

**Eight ideas for building community
in Small Groups
during the **We vs Me** series.**

We're learning in the **We vs Me** series that community is one of the major priorities of the gospel, and of small groups. There are many different things that contribute to the deepening of community. But one of the most important things is *taking out the time to really get to know each other.*

So for these three weeks in small groups, create the environments to really get to know each other. We leave it up to the small group leaders to figure out how to do this, but we offer a few ideas for you to choose from if you don't have better ideas...

- ***Start each time with a meal.*** During the meal ask people to briefly share what they found most relevant to their lives in the Sunday message of the **We vs Me** series.
- ***Put everyone on the Hot Seat over the three weeks.*** As a group brainstorm the 8-10 open-ended questions that will really help you to get to know a person, and then ask those questions of each person on the Hot Seat. Allow people the freedom not to answer certain questions. Briefly pray for each person after they share. If you have a big group then divide your group up into two and have two hot seats going in different rooms.
- ***Get everyone to share their Life Graphs over the three weeks.*** Give everyone a piece of paper and a pen. Instruct them to break up their lives into five year blocks. And in each block to write down the key events of their lives that were shaping them as people. Then instruct them to put it in graph form. The horizontal line of the graph is the time-line of their life. The vertical line reflects the emotional tempo of their life, from sadness to happiness. On this graph plot the listed defining points of your life. It could take 45 minutes for each person to do their graph so there won't be much time to share in that first week. Briefly pray for each person after they share.

- *Do Affirmation circle.* This is a good one if your group already know each other very well. Focus on one person at a time, and as many people as want to, share something positive about the person – what they appreciate, respect, enjoy, thank God for in, and want to encourage more of in that person.
- *Separate the guys and the girls.* Generally guys bond in a different way to girls, and very often the nature of their struggles are similar. Perhaps have one night where the guys gather to bond and pray, and the girls gather to bond and pray. They can decide the week before what they can do on the night that they feel will help them to bond most effectively.
- *Plan something memorable and community-building.* Organise a fun night or maybe even a fun half-day (on a Saturday). Board games, charades, car chases, treasure hunts, Christmas party in July, whatever. Invite the group to come up with ideas. These would also be great events to invite new people to.
- *Get everyone to bring an object or photo that means much to them.* On one week prepare everyone to bring an object in their room that means a lot to them, and why. Then let everyone share. On another week prepare everyone to bring 2 or 3 photographs that reveal the most about them (e.g. childhood, school life, special person, special achievement, special holiday) – use them as a way of getting to know each other.
- *Have communion together.* Some time in the meeting, either during the meal, or at the end, break bread together and read this verse from the Message in 1 Corinthians 10 – ‘Because there is one loaf, our many-ness becomes one-ness—Christ doesn't become fragmented in us. Rather, we become unified in him’.