

Integrating Gender and Nutrition within Agricultural Extension Services

Activity Sheets for
Facilitators
June 2016

Icebreakers, Energizers, Team-Building, Storytelling, and Warm-up Activities

These activities can be used to help people get to know one another, to relieve tension and help participants focus during a workshop, to introduce a topic, to provide a physical break, to divide participants into groups, to provide a format for reviewing and assessing workshop objectives, and to encourage bonding among group members. Each activity is described in a separate box so that this document can be cut into individual instruction cards.

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Person-to-Person

There has to be an odd number of people for this activity to work. The facilitator stands in the midst of the group and asks everyone else to pick a partner. Explain that you'll give them from two to five commands that they must perform as a pair. The last command is always "Person-to-person" and everyone, including the person giving the commands, will have to scramble to find a new partner. The "odd person out" gets to go into the middle of the group and provide the next set of commands.

The game begins with the person in the center (initially the facilitator) giving instructions such as: "Hand to Head" and the pairs must put a hand to a head. The facilitator can then say: "Elbow to Knee" and the pairs then have to put an elbow to a knee, as well as keeping the hand to the head. After a few more commands, the facilitator says "Person-to-Person," and everyone finds a new partner, except for the new person who begins calling out commands. Depending on the group, this can get interesting!

Fortunately...Unfortunately

Alternate these two words as sentence beginnings in a "round." The first person says: "Fortunately ..." (e.g. "... we won the lottery."). The second person says: "Unfortunately..." (e.g. "... no-one could find the ticket."). The third person continues the story with: "Fortunately," the fourth with "unfortunately," etc.

Tip: As most players want to contribute both "good news" and "bad news," either ensure there is an odd number of players (by joining in or not, as appropriate), or encourage occasional passing (something that should be allowed anyway). This game can stay in the world of fantasy. You can also use it as a structure for reviewing a group activity. This can be particularly useful if the group is likely to see the activity as 100% success or as 100% failure. This game brings out a more balanced view – after going through some entertaining absurdities along the way.

Earthquake!

In groups of three make a house with two people on the outside with their arms stretched out overhead and one person in the middle (in the house). One person in the middle of the houses says: "people change" and the people in the houses all move to another house; the houses do not move. One person will always be left out; this person can then say "people change" or "house change" and all the houses move to a new person while the people do not move. The third alternative is to say "earthquake" and everyone has to move—the houses and the people in them

Stand Up/Sit Down

Ask questions about the topic to be dealt with in the workshop. Ask the people to respond by standing up or sitting down. Example: Stand up if you like yard duty. Sit down if you have traveled overseas, etc.

Puzzlers

Cut a picture into four or six parts (old calendars with photos work well). Give each person a piece of the puzzle and have them put the picture together with others. This is their new group. Ask participants to self-introduce.

Fruit Salad


Have the participants sit in a circle with one member standing in the middle. The person in the middle announces that he or she sees someone with “black shoes.” All the people wearing black shoes have to exchange seats with each other, including the person in the middle. One person will not be able to find a seat. That person becomes the person in the middle of the circle telling the rest of the group what he or she sees (e.g., blue jeans, glasses, black hair, etc.). When the person in the middle says “Fruit Salad,” everyone must get up and exchange seats.

Lingua Franca


Individuals brainstorm saying “hello/good-bye/how are you?” in as many languages as possible. Participants circulate and sit with people who have chosen a similar greeting.

The Name Game # 1

Ask each participant to take a few moments to think of a positive adjective that starts with the same letter as his or her first name (e.g. “Loyal Larry”). Start by modeling it yourself. Additionally, participants can be asked to share a sentence using words that begin with the first letter of their name (e.g. “Joyful Jan juggles jelly beans.”). In a circle, beginning with the facilitator as a model, throw a beanbag to another person, saying, “Hi, I’m Joyful Jan and I juggle jelly beans.” The person receiving the beanbag says, “Hi, Joyful Jan. I’m Patient Pat and I pick pineapples.” When the participants have received the beanbag, they put their hands behind their backs to indicate who remains to be introduced. The game continues until everyone has been introduced. An additional challenge can be to have someone name all of the participants using the adjectives they shared.



“Hi, I’m Joyful Jan and I juggle jelly beans.”



“Hi Joyful Jan, I’m Patient Pat and I pick pineapples.”

