

## **"DARK OR WHITE SPECS ?**

On positive and negative attitudes in life

### **Intent of this Exercise:**

- ✓ *To realize that "pessimistic", "negative" and "immature" attitudes may ruin our life.*
- ✓ *To open the eyes of the participants to see the joy, goodness and pleasantness in human life.*
- ✓ *Pessimistic" and "negative" attitudes to life affect all the areas of our existence -self, home, family, occupation, place of work, human relations, religious affiliation, etc. - thus darkening them and filling life with unpleasantness.*
- ✓ *On the other hand, "positive" attitudes make life happy and bright and help us to live a better adjusted social life.*

### **Uses of these notes:**

For personal examination.  
 For talks and inputs.  
 For recollections.  
 For human growth sessions..  
 For improving your self-image events.

### **Target Audience:**

All audiences: age-wise, culture-wise, and religion-wise.  
 For special groups like Charismatics, CLC, YCS, Legionaries, Novices, Candidates, Seminarians, etc.

### **Requirements**

Copies of the "I LIKE & I DISLIKE" QUESTIONNAIRE."  
 Good moderators for the session on processing of the questionnaires.

## **DYNAMICS OF THIS EXERCISE**

### **Hints for the moderator**

#### **1st: Questionnaire.:**

The event starts by giving the participants the "I like & I Dislike Questionnaire".  
 In order not to prejudice their replies, the participants should not be told of the purpose of the Questionnaire and of the day's exercise  
 The questionnaire is sort of a projective device whereby, unawares, the participants may reveal their basic "positive-negative" attitudes to different areas of life.

#### **2nd: Input or Teaching.**

Soon after the questionnaire the moderator will give an input about "positive-negative" attitudes.

**3rd: Processing - Analyzing the replies to the questionnaire.**

With the assistance of the moderator the participants are helped to analyze their answers to the questionnaire and find out what sort of attitudes surface from their replies: i.e. whether their basic attitudes are rather "positive" or "negative".

**4th: Changing attitudes.**

At the end of the exercise we encourage the participants to change and improve their basic positive and negative attitudes to life. We do this by means of activities and prayer-cum-reflection sessions, both in small groups and in a general group prayer meeting.

**The Exercise**

**Step 1. Introductory Session**

Coming to know one another. Group Mixers and Community Building Exercises will help. Singing Hymns and Opening prayer.

**Step 2. Personal Work. Answering to the Questionnaire**

Give copies of the questionnaire to the participants. Request them to reply to it alone and in silence.

**QUESTIONNAIRE:**

**Instructions :**

If any of the item in the questionnaire makes you feel uncomfortable, be free not to reply to it. .

Make sure however, that your answers are honest, true, clear and to the point. Once you finished r3plying to your questionnaire, keep it with you for later use.

**(A) MYSELF.**

These are the things I like in myself:

- 1 .....
- 2 .....
- 3 .....
- 4 .....

These are the things I dislike in myself:

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....

Write at the back of the page or on a separate paper a short description of what sort of person you are and how you feel about it.

**B) MY HOME- MY FAMILY- MY PARENTS-**

These are the things I like  
in my home and family.

- 1 .....
- 2 .....
- 3 .....
- 4.....
- 5.....

These are the things I dislike  
in my home and family

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....

Write at the back of the page or on a separate paper a short description of the type of home and family you have. How do feel about it.

**(C) MY SCHOOL - MY COLLEGE - PLACE OF WORK - MY OCCUPATION**

These are the things I like in my school;  
college, place of work and  
occupation.

- 1 .....
- 2 .....
- 3.....
4. ....
- 5.....

These are the things I dislike In my  
school, college, place of work and  
and occupation.

- 1 .....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....

Write at the back of the page or on a separate paper what you feel about your school, college, occupation and place of work.

**(D) MY RELIGION — MY CHURCH - MY PARISH**

These are the things I like in my religion,  
church, parish,

- 1 .....
- 2 .....
- 3 .....
- 4 .....
- 5.....I.....

These are the things I dislike in my  
church, my religion, church, parish,

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....
- 4.....
- 5.....

Write at the back of the page or on a separate paper a short description of what you feel about your religion, church and parish.

**Step 3. A Talk o Input**

**Suggested thoughts**

- It is a fact of daily experience that there are two types of people in the world "dark-specs" and the "bright specs" persons. That is why we have named this exercise "Dark or White Specs?"

- Some people see things in bright colors, others in dark colors. . It's just a matter of attitudes.
- Attitudes are like "mental specs"
- Everything depends on the nature and color of the specs we wear
- Our mental attitudes color whatever we look at: self, home, family, and school, place of work, occupation, religion, and friends.
- Actually, things are the same, but they look different to different people.
- It all depends on the "specs" we put on!
- To "black- chasmas" people, things look ugly, dark, bad, gloomy, unpleasant, depressing, hopeless.
- To "bright-chasmas" people, things appear beautiful, rosy, good, pleasant, nice, exciting and hopeful.
- A "negative" outlook spoils happiness, brings depression, generates feelings of gloom and robs life of real joy.
- Invent some examples, or role-play for your audience some situations: for instance,
  - ✓ How two brothers, one with "black" the other with "bright" specs, would speak of their home,
  - ✓ Or two pupils of the same class talking of the same teacher...
  - ✓ Or two parishioners talking of the same parish or of the same parish priest.
- Comment on the attitudes implicit in these two instances below
  - ✓ One person said: "The hall was half empty". The other said: "The hall was half full."
  - ✓ Of two drinking friends one sadly groaned: "Pity! So soon half the bottle's gone!" The other full of excitement exclaimed: 'Boy! We still have half a bottle to enjoy!"

