



Team Challenge
Course
&
Mobile Initiatives
Manual

Acknowledgments

This manual is the compilation of activities and ideas from many facilitators. Thanks to all of the Venture staff who contributed their variations of activities.

Special thanks to Jim Cain; who brought many of these activities to Venture.

Please add to this collection if you have an activity or variation that you think would be worthwhile to other staff.

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Procedures and Policy Statement

Much of this manual is procedural. The **procedural** portions include how to do various things, how to make things work smoothly, and checklists to insure that details are not forgotten. Procedural suggestions are designed as useful guidelines and are not mandatory requirements.

Other parts of this manual deal with **policy** issues. These are designated by an asterisk (*). All policies must be followed, unless there are serious extenuating circumstances. Following policies/rules is the standard, though rules need to be tempered with judgment. Individuals with significant outdoor leadership experience and well-developed judgment are typically in a better position than new staff, to make decisions on whether to deviate. Anytime you deviate from a policy, it must be based on a careful consideration of the situation. Any deviation from policy should be documented in a challenge course report or communicated directly with the Director.

Ratios

Low Challenge course:

The Standard Venture staff to participant ratios is **1:8-15**. The actual ratio depends on the age and maturity of the group, the goals of the group and the length of the program. We find 12 to be the ideal size per sub-group. With **corporate** clients we prefer two per sub-group, with the ratio being **2:20**. Our minimum ratio is 1:25, but we only use this for an intact academic class for an abbreviated experience (i.e. more of a taste of the program).

Problem Solving Activities (Mobile):

The Standard Venture staff to participant ratios is **1:8-15**. The actual ratio depends on the age and maturity of the group, the goals of the group and the length of the program. We find 12 to be the ideal size per sub-group. Our minimum ratio is 1:35, but we only use this for an intact academic class with whom we have an established relationship.

Initiative Games:

The standard Venture staff to participant ratios is 1:25, however we may occasionally do 1:100 or 1:1,000. We select activities appropriate to the anticipated size and type of group. An initiative game for 1,000 may be something like a low risk icebreaker at a conference.

Becoming a Venture Team Challenge Course Facilitator

A Facilitator Tracking Sheet will be initiated for each facilitator and kept on file in the Venture office.

The Team Challenge Course staffing process involves attending a training program, reading the TCC manual, and then apprenticing at least three times, until all necessary areas on the tracking sheet are checked off by a staff member. Most individuals will require more than three apprenticeships (5-6 is more typical) unless one has related prior experience. If not all initiative elements are checked off on the tracking sheet, then the individual *could* facilitate a group on their own but *could not* use those elements for which he/she was not approved. The final apprenticeship will have the individual doing all the actual facilitating with a staff member present to observe, quietly give suggestions, and to intervene only if they deem it necessary. Following this apprenticeship, the individual and staff member will meet and discuss the readiness of the trainee to lead group on his/her own. Any weakness or concerns of either party will be examined and an agreement of how these issues might be addressed will be determined. If there are no reasons to postpone a final okay, the trainee will then be able to lead groups on his/her own following general Venture policies.

To actually serve as a paid staff facilitator (not just a volunteer apprentice) the individual must obtain certification in a minimum of Basic First Aid and CPR through the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association or other recognized certification programs. First Aid and CPR certification must be renewed on a regular basis and it will be the individuals responsibility to maintain a current certification.

General staffing of events: When a group calls to register for a program, the appropriate course is reserved and additional data is recorded. The next step will be for a Venture staff member to locate staff for that session. Sometimes we will review people's schedules and call those who have no regular conflict at that time. Sometimes, the first person to come by the office and check the schedule book will sign up for the program. The work schedule is heavier in the early fall and late spring, but never a predictable regular hours job. Those people apprenticing should check the program schedule book and sign up to apprentice for those sessions that are appropriate.

This Facilitator Program is part of **VOLTAGE** (Venture Outdoor Leaders Training and Group Experience) and would help prepare individuals for leadership positions on trips if desired.

The Instructor's Role (from the complete Venture Staff Manual)

*A leader is best when
People barely know that he exists.
Of a good leader, who talks little,
When his work is done, his aim fulfilled,
They will say, "We did this ourselves."*

Lao Tse

To be an instructor, you must also be a leader and role model. Many participants will place absolute trust in you; they will have complete faith in your judgment and will often develop close emotional ties with you quickly. With your guidance, participants may have some of the most memorable experiences of their lives.

Assuming the role of instructor can become an awesome responsibility. Therefore, when you accept the position, you must take it very seriously. You must be mindful of the impact your actions will have on your participants and be aware of this factor in preparing for and conducting a workshop. You must impart, through your behavior, the following values, all of which are integral to the Venture philosophy:

- **Belief in and commitment to high-level wellness**
- **Openness and honesty**
- **Respect for the individual (manners, language, challenge by choice)**
- **Respect for diversity (welcoming to all)**
- **Respect for the natural environment**
- **Respect for equipment and personal property**
- **Physical fitness**

We are here to help people experience success. You must structure workshops so that there is a graduated series of challenges from which participants can emerge with a sense of mastery.

This structure requires planning.

Finally, safety must be your overriding concern at all times. There is, therefore, a whole set of principles which should guide everything you do. Not only must you be safety-conscious yourself, you must also teach your participants how to be responsible for themselves and others.

Ethical Issues

General principles: Staff will act in a manner that is within the boundaries of their competence, will act with integrity and responsibility, and respect the rights and dignity and welfare of all individuals.

Dual Relationships: Leaders need to be aware of their influential position with respect to participants and avoiding exploiting the trust and dependency of such persons. Because of this, leaders make every effort to avoid dual relationships with participants that could impair professional judgment (e.g. intimate or romantic {or business} relationships with participant.) When dual relationships exist, professionals take appropriate precautions to insure that judgment is not impaired and no exploitation occurs. (taken from Ethical Guidelines for Adventure Alternatives Professional Group of AEE)

Some specific expectations: *Staff will not initiate or make moves toward a romantic involvement with a participant during a Venture program (i.e. no hitting on participants).

Confidentiality: Staff respect the right of participants to decide the extent to which confidential material is made public - except where otherwise mandated by law or to prevent a clear and immediate danger to a person or persons. (taken from Ethical Guidelines for Adventure Alternatives Professional Group of AEE)

Ethics in Facilitation: excerpted from The Book Of Metaphors Volume II, (Gass, 1995). As many of the techniques in the exercises outlined in this book indicate, when the sophistication of facilitating and working with clients increases so does the need to look at the appropriateness of how experiences are conducted. As one can see, framing experiences asks clients to consider concentrating on one set of outcomes and processes, quite often at the expense of other focuses. While this may increase the effectiveness of the intervention, it also runs the risk of enhancing the misappropriates of the experience. Can one avoid this problem by choosing not to facilitate? Probably not, since avoiding any facilitation of an experience doesn't free a facilitator from ethical scrutiny; such a conclusion itself can be an ethical decision.

It seems that experiences, and their appropriate facilitation, work best when the focus of the facilitator's efforts is done with empathy for the client. When facilitators are motivated to use processing techniques to "look good," wield power over clients, or reach their own personal gains, questions of appropriateness and lasting effectiveness for the client seem to come into question. To achieve the appropriate focus on empathy, several principals can be valuable to follow. Some of these may include:

- a. Above all else, do no harm to the client.
- b. Make sure that facilitation efforts are done with the client's best interests in mind.
- c. The focus of the interventions is to serve the client, not the facilitator.
- d. There is purpose in the reason for using the particular technique.
- e. It "feels right" to the professional.
- f. It is something the professional would be willing to stand up in front of other colleagues and say that they used this technique and state why.
- g. Only use those techniques that you would want to be used with you if you were the client (i.e., the "golden rule").
- h. Remind yourself that the experience possesses the resources to be more influential than the facilitator's best efforts in helping the client.
- i. When in doubt, follow rule #1.

Overview of Facilitator Responsibilities

Before going out for a program

- Learn about the group and their goals:
 - Check the program book for a pre-program questionnaire.
 - Look in program files if this group has done a program with us before
 - Ask Assistant Director for Challenge Programs or other core staff, or call the group coordinator to find out the group's goals.
- If there are multiple facilitators, meet at the office (or pick another place) prior to the group's arrival to plan the program. For Mobile programs, meet at least 1 hour early to have time to design and set up the program.
- Plan the program.
- Take the keys for the gate and lock box, the first aid kit *, and any items you need that aren't in the lock box.
- Go to course in plenty of time to set up elements and meet the group at the designated location.

Items in TEAM CHALLENGE COURSE lock box:

- Cups (please let us know if the supply is low)
- 2 water coolers (one for the HRC)
- Garbage bags
- Blindfolds (please bring in dirty ones, let us know if the supply is low)
- Balls approximately 10 Nerf balls
- Metaphor group juggle balls
- Several moon balls/ beach balls
- Nitro Swing rope and water can
- Nitro Slide rope and water can

- Mohawk walk- both ropes
- 2 Trust Fall hand restraint loops
- Miscellaneous ropes- for boundary markers or loop the group
- File folder with waivers, evaluation forms, manual, and promotional materials

General Guidelines

Choose activities to use based on:

- your familiarity and comfort with elements/activities
- only use elements for which you are approved
- goals of group and typical outcomes/issues from elements
- size of group
- group member's familiarity with course (have some of them done course before?)

Introducing a Program

- * If the program is at the permanent course, announce that it is for use only with Venture supervision. Individuals can call the office to schedule a program with another group.
- * Give general description or overview of what happens during a program: Experiential Learning, a series of mental and physical group challenges, perhaps give an example discussions after activities to reflect on experience, draw out learning
- * Explain "challenge by choice"; participants are encouraged to push their own limits but are not required to put themselves in any situations where they feel uncomfortable. Explain various levels of involvement in the activities and process.
- * Collect waivers- or have group sign them if necessary. Encourage the group to ask questions so they can make an informed decision.
- * Have people remove all hazardous items from their person: pens, keys, bracelets, watches, rings, necklaces.

Goals

*Check in with participants in some way about why they are there.

Ask participants what their goals or expectations are, or give brief talk about reasons for using Team Challenge Course, which might include some of the following:

- to increase appreciation within the group of each individual's abilities
- to increase awareness that a group working together can accomplish things that individual's cannot do alone
- to increase group perseverance by pointing out that sometimes a seemingly unsolvable problem can be solved with determination
- to increase individual initiative: give the confidence to fully participate in the group
- to increase group trust
- to give each person an opportunity to see how s/he works within a group
- to increase awareness of leadership, communication and problem solving within a group

- to give each person an opportunity to experience some level of physical or psychological challenge; i.e. dealing with fear, overconfidence, lack of trust, etc.
- to allow the group to get to know each other in new and different ways- to help break down barriers to interaction
- to have **FUN**

See if anyone has any questions or concerns (particularly about safety) before starting.

Contracting with Participants

It is often helpful to ask participants to commit to certain group guidelines for their behavior for the day. This will look different, depending on the type of group. By agreeing to guidelines ahead of time, both you and other group members can “call” inappropriate behavior and remind the offender that it was agreed upon not to do that.

Project Adventure refers to their model as the Full Value Contract. There are many variations on it, but one model is:

- **Be here**
Be present mentally, physically, and emotionally
- **Be Safe**
Create a level of safety so that people are able to relax and feel comfortable.
- **Speak the Truth**
Share your thoughts and opinions openly and honestly.
- **Pay Attention**
Listen to what others say and focus on understanding their ideas. Minimize distractions.
- **Be Open to Outcomes**
Try not to prejudge what is happening. Recognize your preconceived notions about what you will learn or experience.

Playfair (doing mostly new games type activities) asks everyone to :

- **Play Hard** (be involved, give it your best)
- **Play Fair** (be respectful and considerate of others)
- **Play Safe** (lookout for your own and other's safety)

Another model is to ask participants for five commitments:

- **Participate**
- **Be responsible for safety:** both emotional and physical
- **Feedback or Feedforward:** Give feedback in ways you can receive it

- Leave baggage: Be in the present, here and now
- Have fun, fun and more fun

Another option is to ask the group to develop the guidelines themselves. “What types of guidelines for expected behavior would be helpful today?”

- Help the group brainstorm and choose from the ideas generated.
- This approach has been particularly effective with youth groups.
- Some common things they come up with are: no discounting others, listen when someone else talks, no fighting.

Warm-ups/Icebreaker Activities

* Some type of icebreaker activity should be done prior to doing course elements in order to help you assess the group and to set the tone - fun, supportive, get people touching. This is commonly a name game or a trust walk, but does not need to be. For adults, morning groups, or groups that have had a long vehicle ride, or groups that will be doing the more physical activities (Mohawk, Beam, Wall) stretching after some initial activity is strongly recommended to avoid injury from exerting cold, tight muscles.

Facilitating Activities

Briefing

- Before each activity, briefing should include:
- Group task
- Rules/ additional restrictions or parameters
- Safety considerations

When possible, explain the group’s task with a creative story-line tailored for the group’s background and goals. See “Customized Facilitation.”

Debriefing

When:

- between elements
- after last element

Base your debriefing session on:

- the stated goals of the group
- individual contributions
- your observations about group interaction

See section on “Debriefing” for more detail

Post-Session Responsibilities

Having supplies in multiple places will cause us all many headaches, unless we follow some set procedures. These procedures may evolve, (let Program Coordinator know how they are working), but for now please follow them so we ensure communication between staff .

Weekday programs

- As long as stuff isn't wet, put it back in lock box. If wet, bring to cage, hang out to dry and
- ***make note of this on the Post Program Report Form***
- Take down ropes and put in lock box. Lock up Nitro swing/slide and lock box. Do a sweep to make sure you don't leave anything out.
- Bring any paperwork back to office. File waivers, put evals in Program Coordinator's box.
- Fill out **Post Program Report Form**- turn in to Program Coordinator's box
- Fill out time card and have a professional staff initial it

Weekend Programs

- As long as stuff isn't wet, put it back in lock box. If wet, bring to cage and
- ***make note of this on the Post Program Report Form***
- Take down ropes and put in lock box. Lock up Nitro swing/slide and lock box. Do a sweep to make sure you don't leave anything out.
- Fill out **Post Program Report Form**
- Put all paperwork (evals, waivers, report) in the "To Office" file basket on the shelves in the cage
- Put keys and the first aid kit (and radio if you have it) in the cage.
- Come in to office later to fill out time card and have a professional staff initial it

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an accident, the most senior staff at the course should take charge of the situation to ensure that this Emergency Procedure is followed:

- assess the scene/situation
- perform primary first aid; stabilize patient
- if serious, call Security: use the blue light phone
- give name of injured participant
- extent of injuries or suspected injuries
- location of patient - at the Venture Team Challenge Course(behind Physical Plant compound)
- type of assistance requested - ambulance to the hospital or police car to transport to Health Center
- Campus Police (not Venture staff) will contact ambulance
- Complete accident report form within 48 hours

First Aid Kit

The Venture First Aid Kit contains items such as Band-Aids, aspirin, gauze pads, ace bandages, bug repellent, Ana kit, etc. All staff should be familiar with the contents.

*** REPORT ALL INJURIES TO VENTURE DIRECTOR WITHIN 48 HOURS!!!**

If participant needed medical help, report ASAP, within 24 hours.

Games
&
Warm-up
Exercises
&
Trust Exercises

Games & Warm-up Exercises

Warm-up Exercises: there are tons of possibilities; here are a few of our favorites:

- individual stretches of isolated body parts (do not bounce, hold position)
- partner stretches: isometric pushing against partner's hands and shoulders, holding legs, etc.
- Stand off: lock elbows back-to-back and sit down, then stand up; also can then do in 4s, 8s, etc.

Name Games

- **Motion Name game**—Go around and say name and do a stretch or motion; group repeats all names and motions.
- **Name Tag/Name Bopper**—One person in middle of circle. One person says someone else's name. When your name is called you have to say someone else's name before the person in the middle tags you (by hand or with a bopper). No running away (can only move one foot) to avoid being tagged. Additional challenge- must say your own name and then someone else's.
- **Funderbird**—everyone says their name when they whack the Funderbird
- **Toss a ball**—Group passes a ball around randomly in the circle. Usually do each stage for several minutes. 1) Say your name when you throw it 2) Say name of person you are throwing it to 3) Say name of person you are throwing it to and the receiver says "Thank You, _____(passer's name)". This can lead easily into Group Juggle: just add an increasing number of balls.
- **Adjective Name game**—each person picks an adjective beginning with the first letter of their name or an adjective describing how they feel that day/moment. Group repeats both as they go around circle.
- **Produce Name Game**—Use a fruit or vegetable which starts with the same first letter of your first name (i.e. Cucumber Cathy, Apple Annie, Tomato Tommy)

Tags (High Energy, Open Space Required)

- **Blob Tag**—Establish a square boundary using cones or ropes or natural boundaries. Have one pair lock arms. The pair's free arms on either side can be used to tag other participants. Once a participant is tagged he/she must lock arms with the ever-growing blob. If the blob breaks apart it cannot tag anyone. Participants cannot go through, under or over the blob to prevent from being tagged. Participants who leave the boundaries are automatically joined to the blob. When all participants are part of the blob the game is over.
- **Monarch Tag**—Introduce a soft object that is easy to catch. This object is designated as the royal scepter. Establish the royal boundaries using 4 cones. Ask 2 participants to volunteer to represent the Royal family (i.e. king & queen, prince & princess, etc.). The goal is for the 2 original family members to bring all participants into the royal family by tagging group members with the royal scepter. Royal family members must stand still when

they are holding the royal scepter. They can however throw the scepter to another family member who has positioned himself/herself close enough to a non-family member to be tagged. Game is over when all are Royalty.

