



## *Switcheroo Gathering Tool*

This resource is designed for groups that begin with a 10-15 minute large-group gathering before dividing into small groups. Show the Switcheroo series video and have an experienced communicator introduce the lesson using the illustration provided. Once your students move to their small groups, your small-group leaders should begin with the entry point section of the small group leader's guide.

## *Session One Gathering Tool*

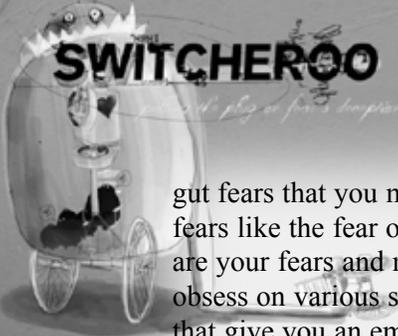
### **Illustration:** Scare tactics

Welcome to our new study called Switcheroo! Before we start talking about exactly what a Switcheroo is, let's look at a video that will help you get an idea of where we're going and what we'll be talking about for the next four sessions. Keep a close eye out for these hidden clues as we get an in-depth look at what we mean by Switcheroo.

*(Teacher's Note: Now show the "Switcheroo differences" video found in the Switcheroo download zone. Tell the students that, in order to get a closer look and better understanding of the artwork and the series, you're going to pull a switcheroo with them. Tell them that there will be two Switcheroo slides in the video. These slides will have five differences. They should concentrate on the two images to find the differences that you've switched from one picture to the next. What the students won't know is that the video is actually meant to switcheroo them in a different way. While they are searching for the differences, two will be highlighted, and then an unexpected and shocking scene will appear quickly on screen, hopefully providing a shock or even a fright for the students. This emotional experience of fear will be a great lead in to the series. Be prepared to watch for different reactions from your students when they are surprised/scared by the video. Refer to those reactions as you connect this opening illustration.)*

**Connecting the introduction:** So, we got some of you with that video, didn't we? You should have seen it from this end - it was a whole sea of heads jolting backward in fright, and that high-pitched scream that one of the guys let out nearly burst my eardrum. We can laugh about our reactions now, but some of our knees are still a little weak from the fear. And to be honest, that is the exact moment we were trying to create to introduce our new series called Switcheroo. We wanted you to feel what's behind the series, not just talk about it. And we thought the best way for us to remember what fear feels like and does to us was to actually create a little of it. Hopefully, you can see it was all in good fun. Now that you have had a moment to recover, let's use this experience to think about this emotion called fear that too often takes over our lives at unexpected times and in unexpected places. And let's see if maybe God has anything to say about it.

Before we get to what God has to say, let's take a moment to talk a little bit more about the kind of fears we're going to be working through in this series. We're not going to be talking about how to get over your fear of spiders, shark tanks, sock puppets, or clowns. Instead, we're going to talk about the deep heart-level fears that we all have because we're human and we live on earth. We're going to be talking about your fears. These are the deep-down-in-your-

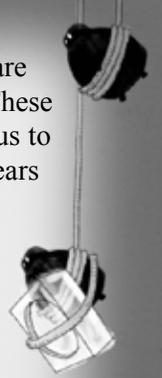


# SWITCHEROO

gut fears that you may not even want to admit to yourself, much less to anybody else. These are fears like the fear of failure and of insignificance, the fear of rejection and of abandonment. These are your fears and my fears. They are the fears that keep you awake at night, forcing each of us to obsess on various scenarios of what could go wrong or what has gone wrong. These are the fears that give you an empty feeling in the bottom of your stomach when you don't see how things could possibly turn out well. These are the fears that hit you where you live and then won't leave you alone.

Unlike a fear of spiders, which may only affect you when you come across one of those eight-legged predators, the fear that you're not valuable or lovable can haunt you 24/7. The fear that you're just not good enough can haunt you constantly. And once these fears infect you, they impact every decision you make and every relationship you have. Here are some examples: Maybe you try to be friends with a particular group of people because you're afraid that's the only way other people will like you. Perhaps you try to be a part of every extracurricular activity you can fit into your schedule because you're afraid that's the only way to prove to your parents and everyone else that you're valuable. Or maybe you shut yourself off from people because deep down you're afraid that if they really knew you, there's no way they could love you.

Whatever the fear and however you tend to address it, we all can agree that this is one place in all of our lives that we can use a lot of help. So, let's turn to Scripture now and see what God has to say to us about your fears and my fears.





# SWITCHEROO

## *Session Two Gathering Tool*

**Illustration:** The hustle

Option 1: Experience

Create a fun atmosphere as students enter your meeting area, complete with some sort of game. This should be a game that can be played quickly and that you are quite good at. However, as you begin your session, play this game against a student and lose intentionally. Choose whatever game will work for your skills and your setting.

After you have publicly lost, invite a student on stage with you to compete against you in the game. Make sure to set yourself up to succeed by competing against a student who is good at the game but still beatable. Let this person play against you for some sort of prize and beat you. Then offer a double-or-nothing proposition to this student to compete against you again. This time, play your best and beat this competitor.

However you execute this hustle, make sure that you can turn the tables and beat the competitor you're playing. This is key to introducing the idea of the hustle.

Option 2: Movie Clip

Show a clip of or refer to a scene in a movie where a Hustle of sorts takes place. *Couples Retreat* starring Vince Vaughn playing a game of Guitar Hero is one example. Make sure whatever clip you use is appropriate for your group setting.

