



**Brief Group Module and Icebreaker Collection 5** - Taking the Escalator releases brief icebreakers and group therapy modules about twice per week in the "[Forum](#)" section on the [Taking the Escalator: Group Activities by Topic](#) page of the website. This is a reprint of the brief therapy modules and icebreakers released in that forum for the period from *Jan 2022 through April 2022*

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### **Group Discussion: "Gratitude Moment: I Thought I Would Never But I Did!"**

For this brief group exercise, everyone in the group should share at least one positive life achievement that has exceeded past expectations. This would be something that you may have never imagined you would do, but you have now done (Positive answers only)

- *Example - "I never ever thought I would speak in front of a crowd but now I have told my story to a room of dozens of people"*

When everyone has shared, an additional follow up question is:

**What is one more thing that you want to achieve in your future that exceeds your past expectations?**

- *Example - "One day I want to publish my own original book"*

### **Icebreaker – "Against the Grain"**

As you know, to "go against the grain" means to choose a path that does not go with the flow of society. This icebreaker is about *innocent\** ways that we all go against the grain in our own unique way

*\*The only rule is to keep discussion innocent (harmless) and light. This is not an opportunity to brag about behaviors that would be considered dangerous, aggressive illegal or "anti-social"*

#### Examples:

- "I put ketchup on my hot dogs and my steak even though most of society frowns upon that"
- "Most people work out in the morning but I don't start my exercise routine until about 10:00 at night"

**Share and discuss your own unique ways of going against the grain**



### **Icebreaker - "Not Again"**

**Discuss some things you would not do again based on some of your life experiences, using the following list of topics**

- Movies (For example a movie you saw that you would never ever watch again)
- Vacations
- Jobs
- Food
- Car
- Clothes
- Relationship
- Other? - Any topic of something you did but would not do again

### **Icebreaker - "Showtime"**

**You get the chance to go on stage to entertain a huge crowd at an event of your choice for up to 5 minutes. You can do anything: Tell jokes, sing, play an instrument, read poetry, show artwork, monologue, act . You have a year to prepare in any way that you want to with a \$25,000 budget for a trainer or lessons, What event to you pick and what is your act?**

### **Icebreaker - "Unforgettably Strange"**

**This simple icebreaker just requires everyone to share a simple but strange occurrence in their life that they will never forget. Keep in mind that the objective is simple and strange rather than sharing anything deep and meaningful. Some examples are provided below to get it started"**

- "I remember one time my sister threw my gym bag at me from across the room and somehow it landed perfectly over my head"
- "I was in New York City in a crowded store and I looked behind me on the checkout line and there behind me was my childhood best friend. We hadn't see each other in years and both moved away but somehow recognized each other in a city of millions"
- "One time I burned my toast and the image on it looked exactly like Kermit the Frog"



## Icebreaker: "Fantasy Slices"

All of us have had fantasies when we were younger that we eventually learned in adulthood would not be a reality. For example, perhaps at one point in your life you dreamed of being a professional baseball player, a rock star or a movie actor. Maybe your dreams are still alive. However if not, sometimes it can be helpful to keep a "slice" of your fantasy alive in your life today. Consider some examples:

*"I wanted to be a rock star but to this day I still play my guitar as a hobby and I am a huge music enthusiast catching concerts whenever I can"*

*"I thought I was going to be an architect but to this day I still take trips to the city to study and admire the beautiful buildings"*

**GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTION -How have you (or if you haven't, then how could you) maintain a "slice" of a fantasy alive in your life?**

## Brief Discussion Module: "Spring into Action"

For most, Spring is a time when people think about positive change. The cold Winter comes to an end and Springtime brings with it a lot of potential for growth. With that said, discuss the following questions as group:

1. What is one short term goal that you can focus on during the upcoming Spring season?
2. How can you do a "Spring Cleaning" in your life this season and get rid of some things that you have been meaning to get rid of?
3. What are some emotional goals for this season (How do you hope to feel as you make progress over the next few months and what is your plan to get there?)