- **Toe Tag**—partners hold hands, try to tag each other's toes with their feet; can then do in 4s, 8s, etc.
- **Wicky, Wicky, Woo**—Establish the boundaries of the enchanted forest with 4 cones. Living within the enchanted forest are the happiest individuals in the world known as Ben-nek-ba-nocks (Facilitator should demonstrate). Request 2 or 3 volunteers to play role of evil wizards. The evil wizards are the only people who can ruin the day of a Ben-nek-ba-nock. If an evil wizard tags an unfrozen Ben-nek-ba-nock the Ben-nek-ba-nock stands frozen until 2 unfrozen Ben-nek-ba-nocks join hands around the frozen unfortunate one and screams Wicky, Wicky, Woo. The game continues until all Ben-nek-ba-nocks are frozen. **Safety issues:** Discuss appropriate place to tag each other and appropriate speed for alluding wizards (i.e. fast walk please)
- **Auto Tag**—Establish the parking lot boundary with 4 plastic cones. Have group members find a partner and request for them to interlock arms (just one i.e. right /left, left/right). Ask pairs to agree on a type of car that they both like. Ask pairs then to imitate the sound that this automobile makes. Have each pair find another pair to play tag with then decide who will be "it" first. The "it" pair tries to tag the other pair with whom they are playing. When a pair gets tagged, they must count to 5, and then they are the "it" pair. When the facilitator says, "go", the noisy auto pairs maneuver around the congested parking lot until the group runs out of gas.
- **Popcorn Tag**—Have the group divide itself in two. Have the 2 sub groups form a line and have the lines facing each other. Request 2 volunteers, 1 to be a popper and one to be it. The object is for the "it" person to tag the popper before the popper pops (or touches) the back of a participant standing in line. When the popper pops the back of another participant that person becomes the new popper and attempts to elude the "it" person. If the "it" person tags the popper the popper becomes it. The game continues until all are pooped.

Icebreakers/ Energizers

• Ah-Saw-You

Brief: AH-SAW-YOU is a fun concentration game. Have group stand in a circle.

1. AH: Facilitator says “AH “and places his /her hand under his/ her chin. *Note the direction that the hand is pointing.*
2. SAW: If the hand is pointing right, the person to the right of the facilitator says “SAW” and he/she places his/her hand on top of his/her head. Note the direction of the hand.
3. YOU: If the hand is pointing right, the person to the right gets to say “YOU” while pointing his/her finger at anyone else in the circle except for the person next to him /her.

This hand point starts the AH-SAW-YOU cycle over again. Remember that the hand under the chin (“AH”) or on top of head (“SAW”) can point either right or left. The direction of the hand point directs the direction of the game. Let the group practice this a few times and then increase the speed. When the first person makes a mistake the group places one thumb in the center of the circle and yells “you’re outta here”(in unison). Participants "excluded" from the circle are not really out of the game- they then take on the fun and exciting role of hecklers. Hecklers walk around the outside of the circle chanting “Ah-Saw-You” in any order they see fit, trying to distract the players. Once the group shrinks to 2 participants the game starts anew.

• Line –ups

Group Task: To line up, according to a wide range of criteria, with or without talking.

Brief: Depending on the goals of the group, request them to line up according to almost any criterion. For example, alphabetical order by name, alphabetical order of their mother’s maiden name, chronological order, personal characteristics (level of outgoingness, ability in ___) etc. Facilitators can increase the level of difficulty by asking the group to not speak while attempting to communicate where they belong in the order.

Leadership: Did someone take on the task of helping the group create an order?

Shared information: Depending on the line-up criterion, participants will learn information about each other.

• People to People

Have group in circle standing next to a partner (need an even number). Person in the middle (staff first) calls out two body parts for partners to touch, for example: head to shoulder. The middle person calls out several more parts to touch and then says “people to people.” Everyone must find a new partner and the person left without a partner comes to the middle to start again.

• Loop the Group

Materials: Hula-Hoops or circles of rope

Set-up: Have the group stand in a circle holding hands. Have one or more pairs break their grip, and rejoin with their hands going through the loop.

Task: For the group to pass the loop around the circle, without breaking handgrips (i.e. the loop has to pass over/around each person). It is more interesting if you send two loops in opposite directions around the circle.

- **Back Writing**

Materials: Paper, markers, several simple line drawings.

Set-up: Divide group into subgroups of 4-5 people. Have them sit on the ground with each group in a separate line facing forward. Give the person in the front of the line a piece of paper and marker.

Briefing: Have the back person from each group come to a central place (away from other members of the group) and show this group a simple drawing. Have each person go back to their group and without talking, this person must draw the picture on the back of the person in front, using one finger. One drawing is allowed. No one may repeat any part of the drawing a second time. Each person interprets what is drawn on his or her back and draws it on the next person. Once the front person receives a drawing, they draw this onto their paper. When each first person has finished their drawing, they hold it up so others may see. Repeat with various line drawings moving from simple to more complex: suggestions are percentage sign (%), smiley face, sun with bird, simple house, star, etc. Rotate the line each time to change people's positions.

- **Paper Tear**

Give each person an 8 1/2 by 11 sheet of paper. (The next part may be done by asking individuals to follow the instructions with eyes open or closed.) Tell participants that if they are unsure what to do, just use best judgment:

Hold the paper up in front of you and fold paper in half.

Tear off a small piece in the top left corner.

Fold the paper in half again

Tear off the top right corner

Fold the paper in half again.

Tear off bottom middle

Open eyes, unfold paper. Hold them up high and look around.

Get together in groups of 4, and compare your results. What does this exercise reveal?

- **Balloon Volleyball**

Place a string across the playing area at a 7-foot height. Blow up 1 balloon per person. Start with only 1 balloon. The balloon must be hit by at least 3 people before going to the opponent's court. Add another balloon into play every 5 seconds. One point is scored for each time a balloon touches the ground on one team's side.

Option: Follow the above directions, except do not place a string across the playing area. Divide into 2 teams. Each team makes a line facing the other team. Sit on the ground, still facing each other and with legs straight move in until feet touch (i.e. player A's feet and

touching with player B's feet). Players must remain seated at all times. Points are scored with a balloon touches the ground.

- **Have You Ever?**

Materials: Have available one paper plate or one piece of paper per person.

Set up: Give one plate or piece of paper to each person (excluding facilitator). Stand in circle.

Group Task: Disclose information to the group about an experience that they have had or something that they enjoy.

Brief: Request group members to stand on their paper. Facilitator (who is also participating) should enter the center of the circle and instruct group regarding task of game, i.e. the person in the center of the circle will complete the phrase, "Have you ever..." (Example: Have you ever brushed your teeth?). If what the person in the center is true for any or all participants, then those participants are required to move to another paper plate/piece of paper, but it cannot be the one next to them. The participant without a plate to stand on is required to take his/her place in the center of the circle and complete the dreaded phrase, "Have you ever..." this time with a new question. The question needs to be true for the asker, so that they can move out of the center.

Safety Considerations: Since for many, the fear of public speaking is greater than the fear of death, participants may be tempted to run or dive to another plate. Discuss this phenomenon with the group and require that they move during the activity with a fast walk, no pushing or shoving please.

Variations:

- **Butts Up**

Replace the paper plates in the above activity with chairs. Replace the "Have you ever..." question with "if you like... (fill in the blank). Butts up, butts up, butts up. After the last spoken "butts up", participants move to another chair (not the one next to them) if the question is true for them also. Same safety considerations apply.

- **All My Neighbors**

Complete the sentence, "All my neighbors who...." ("Like..." or "are...") finish with anything that is true for you. This is a more open-ended question than "Have you ever...?" so the possible topics are greater. It is also a little harder for people to think of something, since it is less specific.

- **Ask One Question**

This activity works best with groups of 10 or more

Each participant writes one question on an index card that would ask something to get to know another person.

All participants find one person they do not know, introduce themselves to them, ask their questions, and then exchange cards.

Participants then find another person, introduce themselves, ask the question you have, exchange cards, etc.

- **Find a Partner or Incorporations**

This activity is best for large groups of 20 or more. Can be done with several hundred.

Sample Briefing: For this activity I will be asking you do something and then find a partner based on what you do. Such as, I might ask you to raise your hand and then find someone raising the same hand (right or left). The goal is to find a partner, so there is a rule called the "rule of threes". If 3 seconds after I tell you how to find your partner, you can't find somebody who matches, disregard the hands and find anyone, even forming a group of 3 if necessary. Everyone clasps your own hands together: find someone else who has is the same (Right thumb on top, left on top, or thumbs side by side)

Answer some question designed to begin conversation, such as "Tell your partner where you are from originally and what you liked or disliked about that place."

Repeat with new pairing method and new question. You need to find a new partner each time.

Other pairing methods (or make up your own):

Cross arms in front of you (which forearm on top)

Imagine you are putting on your pants (which leg first)

Clap and keep your hands together – which hand on top (right, left, equal)

Get into bed (from right side, left, bottom)

Kind of bed (spring, futon, water)

Variation:

- **Categories**

Gather in a large group of people with the same characteristic, group up; get close (if appropriate hold up dominant item and chant the key word to help others find you.) Try to meet at least one person- name, where from and something about them while waiting for next.

Introductory Initiatives

- **Circle Up with Numbers**

Materials: Sets of numbered cards. You need several more cards than the number of people you have in the group.

Set-up: Have group stand in a circle. Remove a few cards at random. Pass out cards face down, so no one sees what is on them. For groups of 20 or more, create 1 circle for every 10-12 people.

Group Task: For the group to arrange themselves in chronological order based on their cards as quickly as they can, while remaining in the circle shape.

Brief: When facilitator says go, turn cards over and arrange people in chronological order. When are finished, yell, "done." This will be timed and you are going for the fastest time possible. Once completed, have each person turn their cards over (so you can't see the

numbers) and trade cards with another person (but not someone directly next to them). Trade two more times (3 total). Repeat the same task again.

If desired, trade cards three more times. This time, the task is to arrange the group in alphabetical order of the spelling of the number on the cards, remaining in a circle, as before.

Variation:

This could be done without allowing talking (much harder).

- **Moonball**

The group hits beach ball around the group, trying to get as many hits as possible before it touches the ground. Can be done with the Funderbird as well (it is harder).

Trust Activities

- **Spotting/ Paired Trust Fall**

* Spotting is mandatory for some activities. If spotting is required, it is specified in the “Safety Considerations” section of the activity description. If you choose to use one of these elements, spotting must be taught and practiced.

Demonstrate the spotting stance:

- one foot in front of the other, about a shoulder width apart
- knees bent
- hands up and ready
- eyes on other person

Demonstrate a paired trust fall with someone, and then have participants practice, usually three times in each role:

- Spotter stands 1 arm’s length behind faller
- Spotter assumes the spotting stance
- Faller stands up straight and keeps body stiff
- Pair goes through communication to be clear before person falls:

Faller “READY?”

Spotter “READY”

Faller “FALLING?”

Spotter “FALL ON”

- Repeat several times; after the first fall, spotter can let faller fall farther if they both choose.

Safety Considerations

- Have the participants pair up with someone approximately their same size (don’t put largest and smallest person together)
- If either the faller or catcher is uncomfortable continuing, they should stop.
- Monitor to ensure that spotters maintain stance and attention on faller.

- Monitor group being responsible toward safety; intervene and stop the activity if appears to be getting out of hand or any individuals are not taking it seriously.

- **Trio Trust Fall**

This is the same idea as the paired trust fall, but the faller is caught by someone behind him or her and then falls forward to be caught by a person in front of him or her. It is useful for groups who need additional spotting practice or additional trust building before moving on to other activities. This should be done after a paired trust fall, so participants learn the basic skill of spotting first

Briefing:

- Demonstrate with volunteers
- The spotter in the back follows the same instructions as before.
- The faller needs to stand straight and stiff as before, but with arms crossed over the chest.
- The front spotter again stands one arm’s distance away and supports the faller by their folded arms.
- Avoid accidental drop by front spotter:
 - take care not to try to support the person by their upper shoulders because your hands can slide up and off of the faller
 - bending knees to be slightly lower to the ground will help ensure you support them lower

Safety Considerations:

Monitor to ensure that spotters maintain stance and attention on faller.

Monitor group being responsible toward safety of person in middle. Intervene and stop the activity if appears to be getting out of hand or any individuals are not taking it seriously.

- **Willow in the Wind (Trust Circle)**

Briefing:

- Form a circle of spotters, with individuals standing shoulder to shoulder.
- Group assumes the spotting position, focusing attention on person in center.
- One faller stands in the center of circle, standing up straight, body stiff, arms folded across chest (eyes closed is optional), check to see that the faller is the very center of the circle.
- Use same communication system as in spotting practice to be clear before person falls:

Faller	“READY?”
Group	“READY”
Faller	“FALLING?”
Group	“FALL ON”
- Faller falls and allows group to pass him/her around the circle and/or back and forth across the circle.
- Emphasize importance of passing faller gently. Faller is the willow tree being blown by the wind. Spotters are a soft breeze, not a hurricane or gale force wind.

Safety Considerations:

- Monitor to ensure that spotters maintain stance and attention on faller.
- Monitor group being responsible toward safety of person in middle. Intervene and stop the activity if appears to be getting out of hand or any individuals are not taking it seriously.

• **Levitation**

Briefing:

- After an individual has been passed around in a trust circle, he/she has the option to be raised up in the air in a prone position and lowered back to the ground.
- Stop the faller in an upright position.
- Group collapses the circle into two lines facing each other with faller between them.
- One person stands directly behind the faller's back and assumes responsibility for the head and shoulders. (Facilitator should assume this role for at least the first person)
- As faller leans back, the group slowly lifts faller up to horizontal position.
- Group then raises faller up as high as the shortest person's reach (no higher to make sure that everyone is supporting the faller)
- Group slowly lowers the faller back down until he/she is gently set down on the ground
- A gentle rocking back and forth motion can add to the floating sensation of the faller.
- Have everyone remain quiet during the activity, unless a safety issue arises
- Faller can close their eyes

Safety Considerations

There is much greater risk in levitation than in a basic trust circle

- This activity should not be a standard addition to trust circle for all groups
- Facilitator needs to be confident in assessing that the group is ready for this higher-level trust activity.

• **Trust Wave**

Group Task: For each person to walk, jog, or run between the two lines of people.

Briefing:

- Divide the group equally in two and form two straight lines with each person facing someone from the other line.
- Arms are extended straight out at shoulder height, so that the hands reach the opposing person's wrists.
- One person stands at least 10 yards away and can walk, jog, or run between the two lines.
- Eyes are focused on runner paying attention to judge the runners speed.
- The people in line raise their arms just before the runner reaches them and then lower them back down just after the runner passes by.
- Runner needs to try to maintain a constant speed (slowing down is OK, speeding up is not).

Safety Considerations:

- It is a good idea to have the first "runner" walk, as a learning trial.

- Have the runner and group use communication system before starting- see “Trust Circle”.
- The faster the runner intends to go, the more distance away from the line necessary for group to judge the speed. Do not start runners a few feet away.
- Make sure that everyone in the line is paying attention, particularly those in middle or far end (when runners have been hit, it is usually because those folks were not paying attention.)

- **Trust Walk**

Materials: blindfolds

Set up: none

Group Task: For sighted partner to safely guide blind partner on the exact path that facilitator walks

Briefing:

- Have group divide into pairs.
- One of the pair is given a blindfold and asked to put it on.
- Explain what will happen on the blind trust walk.
- Sighted people are responsible for their blind partner's safety.
- Let them know they will switch after a while and the sighted folks will be blind then.

Safety Considerations:

Monitor group to ensure they are being responsible toward safety of blind partners; intervene and stop the activity if appears to be getting out of hand or any individuals are not taking it seriously.

Common Stories: Camera story if doing that variation.

Options/ Variations:

- Be creative and safe and have fun with the path and obstacles: vary the difficulty of obstacles with the trust, support, and communication level of the group.
- Possible obstacles at the course: through spider’s web, walk telephone pole, up onto all aboard platforms, walk along trolleys laid on the ground, etc. For high functioning groups- have them run at the end in an open space.
- After a short time, continue without talking; usually give them a minute to plan communications.
- After a short time, continue without touching.
- Human Camera: Do the walk with eyes closed instead of blindfold. Sighted person chooses objects for blind person (the camera) to take a picture of. Sighted person leads them to it and tells how far away to focus, and how long to “expose” the film (open eyes for 1/2 second or 2 seconds).

Common Issues:

Trust, support, responsibility for others, communication (verbal and non-verbal), empathy with blind (real or metaphorically), relating experience to other situations where one feels “blind”.

- **Mine Field (Similar Activity)**

Set up: Establish a rectangular boundary area, about 10 feet wide and 15-30 feet long. Place numerous small objects randomly throughout this space (tennis balls work well).

Group Task:

For each blind person to navigate the obstacle course to reach the other side without touching any of the objects (land mines)

Brief:

- Each person gets a partner and one of them closes eyes or wears a blindfold.
- The sighted partner must stay outside of the boundary and give verbal directions only.
- If a person touches a "mine" they must start over.
- After 1 partner is successful, switch roles.

Safety Considerations:

Blind participants should move slowly and have "bumpers up" (both hands up in front of them, palms facing forward) to protect them if they bump into someone.

- **Trust Fall**

** Staff must be specifically certified for this event- without diligent supervision, significant injury is possible here.*

Materials: Restraint loop

Set up: Clear falling area of debris- fallen branches, etc.

For mobile, tie ladders securely to a tree or post.

Group Task: To catch individuals who choose to fall backward into arms of group members.

Briefing:

- Ask participants to remove all watches, jewelry, pencils, and pens.
- Individuals in line stand shoulder to shoulder facing each other with hands extended, palms up and alternating with the opposite line. Fingers of one line should extend to elbows of opposite line. *Catchers may NOT grasp hands.
- Catchers should assume spotting position with upper bodies leaning out to avoid bumping heads. One foot should be extended forward 10 to 12 inches in front of other foot. Attention on the faller.
- Faller must keep arms from hitting catchers. Have faller clasp hands, and then place loop of rope around hands and elbows. Tucking arms inside shirt is also acceptable.
- Faller's body should be held rigid - not bending at the waist. A helpful way to insure this position is to have faller arch their back by looking slightly up, or using pelvic tilt.
- Catcher at the head end of the line should make sure group is lined up with faller and vice versa, and this person can take specific responsibility for catching (protecting) head.
- Faller must question, "Ready?", hear from the catchers that they are ready, then call "Falling" but will not fall until the response "Fall" or "Fall on" is given.
- Catchers should watch the faller so they can adjust if he/she is not falling straight.

- Faller can decide which height platform to fall from. However the first faller for the group cannot use the highest platform so that group can experience a less demanding catch to start.

