

Skills

Ice Breakers and Group Openers

Using group openers is a basic, yet essential, small group skill. Icebreaker ideas and share questions are designed to facilitate discussion about members' personal lives and to help them open up more freely. They are not designed for simple yes and no answers.

Use discretion with these questions and statements. Some will evoke deep and serious responses. Others are light and funny. If your group is new, you should probably use questions and icebreakers that focus on information about people's lives (where they grew up, where they went to school, how they came to your church, where they work, what they think about certain events in our culture, et cetera). As intimacy develops in a group, begin to challenge people with more in-depth questions that evoke feelings, thoughts, and insights.

What is your favorite movie and why?

If money were no problem, and you could choose one place in the world to travel for a week, where would that place be and why?

Write down your two most favorite summer activities. Pair off and share those activities with one another, explaining why they are your favorites.

Who is your number one advisor in life and why?

One of my biggest pet peeves is _____.

People might be surprised to find out that I _____.

You have three wishes. What would you wish for?

If you suddenly lost your eyesight, what would be the thing you missed seeing the most?

What is the most daring thing you have ever done? What made it so daring?

My favorite way to waste time is _____.

You have one minute to speak to the entire nation on national television. What one or two key things would you like to tell them?

What's the story behind the longest time you've gone without sleep?

What were the circumstances that surrounded your first kiss?

Who is the most famous person you've known or met? How did it happen?

When I dated, I was considered _____ because _____.

If you could do one miracle (other than make the whole world Christian), what would you do? Why?

What do you miss most about childhood?

What's the biggest lie you ever told?

If given a choice, how would you choose to die? How do you *not* want to die?

What is your biggest fear about death?

If you could go to college (again), what would you study?

What's the worst storm or disaster you've been in? What was it like?

Describe the most boring day/event/period of time you can remember.

What day of your life would you most like to relive? Why?

What's the smallest space you've lived in? What was it like?

I was (or would have been) voted "most likely to" _____ in high school?

Just for the fun/thrill of it, before I die I'd like to _____.

My number-two career choice would be _____.

As a time traveler, I would most like to visit _____ because _____.

What has been one of the greatest adventures you have ever been on?

If I could invent a gadget to make my life easier, I'd invent something that would _____ because _____.

Next year looks better to me because _____.

Next year may be a problem because _____.

I am most like my mom in that I _____.

I am most like my dad in that I _____.

I wish before I got married someone had told me _____.

I have never quite gotten the hang of _____.

I'm a bundle of nerves/all thumbs when it comes to _____.

I will probably never _____, but it would still be fun if I could.

What are a couple of things you remember about your grandparents?

What does your name mean? Why were you named that?

What is one of the most memorable dreams you have ever had?

If you were going to leave the world one piece of advice before you died, what would you say?

If you were to describe yourself as a flavor, what would your flavor be?

What was the best gift you ever received as a child?

If you could raise one person from the dead, who would you raise and why?

Who was one of the most interesting persons you or your family ever entertained?

What is the nicest thing anybody ever said about you?

What one thing would you like your obituary to say about you? Why?

What is your favorite city? Why?

Where do you go or what do you do when life gets too heavy for you? Why?

Which do you value most—sight or speech? Why?

When you were growing up, who was the neighborhood bully? What made that person so frightening?

What is your fondest memory of a picnic? Why was it so special?

What is the best news you have heard this week? The worst news?

What was one of the worst things your brother or sister did to you as a child?

If your house were on fire, what three items (not people) would you try to save?

What was your first job? What do you remember most about it?

Who was the best boss you ever had? What made him or her so good?

When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up? What did your parents want you to be?

If you could choose one different way to do your wedding (parachuting while reciting your wedding vows, holding the service underwater, et cetera) what would you choose?

Who was your hero when you were growing up? How did you try to imitate him or her?

If you could go on national television and warn your countrymen to avoid three things, what would you say?

What was your worst boss like?

I suspect that behind my back people say I'm _____ because _____.

Tell the group briefly the story of your wedding day. (If you warn them in advance, each couple can bring their pictures to share with the group.)

Tell the group what's been happening in your life lately using the following categories: something old, something new, something happy, something blue.

Why do you sin? (No simplistic answers allowed!)

In what area of your life would you like to have greater peace? Why?

If you could someday have a worldwide reputation for something, in what area would you like that to be? Why?

What is one of your biggest fears about the future?

Using a fruit or vegetable as a metaphor, how would you describe your life this week (dried fig, ripe cantaloupe, smashed banana, et cetera)?

What do you like best about children? Why?

Of the things money can buy, what do you long for the most?

If you had to go to prison for a year, what do you imagine would be the hardest part of that experience? Why that?

Describe a grade school teacher that made a big impression on you (for good or ill).

You have been granted one hour with the president of the United States. What would you ask? What would you like to say?

You have been given a year sabbatical from work. You can't go more than 150 miles for any one period of time. What would you do?

Break your life into three equal segments. What was the most significant event from each of these periods of time?

Have each person in the group answer for every other member of the group: "I am so glad God made you _____ because that aspect of who you are is _____."

Something I have from my childhood I'll probably never give up is _____ because _____.

The most useless thing in my/our house is _____ but it's still there because _____.

The thing in my wallet/purse that tells the most about who I think I really am is _____ because _____.

When you were a child, what was your favorite time of day? Day of the week? Time of the year? Why were these favorites?

In general, people worry too much about _____.

I want to be taken more seriously in the following area: _____.

An emotion I often feel but don't usually express is _____.