example, Generous Graham, Dynamic Dave. Write them down and refer to them by this given name for the rest of the evening (or at least for awhile!)

Games that Need Preparation

- **52-Card Shuffle.** Each person receives a card from a normal deck; include the jokers as wild cards. Have all group members stand in an open area, holding their cards. Instruct the group to move into a variety of configurations and introduce themselves to the new person or group of people. Give the group a short topic to discuss, such as favorite food, book, movie, etc. Ideas for configurations: Cards with the Same Number, Suits, Straight, Full House. (Note: When some people are left without a match, help them make a group of their own or join an existing group.)
- **Sentence Starters.** Before the group meets, write sentence starters on slips of paper. Have each person pull a slip from a bowl and write their name, read the sentence starter, and then complete it. They should also provide several additional sentences of information that coincide with their sentence starter. Read the completed slips when everyone has arrived to help everyone get to know each other. Variation: Have the group sit in a circle. Pull one slip at a time from a basket, read the sentence starter, then have each person take turns completing them. The following is a sample list of sentence starters:
 - » Although most people don't find...
 - » The best thing I ever did for my child is...
 - » My idea of beauty is...
 - » The best way for me to relax is...
 - » The most important decision I ever made was...
 - » The funniest thing that ever happened to me was...
 - » I have never...
 - » I love to...
 - » I would never...
 - » I am...
 - » I love it when...
 - » I think I have the best...

- » The greatest thing my child ever did was...
 - » The thing that makes me laugh is...
 - » There is nothing I enjoy more than...
 - » The most unbelievable thing...
 - » The biggest and best...
 - » The best way to save...
 - » The lowest...
 - » When I think of prunes
- Whose Story is it? (Online version). This icebreaker game lets you hear some fun, fascinating, and surprising stories. Invite your life group members to take a few minutes to text you a brief personal experience. The more funny and unusual, the better! Select three stories, then choose 3 people from the group to send each story to; (you may select the same 3 people that the stories belong to, or different people). These 3 then take turns reading their story aloud, adding some details to the story. The group then guesses if the story belongs to one of the three, and, if so, to which one.
 - Whose Story is it? (In-person version). This icebreaker game lets you hear some fun, fascinating, and surprising stories. Pass out paper and pen and have everyone take a few minutes to write a personal experience. (The stranger, the better!) Fold the papers and put them in a basket, bag or box. Have three people at a time sit in front of the group. The leader randomly picks a slip of paper and hands it to the three people. Each member of the trio reads the paper aloud and then adds some details to the story. The group guesses if the story really belongs to one of the three and, if so, to which one.
 - Fishbowl. A fun-filled word and memory game! Instructions: Separate the group into two teams. Give each person three pieces of paper and a pen or pencil, instructing them to write any word or short familiar phrase on each piece, fold it in half, and put their papers into a fish bowl, basket, or other container. The play occurs in 1-3 rounds, depending on how much time you want to take:
 - » Round 1–Taboo. The first team selects a person to go first, grabbing a piece of paper from the container and using only words and sentences as hints. They have one minute to do so. They cannot use motions, “Sounds like...,” or spelling hints. If the person guessed the word, they continue with another slip of paper, with their team guessing as many words as they can within the one minute time limit. If the team is unable to guess correctly, the person can pass and pull another slip of paper. However, a person can only pass once during his or her one minute. The second team then takes a turn, seeing how many words or phrases they can guess. If you run out of slips of paper, put them all back into the container for Round 2.
 - » Round 2–Password. Played in the same manner as the first round, in this round, the hint can only be one word. After both teams take turns, put all the words back into the container for the third round.
 - » Round 3–Charades. Again, the same sequence is played as in rounds one and two, however, this time, each person needs to act and use motions as hints for their team’s guesses. When all the words run out, tally all the points.
 - » The team with the most points wins the game.
 - Group Scrabble. Use a white board, overhead, or chart/butcher paper.
 - » Start the game with a word that ties into the location, purpose, or theme of the sermon. Then turn the pen over to a group member and see if they can hook each group member somewhere into the board like a Scrabble game. Can be with participant’s name, school, or a word that describes them.

