



## PROCESSING QUESTIONS for ENC ACTIVITIES

Leading discussions where cadets can reflect on an experience and draw connections has a profound effect on their growth & development, especially in areas such as resiliency, leadership development, character development, confidence, and even passing an academic test.

### Observation

When preparing to lead a reflective discussion after an activity, it is best to observe the participants doing the activity. Write down notes on things that would be great to discuss after the activity and then choose questions that would lead the cadets to reflection on those specific things.

Things to keep an eye out for:

- Who is leading/following (successfully or poorly)?
- Frustrations
- Have they made a plan, and clearly communicated that plan?
- How is communication?
- Negative interactions (rudeness, ignoring someone, etc.)
- Listening skills, respectfulness, cooperation.
- The evolution of the activity.
- The key thing that helped them come together as a group.

Observing the activity will give you insight into areas where they struggled (competing leaders, not enough followers, or not having a cohesive plan, etc.) and where they were successful (listening and evaluating each member's idea, clear communication, etc.). Incorporate these into your discussion. During a team-building activity, **it's extremely important, but sometimes difficult, to avoid giving them hints on how to improve during the activity** (i.e. *Do you think a plan would help?*). The point is they get there on their own. Now, after sufficient time, if you see that they aren't getting there, it's best to pause the activity and do a mini reflection to help them see that a plan would be helpful, but it's best to avoid just telling them.

### Leading a discussion

Your purpose is to guide the conversation to a place where cadets have an opportunity to identify their successes and struggles.

Choose a few of the most important successes/failures that you observed and ask questions that would lead cadets to identify these things. It's important that cadets have a space to self-reflect, and that you don't just list off all the things you saw.

For example, during a Team Leadership Problem (TLP) one of the things you noticed is that one of your quieter cadets (we'll call him Cadet Smith) took a leadership role when they normally don't. During the group discussion no one has brought it up, so you might ask: "Who assumed leadership roles during the activity?" The most obvious cadets will be called out first but keep asking until someone identifies Cadet Smith. If no one does you could say, "Cadet Smith, did you feel like you took a leadership role at any point?" Give him time to reflect, if nothing comes you could ask the group. Did anyone see Cadet Smith take the lead in any part of the activity? If no one volunteers, then you could add your insight at this point. When something important happens during an activity, you want to be sure to address it during the reflection.

Below are examples of questions that *could* be utilized for particular activities. However, don't hesitate to pick and choose what questions would best serve the group at any given moment. "Processing Questions by Topic" resource page (attached) has lots of questions to help you build a discussion that reflects the experience your cadets just had. The discussion could be as long or as short as you wish.

### **Leadership Reaction Course (LRC) / Team Leadership Problems (TLPs)**

Team building activities are designed to challenge cadets and help them develop new skills. Reflection is a key part of internalizing these skills.

- Can you name a feeling you had at any point in completing the activity (consider – mad, glad, sad, or scared)?
- Who assumed leadership roles during the activity?
- What were the behaviors that you described as showing leadership?
- Who followed the leader even if you weren't sure that the idea would work? Why?
- Did anyone try to lead the group, but felt they were unsuccessful? What were some possible reasons for this? How did it feel to be disregarded?
- Who assumed a follower role at times throughout the activity? How did it feel?
- How did it feel to follow different leaders?
- How were group decisions made in completing the activity?
- How did it feel to be heard when you made a suggestion?
- What did you do today of which you are particularly proud?
- What skills are you working to improve?

### **Obstacle Course**

Obstacle courses often combine individual abilities with teamwork, collaboration and trust. Taking a moment to reflect on each of these helps cadets identify their strengths and specific areas they can improve (and how).

