

Makes You Wonder



Series 5: Resources

Leaders Notes and Training The Trainer
by Ian Robinson

I dedicate this series to the memory of

Rev Dr John Mallison,

mentor, idea-mine, generous with resources,

courageous and creative in evangelism,

a man who floated on a raft of prayer.

There are more resources on <http://makesyouwonder.yolasite.com>

including links there to other articles and blog sites.



In this fifth series of *Makes You Wonder*, a truckload of RESOURCES will provide you with essential information –

- how to use all the *Makes You Wonder* material with your group,
- strong discussion-starters,
- *Leaders Training Notes*, and you are encouraged to find ways to use these exercises that we have never thought of and then let us know how it went.

This fifth series is free to download.

There are also many more resources on the [MYW website](http://makesyouwonder.yolasite.com), including discussion forums in which we ask you to share your feedback and ideas. You can access everything there. MakesYouWonder.yolasite.com

And can you help other leaders?

You are encouraged to help others to lead these exercises. Become part of an exciting movement of empowerment and equipping:

- Upload your suggestions. Got an idea for a new exercise?
- Tell us what worked and why.
- Take a photo of your group, upload a pic of your whiteboard for each exercise.

How do I do that? Easy. One way is to “comment”. Each series has its own *Wordpress* blog site. Follow the categories there, so you can comment or feedback generally or comment or feedback on a particular exercise.

Another way is to [email to us](mailto:email@makesyouwonder.yolasite.com), including which part of the MYW web/blogs you think it should go. If in doubt, send it. The sites are moderated to keep flammers off the air, so have no fear about that.



AND we want you to keep updated with the new ideas and new exercises. Simply go to the part on the *Wordpress* page where you request **an RSS feed**. You will need to request RSS for each of the blog sites you want to be updated on. It will not be too much traffic, we don't think.

WHAT MORE?

As well as **Leaders Notes** and **Training The Trainers** guidelines,
there is a heap of other **articles, resources, and prayers from the gospels**.

OR



Follow Ian Robinson on Twitter: #UWAUCAchaplain

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1. INTRODUCTION

YOU ARE NOT HERE FOR SERMONS!

This *Leader's Resource* contains tips and strategies related to over 60 exercises in MYW.

The big idea is to work together creatively. It is NOT about listening to the leader's smarts. Encourage everyone's participation with mind, heart and voice, all brought together by the leader. NOR is it about everyone talking without direction, a 'pooling of ignorance'. The leader is there to facilitate and offer constructive frameworks, gentle push-back, not 'correct answers'. I know some will be challenged by this, but it is a challenge worth meeting. It is the key to empowering others to find their own voice with their own faith in their own worlds.



As you look at each series, we encourage you to choose what you do. We do not usually go linearly one after the other after the other. The leader must select from the options for the group's needs and for the time available. Normally, start with the first two exercises in each series and see what it opens up in people. You can even create or adapt new exercises, once you have got the hang of this – don't forget to share it with us on the MYW website. Your experience will help others.

The Leaders Notes for each exercise are set out to help you when with the group. There are wide margins so you add your own notes, especially in order to tell your own experience as relevant to that part of the exercise. NOTE: stay on the main point! Towards the end of each series, the advice to leaders diminishes. We think you might have got it figured by then.

Here are the main learning methods.

1. Creating Wisdom from a Key Question

The major learning method is "the key question". There are no role-plays. Most "questions" require each person, in a buzz group of three, to have a turn and have ago at answering the question in their own words. The buzz group takes some time to talk it over before the leader gathers everyone's thoughts, by writing and sorting their Feedback into a practical Framework (this is provided). That way, no one gets embarrassed, everyone's thoughts are included, and they are trying new things safely. For managing the feedback into Frameworks, you need a large whiteboard or similar. When the feedback is in the Frame, take some discussion time together. The leader's task is to affirm, categorise and summarise.

2. Opening Options from Mini Case-studies

The second major learning method is situational, using a series of mini case-studies. You don't need a board for these, though you may choose to print off the worksheet. The aim is to spin off fresh possibilities, expand horizons, introduce a new repertoire of possibilities to people's thinking. The leader will affirm, probe further, pull back speculations to the likely or possible, present other possibilities.

3. Use it or lose it - the Assignment and Follow Up

There is an assignment for homework, and it is the most difficult part to accomplish. It is an assignment in hospitality, backed up by Prayer. It is to be undertaken for six weeks from the start of the workshop, then a follow-up meeting. Set the date for the follow-up while still together for the first time. Covenant with the local local coordinator to do this at a set date. The workshop leader should diarise to phone the coordinator and give encouragement. It is so easy to be slack, to conspire in silence together to avoid this. At this follow up meeting of thirty to sixty minutes, only three questions are discussed.

- "What has God done?"
- "What have we learned?"
- "What shall we do next?"

4. Refreshing Paradigms from Bible Study

There are several key bible studies providing paradigms for effective witness. Really key passages are chosen – John 3-4, Luke 4, Matthew 25 and some others. We provide bible verses very often in the exercises, to which you can add, but the point of most exercises is to reflect upon their experience. The reason for this is because some people have received really slanted ideas of what the bible actually says. It is pretty hard to walk with a bias! We want to put them back straight up and walking easier.

Participants Pages

We have provided 'Participants Pages' so marked, but you can choose whether/how/when to distribute them. Some people distract themselves by taking down too many notes, others merely as an aid to concentration. I like to say: "Whatever you have **experienced** by the end of this workshop itself is all you are going to gain for now". They will "outgrow what they learn today in 6-12 months" and will need more stretching exercises from MYW. One person did this workshop four times within a few years and received something different and better each time.

Overall, MYW participants are experiencing the processes of a fairly normal conversation. They are learning how to talk and listen and how to be their Christian selves – that's all they have to do. It is not a small thing. Their words will be valued by others. They will hear themselves making just as much sense as anyone else. They will experience some development of their capacity to converse in faithful and authentic ways. This authentic self will mirror the love of Christ. It will bridge the gap of credibility.

