GAMES & ACTIVITIES

For Experiential Education

TOSS-A-NAME Game

Equipment: Several balls

Directions: Have the players form a circle. The leader starts by saying his/her name, and then tosses a ball to the person on the right or left. That person says their name (& any other appropriate information), and so on, until everyone has had a chance to say their name. The leader then throws the ball to anyone in the circle first saying his or her name. In turn, that person throws the ball to someone else after saying his/her name and so on. Additional balls can be added during to game to increase the fun factor.

Variations: (a) Expand and contract the circle shouting names.

(b) Add a different colored ball or rubber chicken, which must go in reverse order.

(c) When used as an "icebreaker", in addition to names, ask about favorite things (travel , food, colors, heroes, activities, etc.), and about where they live, occupation, etc.

(S.B. - p. 17)

WARM-UP (no props)

Directions: This does not have to be very physical, but should stretch leg, arm, back & neck muscles.

Mrs. O'Grady Variation: Players form a circle, leader starts off saying,
"Mary (or whomever) did you hear what happen to Mrs. O'Grady?"
"No, what happened to Mrs. O'Grady (or whomever)?"
"She wanted to become a games/COPE facilitator (or something else)."
"How did she do that?"
"She did that by (do any stretching exercise) a neck roll"
Keep on doing the exercise for 10 seconds, and then keep going in sequence until everyone has had a turn.

(B.B.A? - pp. 1-11 & 153. S.B. - p, 152)

TRIANGLE TAG (no props)

Directions: Set up 4 players to a group...3 people in each group hold hands to form a triangle. The fourth person is "it" and one of the other three is the "runner." The other two people help keep the runner from being tagged. (Note: (1) the three people forming the triangle must be facing each other; (2) the "it" cannot tag across the triangle…only from the outside; (3) if doing this indoors on a smooth surface, make sure the players are wearing rubber soled shoes. ***This is a very active game*** where the "triangle" spins very rapidly).

(B. B. A? - P.4)

LINE-UPS (no props)

Directions: Have the group stand on a line (tape, rope or painted) in a single line shoulder to shoulder. The participants are to arrange themselves according to (1) *month and day of their birth date* without speaking (no noise of any kind) and with one foot on the line at all times; (2) *height* (mute and blindfolded); (3) assign a *number* to each person after blindfolding them and have them line-up in order without speaking; (4) blindfold each participant and give them the name of *an insect or animal*. Then have them form a line starting with the smallest and ending with the largest...no talking allowed but they can make the sound of their insect or animal (i.e. buzz, caw, moo, cluck, etc.) Other possibilities: you may want to split very large groups into smaller groups, or allow the participants to move freely where both feet can be move off the line… you can decrease the length game with a smaller group and with fewer restrictions, and visa versa!

B.B.A.? - p. 98)

MAIL CALL

Equipment: Spot Markers (1 for each player & 1 in the center of the circle)

Directions: Have the players stand in a circle on a marker with one player in the middle. The person in the middle says, "I have mail for anyone who... (something that is **true of that person and at least one other person**) ... is wearing white sneakers." Everyone who is wearing white sneakers must leave their place (marker) in the circle and find another marker on the circle -- this includes the person in the middle. Everyone who moves must find another marker to step on. The person, who does not make it to a spot marker, becomes the next person in the middle... (some other mail call ideas: colors, eyes, hair, clothing, shoes, belts, hats, wrist watch, eyeglasses, never yelled at their mother, took a shower in the last week, is wearing underwear (every one moves on the underwear and the shower!, likes pizza, hates liver, etc.) Keep it simple…you should be able to see whatever you are calling or be make sure there's a very high probability that what you are calling is going to true of at least one person in the group!

MOON BALL

Equipment: Beach Ball

Directions: Scatter the players in a fairly small area. The object is for the participants to keep the ball in the air as long as possible without the ball hitting the ground.

Rules: (1) No player can hit the ball twice in a row.
(2) Count one point for each hit. Ask the group to set a goal. Was it easy or difficult? Why?

Variations: Right or left hand only, or in a particular succession (i.e. 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10…)

(S. B. - p. 31)

TOUCH MY CAN

Equipment: Soda or coffee can

Directions: Form a group of about 10-15 players. Ask the players to make physical contact with an empty can without making contact with one another. At least one person's nose must touch the can. Start with a larger can (i.e. coffee can) first, and then use decreasingly smaller cans (i.e. soda, small juice can, pill container, etc.) to increase the challenge!