- How are you feeling right now about this activity?
- How do you imagine others felt toward you at various times during the activity? Were these feelings expressed?
- What feelings were expressed non-verbally in the group?
- How did cooperative behavior lead to successfully completing the activity?
- Did you think anyone was blocking the group from cooperating? Explain.
- How can you cooperate in other areas of your life?
- Does anyone feel successful/unsuccessful? Why?
- What steps can you take to be more successful in the future?
- Can you give examples of when you trusted someone in the group? Explain.
- How do you increase your level of trust for someone?
- What did you do today of which you are particularly proud?
- How is this activity a metaphor for real life?

## **Flight Opportunities**

Encampment offers many new and unique experiences for cadets. Taking a moment to reflect on them can help cadets identify how they engaged with new things.

- Was this the first time in an aircraft for anyone? Or this specific type of aircraft?
- What emotions were you feeling before the flight? And now?
- Was there something that surprised you about the experience?
- Why do you feel differently now?
- For those who were scared/stressed, how did you manage that stress/anxiety?
- What did you learn from this activity?
- Is there anything you learned today that you can take into your life outside of CAP?

## **Physical Training (PT)**

A discussion after PT can help cadets identify areas for improvement, and how to actually improve. It also can help them understand that physical activity creates physiological changes in the body (lifted mood, feeling energized, etc.)

- How does your physical body feel after PT?
- How is your mood?
- Why do you think that is?
- Did anyone struggle in any areas this morning?
- Did you learn something today that you can use tomorrow to improve?
- Does anyone have any suggestion on how they can improve this, once they are at home?
- Did anyone have any new successes this morning? Explain.
- Why do you think we do PT every day?
- What areas of life are affected by your physical health? What would/wouldn't you be able to do with a different physical health status?

## **Stand By Inspections (Uniforms & Sleeping Quarters)**

- How did it feel to be at attention while the inspectors were commenting on things?
- Why do you think we did so well/poorly?
- How can we improve for tomorrow?
- What is the point of... (insert specific task – making bed, evenly spacing clothes, etc.).
- How might this translate to your life outside of CAP?

## **Aerospace Activities**

Reflecting after aerospace (or any learning activity) can help cadets process the meaning they have made from the information given.

- How are you feeling about the activity we just did? Excited, bored, etc.
- Did you learn anything that excited you?
- Why was that exciting?
- How can you learn more about this topic?
- What careers are related to this activity?

## **Barracks Time/Squadron Time**

- How did today go?
- What was something new you learned about yourself today?
- What was something you struggled with today?
- How did you overcome that?
- Did anyone do something that was stressful or scary?
- How did you manage that stress? Was that successful?
- Can anybody identify another way that we could handle stress in that situation?

## **Quick Debriefing Tools**

- **Rose, Bud, Thorn:** This is a good end of the day activity. Ask cadets to think of one positive experience (Rose) from the day, one negative experience (Thorn) from the day, and one new insight/goal, or what they are looking forward to tomorrow (Bud).
- **One-Word Whip:** Give everyone a moment to think of one word to describe how they are feeling, their day, accomplishment, etc. Then go around and have everyone share that word/phrase. Participants can “whip-it” to the next person by pointing at them and making a whip sound.
- **Fist to five:** With their eyes closed students hold up a fist or any number of fingers of one hand to identify how they feel about a certain question (e.g. how well did we do on our goal to communicate better?). 0 fingers - poor/bad 5 fingers – excellent. Ask follow up questions regarding the different opinions.
- **Postcards, Emotion Cards:** Lay the cards out in the middle of the circle. Ask participants to pick a card that represents how they feel about the activity, the group, their personal role in the group, a strength, area of growth etc. Make cards: Cut index cards in half and write an emotion on each card.



## PROCESSING QUESTIONS by TOPIC

### Communicating Effectively

- Can anyone give an example of when you thought you communicated effectively with someone else in the group? (Consider verbal and non-verbal communication)
- How did you know that what you communicated was understood? (Consider different types of feedback)
- What could the communicator do differently next time to give a clearer message
- What could the message receiver do differently next time to understand the message?
- How many different ways were used to communicate messages?
- Which ways were most effective? Why?
- Did you learn something about communication that will be helpful later? If so, what?