The Name Game #2

Group size: Medium - Large

Used for ½ day to 1-day long training programs

This icebreaker works best if participants are grouped in a large circle.

The main goal of this icebreaker is to help participants learn each other's names via a quick, low-threat icebreaker. By the time participants complete this icebreaker, they will be able to name at least 50% of all other participants in the training. The name game is simple, safe, and effective for most training audiences. It should be avoided in mixed trainings where groups with historical conflict are brought into the same room. In such cases, the failure to remember someone else's name can become a "critical incident" and a source for continued polarization. While the name game is generally time-efficient, larger groups will require more time. Allot at least ten minutes for smaller groups (5 to 12 participants). Double the time for greater than 12 participants.

Explain to participants that you are going to ask them to play the name game. You will ask each person to introduce themselves, going person-to-person either clockwise or counter-clockwise around the group. Each person will be asked to introduce him or herself by giving at least their name, their affiliation, and an interesting topic of choice (either you pick a topic such as "Your ideal vacation..." or playfully ask the group-as-a-whole what they'd like to know about each other). The main task is to remember enough about each person so they could start from the beginning of the group and remember the names of all those who had introduced themselves thus far. Remind participants they are not to take notes during the game. Begin the introductions. After three or four people have introduced themselves, ask a volunteer to name all those who had introduced themselves so far.

Notes

- * Pepper your facilitation with liberal amounts of appreciation and acknowledgment.
- * Clapping is encouraged!
- * Minimal (or non-existent) processing of this icebreaker is most appropriate.

A nice variation is to break after someone has named everyone else in the group, and encourage people to break up into "affinity groups" with others they'd like to talk with. In these smaller groups, any number of light topics can be used to help participants get to know each other a bit better.

Post-it Notes

People draw their favorite sport or activity on the post-it note and attach it to their nametag. Everyone circulates to discover what others like. Gather "likes" together to form a new group.

WHY? WHY? WHY?

As a warm-up, set up interview pairings. One person is A, the other person is B.

A makes a personal statement (e.g. what they had for breakfast, what they want for Christmas, why they came to the workshop)

B asks “why?” A answers, B asks “why?” etc. It’s easy for B!

At a suitable point, swap roles and restart.

Note: It’s a good game for adults because it’s a child’s game!

Children are naturally more inquisitive and persistent (both excellent attributes for effective learning!). Children play it naturally – as questioners, if not as “answerers.”

The activity can be trivial or profound, which is why it is important to make it clear that everyone has a right to veto, stop, or pass if they don’t like where the “why?” question is leading (even though it’s only reflecting back what they are saying).

It’s a quick way to get to values underlying actions or opinions. As a warm-up, it makes it clear that the learning event is going to be working at a number of different levels, and with any luck, one of these will be humor!

Once introduced as a warm-up game it can readily be returned to later on as a “serious” tool for reviewing.

Common Experience

Participants are paired and asked to interview each other to identify areas of “commonality” in their lives. Possible areas: education, family, likes, dislikes, professional interests, responsibilities, hometown, etc. Each pair is asked to report to the group on three commonalities discovered.

Embarrassing Moments

Paper is distributed and everyone writes down an embarrassing experience. The papers are collected and re-distributed. Everyone reads out the experience written and all try to guess whom the originator is.

Draw It!

Ask participants to draw how they feel, or to draw their favorite food, etc.

Feelin' Good!

Ask participants to write one good thing that happened during the day. Share with partner or others at their table.

The Stone Sharing Experience

Have enough small, attractive, various-colored stones for everyone in the group. Have the group sitting in a circle, close enough to each other to hand off and receive stones easily. You can introduce the activity by saying “This warm-up exercise is designed to help us get in touch with three aspects of life that contribute to our overall health and well-being: a right relationship with ourselves; a right relationship with all other living beings; and a right relationship with the earth. After everyone has selected a stone from the basket that I will pass around, we will each share briefly with the group: 1) our full name and some mention of its possible meaning or significance to us, its family or ethnic origin, etc. (expressing right relationship with oneself); 2) an animal that has been special in our life, as a pet, e.g., or as an object of fascination and interest (expressing right relationship with all other living beings); 3) a place on earth that is special to us as a place of beauty, comfort, good memories, inspiration, relaxation (expressing right relationship with the earth).