(S. B. - p. 108)

EVERYBODY'S IT (no props)

Directions: When the game starts everyone is "it", and tries to tag everyone else. If you're tagged you are out, and must go the ground on one knee…*fastest tag game in the world!* **Note**: keep the group within fairly tight boundaries, otherwise the game will last forever!

Variation: When tagged you go to the ground on one knee, and if you can tag someone **without moving from that spot**, you are revived, and the tagged person must go down on one knee, and so on, until one person is left or time is called. This version is very fast and can go on for a long time.

(B. B. A? - P. 1)

WARP SPEED

Equipment: One three-inch foam or fleece ball & a Stopwatch

Directions: Form the players in a circle. One player throws the ball to another person in the circle (keep one hand raised until you catch a ball), and so on, until everyone has caught a ball. Ask everyone to remember the pattern (sequence). Go through the pattern a second time. Now, on the third try, time the sequence to establish a "world record" for the group. The challenge is to set a new world record. (Are there any other ways this can be done faster?) WARP SPEED can be used in conjunction with TOSS-A-GAME (#1).

(B. B. A - p. 53)

BEACHBALL SOCCER (aka ANTI-SOCCER)

Equipment: Beach Ball

Directions: Same rules as soccer (the number of players can vary), except only hands or elbows can be used to hit the ball. Use a gym wall as a goal indoors or "over a line" (boundary) outdoors. A 16" to 24" beachball is the ideal size.

TRAFFIC JAM*

Equipment: Spot Markers

Directions: Place the spot markers in a straight line using 1 spot marker for each participant plus one extra spot marker. To begin, one group stands on the places to the left of the middle spot marker, the other group stands to the right. Both groups face the middle unoccupied marker. Using the following moves the players on the left side must end up in the places on the right side and vice versa.

Illegal moves: (a) A player may not move backwards
(b) A player may not move around someone facing the same direction as he/she is.
(c) Any move which involves two persons moving at the same time.

Legal moves: (a) A player may move into an empty space in front of him/her.
(b) A player may move around a person who is facing him/her into an empty spot.
* Not recommended for younger children.

(S. B. - p. 122)

DOLLAR JUMP (aka BUCK JUMP)*

Equipment: One-Dollar Bill

Directions: Place the dollar on the ground. The challenge is to jump over the dollar lengthwise while touching the fingers on both hands to the toes (top of the shoes) on both feet (wrapping fingers around the shoe is not permitted…touching the toe tips only!)

Variations: (1) Use two-dollar bills end-to-end (more challenging).
(2) Jump backwards over the dollar bill (more challenging).
* Great for younger children!

(B.B.A? -p.31)

SWAT

Equipment: Foam sword, ½ of a pool noodle or rolled-up newspaper.

Directions: Have the players stand in a circle. The player on the center spot marker has a "sword". The player in the middle runs toward the circle and swats (below the knees) one of the players on the circle. The tagged person chases the "it" back toward the middle of the circle. The "it" runs to the center of the circle, and quickly places the sword on a marker. He/she then runs for the empty space on the circle. The tagged player picks up the sword, and tries to tag the "it" before he/she reaches an empty marker on the circle. If a successful tag is made, repeat the sequence with a new "it". If tagged before reaching the empty spot marker, you must return to the center spot marker. (Note: Tags above the knees are illegal)

HUMAN KNOT (aka TANGLED KNOT) (no props)

Directions: Have a group of 6-10 players form a tight circle. Hold out your right hand, and grab the right hand of someone across the circle. Next do the same with the left hands, so that each person is holding two different hands. Note: The larger the group, the more difficult it becomes to solve the challenge)

Note: If the players are having trouble, "Magic Wind" can be called upon to help a group that is stuck by breaking a hand connection once during the course of the game. Let the group make the decision to call the "Magic Wind." Also, if you are working with "at-risk youth", coed group, or a more mature group, you can use 30"- 36" lengths or rope or webbing to decrease the personal space (contact) of the participants.

Challenge: Untangle the "knot" without breaking hand contact...hands can be moved (i.e. turned or rotated), but contact should not be broken.

(S. B. - p. 117)

ADD-ON TAG (aka TUSKER OR BLOB TAG) (no props*)

Equipment: *Foam Sword (optional with Tusker Tag)
Establish Play Area (Boundaries)

Directions: One person is "it". He/she tags a person who then joins by holding hands to tag a third person. This person again joins by holding hands and so on until everyone is tagged. Only outside hands (free) can do the tagging.

Variations: (a) Start as pairs and have the entire group in pairs.
(b) Use two foam swords (tusks aka *Tusker Tag*) to tag
(c) Someone on the line (blob) yells "Tally Ho" allowing the participants to momentarily break into pairs, reverse direction, and immediately reform as the blob.

