



DIALOGUES for SONS AND DAUGHTERS

WORKBOOK

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*To all Sons and Daughters of the World:
The Hope of the Future!*

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PROLOGUE

I have written this booklet at the request of the "Sons and Daughters Encounter" pioneers, who have made this experience in the United States, the Philippines and Japan.

It is a "workbook" at the service of all those teenagers and young adults who want to involve themselves in the revolution of love which the Spirit of God is promoting and fanning across the world, starting with families.

It is intended to be a **manual for meetings** of sons and daughters who are anxious to share their experiences, be they personal, family, religious or social, and who want to help each other to spread this spirit among their relatives, friends and neighbors.

There are 15 opportunities for an encounters with one's self, with God, with the members of one's own family and with other sons and daughters; and to prepare to become the creators of new families of the future.

These then are 15 outlines for personal reflection, at the service of all the sons and daughters of our time, without distinction of race, culture, religion or social status.

They are a *call*...

They are a *challenge*...

They are a *promise*...

They are a *commitment*...

They are a *hope*...

INSTRUCTIONS

To obtain the best results from the use of this workbook:

1. **Form groups** of teenagers and young adults interested in reaching the goals set forth in the prologue of this manual.
2. **Each member** of the group should have a copy of this manual for personal use.
3. There is **one** outline for each of the 15 meetings, which should be followed in the order given.
4. Meetings should be held every **two** weeks.
5. Ideally an established group should consist of no less than five members. From among the entire group, small groups should consist of no less than four, no more than six members, with a balance of boys and girls in each small group.
6. **Agree** on the day, time and meeting place, as well as on the Step to be followed.
7. A few days **before** the meeting date, each member should prepare thoroughly and in writing answering all questions on the outline selected.
8. The day of the meeting be on time. Try to rotate the meeting place, each time in someone else's home.
9. If you can't make a meeting, let the others know.
10. when everyone has arrived, start with a **song and/or a prayer**. Then select one member to be the moderator or coordinator for the meeting.
11. Every one should be concerned with both giving and receiving, while openly sharing personal experiences.
12. Avoid anything resembling **arguments**. It's not a matter of who is right or wrong, or who knows more, but of what is the truth and how we can help to live it and spread it to others.
13. Our attitude should be one of **self-criticism**, that is, sharing about ourselves within our families and neighborhood. We are not meeting to criticize anyone, but to improve ourselves, and be ready to help others.
14. **The last point** of each meeting should be to agree on the date, time, place and Step for the next meeting.

1. WHO WE ARE

Orientation

Faced with a society which programs us, exploits us and manipulates us to follow its materialistic interests, we must react. We must find our own identity. We must find ourselves - who we are - beginning with a deep encounter with ourselves. It is necessary, then, that we take an honest and sincere look at God's Plan revealed in life and in the Bible, to discover ourselves, and to answer with our own lives the small and big questions of our time.

Personal Reflection

1. How do people see us? (Strong and weak points which they see in us - as sons and daughters and as teenagers and young adults.)
2. How do our parents, brothers and sisters and grandparents see us? (What do they say about us?)
3. How do we see ourselves as individuals? (Positive and negative attributes.)
4. How does God see us? (Genesis 1:26-31 and 2:4-25)

Personal Commitment

- a) In what way do I need to improve or change?
- b) How will I accomplish this?

2. OUR NEEDS

Orientation

Needs do not require definitions. Some needs, especially those related to our body are basic and clear: eating, sleeping, talking, laughing, crying, working... Other needs are less clear, such as those which refer to our relationships with other people. They are less clear because they relate to our deepest feelings. Sometimes we are aware of them; sometimes we are not. The use of drugs, for example, has its roots in our basic needs which aren't being met. Therefore it is very important that we discover which are our real needs, because they greatly affect our behavior and our own happiness.

Personal Reflection

1. What are our five main needs as sons and daughters, teenagers and young adults?
2. What is our most urgent need? Why?
3. Do we need God? Why?
4. What message does God give us in Chapter 3 of Genesis?

Personal Commitment

- a) What is my most urgent personal need?
- b) How do I meet, or intend to meet, that need from now on?

3. OUR PROBLEMS

Orientation

Today, we hear about problems from everywhere: from books, from newspapers — in the cities and in the suburbs, in organizations and in movements, in neighborhoods and in parishes, in homes and in the streets, in the movies and on TV. The temptation is to conclude that life is full of problems and therefore, too complicated. But that isn't true! Life is not just a lot of problems to be solved. Life is a wonderful mystery which we must learn how to live. It is with this attitude that we must confront these so-called problems.

Personal Reflection

1. What are our five main problems?
2. What is the most glaring of these five problems? Why?
3. What relationship do our problems have with God?
4. What message does God give us in Chapter 4 of Genesis?

Personal Commitment

- a) What is my most outstanding problem?
- b) How am I going to face my most outstanding problem? (Concretely)

4. OUR VALUES

Orientation

We can define values as ideals, goals and norms to which we give priority and which therefore govern our behavior. Our values are the “why” of our actions. They are those things which we consider most important, which we appreciate the most – giving them priority – those things for which we accept certain sacrifices and for which deprive ourselves of things. If we want to learn what our values are all we have to do is determine how we spend our *money*, our *time* and our *energies*.