## Icebreaker: Simple, Strange or Special Gifts

Everyone has unique talents that we just seem to be born with. There are just some things that come naturally as "gifts" in life every now and then. Share one or two of your "gifts"

*Examples:*

- > I can parallel park a car like a pro for some reason
- > I just have an amazing knack for video games and I excel very quickly at them
- > I am ambidextrous
- > For as long as I can remember I have an amazing sense of direction\

**Share your own as a group**



## Interesting Moral and Ethical Dilemmas

This website provides some really thought-provoking moral and ethical dilemmas for group discussion. Take a look and discuss as a group:

<https://icebreakerideas.com/moral-dilemma-questions/?fbclid=IwAR1qOcqc2ulaqwe5tVfRrk4yc5zJ4aQTjw8yPFmD-0TVW0ulnqbl-ss42ZI>

## Icebreaker – “It’s a Good Thing That...”

This is a way to get group talking and interacting. Start with a statement about something negative that may have happened. It is best to start with something commonplace and realistic. Then go around the group and make “It’s a good thing that” phrases by changing a few words

### Example:

- Person 1 (Starts) – “**I lost my car keys yesterday**”
- Person 2 – It’s good thing you didn’t **lose your entire car** yesterday
- Person 3 – It’s a good thing that you didn’t **crash your car** yesterday

Etc...*(Keep going until it loses momentum and try a new phrase)*

## 2/26/22 - Brief Discussion - "No Talent Required"

Directions - Discuss the following as a group with group members encourage to identify areas of strength and areas that need work based on the list. Then after see if the group can add to the list by coming up with similar things that anyone with any talent level can accomplish with effort





## Icebreaker - "Dude with a Sign"

**Directions** - This is simple and fun: As a group look at and discuss some of the signs put up by Seth "Dude with a Sign" - Link below

### [DUDE WITH A SIGN](#)

Then as a group everyone should try to come up with at least one interesting or funny idea for a sign if you were the "Dude with a Sign"

## Fun Icebreaker - "Me.com"

**Directions** - Everyone should describe what types of content (articles, pictures, links, videos merchandise, etc.) would be present on a website bearing their name. An example provided below:

**Group Member: PAUL** - *"On my website Paul.com there would be lots of pictures of me fishing off the pier which is my favorite hobby as well as a video stream of free superhero movies, which are my favorite and a section on the website to order Buffalo wings delivery (My favorite food) and also a picture of my kids"*

**Alternate Version** - Do the same as above but instead of group members doing their own websites, have the group come up with content on one another's imaginary website. The only rule is that this is supposed to be fun and expressive rather than uncomfortable or mean so insults or controversial answers should be excluded



## Brief Reading and Discussion: Take that Leap.

(Taken from - <https://medium.com/the-post-grad-survival-guide/7-short-moral-stories-that-changed-my-life-162d91db7260> by Shuxin Lim)

There's an old riddle that says five frogs are sitting on a lily pad. One decides to jump off.

- *How many are left?*

If your answer is "four", thank your math teacher for your math skills. Unfortunately, this is not a test of your math abilities.

### It's a life problem...

The correct answer is "five". Yes, all five are still sitting there on the lily pad but the one frog only decided to jump but hasn't.

*As cliché as it seems* 'The journey starts with a single step' — not by just by thinking about taking that step but by making a decision and then taking action

Moral: Be the frog who not only decides to jump off the lily pad but actually jumps –  
**Make a decision and take action to achieve your goals**

**Discussion: How can you apply this in your life by making an important decision and taking decisive action to achieve your goals?**

### Icebreaker: "5 Things That Rarely Yield Satisfying Results" - *Discuss*:

1. Surfing the TV, internet, or social media for "a little while longer" past your bedtime
2. Starting a conversation with anyone by complaining about your life
3. Arguing.... anytime...with just about anyone
4. Showing off or bragging
5. Repeatedly telling yourself "I'll just have one more then I'll stop..."

***What can you add to this list that from your personal experience?***

***How can you avoid some of life's pitfalls that are simply "Not worth it"?***



## Discussion: "You Can Learn a Lot from a Dog"

### Review and Discuss:

**Positive traits that dogs often can do much better than humans on a consistent basis nowadays-**

1. LOYALTY
2. FORGIVENESS
3. ENTHUSIASM
4. JOY
5. RESILIENCE
6. SELFLESSNESS
7. WARMTH
8. WELCOMING
9. AFFECTION
10. UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

### Discussion Questions:

- **What are some traits on this list that you possess and are able to display on a regular basis?**
- **What traits from this list do you feel people need to work on?**
- **What traits do you need to work on?**
  - *For Pet Owners* - **What life lessons have you learned from owning a dog? (or another pet if you choose)**

## **Self Awareness Discussion - "Character Traits"**

Directions - Print out or display the worksheet "**A List of Character Traits**" and have the group identify some traits on that list. Process group members answers. Below are some optional process questions

