

# **Games and workshops manual**

by

***Paul "Baby Fish" Mullan***



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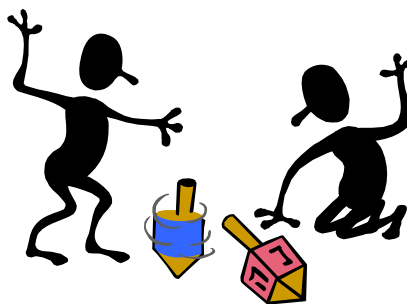
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## Introduction

The following is a collection of a wide variety of games, workshops and other ideas suitable for youth groups, school classes, festivals, adult groups and other situations. I have come across them mainly through working with peace organisations and some do refer to particular local situations (particularly Northern Ireland) - however they should all be easily adaptable to other contexts.

Resources: It's generally assumed that you have plenty of space and chairs - if you don't you need to check the method to see if they are necessary. For all workshops, it's good to have a flip chart / white board and for group members to have pens and paper.

Group Size / Time: No details have been included for this, as most activities are flexible and can be adapted to the people and time that you have. You should be able to see what's possible by reading the method. As a general guide, most games will take 10 - 15 minutes and workshops will take 30 - 90 minutes (depending on how much depth you want to go into during the discussion). Most games will work well in groups between 10 and 25 and can be used with larger groups by dividing them into a number of groups.

Age: Again no details have been included for a suitable age range as this varies a lot depending on the type of group. Many older groups enjoy playing very childish games but there may be a problem with younger teenagers who want to feel mature.

Method: Some of the games are very difficult to describe and it would be a lot easier to have it demonstrated by someone and use the write up to simply help the memory. There is also no need to stick to the given method too strictly - most activities could be adapted to make them

more appropriate to a certain situation and experimenting with changes could end up producing something better.

## Introductory games

### Action Name Game

Method: Have the group sit around in a circle. Go around the circle and have each person say their name and make up an action. Everybody else must then repeat the name and perform the action together.

Variation: The first person says their name and does their action, then the second person repeats this and adds their own name and action, the third person repeats the first two and adds their own, etc. (as in the illiterative name game)

### All Change

Method: Get the group to sit in a circle with one person in the middle and no spare chairs. The person in the middle must shout out something that might describe some people in the group. e.g. "Everyone with brown eyes / wearing black socks / who likes Oasis / didn't shower this morning" and those who fit the description must change places. No-one may move to the seat immediately to their left or right. One person will not get a seat and they must give the next category. If people start calling out a lot of categories that are specifically targeting individuals (i.e. its obviously that only one person will have to move) then you may wish to introduce a rule forbidding this or to have a quick discussion at the end about when whether people prefer being a unique individual or one of a group.

Variations: A simpler version is "Fruit Bowl" or "Apples and Oranges" where people in the group are given the name of a fruit (at least two types) and the person in the centre shouts out one of these. All those who had been named as that fruit change places. If the person in the centre

shouts "Fruit basket" then everyone swops.



### **Alphabet introduction game**

Resources: The letters of the alphabet written on pieces of paper.

Method: Space the pieces of paper out around the room. Ask people to go to the letter that their first name begins with.

They should then introduce themselves to the other people in their group and you can have a question or two for them to ask each other (e.g. why did they get that name?).

Then ask them to go to the first letter of their home town and again introduce themselves - this time they should tell each other their names as well as where they come from and talk a little about their town. You can continue on like this asking for different things like religion, nationality, job, etc. and each time people should tell each other all their previous answers.

You can ask people to observe the different groups that they end up in each time so that they become aware of the fact that they have differences and things in common with each of the other group members (this can help prevent people from splitting into two camps (e.g. Protestant verses Catholic in N.Ireland) by revealing the diversity of the group). You can also ask people how they felt when they ended up at a letter on their own - were they happy to be different or did they prefer to be part of a group?

### **Find the person who... / Human Bingo**

Resources: One sheet per person with list of things to find, pens

Method: Before playing the game, you need to produce a list of things about people, such as "Someone with blue eyes", "Someone who can speak 3 languages", etc. You should have 10-15 of these, depending on the group size, and try to make it so that someone in the group is likely to fit the category. The group are

each given a copy of the sheet and instructed that they have 10 mins to match each quality with a different person in the group. The first to get a name for each item on the list is the winner.

### **Alliterative name game**

Method: The first person in the group introduces themselves saying their name and something they like that begins with the same letter as their name. e.g. "I'm Paul and I like Peaches". The second person introduces the first person and then themselves ("This is Paul and he likes Peaches, I'm Clare and I like Carrots"), the third person introduces the first two and then herself / himself and so on, until the last person has to introduce everyone.

Variations: People choose an adjective to describe themselves beginning with the same letter. e.g. "I'm Generous Gerard"

### **Instant Guessing**

Method: Get the group to walk around and mingle. When the leader shouts stop, each person must find someone that they don't know as a partner (preferably a different person each time). They should then make eye contact, shake hands (or hug) and say their names. The leader will then shout out a question and each person should try to guess the correct answer for their partner. They then tell each other whether or not they were right - yes / no questions are the easiest. Some examples might be: Are they an only child? Are they religious? Are they studying? Have they had a relationship lasting more than a year? What colour is their partner's eyes? (get them to shut their eyes after introducing themselves and then ask the question...).

You can go on to a short discussion about how we make judgments from appearances, etc.

### **Juggling Identities**

Resources: 3 bean bags or small balls

Method: Have everyone stand in a circle, facing in. First go around the group getting

people to say their names - tell people to try and remember a few. The leader then takes one ball and throws it to a group member while making eye contact and saying their name. They then throw it to someone else, etc. with everyone getting the ball once and only once before it ends up back with the leader at the end (to help with this, you could get everyone to keep one hand in the air until they have had the ball once). They should also be told to remember who they throw it to. After one round begin again, telling people to throw to the same person and this time use all three balls (one at a time...)

Variations: Get people to throw 2/3/4/5 to their left instead of to anyone.

### **Life Maps**

Resources: sheet of paper and pen for each person

Method: Explain to the group that each person should draw a map of their life, marking on the events that they consider most important. There are no other rules and people can use their imagination to do this in any way that they like. After these have been completed, you get each person to talk a little about what they drew, get people to guess what other people's maps mean or just put them on a wall without comment. There are a variety of issues that can be brought out of this, about how we select events as important, the differences in how people depicted their life, etc.



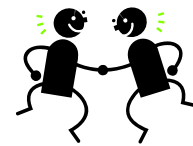
### **Newspaper Name Game / Dracula**

Resources: 1 rolled up newspaper (or similar) - not too thick

Have the group sit on chairs in a tight circle. One person should start off in the centre and be given the rolled up

newspaper. They must then call out somebody's name and try to hit that person on the head with the newspaper before that person manages to call out some else's name - the person named becomes the new target and so on. If someone gets hit before they say another name, then they must be in the centre. You can also add a rule that you can't say the name of the person who said you're name.

If the newspaper version is too violent, the game can be played by touching people on the knee.



### **Pair Introductions**

Method: Divide group into pairs, trying to put people with someone they don't already know. Give them 5 mins to find out all they can about each other (Tell them when half the time is up so that they can swop who's talking). Then each person introduces their partner to the group.

Variations: Give them a number of specific things to find out e.g. Their name, why they got that name / what it means and a something that nobody in the group knows about them.

Also see "Listening Exercise" and "Slanted Storytelling" for ways to develop this.

### **Paper Dropping Name Game**

Resources: One sheet of paper

Method: One person is the middle, the others seated around in a circle. The person in the middle is given a sheet of paper and must call out someone's name and drop the sheet. The person who's name is called must try to grab the paper before it reaches the ground. They then rip a piece off the sheet and continue.

### **Picture Introduction**

Resources: pens, paper

Method: Divide group into pairs, trying to make sure that as many people as possible

are paired with someone that they don't know. Give them 5 mins. for one of each pair to find out as much as possible about the other person and to represent their hobbies, etc. as pictures. The only writing on the page should be the name of who they are describing. Then give them another 5 mins. to reverse the roles. After they have finished get them to pass their pages 5 places to their left and then the group should take turns trying to introduce the person whose sheet they have from the pictures - the person being described can give the real version afterwards.



### **Train Name Game**

Method: The group sit around in a circle with the leader in the middle as the "train". They go up to one group member and ask them their name. When they reply, the leader chants their name 5 (with a slight pause after the first two times as this sounds better...) while making an action (e.g. right hand up for the first time, then left hand, right, left, right). That person then becomes the front of the train and goes around to someone else (making train noises) and asks their name. They repeat this name to the leader and then both chant the name together (while making the action). The 3rd person joins the front of the train and then continue on like this until everybody is "on board" - each time someone is asked their name, the answer is passed back along the train until it gets to the leader at the back and then all chant it together.

### **Icebreakers**



#### **Bing and Bong**

Resources: 2 objects to pass around - e.g. pens

Method: The group should sit in a circle. The leader passes the first object to the

person on his / her left and says "This is a Bing" to which they reply "A what?" and the leader replies "A Bing". The object is then passed on with "This is a Bing" and the reply is again "A what?". The first person then repeats this questions to the leader who replies "A Bing" and they then repeat this to person number 2. So the pen gets passed on and for each person the questions get repeated around the circle to the leader and the answer is repeated back. After practising until this is clear, try it with the second object ("A Bong" ) being passed around to the right. Then start the game with both objects, sending them around in opposite directions.

### **Body Parts**

Method: Have the group wander around in a given area. Give them the instruction that when you stop them and call out a body part (e.g. right hand), they must find someone that they don't know and touch their right hands together. Other suggestions: sole of left foot, knee, back, chin, ear, nose, cheek, elbow, etc. Get the group to move around more in between each call and start with the less embarrassing ones first.

### **Concentration**

Method: Have the group sit in a circle, the leader can begin as "Master" and number the group from 1 going around from the leader. Have everyone set up a steady rhythm by slapping knees and clapping alternately. Then begin by saying to this rhythm "Concentration. Are you ready? If so, Let's Go" Then say "Master to ..." filling in the number of a group member. That person then says "... to ..." where the first ... is their own number and the second is another number. This must continue like this without any break in rhythm and no-one may call the number of the person who called them. Anyone who hesitates or makes a mistake is either out or they become the highest number with everyone who had a higher number than them dropping down one - the aim in this second

version is then to move all the way down the numbers to become the Master. When people get the hang of the game you can start to speed it up.

Variation: See Evolution Game for a sillier version of this.

### **Daddy Bear, Mummy Bear**

This game is useful for dividing people into groups for a workshop or other activity.

Resources: A piece of paper each with the name of an animal and place in family. The number of different animals should be the no. of groups that you want.



Method: Tell the group that they are not allowed to talk from as soon as they receive their piece of paper. When you tell them to start, they must find the others in their group using only actions and animal noises and then once in their group get into order of age and sex (explain what order you want carefully e.g. granny, grandad, mum, dad, teenager, baby). The first group to get into the correct order wins.

Variation: Include one animal with no family (e.g. the Baby Fish) and use the game to look at feelings of exclusion.



### **Do you love me Honey?**

Method: Have the group seated on the chairs, facing in, with one person in the centre. They must then approach someone who is seated and ask them "Do you love me Honey?" to which the seated person must reply "Darling, you know I love you but I just can't smile" and this must be said without smiling or laughing. The question and answer are repeated 3 times and the person in the middle must try their best to make the other person smile. If they do smile then they are in the middle, if not the person in the middle tries again with

someone else.

Variations: Poor pussy - the person in the middle must go up to somebody and purr. The seated person must pat them on the head and say "Poor pussy" three times. Same rules about smiling. May work better for very young children.



### **Elephant Game**

Method: Get the group to stand around in a circle facing you in the centre. Explain that they must do the following actions when you point to someone and call out its name: Elephant: The person pointed to sticks one arm out as the trunk and reaches around under it with the other arm to hold their nose, while making an elephant noise. The two people on either side of them bend their outside arms over their heads to make the ears of the elephant.

Milking the Cow: The person pointed to links their fingers in front of them with palms facing out and thumbs pointed down, while making a mooing noise. The people on either side milk the thumbs.

Toaster: The person pointed to bounces up and down while saying boing, boing... those on either side turn to face them and stretch their arms out on either side to make the toaster.

Baby on a Motorway: The person pointed to puts their thumb in their mouth and makes sucking noises. The people on either side drive around them while making car noises (vroom, vroom).

Giraffe: The person pointed to stands on their tip toes and puts both hands to their head with index fingers pointed up (as antlers). Those on either side hold their outside arms out and down as the legs.

Rabbit: The person pointed to holds both hands to their mouth with two fingers pointing down (as teeth) while saying



"Kani, Kani" (Finnish for Rabbit). The people on either side make the rabbits ears on the sides of the central person's head with two fingers (of their inside hand) wiggling. You can introduce the actions in stages, make up more of your own or get the group to suggest actions. To play the game, the person in the middle simply turns around and points to somebody and calls out an action. Once they have got the hang of it you can start to speed things up. If someone makes a mistake or hesitates they are in the middle (or you can put them out).

After you have played this for a while you can finish it off by moving on to the "Kani, Kani" game.

### **Evolution Game / Flappa, Flappa**

**Method:** This game follows the same as in Concentration, but this time people are animals with the Amoeba at the bottom and the King / Queen at the top. Each animal has an action and sound. The Amoeba begins by doing their action / sound and then someone else's, that person does their own and then another, etc. Anyone who makes a mistake drops down to the bottom of the ladder and those who had been below them move up one place. The aim is to become and stay as King / Queen.

