

GET TO KNOW EACH OTHERS SEQUENCE OF NON-VERBAL GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

This may sound common-place, but the most important ingredient in a collaboration process are the people involved and the quality of engagement they bring into the collaboration. No amount of external inspiration, material resources and techniques can compensate for that. Make sure then to give importance to how the team members encounter and get to know each other. Don't shy away from using techniques of non-formal pedagogy to create a space for people to get to know each-other in playful ways. You can also add your favourite focus. For instance, to initiate an international activism training we used the sequence bellow, which only had non-verbal activities. Why did we choose that? In our group there were people with four different languages. Different languages and accents trigger a whole lot of preconceptions, stereotypes and power dynamics (compare the status of a native British English speaker to the one with a huge French accent and a limited vocabulary). So we wanted participants to meet each other and create the first impressions outside of all these associations and status differences. We did this with a series of games and activities borrowed from theatre. Use this as an inspiration and create your own sequences. We used several activities of Augusto Boal's Games for Actors and Non-Actors.

ACTIVITY TITLE

METHOD

◦ WALKS ◦ ⚡ 15MIN ⚡

Invite people to start walking in the training room, to occupy each segment of the space, explore places they haven't seen yet etc. Then pick from these series of propositions:

a ◦ Explore different speeds. Invite people to walk fast – call for instance 50 the usual pace, then ask them to walk in speed 100, 20 etc..

b ◦ When one person stops all stop: invite participants to observe each other and when one of them stops they should all stop. When one of them starts to walk again they should all walk again.

c ◦ Occupy space: invite everyone to walk where there are empty parts of the space. Then, invite them to go where there is no empty space. Invite them to keep on moving.

d ◦ Silly walks: invite participants to invent all kinds of walks –the ones they always wanted but never dared to try in the street. In a second step: without telling the other, people can copy walks of others that they find inspiring.

e ◦ Shield: ask participants without telling anyone to choose one person as person "A". Then chose a second person "B". Now invite them to position themselves at an equal distance from A and B.

f ◦ STOP and GO: tell participants you'll give a series of instructions that they should follow. Here they go: "When I say Go, start walking, when I say STOP stop". Try a couple of times then add new instructions "when I say NAME shout your name, when I say CLAP clap your hands". Practice, then "when I say sky touch the sky when I say ground touch the ground". And then "when I say GO stop, when I say STOP walk again". Practice and then "When I say NAME you clap, when I say CLAP you shout your name. And of course "When I say SKY touch the ground and when I say GROUND touch the sky" keep on saying the instructions with a good rhythm.

g ◦ Half blind: separate the group into two. One half goes to the side of the room the other takes positions spread across the space. They close their eyes. The ones on the side move in, each get in touch with one of the people standing and accompany them a little while (2-3-10 metres) then leave them. They go towards someone else. The ones in blind position do not open their eyes until there is a change of roles.

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- **RYTHM MACHINE** ◦
⚡ 8 MIN ⚡
Invite people to get in pairs. Teach everyone how to say one two three in the language of the host country or any language that is not the usual common language. Then invite them to count on this language to 1-2-3 alternating turns. In a second step “1” can be replaced by a gesture and a sound (not a word, a sound) while 2 and 3 remain. In step two and three the 2 and 3 numbers are also changed. The machines can be practiced and then shared with everyone.
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- **LEAD CONTACT** ◦
⚡ 6 MIN ⚡
Invite people to work in pairs. If OK for everyone, ask them to stand side by side and touch their forearms. The contact should be comfortable but quite stable. One is going to be the leader the other follower. Followers can close their eyes. Leaders take care of the followers. Then change of roles.
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- **MIRRORS** ◦
⚡ 6 MIN ⚡
Work in pairs, one is a subject the other a mirror. The subject can do anything, and the mirror reflects. Then there is a change of roles without breaking the rhythm. And then here are some variations (each time with a new partner):
 - Same activity but you are doing your morning rituals
 - Same activity but you are in outer space
 - Same activity but you are doing what you do to feel powerful
 - Same activity but you are doing what you do to flirt
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- **HANDSHAKE** ◦
⚡ 4 MIN ⚡
Working in pairs, the first position is that of a handshake. Then one person stays in that position while the other steps away and comes back with a different gesture and movement.
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- **THE JOURNEY** ◦
⚡ 10 MIN ⚡
Working in pairs one participants tells the story of a journey (imaginary or real) only with sounds and movements without actually saying words. The other has the eyes closed. Then change of roles.
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- **FIND THE HANDS** ◦
⚡ 10 MIN ⚡
With eyes closed everyone goes to the centre of the room and finds another pair of hands (help them get into pairs this way). Still with eyes closed invite them to learn as much as possible about these hands. Then split up. Walk with eyes closed and try to find again the same pair of hands.
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- **CIRCLE OF IDENTITY** ◦
⚡ 10 MIN ⚡
Now you can relieve people from the rule of not speaking. Stand in a circle, invite participants to move to the circle and say something that characterises them (for instance: I lived in Africa). All those from whom it is also true, move to the centre close to this person. In a second round you can encourage people to find elements that they think only characterises them. If they find such a thing they deserve an applause.
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