

One-Minute Activities re: Communicating / Listening Skills

First: Have the class pair off with another person – that they do not know – then they engage in 5 exercises for 1 minute each (some have two turns). So, IN PAIRS:

- 1. Face each other and communicate absolutely nothing for 1 minute.**
 - They might not last the entire minute.
 - **Debrief:** How did you feel? Could you actually communicate nothing?
- 2. Face each other. One person is person A, and they are to be bright, charming, full of energy, and talk about whatever they want to for one minute. Person B is to ignore person A for 1 minute.**
 - Then switch roles.
 - **Debrief:** What did it feel like to be ignored? To be the ignorer? What about social politeness?
- 3. Same format as #2 – person A is bright, charming, etc., but now person B is going to interrupt person A as frequently as possible, and try to change the subject as frequently as possible.**
 - Then switch roles.
 - **Debrief:** Was it hard to carry on a conversation when you were being interrupted? How did you feel? Did you find yourself following the other person instead of doing the talking? How did the interrupter feel?
- 4. Same format, person A will be bright, charming, etc., but person B is going to be an attentive listener – they should hang on person A's every word – be excited when A is excited, serious when A is serious.**
 - Then switch roles.
 - **Debrief:** How comfortable were you? How did it feel to be listened to? How did it feel to listen attentively?
- 5. The last 1-minute exercise, they should both be bright, charming, full of energy, and talk about whatever they want to talk about when they are speaking, and when they are listening, they should be attentive listeners. (can let this go for 2 mins.)**

Debrief:

- 1. How did you feel?**
- 2. Which exercise was the longest? Why?**
- 3. Do you think we all meet people who interrupt, ignore, are good and bad listeners?**
- 4. Do you think that we, in fact, can do all of these behaviors ourselves?**

Human Scavenger Hunt

10 groups of 6.

4 groups of 15.

cheap juggling

Better copy

Objective

To search for commonalities among group members and to get to know more about each other.

Group Size

12 or more

Materials

A copy of the list below



Description

Break the large group into smaller groups of about six to twelve people each. Have each group stand or sit together in a place that is separate from the other groups but of equal distance from you – the leader who stands in the middle of the room.

Read one item from the list at a time. The team who sends up a person or group of people to you first that fits the description you have just given earns a point. For example, you might say “two people who have the same middle name” and within each group the members must talk, find out if any two have the same middle name, and then quickly send those people up to you. This first group of people with the same middle name to reach you earns a point for their team. You may give a bonus point for different items if it applies - for instance, if a group has three people with the same middle name they may earn a point for this round even if they were not the first group to get to you. The group with the most points at the end of the game wins.

Human Scavenger Hunt List

1. Two people who have the same first and last initial
2. The person in your group who was born the farthest away from here
3. Two people with the same middle name
4. A group of people whose ages add up to 100
5. Two people with the same birthday (or birthday month)
6. A group of people whose shoe sizes add up to 40
7. The person in your group who lives the closest to here
8. A group of people who have attended school for a total of 38 years
9. A group of people who can spell a word by putting together the first-letters of their first names.
10. A group of three people who all have different colored eyes

Variations

Ask for items such as “a 1982 coin” or “an expired driver’s license” or any other items that group members may be able to find in their pockets, purses, wallets, or on themselves.

Add a stunt to each item on the list – for example, “Two people who have the same first and last initial must leap from up to me.”

Team builders

Puzzles- Make a giant jigsaw puzzle and give everyone a piece. Have them work together to put it together. To make it more challenging, you can have several puzzles, pictures on both sides, or pieces that fit more than once place.

* * **Human Machines-** Have groups of 6 to 8 people each create a machine out of humans imitating the appearance and action of the machine. Examples include becoming a blender, toaster, lawn mower, copy machine, lamp, or washing machine.

* **Human Knot-** Everyone stands in a circle shoulder to shoulder (facing in) and extends their arms across the circle to grab the hands of two different people. As a group, they work on undoing the knot they are now in without letting go of hands or breaking the connection. Note: If everyone has 2 different hands, it is not impossible to solve the knot. However, sometimes there can be two circles looped together instead of one big circle.

Orange pass/Relay- Break into groups of 6 to 10 people. have them form rows standing one behind the other. The leader begins with an orange under their neck. The object of the game is to pass the orange down the row as quickly as possible without using any hands. If the orange is dropped, the team must start over.

Balloon Races- Divide groups into teams of at least 6 people on each team. Each team lines up in a single line and each team member is given a balloon. Each team member puts the balloon between their knees and their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them. the teams race to the finish line, but if anyone on the team drops their arms down or loses their balloon, the whole team must stop, that person goes to the end of the line, and then the team keeps going.

Toilet Paper Relay- Split the participants into as many teams as you want. There should probably be at least 4 on each team. Give each team a roll of toilet paper. When the whistle sounds, the first member of the relay team places the roll of toilet paper on the ground and begins rolling it out along the floor. If the paper rips, they have to discard the ripped piece and go back to where they started from. When that person gets to his/her teammates on the other side, the teammate must begin to roll the toilet paper back up again. This goes on and on, back and forth until one team finishes.

Hoola-Hoop Pass- Have everyone stand in a circle and join hands. Pick one person to start and on each of their arms place a hoola hoop, one slightly smaller than the other if possible. Have the group pass the hoola hoops completely around the circle so that the hoola hoops end up on opposite arms of the person you began with. No one can unlink their hands throughout the process.

Paper Plates- Write the numbers 1 through 20 on paper plates and place them on the ground together, but not in order. Tell the group that they are to step on the numbers in numerical order, (1, 2, 3... 20) as quickly as possible. Time them trying several times and have them try to beat their best scores. The plates cannot be moved from where they are.

* **Electric Fence-** A string is hung between two objects at about waist height. Participants are asked to stand on one side of the "fence" and given the task to get everyone over

the fence without touching the fence. The exercise takes good planning and teamwork to be a success.

* **Islands (Carpet Squares)**- This game should be played with at least 6 people. Lay squares of carpet in a line, putting down 1 more square than the number of people playing (If you don't have carpet squares, use paper or a plate). Have half the people line up on the squares on one side and have the other half line up on the other side, with the empty square in the middle of the line. Have everyone face toward the empty square. Tell the group that they have to transfer all the people to the opposite side from where they now stand of the empty square. People can only move if they are stepping past 1 person in front of them and on to an empty square. (They can't move if there is not a person in front of them, or if there is more than one person in front of them). Only one person can be on a square. A lot of people find this game pretty tough! At the end of the activity everyone should be on the square exactly opposite from where they began.

* **Chair Sit**- Have everyone get in a circle, shoulder to shoulder. Have everyone turn to their right. Have everyone take one sideways step into the circle. On the count of three have everyone sit on the lap of each other. If they accomplish this successfully, have them try walking while sitting in a circle.

* **Stand Up**- Have the two people sit on the ground with their feet pushed up next to each other firmly. The two people grab hands in the middle and pull each other up so that both are standing. When everyone has accomplished this successfully. Have 2 groups combine and do the activity again, this time with 4 people. Keep combining groups until everyone who is participating is in one group and does it together.

* **Rope Square**- Get a large amount of rope (about 40 feet) and tie the ends together so that it is a circle. Blindfold all the participants. Have everyone hold on to the rope and tell them that they need to work together to make the rope into a square. If the group is having difficulty, one or two people can be unblindfolded to assist, but they are not permitted to talk. To make it more challenging, the rope can be criss-crossed between them rather than having them start out in a circle.

Group Juggling- Have participants stand in a circle. The leader tosses a ball to the person across the circle saying his/her name, then puts their hands behind their back. This repeats until everyone has been tossed the ball and had their name said. The leader throws the ball again to the same person, and everyone must throw the ball in the same pattern as the first time, calling out the person's name and throwing the ball. Each time the ball returns to the leader, another ball is added in. Continue adding balls and see how far the group can get without messing up. This can be tried nonverbally if everyone knows each other's names, and other objects in addition to balls may be used.

Indian Feather- Divide participants into groups of 5-10 people, sitting in a circle. Arrange the groups into a ring. In the center of all the groups is a leader with a pair of scissors. In the center of each team circle is a can with a feather sticking out of it. Each player must remove the feather, using only their mouth while standing on one leg. (teammates can assist each other). When the player has taken the feather out of the container with their mouth, they must go to the common center of the ring and cut off the portion of the feather that was touched by the mouth. Each time the feather gets shorter

and shorter, making it more difficult to retrieve from the container. The first group to have everyone get the feather out would be victorious.

