

BOUNDARY BREAKING  
*An Interaction Experience for Groups*

Objectives of Boundary Breaking

*By using Boundary Breaking:*

1. We seek a sense of community by bringing learners together in groups which would not ordinarily meet in the normal flow of life.
2. We seek to create an awareness of each other person through the use of questions designed to reveal more than what superficial conversations include—deeper mutual concerns and insights between people who are not close friends.
3. We seek to teach listening skills and awareness of degrees of meaning within a shared conversation context.
4. Leaders can develop within this context, along with individual attitude development, concept/projection of my personal understanding of what leadership is. Groups leaders grow in confidence and poise while conducting the Boundary Breaking Experience.
5. Boundary Breaking can educate staff about role/function/duties—but awareness of individual “life stance” of delegates.
6. Our objectives include giving kids a chance to open up positively to each other in small groups...providing a vehicle for people to communicate on a real level as soon as possible.

Procedure for Leader:

1. Seat the group in a circle. No one is to be out of the circle. People should be seated as closely together as possible.
2. Name tags or person-identity should be immediate so that answers may be related directly to the person. (Name games preceding this experience are appropriate.)
3. Each person must answer every question, although he may “pass” while he thinks but be certain to come back to each one. No one is to be allowed not to answer.
4. The leader should repeat the answer of each person. (Some people do not speak loudly in this setting. Positive encouragement is essential). Keep all group members comfortable and informed.
5. Group members may not repeat someone else’s answer (cop out). Ask the repeater to clarify what he means and point out the differences between the two answers.
6. Questions are not to be explained or limited. Each person is to react to what he hears. Keep the mood serious at all times. If a person does not understand a question, repeat it with the same wording.
7. Sessions should be less than 2½ hours, but determined by the alertness/response/interest of the group. Do not use all of the sample questions, cull what you reject at the first reading. Add what occurs to you as positive additional material.
8. Do not tell the participants about the “Synthesis Set” beforehand. Switch to the Synthesis Set while interest is strong. Always include this in the session. Here is where closure happens.

### Directions to Participants:

We are going to respond to a series of questions. Every answer you give is absolutely right. No one will question it. Simply respond to what you hear. You may choose any answer you want—but you must choose an answer. You cannot “cop out” by stealing someone else’s answer. We will proceed around the circle, starting with a different person each time. If you can’t think of an answer at your turn, say “pass” and I’ll come back to you later.

Please speak loudly so that everyone else can hear. Try not to change your answer once you decide what it will be. Don’t change to what you think will be a “more appropriate” answer. Stay as honest as you can.

While each member is answering, watch that person closely. We can learn a great deal from the look of a face, the movement of the hands, the nuance of head movement—and by what people do not say—or hesitate in saying. We are concerned with discovering good things about each other—with finding real other persons—and our own personal strengths/characteristics.

We must listen. This is not a debate! We are not here to disagree. We are here to seek the person that is each of us. Too often we defend our own little worlds without listening to all the hearts beating around us.

As each person answers, collect those various answers in your mind and begin developing an idea of each person in the group.

If we do all this—perhaps a few of our invisible boundaries will melt—and we’ll know each other better.

### Synthesis Set:

Answer these questions in the light of answers submitted by group member:

1. Which person was most honest in giving answers?
2. Which person did you learn the most about?
3. What person do you want to know better?
4. Which person do you know the least about?
5. Which person do you think you could work with best for a long period of time?
6. Which person had the deepest insights?
7. Which person surprised you the most?
8. Which person likes people the most?
9. Which person is most sensitive to life?
10. Who is the best planner?
11. Who enjoys life the most?
12. Which answer do you want explained?
13. Who has the most “soul”?
14. Which person will be the best leader?
15. Which person has the most promise?
16. Which person do you feel is most like you?
17. Which person has the most charisma?

## QUESTIONS

1. Choose a word to describe a sunset?
2. Choose a word which best describes your total life up to this moment.
3. Choose a word which you feel describes old people.
4. For what do you think you would be willing to lay down your life?
5. Give another word for God.
6. How many children do you want?
7. How would you symbolize the human soul? (a rose, a sunset, a fountain, etc.)
8. If the atomic bomb were going to explode a block away in ten minutes, what would you do for those ten minutes?
9. If you build one thing, what would you build?
10. If you could choose to be an animal other than a person, what animal would you be?
11. If you could have a dinner conversation with anyone alive today, who would it be?
12. If you could smash one thing and only one thing, what would you smash?
13. If you could tape-record the ugliest thing you know, what would it be?
14. If you could travel to any place in the world where would you go to first?
15. If you were shipwrecked on a desert island, what one item would you most want to take (You cannot take electronic entertainment eg. radio, TV, or a friend)?
16. If you were tape recording the sound of violence, what sound would you use?
17. If you were to paint it, what color is love?
18. On what basis do you select your friends?
19. What comes to your mind first when you hear the word reality?
20. What delights you most about being at Maryville?
21. What do people like best about you?
22. What do you feel when you stand on the shore of an ocean?
23. What do you like to do most with a free hour?
24. What do you love most?
25. What do you think of when you think of tragedy?
26. What do you think people like in you the least?
27. What do you think people like in you the most?
28. What emotion is strongest in you?
29. What force of history are you most aware of as you plan your life?
30. What future discovery do you anticipate most?
31. What institution is most in need of change?
32. What is most valuable about the work your group does in the school?
33. What is the best book you have ever read?
34. What is the best movie you have ever seen?
35. What is the best regular program on television?
36. What is the biggest waste you know of?
37. What is the greatest crime one man can commit towards another?
38. What is the greatest music ever composed?
39. What is the greatest problem in the United States?
40. What is the greatest value that guides your life?
41. What is the most beautiful thing about people?
42. What is the most beautiful thing you have ever seen?
43. What is the most entertaining movie you ever saw?
44. What is the most honest thing you have ever known?
45. What is the most overwhelming thing you know?
46. What is the most powerful force in the world today?
47. What is the most significant book you have ever read?
48. What is the most significant event of the last three months?
49. What is the title of the last book that you read?

50. What is the ugliest thing you know?
51. What is the worst thing your student council has ever done?
52. What is your biggest worry?
53. What is your favorite "toy" at this point in life?
54. What is your favorite sport?
55. What is your greatest fear? Greatest embarrassment?
56. What is your strongest emotion?
57. What is your strongest fear about being a college student?
58. What kind of leadership makes a difference in the world?
59. What leisure time activity pleases you most?
60. What makes you most secure?
61. What one day in your life would you like to live over?
62. What one idea does everyone in this room want to hear?
63. What one word would you put on your gravestone?
64. What person has influenced your life most?
65. What person would you follow the farthest?
66. What physical thing do you want to build more than anything else?
67. What skill do you need in order to succeed?
68. What sound would you use for beauty?
69. What talent should you develop?
70. What television show do you like the most?
71. What thing makes you feel most humble?
72. What three things would you change in your school?
73. What TV advertisement bothers you the most?
74. What will save American politics?
75. What will you be doing ten years from today?
76. What word best describes advertising?
77. What would you like to be talented at that you are not at the present time?
78. When do you feel most lonely?
79. When do you sense being most alive?
80. When you think of children less than three years old, what comes to mind?
81. Who has most influenced your life?
82. Who is the most relevant person in our time?