

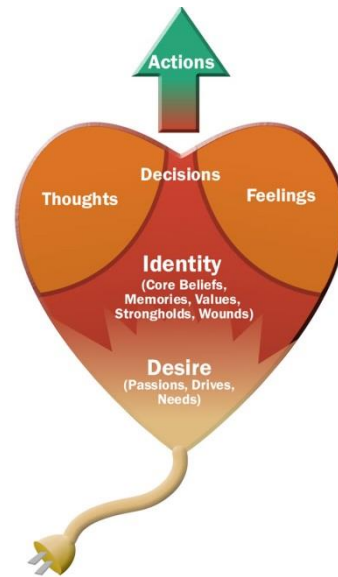
Desire Photo Cards

The *Desire Photo Cards* use the emotional brain to help you discover the deep desires that drive your behavior—and create or obstruct change. These games and exercises are designed to catalyze significant conversations around desires in a fun and engaging way. We’ve provided ten games suitable for parties, small groups, team-building and coaching to help you tune in to why you do what you do.

Understanding the Heart

The *Desire Photo Cards* are based on the MetaFormation heart model, which for the purposes of understanding divides our inner world into four parts:

- **Action**
 The output of the heart. What we do.
- **Mind**
 Our thoughts, feelings and decisions from moment to moment. The active or conscious mind.
- **Identity**
 What we’ve become in life—the beliefs, memories, vows, wounds, values, or principles we’ve chosen to live by.
- **Desire**
 The fundamental human needs—things like acceptance, significance, security or being known—that drive our behavior.

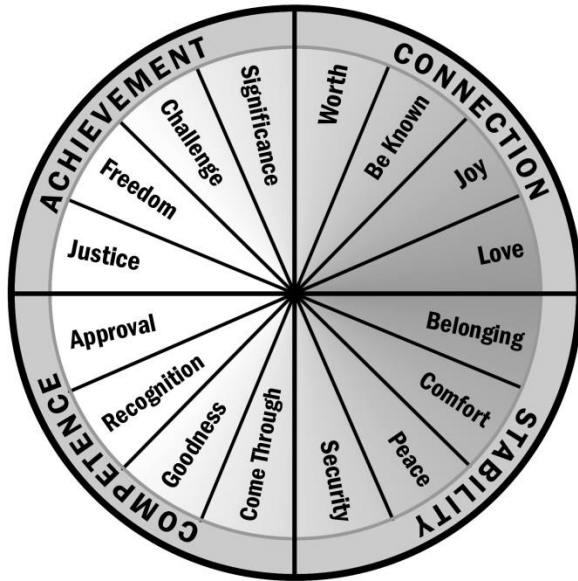


So how do we get in touch with our hearts? Our rational minds tend to place a filter over our deepest longings. When we are asked rational questions, we respond not out of our true desires but our beliefs: what we think others want or what we ought to do. The emotional brain provides a much more direct pathway to desire, because it is not filtered: we feel spontaneously, before we can think.

These cards are designed to stimulate the emotional brain. While the rational brain responds to words and concepts, the language of the emotional brain is image and story. When we visualize, we feel. And when we feel, we get connected to our desires. The best way to use these cards is to feel them—to let yourself get drawn into the story in the picture, and feel what those depicted are feeling. Once the emotional brain is activated, and you are in the feeling, it is much easier to get to the desire.

Both our highest and most base thoughts and actions spring out of the 16 core desires shown on the *Desire Photo Cards*. The desire for love, for example, can beckon us to great acts of sacrifice and affection. Often desires get attached to things (like, ‘if I only found a soul

mate, I would be loved’), but the thing is not the desire. It is only a picture of what we think will give us our desire.



The Desire Wheel showing the 16 desires

When we lack what we most long for, or are pursuing a thing instead of the desire itself, our true desires become twisted. This happens in one of two ways: a reactive fear and avoidance or a grasping pursuit. We either close our heart so we won't get hurt again, or aggressively pursue the thing we crave in unhealthy ways. For instance, the desire for acceptance can be twisted into shrinking back in fear of rejection, or into manipulating and sucking up to others to gain approval. The backs of the photo cards (in black and white) show the most common ways each true desire is twisted.

Dealing with *twisted desires* through discipline or denial doesn't work. Every twisted desire is the result of a true desire that has been unmet. Change only comes

when the true desires begin to be filled in a healthy way: within a relationship with your Creator. That's what you were made for. For a practical guide to filling your deepest desires within your relationship with Jesus, get the book, *Questions for Jesus* by Tony Stoltzfus.

