

## **Team Building Activities / Games**

There are some important guidelines you should follow to ensure that your team building experience is successful. These are as follows:

- When team building, always follow the “challenge by choice” rule. Every individual has the choice to participate at whatever level she/he feels comfortable. However, you should encourage participants to step out of their “comfort zone” and challenge themselves!
- Set ground rules! These should be discussed and agreed upon by all participants. They will probably include things such as “Do not interrupt.”
- “Respect the values and beliefs of others.” “Listen when others are speaking,” etc.
- Handle any potential safety issues. When using activities that requires additional equipment and/or involve lifting people off of the ground, please make sure equipment is in good condition, equipment is handled properly, and individuals have the proper training and supervision necessary to perform the activity safely.
- To make activities more challenging (particularly if you have group members who have done an activity before), feel free to institute additional consequences or obstacles such as blindfolding, no talking, and mobility restrictions.
- Be aware of infraction of the rules. You can enforce them strictly or see if the group regulates itself. Details like these can lead to good discussions about ethics, values and creativity.
- Provide only the basic instructions, and do not get caught up in providing too much information. Only answer questions and provide additional information when asked by the group.
- Use good judgment. It is important to provide the group with the proper balance of challenge and support so that they stretch themselves and learn, but also do not become overly frustrated and shut down. Also, when providing additional challenges for the group such as blindfolding one team member, etc., make sure that the individual is comfortable and willing to go this extra step. Nothing should be done at any time to intentionally place a person in a position they do not want to be in.

### **Helpful Information for Effectively Processing Team building Activities**

After your group has completed a team building activity, it is essential that you process what has just occurred. This will enable the group to further identify “lessons learned” from the activity, better understand group dynamics, and to assess its strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvements related to working as a team.

Below you will find important tips for successfully facilitating these types of discussions:

1. Begin the discussion with questions related to “What happened?” (from beginning to end, what occurred as you were working through the problem together?\_
2. You should then ask questions related to “Why?” ( Why do you think these things happened. Why was your group successful/unsuccessful. Why did you all complete the activity the way you did, etc)
3. Now that you have discussed the process that occurred and its results, you should ask

- questions about individual's feelings during the exercise (How did you feel throughout this activity. How did you feel about the group's behavior and performance, etc)
4. Finally, ask questions related to "What does this mean?" (How does this apply to your current situation or group, what are some ways you can apply lessons from this activity in the future, what will you do differently in the future as a result of this experience, etc)
  5. Avoid yes/no and close-ended questions, and do not let one individual monopolize the discussion.
  6. Verbally acknowledge people's feelings, expect a wide-range of reactions, and make sure that everyone realizes that there is no right or wrong answer.
  7. Have everyone use I statements when they speak, reiterate ground rules as necessary, and be firm in ensuring that all group members' opinions are respected.

## Stretches and Warm-Ups

**All Over Stretch:** Start with your hair, forehead, eyebrows, ears, eyes, cheeks, nose, lips, and teeth and move down the entire body.

**Criss-Cross:** Criss-cross your legs and attempt to hop, trying to increase the length of each lateral movement until a limit is reached.

**Crow Hop:** Hop from side to side, attempting to gradually increase the length of each lateral hop until no more distance can be added. Encourage participants to set their own pace.

**Fried Egg Stretch:** Set up a breakfast scenario of someone cooking and tell the group they are the eggs. Begin by lying on the ground and imitate an egg being fried in a frying pan. Start out slowly and end by flopping all over.

**Heel and Toe Touch:** While hopping on two feet, lock your knees together and alternate touching your toes then heels together. This is a very odd exercise to perform and observe.

**Heel Clicker:** A heel clicker is a dance step that involves alternating heel kicks laterally to the left and then to the right.

**Hop 'N Spin:** Hop on one leg while spinning, letting the other leg centrifuge up into an "L" position in front of you. Use your arms for balance.

**Owah-Tafoo-Liam/ Yooah:** Make up movements to each segment of the chant above and make sure you start the chant slow. As you progressively say it faster the group will hear, "Oh what a fool I am!"

**Olympic Speed Walking Duck Race:** First, have participants practice their speed walking techniques. Have them really get their arms and hips into the motion. Then have participants waddle, quack, and flap their arms like a duck. Now they need to combine all of these motions as gracefully as possible and have a race with their buddies. As a judge, you are looking for form and a good laugh!

**Pair Stretch:** Pairs stand back to back and lock elbows. Each person takes turns bending at the waist while keeping their arms locked with their partner. It works best with people of similar heights.

**Row Boat Stretch:** Partners sit facing each other and put the soles of their shoes together. Have them grasp hands and take turns pulling (gently) one another back and forth. Partners may need to bend their knees because of tight muscles, tight psyche or heredity in order to grab hold of the other's hand.