“I will start, and when I have finished sharing, everyone should pass their stone to the person on their left and receive the stone from the person on their right. This is the process that we will follow after every sharing. By the time we have finished the exercise, everyone will have had their stone touched by everyone in the group and will have touched everyone else’s stone, and we will each end up with our own stone. You may keep your stone or give it back to the earth at some point. You might keep it in your pocket, your purse, on your desk, or on a shelf and it can serve as a reminder of each person who shared and with whom you connected during the exercise; it can serve as a reminder of this workshop/session/training/experience and of all the things that you will learn from it; and it can serve as a ‘touch-stone’ to rub when you are feeling stressed.”

The Napkin Game

Ask participants to form groups of equal size. Give each group a napkin and explain to them that their task is to fold their napkin as small as possible, but still large enough for each small group member to place a toe on the napkin.

You Animal!

Participants choose to be an animal and tell why they would choose this animal as they self-introduce at their tables.

Ball Toss/Group Juggle

Group size: 12-30

Ideal for groups where some people know each other, but the whole group is still getting acquainted.

- Have three tennis balls handy.
- Get the group in a circle.
- Facilitator tosses one ball to someone in the group whose name they know saying their name and then the other person's name (e.g. Sandy to John).
- John (person who receives the ball) tosses ball to someone whose name he knows (e.g. John to Phil).
- Phil tosses to someone whose name he knows and so on, saying both names all the way around the circle.
- The ball is tossed to each person one time only until everyone in the circle gets it and all names have been said.
 - THEN, facilitator starts again and tosses the balls to the same person (Sandy to John to Phil, etc.) only this time with two balls in succession (not at the same time) saying both names, both times.
 - Balls get tossed to the same people they were originally tossed to; first one ball, then the next, all the way around the circle stopping when they get back to the facilitator.
 - THEN, facilitator starts again only with all three balls this time.
 - Saying names each time, all three balls get tossed, in succession, in the same order until they get back to the facilitator.

By the time there are three balls going, it gets pretty chaotic and fun. By now all names have been said so many times everyone should have a pretty good idea of who's who and they are pretty warmed up and ready to go. If (I should say, when) someone drops a ball, simply give him or her a chance to chase it down and just pick up where you left off – no need to start again.

Meeting Warm-ups

Quick ideas to get people focused in the room, on each other, and ready to participate. Go around the table (or circle) and complete one of these sentences:

- Once upon a time, I...
- My ideal vacation is...
- The riskiest thing I ever did was...
- The wildest thing I ever did (that I'll admit to) is...

These are easy to make up and can be topical (e.g.: what I did on my summer vacation, my plans for the weekend are...)

Find an Object

Group size: up to 16

Time: up to 30 minutes

Purpose: Create an environment where it is safe for people to talk about who they are in a broader sense than might normally be socially acceptable.

Give participants 10 minutes to find an object that represents how they feel today, what they aspire to, what their job feels like, what they'd like to let go of to be present – the possibilities are wide open. Participants can either hold on to their object or put it on a cloth in the center of the room (this assumes people are in a circle on the floor or in chairs). Have each participant share with the group what the object means to them. You can either go in order, let someone volunteer to be first and then go in order or let it go according to whoever is ready (this option often feels best).

Some considerations: Most people don't go on very long. It helps to have access to nature because of the greatly increased store of objects to be found there but I've also done it in homes. I think it could be done in an office environment if people had enough time to wander around looking for something. It is helpful to emphasize that they don't have to find the ultimate object and they shouldn't think too hard about it but just let objects speak to them, e.g. whatever seems to catch their eye should be considered.

This is also a good example of "challenge by choice" in that participants can choose how much they wish to share of their "inner life" based on the notion that learning requires some willingness to risk.

Interviewing & Introducing

Purpose: Learn enough about one other person to be able to introduce them to the entire group. All participants get to hear about other participants from the perspective of a third party instead of hearing from the person themselves. This provides a bit of a stretch for participants to have to ask someone they just met to tell them enough about themselves to introduce them.

1. Pair off the participants
2. Have the teams interview one another
3. Have each take a turn introducing the other to the audience at large

Interviews should be timed (begin, end) anywhere from 1-2 minutes or longer depending on how much time you want to allow for this activity. You can prepare questions ahead of time or just provide general guidelines for the interview. You may want to ask people to pick someone to interview that they don't already know.