In addition to pictures of desires (color) and twisted desires (black and white), the card deck also includes a single *Understanding Desires* card, with diagrams of the Heart Model and the Desire Wheel on the front, and a set of desire questions on the back. The diagrams can be used to explain the concept of desires, and the questions are used in many of the games.

Group- and Team-Building Games

Note: most of the desire games in the companion *Desire Discovery Card* set can also be done with the *Desire Photo Cards*.

Game 1: What I Really Want Is...

Objective: *Help a group learn to see their true desires and get comfortable talking about them.*

- **Step 1: The Topic**

Choose a topic that directly impacts your life. Lighter subjects might include: your day, your next vacation, a hobby, something you bought for yourself recently, etc. For a more serious team-building exercise, try a topic like family, friendships, job, your home, or your finances.

- **Step 2: What You Want**

Think about what you really want out of that area of life or that thing. Then pick the *Desire Photo Card* that most closely matches what you desire. When you look at the cards, don't think so much of what is actually depicted (a group of people clapping) as what the photo represents to you (approval).

- **Step 3: Share**

One at a time, give each person a few minutes to describe their desire and why they want it. Use a timer if needed to keep people on track.

Game 2: Why I Care

Objective: *An icebreaker-type game that gets people comfortable talking about desires.*

- **Step 1: Pick a Desire**

Have each person pick a *Desire Photo Card* that represents something they long for.

- **Step 2: Share**

Each person shares in turn why they picked that particular desire and what makes it important to them.

- **Step 3: Learn More**

Optional: Use the questions on the *Understanding Desires* card to draw out more details about the person's desire

Game 3: Pray a Desire

Objective: *this game lets people experiment with praying their desires and letting Jesus touch them.*

- **Step 1: Pick a Topic**

Choose an area of life for group members to share about. You could use a topic like your job or primary role, friendship, home, our group, or vacations; or you can make up your own.

- **Step 2: Find What You Want**
Spread out the Photo Cards on a table or the floor, and have each person pick the photo that represents what they yearn for in that area of life.
- **Step 3: Pray the Desire**
Praying your desire is simply asking Jesus to fill it by speaking to your heart, instead of by giving you some external thing in this world. Look at the photo for a moment, then take one minute to pray, “Jesus, how have you been giving ____ [the desire] to me this week?”
- **Step 4: Share**
Share what came into your heart or what you heard as you prayed. (Note: often people will discount what came into their heart as ‘just me’. If so, encourage them to share whatever they felt and thought, and then ask the group to give feedback: “So, does that sound like Jesus?”)

Game 4: Family Values

Objective: *Get in touch with the desires that were prominent in your family of origin.*

- **Step 1: Choose a Desire**
Spread the *Desire Photo Cards* out on a table or the floor, color-side up. Have each person choose a desire that was important in their family of origin. What desires most describe what your family pursued in life?
- **Step 2: Share a Story**
Can you think of a story (humorous, redemptive, painful or otherwise) that illustrates how your family pursued a certain desire? For instance, did your family pursue security by going to the same vacation destination each year, or freedom in the way you spent time and money, or joy by living on the lake and having a boat, or justice by working for a cause?
- **Step 3: Share the Impact (Optional)**
Share how your family’s pursuit impacted you. Did you buy in or resist that desire as a kid? How does it operate in your life today?

Game 5: Twisted Desires in the Movies

Objective: *This game will generate a lot of laughter as you explore what twisted desires look like.*

- **Step 1: Pick a Twisted Desire**
Turn the deck over to show the black and white side. Then pick a *Twisted Desire* card at random. (A twisted desire is a true desire pursued in an unhealthy way: either we fear lacking this desire and try to protect ourselves against not having it, or we try to force it to happen.)

- **Step 2: Name Movie Characters**

Have the group name well-known characters in the movies or TV that function out of that twisted desire and give examples of how it comes out in that character's life.

Vary the game by using different categories, like historical figures, Bible characters, cartoon characters, or personal stories where you acted out of that twisted desire yourself

Game 6: Desires for Kids

Objective: *Help kids and preteens get in touch with their desires.*

- **Step 1: Find Something You Want**

Think of something you really want using one of these questions:

- If you could get anything for Christmas, what would you want?
- If you got a new friend tomorrow that was just the kind of person you want to be friends with, what would you do together?
- If you had one wish, what would you wish for?
- If someone special to you (a parent, grandparent, teacher, etc.) spent a whole day with you and took you wherever you wanted to go, where would that be?