- Two Extremes. Create an imaginary line from one end of the room to the other. Instruct people to move to a point on the line to show where they stand on an issue. For example - move to the left hand side of the room if you like chocolate, the right hand side if you like strawberry. If people don't have a strong opinion, they stand in the middle. When everyone chooses a position, ask the next one and everyone moves again. (Please avoid political issues!) Other examples:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Fold toilet paper or scrunchy? » Big party or intimate dinner? » Vanilla or Chocolate ice cream? » Work on your car or have someone else do it? » Summer or winter? » Would you rather be beautiful/handsome or smart? » "So You Think You Can Dance" or "The Voice"? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Sleep in or get up early? » Country or Hip Hop? » Sweet or spicy? » Instagram or Tik Tok? » Run/jog or bike? » Would you rather go to a Razorback game or a concert? » Would you rather be taller or shorter?
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- Collaborative Drawing.
 - » ITEMS NEEDED: Paper and pens/pencils for each person, a timer or stopwatch.
 - » INSTRUCTIONS: Have each person fold their paper into 4 equal sections, then unfold it to be flat again. Tell the players to draw a head anywhere in the upper section, connecting the neck to the top of the second section on the paper. Players then fold their paper over to hide what they drew, leaving only the very bottom of the neck showing to help the next player in their drawing. All players pass their folded papers to the left and accept the paper being handed from the right.
 - » Each time a new paper is given to a player, they must draw the missing section, connecting it to the other person's previous section without looking at it. This process will be repeated for the other remaining sections: torso, legs, and feet. Make sure that all players know to leave the very bottom of their drawing visible, so the next person can continue. Time each section to avoid a lengthy game. Once the drawings are complete, check out the crazy creatures!
- Ball Toss.
 - » ITEMS NEEDED: A large beach ball or bouncy ball.
 - » INSTRUCTIONS: Write several questions on the ball (Examples: "Describe yourself in one word," "biggest strength," "biggest weakness," "favorite vacation spot," "favorite place you WANT to go but have never been," etc. Be creative! Outlandish questions are fair game! Examples: "If you could ride one animal 100x its size into battle, what would it be?" "If you could squirt one condiment out of your belly button, what would it be?") Before playing, set a rule for which question to answer (Example: Answer the question that your left thumb touches). Players pass the ball around and answer the question they're left thumb lands on (or whatever rule you put in play).
- People Bingo. Print enough copies of the last page of this document for each person in your group. Supply pens or pencils for everyone. Encourage the participants to talk to everyone as they try and complete their card. If one of the items listed on the bingo card relates to the person they are talking with, have that person sign their name in that box. End the activity after 10 minutes and review some of the interesting facts the group has discovered about each other.

- Connecting Stories. This game is all about finding common experiences or themes between people. The goal of the game is to connect mini-stories in an interesting way. Materials required: Pens and Post-it Notes or notecards.
 - » Divide into small groups of 6-8 people. Each person must share at least one item that connects to the other mini-stories. The longer the chain of items that can be created, the better. Write down a few words on a post-it note to keep track of each part of the story.
 - » The first player shares an interesting memory or experience. Ex: one player can say: "One time, I accidentally locked myself out of the house. So then I spent the entire day at a coffee shop." Any other person can tell a related story that has any similar themes or elements to the previous story. Ex: the next person can say, "I am a total coffee addict. Every day I drink 3 cups of coffee, and it sometimes prevents me from being able to sleep at night."
 - » The next player, based upon the previous story shared, can say something related, such as: "I don't sleep much at night because I play lots of computer games until early morning." Any person can then add to the story, by saying something like, "I also love computer games." To help the group remember each part of the story, write a few words on a post-it note for each part of the story chain. The more interesting or funny the story, the better.
 - » The group with the longest connected chain of stories wins. This activity is a fun way to get people to share stories, while helping them learn similarities or common interests.
- 52-Card Shuffle. Each person receives a card from a normal deck; include the jokers as wild cards. Have all group members stand in an open area, holding their cards. Instruct the group to move into a variety of configurations and introduce themselves to the new person or group of people. Give the group a short topic to discuss, such as favorite food, book, movie, etc. Ideas for configurations: Cards with the Same Number, Suits, Straight, Full House. (Note: When some people are left without a match, help these orphans make a group of their own or join an existing group.)
- Scavenger Hunt. Divide the group into teams of up to five. Provide them with a list of items to find. Choose items that can be found in the immediate area, pockets, purses, or on-line. For example: a credit card, a digital photo of a family, a pair of reading glasses, a baby picture, a business card, and the address of a donut shop in Little Rock. Take a pic of the items and text to the Life Group leader with the image and their team number. The first team to find the objects and text to the leader, wins!
- How Much Do You Use? Pass around a roll of toilet paper and invite each member to "take as much as you need to get the job done." After they take as much as they "need," explain that for each piece of toilet paper they ripped off, they must say one thing about themselves.
- Act and React. This is a funny icebreaker game, where players use paper and pen to write down an event, or you can prepare papers ahead of time. Some examples you might include are:
 - » Winning the lottery
 - » Meeting a large, aggressive bear in the woods
 - » You just got fired from your job
 - » Swimming in the ocean and you see a dorsal fin coming right at you
 Put the papers in a bag, box, or basket. Have players randomly select a piece of paper and react to the experience using words, gestures, and facial expressions. Players try to guess what happened. Set a time limit for the players to act out their event. You can give a point for each correct guess. You can also vary the game by making players act out their event without talking. This ice-breaker can work with any group size and any age.