

# Social Circus Trainer Workshop

Presented by Cirque du Soleil in co-operation with Beyond Social Services Singapore

Date	7 to 11 June 2010
Location	Beyond Social Services 10 Admiralty Road East Singapore 759988
Workshop Facilitator	Andrea Ousley
Assistant Facilitators	Abdul Rashid Yet Tun Hoong
Hospitality Co-ordinator	Stella Jayanthi
Hospitality Team	Bien Argamosa Helen Ho Jess Alava Then Mui Choo
Food & Beverage	Families, youths & children from Beyond Social Services

CIRQUE DU SOLEIL



# Acknowledgements

This workshop was a success because of the positive energy, cooperation and goodwill from everyone one who played a part.

Firstly, we want to thank our families, youths and children from Beyond who have set the standard for home-cooked food and home-made hospitality:

- Mdm Masitah Abdullah & family
- Mdm Noor Jahan & family
- Mr Samion & family
- Danial Azman, Desmond Seow, Iskandar Abdul Razak, Joshua Argamosa, Jessi Argamosa Namaste & Zafirah Sushihasan

The Association of Muslim Professionals, Canossaville Children's Home, Care Community Service, Children At Risk Empowerment Association, Clubilya, Muhammadiyah Welfare Home, Pertapis Bukit Batok Boys' Hostel, Teen Challenge, We Care Community Services, Yayasan Mendaki and Youth Guidance Outreach Services for their friendship, interest in social circus and for sending their staff to the workshop.

The Children and Youth Service Development and Corporate Communications Teams of the National Council of Social Service for encouraging workshop participation among youth-serving agencies and for featuring the programme in Rapport -a magazine that features the highlights of Singapore's social service sector.

Cirque du Soleil for sharing the Cirque du Monde Programme with us and introducing Social Circus to Singapore.

Last but not least, Andrea Ousley for inspiring us all by her talent, spirit and commitment to social circus among individuals, families and communities in need of support; touching them with her warm encouragement and gentle wisdom.

# Contents

## Introduction

Pg 5

## Day 1

Pg 6

Administrative Briefing

Pg 7

Creating a safe "space"

Leaving "baggage" at the door

1. Space walk

2. Name Signs Level 1

Pg 8

3. Post Its

4. "25 up"

5. Triads

Pg 9

6. Clumps

7. A Soup Pot (Steamboat)

Pg 10

8. Name Ballgame

9. Beep

Pg 11

10. I am an Object

11. Preparing for manipulation (warm up)

Pg 12

12. Manipulation

13. Stretching for basic acrobatics

14. Basic Acrobatics

15. Feedback

Pg 13

16. Ending

## Day 2

Pg 14

1. Name Signs Level 2

2. Brain Game

3. Present your Friend

Pg 15

4. Pot of Soup – Animal Game

5. A-1 Chase

Pg 16

6. Zap

7. Reflection on games

Pg 17

8. Time 4

9. Trust Walk

10. Warm up for manipulation

Pg 18

11. Manipulation Level 2

12. Feedback

13. Ending with a Hakl

## Day 3

Pg 19

1. Name Signs Level 3

Pg 20

2. 4 corners

3. Trust Train

Pg 21

4. Tiled Maze

5. Punch a Jump

Pg 22

6. Counting in Pairs

7. Collage

Pg 23

8. Just moving to music

9. Warm up for Balancing

10. Balances

11. Feed back

Pg 24

12. Hak

## **Day 4**

1. Name Signs Level 4
2. Slap slap click click
3. Trust exercise "Falling and Flying"
4. Documentary
5. Name exercise
6. Group led discussion on rules and guidelines
7. Bamboo Bridges
8. Pot of Soup – "Di-Di-Du"
9. Ah- So-Ko
10. 55 Claps
11. Warm-up for Balancing
12. Balance – Sunbaking
13. Balance –Sarah Lee
14. Manipulation Level 3
15. Feedback using only 1 word
16. Ending with a Woosh!