You can just make up any silly actions that you want for this and put them in an order, but are some possibilities:

**Amoeba:** Hands together vertically at stomach, then move them forward and back. Shrlurping sound.

**Fish:** Wiggling action with hands together in front. Quiet "Bob, bob" sound.

**Canary:** Flap ears forward several times with hands. Say "Fi, Fi, Fi, Fi".

**Bat:** Flap arms. Say "Flappa, Flappa".

**Dog:** Go down on all fours, lift back leg, make "Psss" sound.

**Shark:** Big biting action with hands / arms. Biting sound.

**Tiger:** Clawing action. Snarling sound.

**Monkey:** One fist above head and the other

thumps chest. Make monkey "Ooh" sound.

**Moose:** Thumb to side of head, fingers up (like antler) then rotate down. Say "Embarrassing".

**Elephant:** Trunk action (one arm out as trunk, the other round underneath this to hold nose). Elephant noise.

**Tarzan:** Beat chest. Tarzan roar.

**King / Queen:** Stretch mouth with finger in each corner of mouth. Say "aaaaaaa" and flick tongue in and out.

(If you have a small group, then you can select some of these and begin with the lowest - the king / queen should be included though)



### **Greetings**

**Resources:** pieces of paper with greetings written out

**Method:** Each participant is given a piece of paper with a type of greeting action on it. They should then walk around the room and greet each other by doing this action and saying their name (or they walk around until the leader blows a whistle and then get into pairs and greet each other). Some suggested greetings are:

- \* Keep a distance of about 70cms and shake hands with a light grip (England)

- \* Embrace them and kiss three times on alternate cheeks (Netherlands / Belgium)

- \* Embrace them and kiss twice on alternate cheeks (Portugal / Spain)

- \* Embrace them and kiss four times on alternate cheeks (Parisians)

- \* Place hands together in prayer position and bow forwards (Japan)

- \* Rub Noses (Inuit)

- \* A very warm, big hug (Russia / Palestine)

- \* A very strong, firm handshake (Germany)

You can add any other greetings that you know as well.

The countries in brackets are suggested answers to where the greeting come from - don't provide these until after you have played the game and asked for guesses. It

is also good to discuss a little about whether these greetings are stereotyped (e.g. do all Germans have a strong hand grip?).

You can also get quick feedback from people about how they felt using the different types of greeting and if they have any experiences when travelling of embarrassing mistakes they've made, etc.

### **Hey Harry**

Resources: bright lipstick

Method: One person starts by turning to the person on their left and saying "Hey Harry", that person replies "Yes Harry" and the first person says "Tell Harry" (referring to the person two to their left). The second person then repeats this with the person to their left and so on around the circle. If anyone makes a mistake or hesitates, make a spot on their forehead with the lipstick and they then become One Spot (instead of Harry) and must be referred to by this name (so "Hey One Spot" etc.) If they make another mistake they become Two Spot and so on. Play to a time limit or have people drop out when they get to 3 spots.

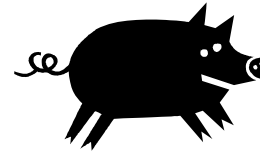


### **Kani, Kani**

Method: Have the group stand around you in a circle. Explain the "Kani, Kani" (rabbit) action - one person hold both hands to their forehead with two fingers extended and wiggling while they say "kani, kani, kani,..." rapidly. The people on either side hold two fingers from their inside hands to the sides of the central person's head.

One person (and the two people on either side) starts off doing the action and then points (with the fingers of both hands) at someone else in the group. That person (and the two people on either side) take up the action and then point at another person.

Continue as fast as possible and anyone who makes a mistake is out. The game finishes when there are only 2 people left.



### **Kiss the Pig**

Resources: One inflated balloon with a pig drawn on it.

The leader begins by saying "I kiss the pig on its (nose / back right foot / other body part)". They pass the "pig" on to the person on their right and that person must kiss a different part. Pass it on round like this until it comes back to the leader. Explain that you will do another round but then "accidentally" burst the balloon. Tell them that they will therefore have to repeat the exercise this time by kissing the person on their right on the same spot that they kissed the pig the first time...

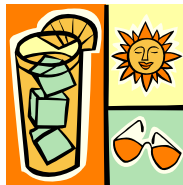
Variation: Have each person turn to the person on their right and say one physical thing about this person that they like and one that they don't like. Then tell them that they must kiss the thing they don't like and bite the thing that they do like... the group needs to already be a little more comfortable with each other for this version.

### **Knee Race**

Method: The group should sit around in a circle with the leader in the middle. The leader shouts out different characteristics that members of the group may have (e.g. everyone with blue eyes, everybody who likes jazz music, etc.) Anyone who has this characteristic should move one place to the right and if there is anyone there they sit on their knee. If there is already somebody on someone's knee or the person to their left moves over before they move, then they must stay where they are. The first person to get all the way around the circle and back to their own seat is the winner. You

can also add a rule that you must actually end up sitting on your own seat and that if there is already somebody there (so that you end up on their knee) then you have to keep going around.

Variation: Give each person a playing card, ask them to remember it and then collect them in again. The leader then shuffles the pack and then the game progresses as before but this time the leader goes through the pack calling out the suits of the cards - everyone who had that suit moves one seat to their right. You can also call out a mixture of suits, colours and numbers (e.g. spades, a red 3, kings, etc.)



### Lemonade

Resources: Plenty of space with areas marked at each end as "safe zones"  
Method: Divide the group into two teams. One team begins by secretly deciding on an occupation (farmer, policeman, unemployed) and the name of a country / town that begins with the same letter. The two teams then stand in lines facing each other with a reasonable gap between them. There should be lines marked behind both teams to represent safe zones.

The team who will be guessing begin by shouting "What's the game?" and the others reply "Lemonade". Then "Where do you come from" and the others reply with the name of the country / town that they have chosen. Then "What do you do" and the others then mime their chosen occupation while the others guess.

However with each thing that a team shouts, they should take a leap forward so that the teams move closer to confront each other. At the end when the guessing team say the correct answer, the miming team should shout "Correct" and run for their safe zone while the others must chase them

and try to catch them by touching them. Anyone who is caught joins the other team for the next round.

### Lemon, Lemon, Lemon



Method: Give each person in the group the name of a different type of fruit. The leader begins in the middle and tells a story. During the story they should mention some of the fruits and attempt to say the name quickly 3 times before the person who is that fruit says their own name. If the leader succeeds in saying a fruit 3 times then that person is in the middle and the leader takes the name of that fruit.

### Match the shoes

Method: Everybody takes off their right shoe and these are thrown in a pile and a different shoe taken as a replacement. The group are then instructed to try and arrange themselves so that matching shoes are together in a pair (will end up as a circle (or circles) with everybody crossing legs with their neighbours).

### Pass the balloon [or polo]

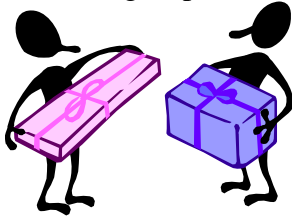
Resources: Balloons [or polos and cocktail sticks (or short straws)]

Method: Divide into teams of about 10 - you can get them to stand male / female if you want. This is a simple competitive team race where the balloons is held between the knees and passed back like that [or everybody holds a cocktail stick in their mouth, the first person puts the polo on their stick and then passes it onto the next person's]. Hands may not be used in the game. If the balloon [or polo] is dropped then the team starts again.

### Pass the Parcel

Resources: Wrap up a small prize with many layers of paper. Between each layer you should put a challenge e.g. sing "Old McDonald", stand on your head, kiss the person opposite you in the group, etc. These can be made appropriate to the age of the group and made fairly embarrassing

for older groups. Some music.



Method: The group should sit in a circle. One person starts with the parcel and it is passed around the circle once the music starts. When the music stops, whoever is holding the parcel must take off a layer and do the challenge. Then continue to pass it on round. The person who takes off the last layer of paper gets to keep the prize.

**Ping / Pong**

Method: The group sits in a circle. One person begins by saying Ping. The person to their left says Pong and the next person to their left says Pong and points to somebody else. They say Ping and so it continues. Try to get a rhythm going and increase the speed.

**Rum Tum Tum**

Method: Teach the group the following song:  
Ahhh... Rum Tum Tum, Ahhh... Rum Tum Tum  
Gooly Gooly, Gooly Gooly, Rum Tum Tum  
(repeat verse)

Hello There, Hello There  
Gooly Gooly, Gooly Gooly, Rum Tum Tum  
(repeat verse)

This is accompanied by the following actions:  
Rum Tum Tum: slap your knees for each word  
Gooly Gooly: The first time - tickle the top of your head with your right hand and under your chin with your left. The second time - the same but swap hands.  
Hello There: The first time - wave to the person on your right. The second time - wave to the person on your left.

After they have got the hang of this, change it so that when you sing Rum Tum Tum they have to slap the knees of the person on their right. Sing it once like this and then add that they have to do the Gooly Gooly action to the person on their left. You can finish up by trying to sing though it as fast as possible.

**Shark Song**

Method: This is hard to describe in words... really need to see it demonstrated but: The leader should sing the following words. Each line is followed by everyone singing "Na naa na na na na". The group should also copy the leader in the actions.

.....Action

There was a boy .....normal clapping  
And a girl  
It was hot  
They went to the beach  
They went for a swim  
And they swam out .....swimming action  
And further out  
(repeat several times)

Chorus  
And there were the sharks .....vertical clap  
Mama shark .....horizontal clap  
Big brother shark .....large vertical clap  
And grandpa shark .....knock knuckles and "toothless" singing  
And baby shark finger clap and high pitched singing

So they swam back swimming action  
And faster back getting faster  
(repeat several times)  
(chorus)

They took an arm wave arm in the air

Another arm wave other arm  
And a leg wave leg in the air  
Another leg wave other leg  
There's nothing left "nothing" action  
(repeat several times) getting quieter

Except the sharks (rest of chorus)

### **Skin the snake**



Method: Get the group to form a number of lines (preferably at least two if you have enough people). They should then form a chain by reaching back between their legs with their left hand and taking hold of the left hand of the person in front with their right. When you tell them to start, the person at the back of each line must crawl up through under everybody's legs, without letting go, and the rest of the line follows. The first line to make it right through to the front without letting go. If there's only one team there is no winner.

Notes: Some groups may feel uncomfortable if they don't know each other well. May also be a problem if girls are wearing skirts.



### **Telephone Signal**

Method: The group sit around in a circle and hold hands. One volunteer is put out of the room and the leader then appoints one person to start. They can also pick several people who will make a certain noise (Quack, Boing, Ring) when the signal reaches them. Bring the person back from outside and the person who was chosen to start should do so by squeezing the hand of the person next to them (the signal can start in either direction). The signal is then passed around by squeezing hands and the selected people make their noise when it reaches them. The volunteer has to try and guess where the signal is in the circle. You can also have rules about changing direction, etc. The group should try their best to disguise the whereabouts of the

signal.

### **Winking Game**

Method: Arrange chairs in a circle (facing in) and so that there is one person standing behind each chair and one person sitting in each, but with one seat empty - as far as possible you should have boys standing and girls sitting, or vice-versa. The person standing behind the empty chair must then wink at some else who is seated and that must person must try to jump up and come across to take the empty chair, while the person standing behind them must try to grab them before they do so.

### **Energisers**

#### **Balloon Volleyball**

Resources: A balloon each, with a different colour for each team. A dividing barrier or net.

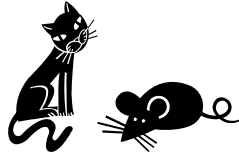
Method: Divide the group into two teams on either side of the net with a balloon of the team colour each. Everyone must stay on their knees for the game. When you say go, they can start to hit the balloons across the net and the first team to get all their balloons on the other side is the winner.

#### **Burst the Balloon**

Resources: A balloon and some string or ribbon.

Method: Get each person to tie a balloon to their ankle (they can just use their shoe lace if they have one). When you say to start they must try to burst other people's balloons by stamping on them, while protecting their own. The last person to have an unburst balloon is the winner.

It is best to play in a not too large area - otherwise it can go on for a long time and gets tiring. Could also be played as a team game (each team has a particular colour balloon) so that people can co-operate to help protect other members of their team.



## **Cat and Mouse**

### *Version 1*

Method: The group stand in a circle in pairs, with one person behind the other and everyone facing in. There should be plenty of space around the pairs. Two volunteers are needed to start the game - one is the cat and the other the mouse. When the leader starts the game, the cat must start to chase the mouse and attempt to catch them (by touching). However, the mouse can stand in front of one of the pairs and then the person at the back of that pair becomes the new mouse. The previous mouse becomes the front person in that pair. If the cat touches the mouse, then their roles are reversed so that the mouse becomes the cat and vice-versa.

### *Version 2*

Method: Again there are two volunteers, one a cat and the other a mouse, with the cat chasing the mouse. The rest of the group stand in a circle (but not too close to each other) and hold hands. At the start the cat should be inside the circle, the mouse outside and the group should have their hands down. The leader starts the game by shouting "Up" and the group then raise their hands. Then the cat and mouse may run in and out of the circle. The leader can continue to shout Up and Down and the group respond by moving their hands up and down - the cat and mouse may not pass through when the hands are down.



## **Giants, Elves and Wizards**

Resources: Plenty of space with areas marked at each end as "safe zones"

Method: Divide the group into two teams and have them stand in lines facing each other, with a line marked at either end of

the room behind them. Explain the following actions: Giant - stand on tip toes with both arms straight up and hands forward. Elves - hunch down. Wizard - both arms forward with hands extended and facing down, but with one hand further forward than the other. Have each team decide secretly on which they will be for the first round (everyone in the team should be the same thing).

