FORGE

FORGE DORM CLASS

Youth Roundtable

Facilitator Guide

Eight one-hour Roundtables, led by FORGE mentors

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How Youth Roundtable Works

Why This Class Exists

FORGE is the mentor-building class: 36 weeks, three phases, for the men who will become certified peer mentors. It is not the only class in the dorm. A FORGE dorm runs shorter classes for everyone who lives there, and FORGE mentors teach them. Youth Roundtable is one of those dorm classes.

It is built for the younger men. Many of them came in young, carry long sentences, and hear more about what they did than about what they are worth. The dorm's FORGE facilitators said what the class is for in their own words: offer these men some kind of hope, and guide young guys away from gang life and toward building themselves as good a life as possible, even if it is in prison.

Youth Roundtable does that by talking, planning and doing together. Eight weekly meetings around one table: what a man's value is, how to speak up, how to treat people, where he is headed, who he stays connected to, and how to lead without a title. In between, the group plans and runs real things for the dorm, a Game Day and a series of tournaments, so the leadership is practiced, not just discussed.

Who It's For

- **Built for younger men, open to anyone.** Both FORGE facilitators who reviewed the plan for a younger men's class chose "no age limit, but built for younger men." An older man who wants to sit at the table is welcome.
- **Any man living in the FORGE dorm** can join. He does not have to be in FORGE.
- **Group size: 10 to 15 men.** Big enough for a real roundtable, small enough that every man talks every week.
- **Closed groups.** A group starts together at Roundtable 1 and finishes together at Roundtable 8. A man who moves in after Roundtable 2 joins the next group. Until then, a mentor meets him, explains the class, and gives him a Journal to read.

Who Leads It

- **Two FORGE mentors co-facilitate** every Roundtable: one leads, one keeps time, watches the room and takes the notes. Where possible, at least one of them is a younger man; the facilitators said the class should be taught by younger people. A FORGE participant in Phase 2 or 3 can co-facilitate as teaching practice.
- **A staff sponsor** (the counselor, chaplain or whoever the facility names) approves the class, Game Day, the tournaments, any outside sponsors, and anything that involves food, prizes or movement. Nothing in this guide happens without that approval.
- **Facilitators do not have to be experts.** This guide is written for a mentor who has never taught it. Every Roundtable has what to say, in boxes marked *Facilitator*. Use your own words once you know where it's going.

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Format

- **Length:** 8 Roundtables, one a week
- **Each Roundtable:** 60 minutes
- **Setting:** chairs in a circle, or around tables pushed together, and one talking piece
- **Outside class time:** Game Day (planned in Roundtable 3) and a tournament series (set in Roundtable 4), both with staff approval
- **What each man has:** his Roundtable Journal and a pen or pencil

Roundtables are named by number, never by a day of the week: different dorms will meet on different days. Say "next Roundtable" or "in Roundtable 6."

Every Roundtable Follows the Same Shape

Part	Time	What happens
Opening Circle	10 min	Opening words said together. A check-in question on the day's topic, talking piece around the circle.
Frame the Topic	10 min	The facilitator sets up the day's topic in a few minutes: a story, a question, a short idea.
The Roundtable	25 min	Open discussion with the talking piece and the day's questions. This is the heart of the class.
Journal	10 min	Each man works his Journal page for the day. Some read theirs aloud.
Close	5 min	One thing each man is taking with him, the week's challenge, and what's next.

Roundtables 3 and 4 bend the shape: Roundtable 3 is a planning session, and Roundtable 4 is a meeting over a meal if the staff sponsor allows it.

The Eight Roundtables

#	Title	The big question	Journal page
1	What Is Value?	What do I bring that nobody can take from me?	My Value
2	Finding Your Voice	What makes it hard to speak up, and how do I do it with respect?	One Thing I Wish People Understood

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#	Title	The big question	Journal page
3	Game Day: Leading a Team	How do we plan something real for the dorm, together?	Game Day Plan
4	The Lunch Meeting: Friendship and Healthy Relationships	Who's really with me, and who's using me?	Events Calendar and What a Real Friend Does
5	Respect: Three Kinds	How do I respect myself, the man next to me, and people who aren't like me?	Respect Check
6	Your Future: Goals and Aspirations	Where do I see myself in five years, three years, one year?	My 5-3-1 and My Vision Board
7	Family Ties and a Work Ethic	Who am I staying connected to, and how do I show up every day?	My Connections and My Work Ethic
8	Leadership Starts with You	Can I be a leader without a title?	A Problem I Can Help Solve, and What I'm Taking With Me

The four topics the group previews in Roundtable 2 each get their own day later: Finding Your Voice (2), Friendship and Healthy Relationships (4), Purpose, Dreams and Goals (6), and Leadership Starts with You (8).

The Opening Words

Each Roundtable opens with the group saying these words together. They are a starting draft; in Roundtable 1 the group can change them, and whatever the group settles on is printed inside the front of each Journal by hand.

> **I came to this table with value nobody can take from me.**
>
> **I'll use my voice with respect, and I'll listen when it's not my turn.**
>
> **What's not positive stays at the door.**
>
> **I'm building a good life wherever I stand, and I'm leading where I am.**

Roundtable Agreements

The group makes its own agreements in Roundtable 1, the way FORGE does. Agreements that usually come up:

- What's said at the table stays at the table, with the safety exceptions below
- One voice at a time: whoever holds the talking piece has the floor
- You can always pass
- Respect, even when you disagree
- No case talk, no names of people who aren't here, no business from the yard

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- Call people in, not out: talk about the behavior, not the man
- Be on time, and stay the whole hour
- What's not positive stays at the door

Limits of Confidentiality

Read this aloud in Roundtable 1, and again any time someone new sits in:

> **Facilitator:**
> *"What's shared at this table stays at this table. It doesn't become gossip in the dorm, and it doesn't get used against anybody. But I'll be straight about the limits. If someone shares something that's an immediate safety risk, a weapon, a plan to hurt someone, a plan to hurt himself, or someone being abused, I have to act on it. I won't ignore a safety issue. Outside of that, what you share here is yours."*

If a man says something that falls under the limits, talk with him after class if it is safe to, and then go to your staff sponsor that day. If anyone is in danger right now, go to staff right now.

Running a Good Roundtable

A roundtable is not a lecture. The facilitator talks the least. Your job is to ask, listen, and keep it safe and positive.

- **Use the talking piece.** It slows the room down and gives the quiet men a turn.
- **Ask, then wait.** Silence after a question is men thinking. Count to ten in your head before you say anything.
- **Follow up.** "Say more about that." "What did that look like?" "Who else has been there?"
- **Bring it back to the man.** When talk drifts to "people" and "they," ask "What about you?"
- **Passing is real.** Never push a man who passes. Check in with him after class.
- **Keep it positive, not fake.** Hard things can be said at this table. Bragging, tearing someone down and glorifying the street stay at the door.
- **You don't need the answer.** "I don't know. What do the rest of you think?" is a good facilitator line.

Hot Topics

Gangs. Some men at the table are affiliated, or are being pulled. Never ask a man about his affiliation, and never let anyone call someone out at the table. Talk about pressure, loyalty and choices in general terms. A man who wants out, or who is being pressured, gets a private conversation with a mentor after class, and a mentor who knows when to bring in staff.

Race and where people are from. Roundtable 5 takes this on directly. Keep it about respect and understanding, not about which group is better.

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Staff and the system. Complaints will come up. Let a man be heard in a sentence or two, then bring it back: "What part of that is in your control?" The class is not the place to organize against anyone.

Cases and sentences. No case talk at the table. A man can say his sentence is long; nobody asks what he did.

What We Say About the Future, and What We Never Say

Many of these men have long sentences. Some cannot be paroled under Georgia law as it stands. So the class never promises parole, early release or a date. What it says is true for every man at the table:

- **Your value is real right now**, not when you get out.
- **A good life can be built where you are.** Education, work, faith, family, being the man others trust.
- **Be ready.** Laws and policies do change. When they do, the men whose files show growth are the men who are ready.

Game Day and the Tournaments

Roundtable 3 plans a Game Day; Roundtable 4 sets a series of tournaments for the weeks after. These are the class's practice field: men lead committees, keep their word and run something for other people.

Rules that are not up to the group:

- **The staff sponsor approves every event**: the date, the place, the games, any food, any prizes and any outside sponsor.
- **No betting. No gambling. No debts.** Nothing changes hands between men because of a game. A man who bets on a Roundtable game is off the event.
- **Prizes and donations only through the facility's approved channel.** Outside sponsors give through the staff sponsor or the chaplain, never to a man directly.
- **Every game the facility allows, and only those.** Table games, card games, board games, and video games if the dorm has them.
- **Winning is fine; humiliating is not.** Trash talk that turns personal ends the game.

The Roundtable Journal

Each man gets a Roundtable Journal: the opening words, the agreements, and one or two pages for each Roundtable, with the day's questions and room to write. The Journal is his to keep. Facilitators never collect it or read it without asking.

A man who doesn't read or write well can work his page out loud with a partner who writes for him, or draw it. That counts the same.

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Completion

- A man completes Youth Roundtable by attending **at least 6 of the 8 Roundtables, including Roundtable 8**, and taking a real part in Game Day or one tournament (playing counts; helping run it counts more).
- Completion is recognized at Roundtable 8 with a certificate.
- The facilitators give the list of men who completed to the staff sponsor, to be recorded in the man's file (SCRIBE).
- A man who misses Roundtable 8 finishes it at the start of the next group.

Builds on FORGE

Facilitators are FORGE mentors, and each Roundtable draws on something they have already learned. Go back to these sessions in your own FORGE materials to prepare:

Roundtable	Draws on FORGE
1. What Is Value?	Week 1 (Session 2: Building the Container, group agreements); Week 10 (Session 29: Finding Purpose)
2. Finding Your Voice	Week 5 (Session 13: Active Listening; Session 14: Communication Styles)
3. Game Day	Week 9 (Session 25: Problem-Solving Framework); Week 14 (Session 42: Lesson Planning)
4. Friendship	Week 8 (Session 24: Building Pro-Social Relationships); Week 18 (Session 53: Gambling Debt Creating Tension)
5. Respect	Week 8 (Session 22: Empathy Development); Week 18 (Session 54: Racial Tension in Shared Space)
6. Your Future	Week 10 (Session 28: Growth Mindset; Session 29: Finding Purpose)
7. Family Ties and a Work Ethic	Week 22 (Session 66: Health, Wellness, and Relationships); Week 7 (Session 19: Personal Accountability)
8. Leadership	Week 1 (Session 3: Service Over Self); Week 13 (Session 37: What Makes a Good Mentor)

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Roundtable 1: What Is Value?

