

WARM-UP QUESTIONS: **30+ Fresh, Creative and Easy-to-Execute Techniques to Disarm Respondents**

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the warm-up period for any research study is to co-create with respondents an atmosphere where everyone can relax, feel less self-conscious and begin to form relationships with each other and the moderator. When successful, the groundwork has been laid to build energy and momentum.

“A powerful group has synergy – the combined effect of the group exceeds the efforts and contribution of its individual members.”

-Wendy Gordon, Goodthinking

To begin, respondents must understand the structure and parameters of the group or interview. This is established through the moderator’s well thought-out introduction and tone of voice. Warm-up questions and exercises provide respondents an opportunity to hear their own voice, a chance to find something relatable in someone else and to feel they are accepted with whatever opinions, thoughts or feelings they have brought with them. Warm-up questions should not be difficult to understand nor too sensitive in nature as respondents are ‘getting’ comfortable. A successful warm-up period gives the moderator the sense respondents are relaxing and willing to help however they are able. There is no better way for a moderator to confidently move forward.

I. Set Yourself Up for Success Before You Moderate

One of the easiest ways to initiate a warm-up discussion is by implementing opportunities for recruited participants to answer questions before the day of the research. Coming to the group armed with answers to previously-thought out questions gives respondents an anchor to help them through the uncomfortable period of meeting and sharing opinions in front of strangers. The moderator can then draw upon this material during the warm-up period as a springboard for discussion. Following are opportunities to implement questions before the research:

- **Adding an open-ended question to the screener**

Take advantage of the opportunity to ask an open-ended question in the screener by formulating a question that will not only assess articulateness, but can then be used as

an opener in the warm-up discussion. Ensure the question is written in a way that can easily be probed to generate a thorough response. The answers to these questions can be used in a variety of ways as part of the warm-up:

- Read back the answer by a given respondent and ask, ‘What led you to this response’ or ‘Tell me more about that.’
- Read two opposing views and ask individuals to indicate where each are on the spectrum and what makes he or she feel that way.
- Ask respondents to discuss his or her opinion with the person next to them and then present their partner’s opinion to the group. (See *Paired Introductions*, Page 5)



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

We gathered the responses you all gave to a question we asked when we recruited you for this group. Some of you responded that you only go to the doctor when you need to and others stated that going to the doctor is more of a wellness practice not related to how you are feeling on that day. Where do you each of you stand on this issue and what experiences have led you to this perspective?

- **Telephone Rescreen**

A telephone rescreen is a great way to connect with respondents prior to the research and works especially well for one-on-one interviews and ethnographies. Not only is it a fail-safe approach for ensuring you have the right respondent recruited, especially if you have a limited sample, but it provides an opportunity to make a connection that you can use in the early moments of meeting a respondent.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

When we spoke on the phone you were feeling distracted by all that was going on in your life at the time. How are you feeling today? How is it similar or different from the way you were feeling when we last spoke?

- **Homework**

Assigning homework is a terrific way to generate fodder for the warm-up period in a group or interview. It provides material for the moderator and respondents to draw upon during warm-up and, at the same time, shows gratitude towards the respondents for the time and effort that went into the work. It seems to energize individuals when the moderator acknowledges this.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

Let’s pull out the homework you completed. Thank you so much for putting your time and energy into this. I looked at everyone’s homework and I was surprised to see in all your photos, not only your equipment, but all the food that appeared in every image. Tell me more about that.



CASE STUDY: Creating a photo circle with a new photo app

Researching a new photo app, respondents were asked to download a draft copy of the app and, as part of their homework, create a photo circle connecting with other respondents. The client was interested in respondents' experiences with the app organically before they received instructions from the group process. A byproduct was the respondents arrived at the group introducing themselves to 'friends' they had already connected with through the app, jumpstarting the group synergy.

Warm-up questions which drew upon this homework assignment included:



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

1. *Tell us something you learned about another person in the room using the app and how you discovered that.*
2. *Based on the photographs you shared, what else can you tell us about who you are?*
3. *Put together photos you received from someone else in the room and tell us a story about them based on what you see.*

- **Meeting Respondents in the Waiting Room**

The moderator's job meeting respondents in the waiting area is to identify the 'best' group and to find a way to connect with each respondent. Waiting-area introductions gives the moderator a chance to show his or her gratitude for their participation, arriving on time as well as an opportunity to find something to empathize in each respondent. These initial acts of appreciation and empathy towards respondents help to soften the transition into the discussion by encouraging respondents to relax and be themselves. Waiting-room discussions can be used as jumping-off points during the warm-up period.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

"You mentioned earlier that you enjoy shopping with your daughter, but that it can sometimes be stressful. Tell me more about that."