Then bring them back facing each other and on the count of three everybody should do their action. If both teams are the same, then they should just shake hands and move on to another round. Otherwise they should follow the rule that Giants chase Elves, Elves chase Wizards and Wizards chase Giants (you can make up your own explanation for this). The team being chased has to try and get behind their safe line before they are touched by a member of the other team. Anybody who is caught joins the other team for the next round.

## **Mexican Wave**

Method: Have everyone seated, facing in, with one person in the middle and their seat empty. When you say to start they must try to sit down and the person to the left of the seat must move over to stop them. Then the next seat along is empty so the next person must move along, etc. Those seated must continue to try and prevent the person in the middle from sitting down for as long as possible.

## **Octopus**

Resources: Plenty of space (indoors or outdoors) with areas marked at each end as "safe zones"

Method: The group start in one of the safe zones with the leader in the middle section. When the leader shouts "Go", everyone must try to run across to the other safe zone without being touched by the leader. Anyone who is caught must freeze immediately. They then become part of the "Octopus" and when the leader starts

the next round they can also reach out and touch people, though they mustn't move from where they are standing. Keep going until there is only one person left who has not been caught and then they can be in the middle for the next game.

## **Parachute games**

Resources: a parachute (2 for the volleyball game)

Method: To begin the games, have the group space themselves around the parachute and hold the edge. Then have them practice making a "Mushroom" by lifting it up quickly together so that the parachute billows up - let it hang like this and then pull it back flat again.



### **Fruit Basket**

Go around the group giving people the names of fruit - maybe 6 - 8 types. Have the group make the "mushroom" and then call out the name of a fruit - those with that name must run across under the parachute and swop places. If you have a multi-coloured parachute then you can simply call out a colour and those holding that colour must swop.

### **Shark Attack**

Have the group hold the parachute fairly taught at waist height and make gentle waves on it. One person should be underneath the parachute as the shark - they make a "fin" on the parachute with their finger and move around underneath. When they grab someone's leg that person should "die" dramatically and then swop to become the new shark.

### **Cat and Mouse**

One person (the mouse) crawls underneath the parachute and another (the cat) crawls on top of it. The rest of the group shake the parachute around to make it difficult to see

where the mouse is. The aim is for the cat to find and touch the mouse.

### **Sit under**

Have the group lift the parachute into the Mushroom shape and then bring it slowly down so that they are all inside and sitting on the edge of the parachute. You can then play a quick circle game.

### **Washing Machine**

Have one person sit in the centre of the parachute and then wrap it around their waist. If some of the group then take hold of the edges and pull it out firmly, the person in the centre will spin around.

### **Volleyball**

If you have two parachutes and a volleyball you can play the following game: Divide the group into two teams and have each team hold a parachute with a gap between the two. One team starts with the ball on their parachute and they must work together to roll the ball from one side of their parachute to the other and then slick it up into the air towards the other team. The others then try to catch the ball and throw it back.

You can mark off a largish area as the court and give a team a point if the others miss the ball and it lands inside their court area. This game is good for developing teamwork and co-operation.

### **Journey to the Centre of the Earth**

You can make packing the parachute away a quick game as well - tell the group that the aim is for each person to roll their part of the parachute into the centre but to watch everyone else so that you all arrive there together.

### **Road Rage / Fruit basket**

Method: Arrange seats in a circle with one less seat than there are people. Appoint one person to begin in the middle. Everybody is then given the name of a car (fruit) - there should be 3 - 5 different types. The person in the middle then calls out the

name of one car (fruit) and all people with that name must swop seats. The person in the middle should try to grab a seat and if they succeed then the person without a seat continues the game. If the person in the middle calls out Road Rage (Fruit Basket) then everybody must swop seats.



### **Sheriff**

**Method:** The group stand in a circle, facing in, with one person (the sheriff) in the middle. The sheriff must spin around and "shoot" someone by forming a pistol with his fingers and shouting "Bang!" The person who has been shot must immediately duck and the two people on either side must then shoot at each other. If the person doesn't duck before they fire then they are out, otherwise the slower of the other two to shoot is out. The sheriff decides who is out or calls a draw and should try to keep things moving quickly. The game continues like this until there are only two people left. The last two must then duel, by standing back to back and taking steps as the sheriff counts. At some point in the count the sheriff will make a deliberate mistake (e.g. 1,2,3,4,6) and then they must turn and fire at each other. The first to shoot at the other is the overall winner and is the sheriff for the next round. **Notes:** May be considered to be encouraging violence...

### **Stick in the Mud**

**Method:** Define a largish area or room as the game area. One person begins as "it" and when you begin the game they must try to catch the others by touching them. Anyone who is caught must stop immediately and stand with their legs slightly apart - they can however be freed if someone else crawls under their legs. You can also play this as a team game with one team chasing the other - if the chasing team manage to catch all the others within a time limit then they win and if there is

anyone still free at the end then the team that is being chased win.

### **Story Race**

**Method:** Divide the group up into equal teams of at least 5 and have them stand in parallel lines at one end of the room, facing the far wall, so that the lines are parallel to the side walls. Number each group from the front and then give each number the name of a person or object (so that, for example, the first person in each team is "John", the second is "mountain", etc.

Then the leader begins to tell a story and as soon as one of the people / objects is mentioned, the members of each team who have that name must run to the far end of the room, touch the wall and run back to their place. One person can be keeping score, with one point for the first person back to their line.

With a young group, this game can be used to help them remember important information - for example if you want to provide safety information for a camping trip that you are going on then you can tell a story about a camping trip that goes wrong, etc.

### **Whistle Game**

**Resources:** a whistle

**Method:** Have the group walk around and mingle. When the leader blows a whistle a number of times, they must get into groups of the same size as the number of whistles. Anyone not in a group is out and continue until there are only 2 / 3 people left.

## **Group building games**

### **4 Up**

**Method:** Have the group sit around in a circle and explain that the aim of the game is for exactly 4 people to be standing at any particular time. However people may only stand for a maximum of 10 seconds and



there should be no attempt at communication between the players - they must just watch each other and try to get into a good rhythm.



### **Bench**

Resources: paper, pens

Method: Arrange seats in a circle with 4 chairs slightly separate from the rest at the front - this is the "bench". Divide the group into two obvious teams (male / female is the easiest) and have them sit in the circle so that it is male, female, male, etc. (or whatever the teams), including on the bench. There should be one empty seat. Get everyone to write their name on a sheet of paper, fold it and throw it in a box. Redistribute these and instruct people not to show their paper to anybody else. The name on their sheet becomes their name for the start of the game. The person with the empty seat to their left begins by calling out somebody's name. The person with that name moves across to the empty seat and swaps their paper with the person who made the call. The person with the new empty seat to their left continues.

The aim of the game is to try and have the bench full of people from your own team (i.e. all male or female). This can be quite a test of concentration and memory.

### **Blind Sculpture**

Resources: one blindfold

Method: One volunteer is blindfolded and another person is appointed as the artist. This second person must make a sculpture from two of the group members and the blindfolded person must then try and copy this using two other people by touching the original piece of art.



### **Bridge Game**

Resources: two walls about 4m apart

Method: Divide the group into groups of 7 (easier) or 8 and take them to different rooms to practice in. Their aim is to come up with a way of building a human bridge between the two walls with the limitation that only 2 hands, 2 feet and 2 buttocks may touch the floor. There must be a continuous link between the two walls and they must be able to hold the bridge for 5 seconds. After giving them 10 minutes to practise, bring them all back together again and give each group a chance to try out their construction. There are various correct solutions.

### **Copy the Leader**

Method: One volunteer is put outside the room. The rest of the group then select a leader and the volunteer is allowed back in. The leader must begin to do an action and the others copy them. The leader can keep changing the action and the others change as well. The aim of the game is for the volunteer to try and guess who the leader is while the group try to make this as difficult as possible by responding quickly when the action is changed.



### **Chinese Drawings**

Resources: drawings, paper, pens

Method: A simple exercise that can be included as part of a team competition - have the teams stand in a row so that each person is facing the back of the person in front. The person at the very back of each team is shown a drawing of a picture. When the leader says to begin, the person at the back draws the picture on the back of the person in front of them with their finger. The picture is passed up the line like this until it reaches the person at the front, who should draw the picture using pen and paper. Give the teams scores for

speed and accuracy of the final drawing.

### **Dots**

This game is useful for dividing people into groups for a workshop or other activity. It is also a co-operation game. Resources: A coloured sticker or sticker with a coloured dot for each person. The number of colours should be the number of groups that you want.

Method: Tell them that they must be silent for the whole game and then go around and place a sticker on each person's back without them seeing their own colour. They are then told to get into the colour groups and that the first group to get together will win.

Variation: Give one person a colour that no-one else has and use the game to look at feelings of exclusion.

### **Equal Distance**

Method: Instruct everybody to select two other people in the room but not to say who. When the leader says Go, everyone must try to arrange themselves in the room so that their nose is an equal distance from the noses of the two people they selected. This should be done without talking. The game can help to develop group awareness and co-operation.

### **Fast Motion Film**

Method: Divide group up into teams of 3 / 4. Each group should then select a film and they have 3 minutes to come up with a one minute drama conveying the main themes / plot of the film. It must be silent and there should be no acting of the title (this isn't Charades). The other groups have to try and guess what the film is.

### **Fighters and Cargo planes**

Method: Divide the group into pairs and have one person from each pair be a plane and the other a pilot. Planes should be inside a large circle and blindfolded - then tell half of them that they are fighters and the others that they are cargo planes. When the game starts, the pilots shout out

instructions to their planes and the fighters must try to shoot down (by touching) the cargo planes. Can become fairly noisy...



This can be done as a team game with each team having a chance to be the fighters and the cargo planes and seeing which team can shoot down most planes in a certain amount of time. This can be a good exercise in team co-operation as they can work together rather than shout over each other. The game can also be used to illustrate the difficulties caused when group members don't observe a "one person speaking at a time" rule during discussions.

### **Group Count**

Method: Get the group into a circle and ask them to close their eyes. Explain that they must count up as a group from 1 to 20. However there is no rule as to who should say which number and if two people say the same one then you must begin again. There should be no other talking before or during the game.

You can add a rule that each person may only say one number, get them to count up to the number of people in the group (so that everyone must have a go) or get them to try it with their eyes open for comparison. Then discuss how people felt during the game and you can bring up issues such as "pecking orders".

### **Group Story**

Method: Have the group sit around in a circle. The aim of the exercise is to invent a group story by going around the circle and each person supplying 3 sentences, continuing on from where the person before left off.

This can be done as a group-building exercise and you can go on to look at questions such as: Was it easy to make a story that fits together? Did people have

similar ideas about the story or did they find that the next person was taking things in a completely different direction? Was it easy to listen and follow the story? Did people think about finishing their contribution in a way that would be easy to continue? etc. You can also make it more difficult by having each person say only one sentence or even one word.

Alternatively you can supply a topic or beginning for the story and use the exercise to look at a particular issue. For example, start off "This is a story about Ali, a young Moroccan boy who's family have just moved to London" and you can then discuss how much people know about the experiences of foreigners living in the country, stereotypes, etc.

### **Human Knots / Pretzel**

Method: Divide people into groups of about 8 - 10. Get groups to stand in a close circle, facing inwards and shoulder to shoulder, close their eyes, reach their hands out and grab two other hands. They should then open their eyes and ensure that they are holding two different hands and not that of someone beside them - rearrange if necessary. They must then try to unravel the knot without letting go. They must be reminded to go slowly and be careful not to hurt anyone. Note that the final solution may not be a single circle - there may be 2 or more and these may be interlinked.



### **Listening Exercise**

Method: Have everybody find a partner, preferably someone they don't know so well. Give them a conversation topic (e.g. my life so far, what I want to get out of this camp, a personal hero, etc) and explain that each person has 3 minutes to talk to their partner about this topic. The listener may not make any comment or ask any question. Swap around after 3 minutes so

that the other person has a chance to talk. Then explain to them that they will have another 2 minutes each to repeat back to their partner what they heard... Give people a chance afterwards to say how they felt in the different roles and discuss the difficulties of listening.

You can also use a similar technique in a debate (e.g. moving debate) if things are getting heated and the two sides are not listening to each other. Give a spokesperson for one side several minutes to explain their view while the others listen silently. Then get a spokesperson from the other side to repeat what was said. Keep stopping them if they start to add their own comments or are changing what was said. Then reverse roles.



### **River Crossing**

Resources: 4 small barrels, stools or similar objects. 2 planks. A space that should be longer than the two planks put end to end (this is the river), with chairs (or similar) at each end to be the shore.

Method: Divide people into teams of 4 - 6. Each team must start on one shore with the planks and barrels and the aim is to get the whole team across the river without anybody falling in (then they get eaten by the crocodiles).

### **Self-Supporting Arch**

Resources: 4 chairs

Method: This group challenge is done in teams of 4. Arrange the chairs in a square so that the back left chair faces right, the back right chair faces towards you, the front right faces to the left and the front left chair faces away from you. Then have the 4 team members sit on the chairs facing out and have them all lie back slowly at the same time, so that they each end up with

their shoulder and head resting on somebody's stomach.