Facilitator Notes for Roundtable 1

The first Roundtable sets the table, literally. The men find out what this class is, who's leading it, and that it is theirs: they make the agreements, they can change the opening words, and the talking is done by them, not to them. Then comes the question the whole class stands on: **what is a man's value?** Inside, worth gets measured by things that can be taken away: reputation, who you run with, money on your books, how feared you are. That's price, not value. This Roundtable names six kinds of value that nobody can take from a man: his talents, his skills, his knowledge, his experience, his ethics, and his character and mannerism. Many of these men have heard for years what they did. Today they start naming what they bring. Keep it real, keep it moving, and make sure every man says something about himself before he leaves.

What to Watch For

"I ain't got nothing." Some men will say they have no value, half joking. Don't argue. Give examples from the board and from what you've seen: "I've watched you help guys write letters. That's a skill." Let the table add to it. Nothing lands harder than another man naming your value.

Value as fear. "My value is nobody messes with me." Don't shame it; that kept some men alive. Ask: "Can that be taken from you? What happens when somebody younger and bigger comes along?" Then: "What about you can't be taken?"

The quiet ones. First meetings are hard for quiet men. The talking piece helps. If a man passes, that's fine. Make sure you speak to him before he leaves.

Testing. Someone may test whether the agreements are real: a side conversation, a joke at another man's expense. Handle it calmly the first time, by pointing to the agreement the group just made. The way you handle the first test is how the table will run.

Common Challenges

"This is soft." "Maybe. Or maybe knowing what you're worth is the hardest thing in here. Sit with us one time and decide."

"Value doesn't matter. I got a long time to do." "Long time is exactly why it matters. You're going to spend those years being somebody. This class is about who."

"Why are y'all teaching this? You're locked up too." "That's why. I'm not up here because I'm better. I'm up here because somebody did this for me."

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Preparing for This Roundtable

- Decide which co-facilitator leads and which keeps time and takes notes.
- Write the six kinds of value on the board or a sheet of paper before the men arrive: **Talents · Skills · Knowledge · Experience · Ethics · Character and Mannerism**.
- Have a blank sheet ready to write the group's agreements on.
- Bring a talking piece: anything that's easy to pass and allowed in the dorm.
- Have a Journal and a pencil for every man, plus a few spares.
- Know the name of your staff sponsor, so you can tell the men who approved the class.

Roundtable 1 Overview

Purpose: Open the class, make the group's agreements, and help each man name the value he brings, so the next seven weeks have something to build on.

From the activity chart: Introduction to Youth Roundtable, goals and objectives for the 8 weeks. Theme: "What is value?" Development of talents, skills, knowledge base, experience, ethics, character and mannerism.

Builds on FORGE: Week 1 (Session 2: Building the Container, group agreements) and Week 10 (Session 29: Finding Purpose).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or paper with the six kinds of value written on it
- Blank sheet for the agreements
- A Roundtable Journal and pencil for every man

Learning Objectives

By the end of this Roundtable, the men will be able to:

1. Say what Youth Roundtable is, how it runs and what the next seven weeks hold
2. Name the group agreements they made together and the limits of confidentiality
3. Tell the difference between price (what can be taken) and value (what can't)
4. Name the six kinds of value and give an example of each
5. Name at least one value they bring, and one they want to build during the class

Roundtable 1 Checklist

☐ Six kinds of value on the board before the men arrive

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- ☐ Every man introduced himself by name and one thing he's good at
- ☐ What Youth Roundtable is, and the 8 Roundtables, explained
- ☐ Opening words read together, and the group told it can change them
- ☐ Group agreements made and written down
- ☐ Limits of confidentiality read aloud
- ☐ Price vs. value taught; six kinds of value taught
- ☐ Roundtable discussion held; every man spoke or passed
- ☐ My Value page started in every Journal
- ☐ Closing round: one word for what each man brings
- ☐ Attendance recorded

Roundtable Plan

Opening Circle (12 minutes)

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in your hand.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Welcome to Youth Roundtable. I'm [name], and this is [co-facilitator]. We're FORGE mentors, and we're going to be at this table with you for eight weeks.*
>
> *This is not a class where somebody stands up front and talks at you. It's a roundtable. Everybody at this table gets a voice, and the talking piece is how we do it: whoever's holding it has the floor. When you're done, pass it on.*
>
> *Let's start simple. Say your name, and one thing you're good at. Anything. Cooking, cards, drawing, making people laugh, fixing things. I'll go first."*

Go first, then pass the talking piece around the circle. Keep your own answer short and real; the men will match it.

Facilitator note: Your co-facilitator writes down each man's name and what he said he's good at. You'll use those later in the Roundtable.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Here's what this class is. Eight Roundtables, one a week, an hour each. We'll talk about your value, finding your voice, respect, your future, your family, and leading without a title. In the middle, we're going to plan a Game Day for the dorm and run some tournaments, and you're going to be the ones running them. The staff sponsor, [name], has approved the class.*
>
> *Every Roundtable starts with a few words we say together. They're in the front of your Journal. Let's read them once, all together."*

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Read the opening words together (front page of the Journal). Then:

> *"Those are a draft. If this group wants to change a line, we'll change it. Think about it, and bring it up any time this week or next."*

Our Agreements (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Every table needs agreements. Not rules from me: promises we make to each other about how we treat each other here. What do you need from the men at this table, so you can be real in here?"*

Take answers with the talking piece. Write each one down on the sheet. If they don't come up, add:

- One voice at a time; you can always pass
- No case talk, and no names of people who aren't here
- What's not positive stays at the door

Read the limits of confidentiality (from How Youth Roundtable Works) out loud:

> *"What's shared at this table stays at this table. It doesn't become gossip in the dorm, and it doesn't get used against anybody. But I'll be straight about the limits. If someone shares something that's an immediate safety risk, a weapon, a plan to hurt someone, a plan to hurt himself, or someone being abused, I have to act on it. I won't ignore a safety issue. Outside of that, what you share here is yours."*

Read the agreements back. Ask: "Can everybody live with these?" Wait for every man to nod or say yes.

> *"These are yours. You made them. When somebody breaks one, it's not me policing you. It's the table holding each other to what we said."*

Facilitator note: After class, copy the agreements onto a clean sheet. Bring them every Roundtable, and have the men copy them into the Agreements page of the Journal next time.

Frame the Topic: Price and Value (8 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Question for the table, quick answers, no talking piece: **in here, what makes a man worth something?** What do people go by?"*

Take four or five answers fast. Expect things like: reputation, who you run with, money on your books, being feared, your hands, your clique. Write them on one side of the board under the word **PRICE**.

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> *"Look at that list. Every one of those can be taken from you. A transfer. A lockdown. Somebody tougher shows up. Your people stop sending money. Your clique moves on without you. That's **price**: what you're worth on a given day, in somebody else's eyes.*
>
> ***Value** is different. Value is what you bring that nobody can take. There are six kinds, and they're on the board."*

Walk through the six, one sentence and one example each. Use examples from the names-and-good-at round when you can ("Like [name] said, cooking. That's a skill.").

> *"**Talents**: what comes natural to you. Drawing, a good ear for music, being quick with numbers, making people laugh.*
>
> ***Skills**: what you learned by doing it. Cooking, cutting hair, a trade, writing letters for guys who can't.*
>
> ***Knowledge**: what you know. The Bible, the law library, history, how an engine works. Even what the street taught you can become knowledge that keeps a younger man from making your mistake.*
>
> ***Experience**: what you've lived through. Including the mistakes. A man who's been through something can help the next man through it.*
>
> ***Ethics**: what you stand for. Keeping your word. Not taking advantage of somebody weaker.*
>
> ***Character and mannerism**: how you carry yourself. How you talk to people, your patience, your manners, how you act when nobody's watching.*
>
> *Price goes up and down. Value you build, and it stays with you, in here and out there."*

The Roundtable (18 minutes)

Pass the talking piece. Ask one question at a time. You won't get to all of them; two or three good ones are enough.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"First question. **Think of somebody you respect. Not for money, not for fear. What was their value?**"*

After a full round, choose from these:

1. "What's something people get wrong about what you're worth?"
2. "Look at the six on the board. Which one are you strongest in? Which one do you want to grow?"
3. "Has the way you see your own value changed since you came in? How?"
4. "Can a man's value grow in here? What does that look like?"
5. "What value do you see in the man next to you that he might not say about himself?"

Facilitator moves:

- When a man says "I don't know," try: "What would your grandmother say you're good at?"
- When someone gives a price answer ("My value is my reputation"), ask the table: "Price or value?" Let them sort it.

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- Use question 5 near the end if the energy is good. It's often the moment the room changes.

Facilitator note: Listen for men who can only name what they did wrong. Don't fix it in front of everyone. Note it, and make sure a mentor talks with him this week.

Journal: My Value (8 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Journal to My Value. There are six boxes, one for each kind. Write at least one thing in every box. If a box is hard, ask the man next to you what he'd put there for you.*
>
> *At the bottom, write one value you want to build during these eight weeks."*

Co-facilitator and facilitator circulate. Help anyone who's stuck by asking, not telling: "What do guys come to you for?" "What have you gotten better at since you came in?"

Ask two or three men to read one box aloud if they're willing. Thank them by name.

Close (4 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Closing round.* ***One word for what you bring to this table.*** *Just one word."*

Pass the talking piece around the circle.

> *"Here's your challenge this week:* ***notice one kind of value in somebody else, and tell him.*** *Out loud, to his face. 'You're patient with people.' 'You're good at explaining things.' Watch what it does.*
>
> *Next Roundtable: finding your voice. What makes it hard to speak up, and how to stand up for yourself with respect. Bring your Journal. See you then."*

After the Roundtable: record attendance. Copy the group's agreements onto a clean sheet. Note any man who struggled to name anything about himself, or who said something that needs a follow-up, and make sure a mentor talks with him before the next Roundtable.

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Roundtable 2: Finding Your Voice

Facilitator Notes for Roundtable 2

Last week the men named their value. This week they practice saying something true out loud. Finding your voice means confidence, self-expression and speaking up. Inside, all three carry risk. Speak up and you might look weak, get labeled, get tested or get ignored. Stay quiet too long and things build until they come out the wrong way. Most young men have learned two settings: say nothing, or explode. This Roundtable gives them a third: say it straight, with respect, at the right time. It borrows the four communication styles and the "I" statement from FORGE Week 5. Then it gives every man a chance to use his voice at the table, with the chart's activity: **share one thing you wish people understood about you.** For a lot of these men, that sentence is the first time anyone has asked. The Roundtable ends with a preview of the topics still to come, so the men see where the class is headed.

What to Watch For

"Speaking up" heard as "snitching." Some men will hear this topic as being told to tell on people. Be clear: this is about speaking for yourself, your needs, your limits, your feelings. Nobody at this table is asked to talk about anybody else.

Volume mistaken for voice. The loudest man at the table isn't necessarily the one with a voice. Notice the quiet men who speak once and say something real. Name it when it happens.