Personal Reflection

1. What do we teenagers and young adults of today value the most? (Make a list.)
2. What are our three most important values? Why?
3. What values have our parents implanted in us?
4. What values are our teachers and pastors implanting in us?
5. What values does our society offer to us?
6. What values does God teach us in the Bible?

Personal Commitment

- a) What do I think I should make my three most important values from now on?
- b) How will I make sure to accomplish this?

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5. OUR WORRIES

Orientation

We have many worries, but possibly the greatest one, and one which might actually be the cause of many of the others is the “generation gap”; that is, the often conflicting systems of values of our elders and our own as teenagers and young adults. We are really living in two different worlds, in our homes, in school, at work, even in church and most social functions. Of course this has always been the case, but today the “gap” is deeper than ever. Can we go on like this, or do we start building “bridges”, bridges of communication? How can we build them? This is the greatest challenge of our times!

Personal Reflection

1. What is our main worry as teenagers and young adults in today's world?
2. What is our parents' main worry? Why?
3. What is the main worry of our civil leaders? Why?
4. What is the main worry of our religious leaders? Why?
5. What is God's message in Ecclesiastes 40:1-27?

Personal Commitment

- a) How can we build a bridge between adults and ourselves?

6. OUR EXPERIENCES

Orientation

Our life experiences are the essence of human existence. Our personal experience of life has three dimensions: past, present and future. In general, adults believe themselves experts on life - living the present based on the past and worried about the future. By contrast, teenagers and young adults live fully in the present, are not interested in the past and are being hurled rapidly toward the future. Life experiences, then are a key factor in the dialogue between generations. All we need to do is find them within ourselves, and be ready to share them.

Personal Reflection

1. What was the best life experience in my childhood?
2. What was my best family experience?
3. What was my most difficult family experience?
4. What was my best religious experience?
5. What was my best social experience?

Personal Commitment

- a) Which of these five experiences has had the most positive effect on my present life, and most likely will influence my future?
- b) How could I share my experiences with my parents and my brothers and sisters?

7. OUR FUTURE

Orientation

For centuries, mankind has firmly believed that if we devote our efforts and energies toward securing food, protecting ourselves from the elements, and obtaining material things for our well being we would attain happiness. Today these dreams are becoming a reality. And yet, millions of men and women feel unhappy and unfulfilled. We must change this dim outlook! We must free ourselves from this materialistic and worldly thinking which threatens to destroy our planet. We must replace it with the foundations of a New Society where Sincerity and Authenticity, Justice and Liberty, Confidence and Peace, Love and Unity reign — a society where these will be the superior values of everyone and for everyone; that is, a Society according to God's Plan. We must be witnesses of Hope!

Personal Reflection

1. What will hopefully be the three main characteristics of the Society of the Future?
2. Will there be a Third World War? Why? Why not?
3. How should a Society according to God's Plan be?
4. How shall we take the "step" from the present state of violence to the Love and Unity which should reign in a Society according to God's Plan?
5. What is God's message in Jeremiah 1:4-19?

Personal Commitment

- a) What do I have to change in my personal life to become a Witness of Hope?
- b) How will I achieve it?

8. OUR PRESENT FAMILIES

Orientation

Our families are changing along with a rapidly changing society. Most of our families are going through a deep crisis of transformation and growth. Today, each one of our families is being challenged to wake up and take stock of themselves — as families. Today, each one of our families is receiving a call from God — Who is knocking at the door — to discover our vocation and our mission in today's society. Today, each family is a hope for the future of humanity!

Personal Reflection

1. What are the main symptoms or signs that our families are undergoing a deep crisis of transformation?
2. What are the most important problems of our present families?
3. What are the most precious values of our present families?
4. What message from God do we find in the Bible for today's families?

Personal Commitment

- a) What am I presently doing for my family?
- b) What can I and should I do from now on?
- c) How will I do it?

9. FAMILY INTERCOMMUNICATION

Orientation

One of the biggest problems of our present families is the lack of communication among family members. The consequences of this lack are extremely serious, not only for each family member, but also for the larger group of families which forms society and religions. The family was intended to be the school for interpersonal communication for each man and for each woman who came into this world. Many things have changed and will continue to change for our families. Deep and loving communication is the necessary key for a positive transformation, a key which should never be missing.

Personal Reflection

- 1. Do we feel that interpersonal communication, person to person, within our own family is important? Why?
- 2. How is the interpersonal communication in the families we know? Why is it that way?
- 3. How is the interpersonal communication in my own family? Why?
- 4. Does the Bible carry a message for interpersonal communication in the family?
What is it?

Personal Commitment

- a) What concrete steps am I taking to communicate with each member of my family?
- b) What and how can I improve in this area?

