

GROWING THROUGH GAMES

Objectives:

- Build trust/camaraderie/community
- Lead and follow
- Problem-solve
- Communicate well

Suggested Scheduling: Interspersed throughout trainings

Time Required: Anywhere from 20 minutes to 2 hours (+ reflection time)

BACKGROUND AND ORGANIZATIONAL INSIGHT

The Amazing Race is a fun and intentional way to build confidence in navigating India and introducing public engagement and personal safety skill sets. During Indicorps, we organized teams of two or three and incorporated riding local buses, navigating directions, buying water, using a payphone, etc. We provided the teams with two envelopes: (1) an envelope containing an official letter explaining the race, emergency contact information, and emergency funds in case the fellows got in a bind and (2) an envelope with instructions, dedicated race funds, and an accounting sheet to track expenses. Indicorps recruited community youth to surreptitiously follow the teams. The best part was introducing the sleuth youth at the end of the Amazing Race and pointing out that in India you are always being watched! The sleuth youth are also a nice safety measure for a first outing. For the winners, Indicorps arranged a chore swap. The first team who completed the tasks and arrived home safe could swap any set of chores for a week.

ACTIVITY

A number of our go-to games are listed in the chart below:

Game	Details	Objective
Wind in the Willows	Group makes a circle, shoulder to shoulder. One person stands in the middle and falls into the group. The group must catch him/her.	Trust, Accountability, Team Work
Eye Reflection	Partners stand face to face in close proximity and are forced to answer questions about themselves while maintaining eye contact.	Trust, Connection
Blind Crossing	Grouped into partners, one group is blindfolded. They must walk towards and find their individual seeing partner who guides the blindfolded partner with verbal directions.	Trust, Teamwork, Communication, Listening

<p>Get It Together</p>	<p>The purpose of this exercise is to practice clear communication and develop trust and teamwork during challenging and confusing times. This activity will remind people in each position what the other role feels like and lend insights to strengthening dynamics between the two. After pairing up, one blindfolded person goes into a large circle to retrieve certain items, with only their partners instructions as guidance. The catch here is the partner must stay on the outside of the circle. Seems fairly simple until all the pairs are in the middle at the same time.</p>	<p>Trust, Teamwork, Communication, Listening</p>
<p>Trust Walk</p>	<p>Trust Walk is about leading, following, trusting and communicating. Many leadership styles emerge during this event. Whatever the experience, the Trust Walk is a powerful learning opportunity. After pairing up, each individual takes turns leading the other person through obstacles and overcoming adversity. While a very simplistic activity, many people find it difficult to trust their partner and find they will 'cheat'. Because it is so simple, very few people take the time to strategize or find out exactly how far 'X' number of steps is for their partner. This creates the scenario for a great lesson in coaching -- we need to communicate with other people the way THEY hear it best, not the way WE hear it best.</p>	<p>Trust, Leadership, Communication, Listening, Humility</p>
<p>Wall Crash</p>	<p>Have the whole group form a line facing a wall, a few meters away. The leader names two people to act as safety nets. They stand near the wall opposite the line. The person at the front of the line walks, eyes closed, toward the wall. The "safety nets" catch each person before s/he hits the wall. After each person has had a turn at a walking pace, the pace is sped up on each turn, until group members are running at full speed. Trust develops through a feeling of safety each time the person is caught by the "safety nets," so that, in the end, members feel safe even when running.</p>	<p>Trust, Accountability</p>
<p>Agreement Game</p>	<p>Have everyone stand in a circle on mats (or with a placemaker) with one person in the middle. The person in the middle will shout a statement. If you agree with the statement you must move to another spot on another mat. The person who is left without a spot will be in the middle and will again shout out a statement.</p>	<p>Ice breaker</p>

Name & Favorite Book	Fellows and staff will sit in a circle and the first person will say their name and their favorite book. The next person will repeat the first person's name and favorite book, the third person will repeat the first and second person's name and favorite book, so on and so forth.	Ice breaker, Presence of Mind
Peanuts!	Pass around a big bag of peanuts and ask everyone to take as many as they would like. Once everyone has peanuts, tell everyone that they must say one fact about themselves for each peanut they have in their pile. No eating peanuts before your turn!	Ice breaker
Human Boggle	Everyone gets a letter. Without talking, they have to arrange as many words as possible in 90 seconds.	Communication, Problem Solving, Team Work, Observation Skills
Three Changes	Instruct the group to break off into pairs. The partners first observe each other, noticing clothing, hair, jewelry, etc. Then instruct the partners to turn their backs to each other. Each person then makes three changes in their appearance: changing hairstyle,, removing glasses, putting a watch on the other wrist, etc. When done changing, the partners face each other again, and each one tries to guess the changes the other has made. Change partners and ask for four, five, six, seven, or even eight changes!	Ice-Breaker, Observation and Presence of Mind
The Count-Up	Everyone lies on the ground in a circle with their heads toward the center. It is not necessary that they should touch, but if the group is comfortable enough, it adds a fun, bonding element if the participants are shoulder to shoulder. Then without any signal, the group begins counting from 1 to 15 (the number can increase as the group's dynamic grows stronger), one at a time, in no particular order. The catch is that no one can speak at the same time.	Communication, Group Harmony and Connection
Pick-up	Organized groups of 9-10 people. One person stands in the middle and the rest of the people have to pick up the person and turn them 180 degrees	Trust, Team Work, Communication
Bicycle Tire	Split into two groups. This will be a competition between the two groups. Put a bicycle tire over the person on the end. The team that gets the tire to the other side first wins	Team Work, Problem Solving

Pass the Ball	Everyone stands in two lines. You have to pass a ball to the other end. Only one person touches the ball and the ball cannot be passed to the two people next to you. You can keep introducing new balls.	Team work, Communication, Creative Thinking, Presence of Mind
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ADAPT EXERCISE FOR A SOLO FELLOW OR VOLUNTEER: N/A

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Reflection question should be framed based on the objectives at hand. The following are suggestions of types of reflection questions you can ask in a post-game debrief.

- What do you think the game was about?
- What skills did it emphasize?
- Was there more than one way to “win”? How?
- How did you show up as your best?
- Where did you get in your own way?
- Where do you see room for improvement?
- What did you learn from your peers?
- What questions did it raise for you?
- How did competition change the nature of the activity?
- What did you learn about yourself? What surprised you?