Real danger behind "I can't speak up." Sometimes a man can't speak up because someone is pressuring, threatening or using him. Don't dig into it at the table. Talk to him privately after class, and bring in your staff sponsor if he's in danger.

Heavy shares in the activity. "One thing I wish people understood" can open up something deep: grief, abuse, a child he's never met. Thank him, don't analyze it, and check on him after class.

Common Challenges

"In here, you keep your mouth shut. That's how you survive." "Sometimes that's right. Part of finding your voice is knowing when quiet is the smart move. The other part is knowing when quiet is just fear. Today's about telling the difference."

"Respectful? Nobody's respectful to me." "Then you get to be the one who decides how you talk anyway. Respect isn't a trade. It's who you are."

"I don't have anything to share." "Then pass for now. Somebody else might say yours."

Preparing for This Roundtable

- Bring the group's agreements from Roundtable 1, copied clean, and tape them where everyone can see.

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- Write the four communication styles on the board: **Passive · Aggressive · Passive-Aggressive · Assertive**.
- Under them, write the "I" statement: **"I feel ___ when ___ because ___."**
- Decide who goes first in the activity share. It should be a facilitator, and it should be real.
- Look over the topic list for the Preview: Finding Your Voice, Friendship and Healthy Relationships, Purpose, Dreams and Goals, Leadership Starts with You.

Roundtable 2 Overview

Purpose: Help each man see what makes it hard to speak up, practice standing up for himself with respect, and use his voice at the table by sharing one thing he wishes people understood about him.

From the activity chart: Four topics for open discussion. 1. Finding Your Voice: focuses on confidence, self-expression and speaking up. What may make it hard to speak up? How do you stand up for yourself respectfully? Activity: share one thing you wish people understood about you. 2. Purpose, Dreams and Goals. 3. Friendship and Healthy Relationships. 4. Leadership Starts with You.

Builds on FORGE: Week 5 (Session 13: Active Listening; Session 14: Communication Styles, the four styles and the "I" statement).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- The group's agreements from Roundtable 1, copied clean
- Board or paper with the four styles and the "I" statement
- Journals and pencils

Learning Objectives

By the end of this Roundtable, the men will be able to:

1. Name what makes it hard for them to speak up, inside and before they came in
2. Tell the difference between passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive and assertive
3. Put something they need into an "I" statement
4. Say when staying quiet is wise and when it's fear
5. Share one thing they wish people understood about them, or listen with respect while others do

Roundtable 2 Checklist

- ☐ Agreements from Roundtable 1 posted; men copied them into the Agreements page of the Journal
- ☐ Opening words said together; any changes the group wants noted
- ☐ Check-in: how the "tell someone his value" challenge went

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- ☐ Four communication styles and the "I" statement taught
- ☐ Roundtable discussion held on what makes it hard to speak up and how to do it with respect
- ☐ One Thing I Wish People Understood written in the Journal
- ☐ Share round held; every man shared or passed
- ☐ The four topics previewed
- ☐ Attendance recorded

Roundtable Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Agreements taped up where everyone can see them.

> **Facilitator:**
> *"Welcome back. Opening words first, all together."*

Say the opening words together. Ask: "Anybody want to change a line? We can talk about it now, or bring it up at the end." Note any suggestion; decide it at the end of class or next Roundtable.

> *"Last week's challenge was to tell somebody what value you see in him. Out loud. Check-in round: **Did you do it? What happened?** If you didn't, that's an answer too. What got in the way?"*

Pass the talking piece. Notice anyone who says "I wanted to but it felt weird." That's today's topic: you'll come back to it.

Facilitator note: If a man missed Roundtable 1, have someone at the table explain the agreements to him in a sentence or two. Hearing them from another man makes them the group's, not yours.

Frame the Topic: Four Ways to Say It (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
> *"Some of you said it felt weird to say something good to another man out loud. Why is that? Why is it hard to say what's real in here?"*

Take two or three quick answers. Then point to the board.

> *"There are four ways people say things. In FORGE we learn them in Week 5.*
> ***Passive**: you swallow it. Somebody cuts in front of you at the phone and you say nothing, and it eats at you all day.*

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> ***Aggressive**: you blow up. 'Man, you got a problem?' Now it's not about the phone any more. Now it's about who's going to back down.*
>
> ***Passive-aggressive**: you don't say it, but you show it. You slam stuff, you talk about him to everybody else, you get him back later.*
>
> ***Assertive**: you say it straight, calm, with respect. 'I was next on the phone. I'll be quick.' Then you're done.*
>
> *Who has more control: the man yelling, or the man who looks you in the eye and calmly says what he needs?"*

Let the table answer. Then:

> *"Here's the tool. It's called an 'I' statement. Instead of 'You always...', you say what's true for you: **'I feel ___ when ___ because ___.'***
>
> *Not: 'You're always in my business.' Instead: 'I feel disrespected when my mail gets talked about, because that's my family.'*
>
> *Voice isn't volume. Finding your voice means you can say what's true for you, without shrinking and without starting a war."*

The Roundtable (20 minutes)

Pass the talking piece. Start with the chart's first question.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"**What may make it hard to speak up?** Not just in here. At home, at school, anywhere."*

Let it go all the way around. Expect: fear of looking weak, getting labeled, getting tested, being laughed at, being told to shut up as a kid, staff who don't listen, not having the words. Don't fix any of it. Listen.

> *"Second question. **How do you stand up for yourself respectfully?** What does that actually look like in here?"*

Choose from these as time allows:

1. "Who's somebody you've seen stand up for himself without it turning into a fight? What did he do?"
2. "When is staying quiet the smart move? When is it just fear? How do you tell the difference?"
3. "Think of a time you went passive or aggressive. Put it in an 'I' statement now. What would you have said?"
4. "What's something you're tired of not saying?"

Facilitator moves:

- If a man shares a situation, ask the table: "What's an 'I' statement for that?" Let two or three men try it.
- If talk turns into stories about other people, bring it back: "And what did you say? What would you say now?"
- Watch the clock. Leave a full 15 minutes for the Journal and the share.

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Journal and Share: One Thing I Wish People Understood (15 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Journal to One Thing I Wish People Understood About Me. Finish the sentence at the top: **'One thing I wish people understood about me is...'** Then write why. Who do you wish understood it? What would change if they did?*
>
> *You've got five minutes. Then we'll go around, and anyone who's willing reads his sentence out loud. Just the first line is enough. This is finding your voice: saying something true, out loud, at this table."*

Give five minutes to write. Circulate. If a man is stuck: "What do people assume about you that's wrong?"

Then the share round. Go first yourself, and make it real.

> *"I'll start. One thing I wish people understood about me is..."*

Pass the talking piece. After each share, a simple "Thank you" from the facilitator. No comments, no advice, no jokes. If someone laughs or cuts in, point to the agreements without making a scene.

Facilitator note: This is often the most powerful ten minutes of the class. Don't rush it, and don't explain what anybody said. If a share was heavy, check on that man after class, quietly.

Preview and Close (5 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Four topics are coming. Today was the first: **Finding Your Voice**. In Roundtable 4 we'll talk about **Friendship and Healthy Relationships**: who's really with you. In Roundtable 6, **Purpose, Dreams and Goals**: where you're headed. And in Roundtable 8, **Leadership Starts with You**. In between, next Roundtable, we start planning a Game Day for the dorm, and you'll be the ones who run it.*
>
> *Closing round, fast: **one word for how it felt to say your sentence out loud.**"*

Pass the talking piece quickly.

> *"This week's challenge: **use one 'I' statement for real.** Something small: the phone, the TV, the cell. Say it straight and calm, and see what happens. Next time, tell us how it went.*
>
> *And bring ideas for Game Day: what games, what would make it good for the whole dorm."*

If the group wanted to change the opening words, decide now or put it first next Roundtable.

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After the Roundtable: record attendance. Check on any man who shared something heavy. If a man hinted that someone is pressuring or threatening him, talk with him privately and bring in your staff sponsor if he's in danger. Ask your staff sponsor what Game Day can include (place, games, food, prizes, outside sponsors) before Roundtable 3.

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Roundtable 3: Game Day: Leading a Team

Facilitator Notes for Roundtable 3

This Roundtable is different. Instead of a discussion, the group plans something real: a Game Day for the dorm. Table games, card games, a tournament or two, maybe video games if the dorm has them, maybe bingo. The point isn't the games. The point is that young men who have mostly been told what to do get to organize something for other people, and find out what leading feels like when you have to keep your word to a whole dorm. Every man ends up on a committee with a job and a deadline. Most of the leadership lessons will come from what happens next: who follows through, who doesn't, what goes wrong and how the group handles it. Your job today is to give them a structure and then get out of the way. Talk less than in any other Roundtable.

Before this Roundtable you must have talked to your staff sponsor. Find out what Game Day can include: a date or a range of dates, the place, which games and equipment are allowed, whether food is possible, whether prizes are allowed and how, and whether outside sponsors can contribute through the chaplain or another approved channel. Plan inside those limits. Never let the group plan something the staff sponsor hasn't approved, and never promise the dorm something that isn't confirmed.

What to Watch For

Two or three men doing everything. The natural leaders will grab it all. Thank them, and then make sure every man has a job. A Game Day run by three men isn't leadership practice for the other twelve.

Gambling sneaking in. "Loser owes a soup." "Winner takes the pot." Shut it down the first time, plainly: no betting, no debts, nothing changes hands between men because of a game. FORGE mentors have run the gambling-debt simulation (Week 18); you know where it ends up.

Big plans with no owners. "We should have a whole tournament with brackets and prizes and food." Ask: "Who's going to do that, and by when?" If nobody raises a hand, it's not in the plan.

Turf. Who controls the TV, the tables, the game supplies, who gets to play first. Equipment and space can carry dorm politics. Keep sign-ups open and fair, and let the Rules committee settle disputes in public, by the rules.

Common Challenges

"Staff won't let us do anything." "Then we plan what they will let us do and do it so well they let us do more next time. That's how it works."

"Why do I have to be on a committee? I just want to play." "Because somebody set up every game you ever played in here. This time it's you."

"He's not doing his part." That's next Roundtable's lesson as much as this one's. For now: "Talk to him straight, with an 'I' statement. If that doesn't work, bring it to the committee lead."

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Preparing for This Roundtable

- Talk to your staff sponsor (see above). Write the approved limits on a sheet: date or dates, place, games allowed, food yes or no, prizes yes or no and how, outside sponsors yes or no and how.
- Write the six committees on the board (see the Plan section below).
- Bring paper for the committees, and a sheet titled **Game Day Plan** for the whole group.
- Think about how you'll split the men so each committee has a mix of loud and quiet, older and younger.

Roundtable 3 Overview

Purpose: Plan a Game Day for the dorm, with every man on a committee, so the group practices leading a team on a real project with real deadlines.