Balloons- Everyone is in a group on their back, heads facing inward in a circle. By using only their feet and hands, they attempt to keep several balloons afloat for as long as possible. Play again, this time using only feet. You can also try the following variations: sit in a circle holding hands, and hit the balloon without using hands, Stand up, hold hands, and hit without using hands, etc.

Space Creations- have groups create a variety of shapes using their imaginations and their bodies. Ideas include round, oblong, flat, open, jagged, closed, parallels, intersections, semicircles, and diamonds. Larger groups might try stars, rectangles, cubes, hearts, octagons, and so forth. Another variation is to create emotions instead of shapes, such as fear or intelligence.

* **Rain-** Everyone sits in a circle, shoulder to shoulder. No talking is allowed. The leader starts the exercise and each person joins in when they hear the sound the person to their left is making. The leader starts the exercise by rubbing their palms together. This continues in the circle until it comes back to the leader who then changes the sound (snap fingers, clap hands, slap thighs, stomp feet, and then in reverse order). The sensations created are akin to the sounds of a rain storm.

Egg Drop- Participants are given small, miscellaneous objects (string, paper clips, tape, pencils) and several raw eggs per group. The task is to drop an egg from as high as possible without having the egg break. The objects can be used to help protect the egg from the fall.

* **Paper Bag Fashion Show-** Group size should be 4 to 5 people per group. Each group will need a paper bag filled with stuff (roll of toilet paper, construction paper, markers, scissors, miscellaneous stuff, and an index card). The task is to create a garment on someone in the group using all the materials except the card in 10 to 15 minutes. Then the group will write a description of the garment on the card which will be given to the fashion show commentator. Everyone but the models will become the audience and the fashion show begins. The commentator reads the descriptions as the fashions are modeled. This can be adapted to fit a topic, such as make a garment that a great leader might wear, and so forth.

* **1, 2, 3, Shoot!**- Everyone needs a partner for this activity. With your partner call out 1, 2, 3, Shoot! On the word shoot, both players hold out any number on their fingers (one hand, 1 to 5). The object of the game is to be the first to add up the numbers on both you and your partner's hand. This can be varied for subtract one from another as well. Gradually add in the other hand and combine people to make larger teams that try to add the numbers. See how many people can work together.

Trolly- Participants are given two long boards with ropes attached. Each Person stands with one foot on each board and holds on to the adjacent ropes. Working together, they must walk with the boards. When this is done successfully, the group can be asked to turn themselves around so that they face the opposite direction, do it in silence, or do it with some members blindfolded.

Willow in the Wind

Form a small circle of about eight persons, shoulder to shoulder, facing in, hands outstretched with palms facing inward. Place one foot slightly behind the other for balance.

Place a "willow" in the middle of the circle with feet together, arms crossed over their chest, and eyes closed. Keeping their feet in one place and their body straight and relaxed they fall backward. The people forming the circle push the "willow", gently push her front and back, side to side, and all around, like a willow in the wind. Perhaps the group can make howling wind noises. Everyone should get a turn to try it out.

****Zoom!***

The object of Zoom is to be one of two winners. The game is played by everyone sitting in a circle, facing inward. One person begins by saying the word "zoom" and turning to face the person on either her right or left. The person "zoomed" can do one of two things. First, turn his head and look at the next person in the circle and say "zoom", thus continuing in the same direction. Second, he can make a brake screeching noise (hrrrrr-or something) and look back toward the person who just "zoomed" her (or perhaps braked her), thus reversing the direction of the zoom.

The game must go rapidly and with rhythm. If someone messes up--looks the wrong direction, says the wrong thing, or hesitates--they are out and the circle closes in. The game continues until there are only two left (can hardly do it with only two).

Spider Web- A Spider's web is constructed of string approximately 2-4 feet off the ground. participants must pass each other through the web to the other side. If anyone touches part of the rope, the group must start over or be penalized (a group member becomes blind or mute). Only one person can use each opening in the web to get to the other side.

Shrinking Platform- Participants are given a defined space to stand on. The space gets smaller with each round. The team must decide on the best way to get the most people on the shrinking platform area.

Building Bridges- A la the Channel Tunnel between England and France, each team is to construct half a bridge without seeing what the other team is building.

Team Cheer - Equipment: Optional: poster board, pens, pom-poms, gymnastic ribbons, balls, bean bags, drums, rhythm instruments (bongos, maracas, rhythm sticks, etc)

Rules: Teams must incorporate movement and choreography into their cheer. Teams can use props to enhance their cheer (recommended) Every team member must be involved in the cheer

To Play: Group is divided into teams of 8-12. Teams plan, create, and rehearse their cheer during the allocated time. At the end of the time, each team performs its cheer for the other teams. To add a competitive element, each team is given votes which it can award as it sees fit to any team it wants. The team with the most votes wins.

* **AFFIRMATIVE FOLD-UPS:** Have group comfortably sit in a circle. Give each participant a sheet of paper and ask them to write their name on the top of the paper. Place all of the papers in the center of the circle. Have each participant draw a sheet from the center (not their own) and ask them to write one (or a sentence) positive word about that person at the bottom of the sheet. They then fold the paper up to cover up the word. Have them place the sheet back in the center and repeat on another sheet. Participants will continue to select other's sheets from the circle to write affirming words on, until the name is the only thing showing on the paper. The leader can then distribute the papers to their owners. This is a great game to do at the end of a retreat, the end of a year for an organization, at a staff meeting, etc.

* **BACK TO BACK:** Every group member must find a partner of approximately equal height and weight, if possible. The partners will lock arms with their backs to one another. With arms remaining locked at all times, the partners will sit down on the ground, kick their legs out straight, and try to stand back up. Then groups of four will try the same thing. Then groups of eight, sixteen, and eventually, the entire group together. This is the perfect activity to begin a trust sequence.

* **CHALKBOARD SENTENCES:** This exercise asks the participants, working in teams, to race against one another to formulate a sentence to which each team member has added a word. The facilitator begins by explaining that the participants will be competing to see which team is the first to complete a group sentence. Next, the participants are asked to divide into two teams. If the group contains an uneven number, one participant

may compete twice. The group leader sets up blackboards or newsprint for each team. The teams then are to line up 10 feet from their board. After giving the first person in each team's line a piece of chalk or marker, the leader explains the rules of the game. The rules are as follows: Each team member is responsible for adding one word to the sentence. The players take turns; after they go to the board and write one word, they run back to give the next player the marker, and then go to the end of the line. (The sentence must contain the same number of words as there are members on the team.) A player may not add a word between words that have already been written. The group leader may wish to process the activity with a discussion on the most serious aspects of the exercise (i.e. the value of anticipatory thinking, the individual cooperating in a group task, etc.).

CLIPBOARDS: This activity can be done in two ways. The first is to do the activity at the beginning of a groups' "existence." Participants are given a clipboard and asked to decorate it (using magazine cutouts, stickers, markers, whatever!) in a way that best represents who they are. Facilitator can give each person lamination paper to cover their clipboard and help it to last for a long time. Participants will have their clipboard to use forever and they will always remember the experience whenever they do! Participants are then asked to share their clipboards with the group. The other way to do this activity is to do it after the group knows each other well. Have participants pick a name out of a hat (but, shh....it is a secret!). The participant then decorates a clipboard for the participant they chose, to represent him/her (based on what they know). Group is given some time to do this. Group then comes back together and clipboards are "unveiled."


HUMAN KNOT: The group starts out in one or two tight circles. Everyone in the group reaches across the circle with their right hand to grab another group member's right hand. The group then reaches in with their left hand to grab a different group member's left hand. The object is to untangle the group without letting go of hands until a circle is formed. If the group is having extreme difficulty, you can administer "knot first-aid" and break one set of tangled hands (with group consensus), otherwise group members may not let go at any time. You may have to decide as a group that the knot is not solvable, after prolonged attempt. NOTE: Can have group do without talking if they are advanced enough.

KEEP IT UP: The players form two or more teams with 10-12 players on a team. Each team gets into a circle. Each team is given a volleyball (or similar type ball of any size). The players attempt to keep their ball in the air the longest. When a team wins, they get a point. The team with the most points, wins. Do not allow players to catch the ball during play. NOTE: To vary, change the way of scoring...say the ball must be hit in the order of the participants in the circle.

LAP SIT: The group will start in a circle. Every group member will turn placing their left leg towards the inside of the circle. Everyone will take one giant step into the middle of the circle. With hands on the person's shoulders in front of you, the group will sit on each other. The group will need to work together to communicate. Once this has been


completed, the group may wish to try to walk in this formation. This is a dynamic activity - and one that will make the group feel a great sense of accomplishment when successfully completed!

