

ICE-BREAKERS, WORKING METHODS AND GAMES



Use the following ideas and activities in a creative way and adapt them to your needs!

GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

- **Interviews with collage**

In pairs. Participants are asked before the conference to bring along magazines with colourful pictures. One person makes a collage about the other person, using information acquired through interviewing the other person. When everyone is finished, all collages are presented to the group and can be stuck on the wall.

- **Portraits**

In pairs. A sheet of paper is folded in half. Person A draws the left part of the face of person B; person B draws the right part of the face of person A. Each writes down some characteristics s/he imagines when looking at the face of the other. For example: extrovert, serious, relaxed, scholarly, emotional, etc. When both of them have finished (not before!), the drawings plus comments are shown to each other and talked about. Before drawing, indications of the hairline, eyes, nose and mouth are made in the middle of the paper. When drawing and writing, only one's own half of the paper should be visible. N.B. The partners should not know each other. Still, they should feel at ease, because it can become personal.

- **Question Time**

Everybody writes down on a piece of paper one question. For example: What is the first thing you do in the morning? What hobbies do you have? Which famous person would you like to meet? When did you last cry? The questions are put in a bucket, and participants—one after the other—take one of the slips of paper, read the question, answer it and put it back into the bucket.

- **Dominos**

One person in the groups starts by announcing two personal characteristics: "On my left side I have two brothers, on my right side I play the piano." Then someone else who shares one of those characteristics takes this person's left or right hand (according to the characteristic they have in common) and adds a characteristic of their own on the free side—for example, "On my right side I play the piano and on my left side I love skiing." If a stated characteristic is not shared, find another one. In the end you have a circle in which everybody is linked to everybody else. People may put their arms round each other, lie down, etc. Play quickly.

- **Travel stories**

Much can happen before participants actually arrive. They may have met problems with visas, public transport, luggage, humiliating customs officers, etc. It is good if they can tell their stories, in plenary or in pairs. Everyone should first give her/his name!

- **Hospitality: How Do We Welcome?**

All the participants sit in a circle. They receive badges on which they write their names. The badges are collected and put in a basket. Then person A has to pick out one badge, say the name, B, and find the person. Before pinning on the badge, person A has to be welcomed by person B. After that person B picks out a badge, etc. Different ways of greeting (handshakes, hugs, kisses), different attitudes (a warm welcome, a distant welcome), different offerings (water, coffee, meals), etc.

- **Quality Initials**

Each person thinks about one or two initials of her/his name (e.g. Chris Grant: "C" and "G")



and finds affirming qualities that describe her- or himself, corresponding to those letters (e.g. “cheerful” and “generous”). Everyone shares her/his name and qualities.

- **The Name Game**

Every participant tells her/his name and favourite colour/food, etc. Two groups are formed. A sheet goes up between the two. One person sits on either side of the sheet. The sheet goes down. Whoever names the data of the person in front of her/him first, wins.

- **Names and ...**

Members of the group give their name and also tell one of the following:

- something new and good that has happened to them during the last week, or something that they are excited about at present,
- the name of a person (or a group of persons) they like to greet (friends, heroes, etc.),
- two simple and silly characteristics which a foreigner might associate with their country (e.g. Switzerland = watches and hiking; Russia = vodka and fur hats). Are these things an important part of their identity?

- **Snowballs**

Give everyone a sheet of paper and ask them to put it on their head. Ask people to draw a self portrait on their paper, while it's still on their head. Then ask everyone to take the paper off their head, but not show anyone. There will be lots of laughter at this point. You can now get people to write something on their sheet by way of introduction to the session. For example if it was a session on the Bible you could ask people to write their favourite/least favourite Book or if you just wanted people to get to know each other they could put their favourite country or food, or three words that describe them. Then you all screw up your pieces of paper, have a paper snowball fight, pick up a piece of paper and try and return the picture to the owner. Afterwards you can go round and people can read out loud what they wrote on their sheet of paper as a way of introducing the workshop.