Pg 24

Pg 25

Pg 26

Pg 27

Pg 28

Pg 29

## **Day 5**

1. Name Ballgame
2. Name Tagging
3. Broken Television
4. Blind Drawing
5. Inclusion/exclusion
6. Strip the Willow
7. Pass around a rhythm
8. Warm p for performance
9. Performance
10. Post Its
11. Reminders
12. Pulling Together

Pg 30

Pg 31

Pg 32

Pg 33

Pg 34

Pg 35

## **Annexes**

- List of participants
- Welcome letter
- Menu
- Participants' response

## Introduction

We have been privileged to be among the first to experience the benefits of social circus in Singapore. Since, 2000 we have been applying social circus skills in different settings where we felt youths would benefit. These included, open areas in neighbourhoods; residential homes and institutions, schools and youth centres serving youths-at-risk and in programmes where the youths attended together with their families.

We have experienced the positive impact on those served and have always endeavoured to grow the work. It is a little embarrassing but only after 10 years or so, it dawned on us that the best way to do this was to nurture workers from other youth-serving organisations into social circus trainers. By sharing the resource, the good spreads. Anyway, better late than never and so, the birth of this social circus trainer workshop.

### About these notes

These notes were put together by Samuel Tang who was a workshop participant. They were written for the participants by a participant and he has put in an analogy at the beginning of each day's programme that aims to trigger participants' memory of their experience. It is an analogy that that arose out of some discussions among participants during the workshop.

Having said this, these notes are meant to be shared with anyone who is interested in social circus as the primary purpose of the workshop was really meant to grow the work.

Please contact me at [ged@beyond.org.sg](mailto:ged@beyond.org.sg) if you are interested in utilising social circus skills in your work.

Gerard Ee  
Executive Director  
Beyond Social Services

## Day 1

I awoke to a wind on my brow, very pleasant and sweet, and in my ears the soft and drowsy ripple of water right soothing to hear, and thus would have slumbered on but for another sound that broke out at intervals, a resounding creak that seemed to shake me where I lay. The ship I found myself upon rocked suddenly as a large wave crashed over the deck and a little voice of panic within me screamed, "Awake! We are cast adrift!"

As my eyes unclouded from sleep, the morning light revealed to me the waking bodies of...

Fiza Halifi	<a href="mailto:noorhafiza@mendaki.org.sg">noorhafiza@mendaki.org.sg</a> <a href="mailto:club-soda@hotmail.com">club-soda@hotmail.com</a>
Tony Tan	<a href="mailto:tonytan@wecare.org.sg">tonytan@wecare.org.sg</a> <a href="mailto:tony2rayson@yahoo.com.sg">tony2rayson@yahoo.com.sg</a>
Siti Izyan	<a href="mailto:izyan@amp.org.sg">izyan@amp.org.sg</a>
MD Alfian	<a href="mailto:alfian@amp.org.sg">alfian@amp.org.sg</a>
Mahattir	<a href="mailto:mdawood2729@yahoo.com">mdawood2729@yahoo.com</a>
Ismail Hassan	<a href="mailto:ismail_hassan@muhammadiyah.org.sg">ismail_hassan@muhammadiyah.org.sg</a>
Karen	<a href="mailto:karen@care.sg">karen@care.sg</a>
Melody	<a href="mailto:loud_headphones@hotmail.com">loud_headphones@hotmail.com</a>
Kelly Huang	<a href="mailto:kelly@teenchallenge.org.sg">kelly@teenchallenge.org.sg</a>
Sharon Chang	<a href="mailto:sharon@cch.org.sg">sharon@cch.org.sg</a> <a href="mailto:sharon.dukkie@gmail.com">sharon.dukkie@gmail.com</a>
Daniel Too	<a href="mailto:senghong@youthguidance.org.sg">senghong@youthguidance.org.sg</a>
Rizal	<a href="mailto:eastwest69@hotmail.com">eastwest69@hotmail.com</a>
Hasrianah Hassan	<a href="mailto:hasianah@clubilya.org.sg">hasianah@clubilya.org.sg</a>
Abdul Rashid	<a href="mailto:rashid@beyond.org.sg">rashid@beyond.org.sg</a>
Yet	<a href="mailto:yet@beyond.org.sg">yet@beyond.org.sg</a> <a href="mailto:mryet123@gmail.com">mryet123@gmail.com</a>
Phun Win Lin	<a href="mailto:winlin@beyond.org.sg">winlin@beyond.org.sg</a>
Stella	<a href="mailto:stella@beyond.org.sg">stella@beyond.org.sg</a>
Pei Ling	<a href="mailto:peiling@beyond.org.sg">peiling@beyond.org.sg</a>
Lyn John	<a href="mailto:lynjohn@beyong.org.sg">lynjohn@beyong.org.sg</a>
Samuel Tang	<a href="mailto:samtangse@gmail.com">samtangse@gmail.com</a>
Patricia	<a href="mailto:patriciachiang@carecom.org.sg">patriciachiang@carecom.org.sg</a>
Ye Jing En	<a href="mailto:jingen@carecom.org.sg">jingen@carecom.org.sg</a>
Chan Soon Onn	<a href="mailto:soononn@carecom.org.sg">soononn@carecom.org.sg</a>