Please fill in the feedback sheets and get them back to us. Ready set go!

2. SOME BASIC NOTES

Before we begin to lead a workshop in faith-sharing, a significant starting assumption is that participants understand basic Christian faith, and have been in a personal relationship with Christ for a while. It regularly happens, however, that an attendee realises in the first time during this workshop that they need to make commitment or conversion. Just do it there and then and move along.

VALUES: The basics become clearer with every exercise.

- Leaders should resist the temptation to set people straight. Affirm what they affirm and let go what they deny.
- Read up the *Makes You Wonder* web and blog sites, and see if there are other leaders' comments that will help you prepare. See page 2 for links.
- This workshop will NOT provide a prescription of "exactly what to say" because that approach will only disempower people. Its particular focus is to grow people's capacity and confidence for a response that integrates heart and mind.



SIZE: The workshop only works where there is a variety of input. Therefore I have found that 8 people is the absolute minimum number, and 25 a good maximum. You can vary this at your own risk, and be prepared to adjust the process. If working with 2 or 3 only, the leader will have to act as a participant, and then add in to the feedback some other observations 'that people sometimes make', using the feedback sheets from the website.

WHO? MYW is suitable for older teens (16+ girls, 18+ boys) and adults of any ethnic group, for groups with a mixture of ethnicity, and different educational levels.

REGISTER: It is strongly suggested that participants be asked to register for the workshop in advance, and that they be charged a modest sum of money above costs. This gets ownership and attention. People with no income can be admitted free.

PERMISSION: Any documents or images in MYW can be copied for the purposes of workshops within your own congregation, team or small group, or in preaching, or in the planning or publicity about them, either in data projection, print or overhead projection. Feel free to add to these with your own selected images or resources. No other use in public is allowed. No other copying by print or electronic is allowed. Therefore, if you as leader travel to a group or church other than your own, you need written permission, or be certified as a trained trainer in MYW (usually through one of our *Train the Trainer* workshops), and they need to obtain their own copies of these materials. The free resources are free.

GOOD LEADERSHIP

HERE ARE SIX QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF EACH AND EVERY TIME THAT YOU LEAD A *MAKES YOU WONDER* EXERCISE.

This is one of the most important things you will ever learn about leadership. After each and every session answer 'yes' or 'no' to these questions. It will tell you if you did it right, irrespective of how people responded.



1. Did I follow the process for this session, and **stick to the point** of this particular exercise (or did I pursue other goals, and if so what were they?)?
2. Did I encourage people's **participation**, affirm their words, allow some silence (or did I talk too much)?
3. Was I **being myself**, making the session my own, and sharing my own personal story with humility and brevity (or was I trying to be someone else)?
4. Did I **stick to time** and leave some things unsaid? (Longer discussions do not always bring benefits in proportion to the time spent.)
5. Did I give a clear and simple **beginning and ending** (or did I keep re-stating what I think I meant if I thought about it sooner...)?
6. Did I explain clearly the **Frameworks** that summarised their responses (does not apply to all sessions but you get what it means)? That is, did I say how they fit together? (Even if you struggle to put people's responses into categories, you can still prepare and explain the Framework.)

That's it. Answer 'yes' to five out of six and you have done that session well. Less than that and you have to do some revision on your leadership style/habits. It may go deep, so get a mentor. If you answer with lots of 'maybe' you must seek out a mentor to discuss your leadership strengths. By all means, ask participants for their feedback , and adapt the feedback sheet if you wish (see page 21).



4. SOME HINTS TO HELP YOU LEAD WELL

WHAT IF WE HAVE CONFLICTS?

What if conflicts of opinion arise in the course, with each other or with the material in the course?

Like all conflict, it is not to be avoided, but acknowledged, and even welcomed. It can be an opportunity to go deeper. It is the edge of an open horizon that is beckoning.

Become curious about the other person's

view, not afraid of it. Here is someone worthy of respect. So are you. Add your view, don't tear down theirs. Look at it from all perspectives. Let a creative thinking process begin, and let there be light!

SOMEONE WITH NO SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES?

It may be more common than we think. A survey in the UK in the seventies and nineties found that 88% of people were having what they themselves called "spiritual experiences", though not necessarily a connection with God or gods. But most felt they couldn't talk to anyone about them. So, while spiritual experience is quite common, talking about is not. No wonder it seems unusual for some of us. While curiosity is high, it does not follow necessarily that the geography of the inner heart is well known. Sensitivity and careful explanation is required.

This is both an intellectual and cultural a challenge. As Bp Leslie Newbiggin pointed out repeatedly, Christianity is always being asked to defend itself, explain its assumptions, bend over backwards to accommodate atheism and all other religions. No one else, and no other field of study is required to do what Christianity is required to do, except possibly politicians. As a consequence, theologians may be overly cautious, more critical than positive in their faith. As a consequence, clergy are trained to be specialists in fine points, and the members of the congregation may follow. It can therefore be harder for some to be sufficiently affirmative, guiding, simple, and to be passionate about the love of God. It need not necessarily be the case, and this IS a generalization, but it is widely true.

BULLET POINT HINTS

- Use people's names. If you are not good with names, use name tags you can read.
- You, the workshop trainer, may feel awkward about not joining in to buzz groups and prayer exercises. I found that if I joined in, it was too hard to keep track of time and to be ready and focussed for the next part of the workshop.
- As you begin each section, bring to mind clearly the aims of this section, and the goal you are trying to achieve.
- Sometimes finish early.
- If doing an all day session, after lunch, when brains go to sleep, do a number of short and active sessions
- Make the morning session the longest - it is the most productive time. Have a morning tea break but then none in the afternoon.
- If doing a week-by-week or fortnightly workshop, leave plenty of time each week to begin with sharing of stories from that week and at the end for repeating one of the prayer disciplines advocated here – e.g. prayer triplets.
- Tell only one or at most two of your own stories each session. Practise to make sure it is brief but conveys its point.
- Vary the pace by adding small sessions here and there between longer sessions.
- Mix the membership of the buzz groups after two or three sessions
- Thank people for their openness towards you, the leader. It is their openness which is making the workshop a success.
- At some point, foreshadow the nasty surprise that some people in the church will not like participants to be bringing new people along. Many have thanked me for this warning later.
- At the end, emphasise that they are at a beginning point. They still need to make more excellent mistakes.