(S.B. - P 42)

MAGIC STICKS (aka HANDS DOWN)

Equipment: 10 pencils, dowels or sticks

Directions: While in a kneeling position, place the pencils in a random or geometric pattern. Make sure that the players can clearly see the pencils. Tell the players that you will be thinking of a number from 1 to 10, and the answer should be very obvious. See whether they can guess the answer. The answer is in your fingers placed near the "sticks", not in the "sticks" themselves. In the first round, keeps your fingers close to your knees. In each subsequent round, move you fingers a little closer to the pencils (or sticks). Ask the participants who figure it out not to give the secret away until the end of the game.

(S.B. - p. 53)

QUAIL SHOOTER'S DELIGHT (aka Phones and Faxes)

Equipment: 1 ball, deck ring, rubber chicken, etc. for **each** participant

Directions: Ask 1 player to stand in the middle of a 30' circle formed by the other with players (for larger groups add an additional player in the middle). The number of people in the middle will vary with the number of players (1:8 to 1:12 ratio is a good average). On the count of 1-2-3 everyone lofts (throw underhand) the objects simultaneously toward the "targets" in the center. **Objects should be thrown up in the air (at least 10') so they "rain down" on the player(s) in the center of the circle…do not throw the props directly at the player(s)!** The player(s) attempt to see how many of the falling objects they can catch. Switch the player(s) in each round, and go for a "world record." This game is basically programmed failure (this can lead to a good discussion about success and failure, and what we learn from our failures). What were the results when the players in the center tried to grab all the props? What happened when they focused on only a few props?

(S. B. - p. 63)

ROPE JOUSTING

Equipment: 50' - 60' rope and 2 small platforms.

Directions: Set platforms about 25' apart and have participants stand on the platform holding the rope so that each has an equal amount of excess rope behind them. The object is to cause your opponent to step off the platform or lose the rope. Depending on the size of the platform, several people can play. Platforms should be no more 1"- 3" high. A 1/2" soft nylon rope works best.

Use spotters behind the participant(s). and leather-palmed gloves to help prevent rope burns (Note: This is more a game of strategy than strength).

ALL SCREWED UP

Equipment: One 36" or 48" x 1/2" threaded rod + a 1/2"hex nut for each participant.

Directions: Break into groups of 4 - 6 participants. Give the group a threaded rod and a nut for each participant. The object is for the group to get all the nuts to the other end of the rod A.S.A.P. This can be done as a timed event or competition. This is a good event for a story line. (i.e. The Spiral Galaxy)

(C & C II – p. 88)

STEPPING STONES (aka Alligator Alley)

Equipment: Spot Markers

Directions: To go from point "A" to point "B" using spot markers to get there. Use 1 marker less than the number of participants.

Rules: Once made, physical contact with the spot markers cannot be broken. If it is, the marker is "lost". Markers can only go forward, not in reverse. Set the boundaries far enough apart so that markers must be used more than once. Use a story theme with this one…be creative!

(Q. S. - p. 186)

GROUP JUMP ROPE

Equipment: 50' - 60', 1/2" nylon rope or 1" webbing.

Directions: Break into groups of 5-8 players. First allow each person 2-4 reps of jumping alone. Then line the group up and try a group jump. Allow for time for planning, problem solving and communication when the group has difficulty in succeeding.

Variations: (a) Allow participants to run through the rope alone or in pairs
(b) Everyone must get through or the entire group starts all over...team approach.

DRAGON'S TAIL

Equipment: 1 Bandanna/player

Directions: This is a tag game. Everyone puts a bandanna in his/her left pocket, or behind one's belt so that at least 2/3 of the bandanna is visible to the other players. The object is to take someone else's "tail" while protecting yours. The last one with a "tail" is the winner of that round. In the next round pair up two players…one person in front of the other. The person in the rear wears a tail, and the person in the front tries to grab the tail of another pair. Only the "head" can grab another dragon's tail. Next try it in groups of 3, 4, 5, 6, etc. For the last round form one big dragon. The objective is still the same. What's different about the last round? (answer: the first several rounds are competitive in nature…the last round is cooperative. This should lead into a great reflection about when one needs to be competitive, and when one needs to be cooperative). ***This is a very active game***.

UP CHUCK (aka BARF BALL)

Equipment: 1 ball for each player

Directions: On a signal each player must throw their ball at least 10' high, and catch a ball other than the one you threw. Leave all balls not caught on the ground to be counted...this is your negative score. The negative score provides a goal to shoot for in order to improve your score in the next round(s).