From the activity chart: Plan and organize Game Day. Six table games: cornhole; bowling or basketball drop; Dirty Hearts or Cutthroat; chess; dominoes; Scrabble. Two PS5s: basketball and Call of Duty. Bingo night. Sponsors.

Builds on FORGE: Week 9 (Session 25: the 6-Step Problem-Solving Model) and Week 14 (Session 42: Lesson Planning, planning backward from the goal).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- The staff sponsor's approved limits, written on a sheet
- The six committees on the board
- Paper for each committee, and a Game Day Plan sheet for the group
- Journals and pencils

Learning Objectives

By the end of this Roundtable, the men will be able to:

1. Say what Game Day will be, within the limits the staff sponsor approved
2. Name the committees, who leads each, and their own job
3. Break a big goal into tasks with owners and deadlines
4. Name the Game Day rules that aren't up to the group: approval, no betting, prizes only through approved channels
5. Describe one thing a leader did today without a title

Roundtable 3 Checklist

☐ Staff sponsor's approved limits confirmed before class and written on a sheet

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- ☐ Opening words said together; check-in on the "I" statement challenge
- ☐ Approved limits and non-negotiable rules read to the group
- ☐ Games and stations chosen
- ☐ Every man placed on a committee; every committee has a lead
- ☐ Each committee filled in its part of the Game Day Plan: tasks, owners, deadlines
- ☐ Committee leads reported back
- ☐ Every man wrote his role in the Journal
- ☐ Attendance recorded; Game Day Plan copied for the staff sponsor

Roundtable Plan

Opening Circle (8 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Opening words, all together."*

Say the opening words together.

> *"Last week's challenge: use one 'I' statement for real. Check-in round, quick: **Did you? What happened?**"*

Pass the talking piece. Keep it moving; today is a working session.

Frame the Topic: A Game Day Is a Project (7 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Today we're not just talking. We're planning a Game Day for the whole dorm, and you're running it.*
>
> *First, what's been approved. [Read the staff sponsor's limits: date or dates, place, games, food, prizes, outside sponsors.] That's our box. We plan inside it.*
>
> *Second, the rules that aren't up to us:*
>
> - ***No betting. No gambling. No debts.** Nothing changes hands between men because of a game. Anybody who bets is off the event.*
> - ***Prizes and donations only through the approved channel.** If someone outside wants to sponsor, it goes through [the chaplain or staff sponsor], never to a man.*
> - ***Winning is fine. Humiliating isn't.** Trash talk that gets personal ends the game.*

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> *Third, how we do it. In FORGE we use a six-step problem-solving model. For a project, the middle steps matter most:* ***define it clearly, gather what you need, come up with options, then choose, act and review.*** *We're going to do all of that in the next half hour."*

Plan It (35 minutes)

Part 1: Pick the Games (5 min)

> **Facilitator:**
> *"What games? Shout them out. Think about the whole dorm, not just what you like."*

Write every idea on the board. Ideas the activity chart suggests: cornhole; bowling or basketball drop; card games like Hearts or Cutthroat; chess; dominoes; Scrabble; video games if the dorm has them; bingo. Cross off anything the staff sponsor didn't approve. **Pick about six stations,** enough that everyone in the dorm has somewhere to play.

Part 2: Committees (10 min)

> **Facilitator:**
> *"Six committees. Every man is on one. Every committee has a lead."*

Committee	What it does
Games and Equipment	Gets the games, boards, cards and equipment together, checks they're complete, and gets them back after
Schedule and Brackets	Sets the times for each station, makes brackets for any tournament, keeps things on time on the day
Rules and Referees	Writes simple rules for each game, posts them, and settles disputes on the day by the rules
Sign-ups and Word of Mouth	Makes the sign-up sheet and a simple notice for the dorm, and makes sure every man in the dorm hears about it
Sponsors and Thank-yous	Works with the staff sponsor on anything approved for food, prizes or outside sponsors; writes the thank-you notes after
Set-up and Clean-up	Sets up the space before, keeps it clean during, and leaves it better than they found it

Let men choose, then balance. Each committee needs at least two men. Mix loud and quiet, older and younger. Ask each committee to pick its lead; if they can't, you pick, and say why.

Facilitator note: If food, prizes or outside sponsors weren't approved, the Sponsors and Thank-yous committee still writes thank-you notes to the staff who made Game Day possible. Nobody's job disappears.

Part 3: Committees Plan (15 min)

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> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Each committee, sit together. Answer five questions on your paper:*
>
> 1. *What exactly are we responsible for?*
> 2. *What do we need?*
> 3. *Who does what? Every man on the committee gets a task.*
> 4. *What needs staff approval that we don't have yet?*
> 5. *When does each task have to be done? Work backward from Game Day.*
>
> *Leads, you make sure every man has a task with his name on it. Fifteen minutes."*

Facilitators move between committees. Ask, don't tell: "Who's doing that?" "By when?" "What happens if it rains, or the dayroom's not available?" "What does the staff sponsor need to know?"

Part 4: Report Back (5 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Leads, thirty seconds each: your committee, who's on it, and the one thing that has to happen first."*

Your co-facilitator writes it all on the Game Day Plan sheet: games and stations, committees, leads, members, tasks and deadlines, and anything still needing approval.

Journal: Game Day Plan (5 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Journal to Game Day Plan. Copy the games and the committees from the board. Then fill in **My Role on Game Day**: your committee, your job, what you need, and when it has to be done.*
>
> *That's your word to this group. Write it like it matters."*

Close (5 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Closing round. **What did you see somebody do today that a leader does?** Somebody without a title. Name him and what he did."*

Pass the talking piece. This is the leadership lesson of the day. Let the men give it to each other.

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> *"Your challenge this week: **do your task.** All of it, on time. If you can't, tell your lead before the deadline, not after. That's what keeping your word looks like.*
>
> *Next Roundtable is a meeting, over lunch if [staff sponsor] approves it. We'll check on Game Day, set a calendar of tournaments for the weeks after, and talk about friendship: who's really with you, and who's using you."*

After the Roundtable: record attendance. Give a copy of the Game Day Plan to your staff sponsor, with anything that still needs approval marked clearly. Ask about the lunch meeting for Roundtable 4: whether a meal together is possible, and where. Check in with each committee lead before the next Roundtable.

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Roundtable 4: The Lunch Meeting: Friendship and Healthy Relationships

Facilitator Notes for Roundtable 4

Roundtable 4 is a working meeting, over a meal if your staff sponsor allows it. Eating together changes a room: men talk differently with a plate in front of them. If a meal isn't possible, run it as a regular Roundtable; nothing in it depends on the food. The meeting has three jobs. First, check on Game Day: debrief it if it already happened, or check every committee is ready if it hasn't. Second, set a calendar of tournaments for the weeks that follow, each run by two or three men from the group, so the leadership practice keeps going after Game Day. Third, the topic: the second of the four from Roundtable 2, **Friendship and Healthy Relationships.**

That topic sits right on top of the biggest pull on young men inside: the homeboys, the clique, the set. The facilitators who reviewed this class named the goal plainly: guide young guys away from gang life and toward building as good a life as they can. This Roundtable doesn't lecture about gangs. It asks a harder question: **who's really with you, and who's using you?** Let the men answer it themselves. They know.

What to Watch For

Affiliation coming up at the table. Never ask a man about his affiliation, and never let anyone call someone out. Keep the talk on friendship, loyalty, pressure and choices. If a man says he wants out, or is being pushed, end that part of the conversation kindly ("That's real. Let's talk after.") and talk with him privately. A mentor who knows when to bring in staff takes it from there.

Game Day blame. If something went wrong, the debrief can turn into finger-pointing. Use FORGE's review step: what happened, what we learned, what we'll do next time. Talk about what happened, not about who's a failure.

Men who didn't do their task. Don't shame them in front of the group. Ask the committee lead to talk with them. Then make sure everyone gets a fresh chance in the tournaments.

Food rules. Follow the facility's rules on food exactly: what can be brought, shared or kept. A lunch meeting that breaks the rules is the last lunch meeting.

Common Challenges

"My homeboys are my family. They've got my back." "Maybe they do. Here's the question: do they have your back when it costs them something, or only when it costs you something?"

"Everybody in here is just using everybody." "Some are. Not everybody. Who in your life has been there when you had nothing to give back?"

"Game Day was a mess." "Good. Now we know what to fix. What's one thing we'd do differently?"

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Preparing for This Roundtable

- Ask your staff sponsor, well ahead, whether the group can meet over a meal, where, and what the food rules are. If the answer is no, plan a regular Roundtable.
- Get the date for Game Day confirmed, or the report on how it went if it has happened.
- Ask your staff sponsor which tournaments and dates can be approved for the coming weeks, so the calendar the group sets is one staff can sign off on.
- Bring the Game Day Plan sheet from Roundtable 3.
- Write on the board: **Friend · Associate · Someone using you**.

Roundtable 4 Overview

Purpose: Check on Game Day, set the tournament calendar for the weeks ahead with leads for every event, and talk honestly about friendship: what a real friend does, how to know when you're being used, and what kind of friend each man wants to be.

From the activity chart: Lunch meeting. Schedule for a time the staff sponsor approves; set a start time. Events: spades, bowling, spelling bee, holiday tournaments. And topic 3 from Roundtable 2: Friendship and Healthy Relationships.

Builds on FORGE: Week 8 (Session 24: Building Pro-Social Relationships) and Week 18 (Session 53: Gambling Debt Creating Tension).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- The Game Day Plan sheet from Roundtable 3
- The staff sponsor's list of approved tournaments and dates
- Board or paper with "Friend · Associate · Someone using you"
- Journals and pencils
- The meal, if approved

Learning Objectives

By the end of this Roundtable, the men will be able to:

1. Say what went well and what they would change about Game Day, or confirm the group is ready for it
2. Name the coming tournaments, when they are, and who leads each one
3. Tell the difference between a friend, an associate and someone using them
4. Name signs of a healthy friendship and signs of one that pulls them backward
5. Say what kind of friend they want to be

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Roundtable 4 Checklist

- ☐ Meal approved and food rules known, or regular Roundtable planned
- ☐ Opening words said together; check-in on Game Day tasks
- ☐ Game Day debriefed (what happened, what we learned, what's next) or readiness checked by committee
- ☐ Tournament calendar set: each event has a time, leads and staff approval status
- ☐ Every man copied the calendar into his Journal
- ☐ Friendship framed: friend, associate, someone using you
- ☐ Roundtable discussion on friendship held; every man spoke or passed
- ☐ What a Real Friend Does page written
- ☐ Attendance recorded; calendar given to the staff sponsor

Roundtable Plan

Opening Circle (8 minutes)

If there's a meal, get everyone served first, then start while men eat.

> **Facilitator:**
> *"Opening words, all together."*

Say the opening words together.

