

LIFE Meeting

Healthy Relationships

March 13, 2019

1. 6:30 ~ Opening Prayer

Jamie

2. 6:40 ~ Icebreaker: Speed Dating

3. 6:50 ~ Large Group: Video and Transition to Stations

4. Stations:

1st Station: 7:10-7:23

2nd Station: 7:23-7:36

3rd Station: 7:36-7:49

4th Station: 7:49-8:02

5th Station: 8:02-8:15

Rotation Order

221

226

122

111

205

5. Closing Prayer

Kaden

- **Next Meeting: April 10th — Real World Issues/Social Justice**
- **Planning Meeting: Wednesday March 27th** Remember it may be a longer meeting because we have guests (We will provide the pizza you provide the sides, drinks, and desserts for **17 people**) Be organized and on the same page.
 - **Food: Graham, Meg, Jamie, Kyle, Allison, Maggie B**

The word relationship can be defined as the way in which two or more concepts, objects, or people are connected, or the state of being connected. Throughout our everyday lives we have many relationships with our friends, significant others, teachers, family, and even people we don't know well. But all these relationships stem from the most important relationship, our relationship with God. Through our relationship with God comes all other relationships we have in our lives. If we have a poor relationship with God we can also have poor relationship in other areas of our life. But if we have a good strong connection to God we can thrive in every other relationship we have in our life. Relationships aren't just defined to a romantic one the word relationship applies to every way we interact with people day to day. This meeting today is to help us see characteristics that we need to work on and improve that are already in ourselves. These characteristics will not only improve every relationship but will also improve yourself. Let us pray:

Dear Lord,

Please open our eyes to see the things we struggle with and need to improve upon. Through our relationship with you help us to better all of our other relationships. Give us strength, guidance, wisdom, and forgiveness as we each embark on our own journey to being the best version of ourselves so that we may have amazing relationships with others but especially with you. As your people let us joyfully proclaim: May the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen.

Icebreaker Speed Dating

1. Are you an animal lover?
2. Have you ever been out of the country?
3. Are you a morning or night person?
4. What's something you're passionate about?
5. What are some interesting or different things you like or do?
6. Favorite food?
7. Favorite movie/tv show?
8. What is your dream car?
9. Where did you grow up?
10. If you had to pick any animated character to portray you in a documentary about your life, who would it be?
11. If you were any superhero or villain, who would you be?
12. Coffee or tea?
13. What makes you laugh?
14. If you had 3 wishes, what would they be?
15. Live in a nice, but isolated home a few miles away from work? Or a house in the middle of a huge city?
16. What's something that makes you annoyed the most?
17. If money wasn't a thing, what would you buy yourself?
18. What makes you overwhelmed or have anxiety about?

Large Group

Video on healthy relationships: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tFIDWciH5fQ>

Transition to Stations

Today we will focus on the relationships in our lives, and how we can make them not only healthier for ourselves, but also others. We rarely think about the hundreds, potentially thousands of relationships we have in our lives. Whether these relationships are strong or weak, old or new, they all still affect us in some way. After today, try to incorporate the traits of a healthy relationship we show you today. They can be the difference between a relationship that helps you grow and become a better person and a relationship that drains you emotionally and physically as well as cause fear, hatred, and self-loathing.

Introduction to the Story

In our stations today, we are going to be talking about different things that we need to have in order to keep healthy relationships. At the beginning of every station we will hear about Mallory and her relationships.

Meet Mallory. Mallory is in high school and has lots of friends. She also recently just started a relationship with someone in her class, Jeremy. She also attends weekly Mass and goes to her local youth group every week. While Mallory seems like she has every relationship she ever wanted, she seems to be struggling in all of her relationships and seems to be missing something. What can she do to grow in every relationship she has??

Prayer in First Station

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

The most important relationship in our life is the one between ourselves and God. And while God will never turn his back on us or put us in a harmful relationship, the same cannot be said about those around us. Thankfully these negative relationships are mostly rare in our lives, but it is important to remember that, unlike our relationship with God, relationships can go sour. One should always keep in mind what truly makes a relationship a positive force in one's life. We should always strive to implement the characteristics we will learn about tonight into to our own relationships.