(B.B.A? - p.80)

BLINDFOLD SQUARE

Equipment: 50" - 60" Rope

Directions: Blindfold each participant. Tie both ends of the rope together, have each participant grab the rope with at least one hand (okay to use both hands). Have the group form a square without taking their hand(s) off the rope. Ask the players to remove their blindfolds when they think they have completed the challenge! Give the team some time to plan, and try it again.

Variations: Circle, triangle, rectangle, 5-pointed star, or any geometric shape. This can also be done by holding hands, if rope is not available.

(C & CII - p.81)

BALLOON TROLLEYS

Equipment: 1 Balloon for each participant.

Directions: Participants line up single file with balloon placed between themselves and the person in front of them. The entire group must cross an expanse without dropping the balloons. Dropped balloons must be replaced without dropping additional balloons. Two people who drop balloons must go to the front or rear and replace the balloons. To increase the challenge, disable some of the players (i.e. mute, blindfold, reverse the direction (facing backward) of some players, etc. This is a "portable" version of the 10' trolleys.

(Q.S. – p.149)

CAPTAIN ON DECK (no props)…(good with large groups)

Directions: People should just be standing around (not in circle or line, etc). The caller/captain should be in a position where everyone can hear the commands. These are the commands given by the captain:

Number of People	**Formation**	**Commands Given By the Captain or Caller**
One person	Captain on Deck	Must salute until "caller" says **at ease** - if they move for any other command, they are out of game.
One Person	Cannon Ball	Quick squat down and say "**BOOM"**
Two people	Man Over board	One person squats in front of the other - 2nd person stands behind "squatee" and peers out to sea.
Three people	Crows Nest	Three people stand back to back interlock their elbows - forming a crow's nest.
Four people	Captain's Table	Four people face each other making a "box" like they are eating at a table - making sounds like pirates eating – **"aargh, aargh, aargh"**
Five people	Walk the Plank	Five people form a straight line front to back

If the players move on the CAPTAIN ON DECK command without hearing **at ease**, or if there are not enough people to make a formation (i.e. 4 players are needed and there are only 2) those extra people are out of the game and move to the side! This is an elimination game.

Don't let the group get too comfortable – the commands should be called at a reasonably fast pace!

ELBOW TAG (no props)

Directions: Works best with at least 10 to 12 participants. Set relatively tight boundaries so players aren't running all over the place. Pick one player to be the "runner" and one player to be the "it". Break the rest of the group into pairs (twos) with one right arm and one left arm linked at the elbows. The "it" chases the "runner". The "runner" can become safe by linking up with any one of the pairs. When this happens the player not linked with the "runner" must immediately break off, and start running as he/she becomes the new "runner". If the "it" tags the "runner" before reaching a linked pair, the "it" immediately becomes the "runner", and the "runner" immediately becomes the "it". The "runner" can link with a pair at any time, and the pairs have to pay attention and break off when the" runner" links up. If you have an odd number of players, let one person be a referee, and

later switch him/her into the game. Let another player be the referee for a while. If you have a large group, you may have multiple "runners" and/or multiple "its". ***This is a very active game***!

KEY PUNCH

Equipment: Spot Markers Numbered from 1 to 30 & a 50-60' piece of rope

Directions: Make a 14' diameter circle with the rope. Place the spot makers inside the circle. The spots should be in random order with a somewhat zigzag pattern. The object is to have the participants touch all of the keys in order without touching anything else inside the circle. Each participant should touch as many keys as possible on each try. All participants must touch at least one key. After the key(s) are touched, the participant must jump back outside the circle without touching a key that is not in the proper order or the ground inside the circle If someone misses a spot marker, or steps out of order, the team must start over from the beginning. If time is running short, the participant can retry from the last "missed" key and go forward from that point.

ROCK STAR/BODYGUARD

Equipment: Two fleece (or foam balls)

The players form a circle…the participants forming he circle are the "**paparazzi**." Put two players in the middle of the circle… one is the "**rock star**", and the second person is the "**bodyguard**". Give the two fleece balls to one of the paparazzi (players forming the circle). The object of the game is to have the paparazzi hit the rock star with the fleece balls. The paparazzi can either throw one or two balls at the rock star, or pass one or two of the balls to other paparazzi that may have a better shot at the rock star. The bodyguard's role is to protect the rock star from getting hit by the fleece balls. When the rock star is hit by a ball, he/she then joins the paparazzi (on the circle), and the paparazzi who hit the rock star becomes the new bodyguard, while the old bodyguard become the new rock star…and so on.

POWER BALL (no props)

Directions: Have the players form a circle. Let one player active the invisible power ball by shaking it as though he/she was holding a real ball. The player should make a sound (whir, whir, whir or some other sound) while activating the ball…be creative! There are four commands and motions that can be used once the ball is activated.

