

# Sample Debrief Questions Related to Goal

1. Level of involvement and commitment - some individuals being uninvolved, passive, and not contributing to group decision making - either because they are left out or they hold back
  - a. Are vital or "hero" roles being dominated by a few?
  - b. Are decisions being made by a few?
  - c. What is the individual's and the group's responsibility for changing this.
2. Group climate
  - a. Is communication open and participatory or closed and guarded?
  - b. Is support and encouragement provided for all?
  - c. Is the expression of feelings recognized and accepted?
3. Conflicts
  - a. How are conflicts expressed?
  - b. Are disagreements being passed over?
  - c. Were you afraid at any time? How did you deal with your fear?
4. Reinforcement of gender stereotypes (particularly around physical strength)
  - a. Men deciding to or being asked to: go first or last or do all the lifting (gender issues also in leadership)
  - b. What did you learn about someone else that you didn't know before?
5. Organization and planning
  - a. How did you discuss, plan, and carry out your solution?
  - b. Who planned the event
  - c. Who's job was it to coordinate efforts
  - d. What contributed to this...?
  - e. What things did you consider in reaching your solution?
  - f. Share your perspectives for your approach to the solution.
  - g. How many ideas were required to solve the problem?
  - h. How were your ideas for the solution shared?
  - i. How did you account for all group members in achieving your goal?
  - j. Did you utilize all of the available resources?
  - k. Who contributed to the success of the group? Did you recognize the contributors?
  - l. Did you use your time effectively?
  - m. How would you do it different next time?
6. Leadership
  - a. Who was the leader/s?
  - b. Where they the intended leader?
  - c. How did they become the leader?
  - d. How are they leading? (Due to physical strength or agility, loud voice, confident speaker, best ideas,)
  - e. How many are involved?
  - f. How did the leadership change during the challenge? Why?
  - g. How does the group feel about its leader's leadership style?
  - h. Is the approach democratic, is it involving of others?

7. Communication

- a. How well did you communicate?
- b. In what ways did you communicate well?
- c. Did everyone clearly understand the solution?
- d. How could you tell?
- e. How effective is the communication in your group

8. Expressing Feelings

- a. So what did you learn today?
- b. How do you feel about the way the group is working together?
- c. How effective do you feel your group is?
- d. How invested are you in your group
- e. What feelings did you experience during the activity?
- f. How many different feelings did you have during the activity?
- g. What is a feeling?
- h. What caused those feelings?
- i. Which of these feelings are good? Bad? (Neither - they are simply your feelings)
- j. Where in your body do you feel?
- k. How do those feelings cause you to act?
- l. How can you tell what other people are feeling?
- m. How can you deal with your feelings most positively? (Identify; Accept; Express)
- n. How can you best express your feelings to others?
- o. Is the feeling that you experienced here today one that you commonly feel in life?

9. Redirect when necessary – “So what you mean is...”

10. Reflect – “What does that mean to you” or “How will you be different from that?”



# Activities Incorporating Active Processing/Debriefing

Courtesy of Eric Evertson

## What...So What...Now What

There is often resistance and a hesitancy to speak up in a debrief. It may be easiest to get people talking first about:

### What:

- What happened?
- Who did what?
- Who was last, who was first, who suggested ideas, who were the leaders, whose idea was used?
- When the group seemed stuck, what happened that got the group moving again?
- Were there times when there was a general group feeling of frustration, euphoria, etc.?
- As a group, what were you especially good at, where could you improve?

### So what:

- How do you feel about your own or the group's performance?
- What significant issues did you notice? (Or you can ask about specific issues- see below)

### Now what:

- In the next initiative what do you want to do differently based on what you've learned?
- In your troop or school (or where ever), how can you apply these lessons?

## Dyads Processing

At the end of the activity, ask each person to find a partner with whom they did not work during the activity. Ask them to share two or three specific observations about the activity with one another. You can do this as you move from one activity location to another. Upon arriving at your destination, ask them to share the similarities and differences about their discussions with the larger group.

## Thumbs-Up

Upon the completion of an activity, ask the group a specific question such as:

- Do you feel that the group worked together as a team?
- Do you feel that the group communicated well during this activity?
- Did you feel like you were a part of the planning process?
- *Or* ask questions that specifically relate to the group.

After you ask this question, the participants should answer with a thumbs-up, thumbs-to-the-side, or thumbs-down in relation to how true they feel the answer is to them individually. A discussion may take place regarding the different thumb positions—simply ask *why* they answered that way.

### **Forced Choice (Modified from the Activity “Have You Ever?”)**

This activity allows people to look at their roles or preferences with regard to one or more situations. In order to do the activity, first draw or make a straight line on the ground. Tell the group that you will be asking them a question (or more than one). For each question, they will need to make a choice. One side of the line will represent one option, while the other side will represent the second option. Be sure to stress that there are no right or wrong answers. This activity simply provides an opportunity to see how others felt and how they see themselves. Here are some sample questions that you may want to use:

- Do you tend to be a follower or a leader?
- In the last activity, were you a talker or a listener?
- Is it harder for you to ask for physical support or emotional support?