Here begins Day 1 of the record of events that happened to us...

### Administrative Briefing

- Transport and logistics
- Basic Rules: wearing appropriate clothes and coming on time (attire must allow one to move easily and still be culturally appropriate)
- Introduction to Cirque du Soleil – Cirque du Monde: Circus as a tool for Social Change. Life Skills through circus
- Personal Introductions

### Creating a safe “space”

- An environment of safety for the individual, starts with being comfortable in the external environment as well as being comfortable with the social environment of the group.
- This space allows individuals to have fun, reflect on themselves, share openly and learn to trust, even be comfortable with physical touch.

### Leaving “baggage” at the door

- Collecting bags, handphones, and other extraneous belongings represents the shedding of concerns, inhibitions and other responsibilities before entering the space.
- Emptying oneself of concerns before entering the space keeps the mind focussed on the task at hand and the people around you. It leaves the mind empty and prepared to absorb the most from the session.

### 1. Spacewalk

#### Aim:

- Getting comfortable with the external space. Owning it as our space.
- To create connections within the group

#### Procedure:

- walk around freely to all spaces of the room, then moving backwards, moving forward on toes
- freeze, look at someone, continue walking
- freeze, look at someone and smile, continue walking
- freeze, say hello to someone, continue walking
- freeze, form a circle

#### Observations:

- Progressions in the exercise allows for basic social interactions among individuals who may not know each other.
- Exercise causes individuals to mix around when forming the circle.
- Selection of upbeat, cheerful music makes a large difference.

From the beginning of the briefing, do not appear too formal. Appear fun-loving and approachable and the rest of the group will follow.

Self-introduction should be made frankly. Speak openly and share personal details that you feel comfortable with.

Having observers sitting at the sidelines creates the sensation of being watched, making it difficult to shed one's inhibitions.

The room must be prepared without hazards and obstacles. Using mats (jigsaw) is safer than grass, which is safer than hard ground.

The circle allows you to get a sense of the group from their body language as a group. Adapt accordingly.

Exercise vs activity vs game. You choose which is suitable.

## 2. Name Signs Lvl. 1

Aim:

- Lvl. 1 Name Signs are not threatening and is used to bring the individual into the group.
- A supportive way to perform a “solo”. Individuals are encouraged to bring a bit of themselves, in their actions, into the game.

Procedure :

- Group creates a circle.
- Each person steps forward, makes a sign/shape with their body and says their name.
- The group as a whole echoes back that person’s “name sign”.
- Continue around the circle.