"**swoosh**"…moves the ball left or right to the next player (use both hands to pass the power ball)

"**ping**"…flat palm of the hand held vertically stops the ball and reverses direction…right palm sends the ball to he left & left palm sends the ball to the right

"**bump**"…hands held together, as though he/she is hitting a volley ball (underhanded). The **ball skips the next player**, and continues in the same direction.

"**schwing**"…a back-handed pass using the right or left hand. A right-handed pass goes to the left, and a left-handed pass goes to the right + **the ball skips two players**, and can either continue in the same direction or change direction depending which hand one uses when he/she receives the power ball.

The object of the game is to keep the power ball moving as fast as possible. If a player makes mistake in a command or direction, he/she is out of the game until the next round.

AH, SO, KO (no props)

Directions: Have the players form a circle. One of the players stars the game by giving the "AH" command. There are four commands: (*the commands should be short & deep like a karate command*)

"**ah**"…a hand held over the top of one's head pointing either to the right or left (palm should be facing downward toward the top of one's head).

"**so**"…a hand is placed under one's chin pointing either to the right or left (palm should be facing downward).

"**ko**"… the palms of both hands held together with both arms fully extended and pointed at a player across the circle.

"**no**"… the palm of either hand is held flat (vertically with the fingers pointing upward) in order to block a "ko" sending it back across the circle to the player to the player who originally sent it…the arm should be fully extended as though you are pushing the "ko" back to the player who sent it.

The object is to keep the game going as fast as you can, using a one of the four commands. If someone misses a command or hesitates more than two seconds, he/she is out of the game until the next round.

Note: The "ah" is always followed by a "so". After the "so" use either an "ah" or " hai." The "hai" is Followed by either an "ah" (i.e. accepting the "hai" from the other player) or "no" (rejecting the the "hai" which goes back across the circle to the player who sent it). That player then starts with an "ah", and so on. The commands and hand movements should be very fast as in karate movements.

TEXAS HOLD'EM ?

Equipment: a deck of cards (remove the jokers & any other extraneous cards) & a stopwatch

Directions: The players can start in a group, circle or line. Give each player 3 to 6 six cards depending on he size of the group. The facilitator keeps one cards out of the deck. This card is not revealed, until the end of the game. The players must not reveal their cards, until they are told to start the game. Once the game starts the players must determine the suit and number (or ace, king, queen or jack) of the missing card (held by the facilitator) in as short a time as possible. Is there a better way to shorten the time? Allow the players to plan before staring subsequent rounds. This can lead to good discussions on communications, teamwork and planning at the end of the game.

BARNYARD (no props…blindfold optional)

Directions: Gather a group of players in a field or large open space. Assign a particular farm animal (i.e. cow, sheep, chicken, pig, duck, rooster, etc.) to each player. Have the players count off by 1 thru 5 (or 6). Scatter all the players, and have them close their eyes (or blindfold them). Each player must make the sound of their animal (moo, cluck, baa, quack, oink, etc.) in order to join their group. The players must keep making their animal sounds until all the players have found their group. Have a least four spotters available to turn wayward players around toward the general vicinity of their group. Make sure the field is free from rocks, trees, holes and other obstructions. **This works great with larger groups**. Have a video camera ready to catch the fun!

Farm animals: cow (moo); **sheep** (baa); **pig** (oink); **goat** (naa); **horse**; **chicken** (cluck); **duck** (quack); **dog** (woof); **cat** (meow); **frog** (ribbet)

STREETS & ALLEYS (aka COPS & ROBBERS)

Equipment: a foam sword (or half a pool noodle) or rolled up newspaper for each "cop"

Directions: You'll need a **large group** for this one…25 to 100+ people and a large open field. Line the players up in rows (i.e. 36 people = 6 rows of 6; 100 people = 10 rows of 10, etc.). Try to make the row as even as possible, if you have 40 people do 6 rows of 6 & 1 row of 4 and so on. Space the players so with their arms raised to shoulder height; their fingertips just barely touch the fingers of the person to their side (STREETS). Once that is done, have the players (with arms still raised to shoulder height) turn 90 degrees to the right, and make sure they are spaced so that their fingertips just touch the players to either side (ALLEYS). Select two players one to be the robber and the other to be the cop. Start in the STREET position. The robber runs up the STREET with the cop with a pool noodle running after the robber. At the end of each row the robber turns into the next STREET with the robber in pursuit. If the cop gets to close to the robber, the facilitator yells "ALLEYS." The rest of the players immediately turn 90 degrees to the right. The robber and cop are now separate by an entire row. At some point the facilitator will yell "STREETS", and the player will rotate 90 degrees to the left to form STREETS. If you have a very large group (100+) you can add another set of cops and robbers. The larger the group the better!