LEVITATION: One person will lie on the ground on his/her back, with eyes closed (if they feel comfortable). The rest of the group will place their hands underneath the person lying down. One person will be designated to be the captain, and therefore should place him/herself at the person's head. Once everyone is ready, the captain will softly count to three. At this time, the group will pick the person up to their waist. The captain will again softly count to three, and the group will bring the person to shoulder height. The captain will softly count to three, and the group will bring the person overhead. Finally, the captain will count to three, and the group will gently rock the person (forward and backward) down to the ground. It is the volunteer's responsibility to stay stiff as a board. It is the rest of the groups' responsibility to take this activity very seriously, not to talk, and to keep the head higher than the feet at all times.

 **LIFELINES:** Each member draws a line on paper to represent the highs, lows, significant events, turning points, etc. of his/her life to date (can also project into future). Members share their lifelines with other members. Members ask questions about each other's lifelines. This exercise also can be done with pipe cleaners and verbal explanations.

Highs: Birth Teenager College First Job

Lows: Childhood HS Grad School Future

 **MACHINE GAME:** The object of this game is to create a machine out of a group of people (i.e. ceiling fan, hot air balloon, watch, etc.). You might want to split your group into two or three smaller groups. Each person is required to be accountable for one noise and one motion of the machine. The group members should then put their motions and sounds together to create the machine. Give each group about 5 minutes to work together and prepare, and then have the groups present to everyone. Ask the other groups to guess what machine the group is.

***MASKS:** Participants are given a piece of paper (preferably poster board). They are asked to cut out a face shape (that is fairly large - like the size of a regular face). They can cut out eyes and a mouth if they would like. Participants are then asked to decorate the face. One side represents what they feel people see/know/believe about them (on the outside). The other side represents what he/she feels about themselves (things going on the inside, what people do not necessarily know or see, etc.). The participants then share with the group if they feel comfortable.

***PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS:** All participants are given a bag with pennies (each participant should have one penny for each member in the group - if there are 20 people, players each should have 20 pennies). Participants go around the room to each other and trade "a penny for a thought." Participants trade pennies - and positive thoughts about what they think of one another. What an incredible activity and a wonderful way to end an experience! Activity continues until all participants have shared with every member of the group and have a new bag of "pennies for thoughts."

PEOPLE PASS: Have the group split into two smaller groups, if necessary. Have the groups lie down on their backs, in a straight line, ear to ear, alternating guy-gal-guy-gal, etc. Have the first person in line stand at the end of the line and lay down (on their back) on the hands of the first person. Have the group pass the individual from one end to the other. NOTE: Each group MUST have a spotter and the group should be VERY aware and serious.

*^{con x}**PIECE OF THE PUZZLE:** Facilitator should cut a puzzle out of poster paper ahead of time. (There should be one piece for each member of the group.) Have participants decorate their piece to represent who they are and what they feel they can contribute to the group. Once participants are done, have them share what they have on their piece. Participants should then assemble the puzzle. Facilitator should initiate a discussion on the power of everyone coming together, how much more of an impact a put together puzzle can have, than separate pieces, and how a final product could not be reached without a contribution from every piece of the puzzle.

POSITIVE BOMBARDMENT: One member is selected to be the recipient of positive feedback from the rest of the group. Once everyone has had a chance to give that member the "gift" of feedback, another person is chosen and the process is repeated. This can be done in writing with members writing a positive comment to each member and putting them all in an envelope with the person's name on it, or verbally. This also can be adapted so the members first give some constructive criticism and then some positive feedback.

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PROGRESSIVE STORY: For this exercise, a group of people must know one another and feel comfortable discussing personal issues. Everyone must be able to hear the other members in the group, but people do not have to see one another. The facilitator begins the story by setting the initial scene and mood. (The mood will alter as a result of the addition of more content to the story.) The story can start with the following examples (or others): "On my way to class the other day..." or "A good friend called last night and..." or "I had the most amazing weekend! I..." In no special order, members of the group then take over the story. They add another element to the plot. The main point is to make sure everyone adds something. The progression of the story indicates where the group members are emotionally and is representative of what is high on their lists of priorities, concerns, and thoughts. This exercise spurs on creativity and can reveal a lot about a staff's collective state of mind. The facilitator plays a big role in interpreting what is said by each person.

* **PRUI:** The purpose of this game is to integrate group members and build trust and communication. Have each player take a blindfold and spread out on the floor. Ask those who feel comfortable to put their blindfolds on. Explain that you will tap someone on the shoulder; that person will be the "Prui" and will take off his/her blindfold. (None of the other players will know who the Prui is. Everyone will mingle around slowly (with bumpers up). Each time a player bumps into someone, they should shake his/her hand and ask, "Prui?" If the person says "Prui," they are NOT the Prui. If the person does not answer you back, they ARE the Prui. Once a player finds the Prui, he/she should join hands with him/her and take off his/her blindfold. That person is now part of the Prui, so if someone bumps into him/her, they should NOT respond, so that person knows to join the Prui as well. Everyone will continue mingling around until they find the Prui chain. When everyone is part of the chain, the game is over. NOTE: This is a high trust activity, and should be done at an appropriate time.

SING DOWN: Teams are created of anywhere from three to ten in a group. The leader will give the groups a word (i.e. love, boy, dance, etc.), and give the teams one minute to think of as many songs as they can with that word in it. Once the minute has passed, one team begins by singing a part of a song with that word in it. All team members must sing it. The other team then responds. NO SONGS MAY BE REPEATED. The group who has the most songs, wins. The process then can be repeated with another word.

TAFFY PULL: Begin by asking group members to remove any sharp jewelry or belt buckles. Then, divide group into two teams - the "Taffy Team" and the "Taffy-Pulling Machine Team." Have all of the members of the Taffy Team sit down and link arms, legs, and hands in one huge, tangled, mass. The job of the Taffy-Pulling Machine is to pull the taffy mass apart into "human-size" bits. Ask the team members to firmly, but GENTLY, tug at a piece that seems the most "stretchable," until it comes loose. Each piece of taffy gets to decide how much he/she wants to stay a part of the taffy mass. These two rules help ensure no one gets hurt. Each piece of taffy that gets separated from the mass joins the machine, until the last two pieces are pulled apart. Then, if time permits, the two teams can switch roles.

I want you to take all you have experienced here and keep it with you. These Touchstones represent the experience we have shared together. Take one, look at it, and remember who you are. Each stone is different - as each of us is our own person. But, they are similar too - each with hopes, desires, and ambitions. Dig deep inside and always have the courage to be yourself. You are a wonderful individual just as you are.

Keep this Touchstone and know the power and energy you feel here will always be within you. Do not forfeit your potential to fulfill all you set out to do. Listen to the voice inside you, think about all there is for you to accomplish, and challenge yourself to do it. Go on....the power lies within.

(Adapted from Springfield College)

TRUST WALK: This is an incredible trust activity! Every group member is either blind-folded, not blind-folded, but promises not to peek, or wishing not to participate. The leaders of the group will organize the group in a straight line or in pairs, singles, etc. The leader will make sure the group begins by holding one another's hands in a circle to help make them feel comfortable. The leader will lead the blinded group members around, periodically leaving them by themselves (but always holding on to something like a tree, fence, sign, etc. - and NEVER for any great length of time), or with new people to hold on to. **THE KEY TO THIS ACTIVITY IS NO TALKING.** If there is an object that needs to be stepped over, the leader should raise the hand of the group member, the next person will do the same to warn the next person, and so on. If there is an object that is low, the leader will lower the arm of the blinded group member, indicating they should duck down, and the chain will continue in the same manner as for a raised object. (The leader can pretend as well.) The leader can organize this activity according to their group. **HINT:** This activity is best down in the dark, but the leader should make sure everyone feels comfortable participating. If someone is nervous, they could become the leader's partner or just watch. Squeezing the hand of a participant is very encouraging and helpful in making them feel safe.

TWO PERSON TRUST FALL: Every group member needs to find a partner of approximately equal height and weight. One partner will designate themselves as the faller, and one will be the catcher. Both partners will get the chance to act in both roles. The faller's responsibilities are to stay as straight as possible, not bend at the waist, keep their arms across their chest, and communicate with the catcher. The catcher's responsibilities are to get in a sturdy stance (usually one leg in front of the other in a lunge position), be aware, keep their hands right below the faller's shoulder blades, use the arms as shock absorbers, not underestimate the force being generated by the faller, and constantly communicate with and reassure the faller. The faller will have his/her back to the catcher. The commands are performed, and the faller falls straight back. After three tries, the partners should switch roles. **NOTE:** Give the group members the opportunity to say "no" to this exercise. This and all other trust activities are very serious activities.

