

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR THE SHARING CARDS

The purpose of this exercise is to encourage open communication and listening. One person draws a card, reads the question out loud and answers or passes. This process continues around the circle. A time or card limit is suggested but not required. The optimal number of participants is between 2-10 people. If there is a large number of people, responses tend to be less honest and more superficial. Groups are successful if everyone is attentive, open and respectful of one another. One person, usually the “keeper of the cards”, must hold the space and remind others of the guidelines as often as is necessary. In this way, the sharing deepens. The questions are designed for age 8 and up.

Place the cards in the center of the table so everyone has access to them. For a large group, place a stack of cards in front of every 3 to 4 people. Participants are asked to not look at a card before their turn. It is very important that everyone gives their full attention to the person speaking rather than preparing for what they might say. Create an area to place the used cards.

Participants remain silent except when it is their turn. No cross talk please. It is easier to be open and honest when there are no opinions, questions, challenges or criticisms. Please avoid the temptation to discuss each question.

If participants want to comment, they wait for a QUESTION/COMMENT card. Participants are encouraged to ask questions or make comments about ideas and thoughts that have been presented in the group (it helps to take notes); however, a comment may be made on any subject. A specific question may be directed to one person or the group but a different question cannot be asked of each person in the group. The card must be used when it is drawn, it cannot be put aside and saved.

Participants are asked to answer the questions in a concise manner. Epic, rambling stories are not encouraged. On the other hand, being cryptic does not serve the purpose of open communication or set the tone for others to be forthcoming.

It is acceptable to say “pass” and not answer the question. The person is asked to read the question to the group and forfeit their turn. If one person says “pass” often, especially avoiding the meaningful questions, please remind them of the purpose of the exercise. If this is uncomfortable for them, encourage them to drop out of the exercise. If many people choose to pass, please end the exercise. On occasion, the time is not right or the people are not compatible with one another.

Blank cards have been included so the deck can be customized. Be creative!!