**Toika Hop:** Select two volunteers and stand between them with your arms around their waists, having them do the same. Have all three of you hop together in sequence. Then start kicking together in sets of one, two, or three (your choice) beginning with the left leg, kicking to the right. Sounds confusing but simple enough. A little chorus line!

## Ducks or Cows

Directions:

This is a great way to divide a large group into two smaller groups. Players close their eyes while one person goes around tapping them on the shoulders designating them either a duck or a cow. On a given signal, players keep their eyes closed and must find other members of their duck or cow team by “mooring” or “quacking.”

## Safety Net

**Supplies needed:** String or rope and balloons

**Process Description:**

This activity is excellent for illustrating how a web of support can make a big difference.

1. Have participants form a square.
2. Have participants weave a web of support between them using the string or rope.
3. Throw an inflated balloons into the middle of the group and have participants try to use their web to keep the balloon aloft. It soon becomes clear that a rich web and teamwork are vital for keeping the balloon from falling to the ground.
4. The group may be allowed to refine and extend their web. The exercise can be done again with more balloons.
5. Invite the group to discuss the safety nets we form in our communities

## Alaskan Baseball

**Space Needed:** Outside or large open room

**Size of Group:** Two large groups of equal size

**Object of Game:** Communication-Score as many “runs” as possible – played in innings.

**Directions**

Break the group into two teams. One team starts with the ball. They throw it as far as they can. After they throw it, get into a tight circle, and 1 person runs around it, counting how many times. Each time they run around the circle completely it's a point. This is going on while the other team goes to retrieve the ball and forms a line. They pick the ball up and pass it down the line, over/under, over/under. Once the last person gets the ball, they yell STOP! The team that threw it stops running. The person with the ball throws it, and roles switch.

## Caterpillar Race

**Team:** small to large

**Equipment Needed:** None

**Directions:** Participants line up single file behind line. Put chair about 25' in front of the groups. First person puts hands on floor, others grab ankles of one in front of them. On signal they race up and around chair. First team done wins.

## Traffic Jam

Small Group

Indoor or Outdoor

### **Equipment Needs**

Traffic Jam boards or mats (one for each participant plus an extra one for the middle). The boards have arrows on them to indicate the direction that the person will initially face. You can also create your own place holders using paper and drawing an arrow on each piece except the middle one.

### **Description**

This cognitive puzzle enables the group to explore their problem solving and leadership skills. You will divide the group into two teams and ask them to stand on boards that you have placed on the floor. Their challenge is to exchange places with the other team by using only the spaces provided.

### **Briefing the Activity/Guidelines**

- Create the semicircle using the Traffic Jam boards or mats. Start with a blank board in the middle and then place the remaining boards on either side, forming two curved lines. Place the boards so that the arrows point toward the blank board in the middle.
- Divide the group into two teams. Have one team stand on the boards to the left of the middle board and the other team to the right. Have everyone face the direction of the arrow on their board. You should now have two teams facing one another with a blank board separating them. The goal is for the people on the left to occupy the boards on the right and vice versa, while remaining in their original order. This means that the first person on the left-hand side of the blank board will occupy the last space of the line on the right-hand side, the second person will occupy the second to last space, and so forth; they will end up facing the opposite direction of the arrows on the boards.

Here are the rules:

- You can move into an empty space in front of you.
- You can move around another person into an empty space.
- You cannot move backwards.
- Only a person can move at a time.
- Only one person can occupy a space at a time
- You cannot move the spaces.

Tell the group that you will let them know when they make an illegal move or reach an impasse. When this happens, they will need to start over in their original positions.

To clarify the rules, you may want to demonstrate by physically moving individuals to show both the legal and illegal moves.

### **Debrief Issues**

- Problem Solving: What was the planning process for this activity? How was it different from other activities? How was it the same?
- Leadership: Who were the leaders? How were they chosen? What was the role of the followers?
- Inclusion: How involved was each individual in the completion of this activity? How interested was each individual? How did that affect the outcome?
- Learning Styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic):
- How do varying learning styles affect the enjoyment of an activity or task?

## **Bonker Boffers**

### **Equipment**

- Enough noodles or boffers for each participant
- Inflated beach ball(s) (depending on the size of your group)
- Cones or goals
- A large open field is ideal for this activity. This is a new and different version of hockey that should be played with wild abandon!

### **Briefing**

Bonker Boffers is essentially hockey with foam noodles: As a facilitator you can decide how stringent you would like to be in holding true to rules and guidelines.

In general, you will want to break a larger group into two teams.

The objectives are to have fun and attempt to score goals on the other team.

Play until participants are tired or until there is a tie. This is fun for all age-groups!

### **Safety**

- Be aware of “high sticking.” The noodles should stay very close to the ground while in play to avoid hitting other players in the face.
- This is an active game and accidents can happen as people get very involved and get excited.