- **A Mini Survey**

Sometimes there is information a client wants that is not a good use of discussion time (media habits, favorite websites, social media consumption, etc.), but nonetheless can provide context for the report. While we all know that qualitative research is not the right methodology for getting at how many people do something, a mini survey can also be fodder for a warm-up discussion.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

"I see almost all of you like to eat something at night. Describe your ideal late-night gastronomic ritual."

WARM-UP QUESTIONS AND TECHNIQUES

I. Create a Welcoming Environment

Keeping in mind respondents are human beings with personal lives, experiences and opinions of their own, moderators should approach respondents with respect for their willingness to participate despite being paid a monetary incentive. Here are ways to do that:

- **Sustenance**

Like all of us, respondents lead busy lives and don't always arrive well rested and fed. There's nothing you can do about a respondent who is tired (except pay and send), but hunger you can deal with. If you are within 2 hours of a meal time, have sandwiches and filling food in the waiting area. Encourage respondents to bring their unfinished food into the room. If it's getting late or you see participants lacking in energy, bring in something sweet, warm, caffeinated or crunchy midway through the group to give them an energy boost.

- **Informality**

Focus groups and interviews are typically informal, but some participants may not know this when they walk into a test environment. Be sure to let them know and offer instructions which are cues to the informal nature of the discussion:



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

- *“Get comfortable. Put your purses or backpacks on a table or otherwise off your lap since we’re going to be here for 90 minutes.”*
- *“Let me know if the air temperature is uncomfortable.”*
- *“Don’t feel you need to respond directly to me if I ask a question. You can respond to each other without raising your hands if we are talking one at a time.” (Another way to emphasize this point is to not make eye contact with a respondent when they are answering a question so that they know they can and should be responding to the group.)*
- *“Feel free to use the restroom or get water/coffee at any time.”*

- **The Backroom**

It's rare to have respondents who have never been to a focus group and do not know about the one-way mirror, however, some still may feel uncomfortable to think that there are people staring at them from the back room. Over the years, I have come to explain the presence of backroom clients in a way that takes the focus off the respondents and puts it on me. Here's how I explain it:



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

I'm working with some colleagues who are in an office behind this mirror. They are there to support me in case I've missed a question, or they might come to the door to follow up on something that has been said. (If I need to go further I might add) They are not in the room with us because they are on their laptops typing away and it would be distracting.

- **Golden Rules**

There really are just 2 important 'rules' for an effective focus group – honesty and participation. Let respondents know that both are important and, by doing this in a genuine way, they will also understand that these are expected as well. It may also help respondents be more honest when they a) don't know anyone else in the room and b) know that you as a moderator are independent of the subject matter and your livelihood or feelings will not be impacted by their honesty

- **Paired Introductions**

One way to handle introductions in a focus group that can jumpstart group synergy, is to have respondents interview each other and then present their partner's story to the rest of the group. This is particularly useful in helping respondents come together as a group and encourage interaction without the moderator always asking questions.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

I'd like you to pair up with another person in the group and get to know a little about each other over the next few minutes. Find out his or her name, how he or she is feeling today, any passions he or she has or whatever else you find interesting. Your partner will ask questions of you and then you will introduce your partner to the rest of the group.

You can also create paired introductory exercises such as those below rather than a straight interview.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

1. *Ask your neighbor to tell you something most people don't know about him or her and you do the same. Let's throw all those ideas into a basket and read them aloud to see what is interesting about us all.*
2. *What special powers do you have and what will they allow the person sitting next to you to do if you give them to him or her? Discuss these answers with your partner and present your ideas to the group.*
3. *Draw the person sitting across from you.*

- **Provide an Example**

As new exercises or projective techniques are introduced, it is sometimes helpful if the moderator provides an example of what you are looking for. This gives respondents a model for how you want them to think about the exercise and saves time redirecting later. It is important for the moderator to carefully think through how to provide the example to avoid biasing respondents.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

I'd like to start our group by asking each of you to do a mind map. A mind map is a type of free association exercise where you write down the subject in the middle of the paper and then any thoughts or feelings you associate with it. Here is an example of one that was done on football. We're going to do this same exercise on [SUBJECT].