> *"Check-in round. **Your Game Day task: did you do it, all of it, on time?** If you didn't, say what got in the way. No excuses needed, just the truth."*

Pass the talking piece. Notice who kept his word and say so out loud: "You said you'd have the brackets, and you had them."

Game Day Check (10 minutes)

If Game Day has happened, debrief it the FORGE way:

> **Facilitator:**
> *"Three questions. **What went well? What went wrong? What would we do differently next time?** And one more: **who stepped up that you didn't expect?**"*

Take answers around the table. Your co-facilitator writes "Next time" ideas on the board; you'll use them for the tournaments. Make sure the Sponsors and Thank-yous committee has its thank-you notes going.

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If Game Day hasn't happened yet, go committee by committee:

> *"Leads, where are you? What's done, what's left, and what do you need?"*

Facilitator note: Whatever happened, end this part on what the group did right. They planned and ran something for the whole dorm. Most men in here never have.

Set the Tournament Calendar (12 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Game Day was one day. Now we keep it going. Over the next weeks, while we keep meeting, we're going to run a few tournaments for the dorm. Ideas from the groups before you: a **spades tournament**, **bowling** or basketball drop, a **spelling bee**, and a **holiday tournament**. Here's what [staff sponsor] can approve: [read the list]."*

Pick three or four events. For each one, the group decides:

- **What** it is
- **When**, as near as the staff sponsor's approval allows (for example, "the week of Roundtable 6")
- **Who leads it**: two or three men, and not the same men who led Game Day if others are ready
- **What it needs**: equipment, sign-ups, brackets, referees, space
- **Approved yet?** Yes, or what still has to be asked

Write it on the board as you go. Then:

> *"Open your Journal to the Events Calendar and copy it. Leads, put a star by yours. Same rules as Game Day: staff approval, no betting, prizes only through the approved channel, and nothing personal in the trash talk."*

Facilitator note: Spread the leading around. A man who was quiet in Roundtable 3 may be the right lead for the spelling bee. Ask him directly; men often say yes when asked who would never volunteer.

Frame the Topic: Who's Really With You? (5 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Last topic today. Friendship. Look at the board: **Friend. Associate. Someone using you.***
>
> *An **associate** is somebody you're around. You eat together, you work together, you play cards. That's fine. Not everybody has to be your brother.*
>
> *A **friend** is somebody who wants good things for you, even when it doesn't help him. He tells you the truth. He respects your no. He doesn't need you to prove anything.*

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> ***Someone using you*** *needs something from you: your money, your hands, your name, your silence, your time. When you stop giving it, he's gone. Or worse.*
>
> *In FORGE we talk about pro-social relationships: people who pull you toward the man you want to be, not back toward the man who got you here. Which kind do you have?"*

The Roundtable (17 minutes)

Pass the talking piece. Start with:

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"**What makes a real friend?** Not the word. What does he actually do?"*

After a full round, choose from these:

1. "Has a friend ever gotten you into trouble? Has one ever gotten you out of it?"
2. "How do you know when somebody is using you? What are the signs?"
3. "Can you say no to a friend and still be friends? What happens when you try?"
4. "Loyalty: what does it mean to you? Is there such a thing as too much loyalty?"
5. "What kind of friend are you? Would your friends say the same thing?"
6. "Who's somebody who's been there for you when you had nothing to give back?"

Facilitator moves:

- When a man describes someone using him, ask the table: "Friend, associate, or using him?" Let them sort it.
- If talk heads toward the set or the clique, keep it general: "Any group that needs you to prove yourself over and over. What does that cost?" Don't name groups, and don't let anyone else name them.
- Question 5 turns the mirror around. Use it near the end.

Facilitator note: If a man talks about a debt, being pressured to hold something, or being threatened, don't explore it at the table. Talk with him privately after the meeting, and bring in your staff sponsor if he's in danger.

Journal: What a Real Friend Does (5 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open to What a Real Friend Does. Four parts. **A real friend...**: finish that three ways. **Someone who's been a real friend to me**, and what he did. **The kind of friend I want to be.** And the last one is private: **one relationship I need to change, or step back from.** Nobody reads that one but you."*

Circulate, but stay away from the last box unless a man asks for help.

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Close (3 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Closing round, quick.* ***One thing a real friend does****, in a few words."*

Pass the talking piece.

> *"This week's challenge:* ***be a real friend to one person.*** *Tell him the truth when it's hard, or show up for him when it costs you something. And tournament leads: start on your event.*
>
> *Next Roundtable: respect. Three kinds: respect for yourself, for the man next to you, and for people who aren't like you."*

After the Roundtable: record attendance. Give the tournament calendar to your staff sponsor, with anything that still needs approval marked. Follow up privately with any man who talked about pressure, a debt or a threat, and bring in staff if he is in danger. Check that the Game Day thank-you notes went out.

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Roundtable 5: Respect: Three Kinds

Facilitator Notes for Roundtable 5

Respect might be the most used word inside, and the most misused. In here, "respect" often means fear: a man who answers every slight, who can't let a look go, who makes people step around him. New men get tested to see if they'll fold. A lot of trouble starts with one word: "disrespect." This Roundtable takes the word back. It separates respect from fear, and it splits real respect into the three kinds on the activity chart: **self-respect**, how a man treats himself; **interpersonal respect**, how he treats the man in front of him, even in a disagreement; and **social and cultural respect**, how he treats people whose customs, beliefs and backgrounds aren't his. That third kind means talking about race and where people are from. Keep it about respect and understanding, never about which group is better. The tournaments the group set in Roundtable 4 are running now, so the men have a live place to practice all three kinds this week, win or lose.

What to Watch For

Respect as fear. "If they don't fear you, they'll run over you." Don't argue; for some men that was true, and it kept them alive. Ask: "Is that respect, or is that fear? What do they say about you when you're not around?"

Being tested. Some men will describe being tested: a new man pushed to see what he'll do. Let them talk about the pressure in general. No names, no yard business. If a man is being pressured right now, talk with him after class.

Ranking groups. When race or where people are from comes up, someone may start comparing: whose people are better, whose people started it. Stop it calmly and early: "We're not ranking anybody at this table. Back to you: what does respect look like from you?"

Self-respect that opens something heavy. Talk about health and personal limits can surface a debt, drugs, someone using a man, or thoughts of hurting himself. Don't dig at the table. The limits of confidentiality apply: talk with him after class if it is safe to, and go to your staff sponsor that day. If anyone is in danger right now, go to staff right now.

Common Challenges

"Respect is earned, not given." "Some of it, sure. But somebody has to go first. What if you give it first and see what comes back?"

"If somebody disrespects me, I have to handle it." "Maybe. Who decides when it's handled, him or you? A man who has to answer every word is letting everybody else run him."

"Why we got to talk about race? That's just how it is in here." "We're not going to pretend it isn't real. We're also not going to let it decide how we treat the man next to us. Both of those can be true."

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Preparing for This Roundtable

- Write the three kinds of respect on the board before the men arrive: **Self-Respect · Interpersonal Respect · Social and Cultural Respect**. Leave room at the top for two words: **RESPECT** and **FEAR**.
- Check the Events Calendar from Roundtable 4: what happened since last Roundtable, and what's next.
- Reread FORGE Session 22 (the three types of empathy) and the Session 54 debrief on being "color-honest." Session 52 (New Arrival Being Tested/Pressured) is also worth a look.
- Bring the talking piece, the group's agreements, and spare Journals and pencils.

Roundtable 5 Overview

Purpose: Help each man tell real respect from fear, name the three kinds of respect, and choose one place to show more of it this week.

From the activity chart: Respect, three aspects (open discussion). Self-Respect: valuing your own well-being, health, and personal limits by making positive choices. Interpersonal Respect: listening actively, using good manners, and treating others kindly even during disagreements. Social and Cultural Respect: acknowledging and accepting different customs, beliefs, and backgrounds without causing offense.

Builds on FORGE: Week 8 (Session 22: Empathy Development) and Week 18 (Session 54: Racial Tension in Shared Space).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or paper with the three kinds of respect written on it
- The group's agreements and the Events Calendar
- A Roundtable Journal and pencil for every man

Learning Objectives

By the end of this Roundtable, the men will be able to:

1. Tell the difference between respect and fear
2. Name the three kinds of respect and give an example of each from dorm life
3. Describe how to disagree with someone without disrespecting him
4. Talk about different backgrounds, beliefs and customs with respect, without ranking anyone
5. Rate themselves on each kind of respect and choose one respect challenge for the week

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Roundtable 5 Checklist

- ☐ Three kinds of respect on the board before the men arrive
- ☐ Opening words said together
- ☐ Events check: last tournament, next tournament, any problems
- ☐ Check-in round completed, including last Roundtable's challenge
- ☐ Respect and fear sorted on the board
- ☐ Three kinds of respect taught, with dorm examples
- ☐ Roundtable discussion held; every man spoke or passed
- ☐ Race and background kept to respect and understanding, with no ranking
- ☐ Respect Check page completed in every Journal
- ☐ Closing round: each man's respect challenge said out loud
- ☐ Attendance recorded; men who played in or ran a tournament noted

Roundtable Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in your hand. Agreements where everyone can see them.

Say the opening words together (front of the Journal).

Events check (3 minutes). Keep it quick and practical.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Quick events check before we start. Open to the Events Calendar in your Journal. Has a tournament happened yet, and how did it go? Leads for the next one: where are you, and has the staff sponsor approved it? Any problems we need to fix?"*

Facilitator note: Hold the line on the rules that aren't up to the group: every event approved by the staff sponsor, no betting, no debts, nothing changes hands. If anyone says there was betting, handle it after class, not at the table; a man who bets is off the event. Your co-facilitator writes down who played and who helped run it. That counts toward completion.

> *"Now the check-in. Talking piece around. Two parts:* ***how did being a real friend go this week, and think of a time somebody showed you respect when they didn't have to. What did they do?*** *One or two sentences. You can pass."*

Go first, then pass the talking piece around the circle. Keep your own answer short and real.

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Frame the Topic: Respect or Fear? (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Quick answers, no talking piece.* ***In here, how does a man get respect?*** *What do people go by?"*

Take five or six answers fast. Expect things like: don't let nobody play you, handle your business, be feared, who you're with, keep your word, mind your business. Ask the table about each one, "Respect or fear?", and write it under **RESPECT** or **FEAR**. Let them argue a little.

> *"Look at the board. Fear makes people act right while you're watching. Respect is what they say about you when you're not in the room. Fear has to be fed every day. Respect builds.*
>
> *The word that starts more trouble in here than any other is 'disrespect.' Today we take the word back. There are three kinds of respect, and they're on the board."*

Walk through the three, a few sentences and one example each.