* **VALUES DISCUSSION:** Have participants find two people who are wearing the same color as them. Have them find a spot where they can talk together. Instruct them they will be talking about some issues and you will give them new topics every few minutes. Here are some samples:

Talk about the most important thing you learned this year.

What are the easiest and hardest emotions for you to express and why?

What is something that few people know about you?

What do you value in a friend?

What do you want to be doing in five years?

What is one goal you have for next year?

What is a motto you try to live by?

What is the greatest challenge you are facing?

What do you like most about yourself?

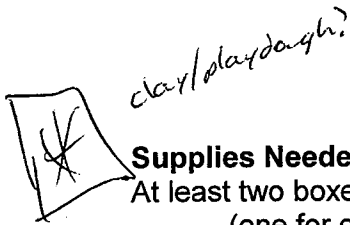
What do you value in a loving relationship?

What do you value most in life?

* **WEB WE WEAVE:** The group stands in one large circle. The facilitator begins the game by asking a question such as, "What is your favorite place to be when you are happy?" The facilitator answers the question and then tosses a yarnball across to another person, while holding onto the end of the yarn. The person answers the question, holds a piece of the yarn, and then tosses it to someone else. Game continues in same fashion, until everyone has shared. By tossing the yarn (or twine) around the group, participants weave a web that connects all of the members of the team in some manner. The facilitator can ask as many questions as appropriate. The facilitator then asks two or three of the team members to "drop" their string. The web begins to sag and appears to be very weak and vulnerable. The facilitator then can discuss how important each participant is to the team and the effect that low levels of involvement and commitment has on the entire team. At the end, the group can kneel down and place the web on the ground. Works well to have a discussion on teamwork. Group members can cut a piece of the string from the web to keep as a reminder of the exercise and the thoughts the group shared. Works well for groups of any size!

* **WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW:** Tape a blank piece of paper (poster board - kind of like a billboard over the person's head) on everyone's back. The members are to write a compliment or positive comment on everyone's back. At the end of the session, explain that a lot of times we tend to give compliments behind someone's back and it is not very often that we actually say these things to people's faces. We sometimes take for granted the positive aspects of others. If you wish, you may also explain that criticisms often are given behind other's backs as well, and that it may be more effective if they go to the person, instead of others. Have the group members pair up with someone they would like to get to know better and remove the paper from each other's backs. They should then explain to that person why they would like to get to know him/her better.

WILLOW IN THE WIND: Should follow after a "two or three person trust fall" has been completed. This activity can be performed in one large group or in smaller groups with a minimum of seven people. Have the group stand in circle with their shoulders touching. One person stands in the middle, with his/her eyes closed, body stiff, and feet planted. The rest of the group should be in a tight circle, in a sturdy stance. The outside circle group members have both of their hands up and ready at chest level. The commands are performed, and the faller may fall any way he/she likes. The rest of the group will gently change the faller's direction by easing their "fall" and sending them in another direction. The middle person will change after a few minutes. NOTE: Address the fact that the more hands on someone, the safer they will feel. The leader also should ask group members to remain quiet during the activity - or even to make the sound of a gentle breeze.



Lego Toy Creature from Outer Space
(an exercise in Communication and Teamwork)

Supplies Needed:

At least two boxes of lego toy pieces
(one for original model, one for each team to assemble – one box per team)
Something to block original model from view

Time Needed: 20 – 40 minutes

Instructions:

Pre-prepare your "Lego Toy Creature from Outer Space" – make it as goofy and complex as you can. This creature will serve as your original model.

- Place this original creature behind something so people cannot see it (example: a screen, science project display board, etc.)

Divide participants into two groups or more (five people or more per group, but no more than 10).

The teams will select who will be the first to view the creature.

One person at a time will get to view the creature for one minute. Then, that person will hurry back to their group. This person will then verbally (*without touching or showing*) tell his/her group how to construct the model. After five minutes, another person will be allowed to view the model for a minute. That person will come back and, again, *without* using their hands, instruct his/her team members how to construct the creature. Five minutes later, another team member goes, and so forth.

- You might, for the sake of time, gradually increase the number of people who view the creature – 1, 2, 3, 4 and you're done.

After the last team member has viewed the creature, everyone has five minutes to construct the creature – everyone can use their hands.

The facilitator will call time, and will reveal the original Lego Toy Creature from Outer Space. The team whose model most accurately resembles the original model will receive a prize (licorice, candy, or something.)

PROCESS/DISCUSSION:

Publishing

What happened during this activity? What did you see happen?

How did you feel during this activity?

How did you feel about the group and the task?

How did you do with this task? How did you operate in the group?

Why were you successful? What helped the most?

What was the most frustrating about this task?

What was the most important thing to your group?

What behaviors were detrimental to your group's success?

Processing –

- Reflect common shared elements from participants' observations
- Find correlations between stories, recurring themes

Example: Joe felt frustrated when he tried to explain what the creature looked like, but his teammates built something that looked completely different.

Generalizing –

So what?

How is this similar to other situations for you?

Applying –

What did you learn from this activity?

What would you do differently next time?

Some ways to summarize the moral of the activity:

- Everyone sees things a little differently.
- When you're working for a common goal, it is important to communicate clearly what you want. Likewise, it is important to listen to others and to ask questions.
- The more information you have, the better able you are to reach your goal.

Didong!

Purpose of Game: Just to have fun, get people laughing and relaxed

Players: five or more

Instructions: (This game has been played all over the country, so its origins have been lost.) It is called, simply, "Didong!"

Have players sit in a circle, facing inward. Hands must be free. This is one of those "round the circle we go" games, in which one slip up means a penalty! The goal is to think quickly, respond quickly, and not to mess up!

Starting out: Everyone is on even playing ground. Beginning with the first person, the person will raise either his/her left or right hand and point across their body to the person next to them, which indicates which direction the game will flow, and players can change directions whenever they please by simply switching hands and sending the signal in the opposite direction.

As you point, you will say "Dong". However, if you point incorrectly (hand does not cross body), you have messed up, and you will now have to say "Didong" which each turn.

If you are a "Dong", but you accidentally say "Didong" – you've also messed up, and you are now also a "Didong".

If a Didong messes up, he/she then becomes a "Dididong", and if they mess up again, then comes the "**Do-wha-diddy-dong punishment**".

What is the Do-wha-diddy-dong punishment?

That person must stand up and turn away from the group, and with his/her derriere/behind/bootay, spell his/her full name in cursive writing, crossing all t-s and dotting all l's! **The key to playing this game is to keep the punishment a secret until someone actually has to perform it, and then that ups the stakes and makes the game more fun!**

After someone has completed their punishment, they are out of the game.

"I'm Cool"

Facilitator Instructions:

Go this:

Have participants arrange chairs in a circle, facing inward. All but one person will have a seat. The odd person out will start off the game in the "mush pot" (center). Standing, this person will say their **name, major, organization they're with** (whatever you think pertinent for a brief introduction) and then they will say:

"I'm cool because I"

ex: wear glasses, have blonde hair, am wearing blue jeans...



Whatever is cool about them has to be something that other people are wearing, or a commonality they have (ex: has siblings, was born and raised in Texas, is a freshman, etc.).

At this point, whoever shares that cool-ness will have to get up from their chair and cross the room to find an empty chair to sit in.

NOTE: *Simply scooting to the empty seat next to you is not acceptable!!!*

(The original cool person also rushes to find a seat.) Whoever is left without a seat is now in the mush pot, and now the process goes over again.

This icebreaker goes until each person has a chance to introduce them-self. If someone ends up in the mush pot more than once, the facilitator may appoint someone to the mush pot who has not had a turn yet.

SAFETY CONCERNS: Please make sure people do not have loose shoelaces, and make sure there are no obstacles they might trip over.



Nacirema

Objective: To experience a new culture

Rules: Three to four people (two males and two females) outside the room, while the rest of the group remains inside.

Inside Rules: 1. Male to Male interaction, Female to Female interaction only.
(Example, If a male speaks to a female, she must avert her eyes and move away.)
2. Elicit a Yes or No response only.
3. Smile will elicit a "Yes" response. No smile will elicit a "No" response.