II. **Who Are You? What Do You Aspire to Be? What Matters to You?**

Following are both homework assignments and in-group exercises that focus on unearthing values, attitudes, priorities, aspirations and how respondents want to be seen or portrayed in communications.



HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

- **Create your life story in pictures**

The objective here is to get respondents to identify the most significant parts of their life stories using photographs from their lives and why they consider them to be significant. The resulting discussion is rich with insights into what is important to, how they spend their time, what their primary role is in their household, a bit about their personality and other unforeseen gems. This can be narrowed to focus in on parts of their lives - sports fandom, parenthood, pet ownership.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

Tell us your life story using 4 to 7 photographs that reflect what you think are the most significant aspects of your life. Take color copies of the photos since we won't be returning them and include a half-page photo essay of your life as you reflect on the pictures you've chosen and what they represent.

- **Create a storyboard of your life**

Like 'Creating your life story in pictures,' a storyboard reveals what is most important to a respondent, although the fact that it's not based on photographs frees the respondent to reveal moments in which they may not have a photo to tell a personal story of a significant time or influence in their life. The moderator can also focus respondents on creating storyboards on various themes such as the high and low points of one's life or the best and worst food moments.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

Create a storyboard which shows how you became a football fan. A storyboard is a series of drawn pictures representing scenes from your life. Include at least 4 scenes that tell us the most important moments or events that have impacted you becoming a football fan and write a short amount of copy to go with each scene.

- **The name book**

Respondents are asked to use photos, personal drawings or verbiage to reveal the influences on receiving their name; that is, mini stories about their name and how they feel about it. This is a great bonding exercise and a fun way to start off a branding study.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

We are interested in the stories about your name. Who were you named after? Is there a story behind your name(s)? Was there anything you were ever embarrassed about concerning your name? Share 1 or 2 stories about your name utilizing photos, writings or copies of artifacts from your life.

- **Videotape Clip**

Use videotaping for exploring aspects of respondents' lives not normally revealed in an interview or focus group. This is an impactful way to gain insight and an impactful accompaniment to a presentation of findings. Several great uses of videos include a mother preparing breakfast in the morning, family dinners or more product-focused such as an elderly person changing the battery of a hearing aid or a gamer explaining their gaming setup.



CASE STUDY: Videotaping Executives Talking To Their Pets

We asked pet owners to video tape themselves talking and playing with their pets. We then interviewed them over the phone and recorded them saying their name and their job title. We put the two pieces together and revealed how our voices, language and personalities significantly alter when we are with our pets.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

Take a 2- to 3-minute videotape clip of you and your pet. We'd like you to talk to your pet as you normally would, saying his or her name and any other names you have for him or her. Include playing with your pet(s) as you normally would as well as any activities you might participate in together.

- **Audiotape Clip**

Similarly, an audiotape can demonstrate moments in respondents' lives when you don't need to see the scene to understand it, such as a parent putting a child to bed, feeding or playing with a pet or a doctor's office visit.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

Take a 2- to 3-minute audio clip of you putting your child to bed on a typical night.

- **Bring your favorite...**

This exercise is very versatile and can apply to many things...favorite toy, item of clothing, advertising, food, things in your closet or items in your makeup bag. It doesn't take a lot of time and, yet, it can be a great springboard for additional probing questions.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

Please bring a favorite item from your closet with an accompanying paragraph which tells us what is significant about this item that makes it a favorite more so than other items you could have brought.

- **Significant Object**

The item respondents bring can be altered to choosing something that is most significant to him or her which is also a wonderful foundation for participants to discover what's relatable in each other.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

Please bring an object to the group that is important to you in some way or reveals something about you as a person. Write an accompanying paragraph that tells us why this object is significant to you and what it represents about you or your life.



IN-GROUP EXERCISES

- **Who Inspires You?**

I've used this warm-up question many times and it works not only to bring the group together in shared values and interests, but it also unveils who respondents aspire to be, how they want to be seen in advertising and who or what influences them, all fodder for communication.



