

FISH FOR A THOUGHT

This exercise features opportunities for self-disclosure. Unfinished sentences (provided) are passed around the group in round-robin fashion, and each member completes the sentence selected. The leader and the group offer feedback.

OBJECTIVES

I. Behavioral

Members will

1. Self-disclose by completing unfinished sentences aloud in the group hour.

II. Cognitive

Members will

1. Increase self-awareness by completing sentences aloud, spontaneously, in group.
2. Reflect on other group members' responses.

MATERIALS

1. Unfinished sentences (cut from xerographic copies of pp. 68–78).
2. Basket, box, or other container.

METHOD

Xerographic copies of unfinished sentences are cut out, folded, and placed in a basket or another container in the center of the group circle. Each group member has a turn to “fish” by picking a folded paper from the basket. The member returns to his or her seat and then reads the sentence aloud, completing it in his or her own words. Discussion follows each member’s response until the facilitator determines the time to move to the next “fisher.”

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Do something interesting with the basket or box of unfinished sentences. Teens usually respond favorably to a sense of the dramatic, so begin by doing something out of the ordinary. For example, you might put a chair on top of a table in the middle of the group to elevate the basket, or you could place the basket on the floor and cover it with a blue scarf to represent water and, thus, “fishing.” You could also decorate the basket of sentences creatively and hand it from member to member. Let your imagination and energy be your guide.
2. Your challenge is to generate discussion around the responses given. Timing is important because, although discussion and spontaneous interaction is the ideal, you need to ensure that all group members have a turn.

Try to elicit the feedback or discussion by posing questions to the group after someone completes a sentence. You may query, "How do you feel about that, Amy?" or "Are you surprised by Steve's response, Yoko?" or "How about a reaction to Juwan's response, anyone?"

The sentences are designed to elicit self-disclosing material. The leader's own therapeutic style determines how the material is used.

CONCLUSION

Teens like this exercise for several reasons. First is the phenomenon of being "on stage" that teens both fear and love. The expectation of responding quickly to the unknown sentence heightens their anticipation. Second is the fact that this exercise can elicit material that would otherwise not be shared for lack of an appropriate entrée in the therapeutic setting.

FISH FOR A THOUGHT: UNFINISHED SENTENCES

(COPY, CUT ON DOTTED LINE, AND FOLD UP.)

.....

My biggest fear is . . .

.....

When others put me down, I . . .

.....

What I distrust most in others is . . .

.....

I get angry when someone . . .

.....

.....

One thing I really dislike about myself is . . .

.....

I feel sad when . . .

.....

I wish my parents knew . . .

.....

I would like the person I marry to . . .

.....

.....

When I like someone who doesn't like me, I . . .

.....

If I had to label myself passive or aggressive, I . . .

.....

The hardest thing about being (male, female) is . . .

.....

I wear the kind of clothes I do because . . .

.....

.....

One thing I like about being in this group is . . .

.....

When other people act like my parents toward me, I . . .

.....

One of my most painful childhood memories is . . .

.....

Things would be better in my family if only . . .

.....

.....

One of my scariest memories is . . .

.....

One of the character strengths I like best in myself is . . .

.....

The person in this group with whom I feel safest is . . . because . . .

.....

When someone I like does not agree with me, I . . .

.....

.....

When I don't like someone who likes me, I . . .

.....

I like . . .

.....

The happiest time . . .

.....

The way I feel about school in general is . . .

.....

.....

I failed when . . .

.....

I need . . .

.....

I am best when . . .

.....

I hate . . .

.....

.....

This place . . .

.....

The only trouble . . .

.....

I secretly . . .

.....

Dancing . . .

.....

.....

I can't understand why . . .

.....

I seem to get my way when . . .

.....

The best thing that could happen to my family is . . .

.....

The best thing that could happen to me is . . .

.....

.....

One of the hardest things for me is . . .

.....

When I stand up for myself, people . . .

.....

If I could change one thing about myself, I . . .

.....

One thing I admire most in other people is . . . because . . .

.....



What I need most from other people is . . .

