



# Pass the Parcel

This idea was developed initially for use to introduce Unlock's methodology to a group of Church leaders. Presenting Unlock's methodology is perhaps most effective if you can give people an experience of using the Unlock learning cycle (see page 3) but in many of the contexts that presentations are requested there is neither the time nor the strength of relationship with the presenter to use a full session from one of our resources. Variations of Pass the Parcel have since been used in different contexts...



## Variations of Pass the Parcel

### Unwrapping the Unlock Learning Cycle -

use it this way with people who already know the Bible...



In each layer have a prompt that will draw out a 'life experience' story from the person that unwraps it, this maybe a question, and item such as a key, or an elastic band, a picture, photograph, or cartoon. (See page 4 for some further ideas)

Play as with normal pass the parcel, when the music stops the person with the parcel unwraps one layer. Then:-

1. The person unwrapping the parcel is asked to tell a personal story relating to the prompt.
2. The group are asked to think of a Bible story, verse or theme that connects with the story.
3. Then someone else is asked to identify something they can learn from the two stories that applies to their life.



Depending on the how confident the group are you might decide to ask the person to the right of the un-wrapper to do step 2 and the person on their left to do step 3. It may be helpful to suggest that if someone can't think of a story, a bible story, or something they can learn from the connections they throw the question open to the rest of the group.

Another option is to ask members of the group to identify where they can see God's love at work in the story that the first person has told.

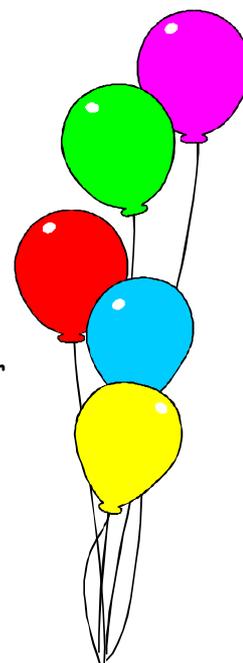
[www.unlock-urban.org.uk](http://www.unlock-urban.org.uk)

(Continued over the page)

## Revealing the Down to Earth Christ -

we used Pass the Parcel this way at the Unlock Annual Gathering

On this occasion each layer had a prompt that we felt linked to a biblical theme, on this occasion it was celebrations or parties, so questions such as 'When did you last have something to celebrate?' a photo of fireworks, a jelly (!), and so on. The layer before last had a card with John chapter 2 verses 1 to 11 printed on it. When this is unwrapped it should be read aloud to the group, either by the person who unwrapped it, or by the facilitator, depending on the groups confidence about reading aloud. In this version the person unwrapping the layer simply tells a story in response to the question in their layer of the parcel, and the game then continues. When the Bible passage is read, you could invite people to make connections with the story they told. Once everyone who would like to has done this then ask the group if anything has emerged from the game that might change their attitudes or actions in anyway. On this occasion the 'prize' in the middle was a bag of party poppers to fit with the celebrations theme. This approach can be adapted to a wide range to themes and bible stories.

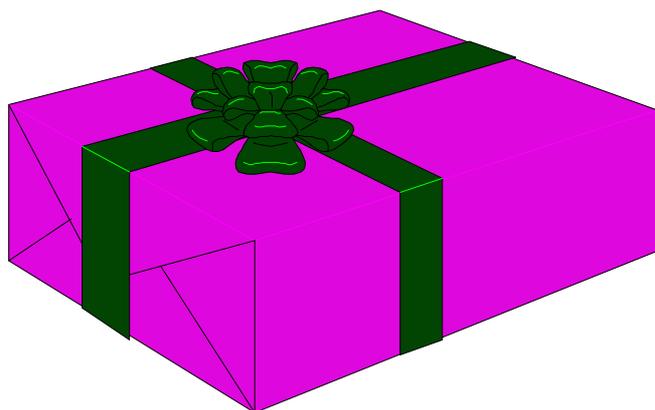


## Releasing Skills and Confidence -

for the end of a series of Unlock Sessions



Given that Unlock's focus is the urban community who perhaps don't have lots of bible stories up their sleeves we wanted to work out how to use this activity in our normal context. The above might work or alternatively at the end of a series of sessions you



could use Pass the Parcel almost as revision to encourage the group by showing how much they have learnt! The prompt in each layer should link to one of the sessions that you have done together or the Bible content that you have used. That way, hopefully, the group will be able to make the links and applications themselves.