It should then be possible for them to tense their bodies at the same time so that they lift themselves up off the chairs into a self-supporting arch. Have them practice holding this position a couple of times and then once they have gotten the hang of it, have them form the arch and remove the chairs. You can time how long they can hold the position while other group members crawl under, or if you are playing a series of games with teams larger than 4, you can count how many times the other team members can crawl under while the arch is still standing.



### **Shark Infested Pools**

**Resources:** some sheets of A3 paper (half the number of people in the group or less)  
**Method:** Place the sheets of paper around the room. Select one person to be on each sheet (these are the islands) and the others should spread out around the floor area (this is the shark infested pool). When the game starts, people have 3 minutes to try and get to the safety of an island before they are eaten by the sharks. However the catch is that in order to be allowed onto an island they must find 3 things in common with someone who is already there.

After the time limit, anybody still in the pool should be put out of the game. Then remove one or more of the islands (preferably the most crowded) and give the people who were on it 1 minute or so to make it on to another island. Continue like this until there is only one island left. As the islands will start to get very crowded, you may need to make it that people only have to have one foot on the island or even that they only have to touch it.

### **Slanted storytelling**

**Method:** First do the Listening Exercise. After people have a chance to clarify what

the other person told them, then ask people to tell it to the whole group. However you will give them a card with a particular situation on it and they must work out how to tell the story to fit. Some examples for cards might be: it's the funniest / saddest story you've ever told, you are gossiping / lying, you detest the person you're talking about, you're dying to go to the toilet but must finish the story first, you are a boss in the Secret Service briefing your department on a suspect, etc. The group can then try to guess what the situation was and give feedback on what was good / bad about the interpretation. Then go on to discuss how we change information that we pass on, bias, etc.

### **Sneak**

**Method:** Arrange seats in a circle with one person in the middle. Members of the group must then try to swap seats with each other without the person in the middle stealing their seats. Good practice for nonverbal communication and observing the group.



### **Spider's Web**

**Resources:** A rope and a suitable doorway or gap between two poles / trees - tie the rope in a crisscrossed "web" in the doorway, ensuring that there are at least 6 gaps that would be big enough for a person to be passed through.

**Method:** Divide people into teams of 5 or 6. Each team must then try to get all their members through the web - however if they touch the rope at all then they fail (get eaten by the spider) and it's a new team's turn. The one other rule is that each team member must go through a different gap. Some groups may end up making agreements between teams to help each other and that's fine.

## **Trust Games**

These games are designed to build trust and co-operation in a group. They need to be taken seriously and people need to be concentrating on what's going on. The leader must also take care to explain things very clearly and be aware at all times of the safety of group members.

It is good to do a series of trust games in one session, building up from the simpler ones to the more challenging (with the trust fall at the end). With the exercises that need a volunteer, encourage as many people as possible to try, time permitting - but don't force anybody that doesn't want to.

After each exercise, give people a chance to say how they felt.

## **Pairs**

Have people divide up into pairs with people who are roughly the same size / build as they are. To start with one person kneels on one knee on the ground with the other foot flat on the ground in front of them so that their partner can sit on their knee. Explain that the partner should stand beside them, shut their eyes and then sit down slowly on the knee. Then repeat, but this time they should close their eyes, take one step forward, one step back and then sit down. You can then go on to 2 or 3 steps and tell the person who is kneeling that they should move to the correct spot if the person sitting down has miscalculated, so that no-one falls on the ground. Get the pairs to swap roles and repeat.

Then have them stand about 50cms apart so that one person is facing the back of their partner. The person in front should close their eyes and let themselves fall back and their partner should have their arms out to catch them gently. Repeat with a slightly greater distance so that the person falls further (but not too far). Swap roles. Remind people to keep their body straight when falling.

## **Group Lift**

One person should lie on the ground with their eyes shut while the others stand around them and gently lift them up above their heads and slowly carry them around the room. It should also be possible to lift them with each person using only two fingers from each hand.

## **Circle Fall**

The group stand in a tight circle with their arms extended and one person blindfolded in the middle. The person in the centre should then let themselves fall and the others should gently catch them and push them back up again. Once their confidence has increased you can have the group move out a little.



## **Circle Walk**

The group stand in a large circle (but with no big spaces). One person is blindfolded in the middle and should start to walk around. If they reach the edge they should be gently stopped and turned around. The person in the middle should be encouraged to try and walk as naturally as possible. You can also have the circle move in and out while the person is walking. Alternatively, have the group stand in a semi-circle at one end of the room and have the blindfolded person run across the room to be stopped by the group.

## **Circle Knee Sit**

Have the group stand in a tight circle with everyone facing the back of the person in front of them. On the count of 3, everybody should sit down slowly. If they manage to do this together then they should end up with a stable circle with everyone on somebody else's knee.

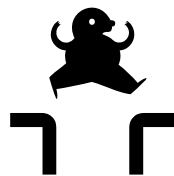
### **Blind Walk**

Ask everybody to find a partner and have one person in each pair blindfolded. The seeing person must then take them by their hand or arm and gently lead them around the room (or outside). You can have obstacles in the way to make it more difficult. Another idea is for the blindfolded person to say where they want to go (e.g. to a party, a fairground, the beach) and the person leading them should guide them through the imaginary landscape. Or you can allow the guide to lift the blindfold occasionally to give their partner "snapshots" of different objects.

You can also do a group walk with people blindfolded and arranged in a train, with their hands on the shoulder of the person in front and only the leader at the very front without a blindfold - the leader can then send directions back along the line (step up, duck, etc.)

### **Pass the person**

Ask for one volunteer and then have the rest of the group lie side by side on the ground, but with every other person facing the opposite way and fitting in so that they are ear to ear with the people beside them. Those on the ground should then hold both hands straight up in the air and the volunteer should then be gently lowered backwards by the leader onto the hands from one end of the line. The person should then be slowly and carefully passed along the line and lifted back up when they reach the other side.



### **Trust Fall / Jump**

Ask for one volunteer and then have the rest of the group stand in two rows facing each other beside a table or other high object that the volunteer can stand on. Have everyone hold their hands out in front of them, cross their arms and then firmly grasp the wrist of the person

opposite. Ensure that they are standing shoulder to shoulder with each other with only a narrow gap between the start of the lines and the table. Have them all lean back slightly with their heads back.

The volunteer should then stand on the table with their back to the group. Have them remove any hard objects such as a watch or boots. They should then stand with their arms crossed and hands at their shoulders and close their eyes. Instruct them clearly that they must keep themselves absolutely straight and keep their arms crossed and feet together. Then get them to fall backwards into the arms of the group below.

This can be quite a frightening experience for some people so nobody should be forced to do the fall. However it is perfectly safe if people follow instructions and concentrate and it is possible for the group to catch even very heavy people as the weight will be spread out. This can be an extremely powerful exercise...

This can also be done with the group standing slightly further away and the volunteer diving onto the arms face down with their arms extended and together in front of them.

### **Wide Game**

Resources: Large space, preferably outdoors, with two home bases at quite a distance from each other. 2 flags. A large quantity of "tails" made from strips of cloth or paper (toilet paper is fine), with a difference between those of the 2 teams (different colour or a black line marked on one team's strips).

Method: Divide the group into 2 teams and take each to their home base. The team's flag should be placed somewhere prominent at their base so that it can be easily grabbed. One leader should stay at each base and look after that team's tails. The aim of the game is for one team to end up with both flags in their own home base and they must therefore try to steal the

other one from the other base. However they may only be active in the game if they have a tail attached - say tucked into their belt or tied loosely around their arm - in such a way that it is visible and can be easily ripped off. Members of the other team can therefore try to remove the tail and if they succeed, that person must immediately return to base for a new one before they can participate again in any way - they may not attempt to remove anyone else's tail and if they had stolen a flag they must give it up. You may wish to make a rule against any other physical contact, such as holding or tackling, other than grabbing a tail.

## Other games

### Bench Ordering

Have the group stand on a long bench (or several benches put end to end). Then tell them that they must arrange themselves alphabetically according to their names (or according to age or some other rule) without touching the floor. This exercise can be used before numbering people to get them into groups.

### Broomstick Challenge



Resources: broomstick (or similar)

Method: This is an individual challenge: The person should hold the broomstick horizontally in front of them with palms facing up and hands quite far apart. They then step over the pole and bring it up behind their back and over their head, then try to step over it again so that they end up holding it behind their back. They may not let go of the pole or change their grip while doing this.

### Commando

Best played while seated around a table.

Similar to "Simon Says" game.

Method: Demonstrate the following

actions to the group: Pimpelepimp - drum on the edge of the table with index fingers. Hack - both hands on their edges on the table in "hacking" position. Flat - both hands flat on the table (for hack and flat, keep the hands still in position)

Then explain that everyone must do the action that the leader calls out, but only if it is preceded by "Commando". If not then they should not react at all but continue the previous action. They must also only do what the leader says and not what they do (which could be different). Anyone who makes a mistake or hesitates is out for that round and the last person left becomes the new leader. The leader will probably have to speed the game up quite a lot to get everyone out.

You can also add in the following actions or make up your own: Pompelepomp - drum index fingers together. Hat - right hand flat on head. Slap - right hand slaps right cheek (you can also add that if there is a "Commando Slap" command while already in the Slap position then it is left hand to left cheek, while keeping the right hand in position).



### Flour Cake

Resources: One cake tin or similar, a tray, flour, a coin, a knife.

Method: Pack the tin solidly with flour. Turn it upside down on the tray and remove the tin so that you are left with a solid cake of flour. Place the coin gently on top in the centre. Each person must then take it in turn to cut a slice off the cake with the knife without collapsing the part with the coin - the person who knocks the coin down loses and must pick the coin out with their teeth.



### Ghost

**Method:** The group sit in a circle. One person starts off a word by saying a letter and then the person to their left continues the word by adding another letter and so on around. Everybody should be thinking of a word that they are spelling (but not say it). However the aim is that you shouldn't complete a word even if you are thinking of a longer one (so if it is at "PE" and you think of "PETROL" and add a T then you lose a life as you have completed "PET". 1 or 2 letter words don't count and neither do proper nouns (names, places, etc.) You can make a rule that you can't begin on certain letters such as X.

It is also possible to bluff in the game - i.e. add a letter when you don't actually have a word that you are thinking of. It is therefore possible to call someone's bluff - if they can then supply a word, the person calling the bluff loses a life and if not then the bluffer loses a life. You also lose a life if you can't think of any letter to add.

Each person starts off with 2 or 3 lives, depending on the time available and the size of the group. When someone loses all their lives they become a "Ghost" - the rest of the group must then ignore that person for the rest of the game. However the Ghost may try to get people to acknowledge them by asking questions, making them laugh, etc. The only limit to what they can do is that it shouldn't cause permanent physical or psychological damage... Anyone acknowledging a Ghost becomes one themselves.

## Guess the rule games

### Crossed / Uncrossed

**Resources:** a pair of scissors (a book for the variation)

**Method:** The leader takes a pair of scissors and passes them to the person to their left, saying either "Crossed" or "Uncrossed". The second person passes the scissors on again saying whether they are crossed or uncrossed and the leader tells them if they are correct. However the secret rule is that you say "Uncrossed" if your legs are uncrossed and "Crossed" if your legs are crossed - it has nothing to do with how you hold the scissors. You can become more obvious about what you are doing as the game progresses but you can be misleading at the start by making a show of how you hold the scissors.

**Variation:** A similar game is played with a book and you say "Open" or "Closed" as you pass it - this time it refers to whether your mouth is open or closed when you finish.



### The Party

**Method:** The leader explains that he / she is having a party and the group are invited - but there will be very strict rules about what they can wear, bring or do, so everybody must say beforehand and the leader will tell them whether or not they can come. So each person must say "I'm going to the party and I'm going to wear black shoes / dye my hair blond / sit cross legged, etc.". The secret rule is that what people say must be true of the person sitting to their right (i.e. the person to their right is wearing black socks / has blond hair / is sitting cross legged, etc.)

**Variations:** A similar game is when each person says "I went shopping and I bought ..." - it is correct if they make a hesitation



noise (ummm, errrr, etc) before saying the object.

Another rule for either of these could be that what they say is correct if at least one letter is used twice (e.g. you can wear shoes or glasses but not a ring or jumper).

### **Find the Object**

Method: One volunteer is put out of the room and told that the others will select an object in the room and they must work out what it is by asking yes / no questions. However no object is actually selected and the group answer yes or no according to some rule e.g. yes if the question begins with "Is" and no otherwise. Continue until the person has guessed the rule - if they don't realise after some time that there isn't actually an object then you could tell them this so that they start to think about what the rule might be instead.



### **The Dream**

Method: One volunteer is put out of the room and told that the others will be told a simple story and that they must try and work it out by asking yes / no questions. However the group are given the following rule: answer yes if the question finishes with a letter from A to M. answer no if it ends with a letter from N to X. Answer maybe if it ends with Y or Z.

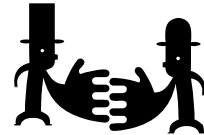
Continue until the person has guessed the rule - you may need to provide some hints. This game can lead to some very interesting stories being created...

You could also use this rule as a Lateral Thinking Game by providing a scenario to start off with.

### **Lying Rule**

Method: One volunteer is put out of the room and told that the others will be given a rule and that they must try and work it

out by asking yes / no questions about anything they like. The rule is that boys always lie and girls always tell the truth (or something along those lines). You could also combine this rule with the Object game above so that the person doesn't know that there is a secret rule.



### **The Handshake**

Method: Two people (who both know the rule) begin in the centre. One says to the other "Leave the room when I tell you and when you return shake the hand that I shook". They then stand quietly until the first person says "You may now leave" and the second person should leave the room until called back. While they are gone, the first person goes up to one participant and shakes their hand. When the other person returns they will walk up and shake the hand of the same person without being told who it was. You can offer the other group members a chance to try being the person who goes out of the room.