5. ROOM, SPACE, EQUIPMENT – a start to your check- list



This list is a practical how to in the hospitality of leadership. It models the gospel.

1. Hold the workshop in a room that is welcoming, light, airy, with **enough space** for the size of the group including when they are spread a bit into buzz groups. A room which "normally seats forty" (40 square metres) will hold a MYW workshop of twenty.
2. Arrange **chairs in a semi circle**, or at very least a square if they are benches, and during the day keep rearranging them as you want, because chairs move to and fro, and can tend to become straight lines like a bus. This should be resisted. Give people clear lines of vision to the white board or screen, past uprights and other equipment. Allow them space for elbows and access in and out.
3. Make sure you have the screen, projector, whiteboard, paper sheets or whatever in sufficient quantity, and large enough to be visible from the back of the group. Be aware that yellow and orange are hard to read. Use several colours of blue, green, dark red and black. Highlight only with red, for it is hard on the eyes when used a lot. Take some paint-friendly tape or blu-tack if necessary to stick paper sheets up, and work out in advance where and how you will do this (you may need to get permission for stick-ups). Have all these materials ready for easy use.
4. **Bring your MYW Leader's Notes**, your own notes, slides, butchers paper or/and transparencies. Have them set out on a table in sequence and ready for your use. Funny how these obvious things can be forgotten. How do I know?!
5. **Write out the agenda** with approximate times, and coordinate times with organisers, caterers, and participants. You may feel as the workshop proceeds that you should vary your selected topics, just let the others know.
6. It is more comfortable to move to **another room** for tea or coffee breaks, if possible, and leave your room to air.
7. **Straighten up** the chairs and tidy up during breaks, or even better, pre-arrange for your hosts, the local coordinator, to do so. When they return, it looks and feels great and participants feel cared for.

Care of the room is an act of hospitality and models the MYW values before any discussion takes place!



6. SUGGESTED PROGRAMME

Most of *Makes You Wonder* is directed towards Christians who seek to increase their capacity and authenticity in faith sharing. However, some combinations of these sessions are so open-ended that they make a good workshop in spiritual exploration with not-yet-Christians, and we call this a “*Wonder Workshop*”, but maybe you can improve on that title. I will return to this specific option below.

Each module of *Makes You Wonder* has a mixture of exercises, listed under ten topics. Try to use a variety so that participants are stretched to work in multiple ways. Some are short some are long. Some exercises you need to do from beginning to end, some you can cut and paste to your own purposes. You choose. I have some concrete suggestions to make below. If in doubt, do exercise one and two from each series.

The time available is the biggest limiting factor in most places. If there are more participants, each session takes longer. Maybe you have one hour at the church camp. Maybe you have a sermon on a Sunday morning. Usually, when they trust you, people will give you three sessions in their small group. When you are finished that, you can ask if they would like to schedule more sessions. Don't forget that each session must include prayer for the people we know who may come to love Jesus. So, start with one exercise, then ask about more. Do three more, then ask again, and so on. Do each exercise properly, allowing time for people to enter into the question and discussion, which is where the best learning is, do not try to do them as ‘concepts only’.

Below are some suggestions from recent sessions that I have led. You can vary these as much as you like. I ALWAYS write myself a list, with an estimate of how long each topic will go. It is only respectful to stick to time, and so this habit models the value of respect which is so important in faith-sharing.

SOME PROGRAMME SUGGESTIONS

These are only suggestions what you might do in each time slot. It depends on you and them and how many and how much time. The suggestions below demonstrate variety of approaches. Leaders must become aware of their favourite bias.

ONE HOUR ONLY

- Why are you still a Christian?
- Biblical Evangelism

TWENTY MINUTES ONLY

- Finding Parables
- MMMotivations
- How to Help Someone Decide?
- The Gifts we Give
- The Four Loves
- Standstill
- Smell of God

THREE SESSIONS of 90minutes

1. My Story – MMMotivations, Why are still a Christian?
2. Your Story –How to Help Someone Decide? Hearing You.
3. The Story –What was so special? THEN Biblical Paradigms OR Y Question-suffering.

THREE MORE SESSIONS OF 90 Minutes

1. Finding Parables, Imago, Y Question-Hypocrisy,
2. Standstill, Smell of God, Y Question -Evidences
3. Nitpick, Y Question-Sacrifice, Hearing points

Try a *Wonder Workshop*

My experience is that God has been alive and at work in people's lives already. With a bit of help from me and you, they can help reframe their experience, and understand that God is not outside their experience. That can become a sign-post to navigate by.