Outside Rules: 1. You are representatives of the University of Houston – Clear Lake and you were sent by President Staples to find out about the Nacirema culture, and how they communicate.
2. One person at a time will enter the culture and engage in conversation.
3. Take about three minutes to question the Nacirema culture.
4. As the next person enters, there will be about a minute briefing time between the outside group.
5. They like creative questions.

After exercise, spend about 15 – 20 minutes to debrief, examining the outsiders reactions to the Nacirema culture, plus insiders reactions and feelings. How should we learn about another culture, values and norms?

**** Nacirema is "American" spelled backwards!**

You're an Animal

Purpose of Game: Get people to pay attention, and to have fun

Players: five or more

Instructions: Players must sit in a circle facing each other. Each person will select an animal to represent them and create a movement that will symbolize their animal. They will demonstrate this to the rest of the group. (Note: hissing, snorts, raspberries, growls – are acceptable, but must be accompanied by movement.)

Examples:

"I'm a snake!" action: with hand, act out slithering snake

"I'm a bull!" action: using fingers to form horns and making a charging motion

After each person has demonstrated their NONVERBAL action, the game begins. Let's say the snake wanted to "pass it on" to the bull. S/he would make his/her own action and then quickly do the action for bull. The bull needs to be paying attention to quickly respond with his/her action and pass it on by acting out someone else's animal. This can go on for a long time – is pretty fun, but can get old if you let it go on for too long.

Toxic Swamp

Toxic Swamp is a low-level team element. Each team is given three blocks (or other flat object) to work with. The goal is for the team to get every member to the other side, without falling into the swamp, in the shortest amount of time possible. All the team members have are the blocks, and the encouragement of team members. Should they fall into the swamp, they need to return to the beginning, but guess what? The clock is still ticking. Once a team member has made it across the toxic swamp, they may not return to the other side to assist team members. As soon as the last person touches down, the clock stops.

This is a great team building and communicating event because all are involved for the best time.

Logistics: The swamp area can be a flat expanse of lawn, or can be done indoors on hard floor, carpet. The distance should be **at least 20 feet across**.

Variation: Instead of blocks, a sixty-foot tight rope can be suspended over a flooded swamp. In this case, only one team member can go across at a time. All the climber has is the support rope above head to guide them along and the encouragement of their team members.

Spider Web - This classic ropes event embodies all that a ropes course stands for: recognition of the inability to conquer the course alone, the need for others to help, and trust in your team to successfully complete the event. The challenge begins with a team of individuals on one side of the web. They are then required to feed each team member through a different hole in the web until the entire group is on the other side of

the ropes. It sounds simple, but every time one of the ropes on the web is touched, a series of bells ring telling the team they need to try to send that team member back through. To add to the challenge, each team is timed against each other for the quickest possible time.

Supplies needed: **lots of rope – tied up to make a web. Bells attached to the rope.**

Time allotted for this activity: **an hour**

I'm Cool - Everyone sits in a circle facing inward. Kind of like musical chairs in that every seat is filled, and the person left over goes to the mush pot. That person will then introduce themselves to the group. Ex: "My name is Austin Powers, and I'm cool because I wear glasses." Everyone who is wearing glasses then has to get up from their seats and make a mad dash to fill an empty seat somewhere else. Whoever is left standing, well, then they get to do the whole "I'm Cool" thing. It's an energizer, it is fun.

* **M&M Game** - Divide students up into groups of 6-8 people. Ask each person to take two - three M&Ms - all different colors, and instruct them NOT to eat them until the game is over. Then, you will reveal a chart that has questions that correspond with each color of M&M. Questions can be like (Brown): Tell us about the funniest thing that ever happened to you. Or (Blue): If you could be a character on any tv show or movie, which show/movie would you be on and why? Or (Orange): Tell us about the most incredible experience you've ever had (in which case, people could talk about things like traveling abroad, semester at sea, doing community service, climbing Mt. Shasta, etc.) This is an activity that gives students a chance to get to know each other, and who doesn't like chocolate?

The Pig Personality Profile

* From a posting on the TRDEV-L Newsgroup (Author ?)

Objective - An icebreaker for opening discussions on human behavior

Give the participants the following instructions:

On a blank piece of paper draw a pig. Tell them not to look at their neighbor's pig and give no further instructions other than to say the pig is of the animal variety! Do not influence how the pigs are drawn. After they have completed the assignment, give a good lead in about personality typing, M-B, etc and tell them this is a similar test. Their drawing will serve to interpret their personalities. The results are as follows: (Don't shoot the messenger, I didn't draw your pig!)

If the pig is drawn toward the top of the paper you are a positive & optimistic person.

If the pig is drawn towards the middle of the page you are a realist.

If the pig is drawn toward the bottom of the page, you are pessimistic & and have a tendency to behave negatively.

If the pig is facing left, you believe in tradition, are friendly, and remember dates and birthdays.

If the picture is facing forward (towards you) you are direct, enjoy playing the devil's advocate and neither fear nor avoid discussion.

If the pig is facing right, you are innovative and active, but have neither a sense of family, nor remember dates.

If the pig is drawn with many details, you are analytical, cautious, and distrustful.

If the pig is drawn with few details, you are emotional, naive, care little for detail, and take risks.

If the pig is drawn with four legs showing, you are secure, stubborn, and stick to your ideals.

If the pig is drawn with less than four legs showing, you are insecure, or are living through a period of major change.

The larger the pig's ears you have drawn, the better listener you are.

And last but not least . . . the longer the pig's tail you have drawn, the more satisfied you are with the quality of your sex life.



ICEBREAKERS

The Assassins

Begin by getting all the players together, and writing their names on a piece of paper. Have each player choose a piece of paper, and check to ensure that they have not drawn themselves. The Game Begins! Their goal is to "kill" the person whose name appears on their slip of paper. Method of murder is optional: water guns are popular, but kissing, or just saying "bang" are also used. Once a player has "killed" their victim, they inherit the victim's slip of paper. This continues until everyone has been eliminated.

Aura

Two people stand face to face, arms-out, palms touching. Then, each turns around three times and they try to find each other's palms again and return to the original position without opening their eyes. This is a great spectator sport and is also a riot if a whole group of pairs is trying to do it at the same time.

Brown Bag

Have your residents bring three things in a brown bag that symbolize them. Share the objects with the group and explain why it symbolizes them.

Variation: Put all the bags in a pile and draw them out one at a time, having the group guess which person each bag belongs to.



The Cracker/Whistle Race

A game for as many people as you would like.

1. Divide the people into two or more groups. Line up in those groups.
2. Hand out one or more crackers to each participant in each group.
3. Explain that the goal is to be the first team to successfully eat their crackers and whistle as soon after chewing them as possible, beginning one person at a time per team.

Coat of Arms

Put up a large shield-shaped piece of construction paper/painted cardboard/etc. on your bulletin board or wall. Each resident must contribute something to this shield. This will then become the floor's coat of arms, which can reappear as T-shirts, signs, etc.



Dragon Tail Tag

Make small chains of about four people. Either have team members hold on to each others waists or link elbows. The end person has a flag or tail (bandana) hanging behind them or in their back pocket. Teams must stay linked to participate.

The object of the game is to steal other teams tails while avoiding other teams who are trying to steal your tail. The last team to have a tail, wins.

Duck, Duck, Goose

While sitting, standing, or kneeling in a circle, facing in, one person goes around the circle touching each person on the head as they pass and saying "duck." The person on the outside continues around the circle tapping and saying "duck" until he decides he's

ready. He then taps someone on the head and says, "goose" and proceeds to run around the circle. The goose must run around the circle in the opposite direction. Both are racing for the open spot in the circle. The loser gets to be the caller for the next round.

A variation on this game is called "They Flying Dutchman." In it, two people go around the outside and say nothing. The people in the circle hold hands. The Dutchmen tap someone's clasped hands, breaking the chain. The Dutchman run around the circle racing against the two whose hand-clasp was broken (who run in the opposite direction). The slower team gets to be the Dutchmen for the next round.

Variations on this game are many. You can have them race around while hopping or skipping, or perhaps in piggy-back. Use your imagination.

Feather Tennis

A string is placed across the room. Just like volleyball, the idea is to get the feather to fall to the floor, in-bounds, on your opponent's side of the court. Unlike volleyball, you must blow a feather up into the air to do it. There are no limits to the number of time passes you can make to your team mates but each player cannot blow more than three times in a row.

Find Your Twin

Pass out copies of the Find Your Twin sheet and have everyone fill in the information under the column labeled YOURS. When finished, mix throughout the group asking questions until you find someone whose description matches yours and get their autograph.

