

EXPLORING THE BIG QUESTIONS WORKSHOP PROCESS FOR FACILITATORS

Workshop groups should be no more than 15 people in one room. If there are more than that there should be a second facilitator and a second room. Make enough copies of each topic sheet for each person to have one.

1. INTRODUCTIONS

Each person introduces her/himself with name, why they decided to participate, and the perspective from which they will speak:

- A religious tradition
- Several religious traditions
- Personal insights and experience

2. GUIDELINES FOR DIALOGUE

- A. Have one person represent dialogue, another represent debate. Have them read in turn from the sheet, "Comparison of Dialogue and Debate."
- B. In dialogue we have a responsibility to tell our story but also to listen attentively and respectfully to the stories of others. Ask the group to name blocks to good listening. These might include things like "I came to tell my story, not to listen to anyone else's," "I already know what they're going to say based on how they identified themselves," or "While someone else is talking I'm thinking of what I'm going to say next."
- C. Review the sheet "The Use of Language."

3. EXPLORE THE TOPICS

Read the "Introduction" and take questions.

Distribute the first sheet. The sheets are in a particular order and should be addressed that way unless you personally come to the conclusion that you prefer a different order. Distribute only one sheet at a time, so that people don't read ahead while you're holding the dialogue.

Have each person read a paragraph. Let the group know in advance that anyone who doesn't want to read can "pass." Let people raise comments or questions throughout the reading. They should identify again the perspective from which their comments come. The object is to invite as many perspectives as possible on the topic.

The workshop is not about *The Urantia Book*, but about having a dialogue on the topics using the book's contributions as a springboard. People will probably ask questions about the book itself. Stick with the dialogue process but let them know that you'll be happy to give anyone who wants one an information sheet about the book at the end of the workshop.

When finished with the first topic, hand out the sheet for the second topic and repeat the process. Cover as many topics as the time allows.