## **Balloon Score**

**Supplies:** Bag of Round Balloons

### **Space Needed:**

An area big enough for the size of your group to sit on the ground (or in chairs if preferred) foot to foot as two teams. Can be indoors or outdoors.

**Size of Group:** 10 or more. Works well with large groups in team competitions.

### **Object of Game:** (Competitive)

To get the group to bond as a team and to score points. This is great upper body exercise.

### **Directions:**

Divide the group into two teams and have them choose a team name. Then have them sit on the ground ( or in chairs if they can't sit on the ground facing each other with their feet against the feet of the opposite team. Let them know the object of the game is to make points. The team with the most points wins.

To score you must get a balloon to hit the floor /ground behind the other team. You must keep your feet in contact with your opponent at all times. Drop a balloon (or two or more) between the teams and have them start hitting the balloon across. Play to reach a certain score or until the time limit is reached. The team with the most points wins.

## Inhuman Knot

**Supplies:** Duct Tape (Each strip = two people, so for a group of 10 you'll need 5 strip)

### Activity Set up:

Create 4' long strips of duct tape

Place tape on the floor in a star-shape (\*)

### Activity Rules:

- Each students is asked to take one end of the tape and hold onto it.
- Without letting go of their end of the strip, the group is to tie a knot
- Tell them to make the largest, meanest knot they can in 1 min.
- After groups have made their knot, have them exchange knots with another group – this time they attempt to untie the knot.

## Hula Hoop Pass:

**Supplies:** Hula Hoops for every team you have. Or you can use a piece of rope about hula hoop size. Stop watch

**Directions:** Get all your participants in a circle holding each others hands. Get someone to 'unlock' one of their hands from the circle, put a hula-hoop onto his/her hand, then reconnect with the circle.

The aim of this game is to get the hula-hoop around the circle and back to where it started without the group letting go of each others hands. Can also be played with groups against each other and a stop watch; lots of fun!

## Our House

**Supplies:** For this activity, you will need an index card for each person in your team, tape, scissors, and markers.

**Directions:** Distribute the index cards; making sure that every person in your team has one. Explain to them that they must create a house out of the cards by taping, folding, cutting or anything else they can think of to do with the cards in order to form a small model of a house. Each person in the group must be represented in the construction of the house by having his or her name written on a part of the house that reflects his/her role within the group. Someone who is a good leader may be the foundation of the house, while someone who welcomes newcomers may be the door of the house. People may also be items in the house, such as comfy chairs or lamps.

Give your team about 10 minutes to build the house. Make sure that everyone in the team is represented somewhere in the house. Once it is built, display so all can see and ask the

following questions:

- How did you decide what the house was going to look like?
- Why did you pick the role that you did? Does it ever change?
- Why it is important that everyone be involved/represented in the house? How does this relate to your team?
- Explain that is important that everyone be included in the decision making and planning because everyone plays in vital roles for their team.

## **Pitfalls**

**Supplies:** Duct Tape (to create pitfalls on the ground) and Blindfolds

**Activity Rules:**

In partners, students take turns leading each other through the pitfall zone-one will be blindfolded, the other sighted.

The sighted partner may not walk inside the pitfall zone.

If a student steps on the tape, (falls into a pitfall) they must start over from the beginning.

Once a student makes it through the zone, have the blindfolded partner lead switch places with the sighted partner.

## **Trolley**

**Supplies:** Duct Tape

Create to parallel duct tape lines (like skis) on the ground with sticky side up.

**Activity Rules:**

The entire group must step onto the tape, ensuring that each group member has each foot on a separate length of tape (like skis).

The group must travel from a starting point, to an end point without coming unstuck from the tape, without breaking the tape, and without losing any group members.

## **Bite the Bag**

**Supplies:** Paper Grocery bags – one for each team

**Space Needed:** Indoor or outdoor space large enough to accommodate the size of your group all standing and bending over or squatting during the activity. There is little overt movement involved.

**Size of Group:** 4 or more.

**Object of Game:** To increase group interaction and support of one another by playing this crazy challenging game.

**Directions:**

Divide the group into teams of at least two people each but no more than ten. Place one large paper grocery sack in front of each team, open and on the ground. Each person must take a turn trying to “bite the bag”, you cannot use your hands, and the only part of your body that can touch the ground is your feet. If anyone falls over, can't bite the bag, or use his or her hands, they are eliminated.

Once everyone on each team has attempted to bite the bag, cut two inches off the top of the bag. The remaining players now play a second round. Keep cutting the bag after each round and giving all remaining players a chance to try the shorter bag while their teammates cheer them on. The person who can bite the shortest bag wins the game for his or her team.

## **Plunger Cap and Golf Ball Relay**

**Supplies:** One toilet plunger and one golf ball for each team. You can also set up obstacles if you choose.

**Directions:**

Divide into teams. Each team unscrews the wooden stick and places the golf ball where the stick screwed in. Players must walk a relay course (down and around a chair) with the plunger cap balanced on their heads. Players, who drop the ball, need to start over at the beginning. Get the cameras... this is hilarious.