The Flour/Dime Game

This game works best for about 6 people per game. Just divide the people up and let them play in their individual groups if there are more.

1. Bring about a cup of flour, a table knife, and a dime for each group (of 6, see above).
2. Pack the flour in the measuring cup very tightly.
3. Put paper over top of it and gently turn it over so that the cup lies upside down on the paper.
4. Carefully take the cup off so that the flour stays packed on the paper.
5. Gently lay the dime on the top of the packed flour pile.
6. One person at a time cuts away at the flour pile with the knife and must cut from the top surface in any direction).

The person who is holding the knife when the dime drops off the pile has to pick the dime up with their teeth and their hands behind their back.

Fox and the Squirrel

This game is more fun with a large number of players (approx. 10-20).

To set up, have everyone pair off and link elbows with their partner. Form a wide circle, leaving 3-4 feet (1 to 1.5 meters) between each pair.

Choose one of the pairs to start the game. One person is the Fox and the other is the Squirrel. The Fox chases the Squirrel anywhere in or around the circle until the Squirrel links elbows with one of the pairs. As the Squirrel links elbows with another player A in the pair, Player B of that pair becomes the Squirrel. If the Squirrel is tagged before linking up with another pair, he becomes the Fox and the Fox becomes the Squirrel.

An extremely tiring and fun game of tag!

Get-to-know-you Bingo

Get-to-know-you-bingo is a simple pre-opener excellent for large groups of like 30 or so. To create a bingo card make a 5x5 grid, with each square about 1.5 inches square. In each box put questions like the ones to follow and a blank line for an answer. Leave the middle square free. It is good to use several versions of the card (i.e. different arrangements of the same or similar questions).

Sample questions or requests:

"Find someone who..."	
Has never been to the West Coast year.	Went to a concert in the last
Has never been skiing socks.	Is wearing black
Plays a guitar (to any degree) station.	Listens to a certain radio
Has a brother named Mike "Cheers" final episode.	Did not watch the
Was born in _____	Wore braces
Owens a pair of bell-bottoms.	Drives a truck.
Has ears pierced twice.	Shops at _____
Is wearing sandals.	Has never
flown in an airplane.	

Gordian Knot

Uh, people get very close here. Everybody stands in a small circle, shoulder to shoulder. Eyes closed. Left hands in the air, reach into the circle, and grab someone's hand tightly. Now all right hands seek a fist. Once everybody is connected, let them open their eyes and try to unravel the knot until everyone is standing in an untwisted circle, holding hands. Good for the group process; because people actually touch, and they have to cooperate and listen to each other. Lots of fun, too!

The Grouping Game

This is a good game to play as a mixer. It is a fun, fast moving game. It starts out as everyone collects in one big group. The leader initially calls out a number, usually a number between two and fifteen. The number shouldn't be more than half of the number of total participants. When the number is called out everyone must try to collect in a group that contains that number of people. The group members should be latching arms or have their arms wrapped around each other so that the leader can see who is in the group. If someone cannot enter a group because the number of required members has been reached, he is out of the game. As different numbers are successively called out, the number of participants gets smaller and smaller. Eventually, there are less than ten people. The last group, or winning group, should have anywhere from two to five people.

Variation for grouping:

Don't make people go "out" of the game. Just constantly re-group people in different sized groups. Have everyone say something like "mingle mingle mingle" as they mill about together waiting for a number to be called out. Ultimately, try to make it so that everyone is in a group. Presto! Instant, fun grouping.

Hands

Each person traces his or her hand on a piece of paper. In each finger and thumb, have them write something about themselves. You decide what goes in each finger and thumb. Have everyone share their own. Suggestions: favorite activity, least favorite activity, hobbies, etc.

Happy Birthday: The Game

Materials:

1 Pair of Gloves A Prize wrapped in several layers of newspaper and boxes.
1 Hat 1 Die (perhaps two dice if group is large)

The group stands in a circle. The gloves, hat, and wrapped box are placed in the center. Someone begins by rolling the dice. If they roll a 6, they hurry into the middle and put on the gloves and hat. They then start to unwrap the package.

They must move fast because the next person to roll a 6 takes the hat off of the person in the center. The person in the center stops immediately and takes off the gloves, gives them to that person, and he/she goes back to the circle. The game continues like this until the package is completely unwrapped and the last person receives their prize. It's really noisy and incredibly fun!

Human Pinball

All but one person stands in a circle, facing outwards. Spread your legs as wide as comfortable, until your feet are touching your neighbors' on both sides. Everyone bends down and swings their arms between their legs--these are the flippers.

One person stands in the middle. A ball is released and the flippers try to hit the person in the middle (possibly for points if you have a use for them). Try it with several balls and more people in the center if the group is very large.

Careful, this game causes bad head-rush. Make sure you take breathers.

Human Scavenger Hunt

Have your residents write down something unique about themselves. Take a few minutes to collect these and call these items out so everyone can fill out their blank bingo sheets. After all the items are written down, have everyone mingle around the room and match the box with the correct person. Once the correct person is located, have him or her sign their box. First one to get BINGO gets a bag of M&Ms or a t-shirt, etc.

Variation: Provide each person with the human scavenger hunt sheet and have them mingle around to find one person who fits each category. Have them sign their name on the line.

Kevin Bacon is the Center of the Universe

Take a list of 10 movie stars (perhaps the one from Movie Star Scramble) any movie stars at all. Link that person to Kevin Bacon through movies in the least amount of steps possible.

Example:

Dustin Hoffman was in Hook with Julia Roberts
Julia Roberts was in Flat-Liners with...Kevin Bacon!!
Bacon factor is 1. Don't count the direct connection.

You should be able to do this with just about any actor or actress from any time. The challenge is knowing all of the right movies and who was in them.

The Lap Game

Everyone in the group gets in a circle, facing in, shoulder to shoulder*. When the circle looks good and round everyone should turn to their left (or right, whatever the director chooses) and sits on the lap of the person now behind them.

This a great game to get people into the group-game mood. Once people are sitting (?) it is a good time to give them all instructions as to what is going to happen next.

*Another thing to do is while people are facing inward, shoulder to shoulder, try to get them to lean inward together, supported by one another/s shoulders. This is useful because it will help the circle get round.

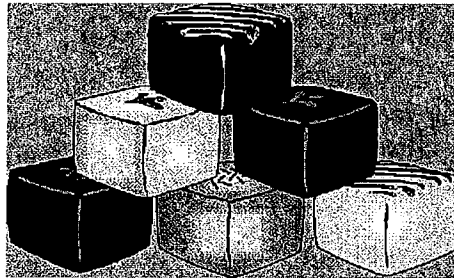
Variation: After the people have completed the task of all sitting down in a large circle, have them start walking! It really works.



M & M's

Pass around a bag of M&M's and ask each person to take out as many as he/she wants. Then have each person introduce him/herself by telling something for each M&M taken.

Variation: Pass around a roll of toilet paper and ask each person to take off as many sheets as he/she uses. They must tell something about them for each sheet.



The Mating Game

The group divides in two parallel lines facing each other across the room (perhaps boys/girls but doesn't matter). Each person is assigned an animal whose match is across the room somewhere. After being given a moment of thought, everyone in the room acts like the assigned animal and walks (crawls, flaps, waddles, etc) across the room in search of their mate. No human language is allowed. When people think they have discovered their mate, they go to the referee. The pandemonium proceeds until everyone has been mated.

To help with the assignment of animals perhaps you could make two sets of animal cards to pass out to people. In this case, the people wouldn't need to be in parallel lines across from each other. They could just be in a big circle or something.

Movie Star Scramble

Scramble the names of popular movie stars and figures and have people figure them out.

1 uilja otsebrr	Julia Roberts	
2 aridhrc eger	Richard Gere	
3 aciemlh otanek	Michael Keaton	4 acjk
nisholcon	Jack Nicholson	5 etsve nrtmia
Steve Martin	6 edjoi esrfot	Jodie Foster
7 nhoj skcasuc	John Cusack	8
orairsnh rfd	Harrison Ford	

Mel Gibson	9 cinhlo naidkm	Nicole Kidman	10 elm osibng
vhyec shaec	11 imk seginrsab Chevy Chase	Kim Basinger	12
14 anad yvrac	13 mdie orneo Dana Carvey	Demi Moore	
nadyn vrgloe	15 elichelme ferfifpe Danny Glover	Michelle Pfeiffer	16



Murder

Version One:

Sit in a circle. One person is the detective, and another one is chosen (without the detective knowing) to be the killer. The detective returns, and the killer starts killing others by blinking to the victims. If you are a good killer the detective will have a hard time finding out who it is.