- **Step 2: Imagine You Have It**

Imagine that your wish came true! Close your eyes and picture yourself getting that present, going to that special place or being with that person. What does your picture look like? Describe it to me.

- **Step 3: Pick a Card**

When you imagine that wish coming true, which picture looks most like what you feel? Spread out the *Desire Photo Cards* and pick one. Then talk about why you picked that photo and what you like about it.

Coaching and Small Group Exercises

Exercise 7: Influential Desires

Objective: *To get in touch with how the desires of others have affected them.*

- **Step 1: Choose a Hero**
Think of a friend or family member who has had a significant, **positive** impact on your life.
- **Step 2: Identify the Desire**
What *Desire Card* was that person operating out of when he or she influenced you?
Pick a card.
- **Step 3: Share the Impact**
Go around the circle and share how that person impacted you, and how their actions sprang from a desire.
- **Step 4: Repeat for a Twisted Desire (optional)**
Repeat the exercise using twisted desires (the black and white photos) for a friend or family member who had a **negative** impact on you.

Exercise 8: Identifying Twisted Desires

Objective: *Identify desires and wounds we may not know are there.*

- **Step 1: Review the Cards**
Spread out the *Twisted Desire* cards on the floor or table in front of you.
- **Step 2: Choose Intuitively**
Think of a particular season in your life or area of life (family, work, home, etc.), and pick a card you identify with in that area. Choose intuitively instead of by a rational process—pick a card you are drawn to when you think of that situation, even if you don't know why.
- **Step 3: Share the Connection**
What is the connection between that particular card and that life season or situation?
What draws you to that card?

Game 9: Family Struggles

Objective: *Get in touch with the twisted desires that drove your family of origin.*

- **Step 1: Choose a Twisted Desire**
Spread the *Desire Photo Cards* out on a table or the floor, black-and-white-side up, and choose a twisted desire that was important in their family of origin. What did your family most fear? What desires drove you?

- **Step 2: Share a Story**
Can you think of a story (humorous, painful or otherwise) that illustrates how a twisted desire played out in your family? For instance, did your father ignore family in pursuit of significance in his work, or did you chase freedom and opportunity by constantly relocating, or peace by sweeping every conflict under the rug?
- **Step 3: Share the Impact**
Share how your family's pursuit impacted you then and now. How has the fruit of that twisted desire played out in your life?

Exercise 10: Coaching Conflict

Objective: *This coaching exercise uses desires to create a win-win outcome for two people in conflict.*

- **Step 1: Start with a Conflict**
Identify the area of conflict you want to work on. Then spread the *Desire Photo Cards* out in front of you.
- **Step 2: Describe the Outcome You Want**
Have the coach help you describe the outcome you want in the conflict. Do you want to be treated fairly, get your point across, preserve the relationship—or what?
- **Step 3: Identify the Desire**
Once you've gotten in touch with the outcome you want, have the coach ask, "What would that give you?" to help you get to the underlying desire. Choose the *Desire Photo Card* that best represents that desire.
- **Step 4: Speak to the Desire**
Now that you understand what the other person really wants, how can you give him or her that desire? For instance, if the other person wants to be understood, what kind of conversation would give her that? Or if he wants freedom to make choices, what can you negotiate that would provide that freedom?

Exercise 11: Coaching Desires and Change

Objective: *A coaching exercise that uses desire principles to change your behavior.*

- **Step 1: Choose a Behavior**
Start with something you want to change about yourself—a bad habit, an emotional response you don't like, a pattern you want to change, etc.
- **Step 2: Re-Experience It**
Think of a recent time that behavior happened, and put yourself back into that situation. See yourself in that place, replay what was said or what you did. *Feel* it as you experience it again.

- **Step 3: Connect with the Desire**

As you are in that feeling, which of the *Desire Photo Cards* are you most drawn to? Which desire would your response (the one you want to change) have given you?

- **Step 4: Pray the Desire**

Look at the photo you were drawn to for a moment, then take a minute to close your eyes and pray, “Jesus, how have you been ___ [the desire] to me this week?” Then share what came into your heart or what you heard.