Variations: walk it backwards, place obstacles in the path.

## **Magic Carpet Ride**

**Supplies:** 6x8 tarp for each team

**Space Needed:**

Area large enough for the tarp to lie flat and a little additional work space.

**Size of Group:**

Need large groups that nearly fill the tarp space.

**Directions:**

Ask the group to stand on a 6' x 8" “magic carpet” (tarp). The entire group must be on the tarp completely.

Once everyone is settled, advise the group that they are going on a magic carpet ride. Tell them that they have already risen 100 feet in the air and are ready to go.

Unfortunately, the instructions on how to steer and land the carpet are on the other side of the carpet.

So they must flip the carpet over while standing on it. No one is allowed to step off the carpet



at any time. If a group loses a member due to a midair disaster/fall they must start over again. There is no time limit to this exercise.

Allow the group to reflect on how the exercise went What helped the team accomplish their goal? What could have been done to help the group reach their goal?

Ask the group if they think that they can improve upon their previous attempt to complete this task.

Allow the group time to complete the exercise for a second time.  
Provide a quick re-cap of why the team thinks that the second attempt was easier or more difficult.

## **Glove and Gum**

**Supplies:** One pair of Garden Gloves and a large package of gum for each team.

**Space Needed:** Any

**Size of Group:** Any

### **Directions:**

In front of each team are a pair of garden gloves and a package of gum. The first person must put the gloves on and then try to remove the wrapper from the gum. When he/she finishes, he passes the gloves on the second person who then opens another package. The first team to finish is the winner. ( You can use a stick of gum rather than a package).

**Fun spin: Use bubble gum. It's harder to get the wrapper off, and then have the whole group blow bubbles at once when their group has finished.**

## **Earth Ball**

**Supplies:** Beach Ball

**Space Needed:** Large open room or outside.

**Size of Group:** Any

**Object of Game:** Working together, communication.

### **Directions:**

Using a beach ball or other light inflatable object, the group task is to hit the object, keeping it in the air without letting it touch the ground.

Additionally, no one person can touch the object twice in a row.

Set a goal with the group for the number of hits that the group can make following the rules.

This fun activity is much harder than it seems.

## **Balloon Stomp Game**

**Supplies:** A round balloon for each person, string

**Space Needed:**

A large clear area with enough room for people to run around in. A space about the size of a basketball court works well.

**Size of Group:**

Any size, bigger than five, works. Remember the more people, the more fun it is!

**Object of Game:**

To stomp on other peoples balloons while protection yours.

**Directions:**

Blow up enough balloons so each person has one. Tie a piece of string about 1 ½ Ft. long onto the balloon. Tie the balloon around one ankle of each player. **THE BALLOON MUST TOUCH THE GROUND!**

Start after everyone has their balloon. You can't use your hands to pop the balloons, only your feet. You can stand on one foot, hide in a corner, or do anything you want to try to save your balloon, however, if you do hide in a corner, nobody is going to get out!! The last person with a balloon wins! This can also be a team game where the last team in wins. If played indoors, play in stocking feet to make smashed feet less of a problem.

## **Amazing Shrinking Blanket**

**Supplies:** A sheet for each team

**Directions:** Explain to the group that because the ground is so cold, you've provide a nice cozy blanket for them to stand on.

Spread the blanket on the ground or floor.

Ask the whole group get on it so that no appendages are touching the ground off the blanket. Once the group successful completes standing on the blanket, advise them that you've received a report that another group needs half of their blanket to keep their feet warm, too. Ask them to get off and fold blanket in half.

Repeat the above process as many times as possible. Each time you fold the blanket, the group will need to be more creative ( and cozy) to successfully stand on the blanket.

## **Spider's Web**

**Supplies Needed:** String to make the web, clothes pins

**Directions:** The Spider's Web is a popular ropes course element that is constructed between trees, or on portable or stand-alone structures.

The objective is to cross from one side of the spider's web to the other without touching the web. The group must create a plan that takes participant physical ability and size to lift, pass, and spot participants in order to get them through.

## Sample Story Line

1. Explain to the group that they were exploring caves, looking for treasure, in a remote part of the world. ( You'll notice lot of "remote" locations in our activities).
2. Fortunately, they were able to find the treasure in the last cave they were looking in. Unfortunately, a giant poisonous spider has spun a web across the entrance to the cave while they were inside. There are no other ways out of the cave.
3. The group must help each other through the web without touching it, else that person would become stuck in the extremely sticky web. Really! Just brushing against a strand ever so slightly would cause someone to become struck.
4. Although very strong and sticky. The web is very sensitive. The vibrations from someone passing through a hole causes it to close, making it impossible to pass another full body through the hole. For some unknown reason, it is still large enough to put hands through.
5. The entire group must get through, because each member of the team has a special piece of the map needed to get back to safety. You can't just give the map pieces to save the others, either, as it tattooed on your body.
6. Good Luck!