Safety Considerations:

- There should be at least 8 individuals standing in line to act as catchers. 10 or more is recommended.
- Spotting must be practiced before doing this activity
- A good position for the staff is up on the large platform, to see the catching line and to place rope sling around faller's elbows.
- Hold the faller steady until s/he is ready to fall. Stress before each fall that faller remain stiff.
- Catchers should be reminded not to let go of faller until that person's feet are on the ground and they are stable.
- Intervene in the case of inappropriate peer pressure being placed on participant to try the fall.
- Consider spotting the faller as he/she climbs the platform.
- The facilitator should not be the first person to fall (unless there is more than one facilitator) so staff is available to monitor the catching and insert him/herself in to line as appropriate.
- Examine the line to ensure a good mixture of strength at points most likely to take the most weight, and adjust if necessary, also make the group aware of how they are distributed.
- Often appropriate to explain past accidents to participants: most commonly the catchers are hit by the faller, so we use the arm restraint and catchers should watch the faller so they can adjust position.

Common Stories: Ask participants to think of something to symbolically let go of as they fall, Book of Metaphors

Options/Variations:

Have faller close eyes.

Have participants change position in catching line - each time the line moves up.

Ask the faller to remain stiff and have catchers pass her/him down the line (for a large group).

Give a timid person the chance to at least get up on the platform. From there, chances are s/he'll try falling, rather than getting down.

Have the faller place the catchers in position on the catching line. This would need debriefing as to why people made the decisions they did and how those choices affected other's feelings.

Common Issues: trust, responsibility, risk-taking, handling fear, body image

• **Trust Lower**

Materials: 12 to 15-foot piece of webbing knotted into a loop

Set up: None

Group Task: To safely lower a participant who is leaning forward as low as the participant care to go, or when he/she's nose touches the floor.

*PERMANENT
COURSE
ELEMENTS*

ALPINE TOWER RESCUE EXERCISE™

INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL

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The Origins of the Alpine Tower Team Development Course

The original design for the Rescue Exercise came about when we learned that the poles already ordered for a large Alpine Tower project in California couldn't be used because of earthquake ordinances. We found out that no structures could be over 30 feet tall in this particular area. So we had a number of extra poles on hand. I sat down and began drawing ideas of a way to use the extra poles. The result was the Rescue Exercise!

Based on our work with cave and rock rescue scenarios in Outward Bound, we knew that handling a rescue litter with a live person on board was one of the best events for developing teamwork, compassion, and a service ethic.

While maneuvering the litter through the events is still the most intense and dramatic of the group problem solving initiatives, we have designed other initiatives to conduct within the design.

At Alpine Towers, Inc., we have always favored group initiatives that require all individuals to work as a team to solve the problem. These initiatives are designed toward that goal.

Some of the initiatives may be extremely difficult to solve without touching the ground and losing a point. This is okay. Some groups need a tough challenge or failure and the initiatives will always cultivate material for debriefing afterwards.

Baby Tower Activities (Teamwork Tower)

These group initiatives take place within the base of the tower. They are all low to the ground problems, occasionally requiring spotting and few props.

- **The Jump** – After stretching out a bit, have participants practice stepping off and on the lower base rails. This will help later when they lose their balance during an initiative. Instruct them to use their hand on the rail, similar to vaulting over an object, if this helps them control their descent.
- **The Perimeter Traverse** – This is an easy one. Simply ask everyone to step up on the large horizontal poles (base rails) and cluster around one of the lower tripod legs. Without touching the ground, or breaking the human chain, they must successfully navigate the base spars. *Spot only if you consider it necessary.*
- **The Tai Chi Traverse** – Now it gets harder. Same set up and objective as before, but this time the tripod legs are charged with one million volts of electricity. They must circumnavigate the base rails without going around or touching the tower legs. *Instructors must spot the chasm between spar angles carefully. Caution participants about jumping the chasm or straining body parts attempting the span.*
- **Penny in the Haystack** – A take off on the proverbial needle in the haystack. Have the group stand on the base rails and face away from the tower center. Ask them to close their eyes until you tell them to reopen. Hide a penny in the very center of the base triangle, on the ground, preferably with only an edge of it visible. Ask them to open their eyes, turn around and retrieve the penny by only using the plank provided. They can't touch the ground, nor can the plank. The solution is to first find the plank, grab the vertical tower rope, swing over the penny, retrieve it, and then retrieve the person. *Caution against any crazy heroics, such as throwing the plank or diving for the rope.*
- **Trust Falls** - These can be done off the butt end of the highest base rail. One instructor holds each participant before permission is given from the group to fall backwards. Faller's hands should be tightly tied together across their tummy with a bandanna to prevent an elbow in the eye of a spotter. Spotter should be in two rows, facing each other, shoulder to shoulder and forearms extended, palms up, to provide an almost solid mat of arms for the faller. *Control this one carefully. It seems innocent, but groups have been known to drop the faller. Make sure the faller keeps his/her feet firmly planted and falls back rigid. To go butt first could penetrate the mat of arms.*
- **The Titanic** - A bandanna or foot square piece of wood is placed in the center of the base triangle. The group is standing on the rails with only a 150 foot climbing rope, a harness, and a carabiner. They are told they have five minutes to get two people over the hot, boiling oil in the

boiler room to the plank, in order to fix the leak before the ship sinks. *They are not allowed to climb any higher than the base rails. Instructors need to insure that any rope tying is adequate and/or spot well.*

- **The Amazon** - Participants are once again bundled around one corner of the tower while standing on the base rails to the vent can be staged from the middle of a base rail. A distance out from one of the distant tripod legs is a pail. The group is told that they need to retrieve the pail, which contains a much-needed vaccination for the Yanomamo tribe. Quicksand is all around. Props include the usual stout plank and a six-foot reaching stick. Position the pail so it is just barely reachable when the plank end is extended, and the reach pole can touch the bailer with someone outstretched on the exposed end of the plank. *Caution the participants about the plank end coming up. One instructor should monitor that end and the other should spot whoever goes out to retrieve the pail.*
- **The Traffic Jam** –Each base rail is scored with a series of cross cuts. Divide the group in half, each person occupying a square. See Mobile Initiative Section for event details.
- **Spiders Alive** – This is a good one as an initial “get to know your group” type of fun icebreaker. With everyone spread out along all three base rails, begin juggling a single rubber spider. Emphasize quality tosses and say the name of the person you are tossing it to. Then say your name and “thanks” in return. Slowly add more spiders and see if the group can eventually juggle all five spiders without the spiders or the people touching the ground.
- **The Sloth Regain** – Here’s a difficult individual challenge that will take some of the energy out of an overly energetic group or individual. Have the person hang upside down underneath the rail supported by their arms and legs around the pole. The object is to get on top of the pole without touching the ground. *Watch out for splinters, make sure the poles are sanded well, and long pants and shirts may help.*
- **Dating Sloths** – Similar to the Sloth Regain, but this one is done with two people. There are several variations. Both can hang upside-down or one can start from a sitting position on top of the horizontal rail. The object is to gain the top while helping each other.
- **Line-up Games** – Many different line-up games can be done while the group is standing on the base rails. You can whisper an animal name to each person and the whole group has to line up according to animal size without talking. Birthday dates is another non-verbal lineup initiative.
- **The Prison Shuffle** – A group of participants, holding hands, stand on separate base rails. The object is for the groups to trade base rails without walking on the ground. Tell them they can’t pass on the inside of their legs. *Staff should spot the outside corner where they will more than likely decide to pass. This is another fun one to try without talking.*

- **The Rail Regain** – After doing some easier initiatives, such as The Jump and The Perimeter Traverse, consider offering them the challenge of standing on the base rail without using their hands. This works best in small groups at separate stations. The object is to get them to use each other for help, so to further instill the idea, have the group hold hands. Be sure to spot carefully and don't do this one as their first introduction to accessing the base rails. Watch out for hot dogs that want to try it without group support. Frame this event as a group task while being connected by hands. There is a potential danger if an individual attempts to regain the rail on their own without using their hands.

Water Activities on the Team Development Course

Safety rules that apply throughout the exercise:

- No running or jumping is allowed.
- Move boards slowly and carefully
- Boards must have corners overlapping the poles and cannot be parallel to poles to be walked upon
- No more than 2 people's weight can be on a board spanning a gap
- Boards should be stabilized by a person at both ends if tilting at an up/down angle.

- **The Great Aqueduct** Typically done on Section 1 (Horrible Hologram)

Present the group with two pails. One is full of water and the other is empty. Also, give them ten pieces of rigid, three-foot long, half-round plastic pipe with three-inch width. Challenge them to move the same amount of water from island to island using the following guidelines: Don't spill a drop.

Materials Needed:

- Ten, three-foot long pieces of rigid, half-round PVC, three inches wide
- Two plastic pails with pour spouts
- Water to fill the pail
- Two initiative boards (2x10x10)

- **Plutonium Tub** Typically done on Section 2 (Dreaded Divergence) and can be continued through section 3 (Bermuda Triangle)

Present the group with a large plastic washtub (ideally twelve inches deep and two feet in diameter) with twelve eight-foot cords attached. Fill the tub half full of water (more water if the group needs a harder challenge) and challenge the group to move the plutonium without touching the tub itself.

Instructor Considerations:

- All Rescue Exercise safety policies apply
- Bring extra water
- Pour food coloring into the water

- Allow the group to attach the cords

Materials Needed:

- Plutonium tub and cords (tub needs 12 holes for cords)
- Water
- Two initiative boards (2x10x10)

- **Dutchboys** Typically done on Section 4 (Complex X)

This initiative requires you to tell the group their challenge and instructions first. After they develop a plan, fill the capped container with water. The container (a rectangular, five gallon plastic gas can) has 2.5 gallons of water in it and 42 holes on the bottom and top of it. The group must move the water container from island to island without losing any water.

Instructor Considerations:

- All Rescue Exercise safety policies apply.
- Bring additional water
- Fill the jug vertically but tell the group to transport it horizontally. This will provide more people plugging the leaks and therefore more participation.
- This one may be impossible to do without losing some points from placing a board on the ground.

Materials Needed:

- The jug
- Water
- Extra jug with 2.5 gallons
- Two initiative boards (2x10x10)

- **The Giant Python** Typically done on Section 5 (Teeter Totter)

While the group is standing on the first debrief island, give them a ten-foot length of flexible, four-inch diameter, plastic pipe. Ask them to hold the two open ends above the rest of the pipe. With a hose or other water source, fill the pipe almost full of water. Leave about five inches of airspace at each end. Now tell the group their challenge, which is to transport their giant python from island to island without it or anyone touching the ground.

Instructor Considerations:

All safety policies apply

- Add excitement and mystique to the initiative by not talking to the group as you fill up the python

Materials Needed:

- One 4"x10" section of flexible plastic pipe
- Water
- Two initiative boards (2x10x10)
- The water cannot be transported in the pail
- Once the water leaves the pail, everyone must remain in his or her spot.

Transport Activity Not Using Water, for the TDC

- **The Egg Chute**

Participants are given a raw egg and two flexible pieces of fifteen-foot long channels (split PVC pipe). Their challenge is to move the egg between debrief islands without touching it. The only rule is that once the egg is set into motion, no team members can move until the egg arrives at its destination.

Instructor Considerations:

All safety policies apply

- Bring several eggs in case of breaks
- Bring a jug of water and a towel to clean up broken eggs on equipment
- Consider conducting a debrief after each event to allow participants to apply lessons learned about trust, cooperation, communication, planning, etc, on the next event.

Materials Needed:

- Two flexible fifteen foot long pieces of half round PVC pipe.
- Eggs

Towel and water jug

- Two initiative boards (2x10x10)

Sample Stories for TDC

Mountain Rescue Delivery (water transport, all sections)

A mountain rescue team is desperately in need of a delivery of blood. They heard that _____ was the place to call for _____. You just got a call that some folks in the field need some blood “YESTERDAY!!” Your task is to get **ALL** the blood they ordered to them as quickly and efficiently as possible!!

There are very detailed requirements on how this delivery needs to be made- while you don’t really understand why they are important, you know you need to follow the guidelines provided.

The delivery route starts once you are on the entry platform into the mountain area. You must stay “up on the route” at all times – no stepping off the route (onto the ground) into mile deep crevasses!!

Your task on the first phase of delivery is to transfer the blood, without spilling **much**, into the giant aqueduct to be able to transport it to the next platform. It needs to be aerated every so often to keep it viable to use. The bucket containing the blood cannot leave the start platform.

The base has given you a bit more blood than was requested from the on-site rescue team. You have a little room for spillage, but not much – about two cups. If you can get it all there it may prove useful to the folks in need! If you loose more than two cups, your team **must return to get more!**

It needs to end up in the tub on the next platform after it is aerated. The tub cannot be touched or moved! Germs these days... have to keep it as uncontaminated as possible throughout the trip!

Work together to ensure everyone’s safety – you all have a reputation in the field for being the safest delivery team around, as well as the most efficient and effective – keep that reputation in tact!!

When you get to the next platform, you will need to contact base and report on your progress and get your next set of instructions. Because the blood reacts to changes in temperature and elevation handling procedures change as you get closer to the folks in need.

Good luck!!

Mountain Rescue Delivery #2

Good work crew!!

Now the blood needs to stay uncontaminated, in the tub. Even the tub cannot be touched for fear of contamination!! Once the tub is raised, it cannot be set down again until it is empty. Move yourselves and the blood safely to the next platform, and then on to the following platform (where the red container is) again without spilling more than a total of 2 cups.

Each person must hold a string the entire time (or while the tub is moving) during this phase of transport.

Keep safety in mind for your crew as you transport the blood!!
Good luck!!

When this task is completed, review / discuss some of the team dynamics that have enabled you to be effective thus far. Are there any changes you want to make in how you approach future challenges?

Remember, contact base when you reach your next stopping point!

Mountain Rescue Delivery Alternate #2

Good work crew!!

Now the blood needs to stay uncontaminated, in the tub. Even the tub cannot be touched for fear of contamination!! Once the tub is raised, it cannot be set down again until it is empty. Move yourselves and the blood safely to the next platform, and then on to the following platform again without spilling more than a total of 2 cups.

Each person must hold a string the entire time (or while the tub is moving) during this phase of transport.

Keep safety in mind for your crew as you transport the blood!!
Good luck!!

When this task is completed, review / discuss some of the team dynamics that have enabled you to be effective thus far. Are there any changes you want to make in how you approach future challenges?

Remember, contact base when you reach your next stopping point!

Mountain Rescue Delivery Alternate #2.5

Good work again!!

Once you get to the litter, you must place the tub in the litter and transport the blood to the next container. The ropes on the litter cannot change locations on the litter. The litter itself cannot be held (only the ropes).

Remember, contact base when you reach your next stopping point!

Mountain Rescue Delivery #3

Good work crew!! You are getting closer to your destination!!

Now the blood must be kept from sunlight to keep it viable. Transfer it to the red container on the platform to transport it. Most of it needs to arrive at the next platform, without spilling more than 2 cups total – it is needed for the rescue team!!

Your crew's ability to stay close to the blood is important at this stage– keep as many of your crew in contact with the blood container as possible to transport it and your team to the next destination as possible!

Check in with base when you reach your destination.

Mountain Rescue Delivery #4

All right!! This is the last section until you reach the team in need of the blood!!

The blood now needs to be mixed with another solution (in second red container) and put into the large black IV tube to be delivered. It needs to be kept in balance, and of course, not spilled, to be able to deliver it all!! This allows the blood to be in the right proportions and ready to be given immediately!! Your destination is the next platform- fill the containers provided there.

Transportation of Critical Sugar Mass (youth version)

Your task is to deliver as much of the sugar solution to the final processing factory. Your group will start with 2-gallons (or 8-quarts) of the syrup.

Before you begin, you must decide what is an A+ amount (the entire 2-gallons) and what is a B+ amount, a C+ amount, etc. to have at the end of each phase. If you meet the C amount of syrup, your group will receive a reward. If you end up with a B+ amount, your group will get a bigger reward, etc.! Reward is candy.

Before you begin, have the entire group practice moving along the poles in the delivery route. Get a feel for how to walk on the poles and how to step down. Safety is extremely important in this activity.

Safety rules that apply throughout the exercise:

No running or jumping is allowed.

Move boards slowly and carefully

Staff are construction managers and must approve OR improve each board placement.

No more than 3 people's weight can be on a board spanning a gap

The delivery route starts once your group is on the entry platform. You must stay "up on the route" at all times – no stepping onto the ground. You need to try to spill as little as possible in order to get the biggest reward.

Phase 1: You cannot move the original bucket from the starting platform. You need to transport the syrup along the route and into the tub on the next platform. The tub cannot be touched or moved. Once you have the syrup safely in the tub, your group is finished with the aqueduct pipes.

Phase 2: At this section, the syrup is beginning to heat up and you must keep it at a distance in order to prevent burns. Your group needs to move the syrup inside the tub, without touching the tub. Each group member also needs to remain in contact with at least one string at all times.

You cannot set the tub down except in the safe zone. One person could also step or stand in the safe zone. You can move the safe zone to any location. Keep safety in mind as you transport.

Phase 3: Now your group is moving around obstacles, as we get closer to the finish processing factory. Using the same tub, and with each person still in contact with at least one string at all times, with the option of using the safe zone, move the syrup past the tree and onto the final platform at the factory.

The Alpine Tower Rescue Exercise™

Background and Purpose of the Litter Handling Initiatives:

Mike Fischesser from Alpine Towers, Inc designed this series of group initiative problems. The idea was to create a versatile tool for discovering teambuilding principles. The exercise allows facilitators to present group issues such as communication, leadership, followership, service to others, compassion, planning, cooperation, listening skills, and respecting others' ideas and quality of effort.

The entire series of events can be used as one long initiative mini-adventure or selected events can be used if time is short. Several groups can work on the course simultaneously and perhaps pass each other at some point. There are numerous metaphors for folks from the corporate world.

Staff must be specifically trained and certified to lead this version of the TDC.

Set Up:

Staff only needs to pre-inspect the course prior to use, prepare the instruction envelopes, obtain a group journal and bring the gear. The instruction letters may vary depending on the goals of the group.