ALASKAN BASEBALL (aka STRIP THE PIG)

Equipment: one rubber chicken or rubber pig (a ball or other object can also be used)

Directions: Split the group into two teams about 15' – 20' apart from each other. One team (Team A) forms a **tight** circle with one player on the outside of the circle. The other group (Team B) forms a line (single file…front to back). At the command, the player outside the circle (Team A) throws the rubber chicken as far away as possible from the other team (Team B). The rubber chicken must be readily retrievable (i.e. water, swamps, sticker bushes, poison ivy, treetops, pavilion roofs, etc are all **illegal**!). Once the rubber chicken is thrown, the player who threw it starts running around his/her circled teammates as fast as possible. Each revolution around the circle scores a point. At the same time the rubber chicken is thrown, Team B runs to where the chicken has landed, and reforms a single line. The first player passes the rubber chicken under his/her legs; the second player passes it over his/her shoulder repeating the pattern until the last player in the line gets the rubber chicken. At this point, the last player in line yells, "**STOP!"** (this stops the runner on Team A from scoring additional runs. At the same time, the player on Team B yells, "**STOP**", he/she starts the second inning by throwing the rubber chicken as far away from Team A as possible.

Team B then forms **tight** circle with a runner going around their circle, and Team A runs to where the chicken has landed, forms a straight line, and so on!!! Players as many innings as you can! **This is a very fast and active game!**
(Note: This game can lead to a great reflection about what happens when a group transitions from a competitive environment {when the players are alone, or in multiple groups} to a cooperative environment {when the group forms one big dragon in the last round}. How many participants realized that they moved from a competitive to a cooperative situation at the end of the game?)

2B OR NOT 2B

Equipment: five pieces of different colored ropes, webbing, shoe laces, belts about 24" t0 36" in length

Directions: Tie four of the pieces of rope into separate rings or loops. Take the fifth rope and go through the other four rope loops. Then tie the fifth rope into a loop so all five rope loops are connected together.
Scatter the ropes around a bit so it becomes more difficult to see which rope connects the other four loops. The challenge is for the group to come up with a consensus as to which rope is holding the other four ropes together. (The goals are teamwork, communication, planning, problem solving & decision-making).

Story line: Your team has been called for a mountain rescue. The equipment has been flown in to assist your efforts, but your climbing ropes have been badly knotted. Since time is limited, you must determine, as a group, which single knot to untie, so that all remaining ropes are unconnected.

T & T

ENERGIZER (no props)

Directions: Set up several groups of 4 players standing behind one another (front to back) with their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of him/her. Participants will change positions base on verbal commands from the facilitator.
The commands are as follows:

"Change" means the 1st group goes to the rear of the other groups.
"Switch" means the 2nd & 3rd groups change places.
"Rotate" means everyone turns around.
"Move" means everyone moves forward like a train "choo-choo" style.

The facilitator calls the commands slowly at first and then speeds them up. The group will have lots of laughs as players get tangled up in the confusion!

Variation: use the command "eyes closed", but eliminate the "move" command.

BANG, BANG, BANG (aka BANG, BANG YOU'RE DEAD) (no props)

Directions: Have the group form a circle, and spread out a bit. The "shooter" (i.e. facilitator) stands in the center of the circle. The "shooter", using his/her pointer finger (& thumb to cock the "gun"), aims and "shoots" at several players in the group while saying "bang". The "shooter" may "shoot" as many players as he or she wants, and may also "shoot" the same player multiple times in rapid succession. After the each round is over, the "shooter" then asks, "Who is dead? The players must then guess who is really dead. Some players will guess themselves or another player in the group. **The answer is simple…it's the first player(s) to answer after the question is asked by the facilitator**! Some players will catch on quickly and others will not. A player(s) who is the first to speak after the question is asked, may not have been "shot"…they will start to wonder how this is possible…it just adds to the fun! If players are having a hard time figuring the solution, ask them to look for a pattern in each round. (Note: probably not a good game to use with "at risk" youth…please use a little discretion!)

KNOT, OR NOT A KNOT? (group consensus builder)

Equipment: About a 30' length of rope

Directions: Arrange the rope in a pile wit many turns loops and bends. Have about five feet of rope at each end stretching out in opposite directions from the "knot." Ask the participants to study the pile and determine for themselves whether or not, when the ends of the rope are pulled in opposite directions. The pile will result in a knot or a straight line of rope. Have them arrange themselves on either side of the pile, according to their beliefs. At any time you can change you viewpoints and move to the opposite side. Next, partner with someone from the other side and try to convince them of your viewpoint. Finally, after more deliberation, slowly pull the ends away from each other to reveal the result. Players can change sides as you pull the ends.

