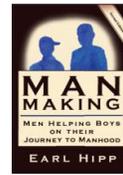


Man-Making

Men Helping Boys on Their Journey to Manhood



Group Opening Questions

If you're running a group for young males, asking a *check-in* question is always a good way to get teen boys focused up and ready for interaction. Opening questions invite participation, increase familiarity, and lead to acceptance of one another.

Below are possible opening questions. Some of them are simply conversation starters, and others invite a higher degree of personal disclosure. Start with an easy round, and then pick a second, more challenging question. The more personal truth the questions request, the more the guys are invited to be vulnerable and open in their responses. This truth-telling has the benefit of increasing intimacy and trust in the group.

If the guys are stuck, **and** you've waited a while in silence to let the tension build, having one of the men present answer a question, can get the discussion launched.

Describe your favorite food and what it was like when you first had it (least favorite).

Share something important that happened to you recently.

After a minute of total quiet, describe what went on in your head.

Tell us about a real risk you have taken in the last week and what happened.

Share one "great" and one "not-so-great" recent experience.

Name some little thing someone you know does that really bothers you.

Tell us something you really like about this group (don't like).

Describe a time when someone betrayed your trust.

Describe a time when you were put down and handled it well (or not so well).

Pick a color that fits your mood right now and tell us why.

Describe a time when you got away with something you don't feel good about.

Tell the group 3 things that make you really happy (sad).

Name a man you admire and tell us why.

At the end of the session, always acknowledge the group for their honesty and for their high quality listening. Speaking a personal truth, being heard, and feeling supported, builds connection between the group members. If you have a group guideline about privacy, you may also want to remind the members that what is said in the group stays in the group. This assurance also raises trust in a group.