Here the rule is that you shake hands with the first person to talk after you say the first line (there will always be some whispering eventually...) - you can wait a while after someone speaks so as to not make it too obvious.

Honeymoon Express

Method: Have the group get into male / female pairs and arrange their seats in a circle so that each pair is sitting side by side and facing around the circle. When the leader starts the music, they must all walk around the circle (in the same direction) holding hands across the seats. When the music stops they must run around in the same direction without letting go of their partner's hand and get back to their own seats. The last pair to sit down is out and should stay seated for the rest of the game.

### **Instant Treasure Hunt**

Method: Divide the group up into teams of

4 - 8 and have them sit in circles at the edge of the room. The leader stands in the centre of the room and calls out objects. The first group to bring this object to the leader gets a point. Ideas for objects might be:

4 different shoe laces tied together  
The oldest person in the team carrying the youngest  
Leaves (a book would do)  
A set of false teeth (a comb would do)  
Some water, etc.

Mix objects that are fairly easy with ones that require some imagination.

### **Lateral Thinking Puzzles**

*Method:* With this type of puzzle, the leader supplies a one line scenario and the others must try to work out what's going on by asking yes / no questions. The leader can also answer Maybe if the question is irrelevant.

*Scenario 1:* There is a man dead in a field clutching a small object in his hand.

*Answer 1:* The man was in a hot air balloon with a number of others when it started to lose height and was in danger of crashing. They decided that to prevent a crash one person would have to jump and they drew matches to decide (so that the person who chose the one with no head had to jump).

*Scenario 2:* There is a dead body in a pool of water on the floor of a room.

*Answer 2:* The dead body is a fish that died when its bowl was knocked off the table by a cat coming in the window.

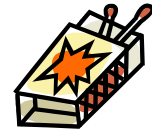
*Scenario 3:* A woman pushes her car up to a hotel and the owner tells her that she's bankrupt.

*Answer 3:* It's a game of Monopoly.

*Scenario 4:* A man lives on the 13th floor of a building. On rainy days he gets the lift up to the 13th floor while on sunny days he gets out at the 10th floor and walks the rest

of the way.

*Answer 4:* He is a dwarf and can only reach the button for the 10th floor, so he has to get out there, even though he hates the stairs, unless it is raining - then he can use his umbrella to push the button for the 13th floor.



### **Match Box Challenges**

Resources: One small match box

*Version 1:* Kneel down and lay your forearm on the floor so that the elbow is touching your knee and your hand is flat on the floor with the fingers stretched out. Set the matchbox on its short edge so that it is just in front of your furthest finger tip. Then remaining kneeling where you are, you must try to lean forward and pick up the match box between your teeth without falling forward or touching the floor with your hand.

*Version 2:* Set the box on its short edge and attempt to pick it up between your teeth with only your feet touching the ground.

*Version 3:* Stand with your heels touching a wall (you need to be in the middle of a long wall so that there's space to spread your legs out). Then put one foot in front of the other and set the match box in front of your toes. You must then try to pick up the box (with your hand) without moving your heels from the wall or falling over. You can try to move it further away from the wall and repeat.

### **Moving Monopoly**

A number of different board games, such as Monopoly, can be adapted as very good team games played on a large scale. In Monopoly you define different rooms or building as the houses, jail, etc. and teams walk (or drive) between them. It is fairly straight forward to adapt it but requires a lot of planning and would take an entire evening to play.

### **Musical Chairs and variations**

Resources: source of music, whistle (for pairs), newspapers (for paper islands)

Basic: Arrange one seat per person in two rows (back to back) in the centre of the room. The group must then walk around the edge of the room while the leader plays some music. When the music stops everyone must run into the middle and sit on a chair. However you should remove one seat each time so that one person will not get one and then be out.

Alternative: Have the girls seated at the edge of the room and the boys walking around (or vice-versa) and when the music stops each boy must try to grab a girl and have her sit on his knee in the centre. Again remove a chair each time.



### **Pairs**

Have the group get into male / female pairs. One member of each pair walks around the room clock-wise while the others walk anti-clockwise in a smaller circle. When the music stops the leader blows a whistle a number of times and then everyone must find their partner - if the whistle was blown once, the boy must sit on the girl's knee, if twice then the girl on the boy's knee, if three times then the girl must pick up the boy, if four times then the boy must pick up the girl. The last pair to get into position are out.

### **A Long Way to Tipperary**

The pairs version can also be played with the song "Its a long way to Tipperary" as follows: Pairs walk around together, holding hands, while singing "Its a long way to Tipperary, its a long way to go, Its a long way to Tipperary, to the sweetest girl I know" then they shake hands and the girls start walking in the opposite direction while you continue with "So goodbye Piccadilly, farewell Leicester square, its a long, long way to Tipperary but my hearts right there". Continue singing the song

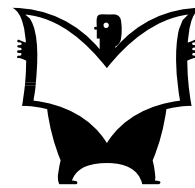
until the leader blows the whistle - then get into position depending on the number of blows.

### **Paper Islands**

Have the group get into male / female pairs and give each pair a sheet of newspaper. They should then walk around the room while you play some music. When you stop the music the pairs must place the sheet on the ground and both stand on it so that they aren't touching the floor. They should hold this position while the leader goes around and checks that they are doing it correctly. They must then fold the sheet in half and continue. The leader should also check that each pair has folded their sheet exactly in half. As the game progresses, one member of the pair will have to hold the other one and then eventually try to balance on one foot, etc. Any pair that loses balance and touches the floor is out.

### **Musical statues**

People walk around while you play the music. When you stop, they must instantly freeze and hold whatever position they were in while the leader walks around and checks. Anyone who moves is out.



### **News Hunt**

Resources: a selection of newspapers (each team must have the same ones)

Method: Divide the group into teams and have them sit in circles at the edge of the room, with the leader standing in the centre of the room. Give each group the newspapers. The leader shouts out a headline, story topic, advertisement or quote from an article and the teams must try to find it in their newspapers. The first team to bring the correct portion up to the leader gets a point.

## **Puzzles**

It can be very useful to have a collection of good puzzles to challenge people with, as these can be used to keep people occupied while sitting around in the evenings during a camp, etc. You can always buy a book of puzzles, but here are a few to start with:

### **Truth-tellers and Liars**

**Puzzle:** You are on an island which is inhabited by two tribes. One tribe can only tell the truth and the other can only tell lies, but you don't know which is which. While travelling on the island you come to a fork in the road and there is one person from each tribe there. You may only ask one question. How can you find out which road you need to take to get to your destination?

**Answer:** Ask one of them which road the only person would tell them to take. The answer will then always be a lie, so you can take the other road. (Either you will ask the Truth-teller, in which case they will tell you the truth about what the Liar would say or you will ask the Liar, in which case they will tell you a lie about what the Truth-teller would say)

### **Spots**

**Puzzle:** There are 5 prisoners on death row and they are told that they will be set a problem and that whoever can answer it first will be set free. It is then explained to them that they will each be given a spot on their forehead - it will be either black or white but they won't know what their own spot is. There will be at least one spot of each colour. They will then be put into a room together and the first person to say correctly what colour of spot that they have will be set free. The prisoners are put into the room and all looked puzzled for a minute before one of them dashes to the warden with the correct answer. How could they tell?

**Answer:** If there were 4 spots of one colour then the one person with a different spot

would be able to tell immediately what they had. As they all looked puzzled at first, this means that there must be 3 of one colour (say black) and 2 of the other (white). So what happened was that one of the whites looked and saw 3 black spots and 1 white one, but the person with the white spot looking puzzled. He/She then knew that they had a white spot as well (or there were white, 2 black and one of the black spotted people guessed).



### **Crash**

**Puzzle:** A man and his son are travelling together in a car and are involved in a serious car crash. The boy is rushed to hospital with brain damage. He is wheeled into the operating theatre, the brain surgeon comes in, looks at the boy and says "I can't operate, he is my son". How is this possible?

**Answer:** The surgeon is his mother. (you can use this puzzle to make a point about gender prejudice...)

### **Recognition Game**

**Resources:**

A collection of fairly well known advertisements, but with the name and parts of the picture removed to make it difficult (but not impossible) to guess. Photos of group members when they were babies.

Pictures of famous people with parts removed (say a strip across the eyes) or the pictures cut into pieces and rearranged.

Extracts from newspaper articles on recent current affairs.

Pens and paper.

**Method:** This can be an ongoing challenge during the course of a party evening. Number the different pictures, etc. and stick them around the walls of the room. People should go around them all (either individually or in pairs) and write down their guesses for what the advert, person or news story was. The person / pair with most correct wins.



### **Spoon Race**

Resources: long piece of string with a spoon attached

Method: Divide the group into largish teams and have them stand in lines. Give the front person in each team a spoon with a long piece of string attached. When the leader starts the game the person at the front should pass the spoon underneath their clothing from the neck down to the bottom of a trouser leg or the bottom of their skirt, while keeping hold of the other end of the string. The spoon is then passed to the next person who also passes it under their clothing, etc. The first team to get their spoon to the end of their line (with the front person still holding the other end of the string) wins.

### **Stretching Game**

Resources: 2 small objects, such as strong plastic cups - you can also use very tough glasses, but you must be absolutely sure that they won't break under pressure...

Method: Mark a starting line on the floor. Each person in turn must stand with their feet entirely behind the line and attempt to stretch themselves out as far as possible by leaning on the cups, then leave one cup lying as far out as possible and get themselves back to a standing position behind the line, all without touching the floor in front of the line with any part of their body. The person who can leave the cup the furthest out is the winner.

### **Table Challenge**

Resources: One well secured table

Method: The challenge is to begin on top of the table and crawl around underneath it and back onto the top, without touching the floor - that's it...

### **Travel games**

#### **I Spy**

Method: One person is appointed to start.

They must choose an object that they can see - either in the bus or outside - without saying what it is. They then say "I spy, with my little eye, something beginning with [first letter of the word]" and the others have to try and guess. If they haven't guessed after a few minutes you can have a round where they can ask yes/no questions to help them along. The first person to guess correctly chooses the object for the next game.

#### **Quick alphabet**

Method: The group must work through the alphabet naming an object that they can see beginning with each letter of the alphabet in turn (Antenna, Bridge, Car, etc.) but within a tight time-limit (say before you arrive at a particular nearby point).



#### **First Letter / Last Letter**

Method: Choose a topic with a lot of words - e.g. names of towns / cities or rock / pop bands. One person in the group starts with any name in this category. The next person then has to give a name that begins with the last letter.

### **Prejudice workshops**

Prejudice Awareness Workshops (General)  
Prejudice awareness workshops aim to expose any underlying prejudices and allow you to challenge these or to discuss ways of preventing discrimination.

You should always look out for anyone in the group who belongs to one of the categories being discussed and give them a chance to say how they feel, etc. and ensure that they are not picked on.

#### **Some sample questions for discussion:**

What exactly do you mean when you express a stereotype? (e.g. say that "Americans are loud")

Where do prejudices come from? -  
 personal experience: can you generalise?  
 media: are they accurate? do they have their own agenda?  
 general opinion: where does it come from? can it be manipulated?  
 surveys, research: what exactly did they conclude?  
 Bearing in mind your answer to the last question, how accurate do you think your prejudices are? Is it possible to generalise about a group at all?  
 What are the possible dangers of prejudice? How can these be avoided? Is there any problem with positive prejudices?

### **Cultionary**

Resources: different coloured pens or pencils, paper.  
 Method: Have the group divide up into teams of 3 or 4. Then the leader gives one member of each team a word and they must draw it while the other members of the team try to guess the word (as in Pictionary). No words, letters or numbers allowed and no talking or hand signals. You could also add other rules such as no flags or symbols if people are finding it too easy. When someone guesses the word correctly, the drawer should shout out and the first team to shout gets a point. You should get each group to write the word on to their sheet and they can be put in the middle for discussing afterwards.

For the words, mix a selection of types of people (A Muslim, An African, Someone with Aids, A Foreigner, A Refugee, A European, A Moldavian) and words related to concepts (racism, conflict, equality, love, poverty). You can also throw in a few words that have nothing to do with the topic of discussion as a light break and to prevent people guessing by association.

Go on to discuss stereotyping, etc. As this can be a very fun game, it is very important to go on and discuss the possible risks of prejudice so as not to merely

reinforce stereotypes.

Variations: Same as above, but get a group member to act the word instead of drawing (as in Charades).

For a shorter look at a more specific issue: Divide the group up into smaller groups and give them 10 minutes each to produce a drawing of a typical member of a particular group. e.g. in N.Ireland, you can divide people up into single religion groups and have Protestants drawing a typical Catholic and vice-versa. Then have each group explain their drawing and go on to discuss prejudice issues.

### **Disabled Race**

A good way to start a discussion about disability and increase awareness of the problems facing disabled people is get teams to compete in different tasks while they are made to be handicapped in some way. For example, organise a relay race with different obstacles to climb over or crawl under, rings to pass through, a glass of water to drink, etc. Then assign the different team members to have the different handicaps - one arm inside a jumper, blindfolded, on crutches with one leg that they can't use, etc. Have the teams compete as in a normal race and afterwards get people to say what it was like.



### **Eurotrain**

Method: Divide the group up into small groups and explain the following scenario: You are going on a 3 day train journey from Lisbon to Moscow, in a 4 person compartment. Out of the following list, you should select which 3 people that you would most like to travel with and which 3 you would least like.

