An Easy Icebreaker

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Session Summary

Phones can be taboo at camp, but they're also an important tool. As my grandma used to say: "Everything in moderation, including moderation!" It is in that spirit that I present to you this easy and fun icebreaker activity, where the only prop needed is each person's smartphone. (*I want to recognize here that not everyone has a smartphone. Understand your audience before presenting this activity. Perhaps have a couple of old iPods or wifi-connected old smartphones on hand for people that do not have smartphones.)

Activity Title: Smartphone Scrapbook

Time needed:

- Anywhere between 10-30 minutes (this is a very flexible activity!)
- This activity could be done as early as the first day of staff training, or anytime throughout training (including in-service trainings during the season)

Supplies needed:

- Each participant needs a smartphone or tablet, preferably their own

Purpose:

- This is a safe getting-to-know-you activity where participants can share as much or as little as they would like about themselves in small pairs or pods
- Participants start to bond as they learn more about each other and get a glimpse into each others' lives

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Setup:

- Ask each participant to get their phone. Assure participants that no one else will touch their phone except for them.
- Teach participants the partner periscope: If you are looking for a partner during this activity at any point, stick your arm up in the air as if it were a periscope and look for another periscope or periscope(s)

Playing the Game:

- This game is somewhat similar to "Mingle Mingle". Announce that folks need to get in groups of a certain number. Try to keep the group sizes small (between 2-4 people). You can do a countdown to try to move them quickly into groups, or play music and say they need to be in groups by the time the music stops. Remind them to use the periscope
- Once folks are in their groups, ask them to take out their smartphones and find a photo to "show and tell" to the group that answers one of the prompts at the bottom of these instructions (you choose the prompt)
- Explain that this photo could be from their photo gallery (preferred); it could be a photo that they find by doing a quick internet search, or could be a photo they stage and take right in this moment.
- Give them 30 seconds to one minute to find or create the photo.
- Once everyone has their photo locked in, each group member will "show and tell" their photo to the rest of their group.
- Once the round is done, you will do a new round with a new size of group and a new prompt. Instruct the groups to break up and find a new group of a new size ("*OK, now you have thirty seconds to get into new groups of approximately 3 people*!")
- You can play as many rounds as you would like; but always remember to stop the game while it is still fun (in other words, before people get bored of it/while people are still wanting more!!)

Possible Prompts: (feel free to make up your own as well!)

- A photo or representation of your younger self
- A photo or representation of one of the best meals you've ever eaten
- A photo or representation of your life when you are not at camp
- A photo or representation of why you chose to work at camp
- A photo or representation of an animal that is significant to you

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- A photo or representation of a person who is significant to you
- A photo or representation of something that you would absolutely need if you were stranded on a deserted island
- A photo or representation of something about you that very few people would guess
- A photo or representation of what you would be doing if camp didn't exist
- A photo or representation of a place that is significant to you

Debrief:

- At the end of the activity, you have the option to do a quick debrief with just 2-3 questions. Questions to the whole group could include:
    - Questions about the game and how the game's setup applies to camp, such as: why was it important that people had choice in how they participated? What mechanisms were set up in the game to promote choice? In what ways were the questions asked inclusive?
    - Questions about the experience for them as a group member: Do you feel or think differently about coworkers after playing this game? How will this game help you be a better camp staff member? A better coworker?

More:

See more of Kurtz's favorite icebreakers here.

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