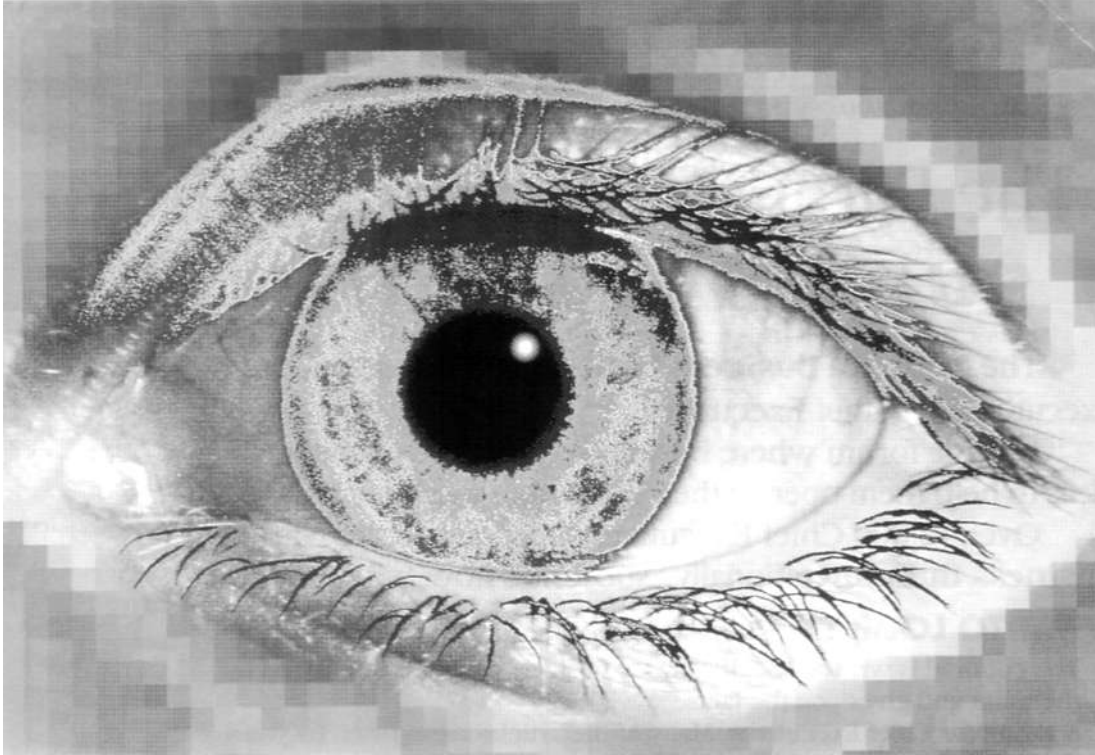
Here is a catch. We have heard that contemporary post-something people are interested in 'spirituality'. However, in my experience, while they may possibly buy a book on the topic, they probably will not front up to talk about it. It is interesting but shy, and not sufficiently motivating.

How can we go forward? The following exercises can become part of a dinner table conversation, or with parents at a play-group (parents) or with op-shop volunteers, or as a devotional with church-agency employees/volunteers. Can you see where this is leading?

For an experiential approach, use any of the *Your Story* sessions except Hearing You.

It is good to make a small start and then see where the real questions take you. Do not plan out a series beyond a beginning two or three topics if no one has said they want them.

There are some more resources to help you in advertising at the end of this series of resources and on the website.



The Wonder Workshop

gentle exercise for the soul

A GENERAL INVITATION

FOR NON-CHURCH PEOPLE

What makes you wonder? If you know the answer, how often do you stop to wonder at it? Sorry but we are just fishing – we all know there is something more.

It has huge outcomes. Our huge rate of youth suicide is acknowledged as primarily a matter of hopelessness rather than homelessness. Increased terrorism closer to home has impacted our minds despite our bravest efforts. Relationships have lost so much resilience that they resemble consumer items with use-by dates.

It is good that in recent decades we have moved away from massive obedience to institutions. The spiritual searching of this generation has come up with more self awareness, which is good. But it still has not satisfied “this longing in our hearts”. We still haven’t found what we are looking for.

We have had church institutions, and church scandals, we have had church unity and church disagreements, we have had new age and ancient wisdom, but we know that we are made for something more than this.

There are signs throughout the last half century that Christianity has been re-learning its own value and contributing in new ways. Keeping the faith, they are changing the structures. Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King are just some of the newsworthy new faces of Christianity on the world stage. As a result, Christianity is growing rapidly in South America, Africa, the Sub Continent, Korea and mainland China. By contrast, the church in the western nations is infected with cynicism and despondency. What have they got that we have not got?

Simply put, the spirituality of Jesus of Nazareth, as recorded for history in the gospels and Acts of the New Testament, is more than a folk tale, more than a cover story, more than a poor man’s crutch. This ancient faith is the wellspring for a thirsty generation. Rather than a doorway into narrowness, it is the door to wide open horizons. Many a new Christian starts noticing the colour in the world for the first time.

The *Wonder Workshop* wants help people to discover this for themselves. We don’t do it by preaching. The WW helps us all to look simply over many of our common life-experiences, and feel the already-present richness of God’s gift and calling upon our lives. Church people need to do it. Non church people need to do it. We will tackle it honestly and with respect. But be warned, if it does its job, *Wonder Workshop* will leave more questions asked than answered. We are all on a journey.

Expressions of Interest to

When

Where

Website for more info:



8. ARRANGING FOR A WORKSHOP

Let's say you have been asked by a neighbouring group to lead them in MYW exercises or a *Wonder Workshop*. How can you go there where you do not people and do that well?

Be warned: In my experience a lot of groups *say* they would like that sort of help, and then do nothing about it, two people show up (the organiser and her dog) and it is all together a frustrating exercise for all concerned. The following tips may help.

When making arrangements to lead a workshop, check through these things thoroughly with the local organisers. Here I will assume it is a local church, so if it is another group, make the appropriate 'translations'.

1. Has a decision been made, including who is the local organiser? Or is this a tentative enquiry about what might be involved? Have they seen the leaflet "How to Organise a MYW workshop", in this Leaders Manual or on the website? Are they wanting to vary anything that is suggested there? Do they have any queries?
2. Are the elders and the minister themselves coming? Who is being invited to come? How are they being invited? Are they being approached personally? Can you prepare lists for personal phone invitation? Do not rely on printed publicity. Don't refer to MYW as another option to add to their lives. Talk about it as a step forward, something we can all gain from, and something we all need to become confident about if the church is to be who we really are into the future. Already in people's minds before you speak there is fear of being found wanting or a dread of bible-bashing or of another churchy programme which in the real world is irrelevant. The proof will be in the pudding.
3. Maximum of 25, minimum of 8 people. Some one is going to ask whether they can only come for part of the workshop. That will be OK, though not ideal. The whole workshop is composed of a number of

exercises, and anyone coming to any one of them will gain something from that one. (I would appreciate it on the day if I knew in advance and if they did not leave part way through a session.) Better to come and gain something than stay away and get nothing.