CASE STUDY: *Who Is Your Sports Muse?*

To understand female sports fans and the influences that impact their fandom, we asked women to identify a key influence in their fandom. Women drew upon their families, childhood, school, team sports and current fan experiences to answer this question, revealing the types of sports experiences that had the most impact.

 **EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION**

I'd like you to introduce yourself and then introduce us to who your [SUBJECT] inspiration is. This might be someone you know or have heard of, real or a character, that inspires you, teaches you or to whom you turn to when it comes to [SUBJECT]. Tell us how he/she inspires you and what or why you admire him or her.

- **The story of your...**

Favorite food, best vacation, middle name, worst travel experience and so on. Personal stories are tremendous at igniting group cohesiveness.

 **EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION**

There is a story behind so many things in your lives. I invite you to think about a story from your life regarding (SUBJECT). What was significant to you about that experience? Knowing what you know now, would you experience it again? Why or why not?

- **Cast Away**

A fun and quick way to get to know your respondents is to ask them what 5 things they would want on a desert island. Encourage respondents to exclude survival products, cell phones and first aid kits and instead reveal 1 or 2 items that they would not want to be without. This can easily be tailored to one category or specific items in various categories.

 **EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION**

You are on a deserted island. What 5 things would be on your list of must haves. Don't include survival items like cell phones, food and tents. Consider that you have your basic needs met. Focus on what 5 things you really couldn't live without.

- **Epitaph of your favorite product or brand**

Many times, respondents will say they like certain brands, but provide very nebulous reasons why. Epitaphs tell you immediately what their fondness is for the brand. If you find respondents are struggling with what they love about a brand, you can also set up this exercise as if the brand no longer exists. You may find that their feelings either don't change or become more animated once they realize it's gone.

 **EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION**

We have a list of shoe brands on the table. Imagine these brands represent people who have died. Select 2 and take 4 minutes to write what you thought of each person in an epitaph that would appear on its tombstone. Focus on what this person/brand did for you when alive and what you will miss most.

- **Past and Future Perspectives**

Asking respondents to look 5-10 years in the past and compare what was important then to now can show you their values, priorities and how their life stage impacts these things. This is great for studies where you need to understand your target audiences' values more deeply.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

Think about your life 10 years ago. Write down the year that was and 5 things that were important to you then. Now write down the current year and 5 things that are important to you now in your life. Let's discuss what you see as the differences in these two lists.

- **Alternative Career**

Alternative career warm-up questions are simple ways respondents can find something relatable or interesting about someone else in the group.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

If you could do anything else than what you currently do, what career would you have liked to pursue?

III. **What Role does this Product Play in your Life?**

Following are both homework assignments and in-group exercises that focus on unearthing the importance of products and services to consumers, the role they play in their lives and the emotional connections consumers have with them.



HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

- **Bring an item that plays a significant role in a routine**

Respondents bring an item from home that plays a significant role in their daily makeup routine, house cleaning routine, commuting routine, self-care routine, or family meal prep during the week. You want to wrap the question around the category you'll be discussing and make it specific enough that you can unearth not only the role the product or service plays, but the respondent's emotional connection to it. The answers to this question can go further by identifying the cultural norms of the category. That is, if the subject is about house cleaning, respondents' answers can shed light on what it means for something to be clean, and what is the difference between a clean floor and a clean chair to measure the product's distance from these cultural beliefs.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

I'd like you to think about your morning or bedtime facial-care routine and bring an item that is a significant part of your routine - a product or process

that you feel is vital and that without it, you wouldn't feel satisfied or that the results of what you currently achieve would be as good.

- **Stop using your most important technology or product for the day**

This is a versatile technique across methodologies. What you are seeking is to understand the benefits of a product or category more deeply. When you remove a product from someone's life for a day, such as headphones/headsets, the remote control, a music app, an organizer, or a favorite hair appliance, a consumer can often tell you how it *feels* to not have these products and you can get both the benefits by understanding the work-arounds (what else they do in place of using the product) and the emotional connection to it. The product not recommended for this exercise is a cell phone and similar devices since the responses may be too broad and predictable to get much nuance.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

For the next 24 hours, I'd like you to pretend you don't own or have access to [TECHNOLOGY OR PRODUCT]. You must not use it or borrow someone else's [PRODUCT]. Journal your thoughts and feelings at least 4 times a day, preferably when you are feeling the loss of the product most keenly.