> *"****Self-respect*** *is how you treat yourself. Taking care of your body, your health, your mind. Knowing your limits and keeping them. Not getting in debt you can't pay. Saying no to what's going to cost you. A man who respects himself doesn't have to prove it every five minutes.*
>
> ***Interpersonal respect*** *is how you treat the man in front of you. Listening all the way through before you answer. Manners: excuse me, thank you, asking before you sit on a man's bunk. And treating him decent even when you disagree. FORGE teaches that you can understand why a man feels the way he does without agreeing with him. That's the skill.*
>
> ***Social and cultural respect*** *is how you treat people who aren't like you. Different races, different hometowns, city and country, different faiths, a man who prays five times a day and a man who doesn't pray at all. You don't have to share his ways. You let him have them, and you don't make him pay for them.*
>
> *On race, we're going to be honest. FORGE calls it being color-honest: race shapes a lot of what happens in here, we see that, and we still believe every man deserves dignity. What we don't do at this table is rank anybody."*

The Roundtable (25 minutes)

Pass the talking piece. Ask one question at a time. You won't get to all of them; two or three good ones are enough.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"First question.* ***What's the difference between a man who's respected and a man who's feared? Have you been one, or both?****"*

After a full round, choose from these:

1. "Self-respect: what's one choice you make in here that shows you respect yourself? What's one that doesn't?"

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2. "When somebody disrespects you in here, what's the pressure to do? What does it cost to answer every one? What does it cost not to?"
3. "Can you disagree with a man and still respect him? What does that look like over the TV, the phone, or a card game?"
4. "Has a man from a different background ever surprised you in here? What happened?"
5. "What did you learn growing up about people who weren't like you? What's changed since then, and what hasn't?"
6. "What does a young man walking into this dorm for the first time need to know about respect that nobody told you?"

Facilitator moves:

- When someone says "I had to handle it," ask: "What did handling it cost you? Who else paid?"
- When the talk turns into a story about a specific beef, stop it kindly: "No names, no yard business. What did you learn from it?"
- When race comes up, keep it to the man's own experience and what respect looks like. If someone ranks groups, use the line from What to Watch For.
- Use question 6 near the end. It turns the men into the older heads, and that's where this class is going.

Facilitator note: Talk about respect runs close to talk about gangs: loyalty, respect for your people, answering for them. Keep it general. Never ask a man about his affiliation, and never let anyone call someone out. A man who says he wants out, or that he's being pressured, gets a private conversation with a mentor after class, and that mentor knows when to bring in staff.

Journal: Respect Check (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Journal to Respect Check. There's a box for each kind: Self-Respect, Interpersonal Respect, and Social and Cultural Respect. In each one, circle a number for **How am I doing? 1 2 3 4 5**. Be honest; nobody's grading you. Then write **One time I showed it** and **One place I can do better**.*
>
> *At the bottom, write **My respect challenge this week**. Make it small enough to do. 'Let a man finish before I answer.' 'Say thank you to the man who serves the tray.' 'Walk away from one argument I'd usually win.' 'Get some sleep instead of staying up all night.'"*

Co-facilitator and facilitator circulate. Help by asking, not telling: "Where were you at your best this week?" "Who would rate you lower than you rated yourself?" A man who doesn't write well can work it out loud with a partner who writes for him.

Ask two or three men to read one box aloud if they're willing. Thank them by name.

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Close (5 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Closing round. **Say your respect challenge out loud.** That's your word to this table, and next Roundtable you'll tell us how it went."*

Pass the talking piece around the circle.

> *"One more thing for the tournaments this week: winning is fine; humiliating is not. Show all three kinds of respect at the table, win or lose.*
>
> *Next Roundtable: your future. Where do you see yourself in five years, three years, one year? Start thinking about it. Whatever your sentence is, the question is for you. Bring your Journal. See you then."*

After the Roundtable: record attendance, and note who played in or helped run a tournament. Write down each man's respect challenge so you can ask about it next time. Follow up with any man who described pressure, a debt or being tested, and with any man who said something that falls under the limits of confidentiality; if it does, go to your staff sponsor that day.

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Roundtable 6: Your Future: Goals and Aspirations

Facilitator Notes for Roundtable 6

This is the Roundtable where hope has to be honest. The activity chart asks where a man sees himself in five years, three years and one year, and what one goal he wants to accomplish this year. For a man going home soon, that's an easy question to start. For a man with twenty years or more, or a man who can't be paroled under the law as it stands, it can sound like a joke. So this Roundtable never promises parole, early release or a date, and you don't either, not even to be kind. What it says is true for every man at the table: **your value is real right now; a good life can be built where you are; and be ready, because laws and policies do change.** The question isn't where a man will be in five years. It's who he'll be. This is also the "Purpose, Dreams and Goals" topic the group previewed in Roundtable 2. FORGE gives you two tools for it: Session 28's growth mindset, with "yet" as its key word, and Session 29's difference between goals and purpose: goals are destinations; purpose is the direction. The men leave with a 5-3-1 plan and a vision board started, both built to work for a man with a long sentence as well as for one going home.

What to Watch For

"I got life. What future?" Don't argue, and don't offer hope you can't back up. Say what's true: "Five years from now you'll be somebody. In here or out there, you decide who." Then ask what he wants that man to have built.

Release as the only goal. "My goal is to go home." Honor it; every man wants that. Then ask: "What part of that is in your hands this year?" Don't predict parole, an appeal or a date, and keep it out of case talk.

Big dreams with no steps. "I'm going to own a business." Don't crush it. Ask for the first step he can take from right here: a class, a book, a skill, a job he can learn.

Hopelessness. A man who says nothing matters, or goes quiet when the years come up, may be carrying more than he shows. Check in with him after class. If he says anything about hurting himself, the limits of confidentiality apply: go to your staff sponsor that day, or to staff right away if he's in danger now.

Common Challenges

"Five years? I'll still be in here." "Then you'll be somebody in here. A man with a GED, a trade, a job people trust him with, a name for keeping his word? Or the same man you are today? That part is yours."

"Goals are for dudes going home." "Goals are for anybody who's going to wake up tomorrow. The years go by either way."

"Vision boards are for kids." "Every builder works off a drawing. A plan you can see is harder to forget."

"The law's going to change. I'm just waiting." "Laws do change. When they do, the men whose files show growth are the men who are ready. Waiting isn't a plan. Getting ready is."

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Preparing for This Roundtable

- Write the ladder on the board before the men arrive: **5 years: who I'm becoming · 3 years: what I've built · 1 year: one goal · This month: the first step**.
- Find out from your staff sponsor what's actually offered here: GED, college classes, trade or vocational classes, work details, faith programs, other dorm classes. Have the list ready, so the goals the men write can be real.
- Ask your staff sponsor whether old magazines, glue or scissors are allowed for the vision board. If not, words and drawings work just as well.
- Reread FORGE Session 28 (growth mindset and "yet") and Session 29 (goals vs. purpose).
- Bring the talking piece, the agreements, the Events Calendar, and spare Journals and pencils.

Roundtable 6 Overview

Purpose: Help each man picture who he's becoming in five, three and one years, set one real goal for this year with a first step, and start a vision board, in a way that works whatever his sentence.

From the activity chart: Future, goals and aspirations: motivation, future planning, and personal growth. Where do you see yourself in 5 years, 3 years, 1 year? What is one goal you want to accomplish this year? Activity: create a personal vision board.

Builds on FORGE: Week 10 (Session 28: Growth Mindset; Session 29: Finding Purpose).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or paper with the 5-3-1 ladder written on it
- A list of what's offered here: education, work, faith, other classes
- The group's agreements and the Events Calendar
- A Roundtable Journal and pencil for every man; magazines and glue only if approved

Learning Objectives

By the end of this Roundtable, the men will be able to:

1. Tell the difference between a dream, a goal and a purpose
2. Describe who they want to be in five years, three years and one year, whatever their sentence
3. Name one goal they can accomplish this year, from where they are
4. Name the first step they'll take this month and who can help them
5. Start a vision board around faith, family, education, work, health and who they're becoming

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Roundtable 6 Checklist

- ☐ 5-3-1 ladder on the board before the men arrive
- ☐ Opening words said together
- ☐ Events check: last tournament, next tournament, any problems
- ☐ Check-in round completed, including last Roundtable's respect challenge
- ☐ Dream, goal and purpose taught; "yet" taught
- ☐ What we say about the future said plainly, with no promise of release
- ☐ Roundtable discussion held; every man spoke or passed
- ☐ My 5-3-1 page completed in every Journal
- ☐ My Vision Board started in every Journal
- ☐ Closing round: each man's first step said out loud
- ☐ Attendance recorded

Roundtable Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in your hand.

Say the opening words together.

Events check (3 minutes).

> **Facilitator:**
> *"Events check. How did the last tournament go? Who's leading the next one, is it approved, and what do the leads need from the rest of us? Any problems?"*

Facilitator note: Your co-facilitator notes who played and who helped run it. Remind the group, briefly, that no betting and staff approval aren't up for a vote.

> *"Check-in round. Two parts:* ***how did your respect challenge go, and when you were a kid, what did you want to be?*** *You can pass."*

Pass the talking piece. Listen for the childhood dreams; you can come back to them in the Roundtable.

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Frame the Topic: Dreams, Goals and Purpose (8 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Back in Roundtable 2 we said we'd come back to purpose, dreams and goals. Today's the day.*
>
> *A **dream** is something you'd love to have happen. A **goal** is a dream with a plan and a first step. And **purpose** is the why underneath it. FORGE says it this way: goals are destinations; purpose is the direction. You can hit a goal and still feel empty. Purpose keeps you going when the goal feels far off.*
>
> *Now let me be straight with you about the future, because some of you have a lot of time. Nobody at this table is going to promise you parole, or a date, or anything we can't back up. Here's what we will say, and it's true for every man in this circle.*
>
> *Your value is real right now, not when you get out. A good life can be built where you are: a GED, college classes if this place offers them, a trade, a job people trust you with, your faith, your family, being the man others come to. And be ready. Laws and policies do change. When they do, the men whose files show growth are the ones who are ready."*

Point to the ladder on the board.

> *"So when we ask where you'll be in five years, we're not asking where you'll be sleeping. We're asking who you'll be. Five years is the man you're becoming. Three years is what you've built by then. One year is one goal. And this month is the first step.*
>
> *One more word from FORGE: **yet.** 'I'm not a school person' becomes 'I'm not a school person yet.' That one word turns a wall into a door."*

The Roundtable (18 minutes)

Pass the talking piece. Ask one question at a time. Two or three good ones are enough.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"First question. **Five years from now, what do you want the men in here, or the people at home, to say about you?**"*

After a full round, choose from these:

1. "What was the dream you had as a kid? Is any part of it still alive?"
2. "What's one goal you could finish this year, from right where you're sitting?"
3. "What gets in the way of goals in here? What part of that is in your control?"
4. "Who have you seen build a good life in here? What did he do?"
5. "If the law changed and somebody looked at your file, what would you want it to show?"
6. "What's a goal that would make your family proud? What's one that would make you proud?"