- **People Bingo**

Create a grid Bingo Sheet that has a different description in each box. Things like “someone who likes broccoli” or “someone who doesn't live in the country they were born”. Each person needs to find someone to match each description and write his/her name in the box. The winner is the first to write names in every box, and to have them checked and verified by the group.

EXPECTATIONS

Two questions are asked: “Why did you come here?” and “What does your movement want you to bring home?” The participants receive a paper cut in the shape of a footprint and are asked to write short answers to the questions on them. Participants stick up their answers on the wall creating a path “to the event” and “from the event”.

A variation can ask the same questions but participants receive two sticky notes and are asked to write short answers to the questions on them. Two large sheets are put up, one marked “WHY,” the other “WHAT.” Participants stick up their answers on the corresponding sheet. Then comes a second request: “Organise the answers.” After some discussion, similar definitions could be placed together, common aims and motivations identified, etc.

CULTURAL EVENING

The cultural evening is a substantial part of WSCF conferences; it is not really a ‘working method.’ Participants are asked to bring traditional national food and drinks to the conference, which are put on tables during one of the first evenings of the conferences. This is the ‘minimal’ idea. You can ask participants to present the food to everybody. You can ask participants to prepare a story, song, a game, a dance, etc., for the cultural evening.



MOVEMENT MARKET

Another fixed part of the programme is the movement market, at which the participants present their respective movements. They may put written information on a table, show short films or posters, t-shirts, etc. They may also be asked to tell in what way the SCM's work is related to the subject of the conference. The cultural evening and the movement market may be combined, but if so, start with the presentation of the SCMs.

WARMING UP /ICE-BREAKING

- **Musical Chairs**
The game with chairs and music. The number of the chairs is the same as the number of the players, minus one. While the music plays, everybody dances around the chairs; when the music stops, everybody seeks a chair. The person who doesn't get a chair is out; s/he takes one chair with him and play continues to the last person. Fun music is important! Music may come from various cultures. You may introduce this game as an example of what happens in the world: we have limited resources and only the fittest survives...
- **Music & Imagination**
Everybody is moving in a big room, while nice and appropriate music plays. The leader tells everybody to imagine/act walking in the desert, rushing in Manhattan, moving in a pot with syrup, being blind, etc. • **Game with socks** In pairs, or with one pair volunteering. They have to take off their shoes and try to take away each other's socks.
- **Song Festival**
Ask for volunteers. They make a circle, facing outwards. There is one person inside, who has a hat/cap. As soon as s/he puts the hat on the head of one of the volunteers, this person immediately starts to sing a song. If not immediately, s/he is out. When the hat is taken away the singer stops. Another person gets the hat, sings a song until the hat is taken away. Etc.
- **The Atom Game**
Participants move about in a room, making clusters of 2, 4, 6 ..., until 30–40.
- **Body Parts**
Participants move and the leader calls out to the participants to create small groups with various body parts that are allowed to touch the ground. For example: "3 people, 4 feet, 2 arms and a nose", or "6 people, 9 feet, 6 arms, 1 stomach"
- **Knots**
Everyone closes her/his eyes and moves together, each person taking another person's hand in each of her or his hands. When each person has two hands, then all open their eyes and try to untangle themselves without dropping hands. The group must work together to get out the knots. It leads to amusing situations because, although the group may end up in one big circle, most of the time there will be a knot or two in the circle, and even two or more circles, either intertwined or separate.

CREATIVE WORKSHOPS

- **Statements I**
A statement is written down on a big sheet of paper (e.g. "Without the Church the world will perish.") Participants decide whether they agree or disagree and form two groups. One group tries to convince the other by arguing. If a person gets convinced by the arguments of the other group, s/he joins the other group.



- **Statements II**

Statements are written down on a big sheet and participants indicate to what extent they agree or disagree by putting stickers on the paper:

	Agree	Agree a bit	Don't know	Disagree a bit	Disagree
Statement I					
Statement II					

In this way one sees the diversity of opinions clearly.

