

So, how's life working out for you?

Discussion guide for small groups

Synopsis

This guide for a 90-minute small group session takes participants through a mini-training experience in the skill of “lifestyle conversations.”

Outcome

Participants gain skill in using lifestyle questions within earnest conversations.

Materials

Newsprint and markers

Copies of a scene from THE RACE: A Lifestyle Musical, one per participant

Activities

1. Prior to the group meeting, write the following questions on newsprint:
 - How are things going for you, really?
 - What's important to you these days?
 - What eats at your satisfaction with life?
 - What do you wish you could do more of? Less of?
2. Introduce the session by noting the power of earnest conversation. It provides encouragement, opens new ideas, assures and comforts. Engage as readers' theater one of the scenes from THE RACE: A Simplicity Musical --- Scenes 2 and 5 contrast with each other nicely – and think together about the nature of the conversation(s) and how heartfelt interaction helps or hinders the characters in the scene. Option: Tell a story about the value of conversation in changing your ways of thinking or acting. (20 minutes)
3. Shift the focus of the group's attention to group members themselves. Ask participants to unpack the meaning or importance of the questions you have written on newsprint. (20 minutes)

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4. Gather participants into groups of three (two conversationalists and one observer). Ask groups to engage in an imagined conversation between two friends. Somewhere during the conversation, they should use one or more of the questions you posted earlier. (15 minutes)
5. Debrief the conversations with these prompts: What did participants notice happening inside themselves? What would they have liked to pursue further? What seemed satisfying? What was difficult? Which question(s) seemed most to stir interest or emotion? (15 minutes)
1. In the larger group, share observations for a few moments. Ask participants what other questions might open possibilities for lifestyle change. (15 minutes)

Closing prayer

Ask for a spirit of joyful expectation about the gift of earnest conversation and the power of caring questions in helping others explore the possibility of lifestyle change.