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Facilitator moves:

- When a man says "I don't know," ask: "What would you be good at if somebody gave you a shot?"
- When a goal is huge, ask: "What's the first step you could take this month?"
- When talk turns to cases, appeals or release dates, bring it back gently: "We don't do case talk here. What's in your hands this year?"
- Use the list of what's offered. "You said you want a trade. Here's what they have. Who's done that one?"

Journal: My 5-3-1 (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Journal to My 5-3-1. Start big and work down:* ***In 5 years I see myself…****, then* ***In 3 years…****, then* ***In 1 year…****. Write who you'll be and what you'll have built, in here or out there.*
>
> *Then the three boxes underneath.* ***One goal I want to accomplish this year****.* ***The first step I'll take this month****. And* ***Who can help me****: a mentor, a teacher, the chaplain, a man in this dorm, somebody at home.*
>
> *Make the goal something you control. 'Get my GED' works. 'Make parole' depends on somebody else. 'Build a file that shows growth' is yours."*

Circulate. Push for a first step small enough to start this week: "Sign up for the GED class." "Ask [name] to quiz me." "Read one chapter a night." If a man wants a class that isn't offered here, help him find the closest thing that is.

Ask two or three men to read their one goal and first step aloud. Thank them by name.

Journal: My Vision Board (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Turn the page to My Vision Board. It's a blank page with six words around the edge:* ***Faith · Family · Education · Work · Health · Who I'm Becoming****. Fill it with what you want your life to have in each one. Words, drawings, and pictures if they're allowed. If faith isn't your thing, use that corner for whatever keeps you steady.*
>
> *You won't finish today. Start it, take it with you, and keep adding to it this week. Look at it every day. Next Roundtable, show us one thing on it."*

Facilitator note: Some men will start drawing and go quiet. That's good; let them work. Walk around and ask about what they've put down: "Tell me about this one." Pictures, and anything cut or glued, only if your staff sponsor has said yes.

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Close (4 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Closing round.* ***Say your first step out loud.*** *Just the step."*

Pass the talking piece around the circle.

> *"Your challenge this week:* ***take that first step before next Roundtable.*** *Not the whole goal. The step. And keep working on your vision board.*
>
> *Next Roundtable: family ties and a work ethic. Who you stay connected to, and how you show up every day. Bring your Journal. See you then."*

After the Roundtable: record attendance. Write down each man's goal and first step so you can ask about it next time. Note any man who couldn't name anything for his future, or who sounded hopeless, and make sure a mentor talks with him before the next Roundtable. If he said anything about hurting himself, go to your staff sponsor that day.

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Roundtable 7: Family Ties and a Work Ethic

Facilitator Notes for Roundtable 7

The activity chart puts two things together here: keeping family ties and positive connections, and building a work ethic. They belong together because both come down to one question: **can people count on you?** Family hears it in whether you call when you said you'd call. The men in the dorm see it in how you do your job. Inside, staying connected takes work and money: letters, calls, visits, tablets or messages where they're allowed. Some men have nobody. Some have family they can't safely contact, or aren't allowed to contact. Safety comes first: a no-contact order, or a relationship that isn't safe, comes before any plan to reach out, and you never coach a man toward contact an order forbids. "Positive connections" is bigger than family: a mentor, the chaplain, a teacher, a man in this dorm who's good for you. The second half is work: the detail job, the kitchen, school; showing up on time, doing it right when nobody's watching, finishing, and taking direction without an attitude. FORGE gives you the questions from Session 66 (what kind of son, father or brother do I want to be, what's in the way, what can I start now), Session 19's point that owning something has no "but," and the Week 7 meaning of integrity: what you value, what you say and what you do all line up.

What to Watch For

Men with no one. Talk about family can make a man with no contact feel like less. Make room for him: positive connections count, and the table should hear you say so. A quiet word after class goes further than a question in the circle.

Restricted or unsafe contact. A man may mention a no-contact order in passing, or a relationship that pulls him back or hurts him. Don't plan around it at the table. Talk one-on-one after class. If a child or anyone else is being abused, the limits of confidentiality apply: go to your staff sponsor that day.

Grief. Many men have lost people while inside, with no funeral and no way to say goodbye. If it comes up, slow down. "I'm sorry. How are you doing with that, honestly?" Then listen.

Work as "their" job. "Why kill myself on a job that don't pay?" Don't argue about pay. Make it about the man: "Who are you on that job? That part goes with you."

Common Challenges

"My family gave up on me." "Maybe some did. That hurts. Who's still there, even a little? And who in here is good for you? Start there."

"I don't take orders from nobody." "Taking direction isn't the same as taking disrespect. A man who can take direction without an attitude gets trusted with more."

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"Hard work never got me nothing." "On the street, a lot of y'all worked harder than anybody: up early, on time, didn't quit. That's a work ethic. The question is what you point it at now."

Preparing for This Roundtable

- Write two words on the board: **CONNECTIONS** and **WORK ETHIC**. Under work ethic, list the six from the Journal: **Show up on time · Do it right when nobody's watching · Finish what I start · Take direction without an attitude · Help others · Keep my word**.
- If you know a man has a no-contact order or a relationship that isn't safe, talk with him before class about how he'll take part (for example, filling his connections page with people in here).
- Know where to send men for more help: the chaplain or counselor for family and grief, and your staff sponsor for anything about safety.
- Reread FORGE Session 66 (relationships and parenting) and Session 19 (personal accountability). Session 20 (Integrity Under Pressure) is also worth a look.
- Bring the talking piece, the agreements, the Events Calendar, and spare Journals and pencils.

Roundtable 7 Overview

Purpose: Help each man choose the people he'll stay connected to and one step to take with each, name one positive connection in the dorm, and pick one part of his work ethic to build.

From the activity chart: Maintaining family ties and positive connections. Establishing and maintaining positive work ethics.

Builds on FORGE: Week 22 (Session 66: Health, Wellness, and Relationships) and Week 7 (Session 19: Personal Accountability).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or paper with CONNECTIONS, WORK ETHIC and the six work-ethic items written on it
- The group's agreements and the Events Calendar
- A Roundtable Journal and pencil for every man

Learning Objectives

By the end of this Roundtable, the men will be able to:

1. Name ways to stay connected from inside, and say why small promises kept matter more than big ones
2. Say why a no-contact order or an unsafe relationship comes before any plan to reach out
3. Name at least one positive connection in the dorm
4. Describe a good work ethic on a detail job, in the kitchen or in school

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5. Rate their own work ethic and choose one part to build

Roundtable 7 Checklist

- ☐ Connections and work ethic on the board before the men arrive
- ☐ Opening words said together
- ☐ Events check: last tournament, next tournament, any problems
- ☐ Check-in round completed: first step, and one thing from each man's vision board
- ☐ Staying connected from inside taught; safety first named
- ☐ Positive connections named as more than family
- ☐ Work ethic taught, with integrity tied in
- ☐ Roundtable discussion held on both halves; every man spoke or passed
- ☐ My Connections and My Work Ethic pages completed in every Journal
- ☐ Closing round: each man's one step said out loud
- ☐ Attendance recorded

Roundtable Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in your hand.

Say the opening words together.

Events check (3 minutes).

> **Facilitator:**
> *"Events check. How did the last tournament go? What's next on the calendar, and who's leading it? Next Roundtable is our last one. If anything on the calendar comes after the class ends, who's going to see it through with the staff sponsor?"*

Facilitator note: Note who played and who helped run it. Next Roundtable you'll need to know who has taken a real part in Game Day or a tournament, for completion.

> *"Check-in round.* ***Did you take your first step? And show us one thing on your vision board.*** *You can pass."*

Pass the talking piece around the circle.

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Frame the Topic: Can People Count on You? (8 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Today's two topics look different, family and work. They're really one question:* ***can people count on you?***
>
> *Start with staying connected from in here. Letters. Calls. Visits. Tablets or messages, where they're allowed. It costs money, it takes effort, and some days nobody picks up. Here's what works: small promises kept beat big promises broken. Call when you said you'd call. Write back. Ask how they're doing before you tell them what you need. FORGE says trust isn't a starting point; it's earned, one honest moment at a time.*
>
> *FORGE also asks three questions about family:* ***What kind of son, father, brother or uncle do I want to be? What's standing in the way? What can I start doing now, from in here?***
>
> *And one rule comes before all of it:* ***if there's a no-contact order, or a relationship that isn't safe, that comes first.*** *We don't plan around an order. If you're not sure, ask your counselor before you reach out.*
>
> *Some men don't have family they can reach right now. That doesn't mean you're alone. A positive connection can be a mentor, the chaplain, a teacher, a man in this dorm who pulls you up instead of down."*

Point to the work ethic list on the board.

> *"Now work. It's on the board. Show up on time. Do it right when nobody's watching. Finish what you start. Take direction without an attitude. Help others. Keep your word. Detail, kitchen, school: same six.*
>
> *FORGE calls the heart of it integrity: what you value, what you say and what you do all line up, even when nobody's watching. And when you mess up on the job, own it with no 'but.' 'I left it half done' is a man talking. 'I left it half done, but' is an excuse."*

The Roundtable (25 minutes)

Pass the talking piece. Spend about half the time on each topic. Two or three questions in each half are enough.

Part 1: Family and connections (13 min)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"First question.* ***Who's somebody who stayed in touch with you in here, or who you wish had? What did it mean?****"*

Then choose from these:

1. "What makes staying connected hard in here? What's one thing that helps?"
2. "What kind of son, father, brother or uncle do you want to be, from in here?"
3. "What's one small thing you could do this month that would mean something to somebody at home?"
4. "If family isn't there for you right now, who's your people in here? What makes him a good connection?"

Part 2: Work ethic (12 min)

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> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Switch. **Who's the hardest worker you ever knew? What did he do that you still remember?**"*

Then choose from these:

1. "What's your job in here? What does doing it right look like?"
2. "What happens in this dorm when a man does his job halfway?"
3. "Ever had to take direction from somebody you didn't respect? How'd you handle it?"
4. "What did the street teach you about hard work that you could use here?"
5. "Who's watching how you work that you don't know about?"

Facilitator moves:

- When a man talks about family he can't reach, don't rush to fix it. "That's hard. Thank you for saying it." Then keep the circle moving.
- When someone blames the job, the boss or the system, let him say it in a sentence or two, then ask: "What part of that is in your control?"
- Tie the halves together near the end: "The way you do a job nobody checks is the way you'll keep a promise to your family."

Facilitator note: Family talk can surface abuse, an unsafe relationship or a fresh loss. Don't dig at the table. Talk with the man after class, and act under the limits of confidentiality if a safety issue comes up.