4. What equipment is needed? It is better to be seated NOT in a church sanctuary, but in a room as relaxed as possible. As facilitator I should be on the same level, not on a stage. I need either a whiteboard at least 6x4feet or a projector screening at least 6x6feet. Let me know which it is and I will bring pens and slides. The room should be comfortable with individual chairs not long pews set in a semi circle of one or more rows , not in straight lines like a bus. Can I have a helper?

5. What hours exactly do you have at your disposal at this event? If they say we have 7-9pm, you do **not** have two hours. Time will be lost for local catch ups, latecomers, teas, washing up, announcements, worship, e.tc. You do not have to have long morning and afternoon breaks, but be informed if the local group considers that they do.

6. There is a follow up to be organised after six weeks. Can we set the tentative date within the overall church calendar and then check in with participants?

7. Ask for participants to register in advance by name, and set a manageable financial fee according to local custom/need, say \$20 per person clear for three sessions (In Australia the red twenty dollar note has the pictures of two leading christians on it!), plus a cost for catering. Why involve money? Two reasons. First, a facilitator may not be paid by some other means for doing this sort of work – they are ‘worthy of their hire’ as scripture says (and believe me, they won’t get rich doing this)! I was told some years ago by a senior corporate trainer that the MYW workshop that he was enjoying was of a standard to command a fee of \$2000 per person per day. It puts \$20 into perspective, doesn’t it. Churches almost never pay commercial rates, so I suggest they take THEIR usual ‘visiting preacher’s fee’, given when they come to lead a one hour service, and use that as their measure. SO, if we are holding a six-hour workshop, charge six times the normal preacher’s fee. Crude but measured.

Secondly, travelling costs for the facilitator are to be borne by the congregation where the workshop is to be held. Agree on this rate, which at its most basic is roughly twice the actual fuel cost, in order to cover servicing and vehicle on-costs. There may be some travel and copying expenses, possibly accomodation. All costs will be underwritten by the congregation, who takes the responsibility of any shortfall. If there is a surplus, you may care to donate it to MYW (through the website-Paypal), and we

will use it for those places where there is a shortfall. In this way we are helping each other to move forward.

8. It is good if the local group can appoint a hospitality-helper or two - to set up the room, take registrations and tidy up after breaks and/or lunch. In this way both you and the participants can just get on with the work. This person may be one who is interested to help but not ready to be a participant.

9. Feedback/evaluation sheets should be distributed at the end of the workshop (see the form in this Manual). The facilitator will read them very soon after, and within one week will report them to the local church leaders, pointing out any requests for further action. Remind them that these requests are now in their hands. Then send to MYW.

10. Say to the organiser 'Please put this workshop as a prayer point in your church notice sheet. Can you ask your praying-people specifically to make the workshop a matter of daily prayer. Will you (coordinator) personally do the same? I too will be in prayer for you. Don't hesitate to contact me about anything you find you are wondering about.'

11. Near to time set for the follow-up meeting, call the local coordinator to see what they are going to do next. If it has all fallen over, name it, and discuss how to go forward.

Many people find one or two of these points hard to discuss, especially the money. Some organisers find it too hard to get down to details. If so, put it in a physical letter, using these eleven points as your basis. You may find you will need to educate the local church in what is involved in something like this.



MAKES YOU WONDER

Feedback Sheet

Can you help us to help others?

Please complete this form for collection at the end of the workshop.

It is anonymous. NO attempt will be made to figure out who said what.

LEADER'S NAME.....

VENUE..... DATE YOUR GENDER M or F

YOUR AGE RANGE Please circle <19 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-69 70+

1. What part did you find most helpful?

2. If this programme was given again I would suggest the following changes be made.

3. If this was a learning assignment, I would give a mark of A+ - D (circle one only).

To my own participation... A+ A B+ B C+ C D

To the leader's facilitation... A+ A B+ B C+ C D

To the whole experience..... A+ A B+ B C+ C D

4. What further help do you feel you need after doing this course?

5. Are you going to pray and follow up in six weeks? Yes/no

Thank you for your help.

OPTIONAL – If you are willing to be contacted in future research on the effectiveness of this workshop or similar, tear this off and hand it in.

Your NAME.....

EMAIL

Thank you.



10. GOING FURTHER

A letter of encouragement to be given to all participants

Congratulations! You have completed some exercises in “Wonder”, discovering your own way of faith-sharing that is powerful, authentic and engaging. Where do you go now?

FIRSTLY, there are some things that only you can do alone.

1. Begin to pray more. Modern culture has trained us to feel that we can live parts of our lives without referring them to the Spirit of God. Day by day, month by month, by discipline and starting again, push back the feeling that you can live your life without walking closely with God.
2. Create good talking points with pictures, posters, books, music etc.. Provoke, initiate and affirm any beauty and kindness. Ask people ‘how are you really?’ and wait for the answer.
3. Act to encourage others to share their faith. You must decide to do this, if your habit is to be shy. Do not permit the conspiracy of silence to retain its hold. Share your stories, even if they are failures, if you share them in hope.

SECONDLY, there are some things that you can do better together.

Invite three friends to share some hospitality of yours. Meet in prayer triplets as you prepare to do so. Expect God to use you as you go out of your way to give love to people and take the opportunities that arise. Pray together for your friends and family. Be deliberate about it. Encourage one another to keep praying.

Share your Christian friends. Create occasions where your non christian friends can spend relaxed time with Christians. They will see the differences between you all and thereby get a clearer picture of what the Spirit might mean to them.

