

Ice Breakers:

When people show up at your group, they are likely bringing with them the stresses and distractions from their day...which can make it hard to get a meaningful conversation started. That is where a good icebreaker can come in handy.

3 simple but effective icebreakers are:

1. Playing one round of Balderdash. A ridiculous sounding word is given and everyone in the group comes up with a definition. Then, all the definitions are read, and people have to guess the correct meaning. It's a lot of fun, gets people thinking, and only takes about 2-3 minutes.

2. Open-ended questions are a great way to get people to loosen up. There are a lot of cool books and resources with these types of questions. One collection of cool questions is from www.tabletopics.com. "Who would you like to trade places with for one month?" "In which activity would you like a lesson from an expert?" and "If you were to own a fabulously impractical car what would it be?" are just a few of the randomly cool questions in their set.

3. Food...having dinner or snacks before your study time is sometimes the most organic way to break the ice with people. On nights when our group has decided not to have food it has been strangely quiet. When we have dinner, it's like we're at a 10-year college reunion.

Try some and let me know how they worked.