Observations:

- Making things more enlivening for oneself has the effect of making it more interesting for others.
- Facilitator can assess the group by taking in each member, eg Who is shy/extrovert?

## 3. Post Its

Aim:

- To get people thinking about the week ahead.
- To get people to reflect on themselves, and realise that they need to bring something to the group to make the week successful

Procedure:

- Individuals write on two separate pieces of paper what they ‘want’, and what they ‘bring.’
- One by one individuals stand up, say their name and explain what they have written.
- The paper then gets stick on the wall.

## 4. “25 up”

Aim:

- To bond/ unite the group to a common goal
- To help focus the individual to perform a specific task
- To help individuals get used to their body and control their strength

Procedure:

- Keep a beach ball up in the air for X number of touches while each individual is only allowed 1 touch at a time.
- Getting them to count together keeps them focussed

Observations:

- Encourage the group to organise and position themselves in the best way to achieve the goal
- Help them to move past an attitude of blame to one of encouraging one another if they fail. E.g. clapping when the ball drops

This game has many progressions in later days to make it more challenging.

If you’re feeling bored, your kids will be feeling more bored. But being too manic may make certain groups, like younger children, difficult to control.

For exercises requiring introspection, you may choose to not give too much time because you don’t want them to think too hard, or lose the momentum/ energy of the programme.

The number of “ups” is variable according to the skill of the group

We set the example when failures occur. Don’t mock or tease. Don’t reinforce them when they mock or tease.

Few games in the social circus make people go “out” or penalise failure. Ostracism and penalties result in low self-esteem, especially for vulnerable individuals. Try to keep everyone engaged.



## 5. Triads

### Aim:

- For a group to get to know one another and swap stories

### Procedure:

- In groups of 3, facilitator provides a topic for each person to share
- After 2 minutes, one person in the group will shift to another group based on a trait like "the longest hair"
- Our Qns were:
  1. What is your favourite kind of holiday? Destination/ Activity/ Type (then the Longest Hair shifts group)
  2. What do you do to chill out? How do you let go? (Biggest Ears shifts)
  3. What brings a smile to your face? And joy to your heart? (Youngest shifts)
  4. Why do you do the job you do? (Youngest in family shifts)
  5. What do you bring to the group this week? (Answers to the last question are fed back through a large circle sharing involving the whole group)

### Observations:

- Our facilitator does her own quick sharing of each question before the triad sharing starts in order to encourage openness
- Exercise subtly encourages individuals to look a little more closely at their peers' individual features, as well as tastes and perspectives.
- In sharing, we see the differences of other people, but also the common goals (Qn 4), allowing us to feel united and not alone.

## 6. Clumps

### Aim:

- Getting people used to making a story with their bodies as a precursor to physical performance
- Getting people used to physical contact

### Procedure:

- With music on, move around the space in whatever manner you want
- Freeze, get into groups of 2 and make a CUP OF TEA
- Walk on outside edge of feet
- In groups of 3, make a BOAT
- Hopping on left foot
- In groups of 3, make a SPILT BOTTLE OF SOY SAUCE
- Hopping on right foot
- In groups of 5, make a GREAT WALL OF CHINA
- Lunge walk
- In groups of 4, make the MERLION
- Gentle skipping
- In groups of 4, make a HAWKER STALL
- Moving backwards
- In groups of 5, make the SINGAPORE FLYER

The questions are selected carefully based on intention and the group. These questions not only allow us to share, but also to reflect on ourselves.

In our work setting, the knowledge that we are not alone in our causes or struggles gives us opportunities to network and learn from each other.

Choose items that are familiar with the crowd but are increasingly abstract or challenging.

