

An Icebreaker: Thorn, Rose and Bud

Outdoor Classrooms (<http://outdoor-classrooms.com>)

I love icebreakers and use them all the time in my workshops and classes because they ease tension and relieve formality. They can be used in the beginning of a workshop or at the end as a reflective exercise. How wonderful to return from visiting family with a new reflective icebreaker game to share. With three generations sharing a meal, my brother introduced this simple game called, "Thorn, Rose and Bud." We have since incorporated this activity into our own dinner conversations, as it inspires all of us to reflect more deeply on our day in a playful way.



Each person at the table shares a "thorn" (a woe), "rose" (a joy) and "bud"(something that you are looking forward).

THORN: a woe from the day

ROSE: a joy from the day

BUD: a something that you are looking forward to

It is important to note that reflections should begin with a thorn, move into the rose and end with a bud. The intention is to end with a happy memory and something to look forward to. It is also important to note that participants may have more than one rose to share, therefore, creating a bouquet. For our family, the prompts gave us permission to share more deeply about how we were feeling which inspired richer conversations.