THE HELIUM RING (aka THE BLAME GAME or GRAVITY)

Equipment: Hula-Hoops (36" works best…*note*: a stick, broom handle, tent pole, etc. can be used in place of a hula hoop…the game is then called the HELIUM STICK)

Directions: Form groups of 5 to 9+ players (5 players minimum). Give a hula-hoop to each group. While in a standing position, the players form a tight circle while supporting the hula-hoop with the tips of their fingers or fingernails. The object is to lower the hula-hoop to the ground without any of the fingers losing contact with the hula- hoop. If any finger loses contact with the hula-hoop, the team must start over from the beginning. The Helium Ring has a tendency to rise as players over-compensate to regain control of the ring. As the facilitator, ask the team whether anyone has an idea to control the ring from rising too high (hint: a few players can put a finger on top of the ring for better control). Players always assume that their fingers have to be on the bottom of the ring. Ask whether anyone has any ideas to prevent the Helium Ring from rising. Don't give them the solution; let them figure it out for themselves!

Note: This is a team effort. Notice how some teams may start passing the blame around the circle. It might be interesting to play this game early in the session, and then again at the end of the session to see whether the group is behaving more like a team, rather than a group of individuals as in the start of the session.

TANK (aka BATTLEFIELD)

Equipment: 50 to 60' length of rope (or small cones), 2 or 3 fleece/foam balls per player & one blindfold for each pair of players)

Directions: Form a circle using the rope (or small cones). Break the players into teams of two. One player from each team enters the circle & is blindfolded. Place two or three fleece/foam balls per participant inside the circle. The team member outside the circle directs their blindfolded counterpart to find a ball, and then aim at one of the other players in the circle from another team. The person outside the circle gives his/her teammate directions as to how to throw the ball in order to hit another player inside the circle. Good communications between teammates is essential. When a player inside the circle is hit, he/she is eliminated. The game goes on until the last blindfolded player remains.

BARREL TAG

Equipment: A 50 gal. plastic barrel/drum or a large plastic garbage can…**NO metal barrels or cans**)

Directions: Place the plastic barrel/can on a level grassy area free of rocks, holes or other obstacles. Have the players form a ring around the barrel while holding hands. Working as a group, the object is to try to pull other players toward the barrel. Any player(s) who make contact with the barrel are eliminated. Any players who break a handhold are also eliminated. Players may jump over the barrel to avoid being "tagged." This is a cooperative/competition type of game. Barrel tag tends to work best with larger groups (15-30) players. This is a **very active game** that tends to get more competitive as people are eliminated. Have spotter ready. If the game gets" too wild" toward the end, consider calling it a tie!

HOW MANY SCOUTS (Indians, Cowboys, etc.) ARE AROUND THE CAMPFIRE?

Equipment: Dice (about 5-6) 1¾ inch rubber dice work best, but any size or kind will work.

Directions: Kneel on the floor or other smooth hard surface. Roll the dice, and ask the question, "How many Scouts are around the campfire?" Ask anyone who discovers the "secret", not to share the answer with other players until the end of the final round. Roll the dice at least 6-8 times before sharing the answer with those who still have not figured it out! Some players will think the answer lies in the number of dice or their position. The answer actually lies in each individual die (dice)…i.e. the odd numbers…ones, threes & fives all have "campfires," but only the threes & fives have "Scouts" around the "campfire." The even numbers…twos, fours & sixes all have "Scouts," but no "campfires." The center dot represents a "campfire." All the other dots represent "Scouts." This is a great game to do at the beginning of a program, as a filer or an impromptu activity. (Note: 1 ¾" **rubber dice** can be found by doing a search for *rubber dice* on the internet or go to HYPERLINK "http://www.boreal.com" www.boreal.com & doing a product search for *rubber dice*).

YOU TEAR ME UP

Equipment: One blank sheet of 8 ½ x 11inch piece of paper for each participant.

Directions: Tell the participants to close their eyes. Hand each person a blank 8 ½ x 11 inch sheet of paper. The group is not allowed to ask questions, but members may talk among themselves, however, their eyes must remain closed. Ask the group -- with eyes still closed – to do the following in sequence:

Fold the paper in half and tear off the lower-right corner

Fold the paper in half again and tear off the upper right-hand corner.

Fold the paper in half again and tear off the lower right-hand corner.