## Some Facilitation Tips:

- Be sure the group has practiced spotting and lifting and that they are mature enough to safely do both. This activity requires lifting and must be taken seriously.
- Use clothes pins to mark holes that have been passed through. After the first few people go through, it's almost impossible to remember which holes are available to use.
- You can add a time restriction if you like. The spider will be back in 15 minutes.
- Rope Variations: You can use this element by threading a rope through all of the holes without it ever touching the web. This variation is difficult in it's own right, but is perfect for groups that you do not want to do lifting for any reason.

## Birthday Line Up

**Supplies:** None

**Directions:** Explain to the group that this is a nonverbal exercise. The group is to form a single straight line, according to birthday. For example, persons with January birthdays will be at the beginning of the line, earliest January dates first followed in order by later dates. The line progresses by months and days with December birthdays at the end. Persons with the

same birthday share the same place in line. You must communicate non-verbally (no lip-reading or spelling in the dirt allowed). When the line is completed, each person will shout out his/her birthday, beginning in January.

## **Floating Rod**

**Supplies:** A long, light rod (ex: a tent pole – the kind that unfolds and connects to itself to make a long rod).

**Directions:** First, place the rod on the floor and direct the youth to make two equal lines on each side, facing each other. Then instruct the youth to form their hands into fake pistols and point them at the person across from them. Pick up the rod and hold it over everyone's fingers and tell the youth that you are now going to place the rod across everyone's fingers.

### **Rules:**

1. Everyone must keep their fingers touching the rod on the underneath side.
2. No one can use any of their other 8 fingers to help.
3. Everyone must keep their fingers straight. (No curling their fingers around the rod. )
4. The object is for everyone as a group to lower the rod to the ground.
5. At first because not everyone will lower the rod in the same way at the exact same time at the same speed, the rod may seem to rise even though they know the objective is to lower it. After a couple of tries, they will hopefully work as a team to lower the pole to the ground.

## **Land Mines**

**Supplies:** Blindfolds, water balloons for outside, Styrofoam cups for inside.

**Directions:** Set up a “mine field” by randomly placing the water balloons (or cups) on a marked section of ground. A concrete slab or basketball court works well for this. Grass also works, but you will need to set boundaries.

Divide students into groups of about 4 or 5. Give each team a blindfold. Put the blindfolds on one member of each team. The point of the exercise is for the ENTIRE team to get across the mine field with the fewest casualties, the fastest.

If a person TOUCHES a mine he/she is out(if it bursts water on them, it just makes it more fun). The other team members must be their eyes and tell them which way to go. The blindfolded people crossing the field must stay within the set boundaries, and only one person per team may be on the mine field at a time (so they can't lead them by touch). Team members help each other by shouting directions. Works best if mines are close together and if teams are close together. Adult leaders may yell out random directions to try to throw the teams off.

The trick is (don't tell the kids this till after it's over) for the person in the mine field to pick out

a certain voice and listen to that one voice.

## **Balloon Building**

**Supplies:** Balloons and masking tape.

**Directions:** Split the groups up into teams, give each team a pack of balloons, and masking tape. Each team must try to build the highest balloon building. The team with the highest balloon building wins.

## **Human Knots**

**Supplies:** None

**Directions:** Get your group in a tight circle and tell them to grab the hand of two different people NOT standing next to them (each person will be holding the hands of two different people – the circle will look like a tangled mess). They must not let go of either of these peoples' hands.

Now the task is simple.... just untangle without letting go. It's possible. Now try it not talking and if all goes well, blindfold all but one of them.

Try it with a handful of staff people before hand to see how it works.

## **Toilet Paper Blow**

**Supplies:** Toilet Paper.

**Directions:** It's simple. Just see how long your team can keep one square of toilet paper in the air by blowing it. Team members are NOT allowed to actually touch the toilet paper; they can only use their breath.

Give each team three tries (if multiple teams, do it simultaneously).

## **Alphabet Pockets**

**Supplies:** None

**Directions:** Everyone on the team searches through their own pockets, wallets, pocketbooks, etc. The group tries to come up with one possession which begins with each letter of the alphabet. The winning team is the one to have objects representing the most letters. Have them get creative and use things around them.

## **Big Bad Wolf**

**Supplies:** LOTS of newspaper and LOTS of tape.

**Directions:** Divide students into teams. Give each team enough newspaper and tape to build a newspaper shelter of some kind. It must be big enough to get three team members inside. Set a time limit on how long you want to give teams to work on the project.

The big Bad Wolf (Leader) then attempts to blow the shelter down. Award prize to the best construction job.