An overweight Swiss banker  
 A Polish prostitute  
 A Kurdish refugee returning from Libya

An African woman selling leather products  
 A blind accordion player from Austria  
 A Roma (Gypsy) man who is just out of jail  
 A wrestler from Belfast, going to a football match  
 A Ukrainian student who doesn't want to go home  
 An Italian disc-jockey with lots of money  
 A Basque nationalist who travels regularly to Russia  
 A Swedish skinhead who is under the influence of alcohol  
 A French farmer who speaks only French and is carrying a basket of strong-smelling cheese  
 A Serbian soldier  
 An aggressive, hard-line Dutch feminist  
 A young male artist with Aids  
 A German rapper living a very alternative lifestyle

Each person should make their own selections and then try to agree a common list for their group. Then ask them to try and write a description of what they think that the people they picked would look like and to note down anything they found themselves assuming (about race, gender, personality, etc.)

Then bring everyone together to feed back their answers. Look at similarities and differences between the stereotypes, how easy / difficult it was to choose / agree, etc. It's also useful to select one or two of the strongest shared stereotypes for further discussion.

Now give the groups a list of questions to discuss, focussing on whatever aspects you are interested in dealing with.

One possibility is to do this in two stages: First discuss questions about where the stereotypes come from and how much truth they contain. Can people actually provide any evidence for the stereotypes?

Then for the last part move the discussion

on to a more personal level. e.g. Ask people to come up with specific instances when they acted in a prejudiced way or when they experienced prejudice against themselves (how did this make them feel, etc.) Look at how our stereotypes effect our behaviour. It's best to keep bringing the discussion back to the personal level and avoid merely criticising other people's prejudice.



### **First Thoughts**

Resources: Something to write up on (Flip-chart, etc.)

Method: Explain to the group that you will call out a word and they are then to shout out the first thing that comes into their minds - get as many people to reply as possible and try to avoid any 'second thoughts'. They should be told not to censor their thoughts and to give honest answers...

Then call out various different social groups: Immigrants, Homosexuals, Homeless, Hippies, Drug Addicts, Yuppies, Muslims, Immigrants, Unemployed, Women, Disabled, Students, Travellers, etc. Pick whatever would be particularly relevant to the group - any specific religious or minority groups in your country. Take time between each to write up the reactions and try to get everyone taking part.

Then go on to discuss the issue of prejudice (see above)

### **Group Labelling**

Method: 4 volunteers are chosen from the group and stand in each corner of the room with a large sheet of paper that is divided in half vertically. They will represent different social groups e.g. Finnish-speaking Finn, (coloured) Immigrant, Homosexual, Disabled.

The rest of the group are divided into pairs and given a number of adjectives each e.g. happy, hard-working, arrogant, caring, weak, intelligent, boring, generous, stubborn, unreliable, etc.

They are then given 10 minutes to decide which of the 4 groups best fits the label. The people who are representing the groups can choose to reject labels that they feel are unsuitable. Those that they accept should be attached to the left hand side of the sheet that they are holding.

After the 10 minutes are up, the pairs are given a further 5 minutes to "dump" any remaining labels onto the right hand side of the sheets and these cannot be rejected.

After this, the whole group should be brought back together and everyone should be given a chance to explain why they put certain labels where they did, if they were thinking of a certain person when they did so, how did the people holding the sheets feel about how they were being described, etc.

Then there should be a more general discussion on where prejudices come from, are some more realistic than others, is there any danger in "positive" prejudice, etc.



*Possible words to use:*

Happy, Sad, Lazy, Hard-working, Arrogant, Humble, Caring, Thoughtful, Shy, Cheating, Aggressive, Musical, Generous, Selfish, Greedy, Good Listener, Stubborn, Unreliable, Intelligent, Argumentative, Strong, Weak, Patient, Funny, Intolerant, Dirty, Sensitive, Independent, Adaptable, Bossy, Boring, Open-minded, Backwards, Friendly, Kind, Ambitious, Creative, Honest, Liberal, Understanding, Moral, Serious, Creep, Outgoing, Rich, Poor, Talkative, Conservative, Violent, Sexy, Stupid, Narrow-minded, Loyal, Wise, Strange, Adventurous.

## **Jokes**

Resources: jokes

Method: Gather a collection of jokes on the topic that you are interested in discussing e.g. against certain nationalities, social groups (rich, vegetarian, disabled), about specific people (politicians), on taboo subjects (disaster jokes), practical jokes and tricks, etc. Include a mix of positive and negative jokes and try to ensure that you won't offend members of the group.

Write the jokes on pieces of paper and give them out to the group. Have each person read them out in turn (or act it out if its a practical joke) and then ask everyone to give it a mark out of 10. Mark up the scores and after you have gone right around the group you can compare the jokes and go on to discuss which are good, what makes a joke unacceptable, is there any harm if its just a joke, etc.

Its also good to go on and look at personal experiences - how do people feel if a joke is told against you, what do you do if people are telling racist / sexist jokes, etc.

You can get group members to add in their own jokes but you need to be careful that it doesn't get out of hand. With an international group its interesting to look at issues such as whether you have common jokes told about different countries (e.g. Irish jokes in Britain might be similar to Norwegian jokes in Scandinavia).

## **Labels Exercise**

Method: This exercise should be combined with some other suitable game / activity (preferably something practical rather than a workshop). Write out labels with different adjectives that might be used for people, such as lazy, clever, arrogant, etc. (one for each person in the group). Then stick them onto people's backs / foreheads without letting the person see what their word is. Explain that everyone must treat each other as if they were like what their



label says, while they carry out the other activity. Afterwards you should let people try and guess their label and say how they felt being treated like that. You should try to be careful that nobody gets a label that is something they might actually have a complex about...

### **Limit 20**

A detailed version of this workshop is available in the All Different, All Equal Education Pack, but you can make up the details for yourself.

The basic scenario for the game is that you organise a team competition with a number of different rounds, but the game is fixed in advance so that one particular team is bound to lose. You need to have team activities for 5 - 8 rounds - these could be selected from other games in this pack (e.g. Chinese drawings, burst the balloon) or you can make up your own ideas (e.g. sing a song, draw a camel, make an elephant sculpture from your team, make boxes from sheets of paper).

Games should be short and varied and you can also arrange them so that they are biased against the team that are already losing. For example take the following game:



**Rattlesnake:** Explain the each team will play against each other and that in each game, the team with the higher score will hunt the other team. In each game the teams will appoint one person who will be blindfolded and given a set of keys. They will be the hunter and victim. Explain that when the hunter rattles the keys, the victim must reply by rattling theirs. Each hunt lasts 45 seconds and the aim is for the hunter to catch the victim by touching them. It is important to remain quiet during the game.

The group should be divided into teams (say four teams called spades, clubs, hearts and diamonds) and you need a jury of 2 or 3 people. The jury should be told before hand that they must make sure that one team (say the diamonds) will not make it to 20 points while the others will. They can justify their scores in whatever way they like - so not just who "won" but how the team members co-operated, politeness, etc. You can make it clearer for the jury by giving them the cores for some of the rounds before hand.

Before you begin, tell everyone that any team that hasn't reached 20 points after a particular number of rounds will be out. This will in fact be all the rounds that there are but they should not be told this in advance. Then play the first round, give the jury a minute to decide the scores and explain their decision and continue through all the rounds. After you complete all the rounds announce the scores and which team is out, wait for the reaction from the group and then tell them that it is in fact the end of the game and that it had also been rigged. Move on to discuss what happened and how people felt.

This game can be used to discuss group dynamics, inequality, discrimination, etc. It is important to have a thorough evaluation afterwards as some people may have reacted very strongly.

It is important to try and not make it too obvious during the game that it is rigged. You could also include a round where, for example, the winning team will have their score tripled, the second team will have their score doubled, etc. - this apparently gives the losing team the chance to catch up but in fact ends up widening the gap. You can add another dimension to the game by having a handicapping round where the team with the highest score gets

to distribute handicaps to the other teams (e.g. one hand tied behind back, etc)

### Perceptions

Method: Divide people up into small single identity groups (e.g. Protestant and Catholic). Then have them complete a sheet with the following: What do Protestants think of themselves? What do Protestants think of Catholics? What do Catholics think of themselves? What do Catholics think of Protestants?



Then get the groups to feedback their answers, compare the different groups' answers (in particular the differences between the Protestant and the Catholic groups) and go on to discuss identity, perceptions and prejudice.

### Prejudice Awareness - Pairs

Method: This is a way to look in depth at prejudice relating to a particular group. Have people do the exercise in pairs. Select the group to look at (e.g. Americans) and one person in each pair agrees to be the questioner. They say the name of the group to the other person and they say the first thing that comes into their mind. The questioner repeats the name of the group and the other person says the next word that comes into their mind. This can be repeated perhaps 20 times - enough to get a range of words and to get beyond the very initial reactions. Either the questioner or an observer can write down the words.



If working with more than one pair, you could get everyone to deal with the same group or allow them to choose their own to get a variety. When discussing the results, it is important to ask the people responding

how they felt about what they were saying - did they want to censor their thoughts, take words back, etc. Were they surprised by any of the words that came to mind?

## Identity workshops

### Identity Workshops (General)

The following identity workshops are designed to get people thinking about who they are, what is important to them, etc.

They can cause quite heated debate with some groups and some people may complain that the leader is being divisive by doing the workshop - in this case you need to discuss with them whether it is healthy to ignore differences and pretend that we are all the same, etc.

*Here are some other possible questions for discussion after the workshops:*

What makes up my identity? What are the different levels (religion, politics, nationality, gender, sexuality, etc)? How important is each part to me?

What is the relationship between individual and group identity? (i.e. who I am verses what groups I belong to)

To what extent can we choose or change our identity?

Where does our sense of identity come from and why is it important? Does there have to be an enemy to strengthen our identity? (i.e. Do we need a "Them" in order to have an "Us"?)

Is it necessary to have a group identity? Or is it just divisive? Should we try to develop a more universal identity? Is it possible to treat people as equal if we see them as different? Or for 2 groups who define their identities differently to co-exist peacefully in the same place?

What threatens our identity? How do we react to this? How can identity conflicts be resolved?

#### 4 Corners

Method: Explain that you will label each corner of the room with a particular identity and that each person must choose one corner to go to, representing the label that they most strongly identify with. There should be no talking while people choose. The labels can be about different aspects of identity relevant to the group - e.g. religious (Protestant / Catholic / Atheist / Other), national (British / Irish / N.Irish / Other), political (Unionist / Nationalist / Republican / Loyalist or Socialist / Capitalist / Liberal / Other) , etc. It can be useful to start with one or two rounds with an Other category and then throw in one where all four corners have a specific label.

Take each group in turn and give them a chance to explain why they chose that corner, whether or not its important to them, how they feel about being there, etc. People in an Other corner should state how they would define themselves. You can give people an opportunity to ask questions to the other groups.

At the end you can also discuss how people felt being forced to choose one particular corner, how the different levels of identity compare and other more general issues related to identity.



#### Flags

Resources: A selection of flags or other symbols relevant to the discussion (e.g. In N.Ireland, use British / Irish / N.Irish / Independent (6 county) Ulster / 9 county Ulster / Orange Order flags. Could also include one foreign country or the EU flag).

Method: Have the group sit in a circle where they can all see the leader and have them shout out their first reactions when they see each flag. Give them a chance to respond to what others have said and then

ask if anyone can explain what the flag is, what it means, etc. After you have gone through all the flags, ask the group which flags they identify with and whether any of them is "their flag". You can get them to gather around the flag that they most strongly identify with and go on to discuss political identity issues (as in "4 Corners"). Also give people a chance to hold any flag that they've never touched, etc.

#### I'm A ...

Method: Ask people to brainstorm for themselves a list of identity labels that could be used about them - this can include:  
the roles that they play in life: a daughter, a friend, a student, your occupation  
hobbies and interests: a fan of a certain type of music, member of a political party, style of clothes  
where they were born , where they now live, nationality  
belonging to a minority or not  
their gender and sexuality  
their religion  
their ethnic identity, "race"  
what they are not or don't want to be: not a woman, not a socialist, not French, not an alcoholic

Then ask people to try and pick out the five that are most important to them and put them into an order from 1 to 5 (1 being the most important). You can provide them with a handout of a person surrounded by five circles of increasing size and they can label these with the smallest as number 1 and so on. You can explain that one way to look at identity is to see each part as a different layer of an onion.

Some questions to discuss: How easy is it to describe your identity? Do you find yourself not wanting to be labelled? Is there a "real you" at the centre of the "onion" after you have peeled off all the layers or a we entirely made up of the different roles that we play? How much of our identity can we choose or change?

You can also get the group to complete the following for each aspect of their identity:  
 One thing I like about being a ... is .....  
 One thing I dislike about being a ... is .....  
 It annoys me when people think that I'm ..... because I'm a ...  
 (any other similar questions)  
 Get people to read out what they have written and discuss labelling, prejudice, etc.

### **Moving Debate**

**Method:** This workshop can be used for a wide variety of topics. It is only necessary to come up with a list of statements to be debated. These should be fairly controversial if you want to really get into the issues but can be mixed with a few funny / simpler ones to prevent it getting too heavy. Ambiguous statements that can be interpreted in different ways can also make things interesting.

Designate one side of the room as "Agree" and the other as "Disagree". Then explain to the group that when you call out a statement they must choose one side. They must choose according to their own interpretation of the statement as you will not explain it.