- **Bring a décor item you consider to be part of a holiday tradition**

Like bringing in a significant object, a décor item that is part of a holiday tradition will have lots of stories behind it. It's fun to do this just to get to know respondents better during a holiday time, but it also can help you understand the importance of holidays and traditions across cultures and ethnicities and the role products play. This can be useful if taking clips or quotes to support advertising development during the holidays.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

Pretend it's 3 weeks before [HOLIDAY]. Think about how you might decorate your home. I'd like you to select a décor item that is part of this holiday's tradition in your home. Something that, if it were not there, you would miss it and the holiday would not be quite the same. Bring that item to the group and write down a paragraph on its history for you, how you would feel if it were missing and any funny or interesting stories around it.

- **Bring a family recipe or secret ingredient for a food/dish you grew up with**

This works especially well for groups or interviews about a food product, of course, although it's also great for understanding cultural, usage and attitudinal differences within subgroups.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

Bring a copy of a family recipe or secret ingredient for a food you grew up with. Write a paragraph on the memories you associate with it, on what occasions you make or use it and bring copies of photos preparing a dish using the ingredient or eating it.

- **Keep a weekly diary and journal every time you interact with the product**

Great for online studies where a respondent can be prompted to check in with an online diary every time he or she uses a product or exhibits behaviors of interest (e.g. when you feel like having a coffee, when you are triggered to smoke). Respondents can check in with information such as the time of day, location, what he or she is doing, with whom and how he or she is feeling. Respondents can share parts of their story or you can summarize some of the findings and ask them to react as part of the warm-up discussion.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

I'd like you to check in every time you decide to [BEHAVIOR] or every time you feel like [BEHAVIOR] whether you engage in that behavior or not. Tell us what time it is, what you are doing, who you are with, how you are feeling and what do you think is triggering you to feel this way.

- **Go shopping for a product in store or online**

A shopping trip can provide detailed information on the customer buying process or journey. You can provide a “map” for the respondent to fill out along the way if you have some idea of what that journey will entail. Beyond the choices consumers make, leave room to understand the issues and questions they grapple with at various points. If there is no budget for having respondents purchase the product, you can have them select what they would have purchased and why. Any piece of this journey can be a topic for the warm-up discussion.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

We'd like you to get in the mindset of purchasing a [PRODUCT]. Embark on the process as you normally would by answering these questions along the way as you move from thinking about the [PRODUCT] to deciding which one of you would purchase.

1. *What's the first thing you do when you are considering a new [PRODUCT]? List any websites you go to. What are you looking for? What questions do you have at this stage?*
2. *What products are you considering and why? What do you do next?*
3. *Are there any sources of information you go to along the way? What/why?*
4. *Narrow down your choices to between 1 and 3 [PRODUCTS] and compare/contrast them.*

5. *What thoughts or feelings does this stage of the buying process conjure up?*
6. *What questions do you have at this point and who is best to answer them?*
7. *Which product did you decide to purchase and why?*



CASE STUDY: Nurses Job Hunting

Asking RNs to share their methods for finding jobs revealed that the path is different depending on the age of the nurse and the job stage they are in. That is, are they open to a new job or ready to act? These differences also impact the sources of information they use.

- **Draw the scene**

This exercise can work both in and out of the group setting, but assigning it as homework provides greater detail. Respondents are telling you the occasions for a product usage. This exercise is also useful for exploring advertising strategies because the intricacies of what consumers draw in a scene can often inspire creatives and make for an interesting addition to a presentation of the findings.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

When you are watching The Disney Channel, where are you usually and what are you doing while watching? Please draw a typical scene of what this might look like. Don't worry about your drawing skills. Stick figures are fine. Draw as much detail as you can recall making the scene close to what it would be in real life.

- **Draw the inside of your refrigerator**

Another way to utilize drawing techniques to understand what is important is to have respondents draw the interiors of personal spaces – makeup drawer, medicine cabinet, nightstand, purse / wallet, car. Many tangential stories are triggered when respondents are talking about these spaces in their lives.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

Please take 10-15 minutes and draw the inside of your refrigerator noting the areas and / or items you especially care about, if at all, and the things you don't. Feel free to add commentary on what thoughts, images or feelings arise as you are doing the exercise, including the aspects that make you happy or frustrated.