Journal: My Connections and My Work Ethic (12 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Journal to My Connections. There's a table with four rows and three columns: **Name**, **How we stay in touch**, and **One step this month**. Only people you're allowed to contact. If you don't have four family members to put there, put a mentor, the chaplain, a teacher, a friend. That counts. Under the table, write **One positive connection in this dorm**.*
>
> *Then turn to My Work Ethic. Rate yourself 1 to 5 on each one: **Show up on time**, **Do it right when nobody's watching**, **Finish what I start**, **Take direction without an attitude**, **Help others**, **Keep my word**. Then write **The one I'll work on** and **What I'll do**."*

Circulate. For connections, push for a step small enough to do this month: "Write my grandmother a letter." "Call my brother when I said I would." For work ethic, ask: "Which one would your boss on the detail rate lowest?" A man who doesn't write well can work it out loud with a partner who writes for him.

Ask two or three men to read the one they'll work on and what they'll do. Thank them by name.

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Close (5 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Closing round.* ***Say one step you'll take this month: one connection, or one part of your work ethic.****"*

Pass the talking piece around the circle.

> *"Your challenge this week:* ***keep one small promise to somebody, and do your job one notch better than it needs to be, with nobody watching.***
>
> *Next Roundtable is our last one: leadership starts with you. We'll look back at these eight weeks, and the men who completed get their certificates. Bring your Journal; you'll want your My Value page from Roundtable 1. If you're not sure you've done enough to complete, see us after class."*

After the Roundtable: record attendance. Check each man against the completion rule: who can still reach six Roundtables including Roundtable 8, and who has taken a real part in Game Day or a tournament. Ask your staff sponsor for the certificates. Follow up with any man who went quiet about family, mentioned a no-contact order or an unsafe relationship, or shared a loss, and act on any safety concern under the limits of confidentiality.

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Roundtable 8: Leadership Starts with You

Facilitator Notes for Roundtable 8

The last Roundtable has three jobs. First, the topic: **leadership starts with you.** The activity chart frames it around responsibility, teamwork and serving others, and asks two questions: can you be a leader without a title, and what problems could you help solve? This is the "Leadership Starts with You" topic the group previewed in Roundtable 2, and the men have already practiced it: they planned Game Day, ran tournaments and kept their word to each other. Name that. Second, the look-back: each man opens his Journal to the My Value page from Roundtable 1 and checks the value he said he'd build. Third, completion: certificates for the men who completed, and a clear answer to "what now?" Inside, leadership often looks like power: the man with the title, the man who gives orders, the man nobody crosses. FORGE puts it another way in Session 3, Service Over Self: using your time, your energy and your influence for something bigger than your own comfort. Session 37 adds what men say the mentors who reached them actually did: they showed up, listened, told the truth and didn't give up. None of that needs a title. Time is tight today, so keep each part moving.

What to Watch For

Leadership as control. "A leader runs things." "A leader is the one nobody crosses." Don't shame it. Ask: "Can that be taken away? What's left when the title's gone?" Keep any talk about gang structure general, and never ask about affiliation.

Problems that are too big. "Fix the system." Let a man say it, then bring it down to size: "What's one piece of that you could touch this month, in this dorm?"

Endings. Some men have lost every group and every person they counted on. A class ending can land as one more loss. Say plainly that the mentors are still in the dorm, and the door is open.

Men who didn't complete. Never let the certificates turn into a public list of who fell short. Handle it before class, privately.

Common Challenges

"I'm nobody. Nobody listens to me." "Leadership isn't who listens to you. It's what you do when something needs doing. Somebody is watching how you carry yourself whether you know it or not."

"Stepping up gets you hurt in here." "Leading doesn't mean jumping into every fight. Sometimes it's walking a young man away from one. Sometimes it's going to staff. Knowing which is part of leading."

"So that's it? Eight weeks and done?" "The class ends. What you built doesn't. And we're not going anywhere."

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Preparing for This Roundtable

- Before class, check the completion list with your co-facilitator: at least 6 of the 8 Roundtables, including this one, and a real part in Game Day or a tournament. Give it to your staff sponsor and get the certificates, filled in by name.
- Talk privately, before class, with any man who won't receive a certificate today: what's missing, and how he can finish with the next group. A man who misses today finishes Roundtable 8 at the start of the next group.
- Know what's next here: other dorm classes, how to apply to FORGE, GED and college classes if your facility offers them, and when the next group and the next Game Day are planned.
- Write on the board: **Responsibility · Teamwork · Serving Others**.
- Reread FORGE Session 3 (Service Over Self) and Session 37 (What Makes a Good Mentor).
- Bring the talking piece, the agreements, the Events Calendar, the certificates, and spare Journals and pencils.

Roundtable 8 Overview

Purpose: Help each man see that leadership starts with him, without a title; choose one problem he can help solve; look back at what he built in eight weeks; and leave with a next step, and a certificate if he completed.

From the activity chart: Leadership Starts with You: responsibility, teamwork, and serving others. Can you be a leader without a title? What problems in your school, family, or community could you help solve? (At this table: your dorm, your GED or college class, your family, or your community.)

Builds on FORGE: Week 1 (Session 3: Service Over Self) and Week 13 (Session 37: What Makes a Good Mentor).

Materials:

- Talking piece
- Board or paper with Responsibility · Teamwork · Serving Others written on it
- Certificates, filled in by name
- The group's agreements and the Events Calendar
- A Roundtable Journal and pencil for every man

Learning Objectives

By the end of this Roundtable, the men will be able to:

1. Explain how a man can lead without a title, through responsibility, teamwork and serving others
2. Name one problem in their dorm, class, family or community they can help solve, and a first step
3. Say what they learned at this table, and how the value they named in Roundtable 1 has grown
4. Name at least one next step after Youth Roundtable

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Roundtable 8 Checklist

- ☐ Completion list checked and certificates ready before class
- ☐ Private conversation held with any man not completing today
- ☐ Opening words said together
- ☐ Final events check: how the series went, what's left, who carries it forward
- ☐ Leadership without a title taught; Game Day and the tournaments named as leadership
- ☐ Roundtable discussion held; every man spoke or passed
- ☐ A Problem I Can Help Solve page completed in every Journal
- ☐ Look-back held; What I'm Taking With Me page completed
- ☐ Certificates given by name
- ☐ What's next explained
- ☐ Opening words said one last time
- ☐ Attendance recorded; completion list given to the staff sponsor

Roundtable Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Set up: Chairs in a circle. Talking piece in your hand. Certificates out of sight until later.

Say the opening words together.

Final events check (4 minutes).

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Last events check. Look at the Events Calendar. How did the tournament series go? What worked, and what would you do different? Is anything still on the calendar, and who's running it now that the class is ending? And who's going to make sure the staff sponsor, and anybody who gave through the approved channel, gets thanked?"*

Facilitator note: Write down the answers to "what would you do different." The next group will plan its own Game Day, and these notes will help. Name the men who ran something, out loud.

> *"Check-in round. **Did you keep your small promise, and how did your job go this week?** One sentence. You can pass."*

Pass the talking piece around the circle.

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Frame the Topic: Leading Without a Title (5 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Back in Roundtable 2 we said the last topic would be leadership starts with you. Here it is. Three words on the board: responsibility, teamwork, serving others.*
>
> *Think about Game Day and the tournaments. Nobody at this table has a title. But somebody got the approval. Somebody set up the tables, kept score, kept the trash talk from getting personal, cleaned up after. That's **responsibility.** That's **teamwork.** And all of it was for other men in this dorm. That's **serving others.***
>
> *FORGE calls it Service Over Self: choosing to use your time, your energy and your influence for something bigger than your own comfort. You don't need a title for that. You need to see something that needs doing, and do it."*

The Roundtable (15 minutes)

Pass the talking piece.

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"First question. **Can you be a leader without a title? Who have you seen do it?**"*

After a full round, choose one or two:

1. "What problems in your dorm, your GED or college class, your family or your community could you help solve?"
2. "Where did you see leadership during Game Day or the tournaments? Whose?"
3. "What's the difference between a leader and a man who just runs things?"
4. "What does a young man coming into this dorm need from the men already here?"

Facilitator moves:

- When a man names a problem that's too big, ask: "What piece of it could you touch?"
- When a man names someone at the table as a leader, let it land, and ask: "What did you see him do?"

Journal: A Problem I Can Help Solve (7 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Open your Journal to A Problem I Can Help Solve. Write **The problem (in my dorm, my class, my family, or my community)**. Then **Why it matters to me**, **What I can do about it, without a title**, **Who could help**, and **My first step**.*
>
> *Keep it real and small enough to start. New men who don't know how anything works. Guys who can't read their mail. Noise when men are trying to sleep. A little brother heading the way you went."*

Circulate. If a man's problem involves a threat, a weapon or someone being hurt, talk with him after class. That one goes to staff under the limits of confidentiality; it's not his to handle alone.

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Looking Back: What I'm Taking With Me (10 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Now turn back to the My Value page from Roundtable 1. Look at the bottom: the value you said you wanted to build in these eight weeks.*
>
> *Then go to What I'm Taking With Me. Write **The most important thing I learned at this table**. Then **The value I said I'd build in Roundtable 1, and how it went**. Be honest; 'not as far as I wanted' is a real answer. And **What's next for me**."*

Give the men four minutes to write. Then:

> *"Talking piece around. **Say the value you said you'd build, and one sentence on how it went.**"*

Pass the talking piece. Thank each man by name. If a man missed Roundtable 1, he says the value he'd pick now.

Certificates and What's Next (8 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"To complete Youth Roundtable, a man came to at least six of the eight Roundtables, including today, and took a real part in Game Day or a tournament. These men did that."*

Call each man up by name and hand him his certificate. The table claps for every man. Say one true sentence about each: something you saw him do.

> *"Your names go to the staff sponsor, to be recorded in your file. If you didn't get one today, you know what's left, and you can finish with the next group.*
>
> *So what's next? The class ends. You don't stop. There are other dorm classes here. There's FORGE; if you want to apply, talk to one of us. There's the GED, and college classes if they're offered. There's a younger man walking into this dorm soon who needs somebody to show him how things work. And there's the next Game Day, which is going to need men who've done it before."*

Facilitator note: Name what's actually offered where you are, and don't promise anyone a spot in FORGE or any class. "Talk to us about applying" is a promise you can keep.

Close (5 minutes)

> **Facilitator:**
>
> *"Last closing round. **One word for what you're taking with you.**"*

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Pass the talking piece around the circle.

> *"Your challenge, starting today:* ***take the first step on your problem.*** *No title needed.*
>
> *Let's say the words one last time, together."*

Say the opening words together, standing if the group wants to.

> *"Thank you for sitting at this table. We're still in this dorm. You know where to find us."*

After the Roundtable: record attendance. Give the final completion list to your staff sponsor, to be recorded in each man's file (SCRIBE). Note any man who missed Roundtable 8, so he finishes it at the start of the next group. Pass the "what would you do different" notes to the next group's facilitators. Follow up with any man who named a problem involving safety, or who seemed to take the ending hard, and make sure a mentor checks in with him this week.

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