For each statement, allow the group time to move to the sides and then give some people from each side the chance to say why they agree / disagree and then to reply to the other sides points. You can also choose to throw in some more comments to try to get the debate going. Make sure that everyone gets to contribute and remind them to listen to what others are saying. After you think that all the main points have been brought out, give people the chance to swap sides if they want to.

If you are working with a group made up of people from conflicting backgrounds, you should make sure that the statements divide the group up in a variety of ways

and ask people to note how they divide each time - this can be helpful in showing that they have things in common with people from the "other side".

After the debate you can also ask for feelings on the format of the debate - did people find it easy to choose sides? etc.

**Variations:** One alternative is to allow a "Don't Know" choice in the middle. It is also possible to add a rule then that this group are not allowed to speak at all - you can then discuss questions such as whether those with extreme views are given more time in the media while the moderates are ignored, etc.

You can also allow people to stand anywhere along a line from "Strongly Agree" through to "Strongly Disagree" at the other (or choose along a scale from 1 to 10). However this can make things more complicated and cause physical difficulties with a larger group as people can't see who they're debating with.

### *Some Suggested Statements*

Violence doesn't solve anything  
 My MP represents my views  
 I can influence politicians  
 The police have too much power  
 It's better to be black than gay  
 Vegetarian food sucks  
 Women are more peaceful (or less racist) than men  
 It is best if everyone agrees  
 The world would be a better place without mosquitoes  
 If we want to maintain our standard of living we will have to fight for it  
 Don't eat too much, people are starving  
 [Russia] can't be trusted  
 Conflict is healthy  
 [Muslims] can't really integrate into European societies  
 Nationalism means war  
 Gypsies are the only true European people  
 Young people are at the forefront of racist attacks

Immigrants take away houses and jobs  
 Love can solve any problem  
 I can contribute to peace in [N.Ireland]  
 All political prisoners should be released  
 Abortion is wrong  
 Teachers understand young people  
 Immigrants who are only looking for a  
 better standard of living should not be  
 accepted  
 The EU is damaging to democracy  
 [The IRA] are the cause of the problems in  
 [N.Ireland]



### **Multicultural Presentations**

Some ways to start discussions in a multicultural group:

Make a timeline and get each person to mark up 3 -5 years that are important in their history. Or take a calendar and look at important dates in the year.

Ask people to think of a historical and a current figure who they respect. Or ask them for 3 national heroes.

Ask people to tell a joke / traditional story or myth from their community.

Once people have thought of their answers, give them a few minutes each to explain their choice. This can simply be a way of making people curious about other cultures and allowing them to talk about what is important to them or you can go on to look at bias in the way we learn about history / the world, etc. If it is a multicultural group from the same country there may be interesting issues raised about how people from different cultural backgrounds see history in different ways and so on.

### **Power Shapes**

Resources: lots of paper, coloured pens and other random objects - its good to do this somewhere where there are lots of things lying around that people can make use of.

Method: Divide people into 3 groups and

name them the Orange Squares, Green Circles and Purple Triangles. Take them into different rooms with some of the Resources and explain to them that must come up with a culture for their group and then try to establish themselves in the main room. So they can make banners for the wall, dress themselves in their colour, arrange furniture in their shape, invent an anthem for their group, etc, etc.

They should then all be sent back into the main room and the leaders can stay back and observe what happens. It can be good to let one group in first and then tell the others that they'd better hurry since the others sneaked in first - generally trying to stir things up a little to get it going, though it normally runs pretty well without intervention.

It is also possible to add other rules / information to the game. e.g. make the groups of different sizes, say with the Orange Squares the majority, but let the Green Circles have the room first. when the groups are divided you can tell them things about the other groups e.g. Orange Squares are arrogant, Purple Triangles can't be trusted, etc. You can also have certain people being spies.

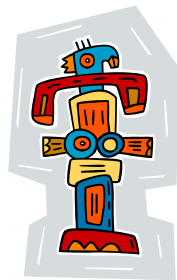
When playing the game in N.Ireland the colours orange and green do have a lot of political significance, so care needs to be taken when adding extra rules (e.g. if you give the Green Circles the room first, this could be seen to be making a political point...). With other groups it may be more interesting to try the game with different colours (e.g. black / white)

After the game has been running for a while, you can suggest that they try to come up with a definite agreement as to how they will co-exist in the room.

If some sort of peaceful ending is achieved or after a certain time limit, bring the group back together, get each group to say what

they thought from their point of view. The observers can then make their contributions - there will usually be a wide variety of points to bring out, in particular the different reactions to conflict. There may have been one group who sat in their corner while the others fought it out in the rest of the room, some people may have formed a "no symbols group" or an "all symbols" group, a male / female division may have emerged, groups may have taken on certain characteristics according to their colour, etc. You can also discuss the roles that individuals took on e.g. leader, mediator, warmonger, etc.

Then get people to de-role (e.g. turn around and say their own name) and make it clear that people are no longer Orange Squares, etc. After this you can continue the discussion at a more personal level, talking about how people felt rather than what actually happened.



### **Totem workshop**

For cross-community or multicultural work: Ask each person in the group to bring along a symbol of their culture / background to the camp / meeting. Give each person in the group the chance to show what they brought and talk about what it means to them. Allow people the chance to ask any questions and to have a close look at other people's objects.

### **Other workshops**

#### **Art Workshop**

Art can be used in various ways to look at issues and in particular provide a visual way for the group to express themselves and their feelings. Some possibilities for using it might be:



Resources: some sheets of paper and coloured pencils for each person

Method: Go on a walk around the area and stop at a number of locations, where the group are given 1 minute to draw a quick picture of how they feel. You should emphasise that there are no rules about what people should draw, so it might be a realistic sketch of the view, something that they're thinking about, a representation of how they feel at the time or whatever. At the end of the talk you can get people to present their pictures or put them on a wall for people to look at. You can also get people to divide up into groups according to similarities in their drawings. Then ask each group to produce some piece of art to represent the ideas in their pictures (or get each person in the group to select one of their drawings and work from these) - say a short drama, a poem, a sculpture made of different objects, etc.

Variation: This idea could also be used to look at a particular issue: say get them to sit with their eyes shut while you describe a conflict situation. Give them some time to try and imagine that they are in the situation and then 1 minute to draw what they feel / think of. Allow them to explain their own picture rather than the leader providing complicated interpretations for them.

#### **Betrayal**

This is an exercise that can be used to look at issues related to justice, the legal system, attitudes to the police, etc. and can bring out interesting aspects of group psychology. You can add in extra background information to make it relevant to your local situation.

Method: Divide people up into two groups and have them in separate rooms. They should each choose one spokesperson. The

basic scenario is that the two groups represent two accomplices in a crime. They are being interrogated by the police and must decide whether or not they will betray the other person in order to get a shorter sentence (or get off entirely).

You can play it in ten rounds with each group deciding what they will do each time. After every 3 rounds or so the spokespeople should be given the chance to meet in private and talk. The leader should be the police interrogator and can offer different incentives if people want to confess. They can also answer questions about probable punishment, etc. for the crime. If the groups aren't getting into the discussion very much you can throw in questions or raise points about possible retribution if the group choose to betray, etc.

At the end, bring both groups together, tell them what the groups chose to do and then give your decision on what will happen to them. You should ask people how they felt during the game, what they discussed, how they feel about what the other group did and how the game relates to real life.

### **Boxing Ring**

Method: Conflict situations that involve 2 main characters can be roleplayed in a "boxing ring" the 2 people in the middle and coaches in the corners. Ideally a group member provides a suitable conflict situation from their experience involving themselves and another person - they will explain as much as possible about the other person and another group member will agree to roleplay them. These two people then take the corners.



This roleplay can then be done in rounds - in the first round they act out what happened in the real conflict situation. Then they return to their corners and their

coaches can give them advise on how they can change their approach to improve what they are doing. Then go into the second round and see how the new approaches work out. This can be repeated for several rounds and the rest of the group (who are not involved in the roleplay) can be observers and comment on what happened during the discussion afterwards.

This exercise is ideal if there are a number of leaders with conflict mediation experience to act as the coaches. It is also not necessary for the person acting the second conflict participant to have coaches if you are mainly interested in how the group members can improve how they deal with their own conflicts.

Note: In some situations it may be better to do both these roleplays using conflicts that people felt they dealt with in a good way - this makes it easier for people to handle if they aren't at the stage where they would be comfortable with criticising each other, etc.

### **Break In**

Method: Ask for one volunteer. Then have everybody else stand in a tight circle, facing in - get them to make this as secure as possible by linking arms or putting arms around shoulders and crossing legs with the people beside them, etc. The person who volunteered must then try to break into the circle (be clear about limits to physical violence). Stop the game if they get in or after a certain time limit. Repeat with anyone else who wants to try and get in. Then ask people to say how they felt about being excluded or excluding somebody else and discuss any relevance to real life situations where people are excluded.

You can also have the volunteer leave the room and then agree a secret rule e.g. you will let the person into the circle if they say please.

Variations: Have 2 or more circles and then have volunteers try to break into a different circle than the one that they belong to. This way the people in each circle may feel that it is a "foreigner" trying to break into "their group".

An alternative game looking at exclusion is to just use a secret rule agreed when the volunteer is out, with no physical attempts to break in. Rules could be: No speaking without first making eye contact with a designated leader, every sentence must begin with a word that starts with w, etc.

### Conflict Roleplays

Method: Divide people into groups of 5 or 6. Ask each person to think of one conflict situation that they have been in and which they felt that they handled badly. They should each outline the situation and then the group should select one of these to roleplay.



The person who's conflict is being roleplayed should identify the 2 or 3 most important moments in what happened and then arrange the rest of the group into a freeze frame representation of each, taking care to try and show the feelings of each participant as much as possible. They can then add in a phrase for each person to say and from this make it into a short roleplay of what happened.

Then bring all the groups back together and have them present their roleplays. After each one give time for those acting to say how they felt about their roles and for those who were watching to add in any comments - in particular focus on how that kind of situation might be dealt with better in future - you can go through the roleplay again with suggested changes to see what

difference it might make in the outcome.

### Culture Shock - Bafa, Bafa

There are various different Culture Shock Games which involve the same basic idea. There are two different groups and each is given the rules for their culture. After they have practiced interacting according to their rules you can arrange meetings between the two groups when they can try to work out what is going on - you can go on to discuss how people felt and reacted. There should be a group leader with both cultures to explain the rules and observe what happens.

You can draw up rules for 2 realistic cultures e.g. one in which personal space is very important, people avoid physical or eye contact, there are many formal rules and rituals, etc. and one where people greet each other with hugs and kisses, always make eye contact when speaking, people are generally informal etc.

The other possibility is to play it more as a game, such as in the following Bafa, Bafa Game:

Resources: coloured cards with animal names, beans

Method:

Culture 1: This culture is based on the trading of farm animals. Each member of the group has 5 different cards which have the name of an animal (there are 5 different types) and come in a few different colours. The aim for them is to get one of each type of animal in the same colour - then they can take the cards to their group leader and they are exchanged for a point and a new set of cards. The group leader should keep score on flip chart.





To trade cards, one person will approach another, hold up a card (without showing what's written on it) and make an animal sound - this means that that person is looking for that animal in that colour. If the other person has this card and wants to trade then they hold up a card and make a sound for what they are wanting in exchange. If both people want to trade then they set their cards down on the floor face down and pick up the other persons (they never make physical contact). If someone doesn't want to trade they shrug their shoulders and walk away. There should never be any talking.

**Culture 2:** In this culture the aim is to be happy and happiness is achieved by playing a guessing game. Each participant has a bean. They start the game with another person by standing facing them and stamping their foot once. If the other person wants to play, they reach out and stroke the first person's upper arm with 2 fingers. Then the second person puts their bean in one hand behind their back. The first person touches one of their arms with two fingers and the second person then holds out that hand to show whether or not it contained the bean. If it does then that is the end of the game. If not you repeat again. If the person guesses the empty hand 3 times then they shout out "Bafa, Bafa" and the rest of the group run to them and rub their upper arms with two fingers while saying "Bafa, Bafa" (this makes them happy).

There should also be 1 or 2 people in this culture who are appointed as the king or king & queen. They remain seated and no-one may start a game with them. However when they pass near the king and queen, the group members should give them a chance to start a game with them. In this case they should make sure that the king / queen always wins the game by swapping the bean after they guess so that the hand they hold out is always empty.

The group leader should also observe what happens and if anyone makes a mistake then they shout "You are expelled from this culture" and that person must stand at the side with their back turned until the leader allows them back in again. There should be no talking in this game apart from the shouts of "Bafa, Bafa"

**The Game:** After the leaders have explained the games to each group and given them time to practice, send two people from each culture to observe the other one (but not take part). They then report back to their own group. Then send 2 or 3 more people who this time try to participate and then report back. You should give everyone the chance to go to the other group. Then end the game and bring everyone together for discussion.

Give each group the chance to guess what the rules of the other culture were and then explain their own. Ask people what they felt when they went to the other group and which culture they preferred. Also look at what happened in each group, whether people cheated, etc. and then go on to think about any relevance to real life.



### **Darts (GNP) Game**

**Resources:** A dart board with equally sized segments, each labelled with the name of a different country. A dart. A list of the countries on the dart board with their respective GNP per capita. An easily divisible prize e.g. peanuts, sugar puffs.

**Method:** Each person throws the dart at the board. They receive a portion of the prize in proportion to the GNP of the country that they hit, so that hitting the USA means that you get an overflowing handful while hitting somewhere like Tanzania gets you maybe one peanut.