Afterward, have a giant paper fight.

## **Balloon Master**

**Supplies:** Duct tape or masking tape and lots of balloons.

**Directions:** Divide the group into 2 or more teams

Give each team a roll of masking tape and 30 balloons. On "Go!" have members of each team roll the masking tape (sticky side out) around one of their teammates below the neckline. Next, have kids blow up their balloons as quickly as they can and stick as many as possible to the taped-up team member. You can either end the game here by awarding the Balloon Master to the one with the most balloons attached in the time allotted, or you can set up an obstacle course and when the balloons have been attached, have the player go through and back to their team. Balloons that fall off during the race can't be re-attached. The team whose player has the most balloons still attached in the Balloon Master.

## **Ameba Coarse / Ameba Race**

**Supplies:** Several pieces of long rope and a defined obstacle course/track.

**Directions:** Divide your group in teams of a least 5 or more. The larger the team size, the more difficult it is. Tie the rope around the entire team at waist level. Make the rope as snug as possible without hurting the students. Put them on the obstacle course and turn them loose. Teams can be timed during their running of the course, or you can actually have a couple of teams race<sup>1</sup> The key is to work together as a team to accomplish a common goal.

Coordination Game:

### **Clapping:**

Have students lay on stomach with arms out in a circle.

Level 1: clap hands on floor straight in front around circle.

Level 2: hands crossed

Level 3: neighbor's knees

Level 4: let students determine

If group gets stuck have them pair off with "high five partner" and come up with a solution or develop a more difficult.

### **Picture This:**

Pass around an object (carabineer, ATC, stick)., have students ID what it is – say "keep it PG." An idea can't be repeated, even "pass."

### **Mr. Snort/Fuzzy Bunny:**

Circle up. Say "I have a friend, his name is Mr. Snort or Fuzzy Bunny. I would like to introduce you to Mr. Snort. We'll introduce him to one another by looking our neighbor straight in the eye and snorting." Pass around the group, can be reversed at any time. If student laughs, smiles, they are to police themselves and step away from the circle. "If we did it again, could we improve?" Do not get to the point of saturate, only play for a while, then let them think about it until the next day.

### **Rock Paper Scissors Splits:**

Pair up, face each other with one foot directly in front of the other and front feet of participants touching. Play rock, paper scissors. Winner takes his/her front foot and moves it directly behind back foot. Loser slides his front foot to touch winner's front foot. Repeat. If person who just one, loses next round, the winner of that round takes his front foot and moves it behind back foot. Loser of that round slides front foot to touch winner's front foot. This repeats until someone does the splits and cannot stay up or begins moving feet closer. Can be done tournament style.

### **Tarp Shuffle:**

Ask the group to all stand on a tarp you've folded lengthwise into about 1 foot wide. You can also use a log that is firmly sitting on the ground. Decide a certain order you would like the group to line up. (Tallest to shortest, Oldest to youngest, Birthdays beginning in January through December). Have the group line up in the order without stepping off of the tarp. They can use each other to help balance, but no part of their foot can touch the floor--only the tarp. You can create penalties for touches, such as having the entire group start over, or just one

person start in their original position if desired. Working together is the key to success.

### **Touch Blue:**

Circle up, facilitator begins by saying touch something blue, on yourself, another person, or in the room. Start minimally invasive and move towards having everyone touch one thing and group up.

### **Speed Elephant:**

Circle up, someone in the middle is it. They point and yell at a person in the circle to act out a character, then begin counting to ten. The person who was pointed at must assume the appropriate position/movements in the ten count, and each person to the right and left of the main character. If any of the 3 participants fails to "act" appropriately in the 10 count, they move to the middle and assume the "it" position. Leprechaun (others rainbow), Charlie's angels (person on right gun up, person on left walkie-talkie), Elephant (others are ears), toaster (person in middle hops up and down while the outside people hold up their hands as the walls to the toaster), outhouse (person in middle crosses one leg at the knee, squats and reads the newspaper while the other two make the walls and ceiling).

### **Switch Around: (ice breaker)**

Meet a person. Stand face to face and study each other for a minute. Then stand back to back and both people switch around three things about themselves (ie: change watch hands, let hair down, tuck in shirt, etc). Then go back face to face and see if you can pick out the differences.

### **Improv Game: "I'm a Tree!"**

Group stands in a circle. Someone jumps in the middle and says, "I'm a tree". Then a second person jumps in and says, "I'm a \_\_\_\_\_". Third person jumps in and says, "I'm a \_\_\_\_\_". The first person says, "I'm going to take my (picks second or third person)", thus leaving one object in the center. Two people keep jumping in and the story evolves. It ends when someone/anyone jumps back in and says, "I'm a tree."