Ha!

Group size: up to 20

Time: 5-7 minutes

Ideally, use a room with flexible seating

- The trainer first asks the group members to form a circular seating arrangement
- When the participants are seated, the group leader explains that the object of this game is for the participants
- Without laughing, to pass the word “ha” around the circle
- The trainer then designates one participant to be the head of the circle
- That participant begins the game by saying “ha.”
- The person sitting to his or her right must repeat the “ha” and then say another “ha.”
- The third person must say, “ha, ha” and then give an additional “ha.”

In this manner the “ha” continues around the circle. The game ends when all of the participants, trying not to laugh (a virtual impossibility), have repeated the “ha”s that preceded them and then added their own “ha.”

Variations: The trainer may use another word in place of “ha.” For example: “yuk,” “har,” or “tee hee.” The group leader may ask all of the participants to repeat the “ha”s stopping only to let the person whose turn it is pipe in with his or her own. The trainer may continue the exercise for five minutes, regardless of how many times the “ha”s go around the circle.

Toilet Paper Go-round

Purpose: Use for short introductions at the start of a “heavy” or “intense” kind of meeting in order to lighten the atmosphere.

Materials: 1 roll of toilet paper

Pass around a roll of toilet paper and say something like “just in case this meeting gets a little messy, everyone needs to take some” (with no other qualifiers or instruction). Then go on with other business (agenda, minutes, “housekeeping” items) as the roll makes its way around the room. Some folks by nature will take many “squares” and some just a few.

Once everyone has had the roll, and you’ve finished other business, ask everyone to introduce themselves and share with the group as many “things” about themselves as the number of “squares” they took. You can suggest the “things” be generic or make it work-related . . . you choose. Have fun!

Truth or Lie?

Group size: 3-8

Time: 15-30 minutes

Purpose: This game has several goals. One is to allow people to get to know and appreciate one another better, through discovering both common and unique interests and experiences. It also serves to help level the playing field within a group through making human connections that aren't related to either organizational or power structures, to help people begin to be more comfortable talking and listening with one another, and to begin to facilitate the process of people exposing something of themselves and their ideas to a group. But most of all – to have some FUN!

In groups of three to eight (depending on how much time you want to devote to this exercise) have individuals take turns making three statements about themselves – two which are true; one that is a “lie.” After an individual makes his or her statements, the other folks in the group discuss among themselves which seem most plausible and what is most likely to be the “lie.” Once they come to some sort of consensus, the individual who made the statements not only tells which is the “lie” but also provides a bit more background about the “truths” as well as what made them think folks might have thought the “lie” was a “truth.”

Note: This game works well with groups that are new to one another. It is often surprising how relative strangers can instinctively pick up the nuances between truths and lies based on very little information. The game also works well with groups that have been together awhile and think they know a lot about each other. The first person or two asked to make statements can find it pretty difficult, but after a couple of folks have taken a turn, others typically find it easier to do. One way to help alleviate this and make the process run smoother is to alert a couple of people beforehand to begin thinking so that they can be somewhat more ready to volunteer. This type of a “plant” can make it much easier for folks who come later because they won't see someone “struggle” and get “uptight” about their ability to “perform.” Another way to get around the difficulty is to start it yourself.

This exercise can also be done “electronically” with groups that aren't physically located together, but have been “assembled” to work together on some task – for example a cross-functional committee or a committee of a national association that has folks from across the country participating. It takes a little longer – a group of seven I once participated in took a month of calendar time to do an e-mail version of this – but it provided the same benefits.

News Conference

Group size: 10-30

Time: 45-50 minutes

Purpose: To help us get to know one another better and answer any questions you may have about your trainer(s). **Note:** Use a briefing room near you; ideal to use during multi-day (3+) programs

Early stages of group development are often characterized by pronounced participant attention paid to the “authority” present in the group. In training programs, that authority is often represented (or brought) by the trainer/facilitator. The following activity works with this dynamic as it helps participants learn as much as possible about the trainer(s) in as short a time possible. In addition, this activity helps participants come to know one another better through introductions and attention paid to one another’s questions. The main goal of this icebreaker is to help participants work with, and gain comfort with, each other and with the trainer(s).