This is a simple visual way of showing the inequality of the world's wealth - it can be a useful game to have for a stall at a festival.

You can find out up-to-date figures for the required information but here are some GNP per capita in USD for 1997(?):  
Bangladesh: 200 China: 370 Finland: 18400 India: 330  
Iran: 2320 Iraq: 3650 Mexico: 2870 Kenya: 340  
Sierra Leone: 170 Russia: 3220 Somalia: 120 Tanzania: 110  
U.K. 16750 U.S.A.: 23150 Zaire: 220 Zambia: 290

### **Exclusion Game**

Method: Divide the group into 3 teams - blue, yellow and red. Explain that for round one (say 1 minute long) the blue team must stand with their faces to the wall while yellows must do whatever the reds tell them to do (e.g. hop on one leg, make a silly face, say "reds are the best", etc). The blues may not move or turn around to see what is going on. You could also put some limits on what the reds can order from the yellows. Then in round 2, the reds are excluded while the blues must do what the yellows tell them. Finally in round 3, the yellows are excluded while the reds do what the blues tell them.

Then go on to discuss how people felt in the different roles. Did anyone not enjoy giving orders? Was it good to be able to get revenge for what you were made to do? Was it frustrating being excluded? Were there limits on what orders would be obeyed? You can then go on to look at any relevance to real life and situations of exclusion and power imbalance.

### **Future Workshops**

This a general format for looking imaginatively in small groups at different problem situations. The discussion of the

topic (say Minorities or the N.Ireland conflict) is carried out in 3 stages:

**The Problem Phase:** Brainstorm the major problems, fears and difficulties.

**The Fantasy Phase:** Brainstorm all possible solutions, no matter how ridiculous. This is the stage to dream about the kind of future that we'd really like.

**The Reality Phase:** Take the list of solutions from the fantasy phase and try to relate these back to reality. Participants may discover that some of the "crazy" ideas from the last phase might actually be adaptable to a practical method that they had not considered before.



### **Ideal Islands**

Method: Divide people into groups of 5 or 6 and give each group a designated space as their "island" (a room or part of a room is fine, but its fun to do this outdoors - its perfect if you can actually put the groups on their own real island, but this is maybe a little difficult in most locations...). Give each group a pen and paper and tell them that they have about 15 minutes to come up with a constitution for their island, consisting of 3 - 5 rules that everybody agrees to stick to. They should also decide on a name for their island and if they want, a flag, anthem, culture, etc. Another possibility is for them to make up their own language (e.g. saying words backwards) or at least some of their own words.

After the groups have done this, you then go around and pick one person from each group to move onto another island - you can explain that there has been a serious storm that has washed them away and stranded them somewhere else. But when you are moving the person you should explain to them in private that they must decide to disagree with at least one law on

the new island - it can be more interesting if you've chosen people who are likely to be the most troublesome when moved...

You should then leave the groups again for about 10 minutes and observe what happens, ending it after all the groups seem to have come to some sort of settlement (e.g. persuading the new person to adopt the rule, changing the rule to accommodate the new arrival, imprisoning them, expelling them from the island, etc.)

Then bring everybody back together to discuss what happened. The first step is to go around each group and have them explain what their rules were and what occurred when the new person arrived. Then go on to ask people how they felt during the game and what relevance it has to real life. This can be a useful exercise for discussing issues of justice, immigrants, etc.

### **Images**

Resources: A variety of photographs showing different objects, people and places.

Images can be used as part of a discussion on many issues. Spread out the pictures and ask group members to select one or two which most represent their feeling about the topic (or simply which one they like the most, identify the most strongly with or which one represents how they are feeling at that moment) Then give each person the chance to explain their selection. Can also be used as a different way of evaluating a camp or event - have people choose the image that most represents their feelings about what has been happening.

Variation: Select images related to a particular topic that you want to discuss e.g. refugees or conflict. Divide people into small groups and have them first select their 2 personal favourite images and then try to agree on 2 for their group. Explain to

them that they should then try to choose a title for the images and/or write a short newspaper article that the image might illustrate. After they have finished bring everyone back together and have each group present their images and explain why they selected them, then read out their title and/or article. You can move on after this to discuss any issues that have come up or to look at media itself.



### **Nonviolence workshop**

Resources: Enough newspapers or pillows for half the group.

Method: Divide the group in half and designate them "attackers" and "victims". It's probably good to give a choice to anyone who feels strongly that they don't want to be on one particular side, but make sure that there is a male / female mix on in both groups.

Take the two groups into separate rooms and give them their instructions:

The attackers are simply to attack the other group with their rolled up newspapers or pillows - tell them that they can be fairly enthusiastic about the attack but to be careful not to cause any actual injury... and absolutely no hitting people around the head (or other sensitive regions...). They should not be told what the victims will be doing and it is useful to try and create some doubt about this in their minds.

For the first round, the victims should be instructed to run away. Send the attackers into the room with the victims and let it run for a few minutes (keep an eye open that no-one is getting hurt), then stop it and bring them together - get as many of the group as possible to say how they felt, what they thought, etc. Bring up any

interesting points for discussion e.g. why certain people were targeted more than others, was there a difference between male / female participants, etc.

Then repeat for a second round, but this time the victims are told to stand perfectly still with their hands behind their backs, to be completely silent and simply make eye contact with the attackers. They shouldn't even flinch or try to protect themselves. The attacking group should be given exactly the same instructions as before.



For the third round, the victims can behave in any strange manner that they wish - hugging the attackers, giving them flowers (if played outside), singing, lying down, forming circles with linked arms (if someone was picked on in earlier rounds they could be protected in the centre of the circle), etc.

After you have discussed the last round, compare all three and try to draw out any lessons from it. Would any of these methods be useful in a real incidence of violence? Are there other ways to react.

What usually happens: Normally the attackers will find the first round the most fun. In the last two (and particularly the second) they usually become bored quite quickly and stop, or start fighting each other. Some may feel confused by it and be at a loss for what to do. With some groups these reactions can be fairly powerful. The victims normally say that they felt much more powerful and in control in the second and possibly the third rounds.

Other things that may emerge: Males tend to enjoy the violence more, it is easier to hit someone who is male / big / trying to defend themselves, a little bit odd looking etc.

If there is time and the group want to, the group roles can be reversed for another round or two.

Variations: The victims can be given a chance to fight back with their own papers, try to take the weapons of the attackers, a few people can be armed and assigned as police, etc. - the group can choose whatever version that they want to try.

### **Obedience Game**

Method: The group should have seats for this exercise. Explain to them that the leader will shout out numbers and they must respond with an action: 1 is stand up, 2 is sit down, 3 is sit down, 4 is stand up. (you can make them a little more complicated if you want, but the aim is for the game to be completely pointless). Then have them start and observe the different reactions. Stop the game after there have been a variety of reactions (people stopping playing, complaining to their neighbour, etc. and preferably someone stating clearly to the leader that they feel this is pointless).

Then explain to the group that the point of the exercise is to see their reactions and point out to them the different ways that people responded. You can then discuss how you would like people to act if they find some other game / workshop boring, etc. and let them know that they can bring up issues with the leader, etc.



### **Rigged Debate**

For training people in facilitation or looking at group dynamics, you can set up a debate that has been rigged before hand without the knowledge of those who will facilitate it. Simply give other members of the group different cards with a role / type of behaviour on it e.g. you want to be leader, you are the group joker, you don't want to be there, you hate some other group member, you think you're always

right, etc. You can also introduce one of the "controlling discussion" methods if things get heated. After the debate (it can be on any topic) you should get feedback from the group members about how they felt with their particular role and how they reacted to the way others were behaving and get the facilitators to say how they felt during the debate. You should also give people the chance to guess what other people's roles were. Its good to have one or two observers for this exercise and you can go on to discuss the roles that group members had.

## Other activities

### Contracts

At the start of a camp / exchange or a long session (particularly if it could turn out to be heated and intense) it can be useful to agree a contract with the group. This is just a list of basic rules that everybody agrees to keep - the rules should come from the group itself as much as possible rather than being layed down by the leader, though it may be necessary to throw in some ideas to get them started.



#### *Rules that could be included:*

Don't interrupt, one person speaking at a time.

Give everybody a chance to speak.

No personal abuse, No put downs, No physical violence...

Listen.

Confidentiality (though you may need to qualify this as you may be responsible to do something about some issues that might come up)

Speak slowly, explain local terms (for an international group)

Rules on drinking, smoking, bed times, etc.

Agree on a method of decision making (majority vote, consensus, etc.)

You may want to challenge the group on some suggestions before writing it up - for example if they suggest No anger then you can ask if they really think that anger is a bad thing, etc. But if the group want to stick to a rule then put it up.

All rules must have consensus to be included in the contract.

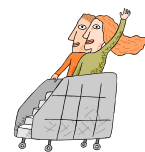
The contract can be changed at any time if everybody agrees - so people can suggest additions / changes during group sessions. You should also go back to the contract every now and again to refresh people's memories and, in particular, if there is a conflict in the group that is related to one of the rules.

### Facilitating discussion

If a group discussion / debate is getting heated and out of control, there are a number of methods for trying to make it easier to facilitate.

**Microphone:** Select an object (e.g. a marker pen) which is the microphone and explain that only the person holding it may speak. Either pass it around (people can raise their hands if they have something to say and the leader can keep track of the order) or leave it in the centre of the circle so that people have to go and pick it up and return to their seat before speaking.

**Cards:** Give each person 4 or 5 playing cards. Each time that somebody speaks they must throw one card into the middle and when they have used all cards they can no longer contribute. Good for getting people to think a bit more about what they want to say before hand.



### Evaluation / Finishing

With a single session or day event, the main need in finishing up is to get some feedback on what the group found useful

and what they didn't, so that this information can be used in planning future activities.

With a camp or exchange it is also important to consider the group dynamics as there will often be a strong bond that has developed over their time together. It is therefore important to have a definite end to it all before people start to leave. This should also be a chance for people to say anything that they haven't been able to before.

#### *Some ideas for finishing activities:*

Go around the group having each person say one word describing how they found the camp / activity.

Have the group sit in a circle and simply tell them to wait silently for people to say anything that they want to. Keep going until it seems like most people have said what they need to, even if that means long silences...

Have people arrange themselves into a human body, according to the position that they think they have taken in the group during the camp. Give everyone a chance to say what part they are, why they chose it and what they feel about that role.

Make humorous badge awards. e.g. Secret Snog, Most Likely to Get Lost / Be Late / Save the World / Destroy the World, Sunburnt Legs Awards, etc. These can be symbols made from coloured modelling clay.

Put up a sheet with a circle divided into segments and each marked with an aspect of the event e.g. leaders, free-time, the group, food, accommodation, workshops, games, weather. Ask everyone to mark an X in each segment to show how good they thought that that part was, with an X near the centre meaning very good and one near the edge meaning very bad.

For the very end of the final group session, have people stand in a circle facing out. When people feel ready they should then make any last comments and say goodbye in whatever way they want and then leave the group and the room. Continue until everyone has gone. The leader can speak first and stay in the room so that one person is not left on their own at the end.



#### **Hopes and Fears**

For use at the start of a camp / exchange. Give everybody a sheet of paper and a pen. Then ask them to write down 3 things they hope to get out of the camp and 3 things they are afraid of. After they have finished, ask them to fold the pages and place them in a box. They are redistributed and people read out what they have on their new sheet, with the opportunity for people to make any relevant comments. The sheets can be put up on a wall and reviewed in the middle or at the end of the camp.

#### **Secret Friends**

An ongoing game for any size of a group, suitable for camps and exchanges.



Get everyone to write their name on a piece of paper, fold it and put them in a pile in the centre of the room. Each person should then pick one name at random which they shouldn't show to anyone. If they've picked their own name then they must replace it. The person whose name you have is then your "Secret Friend" for the week (or however long you specify).

You should then explain to the group that the aim is for them to do as many nice things as possible for their secret friend - maybe aim for at least one a day. This

could be a note with something encouraging, getting someone else to give the person a hug, having them brought breakfast in bed, giving a small gift, etc. You should make clear that its not necessary to spend money on the game and that people should try to be as imaginative as possible. However they must try not to let their secret friend know who they are.

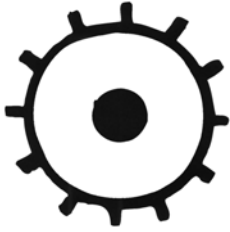
If the game runs down in mid-week or some people have very inactive secret friends, it may be necessary to change some names around. At the end of the specified time, you should bring people together to end the game. People should have the chance to guess who their friend was and say what they liked best.



### **Thoughts in a Hat**

A good exercise for the middle of a camp. Give each group member a piece of paper and a pen, then allow them a few minutes to write down one question - you can leave this open or make a more specific rule about the topic. People could ask about any left over issues from the previous part of the camp, ask about future activities or use the opportunity to bring up group issues or problems. It may be better to make a rule against aggressive questions addressed to one particular person. Then have people fold up their question and throw it in a box. Redistribute these and then go around the group having people read out what is on their sheet - they can try to answer it themselves and then allow for comments from other group members.

Variation: this anonymous question method can be used on an ongoing basis as a "Wish Box" where people can put any questions or comments - these can be read out and discussed during group sessions.



**Ålands fredsinstitut**  
The Åland Islands Peace Institute

PB 85, AX-22101 Mariehamn, Åland, Finland  
Phone +358 18 23238  
e-mail: [marja-leena@peace.aland.fi](mailto:marja-leena@peace.aland.fi)  
[www.peace.aland.fi](http://www.peace.aland.fi)