

Creative Core Ideas

Worship & Prayer

A vital component for a core group is focusing on and responding to Christ directly. Worship and prayer allows people this chance to focus on God's attributes and actions, to bring him glory and to enjoy his presence with us. It is the core leader's role to model a heart of worship and to facilitate a variety of creative expressions of worship and prayer within the group.

1. Share about times in your lives where you experienced God in a real way then pray together, thanking the Lord for revealing Himself so clearly and asking Him for more of those experiences.
2. Read a Psalm then write one together or individually using the form of Psalm 136. Read aloud your collective Psalm or share your individual Psalms with each other.
3. Write out prayer needs on small pieces of paper and have people pray in a circle – each one praying for the person on their right.
4. The week before, assign everyone to come to Core with something to share – a song, scripture, encouragement, or whatever God lays on their heart – according to 1 Corinthians 14:26.
5. God Is Like... Gather a number of objects from your home (white out, ruler, pen or pencil, sticky notes, dictionary, food strainer, scissors, glue, remote control, etc – be creative). Put them in a basket, pass them around and have each core member pick one. Explain that what they each need to do is tell the group how God is like the item that they chose. For example: "God is like this white out in that he sees all my mistakes and one by one covers them in forgiveness. Those sins are gone forever, as if they never were." After everyone shares what God is like, have a group time of giving thanks to God for those things.

Bible Study

Core is a place where we learn to hear from God in the Scriptures and respond to him. The goal of Bible study in core is self-discovery and participation by each member of the core as they read, learn to study, discuss and apply the Scriptures. It is the core leader's responsibility to plan out and facilitate a study time with meaningful questions that help people observe and understand the text and that stimulate the group to move beyond the discussion to a place of obedience.

1. Memorize scripture: Choose a scripture a week to memorize as a core.
2. Develop some discussion questions off of Friday night's sermon.
3. If you are using a narrative story from scripture, have the core members act it out.
4. Read your text in a few different versions and discuss any additional insights this might bring.
5. Have people share a passage of scripture that is meaningful to them and why.

6. Try reading through Lectio Divina, then share reflections afterwards.

Sharing Life

Core is also meant to be a place where people can share openly and honestly about their lives. It takes time to move from being a group of virtual strangers to a place of trusting friendships where self-disclosure can happen. The core facilitator will need to patiently lead the way and help create an atmosphere and provide the opportunities where others feel safe sharing real life and real needs. This includes simply being together and growing in friendship through some fun and casual activities.

1. Share about your past, present, and future. **Past** – where you came from, family relationships, good times & hard times, childhood dreams, significant people, religious story. **Present** – Where you are now, your major, job, hobbies, what concerns you, bugs you, what you do for fun, what keeps you up at night, where you are with faith in God, how growing spiritually now. **Future** – Where you'd like to be in five years, something fun or scary you'd like to try, what God is saying to you.
2. Spin the Bottle – One person draws a question out of a bag of questions, spins the bottle and asks the question to the person to whom it points.
3. Pictionary Sharing – Hand out a Pictionary card to each person and have them tell stories about their life using three of the words on the card.
4. M&M Sharing – Each person takes an M&M. After that you tell them that each color represents a topic. (You decide the topics. Ex: blue – Family, red – Junior High story.) They each share something about their lives from the topic for their color of M&M.
5. Brown Bag History – Leader gathers assortment of old magazines and a brown lunch bag for each member of group. Have each person find, cut, and paste something on their bag that describes each of the categories below. Then have each person share. Possible Categories: (1) – Describes you (2) – Favorite outdoor activity (3) – Color that describes your personality (4) – Describes the part you want to play in making the world a better place (5) – Your favorite time of day (6) – Represents how you feel about God

Mission

It is important that all of us in Core together grow an outward heart of mission and service. If we don't, we will become inward and stagnant. A major vision for our Cores is that they would become places of impacting outreach. To see that vision come to fruition, Core Facilitators need to be regularly encouraging campus or community service projects as well as ways for each member of the group to be active in their witness for Christ.

1. Adopt a missionary in your core: pray, write letters, and encourage them regularly.
2. Organize an outreach event in your residence hall or area of campus. Ideas include: taking out trash, a larger event like "Questions and Quesadillas", a regular weekly life discussion group.
3. Bring the "International" or "World" section of the newspaper to core one week and

pray through the events.

4. Connect with another local ministry or organization you can volunteer with.
5. Make missionary prayer cards- have them draw a picture of themselves, list their prayer needs, and write the areas or people they are called to minister (like the Business department, Mathes Hall, Elderly Ministry, Salt on the Street, friends, family, etc). Check in weekly to see how it's going and pray for each other regularly.