### **Improv Game: "What Are You Doing?"**

Groups stands in a circle. Someone jumps in the middle and starts doing an action/movement. Someone else jumps in and asks the person, "What are you doing?" the first person says something completely different from what they are actually doing. First person leaves the circle and second person has to do whatever the first person says. Just continues like this. Can get ridiculous and hilarious.

### **Rain Sounds**

Need a big group to all stand in a circle. One leader stands in the middle and slowly spins



while doing an action. As the leader faces people, they start doing the action. Steps are:

- 1.rub hands together
- 2.snap with one hand
- 3.snap with two hands
- 4.1 hand snapping, 1 hand patting leg
- 5.2 hands patting legs
- 6.2 hands patting legs faster and harder
- 7.then start reserving

This creates the sound of a rainstorm starting and stopping.

## **Zoogle Stick**

Small stick with tape on one end. It is like a sword where the taped end is the handle and and everything else is the blade. Toss it around in a circle. Is you grab the blade, you lose:

1. a hand
2. a leg
3. you're out of the game

## **Group Jump**

Everyone has to jump and make the landing sound at exactly the same time. BUT! They have to do it with their eyes closed. Voices only.

## **Screaming Toes**

Everyone in a circle and looks down at their toes. Then everyone looks up and tries to make eye contact with one other person in the circle. If two people make eye contact, they scream at each other. First person to stop screaming is out. If no eye contact is made, look down at toes and then up again.

variation: have multiple circles if the group is big enough and the people who make eye contact have to run to another circle and continue the game.

## **Olympic Bobsled Team**

Teams of four stand in a line like they would be sitting in a bobsled. Assigned positions in order of 1-2-3-4. On certain commands, they need to switch positions.

- 1.“Change”: front person moves to the back of sled
- 2.“Switch”: positions 2 & 4 switch spots
- 3.“Rotate”: everyone rotates 180 degrees, so now positions 1-2-3-4 become 4-3-2-1
- 4.“Loose Caboose”: your team scatters and each person needs to form a new group with 3 others

## **Blind Eagle**

Need a bunch of people to stand in a large circle, where they have about 5 feet of room from others. There is a "blind eagle" that runs/jogs with their eyes closed and "wings" out. As they approach the outside circle, someone says, "I gottcha," and grabs their outstretched arms, circles them around once, and sends them back to the center of the circle.

## **Human Caterpillar**

Basically crowd surfing, but people are laying on their backs in a straight line with their arms up. One person is the designated caterpillar and has to fall back stiffly as the others move them along down the line.

## **Arms to Six**

Need teams of 8-10 people. Show them right arm sequence for counting to 6. Then show them left arm sequence for counting to 6. Then tell them to do both arms at the same time.

1. Right Arm Sequence: count to 6, each count moves the arm all the way or all the way down

- 1.1 - arm up in the air
- 2.2 - arm down at side
- 3.3 - arm up in the air
- 4.4 - arm down at side
- 5.5 - arm up in the air
- 6.6 - arm down at side

2. Left Arm Sequence: count to six

- 1.1 - arm up in the air
- 2.2 - arm straight out in middle at 90 degree angle from body
- 3.3 - arm down at side
- 4.4 - arm up in the air
- 5.5 - arm straight out in middle at 90 degree angle from body
- 6.6 - arm down at side

## **Cognitive Dissonance Activity:**

Have the group stand in a circle. For the first round the group is going to repeat a command you give them (forward, backward, left, right) and do it. Second round, say and do the opposite, third round say same and do the opposite of what you say, fourth round say the opposite and do what you say. Debrief why that was so difficult and relate it back to how hard it is to be something that you're not...to do something different than what you say....

## **Verbal awareness activity**

Take a roll of masking tape and a sharpie and write down different things the students say throughout the day and stick it to your clothes. At the end of the day have them claim what

they said and stick it in their journal. Ask if they see any patterns.

## **Debriefing Ball**

Take a beach ball or other ball that can be written on and write down different questions you want the students to answer about an activity. Have them throw the ball around the circle and wherever their right thumb lands is what question they answer. Can be used as an icebreaker as well. Also you can number the ball and have the questions on a sheet of paper...makes it easy to have different questions for different activities.

## **Structured Improv Dance**

Start with the students choosing three different poses. Have them pair up and share their poses with their partner with the intention of adding one of them to their own progression. Have the students then decide on what order to do the poses in. For the poses they need to progress to have motion on one, jump on another, turn on another, and stand still on the other. After they figure those out, one by one, have them develop transitions between the poses. Then add repetitions. Finally share with the group. you can share in the pairs to see how similar or different each person's interpretations were.

## **Index Card Memory Game**

Write pairs of words on the back of index cards that relates to where your group is or what you want to spark a conversation about. Play a game of memory with the cards and then have people choose a card pair that they identify with and have them talk about why.

## **Protector Destroyer (to bring attention to bullying in a group)**

Type of Initiative: Energizer, Problem Solving, Social Awareness

Props Needed: None

This activity started out as an Energizer activity with one phase. With a few changes to the roles it has become a powerful discussion tool.