You can then use these choices as a springboard for further discussion.

### **Line Continuum**

Mark two points on the ground about 30 feet apart (or mark a line connecting two points). Each end point represents opposite ends of the continuum. Group members should place themselves on the continuum depending on how they felt regarding individual or group characteristics of:

- Leader versus Follower
- Talker versus Listener
- Giver versus Taker
- Planned More versus Planned Less
- Safe versus Unsafe

Select any combinations that are appropriate, or make up your own. Once group members are in a straight line and, you might ask *if anyone disagrees* with this order. Let any group member who wants to change the order do so. This allows participants to rate themselves and see how others perceive them. You can also ask group members to reposition themselves according to where they would like to be on the continuum. Discussion questions can include:

- How did you feel about the spot you chose for yourself?
- What were your feelings in lining up?
- How did you feel when someone moved you (if this happened)?
- Are there other times you feel this way?
- Why did you put yourself where you did?
- How far apart were your positions for where you are and where you'd like to be?
- How do you think you could work toward getting to where you'd like to be?

Keep things focused in a positive manner. Ask group members if they see any patterns in their positions.

## **Bull's-Eye**

Place an object, cone, or Koosh ball in the center of the circle. Ask the group members to place themselves close to or far away from the bull's-eye, depending on how they feel about an issue relating to the activity. For example: Did you take an active leadership role in this activity? If you were to answer yes, you would stand very close to the bull's-eye. If not, you might stand a bit back from the center.

## **The Bicycle Wheel**

Using an actual bike tire or a wheel of some sort (or with any object that has meaning to you...for example, a canoe paddle, hiking boots, gardening tools, etc), lay the wheel in the middle of the circle, covered by a blanket (before the group arrives). Share with the group that you have something special lying underneath the blanket that has meaning for you. In just a moment, you are going to reveal this object and ask each group member to look at it, and quietly reflect on their own. They are to reflect on the object, and review in their mind any memories or thoughts that this object brings to them. These thoughts can relate to themselves, early memories with friends or family, experiences with their current groups and/or programs, or analogies that they can apply to their lives. Tell them to be creative.

Uncover the bike tire and encourage quiet reflection (maybe 2–3 minutes, depending on your group's needs or ability to reflect). Ask for a volunteer to start the "go around." Usually sitting next to someone whom you think will share something meaningful first, to set a good example, is a good idea. Ask each person to share a thought, statement, memory, or reflection about the wheel that could relate to their group of people. The facilitator can close the activity by sharing a statement of your own and apply it the group. Some examples follow:

- This tire has been many places; it has its own history, its own story to tell.
- It's like a roulette wheel—it keeps spinning and spinning, looking for where it will stop.
- Sometimes you are riding high on the wheel. But as the wheel goes around, sometimes you are low. If you stay low you can't move forward. Don't get caught staying low—just keep riding.
- The tire has spokes in its wheel. If just one is out of line, the whole tire wobbles. We all need to work together to spin forward.
- The wheel has traveled many places; reminds me of places I've been, places I am going.

## **Funneling**

This is a more targeted or direct way to apply the "what, so what, now what" to specific issues that seem important at the time.

- Filter 1: Get examples of whatever issue you want to look at.
  - Can someone remember a particular instance of effective \_\_\_\_\_?  
(Communication, for example).
  - Can you recall a time when....?
  
- Filter 2: Look at the effect of the behavior or occurrence.
  - What impact did this have (or how did this affect) on the group (or on an individual)?
  - How did this make people feel?
  
- Filter 3: Generalize/ Summarize
  - What can you generalize (summarize) about effective \_\_\_\_\_ (communication) from this situation?
  - Can you sum up what you have learned here about \_\_\_\_\_?
  
- Filter 4: Application
  - Do you see a connection between this learning and your "real" life?
  - Can you apply this learning in any way?
  
- Filter 5: Commitment
  - What will you do differently at home, work, or play?
  - Can you commit to making a specific change?

## Listening and Communicating Worksheet

1. Try to list some of the things that prevent you from really listening to others. Are you more concerned with what is happening to you? Do your own thoughts get in the way?

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2. How do you know when you are really listening? How does your body language change?

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3. How do you know when someone is really listening to you?

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4. Can you list some occasions when you have not listened or just assumed you knew what someone was going to say before they said it? How do you think it made them feel?

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5. How do you feel when you perceive that someone is not really listening you? How do you express your frustration?

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6. How difficult is it for you to receive feedback? Can you think of times that you took feedback as personal criticism? How did you react, and how do you think your reaction prevented you from learning more about yourself?

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