#### **Step 4. Small Group Sessions**

##### **Processing and analyzing the replies to the Questionnaire.**

###### **Note for the main Moderator**

- ✓ This step is the touchiest and most critical one.
- ✓ For this step, ideally the house should be split into smaller groups, of 5 or 6 members each.
- ✓ Make sure that you secure good moderators to assist the groups to process and analyze the replies to their questionnaire.
- ✓ Since the replies to the questionnaire may be a bit personal and confidential, the participants may prefer to form groups of their own choice. If so, let them go ahead. However, see that the groups are not larger than 6 or smaller than 4.
- ✓ If you cannot secure moderators for a small groups follow the instructions below.

###### **Instructions for the participants:**

- ✓ The members of each group will choose a chair person and a secretary.
- ✓ The chairperson will moderate the small group session.
- ✓ The secretary will take note of the processes of the group, the main findings and the general feelings.
- ✓ Nothing personal or confidential should be mentioned in the minutes.

**Method to be followed:**

1. The chairperson will ask a volunteer to begin sharing his replies to section (A) of the questionnaire: i.e. "What I like and what I dislike in myself" and the short description he wrote on what sort of person he is.
2. Once the volunteer has finished, the group members will give him a feed-back on whether from what he had shared he appears to them to be a "black" or a "bright" specs person. They should give reasons in support their views.
3. The volunteer may react to the group's feedback and ask the group for clarifications or give explanations to justify what they said.
4. After one person is over, a second next volunteer will step in. The process will be repeated time and again till all have had their chance.
5. While the chairperson and the secretary do their sharing, somebody else will act in their place.
6. When chapter (A) is over the group will go to chapter (B) and then to (C) and (D).

**Step 5. Prayer in the Small Groups.**

The members informally and spontaneously will pray within the small groups.

All should pray for one another.

Anyone may request his companions to pray for him either in general or for specific intentions.

**APPENDIX    Activities Role-playing**

Do not easily drop the activities. They are very effective to drive home the main lessons of the event. They are both meaningful and amusing.

The best time for the activities is the afternoon hours.

**Instructions for the moderators**

You can follow any of the two methods hint4d below: .

**First method: Group Acting:**

All the members of a small group will participate in it.

They will choose any situation of their liking: for instance,.

|                  |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| At home          | At a camp or retreat. |
| In the school.   | In the parish.        |
| At examinations. | In a boarding.        |
| In the office.   | At work. etc.         |

Within the situation and setting chosen they will have to invent a happening or an event where half of the group will role-play "black-specs " characters, and the other half, "bright-specs " persons.

There should be a clash of views and attitudes over the same issue. Their ideas, reactions and feelings should be clearly portrayed.

### **Second method" "Solo" Acting:**

Below, at the end of these notes, you will find a list of "Life Situations" which can be role-played.

The group will choose one or two of those situations. Two persons only will role-play one situation.

One player will be a "black- specs" and the other a "bright specs" character.

The players will not interact, but just play "solo".

First, the "black-specs" character will come forward and tell the group or alternatively, in a monologue style, speak aloud to himself, about his woes!

He will act the "The poor me" role.

Next, the "bright -specs" person will come forward and tell the group, or alternatively, in a monologue style, speak to himself, about the same event.

He will act "The lucky me" role!

Their views and perceptions, their feelings should stand diametrically opposed.

### **Preparation**

Give the groups time to prepare (20 to 30 minutes).

The first method takes more time for preparation. The "solo" method hardly takes any time. It can be done on the spot.

### **Presentation**

By turns the groups will present their role-plays to the house.

After each presentation the moderator will conduct a short analysis and evaluation.

He will try to get the whole group involved in the evaluation.

On the occasion of the evaluation he will stress the most important findings of the day.

### **LIST OF LIFE SITUATIONS SUITABLE FOR ROLE-PLAYING**

1. Un-cooperative neighbors.
2. Husband drinks.
3. Child fails his class.
4. Wife dies.
5. Aging, growing old.
6. Being very sick in hospital.
7. An unwanted transfer.
8. Loss of a job.
9. Mother-in-law versus daughter-in-law.
10. Unkind bosses in the office.
11. A trendy youth with old-fashioned parents.
12. Husband brings home a small pay packet.
13. Studying dull lessons.
14. Cooking for the family.
15. Searching for a job.

- 16.** Family with a retarded child.
- 17.** I have been pick-pocketed.
- 18.** We have got triplets!
- 19.** Rosary in the family.
- 20.** Looking high and low for a flat.
- 21.** Spinster who cannot get married.
- 22.** Woes of the rainy season.
- 23.** I have to retire.
- 24.** House repairs go on.
- 25.** The brightest son of the family wants to join the priesthood.
- 26.** My boy/girl friend ditched me!