Communication Station

Mallory Story: Read before every station

Mallory struggles communicating with Jeremy because she feels as though her thoughts and issues are stupid and insignificant. What she needs to realize is that Jeremy is there for her through all of her problems. If she can't communicate he can't help. If he thinks her problems are stupid then she can kick him to the curb! She struggles communicating with her friends because she is afraid that they won't want to help her or won't know how. What she doesn't realize is that she won't know unless she tries. Friends are there for you no matter how hard it is to explain your feelings. But you must let them in. Mallory struggles communicating with God because she feels like every time she tries she has no idea what to say and that is a sign of failure to her. Sometimes God just wants you to spend time with him and listen to what he wants to tell you, you don't need to be a poet and good with your words all the time.

- There's the saying communication is key, and in relationships that is very true! Communication is very important for so many reasons. In any relationship no one can read the other person's mind so communication is so important. Without communication unnecessary fights, hurt, tears, and confusion. No one is expected to be perfect + communication in a relationship at once it takes time. Real and true relationships between two people understand that and will take all the time needed until they've discovered a healthy way of communicating.

LEGO bridge activity

Get into pairs. Assign one person to be blindfolded. The person who is blindfolded can't see but can touch. The person who isn't blindfolded can speak but can't touch. This exercise is to show how important communication is. Your team will work together to build this exact bridge. First team wins!!!

Here are some things to remember for this activity and in any type of communication in a relationship:

- Think what you want to say before saying it
- Be clear
- Talk about how things affect you
- Accept responsibility for any faults you have caused
- Listen
- Be aware of your tone
- Remember you don't have to be right all the time
- Remember everyone makes mistakes
- Avoid distracting gestures
- Be aware of physical barriers
- Don't interrupt

- Show genuine attention and interest
- Ask for feedback



Questions

Please come put a tally on the tip you find most important.

1. _____ was the most important tip in this group. Why do you think that is?
2. Have you ever had a relationship strained because of lack of communication? How?
3. Why do you think people have such a hard time communicating?
4. To you, what would a relationship be like without communication?
5. Why is it important to have hard talks?
6. Out of family, friends, boyfriend/girlfriend, and God, which area do you struggle with communication the most? Why?
7. How can these tips help people be better at communicating?

Conclusion of Mallory's Story (Read at the end of the last station)

Mallory has struggled every relationship. This is because she has closed off and not nurtured all aspects of her life. She never believed that she was good enough. For herself or for others. She used to shut people out when she shouldn't which caused her to feel lonely, dependent on others for her self worth, and bottle her emotions. However, she has come to realize is that self-love, trust, honesty, communication, and connection are all intertwined. Without one, you have none and your relationships are weakened and not stable.

Hopefully this meeting opened your eyes on how to make all your relationships stronger and show you the parts of yourself you need to work on. There are so many things that we do without even realizing that it can harm our relationship with others. We have to put forth effort in all of our relationships it is indeed work, but it is well worth it.

Connection Station

Mallory Story: Read before every station

Mallory has struggled with connection in her relationships. There are many people who are in her life but true connection is lacking in most of them. Instead of connecting with others, she tends to second guess herself and think that she is not good enough. Better to be a little stand-of-ish than to feel the rejection from someone if they don't like you. Having a connection with another person doesn't have to be a grand gesture where you pour your soul out to someone. On the contrary it can happen over a simple conversation on the weather. The key to having a connection with someone is to put some thought into what you are saying and to truly listen to what people have to say about things. It is important to allow connections to happen. If we overthink who were meant to have connections with and what types of connections we are to have we could really miss out on things.

Reflections on Connection:

"I define connection as the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgment; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship." ~ Brené Brown

In a world full of people, what can be more beautiful than knowing how to form healthy relationships and establish deeper connections with those around us? What can be more powerful than looking at people around you and understanding that by being kind, loving and helpful towards them, you are also being kind, loving and helpful towards yourself?

Albert Einstein said it so beautifully with these words: "A human being is a part of the whole called by us universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feeling as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty."

We often think of connecting with others as having heart-to-heart talks where we share our deepest thoughts and emotions, or open up about hard-to-discuss feelings or events in our lives. This is certainly connecting, and is important for us all to do at times. But connections can also be as simple as my walk. A pleasant interaction with a store clerk, a shared laugh-out-loud joke, even a text message to a family member, can all, to some degree, satisfy our innate need for community. Human connection brings complex values to our lives: relationships give us a sense of belonging in the group, a sense of identity in contrast to others in that group, an almost therapeutic-support system, and reason not to feel lonely. We learn from others' experiences and insight, and we learn together by pursuing new experiences alongside those we befriend. It's the interactive exchange that makes all the difference.