**Connecting the introduction:** You've just experienced the Hustle. The Hustle happens when someone fools us into believing that they're not good at something in order to make us confident that we can beat them. But once we feel completely confident and put everything on the line, they then play at their full potential in order to beat us at the highest stakes possible. And as they do this, they make us feel as though we're not as talented as we first thought we were. In short, the Hustle leaves us feeling inadequate.

The Hustle is the specific kind of Switcheroo that we're talking about today. In our first session, we talked about how fear pulls a Switcheroo on us and how we have to pull the plug on fear's deception by letting perfect love drive out fear. Today we're going to talk about how fear tries to hustle us into believing these two little words: I can't.

When fear tries to deceive us in this way, we doubt ourselves and feel like we just aren't good enough or strong enough or whatever enough to do what we need to do. But when God's perfect love drives out this fear, we're left with these two words: He will. Today we begin this journey by looking at someone else who fear tried to deceive into believing he was inadequate. His name was Moses.

When we think of Moses, we often think of a baby who we first find in a basket growing into a man who parted the sea. But if we look at the years in between his basket days and parting-the-sea days, we find a man facing the fear of inadequacy at one of the most crucial moments of his life. And in his story, we learn to switch I can't to He will.

## *Session Three Gathering Tool*

### **Illustration:** Falling for the sting

Sometimes something sounds too good to be true because it is too good to be true. Chris Calderon of La Mirada, California, found this out the hard way when he fell for a sting operation. The Los Angeles Sheriff's department sent out 960 letters about an alleged contest at a local hotel where contestants could win prizes, such as a new car. But contestants like Chris didn't know that these letters went to people who had outstanding warrants. When the suspects such as Chris got these letters, they thought they had gotten some inside information that could help them win a new car. But when they showed up for the contest, all they got was arrested. Police had set up this sting operation to get the suspects to come to them so that they could throw them in the slammer. One minute people like Chris thought they got some great information, and the next they ended up behind bars and isolated from society.

What made this operation particularly stinging for Chris was that he actually used his booking sheet from his previous arrest as his form of identification for the so-called contest. Obviously, there was no contest, and no car, and using his booking sheet as ID made it even easier for police to arrest Chris. That day, police arrested Chris and seven other people on their outstanding warrants. The sting was successful.

(Citation: <http://www.digitaljournal.com/article/282934>)

*(Teacher's Note: As an alternate to this story, you can use a local example of a police sting or invite a local police officer to come to your group and do a short interview about how sting operations work.)*

**Connecting the introduction:** This sting was set up by the good guys on the police force so that they could make timely and safe arrests. But stings work for bad purposes sometimes as well. The key to a sting operation is that someone gives us information that makes us feel like everything is going our way. But then the Sting does its work, and we realize that the information we thought was foolproof was actually faulty. As a result we end up feeling like losers because we're cut off from everyone else and left alone. A sting operation actually leaves us feeling stung, as if we are now persona non grata, someone no one wants to know or be around. In a word, we end up isolated.

Earlier in this series, we've talked about how fear can use Switcheroo and Hustle tactics to try to deceive us into believing a lie. Today, we're focusing on how fear can pull a Sting on us and leave us feeling like we don't belong. The two little words fear tries to make us believe are I don't... as in, "I don't fit in" or "I don't belong."

But once again, we'll see how perfect love continues to drive out our fears. God's love can pull the plug of fear's deception of isolation by reminding us that He does. God does provide the community and relationships that He has designed for us. We'll see how this can play out by meeting a man who was on top of a mountain, but due to some faulty information found himself isolated and confused and (we could even say) stung.



## Session Four Gathering Tool

**Illustration:** Coca-Cola heist

*(Teacher's Note: Show the YouTube video found at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=bSNCnyCUdk8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bSNCnyCUdk8) or use one of your own choosing. You may also choose to use an appropriate clip from one of your favorite heist movies such as Ocean's 11, 12, 13, or The Italian Job. Make sure whatever clip you choose is appropriate for your setting. Tweak the following verbiage to match your chosen clip).*

This was an incredibly clever heist. The bugs showed great teamwork as they heisted that Coke right out from under a guy while he napped. He never knew what was coming, and at the end, the butterflies even fooled him into thinking everything was as it should be - until he tried to take a drink, that is.

**Connecting the illustration:** While that heist was funny and cute, many heists are not. If you think about some of the most famous heists in history, many of them involve diamonds or million-dollar art pieces. And when a heist is pulled off effectively, the owners of these treasures usually have no idea what happened until it's entirely too late, kind of like the napping guy who lost his soda.

In this series, we've studied how fear can use different strategies such as the Switcheroo or the Hustle or the Sting to deceive us and paralyze us. Today we're going to look at another trick that fear tries to pull on us: the Heist. Just as fear tries to trick us with the deceptions of inadequacy or isolation, fear also attempts to heist our identity by making us feel unlovable. It wants us to believe these two little words: I'm not. I'm not lovable. I'm not acceptable. I'm not valuable.

This deception that we are unlovable often goes hand in hand with the deception of isolation that we learned about last session. But the deception we're talking about today can go even further. The deception of isolation makes us fear being alone. But the deception that we are unlovable makes us fear that we deserve to be alone. This fear can overwhelm us even when we are surrounded by people, because this deception targets who we are at our very core and our very identity.

Fear attempts to hijack our identity to the point that we no longer feel valuable or worthy of love. But just as we have seen perfect love drive out fear in the midst of all those other deceptions, perfect love is able to pull the plug on fear's deception in the area of identity too. Love will show us that the origin of our identity and worth is Christ. He is the source of our value.

So, today we are going to look at one more story and meet someone who faced the deception of unlovability, and we'll see how God saw her, loved her, and reached out to her, effectively pulling the plug on fear's deception of unlovability.