

LET'S WALK. BUT WHERE TO ? **" WHAT'S YOUR AIM IN LIFE?"**

Intent of these notes:

- ✓ *To realize that life has an "aim".*
- ✓ *To experience that an "aimless" life leads to boredom and frustration.*
- ✓ *To motivate the participants to search for meaning and purpose in life*

Uses of these notes

- ✓ *Recollections.*
- ✓ *Discussion groups.*
- ✓ *Prayer sessions.*
- ✓ *Leadership training*
- ✓ *Vocational events.*

FIRST PART: The Walking Game

1. walking aimlessly.

- Ask the participants to walk alone and in silence, aimlessly, for 5 minutes.
- Define the area or space for them to walk in. It should not be too large
- Request them to keep in touch with their feelings while they do their aimless walk.

2. walking with an aim in mind.

- After the 5 minutes of walking "aimlessly" are over, ask them to stop walking.
- Tell them to choose an aim for their next 5 minutes of walking. This time they will have to walk purposefully! (Their aim may be to meet a friend, to talk to someone, to see something, to do a concrete thing they would like to do, etc)
- Tell them to walk now for 5 minutes with an aim in mind.

3. Personal Work.

When the 5 minutes of purposeful walking are over, tell them to meet in their small groups. Give each a copy of the Reflection Questionnaire below.

A FORM: REFLECTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Reflect in silence for a few minutes on the questions below.

Then, put their reflections in writing.

- What could the meaning of the first part of the game be - aimless walking- when we apply it to real life?
- What was the outcome of your "aimless" walking? Did you enjoy it? What were your feelings?
- What happens to people who live aimless lives? What do they accomplish? How do they feel?
- What did you feel when in the second part of the game you walked with a purpose in mind? Did it make any difference? What? Why?

- What aim had you in mind in the second part of the game? Did it satisfy you? Why?
- What aim or aims do you consider "good" to give meaning to your life?
- Are there aims worth 'living for' and dying for? Which? Why?

4. **Group Work. Sharing, discussion and Input**

Small Groups Work. (In small groups of 6 or 8 each)

- They will choose from among themselves a "chairperson" and a secretary".
- The chairperson will moderate the sharing and discussion, the secretary will take down the proceedings of the sharing and discussion.
- By rotation, all the members of the small groups will share their views on the points of the questionnaire.
- After sharing their views, discussion will follow.

General Session Sharing, Discussion and Input

Sharing and Discussion.

- The small groups will come together.
- The group secretaries will read their reports.
- The moderator will chair the general sharing and discussion and finally summarize the main ideas coming from the small groups.
- Ideally the leading ideas could be written on the board.

Input: Suggested ideas:

- Going through life aimlessly leads one to many problems, the biggest of which
- Is frustration, boredom, and meaninglessness in one's living.
- When we have an aim in life, life becomes bearable, meaningful and interesting even if there are difficulties and failures.
- Nietzsche said: "If one knows the 'why' of his life, he will be able to live" anyhow"!
- An aim in life is not an "immediate" objective, like becoming a teacher or an engineer, but an "ideal" "a" purpose" in life
- The higher and the nobler the ideal the more life will become meaningful
- Any immediate objective, however good it may be, for instance to be a doctor, must sub serve a higher purpose or aim if life is to be meaningful.
- Aims, for instance, could be: to serve others, to fight against injustice, to help the young, to strive for world peace, to spread the Gospel values, to ameliorate the health conditions of the world. the advancement of science, etc.
- A real aim in life is not to be "what" I want to be or" do", but the "why" I want it.
- For instance, to be a doctor may be the "what" I want, but to serve the poor through my medical career would be the "why" I want it. The, medical

profession would then be an instrument or a means to carrying out my purpose in life.

- An aim or the “why” in life can be equated to an “ideal” to an ultimate goal.
- It is something like the “polar star” of my life, the thing that gives direction and meaning to all my actions and to all my days, to all my “whats” (be it engineering, medicine, politics, religion, journalism, whatever).
- An aim, to be worth its name, should be unselfish, for instance: I should not want to be a doctor or a politician for money, prestige, fame, etc. In that case, although the “what” I want is good, the “why” I want it is selfish. In that case, I will feel empty and unfulfilled at the end of my life.
- We have been made by God for one another, for service, for love, to build society, to relate to other human beings, to grow by helping others grow, etc. not for my own egoistic self-centeredness.
- Cite examples of people who had true aims in life from among saints, politicians, humanitarians, scientists, writers, etc.

THIRD PART

Personal Prayer and Personalization.

Personal Self-examination and Prayer:

- Begin by singing hymns or bhajans.
- Give the participants some time for personal prayer and reflection.
- Encourage them to do a sort of an examination of conscience, such as
 - Has my life so far, been a selfish or an unselfish one?
 - Has life brought me satisfaction and fulfillment? How? Why?
 - Do I know what and why I want to live for? Explain what your goal in life is.
 - Where is my life leading me?
 - What I intending doing from now on?
- Spontaneous prayers.
- Praying for one another.
- Final hymn or bhajan.

APPENDIX 1A: Form

PLANNING MY LIFE AHEAD.

My resolution - My Aims in Life

1. I choose as the "aim" - the "goal" and "why" - of my life the following:

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2. The immediate objectives, the "whats" of my life, the things I intend doing or .carry ou in my life are:

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3. The obstacles I foresee to realizing my " aim" are:

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4. Some of the means I am going to take to overcome these obstacles are:

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APPENDIX 2: Activities.

If you dispose of time, do not skip this step. It is very effective.
Use the afternoon hours for activities.

Preparation of Activities:

Each small group will prepare an activity of their choice, for instance,.

Role-play

Poster

Group dynamic game

Preparing stories and parables

Mime

Radio-play

Etc.

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Based on the main ideas of today's sessions. for instance,

Goals and aims

Usefulness of life

Ideals

Meaning

Purpose of life

Joy of living

Successful living

Etc...

We suggest here below a few items suitable for activities:

Compare life to a Voyage:

Lost in a desert... loitering aimlessly.

Victims of a shipwreck at sea going in circles in a small boat.

Space travel..., lost in the skies.

Modern Youth Going Nowhere:

Falling into drug addiction.

Into sex abuses.

Into gambling, drinking, etc. without ever finding joy and meaning.

Gospel People:

Mary Magdalene. She found peace only when she began living for Jesus.

Zacchaeus, Mathew. Money could not satisfy them.

Herod, Pilate... did never find peace and joy;

All of them money, power they had, aims and goals they had none!

Slogan Preparation:

Ask the small groups to prepare four or five slogans, for instance,

. If you do not know where you go, you will go no-where!

If you have nowhere to go, don't try to go there!
'T' lie radius knows where he goes; the circle doesn't!

Group Dynamic Games:

Make the participants play some games without giving them complete information or the proper aim of the game, for instance,

Go around the room and search for it! *Do not say what it is.*

We shall have a race; the first to reach there will be the whiner. *Do not specify where the "there" is.*¹³⁷

Presentation of the Activities:

When all are ready, the groups will present their activities.

Each presentation will be followed by a short analysis, evaluation and discussion.