1. What are some of your best traits? How can you enhance or increase those traits?
2. How can you use these positive traits in your life....
  - To help yourself?
  - To help others?
3. If you chose any negative traits, how can you change those and make improvements? (Everyone can change for the better with patience, persistence and effort)



## Icebreaker: "Average or Outlier"

**Directions** – Consider the average amount that a typical adult does certain behaviors. Have group members decide whether they personally fall into either of these categories:

**“Average”** – *Meaning that the amount that you do this behavior personally falls within the average range (or close to it)*

**“Outlier”** – *This means you are an exception to the rule: You do this behavior significantly less or significantly more than the average person*

### Example –

Topic: Sleep

- Group Member 1 – *“I am in average range and tend to get a solid 7 or 8 hours every night”*
- Group Member 2 – *“I am an outlier as I consider myself lucky to get 4 hours a night*
- Group Member 3 – *“I am an outlier the other way and I sleep way too much probably as I like to get 10-12 hours a day”*

### Some suggested topics but feel free to come up with your own

- **Sleep** (Average range for adults is 7-9 hours)
- **Reading** – (Average American Adult reads about a book a month)
- **Work** – (Average amount an American adult male works about 41 hours/week and female 36)
- **TV** (Average American is about 4 hours/day)
- **Social Media** – (Average about 2 ½ hours/day)





## Icebreaker - "Who Do You Think I Am?"

Warning - *This may be difficult for a newer group as there needs to be some degree of trust and comfort*

**Directions** - Select a brief scenario and read it to the group. Then ask the group to (honestly but kindly) share how they feel others would respond to this scenario. Explain to the group that mean or provocative answers should not be shared. Keep it light and fun

Example - The chosen scenario is:

- *"Kim Kardashian shows up in this group"*

Examples of group responses -

- *"I think Johnny would try to get her number"*
- *"Susan would probably go for a selfie with her"*
- *"Lawrence would probably just ignore her and act like she wasn't there"*

Now try it as a group. You can come up with your own scenarios but here are a few for ideas

- A famous person (select who) joins the group
- You come to group and other people are there talking but no counselor shows up
- You smell a really putrid scent in the room with the group but don't know where it came from
- A limo driver shows up with the most beautiful car you ever saw and just says "Get in, let's go" but doesn't give any other information

## Article "100 Ways to Slightly Improve Your Life Without Really Trying"

*This interesting list of simple but creative and helpful ideas for self improvement has something for everyone. For a brief group discussion, have group members look through the list for a few minutes and share a few ideas that stuck out to them*

**LINK** - <https://amp-theguardian-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/amp.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2022/jan/01/marginal-gains-100-ways-to-improve-your-life-without-really-trying>



## Brief Discussion Module: "Adulthood"

"Adulthood" is an informal term to describe behavior that is seen as responsible and grown-up, if mundane and unpleasant—like bills and chores.

People often say amusing thoughts about adulthood (or behaving like an adult). Read and discuss your thoughts about a few examples found publicly on Twitter:

- *"The older I get the more I understand why my mom was always saying "I'm going to lay down"*
- *"Sorry I gotta be up early for work" is the adult equivalent of "my mom said no"*
- *Getting older involves waking up every day wondering if you're coming down with a cold or if this is just how you wake up now*
- *Adulthood is making an involuntary grunt when you do anything that involves movement*
- *When you're a little kid, all adults seem they they are the same age and when you are an adult, all little kids seem like they're the same age*
- *Age 17: Sneaking out of a house to go to a party - Age 37: Sneak out of a party to go home*

### **DISCUSS:**

What are some of your personal thoughts about life as an adult? (Or if you are not an adult what do you think that adulthood may be like?)

What do you wish they would have taught you about "adulthood" when you were still young enough to be prepared for it?

In all seriousness, how are you personally improving when it comes to accepting and completing adult goals and responsibilities?



## Icebreaker "Good Old Days or Nowadays"

This is a simple but interesting icebreaker discussion for groups. Simply bring up various topics and allow the group to select which version of this topic they like better, **NOWADAYS** (*today's version of the topic*) or **GOOD OLD DAYS** (*the version of the topic from the past*)

Here are a few topics to get started:

**Music** (*Do you like the music of today better or the music of the past?*)

**Sports**

**Television**

**Cars**

**People**

*Etc...Allow the group to choose some more and continue...*