Have the group members open their eyes and papers. Have them compare the results. Each paper should look different even though they all received the same instructions. This is a good example of how people interpret ambiguous instructions. This activity is a great segue into a discussion on the importance of proper communications (i.e. talking, listening, asking questions to clarify instructions, oral versus written communications, etc.)

THE NINE DOTS

Equipment: One sheet of white paper with 9 dots in rows of three (3 rows of 3 dots) ... Note: each dot should be equidistant from each other & at least about 2" apart. Also, the dots should be made with a magic marker, so they are not too small. There should be one pencil or pen per participant (pencils are preferable, since mistakes can be erased). *Set the set up below*.

Directions: Using a pencil connect all 9 dots with 4 straight lines. Once you start the pencil cannot be lifted from the paper until all the dots are connected. This activity requires "out of the box" thinking…both figuratively and literally!

Solution: There are a few ways this can be done, however, simplest way is to start with any of the 3 "outside" dots making up the "perimeter" of the "box." Connect all 3 dots, and continue about 2" beyond the "box" in a straight line and stop. Next make a 45 degree turn (inward) and connect 2 dots with a straight line continuing about 3" beyond the second dot. Now, make another 45 degree angle turn (inward) & connect 3 more dots. Finally, make the last 45 degree turn (inward) and connect the last two dots…4 continuous lines connecting the 9 dots! The final "product should look something like an arrowhead or a triangle with a line bisecting the triangle and continuing "outward" for about an inch or so.

Set up➔ . . .

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S.B. ======> Silver Bullets

B.B.A.? ==> Bottomless Bag Again?

F.S. ======> Funn Stuff

Q.S. ======> Quicksilver

C & C II => Cowtails and Cobras II

T & T ===> Teamwork & Teamplay (HYPERLINK "http://www.workandteamplay.com" www.workandteamplay.com)

THOUGHTS FOR FACILITATORS:

Tag games…don't allow a player to be the "**it**" for more than 1 to 2 minutes…this will help younger or less physically fit players from being discouraged. Tell the player who is the "**it**" that he/she has had their chance, and now it's someone else's turn! Also, don't allow the tag games to get out of control…slow them down, if necessary! Have spotters in ready, especially when the games or activities are in close proximity to trees, poles, cables, rock, uneven ground or other obstructions.

Safety is always a top priority. Make sure the play area is level and free from holes, stumps, rocks or other objects that might cause injury. Read medical histories. Is anyone taking medication? Ask whether any of the participants have or are prone to head, neck, back, joint injuries or allergies. Does anyone carry an epi-pen for insect stings? Is there any other reason to limit participation? Does everyone

have the proper clothing and footwear (i.e. sneakers for smooth surfaces)? Are bulky objects (i.e. water bottles, knives, cell phones, cameras, etc) and loose jewelry removed? Make sure participants are properly hydrated (especially in warn weather), and be on the watch for hypothermia (especially in cool/wet weather). Thunderstorms/Lightening: clear the play area, and seek covered shelter for at least 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder. Always wear gloves when handling rope to avoid burns. Turn off all electronic equipment to avoid distractions.
Always use spotters (safety personnel) where there is the possibility of injury due to falling. The spotter's arms should be outstretched toward the participant(s), slightly bent at the elbows with palms (flat) facing outward. Legs should be slightly bent at the knees with one foot forward (in) and the other foot back (out). Use your body as a "shock absorber" to help cushion participants who may slip or fall.

Tips for Games Facilitators…once the participants are given the instructions and rules for the game, try not to interrupt the team process. Resist the urge to "jump in" and help them with a solution to a particular challenge. Let them figure out for themselves. This is their process…do not interfere, **unless health or safety issues are involved**. If the players appear frustrated or stuck regarding a solution to an initiative game, use the **Socratic Method**…**ask questions, do not make statements!** This should be a **guided discovery**, just sit back, relax and watch the "light bulbs" start coming on!
As a facilitator, what do you do when you fail to give the proper instructions or forget to include one of the rules? Usually, most sensible approach is to let the group continue, and play the game to its conclusion*. While this may not be the best learning experience for the players, it certainly will be for you as the facilitator! Remember, **we all** learn a lot more from our mistakes, than we do from our successes. It has been said that "experience is the name we give to our mistakes." The real challenge, of course, is to avoid repeating them!
* Should a participant ask a question **after activity has started**, the facilitator is given a
"reprieve" or opportunity to amend the rules. He/she can now make changes to the rules, especially, if it applies to a rule that was originally left out! The group will soon realize that there may be consequences to asking questions once the instructions have been given, and the game has started. Questions and reflections are always encouraged after the game has concluded.