By the time participants complete this icebreaker, they will be able to describe: The names and affiliations of others in the training; the background of the trainer(s)/facilitator(s) and the relevancy of that background to the training-as-a-whole; personal characteristics of the trainer that may impact the course of learning throughout the training or facilitation event; specific nuances of the training that do not emerge during discussion of the training agenda; specific aspects of the training design intended to maximize their personal “safety” as they participate “at their own level” in activities, discussions, and opportunities for personal disclosure; and answers to any other questions they may have about the training and/or the facilitator(s).

- Display the following newsprint for participants: Trainer “News Conference”
- Break participants into several groups of four to six people each
- Display your own versions of the following newsprints after folks have “settled down”

Task One: Introduce yourselves to others in your group including names, affiliations, and one thing people wouldn’t know about you if you didn’t tell them. Take ten minutes for these introductions.

Task Two: Work within your group to think of 2-4 questions (depending upon number of sub-groups) you would like to ask your trainer(s) to help you know them better and better understand their hopes for this training (any questions about the training itself should be moved to another sheet of newsprint to be addressed after this opening activity). You will have ten minutes to come up with your questions.

Trainer Note: what you’re essentially doing here is working to keep questions focused on the person(s) of the trainer(s) rather than on the mechanics of the training itself.

After the second ten minutes, set up chairs in the front of the room (one chair per trainer) facing the back of the room.

- Ask participants to arrange their chairs to face the trainers’ chairs (to look like a news conference!).
- Ask each group to alternate the asking of their questions.

Trainer(s) answer as honestly as possible and appropriate. Process the activity minimally with brief discussion of participants and trainer reactions to the news conference format.

All My Neighbors #1 (similar to Fruit Salad)

Group size: odd number

Time: 10-15 minutes

You need an odd number of people for this game, which is a distant cousin to musical chairs. Everyone begins by sitting on chairs in a circle with the facilitator standing in the middle. Explain that the person in the middle needs to find some “neighbors.” To do so, they’ll make a true statement about themselves and hope that it will be true for others. Everyone that “identifies” with the statement has to then stand up and find an empty chair. The person in the center is also looking for a chair, so once again someone will be without a chair, and they get to go to the middle and find some “neighbors.” The facilitator then begins with something like: “All my neighbors wearing blue jeans.” At this, everyone who is wearing jeans should jump out of their seat and look for an empty seat. The “odd person out” goes to the middle

All My Neighbors #2 (for a more “sedate” group)

The group is in a circle, standing up. The facilitator is standing in the middle of the circle. Explain that you are going to make a variety of statements and you’d like everyone who “identifies” with the statement to join you in the center of the circle for “high fives.” The facilitator then begins: “All my neighbors wearing blue jeans.” At this, everyone who is wearing blue jeans should join the facilitator in the middle of the circle for a high five. Folks then return to their seats. The facilitator then goes on through 10 to 15 other such statements. Figure on ten minutes (tops) for this activity.

Example can include:

All my neighbors who:

- ...are wearing socks
- ...have an older sibling
- ...were born in a month without an R in it
- ...whose last digit of their social security number is odd
- ...haven’t been caught speeding in a year
- ...like Frosted Flakes
- ...don’t eat meat
- ...were engaged to be married more than once
- ...remember the name of Yogi Bear’s sidekick
- ...have watched *Gone with the Wind* in one sitting
- ...know how to tie a bow tie
- ...play the piano (even a little bit)
- ...have been to a *Grateful Dead* concert
- ...have voted with an absentee ballot

Blob Tag

Group Size: Flexible

Time: 10 minutes

Note: It's helpful to have a large, open space for this energizer.

The facilitator is "it." When she or he tags someone, they lock arms and then jointly attempt to tag someone else. As each person is tagged, they lock arms with those who are already "it." The game is over when the last person is "captured." Some boundaries must be set up for this activity to keep folks from roaming too far.

Honey, I Love You

In this game, everyone is sitting in a circle. As the facilitator, you will normally go first. The object is to identify someone in the circle, go up to them, and say, "Honey, I love you, but I just can't make you laugh," with the express purpose of making them laugh. The person you are saying this to has to look at you and work at keeping a straight face. If after three tries at getting them to laugh you haven't succeeded, pick another target. If they laugh or even smile, they move into the middle of the circle and select a target. You can do just about anything to get someone to laugh except touch them. Funny faces, strange voices, props, etc. are all fair game. Once a person has been made to laugh, they can no longer be a target. The game goes on until the last person either breaks down and laughs or withstands the final three attempts at getting them to laugh. Note that depending on the size of the group and the ability of folks to keep a poker face, this is often not a quick game. Nevertheless, it's always a lot of fun!