Equipment Needed:

Rescue litter and shield

One 75' rope

- Four biners
- Four tethers
- Two 2x10x10' boards

Safety Policies: All of the policies from the other uses of the TDC, with these additions:

- Adequate time must be taken to warm up ankles, knees, backs, and shoulders
- Instructors will spot where necessary
- Don't allow participants to position their bodies into an overstraining situation
- Don't use the exercise if the poles are too wet or slick for footwear to grip

Instructor Considerations:

- Inform participants that they need to be very conscious of reaching, pulling lifting bending and spreading in awkward positions. Each person is given an imaginary strain gauge with zero standing still and ten being an injury. Participants and staff should all monitor each other and speak up if someone is nearing a five.
- Staff needs to be aware of the medical histories of the participants, especially those with preexisting injuries.
- Don't allow any heroics where someone might get hurt.

- Allow 10-15 minutes for warming up stretches.
- Pre-teach the figure eight on a bight knot.
- Many variations are possible depending on the fitness and maturity of the group. Some groups may be challenged without using the litter. Simply challenge the group to make their way through the maze of pole patterns without touching the ground. Another variation is to have the group carry a bucket of nitroglycerin through the events without spilling a drop. It may be better for some groups to carry the litter without only a small amount of weight placed inside. For the full effect, a person in the litter creates an interesting dynamic and atmosphere to the problem.
- A group could re-visit the Rescue Exercise many times to try new problems, if the above variations are used and then only introducing a couple of events each session for about an hour or two of programming, including framing and debrief time.

Suggested themes for their “debrief islands” are:

- Communication
- Planning
- Listening to and respecting others’ ideas
- Quality

Debrief Island #1 (Sample letter for the instructions envelope)-

Extra-terrestrials from the Ogatten civilization have selected you as a representative sample of mankind. To determine whether or not they need to intervene and help Earth’s problems, they would like to assess the evolvement of human qualities, specifically:

- Fortitude
- Perseverance
- Tenacity
- Ingenuity
- Peaceful and productive problem solving
- Respect and care for others

With the special space capsule provided and a few helpful items, the Ogattens would like you to embark on this adventurous exercise.

Your team has one hundred points to begin. Each time anything (people’s feet or gear) touch the ground, a point is deducted. There are ways to gain points. For example, on the first exercise, The Horrible Hologram, you may gain a point if the capsule does not touch the giant poles. A maximum, perfect score would be 109 points.

To lessen the possibility of injury, the Ogattens would like for you to follow the following safety guidelines:

Safety Guidelines:

- No jumps
- Stretch and warm up your ankles, knees, shoulders, and backs (allow 10-15 minutes)
- Only the figure eight on a bight knot may be used
- Each person is given a strain gauge. Everyone must monitor each other to insure that gauges don't exceed five or six. Ten is an injury and zero is standing still.
- No body bridges
- Only two people on a single board at a time.

To Proceed:

- Place a group member in the capsule (and hope they don't disappear into the twilight zone) and gain the next island.
- Remember: The fate of planet Earth is in your hands. Good luck, and don't forget to have fun along the way!

Debrief Island #2

Congratulations! Your group has arrived at Debrief Island #2.

Would the reader of this letter please record (in the group journal) what lessons the group says it has learned in communicating with each other? Please do this before reading further.

Your group may gain a point if everyone feels that there was one hundred percent participation in the last event.

Now, place a different group member in the capsule and gain the next island via the Dreaded Divergence exercise.

A point may be gained if the capsule does not touch the giant poles.

Debrief Island #3

Good work! Your group is now on Debrief Island #3.

Have the reader record what the group feels they have learned about planning. Also record the feelings and observations of the first two people to ride in the capsule. Do this now before reading further.

How about that one hundred percent participation point?

Place a new group member in the capsule and gain Debrief Island #4 via the Bermuda Triangle. A point may be gained if the rope is used.

Debrief Island #4

You are doing well.

Please record the lessons learned regarding listening to the ideas of others.

One hundred percent participation?

New member in the capsule for the Complex X exercise.

A point may be gained if nothing touches the ground. Good luck!

Debrief Island #5

Well done!

Please record your group observations regarding the quality of your efforts.

One hundred percent participation?

New member in the capsule, please.

The object is to cross the Teeter Totter to Debrief Island #6.

Debrief Island #6

Good work!

Please record group lessons on the subject of respecting each member in the group for their ideas for solutions to the problems.

One hundred percent participation?

New member in the capsule, please.

Your final challenge is to cross the Darien Gap to the Teamwork Tower. (You may have to forfeit some points on this one.)

Teamwork Tower

Congratulations!

You have done a fine job dealing with all the obstacles.

You have learned valuable lessons along the way.

The Ogattens feel that your group is capable of managing planet Earth and they have decided to postpone intervention for the time being.

• **Mohawk Walk/ Multi-line Traverse**

Materials:

2 ropes with carabiners on end (on hooks in lock box labeled Mohawk Walk)

Set-up:

- Put up ropes on first the pole and across the fourth span- clip carabiners into eye bolts.
- First rope can be hanging (very hard for first person to traverse) or tied across span loosely (moderately hard for first person) or tied across span tightly (easier for first person).

Group task: To get group from one end of wire to the other without touching the ground.

Brief:

- Each section is different- some have ropes to use for balance, some section you only have each other for support and balance.
- Can help support each other, but only if you are on the event- on a cable or pole.
- Spotters can walk on ground, but can't help people on event.
- A fall or touch by a spotter causes penalty: a re-start to beginning, to the last pole, etc.

Safety Considerations:

- Spotting is required for this activity, have spotters on both sides for the first section- quick falls often take place here- and elsewhere if deemed necessary.
- Spotters should anticipate direction of fall depending on angle of hand rope. Walker may fall forward or backward in an arc - be ready. Be sure spotters keep their hands up; after many attempts at the first section, spotters can become lax and forget about keeping their hands up.
- Only slow controlled motion is allowed- Do not lunge for the next pole, run, jump, etc. because you could fall and land on pole/cable/bolt. Not far off ground, but serious injury is possible.
- Caution participants about the potential of splinters from poles.
- Participants are not allowed to climb up the poles.

Common Stories:

- Indian burial ground - can't touch the sacred ground.
- Crossing a deep chasm- there is fog rising out of chasm so eyes are closed while on the wire.
- High voltage across the space so each person needs to be grounded (i.e. either touching a pole, or touching a person who is touching a pole. Anyone not grounded at any time needs to start over.
- Customize metaphor: each span represents a different aspect of group's task, journey, or goal.
- Surviving the week: Each section can represent a day of the week (5 total) finishing Friday night.

Options/Variations:

- Additional limitations are often used to create more interdependence and less individual focus:

- Only half of group or certain people (females, those in sneakers, first one to touch it) can touch an aid.
- Each person can only touch one rope; or two ropes, or three ropes (there are 4 total)
- A different person has to be the first one across each span.
- Must close your eyes for certain section (s).
- The task can be limited to only doing part of the event- typically either the first or the last section (Tension Traverse or a Multi-Line traverse).

Common Issues:

Support- giving, receiving, asking for help; communication-in small groups, passing on information to those behind you; roles people chose to play; quality- touches, trial and error. Good practice for HRC.

• **Nitro Swing/ Proudys Landing**

Materials:

- Swing rope with carabiner
- Can filled up with water
- Landing markers of choice (bicycle tire, rope loops, boards, trip wire, etc.)
- Optional: rope to help retrieve the swing, loop rope to extend swing rope for youth groups, container of water to replace water lost on unsuccessful attempts

Set up:

- Climb up tree with large staple footholds and attach rope to cable eye. Lock biner.
- Unlock lock and let rope down.
- When attaching and removing rope, be sure to avoid losing hold of the cable without the rope attached; it can swing away from the tree and be extremely difficult to retrieve.
- Place container of water on beginning platform
- Arrange landing area as desired

Group Task: To transport group and liquid from platform across open area using the swing rope.

Brief:

- No one can touch ground on other side of the yellow rope boundary: consequences can be individual or entire group restart.
- No items other than what they brought with them can be used to obtain swing rope.
- Landing must be inside designated area (on boards, in tire ring, rope loops, across line).
- If any water is spilled entire group must start over.

Safety Considerations:

- Warn participants about rope burns from sliding hands on rope.
- Standing or sitting in the loop is easier and safer for those with less upper body strength. Staff should demonstrate these techniques if they seem necessary. * Have at least 1 participant (preferably 2) on each side to assist getting someone's foot or body in and out of the loop.
- Warn participants to watch out for the "lasso" if such a method is used to get swing.

- Staff should spot participants who appear likely to have difficulties swinging.
- Swinger should try to grab above the knot in the rope to avoid dragging the ground.

Common Stories:

- Mission found the fountain of youth, Nitroglycerin, cure for cancer or other disease. Have to get to helicopter pick up pad, across swamp of Piranha fish.
- Water represents your reputation- don't "diminish" it.
- Serum Crossing - deliver a life saving serum to an isolated community in order to prevent the spread of a deadly disease or the extinction of the community. Middle is contaminated with the disease, so if anyone touches, the entire group must return to original position. Those who touched are treated with the serum, which leaves less for the community.
- Avalanche/ flood wiped out a crossing, must use swing to get home or to go rescue others.

Options/Variations:

- Varying landing area effects task: all land and stand inside 1 rope loop or on 1 platform; multiple landing spaces- people must stay where they land or may move around.
- Each person gets only 1 (or 2) tries to retrieve the rope and then it is someone else's turn.
- Have subunits responsible for jobs: getting rope, transporting water, sending/receiving swinger.
- Allowing the swinger to bump the ground, if using the chasm story it would not be there anyway.
- The amount of liquid in the can effects the group's challenge level, more difficult with more liquid.

Common Issues: Brainstorming/problem solving; supporting others, quality (spills), trial and error

• Nitro Slide

Materials:

Boundary ropes for each side (or other landing zone at end: boards, loops)

Can filled up with water

Optional: rope to help retrieve the slide (more standard with this version than the swing);

container of water to replace water lost on unsuccessful attempts

Set-up: Unlock platform from tree- place in middle, provide can of water, boundary markers for each side

Group Task: To transport group and liquid from one side to other without touching the ground.

Brief:

- No one can touch ground on the other side of the rope boundary: consequences can be individual or entire group restart.
- Landing must be inside designated area: on boards, in tire ring, rope loops, across line
- If any water is spilled entire group must start over

Safety Considerations:

Be careful helping people onto the platform (lifting technique-straight backs- if necessary)

Do not push platform too hard to slide it to other side. (One could slide into the far tree)

- * Look out for being hit by sliding platform- it will have considerable force with a person on it
- * Do not swing platform from side to side, only straight line from tree to tree
- * 3 people maximum load- slide will drag
- * No standing on the platform, only seated riding

Common Stories:

See those listed under Nitro Swing.

Options/Variations:

Same option/variations as listed for Nitro Swing, plus:

- Limit the number of rides on the platform, adds level of difficulty, and fits with makeshift story.
- If you require that people must stay where they land, warn them about being hit by the slide.

Common Issues: Brainstorming/problem solving; supporting others, quality (spills), trial and error

• Spider's Web

Materials: None

Set-up: Check for tightness of strings; adjust or fix broken sections if necessary.

Group Task: To move entire group through web, from one side to other, without touching it

Brief:

- Once a body has successfully passed through an opening, that opening is closed. (For large groups you could allow 2 uses of some or all holes.)
- Holes are only useable if they are surrounded on all sides by string- no over the top, through the side, etc.
- If participant attempts to go through an opening and touches, it's closed and s/he must start over.

Safety Considerations:

- Spotting is required for this activity.
- When passing someone, be careful not to drop him/her: support head and shoulders until the participant is back standing on the ground.
- Inform people about safe lifting techniques to avoid back injuries; do spotting type fall into lifters arms
- Slow controlled motion when passing people (no throwing); no jumping or diving through.

Common Stories:

Spider story, windows of opportunity, windows of leadership, stain glass window escape, each hole is product

• **Spider Web Variations**

These are two different initiatives using similar materials:

1. Spider Web Rope Pass
2. Spider Web Puzzle Pass

Materials:

- Portable Spider Web and
- A 20-30 foot rope or
- Lizard Puzzle

Set up:

- Set up the spider's web.
- Divide group into 2 sub groups with half on either side of the web.

Group Task:

1. To weave the entire rope through each hole of the web, without touching the web.
2. To build a puzzle and pass it through the web, without touching the web.

Brief:

1. The goal is to weave the rope through each hole of the web, without touching it. The rope must be woven through each hole; it may **not** be extended through one hole before it goes through the next hole. In addition the rope cannot simply be balled up and passed through one hole at a time: the back end must stay on the starting side until the rope is fully woven through different holes.

If the rope touches the web at any point, the group must start over or the rope must be removed from any hole that shares a common boundary with the hole that was touched.

2. Half of the lizards are on one side of the web and half on the other. The group must build the puzzle by attaching the lizards together. A puzzle piece may only be added after the main puzzle is successfully passed through a hole in the web without touching any of the web. The puzzle cannot be passed through a hole unless another piece is added on from the present side. Each hole in the web may only be used once.

So, they begin by passing one piece through a hole. Add a piece, and pass it back. Add a piece, and pass it back, etc.

Common Themes: Planning, problem solving, decision-making, quality

Options/Variations:

- Difficulty based on touching web: no touches is extremely difficult
- Put a stick in the web and a touch is if it is knocked out; or attach bell- if the bell rings.
- Let group decide what constitutes a touch and what are the consequences of a touch.
- Penalty options include: that person starting over, whole group starting over, spider coming to investigate and getting closer with each touch or more violent touch and once spider arrives everyone must return (this can be based on a specific # of touches given at start or can use staff discretion based on obviousness of touch and/or abilities and motivation of the group.
- Allow the hole to stay open if a body part is left in it: this helps groups call their own touches.

- Half the group can start on one side, half on the other.
- Using only one hole is a variation called Porthole, good for small groups and/or limited time

Common Issues: Leadership, quality (esp. if group is responsible for identifying their own touches), problem solving, planning, gender roles, body size perceptions, trust, decision making, resource utilization

- **TP Shuffle** - can be done on several sections of the TDC

Materials: For mobile version, 2 boards per group

Set-up: For mobile, place boards on a flat area

Group Task: For the two halves of a group standing on a horizontal telephone pole (or boards if mobile) to exchange ends without touching the ground.

Brief:

- Entire group gets onto the pole.
- Find middle of group, half the group faces the other half (both face towards the center)
- Exchange ends without touching the ground.

Safety Considerations: If someone is going to fall off, encourage them to step down rather fall or pull someone else off.

Common Stories: 2 tribes from separate cultures meet on a bridge; can't go back because they would lose face in their cultures.

Options/Variations

- For youth- try to create a progressive challenge:
 - Have them all walk across the beam individually
 - Pairs walk toward each other from opposite sides and have to pass each other
 - Then, all on pole if desired.
- Instead of all switch, the 2 people on the ends have to switch ends (less time, but all involved).
- Put some objects on the ground they can use for additional support, or allow "X" number of touches before a restart.
- Time the event. Assign a 15 second penalty each time someone touches the ground. Give group a second or even third try to beat their previous time.
- Each person writes down a positive quality of self, put paper in pocket. Get on pole, re-arrange into alphabetical order of quality without talking.
- Get on and line up by height or other order.

Common Issues: Trial and error, leadership, communication, trust, teamwork, demonstration of personal quality

● **Wall**

* *Staff must be specifically certified for this event- without diligent supervision, significant injury is possible here.*

Materials: Optional rope for last person.

Set up: Optional: Attach rope securely to platform.

Group Task: To get entire group over the wall

Brief:

- There may be no more than ___# of people off the ground at one time (event can hold up to 8- facilitator may set a lower limit to ensure there are enough spotters).
- Once participant has gone over wall, s/he can spot, but cannot assist.
- Clothes or props generally should not be used to make a rope.
- Sides of wall cannot be used, nor can the cracks between the boards.
- Anyone stationed at the top to help must have at least one foot on the platform.

Safety Considerations:

- The smallest number of people required of an extremely strong group is twelve. The average group requires more; about sixteen people.
- Spotting is required whenever someone is not standing on the ground or the wall platform.
- Climbers are not to use the gaps between boards and staff must intervene if they see this happening.
- Warn people about not getting in a position in which their head is lower than the rest of their body- it is difficult to successfully spot someone falling head first.
- Remind spotters to position themselves both in back and on sides of climber in a complete 180-degree arc around the climber.
- Warn participants about strain on backs when lifting people or when people climb on their backs.
- Warn people at top about being over zealous and pulling someone up too forcefully over the top; in particular, be aware not to drag tender parts over the top edge of the wall.
- At the top, the person in the middle should have his/her feet locked against the wall by the two people on her/his sides.

Common Stories: Metaphor for overcoming walls (obstacles) in your life.

Options/Variations:

- Each person must come down in the same order of going up.
- Explain that a common pattern is for the males to do all of the lifting and pulling; can they find an alternative method that allows everyone to contribute.
- Limit the number of lifts or assists per person: only helping 2 or 3 people from the ground.
- For a group that is working well together or has already done the wall, have them attempt it without talking, or with only a couple minutes of talking to plan.
- May want to suggest letting people grab the top of the wall once they are that high and then allowing them some input into how they are assisted over the top.

Common Issues: Excellent end of the day activity

• **Whale Watch/Balance of Life**

Materials: None

Set-up: Visually inspect platform to be sure it is secure and centered

Group Task: To balance the teeter-totter with the entire group on board.

Brief:

- Instruct everyone to get onto one side of the platform (with it is still resting on the ground).
- Adjust people until the platform is balanced and stays balanced for 10 seconds.

Safety Considerations:

- Warn participants on the ground not stand under or near the ends of the platform- it will break their feet easily if they get caught under weighted board.
- No one may stand on the yellow borderline. (This is to lessen the likelihood of people falling off of the platform.)
- Avoid rapid movements, this will cause platform to rock back and forth quickly.
- If you do fall off- move away from platform.

Common Stories:

Whale Watch: The group is boarding a ship to go whale watching. The goal is to have all the passengers board the ship and then maintain a balanced boat for at least 10 seconds. A ground touch means hitting a reef with whatever appropriate consequence your leadership skill deems necessary.

Balance of Life: Before doing the event, ask participants to think about balance in their own lives. What aspects are they balancing? How balanced do they feel? Do a round to share these if appropriate. Then do the event, and reflect on how learning relates to balance in their own lives.

Options Variations:

This activity lends itself to giving the group a progression of several of the variations.