Version Two:

Tear up enough pieces of paper or cards so that there are more than there are people. Write O's on all but one, put an X on that one. Fold them up and put them in a hat. Have everyone draw one, whoever gets the X is the murderer. Methods of murder are optional: pick one and stick with it for all the games, though, or it can get confusing. Suggestions: sit in a circle holding hands (this only works in the dark or if everyone keeps their eyes closed), and squeeze. Squeeze once, and you kill the person sitting next to you. Twice, and the person next to you squeezes their neighbor once and HE dies. Get it? Or, wander around shaking hands; the murderer taps the wrist. Those murdered must count to 10 (to themselves), shaking hands and acting normally, before dying. In all cases, let them have fun dying!

Musical Chairs

Classic Musical Chairs is played with numbers in a circle (perhaps on chairs, perhaps on the floor). When the music starts the players walk around the circle, when the music stops everyone must stop on their own number. A number is drawn from a hat and the person on the winning number gets a prize (or something).

Variation: It is fun to place obstacles in the path (i.e. between the numbers) for the players to crawl under, jump over, or step around. You can also play by crawling, hopping, or skipping. It's great exercise!

Nametag Swap

Prepare nametags for all your residents. As they enter the room, hand each person a nametag with someone else's name. Have the group mingle around the room to match the nametag with the correct person. Once the correct person is found, give everyone five minutes to find out about the other person. Then have each pair introduce their partner to the group.

Name That Show Tune

Take lines from the themes of TV shows and write them on a paper with an answer blank below. Here are some examples:

1. This is a story about castaways, they're here for a long, long time...(Gilligan's Island)
2. A story about a man named Jed, the poor mountaineer hardly kept his family fed... (The Beverly Hillbillies)
3. They were four men living all together, yet they were all alone...(Brady Bunch)
4. One O'clock, two o'clock, three o'clock rock...(Happy Days)
5. The _____ Promises something for everyone...(The Love Boat)
6. They're the modern stone-age family... (Flintstones)
7. Where everybody knows your name, and they're always glad you came...(Cheers)
8. Come and knock on our door, we'll be waiting for you...(Three's Company)
9. On your mark get set let's go now, gotta dream...(Laverne & Shirley)
10. Welcome back, welcome back, welcome back...(Welcome Back Kotter)
11. We're moving on up...(Jefferson's)

An excellent twist on this game is when you give out the answers and have everyone sing the answers back.

Name those Logos

Go through several magazines and cut out advertisement symbols (i.e. the 7up dot, but not the word 7up). Paste each on the white side of a 3x5 card and have everyone go around the room with an answer sheet and try to identify as many of the symbols as possible.

Questions

Option 1: Questions

For the 1st day. Stick a sheet of paper on everybody's back. Now let the people walk around; they ask each other a simple question like 'what is your favorite color' etc. The answer is written on the sheet.

~~*~~ **Option 2: Advertisement**

Write an ad about yourself, describing yourself and some peculiar habits or properties. Don't tell too much. Now the ads are mixed and people will guess to whom it belongs.

~~*~~ **Option 3: Questionnaires**

Have them write the answer to three questions on a piece of paper. Questions can be 'how would you like to re-incarnated', or 'what would you like to do at least ONCE in your life?' The papers are mixed and one person takes a random piece and tries to guess to whom it belongs. Good guess? A point and another try. Wrong? The wrongly guessed person can try now.

Pile Up

Everyone sits in a chair (or possibly on the ground) in a circle--one chair for everyone. One person in the middle begins to ask yes or no questions like: "Were you born in Mississippi?" "Are you right handed?" If the players can answer "yes" to the question, they move one chair to the right. If the players can answer "no" they must stay in the same chair. Eventually, there is a pile-up. The object of the game is to try to get everyone in the same seat.

Two notes. First, you may want to rule out questions whose answer is visible like: "do you have green eyes?" This adds an element of challenge to the game. Second, once everyone is all "together" it may be a good time to give them instructions for the next activity.

Variation: People sit in a circle on strong chairs or benches. Everybody gets a card from a game of cards, and remembers whether it is hearts, diamonds, club or spades. Now someone takes a deck of cards and turns the upper card. When it is 'hearts' everybody with hearts moves one chair to the right. If that chair is occupied you sit carefully on this persons lap. After turning some cards, the piles can get quite high! (If you have somebody on your lap you cannot move)

Psychic Shake

This game calls for as much silence as possible. Each person decides on a number from 1 to 3. While not saying a word, everyone in the group wanders around shaking people hands. The number of shakes should match the number chosen. There will be an unmistakable moment of tension when the numbers don't agree. But when they do the two should silently decide how to group themselves. Eventually, everyone will be in three groups. Surprisingly, the groups are often very evenly divided. It must be something psychic.

Red Handed

Also called "Button, button, who's got the button?" by my grandmother. The group forms a circle and one person, "IT", stands in the center. The group faces in, fists closed, palms up. IT places a marble (or button, or other small object) into someone's hand. IT then closes her eyes. While her eyes are closed the group passes the marble around. The idea is to trick IT so everyone pretends to pass the marble.

IT shouts out a word (any will do--"RED HANDED" for example) and opens her eyes. She then tries to guess (or catch) who has the marble. Everyone presents their hands in the original position (fists closed, palm up) and IT picks a hand.

If you get caught with the marble, you become IT. If IT fails to catch someone "Red Handed" then she must try again.

Swat 'em or Whipped to the Gap

Equipment: Newspaper rolled up into swatter

Action: Group in a circle, everyone facing in with hands behind back. "IT" walks around the circle with the newspaper. He discretely puts the newspaper into the hands of one of the players. That person swats the person on his right while the person being hit runs around the entire circle and comes back to his original place. The chasing person's place was taken by the previous "it". The person with the swatter now becomes "it".

NOTE: If the group is really large use two or three swatters.



Think Hard or Hardly Think

Put the following on a table:

A calendar		the letter "K"
A match in a bottle of water	Jar of 16 candies	
Toothbrush		Pitcher
Candle		Salt
Fork		Tacks
Buttercup (or other flower)	the letter "N"	
Stamp		2 dice on a dish of dirt

When the guests come have the previous articles on a table. As they come, give them the following list. Match the statements on the list with the items on the table.

1. End of pork ("k")
2. A bunch of dates (Calendar)
3. A swimming match (match in the bottle)
4. Sweet sixteen (Candies)
5. Never borrowed, never lent (toothbrush)
6. Seen at a ball game (pitcher)
7. Out for the night (candle)
8. The ending of a Biblical Character (Salt)
9. Branching of a river (Fork)
10. On of the causes of the American Revolution (Tacks)
11. A spring flower (buttercup)
12. The end of ambition ("N")
13. Ready to be licked (Stamp)
14. A paradise on earth (dice)

True/False

Everyone is given a 3X5" index card and writes the following on it: their name, 3 true statements about themselves, and 3 false statements about themselves. The statements should be in mixed order. Cards are collected and redistributed to people.

Sardines

Very easy, sort of reverse Tag. Assign a few "police"; make them stay while one person runs off to hide. Then let the rest (but not the police!) run off in search of the first person. Give them a minute, then send the police out. If caught, the runners must go back to "jail" for a bit. The game ends when everyone has ended up in the same place as the first runner (it can get very cramped in there!!).

Similarities

People sit in a circle on chairs. Everybody has a chair except one person in the middle. He really wants to sit! So this person names a property like "I have black trousers", "I live in Amsterdam", "I have a sister", or even "I have two eyes". All people who can say that too have to change seats, the rest stays seated. The person who was in the middle will try to sit on one of the chairs, and one person remains. This person now asks the next question.

Spit in the Ocean

Materials:

Thimble

Water

The person starting off the game has the thimble filled with water. This person will think of something. For example: They will say "I am thinking of a color." They go around the group, which is in a circle, and each person will guess a unique color. The object is to not get it right. If the guess is correct, the person in charge throws the water on them. Then, the wet person is in charge.

Stand Off

Two people stand face to face at one person's arm's length. Each stand with his feet side-by-side and together. Palms must face inward to start. The object is to make the other lose their balance without touching any part of their body than the palm. Go for two out of three. You can dodge and feint with your hands but touch no other part of your body.

Another version is from the Martial art aikido. Players start with palms together and must stay together throughout play. The object is still to make your partner lose balance but no sudden moves are permissible. This game can get tiring.

