



You Have Five Minutes Until You Run Group and Have Nothing Prepared!

(Aka “Slips of Paper Exercise”)

This exercise is easy, requires little or no preparation or forethought, yet it consistently yields excellent results and always gets the group talking.

Directions -

- 1 – Group Brainstorm – Have the group come up with three interesting topics. Start by brainstorming a list but then use the group to reduce the list to just three general topics (For example “Drugs and alcohol” “Emotions”, “Relationships” etc.)
- 2 – Hand out one blank piece of paper and a pen to all group members. The counselor should participate as well so keep a pen and paper for yourself and participate in the question writing.
- 3 – Everyone tear paper into 4 pieces
- 4- On each slip of paper, each group member should right an interesting question for the group based on each of the three topics decided upon. (For example if first topic was “Drugs and Alcohol” an appropriate question could be “What drug scares you the most?” or “Which substance has caused you the most trouble in your life and why?” If the second topic is “emotions” then on the second slip of paper a question could be “What is one thing that you feel guilty about” or “When was the last time you lost control of your emotions?” Do this for the third topic as well. Encourage original and thought provoking questions that anyone can answer.
- 5 – The Fourth blank paper is a “Wild Card” – On this last piece of paper everyone can write any question about anything they want for the group.

Process –

This is the easy part. Just gather up all the questions and mix them up and then for the first person in the group read them a question and simply have them give an answer. Pick another question for the next person, and so on around the room one by one. (Counselor should pick the questions in case there are any that are inappropriate that need to be skipped)

This is a surefire easy way to engage a group because the group wrote the questions and they are eager to hear them. In fact, counselors should save this activity for times when it is needed most like when you have to cover someone else’s group unexpectedly with little prep time.