- **Symbolic objects**

Symbols can be used during workshops and worship. Participants can be asked beforehand to take a symbol with them. Examples: o Something to construct a Church. During the workshop/worship the participants explain why their object is (or should be) an important part of the Church. o A family photo that tells something about your youth. (Which can trigger personal talks.) o A recent photo of your own newspaper that tells something about your country, about the theme of the conference, about your own main concern, etc.

- **Movie/Video**

Before the video is shown, the participants get the task of finding answers to questions like: “Which person can you most identify with?” “Which dialogue strikes you?” “What do you think is the theme, the message of this video?” Etc.

- **Simulation game**

In a simulation game there is a given starting situation in the form of formal structures, procedures, tasks, etc. The participants are assigned a role in this situation and receive specific information related to the role. What happens after this starting situation is up to the participants. This working method takes a long time. An example of such a simulation game is a ‘The Court,’ held during a WSCF conference on “500 Years of Resistance,” where participants from the Latin American and European regions discussed the European conquest of Latin America in 1492. There were the accusers, the defenders, the jury and the judge. OR a large group can be involved in a large scale economics “game” that allows trading/manufacturing etc.

- **Dream or “Soap-Box” Session**

Such a session is possible when there is a relaxed atmosphere and trust. The group could, for instance, lay in a green, sunny meadow. Each participant is allowed to talk about anything s/he feels like, without anyone objecting, disagreeing or disapproving. People can vent their frustrations, convey their hopes and fears, express their likes and dislikes, without feeling condemned or judged for what they say.

- **Silent discussion**

On a big sheet of paper, one writes down a word or a statement. Others react by writing down around this word/words their associations or comments or questions. People can react to the reactions, etc.

- **Painting**

Every participant makes a painting about the theme of the conference. A specific task can be required: emotions, dreams, highlights, etc. Invite a workshop leader who has experience!

- **Photo association**

Put a number of photos on a table (a set of black & white photos is available at the European office) and ask the participants to pick out one or two photos that— according to them—tell something about ... the core of their faith, their SCM, the theme of the conference, etc.

- **Definition**

Each participant is asked to write down a definition of a word, e.g. ‘communication’, or a description of a concept, e.g. ‘the vision of WSCF.’ The participants are asked to share it with

another person and to try and establish a common definition or description. This is repeated in fours, eights, etc. Finally the whole group arrives at one common definition/description.



BIBLE STUDY & WORSHIP

- **'Swedish method'**

A Bible text is copied, one copy for each participant. The text can be read aloud. Then everybody reads it again and makes signs on his or her own copy. For example: ? = I don't understand this sentence, this word, this part ! = I think this is important * = this is moving (or: this irritates me) After about 10–15 minutes, people can share their comments and feelings, and questions can be raised. A theologian may facilitate and help the group further.

FOLLOW-UP

- **Letter of commitment**

Participants write themselves a letter at the end of the conference, in which they point out what they want to do with the experience of the conference (for themselves, for the SCM, for society). The letters are put in envelopes with the addresses and sent to them one month after the conference by the PrepCom or the staff.

- **Action-plan**

Participants make an action-plan for their SCM with an objective that is connected to the theme of the conference.

- **Interviews in pairs.**

They ask each other: what did you learn, what was the most inspiring, what are you going to do with this experience, what are you going to report to your SCM, etc.? This is written down and could be used for the conference newsletter, conference report, SCM magazines, etc.

SAYING GOODBYE AND WEEK-LONG ACTIVITIES

- **Messages to each other**

This could be a nice part of the last evening. Every participant gets a (coloured) A4 paper on his/her back. Pens are available. People walk around and write down their greetings or messages on the backs of their fellow-participants.

- **Secret Friends**

Each person draws the name of another participant. Throughout the week they are asked to find creative ways of making the person feel welcome, giving gifts (with out financial value), or making the person feel special. At the end of the week the secret friends are revealed.

- **Envelopes**

A table of envelopes with each participants name on it are displayed and throughout the week participants can write notes and messages to individuals. At the end of the week the envelopes are given to each participant.