For all variations, the goal can be no touches, as few touches as possible, or have the group do some goal setting: How many touches will be acceptable to you as a group?

- **Alternate Basic Version:** Split the group in half and position each half at opposite ends of platform. Entering only from the middle only (you may not board the whale watch from the side of the boat), the group must all board the ship without allowing any (or the least amount of) ground touches.
- **WHOA (The Whale's on the Starboard Side):** A 50/50 divided group standing on opposite ends attempts to change ends without letting the platform make contact with the ground-or least amount of touches.
- **'Hey, Where's the Whales?':** A group standing all the way around the periphery of the platform attempts to make a 360 degree rotation without letting the platform touch the ground-or least amount of touches.
- **Ballast Beam:** With a group standing on the ground at each end of the platform, the participants try to exchange ends with the least number of platform ground touches-or least amount of touches. A platform end is not allowed to be held on the ground at any time.

- **Walking the Plank:** With the entire group balanced in the center of the platform, the players attempt to move to the ends of the platform so that everyone is located within 18' of the ends of the platform. This is attempted, of course, with the least number of touches.
 - **Abandon Ship:** With the entire group balanced on the platform, everyone must abandon ship without allowing the platform to touch the ground. NOTE: If people leap off the platform, you may encounter sudden movements of the platform resulting in hard impacts with the ground. Advise people of the dangers and monitor closely safety.
 - **Sandy's favorite progression:** First version; then one person from each side must switch ends; then one person from both back edges must switch sides; then all exit from the middle. All of this is done with as few touches as possible or the group can set their own goal.
- Common Issues:** Leadership, communication, role in the team, planning, balance

MOBILE INITIATIVES

- **Acid Pour (Toxic Waste, Nuclear Meltdown)**

Materials: Boundary markers, inner tube, lengths of string, plastic container, small metal container, items to fill metal container (water, rocks, or other)

Set Up:

- Fill the smaller metal container with something that can easily be poured out.
- Set both containers side-by-side inside a small marked off area.
- Make a larger boundary area with a width longer than 1 string length.
- Leave inner tube and string set outside of boundary area.

Group Task: To empty the contents of the smaller metal container into the larger plastic container.

Brief:

- Your group must neutralize this highly toxic and volatile chemical (in the plastic bucket) by pouring the agent in the can into the bucket.
- You may use only the materials provided (strings and rubber tube).
- You may not enter the outside boundary area.
- Neither container can leave the inside boundary area.

Safety Considerations: Monitor blind participants (if using that option).

Common Stories:

- Meltdown in a nuclear power plant and the metal container has the water to cool the reactor
- Toxic waste or a volatile acid must be neutralized by adding another chemical.
- The Toxin or acid is eating through its old container and must be put into a new, stronger container.

Options/Variations:

- Only allowing each participant a limited amount of time to speak, as if they were in protection suits with a limited amount of air.
- Having the group elect a foreman to supervise the transfer of materials and only allowing the foreman to speak.
- Blindfold half the group before they see the task; only blindfolded participants can touch resources. Describe the task to the sighted participants so that the blindfolded ones can't hear it. Sighted folks must direct the others to perform the task. This is very difficult, so often good to allow them to regain sight at the end, if success is important for the group developmental stage.
- Strings can be already tied to the tube (best for blindfolded version) or separated.

Common Issues: Teamwork, communication, leadership/ followership, creative problem solving

• **Acid River or Muse**

Materials: Rope boundaries, 3 bridge boards, 12' rope (optional)

Set-up:

- Place rope boundaries at both ends of the “river”
- Have the three bridge boards separated from the pile of other boards.
- Give group the 12' rope to help move (lower) boards. Cannot be used to tie boards together. (This rope is recommended for most groups- lowering the boards is very hard on back muscles).

Group Task: To cross a "river" using only the provided props

Brief:

- All participants must start from designated rope boundary, no other outside resources available
- Neither participants or boards may touch the "water"
- If either people or boards touch water- all or some must return to start (or get some other penalty if time is short)
- The tiles can support both people and boards

Safety Considerations:

- Do not use this event if it is wet outside- the boards become dangerously slippery
- Be careful of self and others when moving boards: protect backs with proper lifting technique, careful not to accidentally hit others with the long, heavy boards-3 Stooges
- Before people walk on them, make sure boards are safely supported on tiles and laying on the more stable, wider side (gap between boards facing up)
- No jumping to/from tiles or boards, move slowly and carefully on boards

Common Stories: Crossing an acid river, poison peanut butter, overflowing river, roof of Colvard

Options/Variations:

- Require that the group finish with all of their resources: all 3 boards must come with them to other side
- You can make one person blindfolded and see how group responds to care issue.
- This has been used with recovering alcoholics moving across the sea of relapse to recovery on the other side.
- To lessen difficulty- give teams a few minutes to research or gather information. They can walk in river and test board lengths. This speeds up the assessment of the problem, and hopefully, solving it.
- Make the obstacle a metaphor- have group come up with what it represents: reaching the other side represents successfully attaining sales goal or company objective; what makes it hard to get there? Examples: competitor companies, interpersonal conflict, etc. This metaphor can be used on many of the “get from A to B” activities.

Common Issues: Quality- touches, attention to detail, paradigm shifting/thinking out of box, problem solving.

• **All Aboard**

Materials:

- 3 Sets of 3 stacking platforms
- Or 1 set of 4 smaller stacking platforms

Set up: Place the platforms in a level area so that the larger sized platforms cover the smaller platforms.

Group task: To get the entire group off of the ground for a specified time

Brief:

- Get entire group off of the ground (no one touching ground) for specified time (usually 5-10 seconds or the length of one verse or song)
- Start counting when all feet are off ground

Safety Considerations:

- Do not use "pig pile" technique (stacking participants horizontally).
- Warn group to step down instead of falling on top of each other.
- Since usually everyone is participating, there are no spotters; getting on top of shoulders is dangerous and discouraged. * You may allow this technique if there are at least 4 spotters.

Common Stories:

- Star Trek: Beam me up Scotty; Elevator broke, so group has to ride up in clothes trolley;
- Recording company: have to sing a song while on board; Simply asking everyone to "get on board" for the program;
- Helicopter rescue platform

Options/Variations:

- One set has four sizes: starts medium sized and gets extremely small. (For groups of 5-10)
- The other 3 sets of platforms have three sizes: starts large (for approx. 12-14 people) and gets small (for approx. 8-10 people).
- Generally, start with largest to create success and then get smaller. Can stop after success at one size, let group decide whether to try smaller ones, or intentionally give them a nearly impossible task to process issue of defining success and failure.
- Have group be responsible for its own quality- i.e., knows when all feet are off the ground.
- For larger group, task can be to see the maximum number that can get on board - use extra players as spotters.
- Body part version- get 10 hands, 2 cheeks, 3 noses, 1 ear, etc. touching the platform. Good option for youth (6th grade or below)

Common Issues:

Brainstorming, Trial and error, Personal space, Failure, perseverance, knowing when to quit

• **Balloon Tower**

Materials: 1 bag of balloons, 1 role of masking tape.

Set-up: Activity may be performed inside or outside, however, if outside is chosen wind can make this activity highly difficult.

Group Task: Build the tallest balloon tower possible.

Brief:

- Group can be divided into sub-groups to create competition if consistent with group goals.
- Establish time limit for completion of task.
- Group may only use materials provided.
- Tower must be able to stand on its own at the end of time period for at least 30 seconds or whatever amount of time designated by facilitator.

Safety Considerations:

- Encourage group to share task of inflating balloons to avoid hyperventilation by individual group members.
- Warn group that balloon material is difficult to dislodge from the esophagus and encourage participants to use caution when inflating balloons.

Common Issues: Cooperation, creativity, problem solving.

Common Stories: The government has challenged several companies to build the prototype for a new tower to be constructed in Washington, DC. This activity is an opportunity for your firm to compete with others and demonstrate its design and construction abilities. The most successful team (that with the tallest standing tower) will be awarded the contract.

• **Blind Line-up**

Materials: Blindfolds

Set up: none

Group Task: To arrange themselves into a line according to a pre-determined order.

Brief:

- Have group put on blindfolds.
- Spread them out in an open area and assign each person a number from 1 to the number of people in the group
- Tell them the task is to line up in numerical order without talking.

Safety Considerations:

- Instruct participants to move slowly in bumpers up position (hands up in front of them).
- As with other blind activities, monitor for participant safety: wandering off, walking into objects or other people.

Common Issues:

Quality, communication, planning, leadership, involvement/support, management, trust

Options/Variations:

To make task more difficult, assign one person the number “0” and another person a fraction, such as “1/2” or maybe “3/12”.

• **Blind Polygon**

Materials: Blindfolds, rope

Set up: none

Group Task: To make a perfect square (or other shape: pentagon, hexagon, equilateral triangle, etc.)

Brief:

- Have group stand in a small circle and put on blindfolds.
- Place rope on the ground in the middle of circle (or hand to one person.)
- Instruct group to make a shape using all of the resources they have been given.

Safety Considerations:

- Instruct participants to move slowly in bumpers up position (hands up in front of them).
- As with other blind activities, monitor for participant safety: wandering off, walking into objects or other people.

Common Issues: Quality, communication, planning, leadership, involvement/support, management, trust

Options/Variations:

- More difficult version: Tell the group the task before blindfolding them (to form shape with rope, but must do so without talking). Allow ten minutes of planning time before they become blind and mute. After planning time, scatter participants around the room and hide the rope.
- Have upper management, middle management, and front line. Upper management tells middle managers the task. Middle passes instructions on to front line. Front line is blind, but others not told this. Upper management needs to be set aside so they can't see the activity.
- Add the rule that all participants must be touching the rope- can be set up such that everyone starts out holding the rope.
- Can be done with large groups by dividing and all doing it simultaneously

• **Board Room**

(Jim Cain)

Materials: Mobile TP shuffle boards and a set of All Aboards

Set-up: Make a plus sign configuration with ALL ABOARD in the middle of the TP mobile boards. Group stands on TP boards- 3-5 people on each board.

Group Task: For each person to move to another TP board without touching the ground.

Brief: No more than two people can be touching the All Aboard at one time.

Optional:

- Cannot end up on the same board as anyone in your starting subgroup (original board)
- Cannot be in the same position on ending board as starting board- i.e. one end or other.

Safety Considerations: Same as TP shuffle, plus no jumping from board to board.

Common Issues: Mental problem solving, support, decision making (multiple methods). It becomes sort of a mixture of Traffic Jam and TP shuffle.

• **Bull Ring**

(Jim Cain)

Materials: Tennis ball, ball stand, ring with colored strings attached.

Set-up:

- Lay down stand, place ring over stand, and put ball on stand, spread out the strings.
- Arrange obstacle course (around a trash can; between two objects such as trees, poles, chairs or a doorway; up/down stairs or over a table or chairs, etc.)

Group Task: To transport the tennis ball and move through obstacle course and return to pole.

Brief:

- Without dropping it, transport the tennis ball around/ through certain obstacles and replace the tennis ball on the pole.
- Can only hold the end of the strings.
- No one may touch the tennis ball.
- If the ball falls, start over (back one obstacle, have goal of fewest possible touches, etc.)

Safety Considerations:

- Be aware for participants walking backwards, sideways, etc., as they may not be able to see all potential hazards as they move.
- Use standard precautions for blindfolded participants if using that variation.

Common Stories: The ball represents something very important to your group/company/organization (the essential purpose or function). You must handle this resource, without “dropping the ball” so to speak.

Options/Variations:

Vary difficulty of obstacles- simplest might just be to go around an object and return.

Have only blind people touch strings, sighted partners must give directions (like acid pour version)

Use dental floss as connectors (break with too much tension) or elastic connectors

Use different size balls.

Use the same idea with a magnet to pick up metal objects on floor (for disabled populations)

Use same idea with magic marker with paper to do group writing

Common Issues: Teamwork, communication, planning, whole group acting as one unit

• **Catapult**

(Jim Cain)

Materials: 9 square wooden rods with holes drilled, Camouflage bag with threaded rod, washers, wing nuts, nuts, bungee cord, Blue container with lid, Tennis ball or egg to launch, Protection materials for Egg Drop (straws, tape, other if desired)

Set-up:

Provide group with above materials.

Group Task: To launch an egg twenty feet without breaking it; (construct a catapult capable of launching and construct protection system for the egg.)

Brief: Using the provided materials and no others, your task is to ... (above).

Safety Considerations:

- Require OSHA inspection before bungee can be put in place: swing arm must be stable, and people out of way and prepared to avoid pinched fingers or getting hit by catapult. (The arm can swing quickly with great force)
- Ask group to do an OSHA inspection before each practice or test launch- anytime swing arm is moving.

Common Stories: Engineers contracted to design ... similar to egg drop story.

Options/Variations:

This is a long activity- allow at least 2 hours to complete.

Use tennis ball instead of egg. Must launch it twenty feet and catch it, or just launch certain distance.

Common Issues: Communication, leadership/followership, complex problem solving, management of multiple tasks

• **Common Ties**

Materials: One sling rope per person

Set up: Give one rope to each person

Group Task: To find common ground that connects all group members to each other

Brief:

- One person starts by saying her name and something about herself (something she enjoys doing or any statement about who she is). Someone else who has something in common with her, say what they have in common, and then something new about herself. This continues until everyone is connected to another person by the rope and their commonality.
- Final task is to get back untangled into the original circle without letting go of the ropes. (This is just like human knot, but much easier because it is easy to move around.)

Options/Variations:

- Add the task of picking up and moving an object using the tangle created by the commonalties.
- Focus the disclosure in step one with a more direct question: for example,
 - Tell us something no one else in the group knows about you.
 - Goals/Expectations for the day
 - At the end of a program- create closure with a “What did you learn...” question.

Common Issues: Commonality, teamwork, connections

• **Corporate Connection:**

Materials: 8 buckets (2 designated as red, 2 as blue, 2 as green, 2 as yellow). Many balls in colors corresponding to colors of buckets. 4 long ropes to mark boundaries.

Set-up: Divide group into 4 teams- Red, Blue, Green, Yellow

Stand behind boundary with your color balls.

Group Task: For each team to score as many points as possible.

Brief:

- Group designates each person a "thrower" or a "retriever".
- Participants receive 5 points for each ball that lands in close bucket, 10 points for each ball that lands in far bucket.
- Balls may only be thrown from behind the boundary line by people designated as throwers.
- Balls may not contact anything else once thrown by a thrower (i.e. retrievers)
- Throwers must remain behind line.
- Retrievers must stay inside the middle, may only retrieve the balls for the throwers. If a ball contacts a retriever, it must return to a thrower without being counted.
- Retrievers may take balls out of buckets to return them to throwers, but they may not move the buckets nor pick them up to empty them.
- Group will have a round of 2 minutes duration to score points.
- Use facilitators to count score (1 per subgroup) and post it after each round on newsprint on wall.
- May repeat rules and encourage them to think of how they could cooperate to score more points.

Safety Considerations: Only use soft light balls for this activity

Common Issues: Competition vs. cooperation

May repeat rules and encourage them to think of how they could cooperate to score more points.

• **Cube**

(Jim Cain)

The **Cube** is a cube of PVC tubing and connectors that, when carefully balanced in the custom stand, provides a web initiative that requires teamwork to accomplish. The goal here is for each member of the team to pass through the cube, with the help of other team members, without tipping the cube over. For safety, we recommend that all participants passing through the cube be in contact with at least one other person at **all** times (this discourages acrobatic leaps through the web, and encourages better spotting, and more contact between participants). Each person should identify one side of the cube to enter, and a different face to exit. After successfully completing this path, this path becomes closed, and other participants will need to identify other faces to enter and leave the cube. With 6 faces, and five possible exits for each entry location, a total of 30 different paths are possible.

In addition to the **Cube**, several additional activities are possible with this equipment. Using The Cube without the customized stand (i.e. sitting flat on the floor), The Cube becomes a modern day version of the 1950's challenge of stuffing phone booths (or Volkswagens). The

object here is to fit the maximum number of team members within the perimeter of the cube (imagine a large cardboard box). This activity requires a real commitment from the team, and the careful placement of team members so that everyone can fit into the space available. We call this initiative **All Inboard**.

The next activity uses just one face of the **Cube** (see illustration), for a PVC version of **All Inboard**. The goal here is for the entire team to stand within the perimeter of the PVC frame, long enough to sing one verse of "Row, row, row your Boat." You can assemble a shape that is approximately 22 inches square, or a 22 x 44 inch rectangle, or a 44-inch square, or even a 66-inch square (for those really large teams).

Next on the list of potential activities using the **Cube** materials, is to assemble several of the straight tubes to form a 10 - 15 foot (3 - 4 meter) long pole. The activity known as the **Helium Stick**, uses such a pole. Participants are placed face-to-face, with approximately 5 - 8 participants (rather like an old fashioned Virginia Reel square dance line). Next, everyone holds up both hands, and allows the pole to rest on their index fingers. Now the objective is for the entire group to lower the pole to the ground, without any team member losing contact with the pole. What typically happens is that many teams actually end up raising the pole, rather than lowering it, and this unusual behavior leads to some interesting debriefing when groups discuss their "mission" and how they might actually act in a manner opposite to their goals.

Finally, this pole can be used for a high tension activity, known as **Photo Finish**, which Sam Sikes features in his book, *Feeding the Zircon Gorilla* (Learning Unlimited 1-888-622-4203). Here the entire team attempts to cross the finish line (our pole, laying on the ground), at exactly the same time. This means that "everyone" crosses the line. Allow the group 15 minutes to make 5 attempts to cross the line at exactly the same time. Each time a person crosses the line, intentionally or not, say, "Click" like you are taking a photograph (or you can actually use a digital or instant camera to record this historic moment). Then let the group decide if they have met the challenge to finish exactly together. A technique that brings greater "tension" to this activity is to limit the amount of space the team has behind the line. This limits effective space to plan, and increases the opportunities for someone to accidentally cross the finish line.

- **Cups**

Materials: 2 cups, 10-15 nuts, rocks, or other small objects (facilitator judgment), 1 tin can, 1 stick, blindfolds

Set-up:

Place cups about 2-3 feet apart on the ground.

Place small objects in center of group circle.

Group Task: To get entire group (all but one person) to pass through the gate (2 cups) while blindfolded and without talking.