The question about where people can see God's love at work in the stories

they hear could be used in any of these versions and does not rely on extensive Bible knowledge in the participants.

These approaches were devised by Sonya Doragh, the Unlock Liverpool worker. For further details or suggestions you can contact Sonya via the Unlock National Office [unlock@urban.org.uk](mailto:unlock@urban.org.uk), or telephone 01142939060. [www.unlock-urban.org.uk](http://www.unlock-urban.org.uk)

# Unlock Learning Cycle



Action goes on to create more stories, and the process continues . . . .

## Unlocking real life stories of urban people.

Everyone is a creation of God, a unique individual. Being human means we are involved in a complex set of relationships. An individual faith that does not affect daily life and relationships is a pale image of what the Lord Jesus requires of us.

Jesus accepted people, and listened to the real issues of those who approached him. In the same way, Unlock encourages people to talk about their own experiences. People think and speak in concrete ways—involving emotion, and describing things that happened at a specific time and place.

Unlocking people's real stories of everyday life brings into the open the genuine concerns in people's lives, and they learn from each other as important issues are shared.

## Releasing life changing skills and confidence.

Our involvement in the lives of the people to whom God sends us is part of the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus. 'Social Action' is not just something that gives us the right to talk about Jesus. It is part of the way we proclaim the Good News and can lead to freedom for prisoners and release from oppression. Our understanding of Good News includes the fact of collective and structural sinfulness, in our society, as in any other. People are as much sinned against as they are sinful.

Jesus opposed both religious and political structural sinfulness in his day, and we are obliged to oppose it in ours. To proclaim the Good News we need to take the incarnation and earthly ministry of Jesus as seriously as we take the last days of his life, the cross and the resurrection.

The consequence of Unlocking stories and revealing Christ is that lives are changed!

## Revealing Good news of the Down to Earth Christ.

The majority of the Bible is not theological textbook, but a collection of stories about people facing up to the demands of life.

Jesus did not 'preach at' people, or attempt to fill them up with new facts. He responded to them, with all their questions and needs, taking them seriously as whole people. He used stories of everyday life—sheep, fish, bread, wine—and used relevant symbols.

We give space for Bible stories to engage with people's real life stories (contextual theology).

We do not try to impose the Good News on their lives, but help them bring their hopes and ambitions, their joys and their fears, into the light of God's truth. People reflect on the Good News, as God, thought his Spirit is with them.

**Suggested pass the parcel prompts -**  
just some ideas to get you started; you can use all sorts of things depending on whether you want to develop a particular theme or not.



**Items/pictures:-**

- Key
- Elastic band
- Lighter
- Sticking plaster
- Piece of ribbon
- battery
- Biro
- Purse
- Ball
- Bus
- Umbrella
- Spectacles
- A toy ring or beads
- A ticket
- A handkerchief
- A party hat
- A paper clip
- An invitation
- A coin
- A nut and bolt

**Prompts:-**

- A person who helped you grow
- A surprise meeting
- A time when you heard unexpected news
- A time when you learned something special from someone
- A time when a journey went wrong
- A time when you found yourself in a strange place or strange circumstances
- A time when someone comforted you
- A time when you got lost
- A most enjoyable meal
- A person you want to take care of
- A time when someone unexpected helped you out
- A time when you were afraid
- A special gift you have received
- A time when you felt good about yourself
- A time when you experienced generosity