- **Bring a photograph of...**

If getting a sense of the differences between personal spaces is important, have respondents bring a photograph from home, rather than a drawing. It's easy for respondents to show and tell from photographs in the warm-up time and provides data that can be easily included in the report.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

We'd like you to take 2 or 3 photographs of your children's closets and dresser drawers as they normally look on an average day. Include both the inside and the outside areas surrounding them.



ON THE SPOT

- **Describe a favorite holiday ritual, food, décor item**

A take-off on bringing an item to the groups, this exercise should give respondents time to ponder and then write down some of the images, thoughts and feelings that arise. You might even consider taking them through an imagery exercise where they return to the time and place to get fully immersed in the experience.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

I'd like you to write about a favorite holiday ritual that you enjoyed as a child or today. Close your eyes if you like and call up a scene from a holiday in which you participated in a favorite ritual. (Give respondents a few moments to get to where you want them to be.) Recall who was present, what the lighting in the room looked like, the temperature, what you might have been wearing, what food or drinks were available, the music and scent in the air. Where are you and what are you doing, what are you saying, what are you thinking and how are you feeling? Open your eyes and write down your thoughts and feelings about this ritual and what, if anything, matters to you.

- **Imagine a new life for a week**

If you want to know what life is like in the present for a respondent, understand where he or she would like to escape to and compare / contrast the two.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

I'd like you to imagine you have been given the time and money to take a break from your life next week. Close your eyes if you like and call up where you would go, what you would do and who would you be with, if anyone. Would you be in your life or step into someone else's? Consider what the vibe of this place would be like and how you would feel once you arrived. Open your eyes and write down your thoughts and feelings about where and how you would spend your time and what about it attracts you compared to your life here and now?

- **Describe 5 actions to ensure your air travel will be comfortable and easy**

When respondents show you how they prepare for something it can be helpful in setting up a discussion on missed opportunities for a new service or product. By

understanding how respondents prepare, you learn what their ultimate goals are and the work-arounds they've developed to avoid a negative experience.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

Think about your last couple of air travel experiences. As you imagine preparing for a new trip, make a list of the activities you do prior to traveling that directly impacts how easy and comfortable your trip will be. We will be discussing what your ultimate goals are and what you are trying to avoid by doing this activity.

- **Describe your favorite products and how you use them**

A simple and clear way to start a conversation about a new product is understanding current usage and, more importantly, what there is about the product to be fond of. If there appears to be little consumers are fond of, suggest the product should be eliminated and not available. Then watch the reaction of respondents to see if there are consumers trying to hold onto the brand and explore why.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

Describe what [CATEGORY] products you use. In what ways or scenarios do you use them and why? Let's say that that brand is no longer being manufactured and you cannot get it anymore, what would you do, think and feel about that?

- **What products were you using 7 years ago compared to now?**

Product changes can be symptoms or reactions to deeper personal changes in values, lifestyle or life stage happening in the background.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

Think about your life 7 to 10 years ago. Write down what you liked to eat, what was important to you at that time, who was prominent in your life, what books were you reading, your favorite movie, what couldn't you live without and what [PRODUCT OF INTEREST] were you using? In a second column write down the same things, but in the present. Looking at both lists, what do you see? How have you changed? Why is that important to you now? Why isn't that important to you anymore? Circle those things you want in your future and let's discuss why.



CASE STUDY: Creating Advertising Strategy

Developing an advertising message for a new compact vehicle on the market was all about aligning with the targets' values. This was arrived at, in part, by understanding consumers' last car choices vs current preferences and what had changed about them during this time. Knowing these answers is also helpful in portraying consumers the way they want to be seen.

- **How does (FOOD) feel in your body?**

When asked to describe foods, medicines or products used in or on the body, rather than describing the product with words, ask respondents how the product *feels* in their body. You are asking them to show you on paper where in their body they feel the food item, how it feels in the body once it's ingested? This allows you to see other ways the item can be described rather than a very rational description.



EXAMPLE INSTRUCTION

For the next exercise, each of you is going to be using an outline of a generic human body that represents your own. Think about [FOOD] in front of you and imagine eating it. I want you to show on this paper where you feel this food in your own body. What are all the places in your body that light up when you eat this food? Use one-word adjectives or short phrases to describe what is happening in that part of your body when you consume this food.