Brief:

Group is given task and will be allowed "x" minutes for the planning process before blindfolds are used.

Individuals will be placed at random locations around the area.

No one may speak. Only resources are the stick and can.

All but one person will be blindfolded (group's choice).

The person who can see cannot move.

For planning phase: Each nut allows one person 30 seconds worth of speech. No other talking is allowed. Individuals must take a nut from the pile and when all the nuts are gone, the task is started.

Activity phase: blindfold all but one participant and spread them throughout the space.

Safety Considerations:

- Instruct participants to move slowly in bumpers up position (hands up in front of them).
- As with other blind activities, monitor for participant safety: wandering off, walking into objects or other people.

Options/Variations:

Give at least two talking objects per person for moderate challenge; one/person for hard challenge.

Facilitator can move the cups once everyone is blindfolded and/or during the activity. Process dealing with change. This greatly increases the difficulty of the task.

Common Issues: Communication, listening, planning, trust, dealing with change

• The Egg Drop

There are various versions of this activity.

Set-up: Divide group into groups of 3-5. Each group gets 1 raw egg, 30" of masking tape, and 20 plastic straws.

Group Task: To design and build a delivery system that will protect a raw egg dropped from a height of 8 feet.

Brief:

- Using only the provided materials, each group must build a protection system for their egg. They have 15 minutes to plan, during which they may not physically connect any pieces.
- They have 5 minutes to construct their system.
- After time is up, facilitator drops the eggs, one at a time.

Safety Considerations: If done indoors, lay down a large piece of plastic to protect the floor.

Common Stories: "Your group represents one of many business groups that are vying for a very lucrative construction contract. The contract will be awarded to that Hi-tech group who develops a fail-safe delivery system for the egg, using the least amount of materials and the least amount of time. The essential and final criterion for success, however, is an intact egg at the end of the test. This is particularly significant when you realize that your successful design will establish the structural guidelines for NASA's manned space egg flight to Mars."

Options/ Variation

See file in Venture office for more detail on variations.

Corporate version: groups have a budget and may purchase a wide variety of materials. Each group does a sales pitch on why they have the best system.

• Group Juggle

Materials: Numerous balls; for metaphorical version- at least 4 different kinds of items.

Group Task: Set a challenge for the maximum number of balls group can juggle successfully.

Brief:

- Group passes a ball to everyone in the circle creating a pattern, so that everyone touches it once before anyone touches it twice.
- Remember whom you are throwing it to.
- Facilitator adds more balls into the circle.

Options/Variation:

- For more of a just for fun icebreaker, facilitator adds more balls until it gets out of hand.
- Start with ball toss name game and then move into juggle.
- Have the group stop and rearrange themselves and/or create a new pattern

• Metaphorical Juggle

Start with three-four different types of throwables.

1) **Primary task(s):** usually a normal ball, used to establish the basic pattern. This ball can represent primary task of individuals or group.

2) **Curve ball:** they are representative of the things in life that you have no control over, get in the way of your primary task, like pop tests after a party night, computer crashes, etc. You may give an example to get the group started, but get them to say what their curve balls are.

Practice sending the curve ball object around in the opposite order.

3) **Distractions (rumors):** These can come from anywhere and go to anywhere (pass around in any order you want.) Practice a few of these.

4) **Daily responsibility:** the things we have to do everyday that are important, but not exciting. These objects will just be passed hand-to-hand around the circle.

- Start back with the primary task or tasks going in the basic order, add in some curve balls, and some rumors. Once things are flying everywhere and out of the circle, stop the group and talk about how they think things are going. Debrief a little now about how this chaos relates to work/life. What can be done to reduce the chaos?

- If they want- start again and hopefully this time will be much smoother than the last one.

Common Issues: Managing stress, time, prioritizing.

• **Golden Gates (Facilitator Page)**

Materials: 60 sheets of paper per group, paper clips per group, approximately 60 feet of string, tape for the string, copies of rules (next page) for each group, a ruler, flip chart for debrief if desired

Set up:

- Lay down string in two parallel lines 3 feet apart.
- Count out the paper and paper clips for each subgroup.
- Separate the practice materials: 5 sheets of paper and 5 clips.

Brief:

- Divide group into sub-groups of approximately 5 people.
- Hand out the instructions and read through them with group; allow clarifying questions.
- After 14 minutes, remind the group they need to choose a leader and have that person report the plan to the comptroller in one minute (as per instruction sheet). Comptroller (facilitator) informs the leaders that they have been hired by a new company (they must switch groups). Their task is to ensure that their company (the new one now) builds the best, most cost effective bridge possible. As per instructions they have 5 minutes to finalize plans.
- After 5 minutes: it is time for construction; each group gets a space at the river. Start stopwatch.
- When a group is done building they inform you and you tell them how much time has elapsed on the stopwatch. From that number they can calculate their costs. You need to keep track of the 1 minute the bridge needs to stay standing, as well as call out times for other groups as they finish.
- Once all groups are finished, they should calculate their costs and profit margins. Have each group announce their profit- you then announce the winner.

Options Variations: Can be done without having the designated leaders switch.

Common Issues:

- It is helpful to let each subgroup do their own mini-processing with suggested questions.
- In your small groups, please answer the following questions:
 - How was the original leader chosen? What criteria were used?
 - What effect did the new leader have on the group?
 - What are the characteristics of effective leadership?
- Come back together in large group and have sub-groups share their thoughts.

• **Golden Gates (Contractor Guidelines)**

Your Task: Your bridge-building company has been contracted to build a paper bridge over the 'river' that has been marked out in the middle of the room. The only materials you may use in this enterprise are the paper clips and scrap paper provided. You will be given a planning/practice phase before construction begins. The bridge must be:

- capable of standing for 1 minute without any extra support (other than provided materials)

- at least 30 cm (12") above the river at its central point

Finances: Your group will be paid \$10,000.00 for a bridge built according to this briefing. From this you should deduct construction costs as follows:

- \$100 for every sheet of paper used (paper clips are free)
- \$2,000 for every support/stanchion which is built in the river
- \$100 for every 10 seconds (or part of 10 seconds) it takes you to build the bridge
- Your profit is \$10,000.00 minus your construction costs.

Time Frame:

- Phase I = Planning and Practice (15 minutes)
- Phase II = Group leader presents plans to comptroller
- Phase III = Final planning (5 minutes)
- Phase IV = Timed construction of bridge

Considerations:

- During the initial planning phase you will be given only 10 sheets of paper and 5 paper clips with which to practice.
- At the end of the initial planning phase, you must select a group leader who will present your plans (including projected costs) to the comptroller for approval.
- You will be given a final 5 minutes planning before the construction phase begins.
- During the construction phase each group may use up to 50 sheets of paper and up to 20 paper clips.
- The 'river' is one meter wide
- The group who makes the greatest profit, will be awarded the contract.
- # *Remember*, you need to build a bridge quickly while using as little paper and as few supports as possible; and it must stand freely for one continuous minute.

- **Gridlock**

(Jim Cain)

Materials: Several long lengths of rope or flat webbing, or, a bed sheet and a marker, or, a large roll of masking tape and a linoleum floor.

Set up: Create a grid or checkerboard pattern with each square measuring approximately 12" x 12".

Group Task: To recreate a pattern on the grid, which the facilitator has drawn on a piece of paper, without the group having the opportunity to see the facilitator's rendering.

Brief:

- To determine the correct path on the grid concocted by the facilitator.
- The group is allowed to let one participant move as far as they can until they make an error.
- New participant takes over the journey, and attempts to make a better choice at the site of the last error.
- Allow the group a few minutes to plan before the activity begins.

Safety Considerations: No jumping from square to square is required to complete the pattern.

Common Stories: A competitive trucking company is attempting to find the fastest route around town during rush hour traffic so it sends out a rush hour traffic test team. Each time the test team encounters a traffic jam or dead end the team must change drivers. When the team finds the best route through the rush hour, it signals the home base so the rest of the trucks may follow.

• **Houses and Wells**

(Jim Cain)

Materials: 6 objects (plates or Frisbees are good) and nine sections of rope approximately 6-10 feet long.

Set-up:

- Place 6 objects on ground, two rows of 3 about a foot apart.
- Give group 9 sections of rope

Group Task: To connect each house (object in one row) with each well (objects in other row) without any ropes crossing each other.

Brief:

- As stated- no ropes may cross (touch) any other ropes.
- Give each person one/two ropes- only he or she may place them. Extra ropes can be group decision.
- Once a rope is placed it may not be moved.

Common Stories: Each house needs to be connected to a well with the pipes, but if the ropes cross that means that you break someone else's pipes.

Options/Variations

All ropes can be group decision.

Common Issues: Decision making, problem solving, brainstorming

• **Human Knot**

Materials: none

Set up: none

Group Task: To untangle their community without letting go of each other's hands.

Brief:

- Participants form a circle, reach across and connect right hands with one person not next to them.
- Then connect left hands with a different person still not next to them.
- People should not have both hands of the same person or the hand of someone standing directly next to them.
- Send a pulse around the circle to see if there is one circle or more than one (best in only one).

Safety Considerations:

- Move slowly, being considerate of other people.
- While untangling, wrists and elbows can become twisted and bent in painful and possibly dangerous positions. It is OK to rotate your grip, just not to let go of it.

Options/ Variations:

- **Knot Aid:** If the group is having difficulties, you can allow them to release and then reconnect one pair of hands in a different position without moving their feet.
- As an easier progression for younger youth groups or for one large group (say more than 15): after the group is all holding hands, choose one pair of hands to let go and then group can untangle to form a line.
- Use ropes to join hands (similar to common ties). This works particularly well to with participants in wheelchairs.

Common Issues: Communication, level of involvement, listening, cooperation

• **Infinite Circle**

(Jim Cain)

Materials: Length of rope that can encircle entire group

Group Task: In pairs, rope linked and around wrists, get untangled - same in-group circle ropes linked, alone with knot in rope get knot out

• **Insanity**

Materials: Hula-hoops and multiple objects (like balls from a group juggle bag)

Set up:

- One hula-hoop in the center of the area, 3-4 others spread out around it, approximately 15 feet away.
- Put numerous props into the center hoop (more than 1 per person).
- Divide the group into 3-4 subgroups (3-5 people per group).
- Each one stands by an outer hoop.

Group Task: Get all of the objects into your circle in the time provided (30-60 seconds).

Brief:

- Each person can only carry 1 object at a time
- As you move an object, it must remain in your possession (no throwing them)
- Groups may not guard objects or block others from moving them (even in their own hoop).

Safety Considerations: No running

Tips:

- ask everyone if they understand the goal- repeat as necessary.
- After each time, ask, “Did everyone achieve the goal”.

- **Key Punch**

(Jim Cain)

Materials: 2 Ropes for boundary markers, cards numbered 1 to 30.

Set up:

- Lay rope in circle, lay cards down face up spread randomly in the circle.
- Place rope 15-20 feet away as boundary line.

Group Task: Touch numbers in numerical order as fast as possible.

Brief:

- Plan from a distance - then move to line.
- Once cross line time starts.
- Only 1 person allowed in the circle at a time. Can redo 2 or 3 times -

Options/ Variations

fastest, most accurate, have 1 number upside down to be determined by elimination -

- **Alphabet Soup**

Materials: 26 paper plates with 1 letter of the alphabet marked on each plate. 1 long length of rope.

Set up: Place 26 letters facing up and establish a boundary around them with the rope.

Group Task: For the group to create a method so that each of the letters of the alphabet are contacted by a member of the group, in order.

Brief:

- Plan from a distance and then move to the boundary.
- Once the boundary is crossed, timing starts.
- Only one member can be inside the circle at a time.
- This activity is typically timed.

Common Stories: It is your first day on the job at a soup factory. It is the group's task to perform a quality control check on the alphabet soup line. There are many vats of soup to check so the group must work as fast as possible and must actually check each letter by touching it. The shift supervisor will be timing you.

- **Lego Bridge**

Materials: 10-14 pieces of a Lego set. Have identical sets of 5-7 Lego pieces.

Set up: Divide group into 2 sub groups and separate them into 2 distinct rooms. Give each group 1 of the identical sets of pieces.

Group Task: The task is for each group to build identical halves of the bridge that ultimately will fit together to create a mighty span.

Brief:

- Instruct the group to work in separate rooms and build identical halves of a bridge using all Lego pieces provided.

- At scheduled intervals (every 2 minutes), 1 representative from each subgroup can meet in a common place, (out of view and out of hearing range from their group members) and exchange information with a member of the other team for 15 seconds.

Safety Considerations: As per the instructions on the box, inform participants not to put Lego pieces in their mouth. This is a choking hazard. (It is ok to laugh now)

Common Stories: After a devastating earthquake, a construction company who has been hired to rebuild a bridge lands 2 separate construction crews on either side of a river. Nothing of the original bridge remains. The earthquake has completely changed the landscape. For the bridge to be structurally sound each side must be built identically. There is only one phone line that crosses the river and it only works for 15 seconds every 2 minutes (sorry, no conference calls).

Options:

- Change the amount of time (either in sub-groups or time for representatives to talk).
- Require that the representatives are different group members each time.
- Have sub groups speak in 2 different languages (example: English/Spanish)

Common Issues: Communication, attention to details, problem solving, group process.

• **The Longest Line**

(Jim Cain)

Materials: Object to retrieve

Group Task: To retrieve object without anyone in the group losing contact with the others.

Brief: No one may leave the base (starting place) without being connected by touch to the base or to someone/something touching the base.

Common Stories: You are the space shuttle crew and your food floated out of your cargo bay. You need to retrieve it. If anyone loses contact with the shuttle they will float off into space.

Options/Variations

Group can be given a rope to assist in traveling a very long distance.

If group is going to be successful very easily, remind them that objects in space are rarely stationary- have the solar winds move the goal.

• **Lower the Bar**

Set up:

- Have half the group line up side-by-side, shoulder-to-shoulder, facing the same direction.
- The other half lines up the same way but directly across from and facing toward the first group.
- Have the group make a toy gun shape with their hands (thumb up and index finger pointing ahead) and point the gun at the person across from them.
- Ask them to arrange their hands so that you will be able to lay the bar down and it would rest on everyone's' fingers.

Task: Lower the bar to the ground, with the following rules about how they do it:

- At all times, everyone's fingers must remain in contact with the bar at all times.
- Fingers may only contact the bottom of the bar- no one may put a thumb, finger, or anything else on the top of the bar
- You (facilitator) will always start by placing bar on fingers positioned at shoulder height of shortest person (they will need many tries, so this establishes a starting line each time.
- If they come up with the idea themselves, they can get down on the ground instead of standing, making "shoulder" height much closer to the ground.
- *Facilitator- as the bar goes up in the air, if it gets so high that some people can't touch it anymore, you will want to take it away and restart at should height again.
- As we discussed, this activity does cause significant frustration. You may want to intervene in the group process, depending on what you observe happening. You may want to reassure the group that the task is possible, although very hard.
- Or you may, if appropriate, increase their frustration by asking why they cannot accomplish such a simple task. (At the end you would definitely want to let them know that the task is extremely hard).

Safety Concerns: monitor the group. Sometimes a frustrated person can send the pole flying and there is a risk that the people on the ends could get hit in the face or eye with the end of the pole.

Common Issues: Coordination, communication, handling frustration, placing blame, system theory, leadership, integrity (following the rules).

• Lycra Tube

(Jim Cain)

Materials: Lycra tube(s)

Set up: The tubes are slightly different sizes. One holds 12 maximum, other holds 14-16 maximum.

Group task: Multiple applications

Brief:

Basic circle - everyone lean back in the circle, supporting each other, this can be done by simply leaning back against it or sitting back into it.

Enclosed debrief circle - can pull over heads to keep sound or sun out, and help establish the group's focus

Around the world - everyone roll around the tube first in one direction and then the other.

Orbit - All but one move into the center, 1 pushes out on the tube and runs around circle, rolling around as the mass in the center keeps the person from falling out.

Cross over - with only 4 in the tube at time. 4 stand in a square pushing out slightly on tube. Opposite corners will switch places: raise right hand and walk toward each other almost touching hands (the "pass right pledge".) Then next two cross over. After doing this walking a few times, slowly speed up so that the pair alternately bounce off the tube and pass in the middle- always with right hands up.

Safety Considerations:

- All activities with the Lycra tube should be done carefully and begin slowly.
- The spring in the Lycra adds force and speed to someone's movement.
- People can easily crash into each other during Around the World and Orbit.
- Crossover is potentially extremely hazardous- individuals can impact at great speed.
- Use discretion in choosing this activity and monitor closely.

Common Stories: See Brief, they can be embellished from the names of each game

Common Issues: Relations of individuals to the group,

• **Magic Carpet**

(Jim Cain)

Materials: 1-2 "carpets" (plastic tarps)

Set up: Lay carpets out flat, close by each other but not touching.

Group Task: For the entire group to stand on one carpet and flip it over without falling off.

Brief: Without touching the ground, everyone must end up standing on the opposite side of the carpet.

Safety Considerations: Watch out for the domino effect of everyone falling on top of each other. It can be required that participant's feet always touch the carpet to avoid the use of piggy-backing or other balance issues.

Common Stories: Your magic carpet is flying in the wrong direction because it is upside down. You are up in the air, so you must flip it over without stepping off.

Options/ Variations

Turning over a new leaf: Have everyone think of something they would like to change about himself or herself or do better (can write it down). Then do the activity to symbolically "turn over" the new leaf.

- Turning over new leaf can be done with 1 tarp instead of 2. It needs to be bigger than the small red tarps for an average size group.
- It can also be done similarly to All Aboard with the size of the carpet being reduced after each successfully completed stage.
- It can also be done with participants using only their feet to move the carpet or requiring that their feet touch the carpet the entire time and allowing other body parts to touch the surrounding ground.
- Have 2 groups (each with own carpet) do this side by side. Do they compete or cooperate?

Common Issues: Teamwork, balance, change

• **Marble Roll**

(Jim Cain)

Materials: One PVC pipe section per person, one or more marbles (or other objects: ball bearings, ping pong ball, golf ball, etc.)

Set up: Lay out tubes in a pile and have target in place (bucket, cup, trash can, etc.)