Create events through your church where you can present the beauty and relevance of Christianity along with an invitation to investigate Jesus Christ. Even just a small group of two or three can do it - you cannot get everyone in the church behind it, and waiting for that is just an excuse. It may involve a speaker, presenter, musician, a topic - or it may be none of these. Look at the things you really get

inspired by – do that. It just has to be anything that you really can invite your non- christian friends and christian friends to!

Meet in six weeks after the MYW workshop began. Ask each other only these questions:

- "What has God been doing with us in faith-sharing?"
- "What have we learned? "
- "What more can we learn?"

If the follow-up does not happen, ask questions and say why it really is so. Perhaps:

- "What has God been doing with me in faith-sharing?"
- "What do I learn from the lack of mutual support in this? "
- "What can we do now?"

In worship services and in small groups, ensure that you *always* pray for "the lost", that they become disciples of Jesus, and try to be as specific and deliberate as possible.

Encourage others to do a MYW workshop. Tell them what it was like and how it has helped. How will they know unless you tell them? Will they believe an advertisement or a church newsletter? The personal recommendation is what counts.

No more Maybe's.

Make More Mistakes.



11. TEN WAYS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR CHURCH

Here are some suggestions about how to use MYW exercises in your existing programmes. Start with your own small group, or whoever wants to start. Prove it there first.

1. Sunday church sessions

If your congregation is around fifty or less, like the vast majority of churches in Australia, instead of a sermon, do one of these exercises. Each Sunday do one more, once or twice each month. Some of the sessions can be adapted to sermon input.

2. Regular sessions for a social service team.

To keep the team reminded of the evangelistic edge to all church life, and to increase their capacity to cross over with permission, introduce these exercises to their training, on a regular basis. When “clients” request an explanation of why we do what we do, there is no barrier to what they can say. An imposed talk or a pressure to attend church will be counter-productive. You can put up posters which say “Ask me why?” OR “God loves you and so do I.”

3. Prayers for the Lost in church.

Many churches pray for everything except those whom they would love to see come to follow Jesus. Ask the minister, worship team or whoever you need to, to make it a regular structured and listed part of Sunday’s “prayers for others”. Make them holistic, not just scalp-hunting prayers, an expression of all our love.

4. Say HHii! Month

Also known as the “Cancel Everything” month. Once or twice a year, instead of inviting the evangelist to town, invite the congregation to become the visiting evangelist. They are to invite their friends in, no excuses. Simple as that.

Prepare with special prayer groups, special Sunday prayers, and Prayer Triplets. Set up the sort of special event to which you feel you CAN invite your house guests. Print really nice invitations.

Cancel for the entire month ALL other church group meetings and committee meetings, in order to make time to **Say Hhii!** H=hospitality at home. I= Intercession and Invitation. Get really serious about this, or it will remain an optional extra in their life.

Have an Alpha course or something similar ready to follow up the Say Hhii month, so that people who come to your special event can be invited to attend it. This structure teaches the congregation where their particular responsibility lies.

In summary, the sequence goes: Book up the month of no-meetings. Prepare one special invitational event at the end of that month. Print and distribute really special invitation cards to it. Set up special prayer. Now, stay home with friends or make new friends! Don't be seen at church. Special Event. Follow-up course. Evaluation. Set the dates for the next one.

5. For Group Leaders for Alpha, Emmaus Walk, or similar courses.

Many courses follow the Alpha model of a friendly-dinner and discussion approach, however there is a weakness in the model that MYW addresses. That is, the group leaders are not always at ease, respectful or friendly with their own faith-sharing. The group may be too passive to the DVD talk, or the ill-at-ease leader may talk too much, or answer too many questions. MYW training moves them to the next level, and the effect is multiplied through the groups.

6. A special study series for a small group or a weekend.

Advertise the course for anyone interested, in your church and any others. If you don't get enough the first time, postpone the course and keep going wider until you get ten to enrol. Ask them what they want to do, where their needs are, and select the exercises accordingly.

Take them away for a weekend to do the bulk of it, and then continue to meet for six weeks. Agree from the outset that you will return and do some more within the year. The effect of this is to say that you mean to check up on how you have all continued to implement the learnings.

7. Working with an inter-church team on a mission project.

This works the same as for #6, but they will need to take a bit of time at the beginning to say why their church wants to come and do this. They may already know each personally from the town, through business, schools, sport, etc, but this is different so do not miss it out. It builds a deeper commonality among them. Then, their different emphases and traditions, and ways of praying will not get in the way.

8. In connection with routine family life and working life.

If you are talking about living the faith at home or at work, you will have topics to do with relationships and ethics. Throw in one or two of the MYW case-study exercises too, tailored to the situation. That sense of practical context will help very much.

9. In preparation for involvement in a community festival.

As with preparing mission teams above, the festival team need preparation of not only their programme but their minds and hearts. The casual activities of community festivals can make it seem too hard to "get serious". The relaxed approach of these exercises, especially entry and empty points, will provide ways of conversation, and provide new ideas for the content of your displays.

10. In reviewing the ways you can impact your community.

When you do the exercises, especially the entry and empty points, it may suggest new ways to engage with your community. When you do your church future-planning, someone who has done these exercises may passionately get an idea upon how to reach out. Not just in conversation but in action too. You won't be just doing community welfare work, but entering people's lives with ALL the love of God, full of gentleness and respect.

Am I the only one to worry that something this easy, this authentic, simply can't be impressive? can't bring the changes it describes, can't move people along very far? Don't we need someone impressive, something dramatic? MYW will make you wonder!



TRAINING THE TRAINERS

Research has shown that it is so much better if the skills and exercises in the MYW workshop can be close at hand to every group and congregation. So, we have been equipping others to lead this workshop. This one workshop will not do it all, but it makes real progress and it sets many other good things going.

It is best, in a region or in a denomination, if someone is appointed to be a catalyst for the MYW workshop and as a coordinator of leaders.