10. FAMILY INTER-RELATIONSHIPS

Orientation

The family is the basic and fundamental relationship of persons. This is essential for an authentic family. Therein is found the important and far-reaching interpersonal relationship – person to person in each one of our families. God has created us to live not “as islands” but in interpersonal relationship, i.e., in a family. If we succeed, we are happy. If not, we cannot grow as persons and we become dissatisfied, looking outside our home for that which we cannot find within. But the flights, the escapes, the evasions and drugs are no solution for this growing problem which millions of men and women in all parts of the world suffer from today.

Personal Reflection

1. How are my interpersonal relations with each one of the members of my family?
2. With which member of my family do I have the best relationship? Why?
3. With which member of my family do I have the most difficult relationship? Why?
- ⁴ What does God teach us in the Bible about interpersonal relationships?

Personal Commitment

- a) How can I improve my personal relationship with each member of my family?
- b) How can we help each other in this important and common endeavor?

11. FAMILY PRAYER

Orientation

God is not “something”. God is “Someone”. He is the Being par excellence on whom we all depend. He is our Creator and the Lord of heaven and earth. Therefore, He should be Number One in each one of our families. Our relationship with Him should be personal and direct, just like with our family. Is it really so in our families? Today, millions of families are trying to change and reform without counting on God. Can they succeed? Isn't this abandonment of God the reason for the failure of so many families of our time?

Personal Reflection

1. Is God really Number One in our family? What signs do we find of this priority?
2. How is my personal and direct relationship with God? Why?
3. How is my family's direct relationship with God? Why?
4. What is God's message in Genesis 11:1-9?

Personal Commitment

- A. How can I improve my personal and direct relationship with God?

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- B. How can I improve my family's direct relationship with God?
- C. What can I do so that God will become Number One in my family?
- D. How can we help each other in this exciting adventure to open our families to God?

12. FAMILY OPENNESS

Orientation

We must unite in order to become open and be better able to communicate and radiate family energy in our neighborhood, in our church or temple, in the people with whom we come in contact. If we remain closed within ourselves we will die as individual persons, as married couples, as families and as communities. Everything that remains closed will, in time, wither and die. We must ask God to breathe His Spirit into our home so that we will discover our vocation and our mission in today's society,

As families, we are God's fires. The fire inside each one of our families has not been meant to be kept selfishly, but to spread to other families in our neighborhood, to illuminate and to communicate love's warmth and friendship to every person who crosses our path as we journey towards the Promised Land which God promised to His people.

Personal Reflection

1. Is my family open and dynamic? List both positive and negative indications?
2. What is my family bringing to our neighborhood, our community, our society?
3. What is my family contributing to our church or temple — or religion?
4. Is my family ready to influence (as a family) homes, neighborhoods, churches or temples and communities?
5. What is God's message in Genesis 12:1-9?

Personal Commitment

- A. What can I do to encourage my family to be more open and dynamic?
- B. What can we do together to get our families to be more influential in our neighborhoods, churches or temples, communities — even our country?
- C. How can we accomplish this?

13. OUR FUTURE FAMILIES

Orientation

Our present families are not the goal of our lives. They are just the springboard from which we shall launch ourselves to create for each of us our future family. This is God's commandment: "And man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall unite to his wife, and they shall become one flesh". One day, we'll give a strong hug to our parents and brothers and sisters to begin the exciting adventure of building a new family. How will our future family be? Everything, or almost everything, depends on each one of us. These future families are already inside us, like small but very powerful seeds, planted by God to launch a revolution of Love in the history of mankind.

Personal Reflection

1. What would we want the families of the future to be like?
2. What would we want marriages to be like in the future?
3. What would we want parents to be like in the future?
4. What would we want our sons and daughters to be like?
5. What is God's message to each one of us as revealed in Jeremiah 1:4-10?

Personal Commitment

- a) What do I have to change or correct in my personal life to prepare myself better to become the creator of a new family in the near future?
- b) How could and should we help each other to lay strong and everlasting foundations for our future families?

14. TODAY'S BOYS

Orientation

What are today's boys like? Let's look into this subject together to see if we can help consider a positive way to help boys improve ourselves. We have to face reality in order to draw personal conclusions, as well as those of the group. If *we* do not do it, no one is going to do it for us. Therefore, let's be honest and friendly in our sharing.

Personal Reflection

- 1 What do I like most about today's boys?
2. What do I like least about today's boys?
3. What kind of boys would I like them to be?
4. What message does God give us in Ezekiel 37:1-14'?

Personal Commitment

- a) How will I personally respond to the call God is making to me in Ezekiel 37:1-14?
- b) How could we, and should we, help to respond sincerely and bravely to God's call?

15. TODAY'S GIRLS

Orientation

"What are today's girls like?" They are certainly quite different from yesterday's girls. Are we better off, or worse off? What are our qualities and virtues? What are our defects? What is our potential? Do we influence the behavior of today's boys? Let's go deeper and have a friendly sharing.

Personal Reflection

- 1. What do I like most about today's girls?
- 2. What do I like least about today's girls?
- 3. What would I like today's girls to be?
- 4. What message does God give us in Isaiah 55:1-13?

Personal Commitment

- A. How will I personally respond to the call God is making to me in Isaiah 55:1-13?
- B. How can we help each other to respond as a group to God's call?
- C. How can we bring God's Word to other sons and daughters like ourselves?