Group Task: To transport the marble(s) into the bucket

Brief:

- Each person can only touch his/her own tube
- No one may move their feet while a marble is touching their tube
- The marbles may not come into contact with anything but the tubes and the final container

Safety Considerations: PVC pipe can make a reasonable weapon with immature groups or participants.

Common Stories:

- The marble can represent something significant/relevant to the group (a big client for a corporate group; a group project- each person does their own part, but can't do another's).
- The marble can be a chemical concentration needed to neutralize or purify the substance in the target container

Options/Variations

- Use multiple marbles- have to get them all, or group can set goal of how many to get in
- Use a marble too big to fit in pipes, or don't allow the marbles to pass inside the tubes.
- Use the elbows that can attach to the pipes to create curves or stoppers
- With people in wheel chairs or with fine motor skill disability, longer pipes are available; allow them to touch other people's pipes.

Very Hard Options

- Have final container be up a flight of stairs
- Mark the ends of tubes with color code- can only touch another black tube or blue tube, etc.
- Move water- have to fill a cup up to a certain level
- Object cannot stop or move backwards

Common Issues: Excellent metaphor for many work settings: customer service- customer gets passed to many employees. Quality, attention to detail, integrity, communication, problem solving.

• **Marshmallows/Stepping Stones**

Materials: Paper plates

Set up: Give each person 1 paper plate. Establish a start and finish line (with lengths of rope or other marker; distance apart should be approximately 2-3 Xs the length of the group if they were standing in a straight line.

Group Task: To move from start line to finish line without touching the ground in between.

Brief:

- Participants cannot touch the ground with any part of their body. If a participant touches he/she must return to the starting point.
- The plates can support people, so you can step on the plates to cross the distance.
- If you lose contact with the plate (even for just a split second), you lose the plate. Some part of someone must be in contact with the plates at all times.

Common Stories:

- You are crossing a giant cup of hot chocolate using marshmallows (paper plates) as their metaphorical stepping-stones.
- You are crossing a shallow but fast moving river, using these stepping-stones. If you aren't touching the stones, they float away. The water is toxic, so you can't touch it.

Safety considerations:

- A lot of stretching (particularly leg splits) may occur during this activity.
- Make sure the group is sufficiently warmed up and stretched out before starting.

Options:

- For a harder challenge, give less plates than people (like 7-8 for a group of 10).
- This activity can also be called Resources. Each paper plate represents a resource. The group's goal can be to cross from one boundary to the other making the most of their resources.

• Portable Mohawk Walk

Materials: long piece of 2 in diameter rope, wooden blocks or plastic domes

Set-up:

- Lay the rope on the ground with some "s" curves in it (the sharper the curves, the easier it is to walk).
- Lay down some of the blocks to assist with balance.

Group task: To get group from one end of the rope to the other without touching the ground.

Brief:

- Can help support each other, but only if you are on the event- on a cable or pole.
- Spotters can walk on ground, but can't help people on event.
- A fall or touch by a spotter causes penalty: a re-start to beginning, to the ground object.

Safety Considerations: Only slow controlled motion is allowed- Do not run, jump, etc.

Common Stories:

- Indian burial ground - can't touch the sacred ground.
- Crossing a deep chasm; fog rising out of chasm so eyes closed while on the rope.

Options/Variations:

- Additional limitations are often used to create more interdependence and less individual focus:
- Only half of group or certain people (females, those in sneakers, first one to touch it) can touch an aid.
- A different person has to be the first one to reach a ground marker.
- Must close your eyes for certain section (s).

Common Issues: Support- giving, receiving, asking for help; communication-in small groups, passing on information to those behind you; roles people chose to play; quality- touches, trial and error.

• **Ping Pong Balls**

Materials: Ping Pong balls, pencils, boundary markers

Group Task:

- To maximize your sales- get as many points as possible into the container
- To accurately project your sales income: set a number and obtain this number exactly.

Brief:

- 5 minutes to plan (no practicing); 5 minutes to do
- The ping pong balls may not be touched by anything other than pencils
- No one may touch more than 1 pencil
- The event (tools or set-up) may not be altered in any way
- The balls cannot touch the ground inside the boundary:
- You make a sale by placing a ball into the container, converting potential clients to actual customers. There are a different "sized" clients out there yielding varying revenues:
 - Regular- 5 revenue points;
 - Big- 25 points
 - Huge- 50 points
- Bungled sale penalties:
 - Minor- go back outside
 - Medium- cannot be used again
 - Major- whole sales area lost
 - (b/c reputation shot)

Options/Variations

- Number of geographic locations set up depends on group size, extend time limits to accommodate bigger groups;
- Other scenarios possible to match client needs: can be a production problem with a quota (for example, "this is a new coating process for pills", fits production managers for a pharmaceutical company)
- This could potentially be done out in the field by using sticks and rocks and a rope or string boundary.

• **Punctured Drum / Water Tube**

(Jim Cain)

Materials: PVC pipe with holes in it, pipe stand, water supply, cups, rubber duck or ball (everything but the water stores inside the PVC pipe which has a handle for carrying.)

Set Up: Place pipe in stand, put duck or ball in bottom of it. Set out the other materials.

Group Task: To float rubber duck out of pipe by adding water

Brief:

- Using only the cups and water supply provided you must rescue the rubber duck from the bottom of the pipe.

- The duck must float out of the top of the tube before being rescued.

Safety Considerations

- Warn people with very small fingers (mostly youth) about getting fingers stuck in holes.
- Warn participants about releasing holes at same time to avoid people near bottom getting soaked

Common Stories:

- Lost your favorite rubber ducky in a hollow tree trunk.
- Dropped your all weather cell phone down an open pipe- it is on and running up charges.

Options/Variations:

- It can be made more fun by using cups of different sizes and/or by putting holes in some or all of the cups (film canisters up to buckets).
- Cups cannot be dipped into the cooler- can only be filled by the pour spout.
- Give the group some random useless props (rope, plastic hoops, balls, etc.)
- Group has to switch roles 1/2 or 3/4 the way through the task (water carriers/hole pluggers).
- Challenge to not have any water spill (hard).

- **PVC Construction**

Materials List

Standard size PVC Pipe

Straight Pipes	1 @ 18"	2 @ 17"	2 @ 15"
1 @ 14"	1 @ 13"	2 @ 12.5"	2 @ 10"
1 @ 9"	2 @ 8.5"	1 @ 8"	1 @ 7.5"
1 @ 6.5"	1 @ 5.5"	2 @ 4.5"	3 @ 4"
1 @ 3.5"	1 @ 3"	2 @ 2.5"	

Joints

5 T's	2 Four Way	1 End Cap
10 Elbows	2 Obtuse Elbows	3 Straight Connectors

Instructions and variations are in each materials bag. We have 5 sets.

- **Time Warp**

Materials: tennis ball

Set up: none

Group Task: Group passes a tennis ball around a circle- remembering to and from whom. Then given the challenge to see how fast they can all touch the ball in the same order.

Brief: Keeping this order, we're going to see just how quickly this tennis ball can be passed around the group.

Safety Considerations: none

Common Stories: This tennis ball contains a message but, like a record player, it can only be heard when turned fast enough

Options/Variation:

- Each person must touch 4 tennis balls in a set order. First, guess how fast it can be done, then keep trying to reduce time
- By spreading the group out, taking away one arm or the other, making them stand still, taking away one leg or the other, etc., the task can be made more difficult.

Common Issues: quality, expectations,

• To Be or Knot to Be

(Jim Cain)

Materials: Set of intertwined multicolored ropes.

Set Up:

- Lay each of four sets of ropes apart from each other on the ground so that the group can progress from one set to the next. While there is no set way to lay out the ropes, spread them out so that it is possible to follow the strands around to see where they go.
- The group should progress from different solid colors, to same solid colors, to different striped colors, to same striped color. For most people, this is easiest to hardest.

Group Task

Come to group consensus about which rope connects to all of the others.

Brief:

- The pile of ropes consists of 4-5 ropes tied into loops. One of the loops has all of the others passing through it, like a set of keys hangs on a key chain (It is good to demonstrate by holding up a set of keys).
- Each person looks at the ropes and decide which rope holds the others.
- The group needs to come to consensus- do not agree unless you are so sure you are willing to bet your next paycheck on it.
- Once the group has decided, you can pick up that rope to see if you are right.

Safety Considerations: none

Common Stories: The ropes are a group of snakes sleeping on a stick in the middle of your only path of travel. You must choose the stick to throw the snakes off the trail with or they will bite you.

Options/Variations

The difficulty varies somewhat depending on how the ropes are laid out.

Common issues: Reaching consensus, giving in, and willingness to change perspective, communication- selling ideas, listening.

• Traffic Jam

Materials: Markers (paper or carpet squares); one more than group size.

Set-up: Place markers in a straight line, with several inches between each one.

Group Task: To switch sides according to the specific rules for "legal" movement.

Brief: Have each person stand on one marker: middle marker should be empty and two groups should be facing each other.

The following are the only legal moves:

- Forward 1 space onto an empty marker
- Around one person who is facing you into an empty marker.
- Explain this several times, several ways, if possible: this is usually a confusing part of the task.
- Anytime there is an illegal move, the group must return to starting position and try again

Safety Considerations: none

Common Stories: none

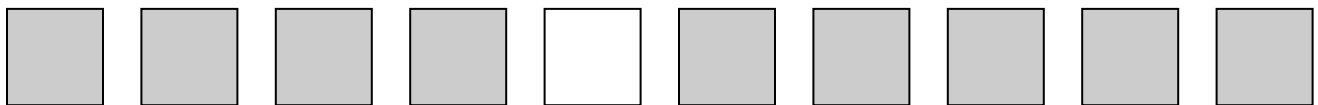
Options/Variations:

Have one or more persons in a "viewing box", standing at the side to give directions and see the process from a different perspective. They can rotate this position.

Common Issues:

The formula, in an alternating sequence is: team A moves up, team B moves around, and team B moves the second person up; then each team moves forward.

Legal Moves:



• Tree of Knots

(Jim Cain)

Materials: Length of rope, usually about 30 feet

Set up: Put rope around tree or pole and lay it on the ground.

Group Task: For the entire group to pick up a rope that has been passed around a tree and without letting go, tie a square knot in the rope against the tree.

Common Stories: Your group has been caving all day and is heading into the home stretch when an overpowering wind threatens to blow the group apart. To stay together you all take your safety line and tie it around a tower in the cave, but if someone lets go of the rope at any time s/he will be lost to the group.

Options/Variations:

Have the group tie a bowline or bow etc. Can state rule that participants can't let go with their right hand

Common Issues: Teamwork, communication, leadership/followership,

• **Trolley**

Materials:

- 3 sets of trolleys are available
- 12 ft long 4X4 boards- hold up to 12 people
- 8 ft long triple boards- holds up to 16 people
- sectioned trolleys- each section holds 3 people, up to 12 with all 4 sections

Set-up:

- Lay the trolleys out on flat ground.
- Set up start and finish boundaries if desired.
- If using the sectioned trolleys, attach sections together using rapid links

Group Task: To travel a given distance on the trolley without touching the ground.

Brief:

- Participants must all move from point A to point B without touching the ground.
- The resources available are these boards and ropes, which can touch the ground.
- Everyone must start and finish together.

Safety Considerations:

- Warn people about the domino effect of falling off. People will lose balance and start to fall off. Encourage people to step down rather than fall into person in front or back them.
- Warn people about getting their feet stepped on by the boards. If someone steps off and the group sets the board on top of their foot, it could cause serious injury. The two ways to avoid this are to: 1) try to touch ground away from the boards. 2) group try not to lift the trolleys high in the air- they only need to be slightly off the ground to move them forward.
- Everyone must be wearing sturdy shoes. Open toed sandals not allowed.

Common Stories: Toxic waste (acid, poison peanut butter, etc.) on the ground that is poisonous to the touch. Group must pass over this area without touching it. It has varying effects on people, so you won't know what happens to you unless you touch it.

Options/Variations:

- Ground touch penalties: go to back of line; face backwards, no talking, blind, start over.
- Add the task of gathering objects or avoiding obstacles laid between point A and B.
- Give penalty to group (rather than individual) "1 person must..." group decides who.
- Change the finish point just before they reach it: how does group handle change.
- Everyone blindfolded except for 1 mute person.
- One-minute manager: If leader calls a staff meeting, everyone can talk, but group cannot move. When meeting is ended, only the leader can talk. Leader is rotated every 1 or 2 minutes.

- Everyone silent except one person. At a semi-regular interval or every time someone falls off, change the "speaker" or leader.
- Half the group blindfolded and the other half mute and facilitator explains the task only to the mute.
- For a group of larger than 12 it is possible to require the group to make more than one trip, figuring out a way to shuttle the trolley back to the start to pick up additional people for 2nd trip.

Common Issues: Leadership, quality, dealing with change, communication, responsibility

• **Wing It**

(Jim Cain)

Materials: Bolt (1 ft. 3/8") on stand, wing nuts that fit the bolt

Set Up: Have bolt ready in the stand, hand wing nuts out to each member of the group.

Group Task: Pass 5 wing nuts over bolt and all the way down as quickly as possible

Brief: Each person needs one nut and s/he must pass it down the rod as quickly as possible.

Safety Considerations: If the group opts to turn the rod rather than the bolt, be sure to warn them that this can cause some very sore hands very quickly.

Options/Variations:

Use more nuts or use some regular nuts (not wing)

Common Issues: teamwork, communication, goals

• **Witches Lair**

Materials: One block per person in the group

Set-up: Create a circle from the blocks, have the group stand on the blocks

Group Task: To move around in circle without touching the ground until they unlock the combination lock.

Brief:

- Each person is a number on the face of a combination lock.
- You must rotate the group to find the combination to unlock the lock.
- You will hear a "click" when part of the combination is achieved (the right person is at the top of the circle).
- The group then rotates around in the opposite direction until there is a "click" for second number.

Options/Variations

Vary difficulty with hard or easy combination (change the amount of rotation required).

- **Worm Hole**

(Jim Cain)

Materials: elastic tube (Lycra tube coiled once)

Set Up: none

Group Task: For all sets of pairs to pass through the tube differently from the preceding pairs

Brief:

- Every pair must pass through the tube in a manner unlike any of the preceding pairs.
- Each pair can only hold the tube for 2 other pairs.

Safety Considerations:

- No diving. Leaping through the tube, do not hold the tube so high that it might be necessary.
- Be aware of possible neck, back, or joint injuries depending on how pairs pass through the tube.

Common Issues: teamwork, trust, reliance on another person

FACILITATION

Options for Customized Facilitation

When facilitating group initiative exercises, there are many ways to make the challenges more interesting and more appropriate to the group. It often makes sense to impose special limitations on a group to encourage diverse interactions, and to help highlight significant issues in the group's dynamic. It is okay to interrupt the group and add limits after they have already begun working on task. You can change rules to address any problems or issues of which you become aware. Following are some examples of creative approaches and when they might be appropriate.

1. Set a time limit - to force group to be efficient or to increase challenge or stress.
2. No one can talk - if a group needs an increased challenge. Also a good way to introduce nonverbal communications.
3. Half the group is blind folded and the other half can't talk. Only explain the task to the subgroup that can't talk. Forces group to focus on communication and using all a group's resource. Can bring these issues to people's attention. Particularly useful with management training. Has worked well on trolley. Could try with giant's finger also- with only a few sighted people (2 or 3).
4. Group can talk for 3 (or maybe even 15) minutes and then must complete the initiative without talking. Forces group to do pre-planning, which is good for groups that don't plan ahead. If a group tends to be overly analytical and to discuss a problem to death, this rule limits discussion thus getting the group moving and active. Avoids paralysis of analysis. Can also add a brief "talk" time during group "work" time to improve process.
5. People must complete task in same order they start in: for example on the beam, whoever helps someone up must be the next person to go up, that person is then at the top helping to pull the next 1 or 2 people up, then they must return to ground in same order that they went up. This is a way to spread out the important roles so each person can feel like she is making a significant contribution. Use if a few people are dominating the vital roles.
6. Only the women (or other cultural sub-group) can speak or perform certain functions - if, in previous activities, the males (or other sub-group) tended to be more assertive or more dominant than the women (sub-group).
7. Handicaps: Certain individuals have one broken arm or leg, or are blind, or can't talk, or can only ask questions, etc.- if those individuals tended to dominate in either leadership or "hero" roles. Also might be appropriate if the group as a whole needs a greater challenge.
8. In a group with dysfunctional communication patterns there are many options: Only the person with the talking stick (some physical object) can speak. Explain that as soon as whoever has the "stick" finishes his/her current thought, he/she must pass the stick to whomever asks for it. Each person has 2 or 3 matches (or some small physical object) and each time they speak they must put match into pile. Once their matches are gone they can

no longer speak until everyone is out of matches. This tends to bring in other people's ideas, especially once the talkative individuals have used up all their chances to speak. If certain individuals are shy or non-assertive, this will insure that they get a chance to share their ideas. Before someone states her idea or suggestion, she must repeat back (rephrase) the idea of the person who spoke just before her - if a group is not really listening to each other this will help them do so.

9. One individual is the designated leader, and you can even make it so this is the only person who can talk - this provides that individual special support or encouragement to take leadership, and/or it gives that individual a chance to test his/her leadership style or skill. This rule would be appropriate for examining, comparing or testing leadership styles or to give an individual extra support. Could make it so that is the only person who is sighted and everyone else is blindfolded.
10. Let group identify and determine consequences for error i.e. touching web on the Spider's Web; (how obvious a touch, how many free touches, individual goes back, all go back, hole closes or not, etc.) This gives the group more ownership and greater accountability. It brings up good debriefing issues about quality, risk-taking, and honesty (doing what they said they would do).
11. You can load the presentation by relating some aspect of the event to an issue the group is dealing with. For example, you can talk about how quality at the spider's web (in terms of not touching the web) is related to quality or honesty at the workplace. At the trust fall - falling can represent letting go of something that is holding you back in life. In Willow in the Wind - the way you treat center person is the way you'd like to be treated. Tell the group at the web- "often in groups, a few males dominate the decision making, toss the females through the web, and then figure out the hard part of how to get the last person through. There are other ways to do this event- other groups have found them; I hope you do too." (From Book of Metaphors)
12. You can ask a couple individuals to not participate and just be process observers. You can suggest certain things for them to look for. (I.e. leadership, communication patterns, gender roles, etc.) And even provide specific questions for them to respond to (ex. who talks first, whose ideas are acted upon, is anyone completely uninvolved, who talks to whom, etc.)
13. Have group repeat an initiative trying to improve its time or effectiveness. Gives the group a chance to put into practice what it has learned in a debriefing.

