

Toolbox idea

Experience Game

Session : Intro (1) or Review (6)

Possible applications: How life experience shapes us, choosing to learn from both good and bad experiences, ice breaker

Materials needed: Experience game sheet, writing utensils

Instructions: Ask participants to divide into groups (I usually have 3). You could number them off, or let them divide up themselves, whatever will work best for your group... but they must not be in the same group as the person they are attending the class with. (This lets them get to know others, as well as come out of their shell a little quicker.) Items can be personalized for your area—for example, the 89ers carnival and bluegrass festival are specific to Guthrie.

Each group needs to have one 'secretary' who will mark on the sheet how many points they get for each item. Give the group 5-10 minutes to answer all the questions on the front and back. They should also total their score. When you bring the group back together, you can ask for some examples of interesting experiences they have discussed, if appropriate.

Also, this can be a useful way to determine who chooses first in the choice bag game if used in conjunction with that activity.

Key points to process:

We ALL have valuable experiences we can draw from, no matter how old.

We need to learn how to grow from both the good and bad experiences that we've had. Obviously, this could lead into a discussion of what led them to this class and how that negative experience could be used to help them in the future, *if they choose to learn something from it.* That's why this class exists! Hopefully everyone here can learn something useful—even really great people can make themselves just a little bit better if they try.

This is also a great opportunity to validate some of the lesser appreciated skills, especially for teens that feel marginalized. You get points for being able to Ollie! Beating an entire video game! This is often when I see the harder to reach youth become engaged in the material.