

Throwing Animals

For this game, you will need 6-8 little stuffed animals or small object that you can throw without hurting anyone. The 6 stuffed animals should be the same or should have a similar shape. You should have another object of a different colour or shape. Have all the animals in a bag.

Invite everyone to stand up and form a circle. Ask everyone to raise their right hand. Take the bagful of stuffed animals in your left hand. Explain that you are going to say the name of one person in the circle and throw a stuffed animal to that person. When the person catches the stuffed animal, he or she lowers their right hand. He or she must then say the name of another person and throw the stuffed animal to them. When everyone has lowered their hand, the stuffed animal comes back to you. Start throwing the stuffed animal again and continue, throwing all the like stuffed animals one after the other. After a few stuffed animals have made it around the circle, take out the different one and explain that you have to throw it in the opposite direction, to the person who throws you the like-coloured ones.

Clean Water Flows

Ensure there are just enough seats in a circle for everyone but you. Explain that you will call out “Clean water flows for everyone who...” and then you will add a description. Everyone who fits this description must get up and change seats with someone else who has that description. For example, “Clean water flows for everyone who wears sandals” or “everyone with two eyes”. You must carry the characteristic of what you call out (i.e. you must be wearing sandals if you are to call out that “clean water flows for everyone who wears sandals”) In the exchange of seats, you try to get a seat for yourself and the person who remains left standing, gets to be the “Clean Water” Caller.

Once the group has gotten used to the game (after 6-8 Calls), introduce the concept of a “Flood”. When there is a flood, everyone moves. As you end the energizer, explain that if at any time during the remainder of the workshop, participants feel they need a quick energizer, anyone can call out Flood! and everyone needs to stand up and quickly find another seat.

Big Mouth

Get three volunteers into the centre of the circle. Ask a question. Each of the volunteers takes a deep breath, answers the question seeing which one can keep going the longest without taking a new breath. Use semi-serious questions relevant to the workshop like “how do you collect your water?” People can come up with important sounding answers, in an atmosphere in which content is not important and fun is the object.

Big Sigh

Get into a circle or stand up where you are, leader in the middle or at front where can be seen by everyone. Everyone follows what the leader does. Leader crouches on the floor, hands on floor, and slowly rises giving an increasingly loud sigh as s/he does so finishing with arms stretched high and sigh becomes a shout. Very good for relieving tension.

Adhesion

Get into pairs, standing shoulder to shoulder, scattered around the room. You are stuck together like a bacteria adhered to a particle in the water. Choose one pair and make one person “It” and one person the runner. “It” chases and tries to tag the runner. If tagged, the runner becomes “It”. Runner may escape at any time by lining up with any pair “adhering” to someone else. The person at the other end now becomes the runner.

BioLayer

Take a long string or tape and make a line to divide the room into two. Get everyone to stand on one side of the line and ask two people to be volunteers. Explain that everyone in the large group are pathogens in a pot of water. The two volunteers are “good bugs” in the BioLayer. Pathogens link arms and move toward the line. If one of the good bugs touches any of the pathogens, they become part of the biolayer and help the good bugs capture the rest of the pathogens. Pathogens are trying to get past the good bugs.

Machine

Explain that we are going to invent the most amazing water treatment machine ever! It looks and sounds completely different from anything ever designed before. One person begins with any mechanical noise and motion, repeated in machine-like fashion. Others connect themselves when they see a place in the machine where they could like to fit in.

Slow Flow

One person volunteers to be “It” with the objective of tagging another participant. The tagged person then becomes “It”. In Slow Flow, everyone must use slow exaggerated motions as if swimming through very very thick, muddy water.

Touch Blue

Leader calls a colour “touch blue” and everyone must touch something blue on another person. Continue with other colours and descriptions.

Rainstorm

The person in the centre of the circle directs, rubbing hands together and turning slowly toward everyone in the circle. Imitate the director as the director faces you, and continue the action until the director arrives at you again with another action.

The director goes around the circle eight times in this order: First time: rubbing hands together, go all around the circle. When you get to the person you started with, start going around the circle a second time, this time snapping your fingers. Third time: slap thighs. Fourth time: slap thighs and stamp feet. Fifth time: stop stamping feet and only slap thighs. Sixth time: back to snapping fingers. Seventh time: back to rubbing palms together. Eighth time: return to silence. Rainstorm is over once you’ve completed the entire circle and everyone has stopped rubbing their hands together.

Concentric Circles

Ask the group what they need to do to be a good listener. Form two circles, inner circle facing out, outer facing in so people are paired up. Ask people in inner circle to speak to the theme while participants in outer circle only listen. After 2 minutes you stop and ask people in outer circle to speak to same theme while inner only listens. Once both inner and outer participants have spoken, ask outer circle to stand up and move over to the next chair to their left. Next theme, outer speaks, then inner. Then ask participants in inner circle to stand up and move to their left. This can be a bit confusing the first few times you facilitate, but the important thing to remember is that both circles, inner and outer, move in the same direction to *them*; participants in outer circle move to *their* left, inner circle to *their* left. Since they are facing each other, they move in opposite directions.

Themes

1. A person I admire and respect, and why...
2. Something I've learned that's been important to me, and why...
3. The reasons I've chosen the work I'm doing now are...
4. An important goal I have in my life, and some of the things I'm doing to achieve it...
5. One time I laughed so hard my face and tummy hurt and I couldn't stop...

After all have spoken on all the themes, get everyone back in large circle, no more inner/outer, and ask a few questions about how it went.

- How did it feel to speak uninterrupted, with an attentive listener, for 2 minutes?
- How was it to be the listener?
- How did you find the questions/themes?
- Did you find out anything exciting or surprising about others or yourself?
- What do the themes/questions ask the speaker to reveal about him/herself?

This is a good community building activity that helps participants know each other much better. You can add/substitute questions/themes to suit the particular workshop. For example, in this case I included something about the reasons we chose the work we do.