Activity

Supplies needed : Paper squares for people to draw and color on to show how they describe themselves

This activity gives participants an opportunity to share information with other participants that they deem important about themselves while creating a visual reminder that illustrates how all the group members bring individual talents and qualities yet all stand together as one group. The area should allow for individuals to work on creating quilt squares. The facilitator should have supplies for participants to use to create their square such as construction paper, scissors, markers, glue, etc. Give participants access to supplies and explain that they are to create a quilt square that represents who they are. Only give dimensional directions (size of square, etc.) and allow participants to add as much or as little as they feel necessary. Have each participant present his or her square to the group and explain the significance of items on the quilt. [Group size permitting] Attach quilt squares together with tape.

When done everyone will go around and talk about why they drew what they drew and talk about themselves.

Human Knot

Play Game where you reach both hands in and then you have to untangle yourselves as a group

Questions for discussion:

1. Where do you feel most connected to others? (home, school, etc.)
2. Why is connection so important for humans?
3. Who is someone you have a strong connection with? (friends, a sibling, a parent)
4. Is it easy to form new connections?
5. What is something that helps you connect with others? (sports, joking around with someone, deep conversations, etc.)

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honesty, communication, and connection are all intertwined. Without one, you have none and your relationships are weakened and not stable.

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Honesty Station

Mallory Story: Read before every station

Mallory struggles being honest in all relationships. She struggles being honest with Jeremy when she's upset because she doesn't want to upset him and make him turn against her. She also fears that Jeremy isn't being honest with her. What she needs to understand is that being honest either makes it breaks a relationship. If she can't be honest and receive honesty completely then it's not the right relationship for her. She should be able to be honest without fear and know that the right person will accept her through it all, always. She also struggles being honest with friends because she doesn't want to upset them or bother them. What she needs to realize is that true friendship comes with complete honesty, good and bad. Nothing good is ever easy and she can't let that scare her from being honest so she can be happy. She struggles being honest with God because she feels as if she ignored it, it will go away. God already knows everything we do and think and he's waiting for us to come to him with open arms and honesty. He's not here to judge he's here to love, protect, forgive, and guide.

- A healthy and strong relationship can take many factors to make it function correctly. Whether that relationship is with a parent, sibling, friend, or significant other you need to exercise the principle of honesty. Being truthful with one another is just as important as being truthful to yourself. Relationships obviously take two people to make it work, but you are only responsible for yourself. Exercising honesty builds trust and can lead to a greater bond between you and the other person. In Proverbs 11:3 it reads "The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity." Honesty leads us down the right paths, but it is just as easy to take a wrong turn and lose your way. In this next game you are going to have the chance to be the liar and the lied too.

Game Instructions:

1. Have students sit in a circle and close their eyes.
2. Once all eyes are closed choose one student to walk around the circle for a bit and have them tap a student on the shoulder to let them know to open their eyes.
3. They will then place a penny in that student's hand.
4. Next the original student will turn around and count to 30.
5. In that time, the student with the button has the option of walking around the circle and choosing a new student to give the button to or keeping it to themselves.
6. After 30 seconds, have the original student stand in the center of the circle and ask each student who has the penny.
7. Each student will have to say no, they don't have the penny.
8. If the liar is correctly guessed, then the standing student wins.

Closing:

Now that you have lied or been lied to we get to experience the feeling of distrust. We've all been looking at each other, asking who's the liar? It doesn't have an overly great feeling does it? If we always try and shoot for the goal of honesty in our relationships we will not have to question this feeling. We can use trust as the foundation of our relationships, and build from there. Being honest with the other person immediately you are adding something to that relationship that will set you up for success.

Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think honesty can be difficult at times?
2. Can you think of a relationship where honesty played a factor either good or bad?
3. Have you ever been on the other end of a lie, how does it feel?
4. What makes a person trustworthy?
5. What are ways a relationship can benefit from honesty?

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*"Honesty is more than not lying.
It is truth telling, truth
speaking, truth living, and truth
loving."*

Self-Love Station

Mallory Story: Read before every station

Mallory's relationships are really struggling. She doesn't have confidence in herself and the love for herself she needs. Mallory knows that if she wants any relationship to work she needs to have self love. Her relationship with Jeremy is struggling because she compares herself to all of his past relationships and isn't confident that she is enough for him. What she needs to realize is the only person she needs to love is herself before anyone. Lucille Ball once said "Love yourself first and everything else just falls into line." Mallory is struggling in friendships because she is constantly comparing herself to her friends wishing she had what they had and is jealous of them because she feels like she isn't nearly as pretty, smart, talented or funny as all her other friends. What she needs to realize is that she brings something to the friendship table that nobody else does. Once she can love herself she can appreciate all the accomplishments of her friends and will the good of them. Mallory struggles in her relationship with God because she knows she's not perfect but wants to be. She feels as though she's sinned too much for God to love her. What she needs to realize is that God created her in her image and she could never do anything to make him stop loving her. He created her and that alone is enough to make her love herself.