Hospital Tag

In this activity everyone is "it." The objective is to keep from being "tagged" by another player, but to tag as many other people as possible. The first time you are tagged you have to put a hand on where you were tagged – for instance, if you are tagged on the top of the head, you then have to play with one hand on top of your head. You can then resume attempting to tag others. The next time you are tagged you have to put your other hand where you are tagged that time. The third time you are tagged you're "dead" (sit down to signify this) and can no longer attempt to tag other people. It helps to have a large, open space for this activity, but it normally helps to set up some boundaries to keep folks from roaming too far. Depending on people's creative "tagging" abilities this can get pretty interesting. It shouldn't take more than ten minutes for this energizer to run its course.

The 4 Cs

Insight into various personalities – Name a cartoon character, color, car, and cuisine that best describes your personality and tell us why.

Warp Speed

A Koosh ball is thrown underhand to the first person after their name is called. The person who receives the ball says thank you to the giver, calls out someone else's name, and then tosses the ball to that person. Because everyone in the group should receive the ball one time, each person crosses his/her arms after receiving the ball so that everyone knows who has and has not yet received the ball. The game can be timed, to see how quickly the team can complete the activity. This activity can be used to learn names, energize the group, promote creativity, or encourage risk taking.

Secret Agent

Note: In this game it's best to have a pretty good sized, open area.

Have folks begin by standing around in a circle. Tell them that there is someone in the group out to get them – a “secret agent” – and only you know whom they are. Each individual also has a “bodyguard” who only they know about. Then, quietly, without pointing, and without telling anyone, each individual identifies to himself or herself who their “secret agent” is for this game. After everyone seems to have made a selection, have them then select another individual – quietly, without pointing, and without telling anyone – who will serve as their “bodyguard” for the activity. After everyone has made their selections let them know that they are now free to move around, but they must keep their “bodyguard” between themselves and their “secret agent” at all times. This can get pretty funny and interesting as people move about. It often turns into utter chaos because of the odd combinations of “bodyguards” and “secret agents.”

Alphabet Search

Divide participants into small groups. Search your person for objects that you have on you ranging from A-Z. Place items in buckets. First group or person (if done individually) to get all 26 letters represented wins. Exercise can explore how diverse we are, with insight into our individual selves. If done as a small group, lends itself well to a small team building exercise as the group works together through the alphabet.

Who's Here?

Note: This is a very popular introductory exercise. Use it in the beginning of a workshop as a warm-up to talking about identity, diversity, and inclusiveness.

Purpose: If it works, this exercise will elicit feelings from group members related to personal identity and acceptance, experiences of bias and discrimination, desire for connection without compromising integrity, etc. Facilitators should be prepared to deal with such feelings.

Other goals:

- To orient the participants to thinking about identity and identity group membership. (“I am _____,” and “I am a member of/I belong to the group _____.”)
- To make explicit the diversity of the group. To get participants thinking about the feelings attached to belonging to a group or not belonging to a group.
- To help facilitators identify which identity groups are present.
- To help facilitators assess how receptive the group and individuals are to thinking about identity and/or difference (comfort level of the group).

Participants will be able to:

- identify the identity groups they belong to
- identify the identity groups present in the room
- talk about feelings attached to identity group membership (or non-membership)
- talk about themselves and others in terms of identity groups

Ask participants to sit in a circle. Tell them that you are going to read a list of questions about their identities. Ask participants to move to the center of the circle when they hear a phrase that describes them. Ask them to pay attention to the feelings they have when they hear certain descriptions, when they stand, when they don't stand, when others stand or don't stand. They should notice their feelings and each other when they are inside and outside groups. Remind them that some identities are risky to claim in certain settings. Participants may elect to “pass” and remain in the outside of the circle. (Example: who here is over 30? Those over 30 should move into the middle; those under 30 or who choose to pass should stay put.)

