

Using the *Build It! Toolkit* – Notes and Advices for Leading a Workshop

Before the workshop:

Make sure chairs are set up for the appropriate number of participants, set up video and sound collection equipment if relevant, set up any materials and supplies for the activities. Put out sign-in sheets early so that F/friends can sign in as they arrive and get settled.

Optional (well in advance of the workshop):

Ask the supporting host---meeting committee/s or business meeting to provide some concerns or topics that participants would like to discuss in a worship---sharing time during the workshop. When planning a workshop or activity, you can identify specific intergenerational themes faced by the community participating in this workshop in advance, and raise those at appropriate times during the time together. The workshop leader can identify issue/s in advance by reading recent newsletters, talking to relevant committees of the meeting, or raising the question at meeting for business. The participants can discuss the concern/s identified in a worship---sharing time during the workshop.

Note on Worship:

Worship time is approximate for planning purposes and may be briefer or longer depending on the needs of each group and session. A tested and true Friendly adage is: the more you want to accomplish in a given period of time, the more time you should spend in preparatory worship.

Notes on Game/Activity Selection:

The selection of what type of game/activity is important to the flow of the workshop. Different games/activities from the same category could easily be interchanged. Consider how some of the games/activities will build on each other. If you are leading a training session on how to use the book, consider leading only a few rounds of an activity or game to give a sample rather than a feeling of having completed any one activity or game. The order of activities is designed to be:

- Gathering Game
- Name Game and/or Icebreaker – *only the first session if split by break, lunch, etc*
- Deepening Activity

- Landing and/or Reflection Game
- Planning/Next Steps/Worship Sharing – *at the very end*

It is important to begin with a Gathering game after a break before moving into a Deepening activity, and to close the end of the workshop or session with at least a brief worship or worship sharing time. It is also important to open and close the time together with silent worship or prayer.

Notes on Participants:

When possible, allow participants the choice to start when they feel ready, rather than going in a circle. (Going in a circle can put the first people at a disadvantage, especially if they don't completely understand the instructions or are not comfortable.) Be ready to adapt or wing it on rules for games when you have people with differing mental and physical abilities, and encourage people to help those sitting nearby who need a helping hand or word, or the facilitator or companion in ministry can help.

These are activities, not a competition, so it is fine and good to give people with special needs a copy of the agenda and the details of each activity planned in writing, in advance, so that they can be comfortable and participate as fully as possible. Select games and activities that will work for the abilities of all the participants; consider advanced preparation, mobility, hearing, and speaking.

Notes on games:

General note:

Make sure to give an overview of how the game is played so that people have clear instructions for the whole game before it begins. Giving the instructions partially, then beginning, then giving the next instructions often confuses people who want a clear map of the activity before beginning it. Also, unless otherwise indicated the games are designed for people to be sitting in a circle and able to see all other participants.

Webs and Connections:

When playing any game that leads to weaving a web of string or yarn connecting everyone, comment on how we are all connected, and that the web remains when someone leaves, but it's strongest when all are connected through our differences, or strengths and weaknesses, or whatever the game focused on.

All games:

Give multiple examples or offer additional examples for each game. If you can, allow people to take their turn speaking when they are ready rather than taking turns in a circle. Always ask if F/friends are clear or have questions after giving the instructions, before beginning an activity or game. For games involving standing in clusters, circles, etc, ask the group if they are well spaced or if they need additional space or to be closer together.

Standing and sitting:

Games can begin with F/friends standing or sitting. If sitting, consider having each person stand when it is their turn to speak or share to help project their voice. Or, if sitting, consider having F/friends either remain standing (so all are standing at the end) or vice---versa, with everyone standing at the beginning and each sitting once they have spoken or passed.

All games involving a specific phrase:

For example, Icebreaker Never Have I Ever, Deepening Activity This I Believe—repeat the phrase to be used after each person goes, when asking who would like to go next, to help people remember the phrase.

Icebreaker Adverb Game:

It's helpful if the F/friend who steps out of the room uses that time to think of tasks to ask people to act out.

More Tips:

The FGC Youth Ministries Program is happy to collect more tips on the games and activities in the *Build It! Toolkit*, and to collect additional games, activities and practices for nurturing intergenerational spiritual community.

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