Debriefing Initiative Exercises

It is essential to debrief initiative activities to maximize the learning. A post-event discussion can focus on any number of issues. Knowing the groups goals and issues ahead of time will help you decide on what to focus on the. Use any of the following questions that seem right, or make up your own. It may be important to focus on significant issues that emerged during the activity, especially those that might interfere with the group's future effective functioning.

What...So What...Now What

There is often resistance and a hesitancy to speak up in a debrief. It may be easiest to get people talking first about:

- what happened (what),
- then to talk about the meaning of what happened (so what),
- and finally, how to apply that information (now what).

Group discussion questions might include:

- What:
 - Who did what? (Who was last, who was first, who suggested ideas, who were the leaders, whose idea was used? When the group seemed stuck, what happened that got the group moving again? Were there times when there was a general group feeling of frustration, euphoria, etc.? As a group, what were you especially good at, where could you improve?
- So what:
 - How do you feel about your own or the group's performance?
 - What significant issues did you notice? (Or you can ask about specific issues- see below)
- Now what:
 - In the next initiative what do you want to do differently based on what you've learned?
 - In your workplace (or class), how can you apply these lessons?

Funneling

This is a more targeted or direct way to apply the "what, so what, now what" to specific issues that seem important at the time.

- Filter 1: Get examples of whatever issue you want to look at.
 - Can someone remember a particular instance of effective _____?" (Communication, for example).
 - "Can you recall a time when....?"
- Filter 2: Look at the effect of the behavior or occurrence.
 - "What impact did this have (or how did this affect) on the group (or on an individual)?"
 - "How did this make people feel?"

- Filter 3: Generalize/ Summarize
 - What can you generalize (summarize) about effective _____ (communication) from this situation?
 - Can you sum up what you have learned here about _____?
- Filter 4: Application
 - Do you see a connection between this learning and your "real" life?
 - Can you apply this learning in any way?
- Filter 5: Commitment
 - What will you do differently at home, work, or play?
 - Can you commit to making a specific change?

Some typical major issues:

1. Group needs vs. individual needs - task completion vs. the needs & feelings of individual members - examples: people telling others what to do, group not hearing or ignoring individual's suggestions.
2. Level of involvement and commitment - some individuals being uninvolved, passive, and not contributing to group decision making - either because they are left out or they hold back Are vital or "hero" roles being dominated by a few? Are decisions being made by a few? What is the individual's and the group's responsibility for changing this.
3. Group climate - is communication open and participatory or closed and guarded? Is support and encouragement provided for all? Is the expression of feelings recognized and accepted?
4. Conflicts. How are conflicts expressed? Are disagreements being passed over?
5. Reinforcement of gender stereotypes particularly around physical strength - men deciding to or being asked to: go first or last or do all the lifting (gender issues also in leadership- see below).
6. Organization and planning - not thinking ahead, lack of communication, poor recognition or utilization of resources, not regrouping and modifying original plans after seeing things not working or inefficient, lack of understanding or agreement about procedures or goals, ineffective use of time
7. Leadership - who leads? How? (Due to physical strength or agility, loud voice, confident speaker, best ideas,) are many involved? Does the leadership change? Why? How does the group feel about its leader's leadership style? Is the approach democratic, is it involving of others?

Large Processing Pack

• Talking Stick

Type of Activity: Debriefing Tool

Props: Talking Stick

Directions: The Talking Stick can be used for those groups who talk over each other and don't really listen to what their teammates have to say. The Talking Stick is just what it sounds like-- whoever has the stick gets to talk! And everyone else listens. As the Facilitator, you will have to be creative as to who gets the stick next, maybe a finger system of holding out the number in which the next person is to talk, i.e. The next person to talk holds out the number 1 on their fingers, the person after that holds out the number 2, and so on.

I sometimes let the group carry on until they get frustrated enough to ask for the Talking Stick. (that is, if they've seen it before.) That way they are more in control of their process. Sometimes that works and sometimes you have to intervene. Play with it and make it your own!

• Freebie

Type of Activity: Facilitator Tool

Props: One Freebie Disc

Directions: The Freebie is genuinely whatever you want it to be. I like to introduce it at the beginning of the day and show it to the group. Tell them that this is a "Freebie" and that they, as a group, can use it up to 2 times throughout the day. (Or however many times you see fit.) They can use it if they need some help during an activity, assistance in resolving a conflict, etc. Whenever they want--except the group has to come to consensus on when to use it. Before they can 'turn in' their Freebie, everyone in the group has to agree that they want to use it. You will see that the decision on whether or not to use up the Freebie becomes a process all in itself. To get the group to consensus you may want to use the Consensus Cards, also in this pack.

Created by Kelly Johnston.

• Pocket Medic Debrief

Type of Activity: Debriefing Tool, Great for Therapeutic groups.

Props: Pocket Medic and supplies

Directions: Pull out your Pocket Doc and lay out all of the supplies from the inside. Explain what each piece is and what it's used for. Ask each participant to be thinking of which items represent experiences or similarities to themselves as you explain each item. After you are finished explaining, let each participant share why different items are similar to themselves.

- Splinter Grabber: Able to pull things out of difficult situations.
- Safety pin: Multi-purpose tool, able to perform many functions in different situations.

- Sting relief pad: Is able to take the "sting" out of situations.
- Antiseptic towelette: Able to clean small wounds and wash things clean.
- Double antibiotic ointment: Used to cover small wounds. Prevents infection in minor situations.
- Sterile gauze pad: Used to cover wounds for them to heal.
- Fabric bandage: Used to cover small wounds after cleaning.
- Knuckle bandage: Used to cover small wounds in specific areas.
- Telfa dressing: Doesn't stick to wounds.
- Sterile wound closure strip: Used to hold things together.
- Moleskin: Used to cover "hot spots" before a blistering situation occurs.
- Molefoam: Has thicker skin.
- Acetaminophen: Used to reduce pain.
- Ibuprofen: Used to reduce an inflammation.

- **Consensus Cards**

Type of Activity: Consensus tool

Props: Consensus Cards

Directions: This is a great way to find consensus in your group. Pass out the Consensus Cards. Explain to the group what consensus is. It is when everyone agrees with the decision. I like to use this one when trying to determine the difficulty level of an activity. Say if the group gets to decide how difficult the activity is on a scale of 1-5, one being the easiest and 5 being pretty challenging, then I would use these cards. Someone would throw out a number, like difficulty level 4. Then the group can use their consensus tools to "vote". The cards are colored like a stoplight. The card colors mean:

- Red: I do not agree with the decision. We need to talk about this further.
- Yellow: It wouldn't be my first choice, but I will support the group and participate fully.
- Green: I agree, this is what I would like to do.

Have the participants cover up the two colors that is not their decision, so the color they want is shown to the group. You do not have consensus unless everyone is at least at the yellow.

Created by Kelly Johnston.

- **Deck of Cards Debrief**

Props: A deck of playing cards

Directions:

- Designate a meaning to each suit within the deck of cards. For example hearts could represent successes, spades could represent situations individuals had a difficult time with, diamonds could represent something they noticed about themselves and clubs could represent something they noticed about one of the other group members.
- Shuffle the deck and deal each individual a hand (up to 8 cards). For each card, the individual shares with the group an example of what the suit represents. The numbers on the

cards and face cards can be involved also. For example, Jacks are wild cards that can be traded for another card in the deck and the numbers on the cards represent how many thoughts that individual may share with the group, etc.

- You may want to "stack the deck" with specific cards or adapt the rules so that the person who draws a "10" does not have to share 10 items--this could get a bit lengthy!

Taken from Reflective Learning, Sugerman, Doherty, Garvey, Gass. pg 66.

• Carabiner Connections

Props: 8 Carabiners

Directions: This closure experience has several valuable features. It takes advantage of the analogous similarities between a carabiner's functions and a participant's functions as a group member. Ask the group to sit in a circle and place the carabiners in the center of the circle.

Have the carabiners interconnected with one another in a "necklace" style fashion. Unclip a carabiner and begin talking about its qualities and how these may often relate to people.

- *carabiners (like people) are incredibly strong when taking a load in certain positions and directions (e.g., 2200-2800 kg) and in other positions are much weaker and can break;
- *carabiners are incredibly strong when they (their gates) are closed, but will only work with others (pieces of equipment like ropes) when they are open, which is when they are most vulnerable.
- *while strong as an individual piece of equipment, carabiners are often used in pairs, in complimentary positions, in order for them to be truly capable of accomplishing their tasks.
- *different types and shapes of carabiners (e.g., locking, nonlocking, dogleg) work well in different situations, and it is not so much which carabiner is "better," but which carabiner works best in a particular situation.

Ask participants to consider how the carabiners, like themselves as group members, become connected, disconnected, and reconnected in their lives. Some connections are long term while others are only for a short time.

Taken from Reflective Learning, Sugerman, Doherty, Garvey, Gass. pg 59.

• Tool Cards

Type of Activity: Debriefing tool

Props: Tool Cards

Directions: This is a great way for people to express their feelings. Spread the cards out before the group and have them pick a tool that best represents an experience or a feeling that they have had. Go around the group and ask each participant to share why they picked the card they did and why that card represents them or an experience they have had.

You can also use these at the beginning of the day, spread out the cards and ask them to pick out the cards representing the "tools" they are going to need to be successful as a team.

You can also use these as an intervention tool, when a group is having a hard time during an

activity. Stop the activity and spread out the cards before the group. Ask them to think about the role they are playing within the activity and then pick a tool card that would best represent the role they are playing. You'll be amazed at some of the responses.

- **Dry Erase Board and Markers**

Type of Activity: Debriefing Tools

Props: Small Dry Erase Board and Markers

Directions: This is an excellent tool for facilitators to use for things like Goal Setting before or after activities, Time Keeping if an activity requires continuous improvement in times, and other general information keeping. A great tool to help process a number of experiences.

- **Treasure Chest**

Type of Activity: Debriefing Tool

Props: Treasure chest and contents

Directions: Get out your Treasure Chest and set out all of it's contents before the group. Feel free to add to your treasure chest if you'd like! Let the group pick up individual items that metaphorically represent an experience they had during the activity/day/program and then share them with the group. Sometimes it's fun and less intrusive if you let participants partner up or do this in small groups.

- **Raccoon Circles**

Type of Activity: Debriefing tool

Props: A piece of webbing 15 feet long

• **Directions:** Knot Around, Feeling Knotty, Knot Feelings! Or whatever you want to call it! This is a good way to debrief any experience.

- Tie the two ends of your webbing into a knot.
- Have the group stand or sit in a circle.
- Wherever the knot is in the circle, have that person start.
- Whoever has the knot can share a thought, experience, compliment, etc.
- As the facilitator you can designate what can/should be shared when the knot is received.
- Pass the knot around the circle until everyone has gone.

- **Metaphor/Feelings Cards**

Type of Activity: Debriefing tool

Props: Metaphor Cards/Feelings Cards

Directions: There are a couple of different ways you can use these cards.

- One way is to spread the cards out before the group and have them pick a card that best represents an experience or a feeling that they have had. You can do this at the end of the day or after an activity. Go around the group and ask each participant to share why they picked the card they did and why that card represents them or an experience they have had.

- On the back sides of the metaphor cards are feelings words. You can use these if a participant is having trouble describing the feelings they are experiencing. Spread the words out and let them pick. This usually works well with younger crowds.
- Another fun way to use the feelings cards are to have everyone pick a card and not look at the feeling word. Have them place the card to their forehead-word side out-and try to guess what feeling they have on their forehead by everyone else's reaction to them. This is a great way to teach social skills and how people react around others when they are exuding a certain feeling.

• **Body Part Debrief**

Type of Activity: Debriefing tool

Props: Eye ball, Stomach ball, Brain ball, Heart ball, Hand ball, Ear ball, Smiley ball

Directions: There are a couple of ways you can set this one up. I like to use it to end the day.

- Present each ball and explain the different metaphors they could talk about when they receive that ball. Once you describe it, toss it randomly to someone in the group. Then as you describe the other balls they have time to think about what they want to share. Once all of the balls are out in the circle go back to the person that you first tossed the ball to. Let them share with the group and then have them toss the ball randomly to someone else in the group. That way that person has time to think about what they want to share as the other people ahead of them are sharing.
- Another way to set this up is to describe each ball and then leave the balls in the center of the circle. Then a person can choose what they want to share. Have them come forward and pick up a ball that relates to what they want to share.
 - "Eye" ball-- something new that you saw in your self or someone else, a vision you have for the group.
 - "Stomach" ball--something that took guts for you to do, Or something that pushed you outside your comfort zone.
 - "Brain" ball-- something new that you learned about yourself, the group, a teammate, a thought that you had.
 - "Heart" ball--a feeling that you experienced, something you felt.
 - "Hand" ball--a way that the whole group supported you, someone you would like to give a hand to for a job well done.
 - "Ear" Ball--something you listened to, a good idea you heard
 - "Smiley face" ball--something that made you smile.

Created by Michelle Cummings, Training Wheels Copyright 2001

• **Stopwatch**

Type of Activity: Facilitator Tool

Props: One Stopwatch

Uses: The stopwatch is a great tool for any facilitator.

- It can be used to time groups for progressive improvement

- Keep track of how much longer they have to complete an activity.
- It can be used for individual times as well as group times.
- Use it to your heart's content!

***Large Processing Pack** is property of

Michelle Cummings

Training Wheels

"A Creative Resource for Building Teams."

Final Debrief / Closing Circle Suggestions

It is always a good idea to try to leave time for a final discussion of the session as a whole- a wrap up of the entire experience. You can use a go around (in which each person in turn around the circle is given an opportunity to respond) or an open discussion. Here are a variety of ways to structure this final debrief.

Self-disclosure questions - what was significant for you:

- A significant moment that I experienced during this activity was....
- My high point was... My low point was...
- The specific point when I felt best about my contribution to the group was...
- What I paid the most attention to during this experience was...
- How was your involvement typical of you? Atypical? If you were going to train someone to respond as you do in these situations, what would you train them to do?
- Did you extend yourself beyond usual-in what ways? -Why? -How felt?

Feedback to the group:

- The most significant lesson I learned from these activities was...
- One thing I would like to say to the group at this point that I have not previously said is...
- One thing I would like to take away from this experience to nourish me in the future is...

Feedback to individuals:

Tell the person on your left (or right):

- Something you appreciated about his/her contributions to the groups' success, or
- Something you learned about him/her, or
- Something you'd like to give that person (something they could use) and
- Something you'd like to take with you from that person (something they have that you like)
- (Or other questions that provide direct feedback).

We've had some success with these closings:

- **The photo exhibition:** "Close you eyes. Imagine an art gallery with an exhibit of photographs taken of this group going through the course today. I want you to look at the pictures carefully, notice who is in them, the expressions on their faces, and the positions of their bodies. You see a picture entitled" (pause for a few seconds after each title): "help, unity, ingenuity, apprehension, cooperation, struggle, success" (add or exchange words that seemed

particularly relevant to the days experience). "Open your eyes. Share with us what you saw. Describe the pictures."

- **The slide show (Variation on photo exhibition):** each person gets the "clicker"; describes their slide(s) up on the screen and then passes the clicker on to the next person.
- **Headlines:** Similar to above. Instead of visual picture, "think of a newspaper headline that would summarize or capture your experience out here today (or what you have learned today."
- **Performance awards:** "If awards were to be given for today's effort, what would they be and who would be the nominees for those awards for example" (pause after each award to get names of nominees - add others or ignore those that seem inappropriate). " Best verbal encourager, most willing to initiate actions, best synthesizer of different ideas, most willing to push through their fears, most willing to sacrifice their body for the group, most creative solution suggestor, best reliever of tensions, best at helping to ensure that everyone got heard...etc. What are some other awards and who are the nominees."
- **Car parts:** "I'd like you to imagine that this group is an automobile. What kind of car would it be? Why? Now think about what part of the car represents you; the headlights, steering wheel, tires, seat belts, engine, starter, battery, radio, brakes, etc.? Take a minute and think about what your contributions are and how that makes you similar to some part of a car. In just a minute we will go around and each person can share what part symbolizes their role and how so."
- **Popsicle Sticks:**

Working with various populations (*to be included in next edition, for now you can make your own notes*)

Tips and ideas for working with each of these types of groups at the GIC

Youth groups

English as a second language or non-English speaking groups (ELTI classes, and international house)

Universal considerations (including people with disabilities without making them noticeably different)

Additional Information and Resources

Books in the Venture Library:

Venture maintains a library with numerous activity books, as well as a card index system to help you find an activity that works for your group.

Effective Leadership in Adventure Programming, Simon Priest and Michael Gass

Book of Metaphors , Volumes I and II, by Michael Gass

TeamWork and TeamPlay, Jim Cain

Quicksilver, Karl Rohnke

Cowstails and Cobras, Cowstails and Cobras II, and Silver Bullets by K. Rohnke, the New Games Books edited by Fluegelman,

Processing the Adventure Experience, by Nadler and Luckner,

The Complete Ropes Course Manual, Rohnke, Wall, and Tait

Playfair by Weinstein and Goodman

Web pages:

Several web sites can be a resource for more information about Experiential Education or to learn new activities:

Venture: <http://www.uncc.edu/venture> Go to our links page to access most of these pages below.

Activities:

Christian Itin's Pages:

Hundreds of activities for groups: <http://www.du.edu/~citin/activitypage.html>

His links to numerous other sites with activity lists: <http://www.du.edu/~citin/links.html>

<http://www.wiuadml.edu/miosa/lessons/types.htm>: This page has lots of icebreakers and warm-ups.

Thanks to Regina Young-Hyatt for this page.

Organizations:

Association for Experiential Education, <http://www.aee.org>

AEE Guide to Experiential stuff on the web, <http://www.aee.org/resources/eeguide.html>

(Links to many interesting pages including: Adventure Therapy, Experience Based Training and Development, Processing, women's issues, research, and more.)

Project Adventure, <http://www.pa.org> (a major service provider and publisher of books related to this field)