

Exercise 1: Personal experience discussion

This discussion begins with an exercise on our spiritual journeys.

Following the instructions below, complete the Life-line Exercise on the next page. Your facilitator will give you five minutes to work on this.

Life-Line Exercise

1) Take some time to think back over your life. Select five to ten key events and people that have had an impact on you, for better or worse, and place a word or symbol for each in the appropriate place on the drawing found on the next page. The middle line divides your life-line into segments by age and represents the middle ground or status quo in your satisfaction with it. If an event or person brought growth and positive movement in your life, put its word or symbol somewhere above the line at the appropriate age range. If the opposite is true, if it had a negative impact, place that word or symbol below the line. Once you have indicated the most important five to ten events in your life, connect the events with a line.

Notice the path the line takes in relation to the middle line.

2) Look at the life-line again and consider your relationship to God over the course of your life. Take a different color marker and draw a new line that represents the story of your relationship with God. It should move above the midline to mark the times when you were growing closer to God and below it when God (or perhaps you) seemed distant or absent.

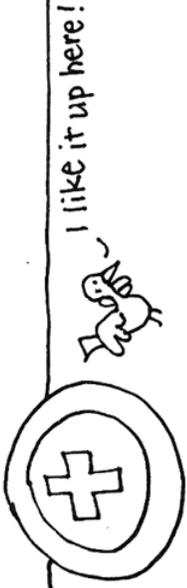
Take a moment to note where key events and people on the first line are related to your experience of the nearness or absence of God.

After five minutes, team members are divided into small groups. The groups are asked to:

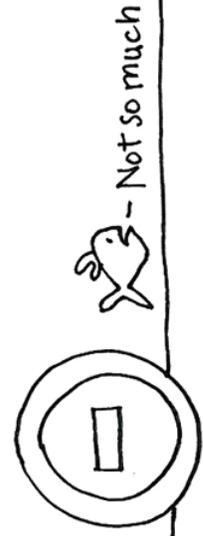
- Focus on where you were five years ago. Share a description of your life at that time with the group, including major events and the way your faith journey weaves through them (two-three minutes for each person).
- Listen for common drivers in the ways faith grows or diminishes as each person speaks.

When everyone has spoken, the groups consider these questions:

- Is anyone in the same place they were five years ago?
- Find a word or two to describe the difference in your faith today compared to five years ago.



I like it up here!



- Not so much

LINE ONE: KEY EVENTS AND PEOPLE ALONG YOUR JOURNEY : Satisfaction with your life in the world
Use one color to indicate

LINE TWO: YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO GOD / YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY: Satisfaction with your life with God
Use another color