- Give each person a piece of paper, and tell them to write everything about themselves that they are proud of; it can be achievements, personality traits, characteristics, goals, experiences, etc.
- Choose one person and have everyone in the group say one thing about them that they like, admire, or appreciate.
- Reflection on Self-love

Questions

1. Do you think self-love is hard? Why?
2. Why do you think self-love is important?
3. What are some struggles you have had with self-love? How can personally increase your own self-love?
4. Do you think it is possible to have too much self-love? When does it stop being self-love and become narcissism?
5. Do you think you can help other with gaining self-love and visa versa? How so?
6. What are obstacles in your life that stop you from self-love?
7. Do you ever feel you are being to hard on yourself at times?
8. Who are people in your life that help you grow in self-love? Why?

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Trust Station

Mallory Story: Read before every station

Mallory has a hard time trusting others. She has been hurt badly in the past from trusting too easily and has put up her walls in fear of getting hurt again. She struggles with trust with Jeremy because she feels that if she lets her guard down he will see the bad parts of her and leave just like everyone else. What she needs to realize is that Jeremy is his own person and if he is truly there for the right reasons he will accept her and love her through it anyways. She is struggling in friendships because she feels like if she trusts her friends they're going to not be who she thinks they are and stab her in the back with her personal feelings, insecurities, and problems. What she needs to realize is that true friends are ones you can trust and if they were ever to break that trust then she doesn't need them in her life. Mallory struggles trusting in God because she feels like every sin is the worst of them all and is afraid of judgment. What she needs to realize is that no matter how bad a person sins God is so forgiving and will guide her and be the one person she can truly trust even if she can't trust anybody else.

Station Activities

- Trust fall
- Blindfold activity
 - Open space of sort. One person is blindfolded in small group. Everyone makes a (minefield) of cups or cones. One person is speaking to the person in a blindfold directing them. The person in blindfold can't speak: only move.

Trust Questions

1. Would you describe yourself as a trusting person? Why or why not?
2. Who are some people in your life that you deeply trust? Why?
3. Have you ever lost someone's trust, or has someone ever lost your trust? Why?
4. Do you trust yourself? Why or why not? Do you want to change how much you trust yourself?
5. What makes a person worthy of your trust, to you?
6. What makes a person not worthy of your trust, to you?
7. Do you think trust can ever be regained after it is broken?
8. How hard is it for you to trust someone? Why?
9. Is trust something that you have ever given to easily or not given when it is deserved?
10. What does trust mean to you? If you had to your meaning of trust in a sentence, what would you say?

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Closing Prayer

I'll Be There For You by the Rembrants

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UHDi_FSsA3M

So no one told you life was gonna be this way
Your job's a joke, you're broke
Your love life's D.O.A
It's like you're always stuck in second gear
When it hasn't been your day, your week, your month
Or even your year, but
I'll be there for you
(When the rain starts to pour)
I'll be there for you
(Like I've been there before)
I'll be there for you
('Cause you're there for me too)
You're still in bed at ten
And work began at eight
You've burned your breakfast, so far
Things are going great
Your mother warned you there'd be days like these
But she didn't tell you when the world has brought
You down to your knees and
I'll be there for you
(When the rain starts to pour)
I'll be there for you
(Like I've been there before)
I'll be there for you
('Cause you're there for me too)

There are many things we value in life such as faith, sports, and even school. We have been given so much, but among all that we have been given we have received the ability to control our relationships. Think of your family, your teachers, and even the person sitting next to you. You have an individual relationship with each and every one of them. There is a beauty in each relationship that it makes it so special. These are people that love and care for you, the people that want the best for you and would do anything to help you get there. These are the people that will be there for you when life is not going your way. As well as the people who will celebrate your achievements with you. Tonight we learned about the importance of honesty, trust, communication, self love, and connection in a relationship. If you incorporate these into your relationships and make them the foundation your relationships they will grow and be better than you ever thought they would be. The bond will be like no other feeling. Just remember to keep these truths in mind. As your people let us joyfully proclaim: **May the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the immaculate virgin Mary amen.**