



AIM: A pilgrimage / walk and talk where the participants get the opportunity to share their life stories.



Participants: 2 - 40



Duration: 1-3 hours



Required Material: a list of questions (if needed)



Category: Dialogue exercise / inter-cultural, inter-faith

THINGS TO CONSIDER

- A. It is important to explain and prepare the participants for the seriousness of the pilgrimage and to encourage them to have the courage to share and be open with one another.
- B. This exercise is an exercise that is relevant for the end of a week or three- day seminar. It would be difficult to do with a large group that do not know each other and have not had the chance to form any trust yet.
- C. If possible, the facilitator should form pair up participants in twos based on age, religion, personality etc. This is only possible if the facilitator knows the group and has a sense of who would benefit from mutual sharing.
- D. Some people have difficulty in sharing their personal faith story, so give the participants a number of questions that may help them get started on their sharing. Also, for people who do not adhere to any faith or religion, they too have a story of how they came about believing in the values/ideology they have in life.
- E. This exercise is not an exercise in which the participants try to convince each other or compare religions or discuss their religions. It is a sharing of the depth of their faith. We listen, we share, we offer interest and understanding, we trust each other with the deepest hope and faith in our hearts. That cannot be discussed, only shared.

STEPS	
Preparation	<p>Introduce/prepare the pilgrimage/exercise by sharing how the major religions all have traditions of pilgrimage and pilgrimage sites. The facilitator can share examples from Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Hinduism, etc. Share how walking and journeying with others through the landscape of one's faith is part of the inner dialogue and journey towards a deeper relationship with God and with the person of the other faith.</p> <p>Divide the participants into groups of two that you have formed beforehand. Send them off two by two and give them a list of questions they can get started on.</p>
Activity (1-2 hours)	<p>The pilgrims walk off two by two. They can go wherever they like, but should not stay in the same area as the others. They should preferably walk and once in a while sit for a break. They have been given a chance to share their faith story with another person as well as listen to the story of their pilgrim partner. Encourage the pilgrims to take it seriously. Give them a list of questions that may help them get started on their sharing. If they don't need it, that is also ok.</p> <p>Questions could be:</p> <p>Which religious tradition are you born in to?</p> <p>Do you remember the first time you prayed and what you prayed?</p> <p>Who taught you how to pray and worship?</p> <p>Do you share your religious and spiritual questions in your family?</p> <p>When was the first time you remember having doubts, questions or concerns regarding your faith and do you have these questions regularly?</p> <p>Have you gone through a faith crisis?</p> <p>Have you had times in your life where your faith has carried you through a difficult time and given you hope and encouragement?</p> <p>How has your faith formed and shaped you and your life and relationships?</p> <p>How do you hope your faith will evolve in the future?</p>
Evaluation (Over lunch or dinner)	<p>When the pilgrims return, it is a good idea to invite them for lunch or dinner, to celebrate their return from their pilgrimage.</p>

	<p>Encourage the pilgrims to have their lunch/dinner together with their pilgrim partner.</p> <p>The sharing they have done is between the two and is not for plenary discussion or sharing.</p> <p>As a facilitator, it is important to receive them when they return from their pilgrimage.</p>
Conclusion	<p>When the group gathers again you can spend some time asking the participants if they benefitted from their pilgrimage, without sharing details of what they heard from their partner. It is important to encourage confidentiality, but each person can share something about their own experience during the pilgrimage and what they have learnt about themselves.</p> <p>End the common sharing by repeating the aim of the exercise and how you hope that they have experienced a glimpse of how spiritual dialogue and sharing can deepen our relationships.</p>