### Expressing appropriate feelings

- Can you name a feeling you had at any point in completing the activity (consider – mad, glad, sad, or scared)? Where in your body did you feel it most?
- What personal beliefs were responsible for generating that feeling? (What was the main thought behind the feeling?)
- Did you express that feeling to others? If not, what did you do with the feeling?
- Do you usually express feelings or suppress them?
- How do you imagine others felt toward you at various times during the activity? Were these feelings expressed?
- What types of feelings are easiest to express? Most difficult?
- What feelings were expressed non-verbally in the group?

### Leading Others

- Who assumed leadership roles during the activity?
- What were the behaviors that you described as showing leadership?
- How did the group respond to these leadership behaviors?
- Who followed the leader even if you weren't sure that the idea would work? Why?
- Did the leadership role shift to other people during the activity? Who thought they were taking the leadership role? How did you do it?
- Did anyone try to lead the group, but felt they were unsuccessful? What were some possible reasons for this? How did it feel to be disregarded?

### Following Others

- Who assumed a follower role at times throughout the activity? How did it feel?
- How did it feel to follow different leaders?
- Do you consider yourself a good follower? Was this an important role in the group today?
- How does refusal to follow affect the leadership role?
- What are the traits of a good follower?
- How can you improve your ability to follow in the future?

### Making Group Decisions

- How were group decisions made in completing the activity?
- Were you satisfied with the ways decisions were made? Explain.
- Did the group arrive at any decisions through group consensus (some didn't get their first choice, but they could "live" with the decision)?
- Did everyone in the group express an opinion when a choice was available? Why/why not?
- What is the best way for this group to make decisions? Explain.
- Do you respond in similar ways in other groups?
- What did you like about how the group made decisions? What didn't you like?

### **Respecting Human Commonalities**

- How are you like some of the others in the group?
- Were these commonalities a help to the group in completing their task? Explain.
- Were these commonalities a hindrance to the group in completing their task? Explain.
- Do you think you have other things in common with some of the group members that you haven't found yet?

### **Cooperating**

- Can you think of specific examples of when the group cooperated in completing the activity?
- How did it feel to cooperate?
- Do you cooperate in most things you do?
- What are the rewards of cooperating?
- How did cooperative behavior lead to successfully completing the activity?
- How can you cooperate in other areas of your life?
- Did you think anyone was blocking the group from cooperating? Explain.

### **Respecting Human Differences**

- How are you different from some of the others in the group?
- How do these differences strengthen the group as a whole?
- When do differences in people in a group prevent reaching certain objectives?
- What would this group be like if there were very few differences in people? How would you feel if this were so?
- In what instances did being different help and hinder the group members from reaching their objectives?

### **Listening**

- Who made suggestions for completing the activity?
- Were all of these suggestions heard? Explain.
- Which suggestions were acted upon? Why were the other suggestions ignored?
- How did it feel to be heard when you made a suggestion?
- What interfered with your ability to listen to others? How can this interference be overcome?
- Did you prevent yourself from listening well? How?

### **Trusting the Group**

- Can you give examples of when you trusted someone in the group? Explain.
- Is it easier to trust some people and not others? Explain.
- Can you think of examples when trusting someone could not have been a good idea?
- How do you increase your level of trust for someone?
- On a scale of 1-10, rate how much trust you have in the group as a whole. Can you explain your rating?
- What did you do today that deserves the trust of others?
- How does the amount of fear you feel affect your trust of others?

### **Closure Questions**

- What did you learn about others?
- How do you feel about yourself and others?
- What new questions do you have about yourself and others?
- What did you do today of which you are particularly proud?
- What skill are you working to improve?
- How can you use what you learned in other life situations?
- Would you do anything differently if you were starting the activity again with this group?
- What would you like to say to the group members?