Encourage participants to have a look at the other creations. This provides an opportunity to talk about how individuals and groups work and see things differently; and how this diversity leads to

- Walking with legs crossing over
- In 2 large groups, make the GREAT SINGAPORE SALE

Observation:

- Individuals begin to shed their inhibition as they see that it is alright to look silly (even during the walking segments of the exercise)
- Groups must work as a team by contributing what they have and making quick decisions even though there is no leader (hence the exercise must be done fast)

### 7. A Soup Pot (Steamboat)

Aim:

- To share ideas for games and thereby add to our own individual "toolkits".
- To play the games and learn them as a group, allowing us to assess them or adjust them
- Understanding the purpose and goals of games, as well as considerations to keep in mind

Procedure:

- Write down on a slip of paper a game you would like to teach/ share
- Write down on another slip of paper a request for a game you would like to learn
- Put the slips of paper in a container of sorts
- Throughout the week, we will draw out a slip and someone will teach or offer a game to meet a request

### 8. Name Ballgame

Aim:

- Getting to know each other's names.
- Familiarity with catching juggling balls in a not intimidating way
- Building concentration and focus with simple catch and throw tasks.

Procedure:

- In a circle, everyone has one hand in the air.
- Facilitator starts with a juggling ball, says someone's name and throws to that person.
- They catch the ball, say someone's name and throws to that person. It is preferable for each pass to be towards someone at the far side of the circle.
- As the ball is passed around, each person lowers their hand until each person has received the ball once only
- Revise the path in which the ball travels. Remembering that the same person passes to you and that you throw to the same person.

Variations:

- Depending on the size and skill of the group, you can add more and more juggling balls into the pattern

Observations:

creativity.

The numbers in the group do not need to be exact. Involve everybody.

Useful in train the trainer sessions, as a break from frantic activity and an opportunity for others to take charge and teach

Juggling balls are made from birdseed or rice placed in a sandwich bag and wrapped in a couple of layers of balloon skin

Explain the underarm throw and the concept of throwing TO someone, not AT them

Call the names out loud and make eye contact

- Helps participants be more comfortable with eye contact as a form of communication to check if someone is ready for the ball.
- The process of making the juggling ball is a good time to chat and children treat the gear which they make better.

Building an atmosphere where participants are not ashamed to fail or look silly encourages them to keep trying. When they keep trying, they focus on the task at hand, allowing them to grow in confidence. When individuals see the confidence and focus in others, they begin to trust.

### 9. Beep

Aim:

- Building trust

Procedure:

- In pairs, A teaches B a sound like BEEP (or any other sound)
- B can echo A a few times so the sound becomes familiar
- B closes eyes and A moves away from B
- A begins to BEEP and B follows the sound with eyes closed until they find A

Observations:

- Make sure the external space is safe and free from obstacles, this is not a dodging exercise
- Beeping loudly and clearly is reassuring.
- Don't make the exercise too challenging, go at the pace of the group and the individual.

### 10. I am an Object

Aim:

- To get to know the members of the group
- To speak and present oneself to the group
- To think in abstract terms
- Self exploration/ revelation

Procedure:

- A pile of varied objects are place in the middle of the circle, eg. Flower, pencil sharpener, mobile phone, soft toy.
- Instructions are given: "Look at the objects. Which one represents you? Why?" (pause 30s) "Now go and pick up your object, if someone picks your object, pick another"
- Participants then present the object to the group and explain why it represents them

Observations:

- The object forms a stimulus to get them to talk about themselves.

before throwing

Don't panic. Focus and concentrate.

Juggling balls make good gifts, but remember that the materials used should be cheap and culturally sensitive.

Trust exercises require the individual to feel safe. Hence don't mess around with the participants or lead them astray. The idea is to build trust, not laugh at people.

### 11. Preparing for manipulation (Warm up)

Aim:

- To stretch and loosen joints
- To gently take you into the awareness of your own body. Gaining a sense of control of your body and getting you comfortable with different motions and positions.

Observations:

- Be aware that individuals that have been abused may have disconnected from the awareness of their bodies. Getting in touch once more may be a traumatic experience.