SAMPLE LIST OF DESCRIPTIONS:

Generic: “Who here...”	...considers themselves working-class?
...is the oldest child?	...considers themselves economically poor?
...is the youngest child?	...is Moslem?
...is a middle child?	...is Jewish?
...is an only child?	...is Christian or raised Christian?
...has more than three siblings?	...is of another religious background?
...has more than five siblings?	Ism-related: “Who here...”
...comes from a blended family (i.e. has step-sisters and/or step-brothers)?	...is a man?
...was raised by a single parent for most of their life?	...is a woman?
...was raised by two parents?	...is married?
...has a divorce in their family history?	...is single?
	...has children?

...comes from/grew up in an urban area?

...comes from/grew up in a rural area?

...has a dog?

...has a cat?

...has horses?

...has other animals (name)?

...likes sports?

...likes movies?

...has no children?

...considers themselves middle-class?

...does not speak English as their first or native language?

(You can make up more along these lines. Be mindful of culturally appropriate vs. non-appropriate questions. These examples have worked in the United States but may not be fitting elsewhere.)

Process the exercise by asking participants to discuss the feelings associated with group membership or non-membership. How did they feel identifying themselves as members of these groups? Did anyone not stand up even though they were a member of that group? Was anyone confused? What description felt proudest? Scariest? Did any description make you feel ashamed? Other questions?

Multi-way Tug-of-War



See diagram. You'll need several good quality ropes each about 60 ft+. You can attach ropes to each other with bowlines instead of ring/karabiners. Pick a soft location e.g., grass.

Brief Description: Fun, physically demanding, competitive team activity. Several teams pull against each other, requiring communication and tactics as well as strength to outmaneuver and win.

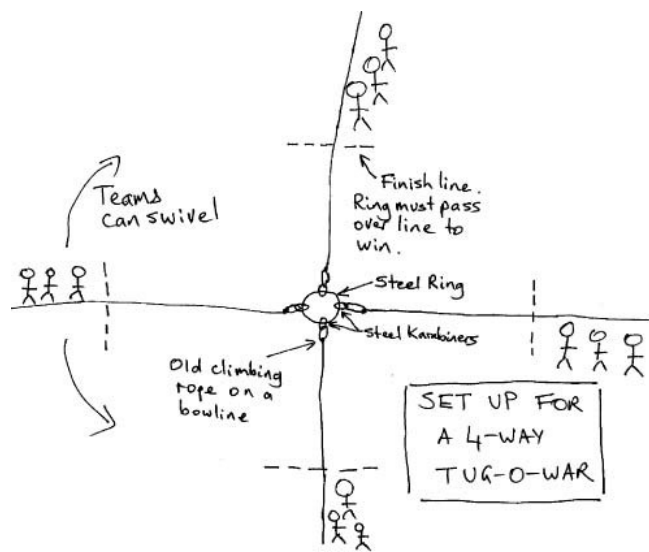
Fun, finale-type activity. Physically exhausting and emotionally climaxing!

Works for kids through to corporate programs. Ideal for adolescents and possibly youth at risk. Especially with older adults, be careful with this activity, especially if they are unfit or if overexertion is contraindicated (e.g., heart problems).

- > Use for any size groups, indoor or outdoor. A large group outdoors is ideal.
- > In traditional one-on-one tug-of-war it is mostly strength that wins, with a few tactics.
- > In multi-way tug-of-war it is mostly tactics that wins, with some strength.

How-to

1. Lay out the ropes, etc. as shown in diagram below.
2. Participants should prepare appropriately, and remove watches and hand jewelry.
3. Divide into groups and make sure the groups appear to be of similar strength.
4. Brief group on normal tug-of-war **safety rules**, basically.
 - * no wrapping or tying rope around anyone or anything - **only hold rope with hands**
 - * watch out for rope burn on hands - let go if rope is moving through hands
 - * watch out for rope burn on body - **let go if you lose footing**
5. First command from the Tug-of-War master is "take the strain." This is only to take up the slack, that's all. The Tug-of-War master makes sure the center ring is stable and centered. This needs strong leadership because teams are always keen to add extra strain!
6. Second command is "Go!!"
7. Teams attempt to pull the center ring or knot over their finish line. This can rarely be achieved by strength alone and instead will require guile. Teams can swivel to cooperate / compete with other teams, then switch directions, etc.
8. Conduct several rounds. Continue, say, until one team earns 3 victories and the Tug-of-War title.
9. Allow teams plenty of time to physically recover and debrief/plan after each round.
10. Team building groups may wish to discuss what the secrets to success were in this activity, and whether these lessons apply elsewhere.