This activity has three phases:

**Phase One:** Invite your participants to get into one large circle. Then tell them to secretly choose someone in the group that will represent their 'Protector.' Then ask them to 'secretly' choose a different participant in the group that will represent their 'Destroyer.' Instruct them that as soon as you say, "Go" the participants are to walk at a fast pace, and they must physically keep their 'Protector' between themselves and their 'Destroyer' at all times.

As the participants start to move, much giggling and confusion will occur. Participants will quickly walk around attempting to keep their Protector between themselves and their Destroyer. Some will have great success; others will find it quite difficult! After a natural conclusion has occurred, ask participants to thank their protector for protecting them and inform their destroyer that they were their destroyer and then get back into a large circle.

Quickly debrief this phase with the group.

### **Debriefing Topics:**

1. What were some strategies you came up with to keep your Protector between yourself and your Destroyer?
2. How successful were you?
3. What were some challenges you faced?
4. How difficult was this task?

**Phase Two:** After debriefing Phase One, inform the group that you are going to play the game again; however, this time the roles are different. Ask them to secretly choose someone in the group that will represent their 'Protector' and a different person to be their 'Bully.' Same rules apply as before—a fast walking pace, and they must physically keep their 'Protector' between themselves and their 'Bully' at all times. Ready? Begin!

This time the activity seems to have a more serious tone to it. Participants seem to be more anxious if their 'Bully' gets close to them. After a few minutes of play, ask participants to thank their protector for protecting them and inform their bully that they were their Bully and then get back into a large circle.

Quickly debrief this phase with the group.

### **Debriefing Topics:**

1. How different was the activity when you had a Destroyer versus a Bully?
2. How were your feelings different from having a Bully rather than a Destroyer? Did the label of 'Bully' make it more real?
3. How do you think victims of bullying feel when they see their Bully in the hallways at school?

**Phase Three:** After debriefing Phase Two, inform the group that you are going to play the game a final time, and the roles are different yet again. Ask them to secretly choose someone in the group that will represent their 'Victim of Bullying' and a different person to be their 'Bully.' They will assume the role of the Protector in this phase. Similar rules as before—a fast walking pace, however they must physically keep themselves between the 'Victim of Bullying' and the 'Bully' at all times. Ready? Begin!

This phase plays out very differently to the other two phases. Usually everyone charges the center of the mingling area to get into position between the Victim of Bullying and the Bully. It definitely has a very serious tone. Participants seem to be very anxious if their 'Bully' gets too close to their 'Victim.' After a few minutes of play, ask participants to inform the two people of the roles they played in the activity and get back into a large circle.

Debrief this phase with the group.

### **Debriefing Topics:**

1. What was your strategy for keeping your Victim safe from the Bully?
2. How many people used the strategy of staying close to your Victim? How many people used the strategy of staying close to your Bully? What are the pros and cons of these two strategies?
3. What were some feelings that you experienced as the Protector? (Reports vary from successful to helpless to overwhelmed.)
4. How can we use this information to help us?
5. What can we learn from this experience?
6. Who are some 'Protectors' in your life?
7. Who are you a 'Protector' for?
8. What can you do if you see an incident of Bullying?

### **Stack Cups Back to Back**

Have participants sit back-to-back. Each participant has the same range of objects such as popsicle sticks, toothpicks, cups, rocks, etc. One person creates something and then instructs the other person on how to create it. Most of the time people will mess up and have to try again. Use this activity to talk about communication.

### **Perfect Square**

Have the entire group grab a rope where the two ends have been tied together. Have everyone grab the rope and then blindfold them. Make sure that the group is all mixed up and then ask them to make a perfect square. If you want to add more challenge to the students then tell them that no one can talk or only one participant can talk. You can also tie knots in the rope for added challenge (make sure they won't line up with any corners) You could also tie a corner to a tree or something to signify limitation, miscommunication...

### **Giant Puzzle**

Blindfold everyone, may leave one person with sight as a silent observer. Have everyone sit in a circle and put on blindfold them. Once they are all blindfolded, take out a giant puzzle with about 10 pieces. Don't tell them what kind of puzzle it is, simply tell them they have a challenge to complete and everything they need is within arms reach so there is no need to get up and move around. Place most of the pieces in the middle of the circle, a few on the

outside of the circle and hold one piece above someone's head. Tell them they can, as a group, ask you any three questions they like.

Once the activity has been completed have your silent observer share what they saw. Who displayed leadership? What plans were made? What worked? Why did it work? What didn't work? Why didn't it work? How were ideas considered by the group? How can we relate it to your stay at Asipro? How can we relate it to your life at home? What now?

### **ART project, art therapy-**

With therapeutic intent

Draw what money can't buy

Draw what is stopping you from getting what money can't buy