IE3

We do not believe that all leadership needs is to reword a few of these pages and copy them to participants and call them leaders. We need three trajectories, of which this resource is only a part.

IE – Inform and Expose: Supply reading, do training, discuss in corridors, THEN take people to another place entirely through hearing a story, or going to see things in action, even if it does not exactly mirror their situation. This exposure is hugely powerful learning.

IE – Inspire and Equip: Pray for people, share your own story, show them scripture on these things THEN provide tools, provide opportunities to experiment, provide events and budget to make them work.

IE – Invest and Empower: Watch them at work, encourage them, support and mentor them THEN put them with *peers* in their area of gifting, provide *parameters* of independent action and reporting and the *perimeters* of their responsibility.

WHOM SHALL WE TRAIN?

The people who can best lead this workshop are usually **not** acknowledged 'evangelists', and usually not professional counsellors (though they are not excluded), but 'teachers' or 'pastors' who have *a heart* for

evangelism, a great desire to 'do the work of an evangelist' as Timothy heard from Paul. It is important that they be able to listen and learn as well as talk about faith sharing. They must have stories of their own to share and some capacity to open their heart to others. They do **not** have to be like Ian Robinson. They do have to be able to understand the frameworks in this workshop, and be able to think in 'categories' in the way they handle group responses. To do this requires a certain capacity for "thinking on your feet".

AUTHORITY IN LOCAL CULTURES

MYW methods have been very good in many cultures, for several reasons, chief of which is this - it starts where people are at, if they will speak it. The leader must not talk too much or lead too little.

Broadly speaking, the processes of the workshop are **not authoritarian**, but empowering. The leader is not the big expert, the participants are. This is not always received happily. This has sometimes made a group feel some initial uncertainty. In those cultures where schooling has been authoritarian, perhaps East Asians, Singaporeans or Pacific Islanders, they may feel they must wait upon the words of the 'teacher'. Among preachers of all languages, to facilitate MYW will be a the strain - long periods of forcing themselves NOT to fill the gap with their own talk. However, once the group have become accustomed to it, they became very enthusiastic for it, and learned a lot.

The level of cross-cultural agreement is to me a little short of a miracle - either we have hit on something which is universally helpful or we have encountered people who are impossibly polite! I think and hope that it is because the categories are framed from biblical theology especially based on the Gospels, so even if people have differing interpretations of scripture, they can go along with the story.

Having made that large claim to be transcultural, some of the specific questions in the exercises may need to be altered to suit local culture. If you are uncertain, do a trial run with **people from your culture who are bi-cultural**. That is, they will grasp its original intent from my Australian English and be able to 'translate' ideas, values, processes and words. Then ask them to review it - ask for their adjustments in content and process. Ask questions like: What are the ways that people express this question in **this** culture? Who among **our people** do you hear these comments from? Age? Gender? Income level? Educational level? What in **our** culture and history has contributed to the gaps of communication we now have? With whom are we ministering well and who is not receiving us well? Are there patterns of obligation and respect in this culture which might prevent a Christian from asking another person to listen to them? How can we work with that? And so on. Please let me know what you discover. Your discoveries may very well be a great gift back into the Australian English version of MYW.

CAN WE ADAPT THIS TO OUR CULTURE?

Yes, please do, you must. Contact MYW and we will show you some ways to do so. We can come and work with you in that project, and keep in touch about it. But it is your project.

THE SCHEDULE FOR TRAINING THE TRAINERS (TT)

If you have advertised for expressions of interest, phone all registrants and ask them why they wish to come, and how have the exercises benefited them in their own witness. All trainees must have been participants in six hours of MYW exercises themselves, with personal benefit. If trainees only wish to come to 'collect' something for the benefit of 'others', ask them to do more MYW exercises until they 'get it' for themselves.

It is better by far if you identify potential leaders and approach them to participate in TT.

The minimum leaders' training schedule requires three hours, assuming they have done six hours of exercises already.

Note: in session three below it is good to have present a few people who are not preparing to be leaders. Pre-arrange this, usually the catering team!

Session 1,

Discuss:

1. "What were the major benefits to you of being a participant in the MYW workshop?" Discuss at a personal narrative level, and observe the diversity.
2. "What must a leader do to ensure that these benefits happen every time?" Receive observations. These can be summarised into the six factors used for evaluating each workshop session in "Good Leadership" p 8 above. These factors are used in the session 3 below.

Session 2

The leader goes step by step in overview through the series and how each section fits together, what its particular aims are, and advises on any particular hints or suggestions.

Session 3.

The trainees are placed into groups of three. Any visitors (not there to be trained as leaders of the workshop) may also be assigned to these groups. To them it will be just like another MYW workshop session, and their presence will in fact help the group to function better.

Each small group is assigned three sessions to lead, and each trainee chooses one of them. It does not matter which one. They then take fifteen minutes preparation time for their session. (Perhaps visitors could bring them coffee now?)

Each one then takes twenty-five minutes to lead their session in their small group only. Some variations from the usual instructions need to be adopted for this TT session to work:

- a. Whereas in the main workshop, there are two separate segments where the buzz groups talk and then feedback on to the Board, in this training session these are done simultaneously.
- b. The small size of the group makes it very hard to gain the usual range of answers. The leaders will therefore have to ask more leading questions, as well as be a contributor themselves. This is quite difficult.
- c. It is obviously not expected with such short preparation time that the trainees will master the process and the content, but it is surprising how much they can manage if they adhere to the six factors of Good Leadership (p8 above).

The Trainer of leaders will circulate briefly to each small group like a "fly on the wall", and help where needed.

The first twenty minutes of this session is for discussion of the Key Question. The last five minutes it suddenly changes to a self-evaluation by the leader and feedback from the group:

- The leader of that session begins to go through each of the six Good Leadership factors, one by one, and offers comment on how well they felt they just did with that factor. Scoring out of ten is a handy way to do this at first, but thereafter it should be yes/no.
- At each factor, the others in the group will give their feedback on the same factor from their view on the receiving end. This removes the tendency to gloss.