Source: ODD Retreat, June 2003, Facilitators: Keesha Egebrecht, ODD Administrative Assistant, and Stephanie Houser, Heifer Ranch

What Do You Think?

Everyone gets a postcard and then gets into groups according to what is on their postcard – person, place, or thing. Each person in the group then discusses his/her picture and a similar site in his/her own country, state, or town/village.

Knee Coordination

Everyone sits in a row, putting their hand on their neighbors' knees. Starting at the beginning of the line, hit the knee of the neighbor who hits your knee once with one hand, then hit the knee of your other neighbor (first and last knee in the line get two hits, every other one gets one hit). Each person must wait for their turn, but go as fast as possible. If someone messes up by going out of order they are to sit out. See who is left at the end!

Memory Game

This method demonstrates that no single person has a complete picture of the event. One person sits in the storyteller's chair and starts giving a detailed account of what happened. If any listener thinks the storyteller has omitted any detail, they change places with the storyteller and continue until challenged, and so on. If at any point you want to speed things up, you can (if this facilitator's privilege is claimed in advance) jump ahead in time and continue from a new starting point.

Emag Yromem

The same as the memory game, only backwards. Start with the end of the story. Useful advice is to use the phrase "and before that..." to replace "and then..." Challenges for omissions are encouraged as in the memory game. Why use this variation? Greater novelty, interest, and fun. It can be useful for investigating causes (challenges for omissions can help to track down multiple causes). It's easier to control the time, i.e. stopping people before they get back to the start is easier than stopping people before they get to the end.

Follow the Leader

Have one person act as the leader and take the group on a walk (in a straight line) through the room, building, and/or outdoors doing a number of different activities, such as jumping, stalking, clapping, skipping, touching things, etc.

Just a Minute

This is based on the BBC radio program of the same name. One person is given a topic and has to talk on that subject for just a minute without hesitation, deviation, or repetition. Challenges can be made at any time. If successful (the referee's decision is final) then the successful challenger carries on with the same topic for however many seconds remain – until they are successfully challenged, etc. The person whose turn it is when the minute is up wins something (e.g. a point). A timekeeper (with stopwatch) is needed to stop the watch as soon as a challenge is made, and to restart it as soon as the chair has announced her verdict and has said who should continue talking on the topic. Once a group understands the game, the roles of chair and timekeeper can be on a rotation. The transition to a reviewing technique is when the topics chosen (by the facilitator or by group members) are about experiences they have had together, and the deviation rule is tightened up to prevent people straying too far away from events in this group. Try throwing in some jargon or clichés that have become common currency in the group (e.g. “trust,” “co-operation,” “communications,” “listening,” “assertiveness”). In just a minute, these words can become so “dissected” that the group may choose to use them a little more accurately in the future!

Three Things

This is a family favorite. It also teaches connection making skills and can assist with the transfer of learning. The child comes up with three things (real or abstract) that they want in their story, e.g. “Father Christmas,” “me,” and “a huge present.” You instantly tell a story with these three things in it. Each child (approximately 3!) comes up with a “thing” that really challenges the storyteller, e.g. “the dirt in my finger-nail,” “spending \$100 million in a minute,” and “a really, really, funny ending.” You do your best! But when children get this “clever” it's definitely time to turn the tables (and let them enjoy story-telling). You come up with 3 “things” for the child (or children) to tell you a story about. **Now the “professional” version:** Ask each individual to choose three *different* “things” from the workshop that they want to remember (“things” they valued directly, or “things” they valued indirectly because of what they learned as a result). Ask each individual to describe these three *different* things to a partner in a way that brings out *similarities* or connections. Ask each individual to choose one high(ish) point from the course and one low(ish) point from the course and then to imagine a situation six months ahead when they are facing a problem and have a “flashback” to the course. Ask each individual to tell a story (to the group or to a partner) that brings these three “things” together into one story. A more challenging variation is to ask each person to write a “future problem” on a piece of paper and put the “problem” into a hat. Each person in turn, draws a (random) problem and incorporates it into a story with the high and low points they have already chosen.



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