Stand-Up

Sit on the ground, back-to-back with a partner, knees bent and elbows linked. The object is simply to stand up together. Then try it with 3, then with 4, then with 5... Try it with as many people as are in the "Lap Game."

Two truths & a lie

Each person reads the name on the card and the statements. The group tries to determine which statements are true and which statements are false.

Wheel in a Wheel

Form two circles, one inside of the other, with the same amount of people in each circle. Have the people face one another and ask them the questions listed on the sheet provided. After each question, have the outside circle move one to the left. The object of this is for everyone to be able to get to know each other.

What's your Name Sweetie

Materials:

About 6 different candies that have given names like M&M's, Crunch, Wrigley's , etc.

1 Die (or 2 dice if the crowd is very large)

Everyone is seated on the floor in a circle. Packaged candybars or candy are placed in the middle of the circle. Everyone starts by saying his or her own names. The leader then makes sure that everyone knows what candy is in the middle. Someone begins by rolling the dice. If they roll a 6, they can take one of the candies in the middle. The die continues to go quickly around the circle while people keep picking up candy. When all of the candies are taken, people then can get other people's candy.

In order to get their candy, they must state the person's first name and the name of the candy they hold. The person who rolls a 6 and matches the name of the candy and the person takes the other's candy. If they forget either name, they miss their turn and the dice goes to the next person and they continue to roll. (One person can get more than one candy and people can hide the candy behind their back). This is a great way of getting to know people's name and how to get your favorite candies!

Who Am I?

Pick a category such as cartoon characters, movie stars, vegetables, etc. Pin the name of one of these items on the back of each guest as they arrive. Tell them that they need to find out who they are by asking other people for help.

The rules are:

1. ask yes or no questions only
2. answer yes or no questions
3. no removing your own nametag to find out.

If you need people seated or grouped up this may be a good way to do it. Have place cards at the seat of each item. Or have a few different categories of item to guess. Then when it comes time to group up have the cartoon characters go here, vegetables there, etc.

TEAMBUILDING GAMES & ACTIVITIES

Teambuilding activities are loads of fun, but they can also be tools for strengthening your group. They can be good icebreakers for the beginning of a meeting or a way to build stronger ties with members you already know. Some involve a lot of teamwork and can result in tighter friendships among the people with whom you work.

There are many gradations of teambuilding activities. We've broken them down into three rough categories. Many were hard to choose a specific category for, so use your own judgment and understanding of your group when you do these activities.

- **Beginning** – focus on remembering names and getting acquainted
- **Middle** – focus on having fun and getting along
- **End** – focus on strengthening the team, understanding others strengths and weaknesses
- **Cheers** – use for stretching, to keep the group upbeat, and to have fun

Beginning

These games and activities would regularly be used at a first meeting, at the beginning of a gathering, or at the start of a student conference or workshop. With little physical contact, these games help loosen people up, remember names, and get more comfortable with people they've just met.

Pass the Clap

Focus: Having fun, Visual communication

Stand in a circle. One person has the “clap” in their hands and turns to face a person next to them. About when they make eye contact or just when they are facing each other, they clap simultaneously. Then, that next person has the clap and turns to pass it on. After it has been passed around once and everyone has the hang of it, begin to time him or her. Encourage people to move around, jump into a different part of the circle, and reverse it.

Whose Shoes?

Focus: Introductions

Have everyone sit or stand in a circle. Ask them to take their shoes off and *immediately* toss them into the middle of the circle. Begin by having one volunteer pick a pair of

shoes; describe the owner (without knowing who it is). Ask for things such as age, hobbies, or attitude. When he is done describing the owner, he must guess whom the shoes belong to. Then, the real owner comes forward and continues the activity.

Blindfolded Animals

Focus: Separating into groups

This activity can be used to separate people into pairs or a large number of students into different groups. With a small group, write the name of however many animals on two different pieces of paper and have the participants draw one out. With a large group, have students count off to a certain number and assign a certain animal for each number. When you say "go", participants will close their eyes and are only allowed to make the noise of their animal in order to find their other group members. Animals such as cows, pigs, dogs, chickens, elephants, cats, and horses all make for a fun, and noisy, activity.

Action Intros

Focus: Learning Names

Make a standing circle. Have one person start by saying an action and their name. The action should start with the same letter as their name, like energetic Eric or jumping Jill. When they say their action and name, they can also act out their action. So, jumping Jill would jump up and down. Have the entire group go around and repeat everyone's actions and names each time a new person introduces him or herself.

TAG!

Focus: Get Moving

Here are two variations of tag that will keep participants upbeat and interested.

Hospital Tag Every participant is "it" and also has three lives. When a player is tagged once, he must put this hand on the part of his body where he was tagged. The second time, he puts his other hand on that spot. The third time he is tagged, he is out. Participants will get a kick out of watching people run around with their hands on ankles or backs while trying to tag others.

Clothes Pin Tag Bring enough clothespins for every player to have at least three. Again, everyone is it. Give them a certain amount of time to tag as many people with clothespins as they can. When time is called, players with one or no clothespins on them are still in the game and can again play for one more round. There are many ways to mix this game up, but remind players that they're not allowed to take the clothespins off once they have been tagged.

Concentric Circles

Focus: Get to Know One Another

Divide everyone into two groups. Have one group make a circle facing outward. The second group then makes a circle around the first group and faces inward. Everyone should be facing someone from the other circle. Each person can talk to the person across from them for a minute or two before you yell, "SWITCH", and have one circle move to the left or right a few steps. If participants seem shy, give them a topic to talk about each rotation, such as movies, DECA, college, food, etc.

Move It Buddy

Focus: Memorizing Names

Stand in a circle, with one person in the middle. When the person in the middle says so, participants will be given 30 seconds to one minute to memorize the first, middle, and last name of the person to their left and right. After the minute is over, the person in the middle will point to somebody and say "left" or "right". If he or she pauses or stumbles saying the full name, he or she is then in the middle. If everyone seems to know each others names right away, the person in the middle can call out, "Move It Buddy!" and everyone must rush to a new space and begin memorizing names again.

Middle

These activities and games are for people that have become more comfortable with each other. People aren't as concerned about looking silly as long as other people are doing it too. More contact-oriented games are sometimes okay, but this must be gauged by watching the participants and their reactions. Sometimes these activities are good for the end of a shorter meeting. Keep in mind there is a substantial difference between a meeting early in the year and a meeting in the middle or towards the end of the year.

Blindfold Birthdays

Focus: Verbal Communication

There are many variations of this game. Begin by asking everyone to blindfold themselves (or close their eyes, but it's oh-so-tempting to peek!). Then give them the task of lining themselves up in order of their birthdays. Variations include lining them up by height or weight or by allowing them to see, but not talk.

Two Truths and a Lie

Focus: Getting to Know One Another

Go around the group and have everyone say two true statements about themselves and one false. The rest of the group has to guess which one is false. If participants find it hard to think on the spot, give them index cards and let them write it down. Then, toss the cards into the middle of the circle so you have to guess who the person is *and* what is false. You may be surprised. You can learn some crazy things about each other!

Count Off

Focus: Non Verbal Communication

Begin by having the group stand in a bunch or sit on the ground in no order. The goal of this activity is to count to a number twice the number of people in your group. Participants can only say two numbers during the entire game. Also, only one person can say a number at a time. If two people say the same number, the group must begin counting again. Begin by giving them no prep time, but allow the group a minute to plan if they are having trouble.

I'm Making a Triangle

Focus: Brainteaser

This game may confuse and frustrate those who don't understand at first. Choose three people in the group by saying, "Amanda, Collin, and Karie". Then ask the question, "Whose triangle is it?" Participants will spend lots of energy and time trying to find a specific pattern, but there's an easy solution. The first person to speak after you ask the question is who the triangle belongs to. It may take the group a long time to understand, so if needed, be very, very obvious. No matter how obvious you are, there will still be people who won't get the pattern!

Floor Designs

Focus: Having Fun, Communication

This activity requires one package of computer or copier paper and a large, open floor space. Have one participant in the group draw a picture on a piece of paper of anything they'd like. Then, give the group the stack of paper and tell them to mimic the drawing on the floor. To make it more interesting, silence certain people in the group. For instance, only allow one person to do the talking and instructing or, perhaps, only the guys. If there is a large number of participants, divide the group in half and have the groups compete to see who can lay out a more accurate picture. This activity is especially fun if timed and allows for a fun photo opportunity at the end.

60 Second Speeches

Focus: Getting to Know One Another, Speaking Skills