How are you going so far? Three trainees in each session, each taking 25 minutes, plus twenty minutes in preparation, and a bit of faffing around, all this should take nearly two hours. Now, 90 minutes more and you are done, as follows.

Session 4. Take time to discuss these questions

- a. First question is not about leadership but as participants. What was it like this time, being a participant in these TT trainee sessions, compared with the time when you were simply a participant in a MYW workshop? Was this one of equal or lesser value to you as a witnessing individual?" Note the answers for the sake of the leaders who probably feel sure they didn't do very well.
- b. "Second question is about you in this leadership practise. What have you learned about leadership of the MYW workshop?"

Session 5.

Discuss the leaders notes about the practicalities of arranging, leading, and following through on a workshop. Refer to the MYW website and the benefits to self and others of reading and contributing to it. (30mins)

Session 6.

Pray for the spread of the gospel throughout the world, and commission each other to the task of authentic community engagement. The End.

SO YOU ARE GOING TO LEAD MYW or WW ?

Feedback Please

CAN YOU HELP US TO HELP OTHERS?

In using this workshop, please feed back to me on these matters. Send them to:
idtr@westnet.com.au or make them as 'comments' on MYW website.

- 1 What suggestions would you like to make about the notes and resources?
- 2 Were you able to **personalize** the material? Any suggestions?
- 3 ON a scale of very bad to very good, how helpful did participants find the exercises?
- 4 Did you find that the course leads people to want to do **more**? What suggestions can you make about these?
- 5 Any other **issues**?
- 6 Are you aware of any **other courses** in this sort of territory?
- 7 What are the **best books** you would recommend - for leaders? for participants?
- 8 What are your comments about the necessary **qualities of a suitable leader** of this course?

- 9 In your view , what the **sort of participant** is this course most suitable for? Most unsuitable for?
- 10 Can you share any “**traveling tips**” for new leaders that you found really worked well?
- 11 Can you share any other “good ways to put it”, good images, or some humour to lighten it up?

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MAKES YOU WONDER



WHY IS IT GOOD FOR CHURCH PEOPLE TO DO THIS COURSE?

Christians need to re-connect with unchurched people, and we need new ways to do this. Why? Here are a few of the reasons that really matter:

In former generations, you could assume that your friends and acquaintances knew something about the Christian basis of our society, its laws and its community values. When people shared their faith, the focus could be on 'personal commitment'.

This simply does not fit any more. We need to come home to our true selves as Christians.

We all know about the great 'declines' - of church attendance, church weddings, scripture in schools, baptisms, Christian values of money and sex, knowledge of scripture, reading of scripture, respect for authority, and the acceptance that religion has a place in a community. This is no Christian society nor is there a general acceptance of the place of religion. It takes us longer to earn trust and to provide basic information of Jesus' life death and resurrection. It takes time to open up and correct the false ideas that are doing the rounds. And how can we discuss the implications when lots of people just don't make any 'commitments' to anything except their mortgage - they just shop and change. It's a consumer society.

Many evangelistic tools, including *Alpha* and *Christianity Explained*, have done a good job, but there are three things needed before people can really gel with them:

1. Many people can't accept that quoting the Bible settles any question. They do not know what it is about, they know it can be quoted to suit your own ends, and therefore they can not yet accept its authority. *Makes You Wonder* does not just quote the Bible, it uses the text of scripture as a source of hope and wisdom. We hope that by doing this honestly, participants will build up a feeling for its value.
2. Many people aren't confident about spiritual stuff. They suspect it might be just your vivid imagination. It may feel like visiting a foreign land - a lot of it doesn't make any sense - and they conclude that they are not the religious type. *Makes You Wonder* asks specific questions about their own experiences and, in the feedback, shows that spiritual qualities and values are already present, fairly self-evident and already within their experience.
3. Many people, even believers, can't see what the God-dimension has to do with normal life. Their faith can't connect with the roles, trials, decisions and conversations of Monday to Saturday. Lost for words, they find it too hard to share their faith in any relevant way. *Makes You Wonder* gives Christians some exposure and experience in talking about faith in new ways that are relevant, human, meaningful, gentle and respectful.

Lastly, no change will happen without a more significant prayerfulness. The widespread resistance to this need is perhaps the clearest indication yet that in the church our theory is good but our practise is poor. We simply cannot take God's mission forward if all we talk about is demographics, community needs, budgets and buildings. If we hope to share our vision with others, Christians need to look into and learn from our own experience - with less censure, more experimentation, more provocation, more biblical and less noise. We might find we are more at peace, more attractive to conversation with others, just more lovely to be around, a goodly place. Such prayer is subversive. Such a peace is infectious.

We need that. We won't get it simply by thinking warmly in this direction. We need to work together to allow fresh light to shine from our experiences. We see the "earthen vessels all too clearly, maybe even cynically. We need to catch a fresh appreciation of the value of "the treasure" inside.

When?

Where?

How?

Registration process?

Contact for questions ?

THE BACK PAGE

Makes You Wonder will help you:

To find your own voice in sharing the faith that you have at the moment
To develop confidence in the power of being simply yourself
To realise afresh how great a gospel we have received
To find fresh and biblical ways to share these discoveries in small steps with those who have no church background.

This series is one of five.

- MY STORY
- YOUR STORY
- OUR STORY
- THE STORY
- RESOURCES

For contact details and more resources see www.makesyouwonder.yolasite.com

For updated leaders notes, where to feedback and short instructive video:

<http://myw1.wordpress.com>

<http://myw2.wordpress.com>

<http://myw3.wordpress.com>

<http://myw4.wordpress.com>

<http://mywresources.wordpress.com>

Or email us at idthr@westnet.com.au

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