### 12. Manipulation

Aim:

- Manipulations are used as a tool to build achievement, a sense of mastery.
- To serve as an outlet for expression
- An added educational element such as counting during manipulations is a benefit for small children

Procedure:

- Learning how to use ribbons.
- Juggling hoops, clubs, balls and scarves

Observation:

- An atmosphere where the individual feels comfortable to make mistakes and embarrass themselves is integral

Progression: At the individual level, the difficulty of the exercise must build personal successes before the participant can confidently progress to more challenging activities.

### 13. Stretching for basic acrobatics

### 14. Basic Acrobatics

Aim:

- Working physically with others
- Being comfortable with trust, proximity and touch
- Body control and awareness
- Improving verbal and non-verbal communication

Lean Outs:

- In pairs, facing your partner, toes to their toes
- Monkey grip left hand to left hand, right hand to right.
- Both people lean out and counterbalance
- If balanced, release one hand, present and grip again
- If balanced, squat together and rise together

Thigh Stand

- 2 bases standing side by side, flyer positions behind them
- Bases stand feet wide apart with one knee bent (lunge) to create

During all stretching exercises, it is important to listen to your own body, not compare with what others can do.

If children seem frustrated because they can't get a certain trick. Make it easier or just play with the equipment and praise them for it.

Model for them a spirit of trying again when you fail, being able to laugh at yourself and still finding it fun.

CAUTION: Jigsaw mats get really hot in the sun

Must have spotters to

a platform between them.

- Flyer uses C-grip on bases shoulders and puts one foot on one base's upper thigh. That base hooks an elbow to support the flyers knee.
- Flyer calls "Up", and puts the other foot on the other base's upper thigh. That base supports the flyer's knee.
- Flyer releases bases shoulders and presents
- Flyer calls "Down", C-grip on shoulder, and lowers one foot then the other. Do not jump off.

Observations:

- Only do as much as the individual is comfortable with
- However, try to encourage and reassure those that are staying behind to have a go. Especially those who may have doubts about their weight.

### 15. Feedback

Aim:

- To encourage the recognition of strengths

Procedure:

- What you enjoyed the most? What you know you were good at?

### 16. Ending

"A clap, a pat on the back, a silent cheer"

prevent flyer falling forward or backward

C-grip is when thumb is placed beside fingers to prevent injury during a fall.

When the flyer calls "Down", it means DOWN. No questions asked.

Great for little kids, so they don't get so hyper at the end when they have to leave.

Andrea: "Day 1 was about getting people to share about themselves without direct pressure or confrontation"

# Day 2

We could not get in.

Brave Rizal, bested by obstinate oak, tore his throat with shout after shout as he relentlessly slammed himself against the door.

But to no avail.

The keenest eye could discern nothing through the keyhole of the Captain's cabin. Lock, hinge and frame, friends to privacy, would yield no secrets under the harshest scrutiny. Foes to emergency, they laughed pityingly at us.

"Doubt!" they cried raucously, "Failure." they slid insidiously between the edges of our urgency. Our hearts were inundated with Panic and Despair.

We could not get in.

Bleak as the Second Day was, the gloom served to blur our outlines as we began to hold hands...

## 1. Name Signs Lvl 2.

Aim:

- Similar to Name Signs Lvl 1.

Procedure :

- Group creates a circle.
- One person steps forward, makes a sign/shape with their body and says their name.
- The group as a whole echoes back that person's "name sign".
- The next person will step forward, present his/her "name sign" as well as present the previous person/s "name sign"
- The group steps in and echoes both.
- Continue around the circle until the last name sign is presented with all the previous name signs.

Feedback:

- The repetition of names and the association of name and actions aids in embedding the names in our memory
- We begin Day 2 with a game similar to Day 1. This pattern brings us back into our secure and familiar space. Despite what doubts or inhibitions we have brought with us on the second day, the familiar structure "reminds" us that today we're going to have fun.
- For performances, name signs are great for curtain calls, simple dances, and flash mobs.

## 2. Brain Game

Aim:

- To be more familiar with your space and make it home
- To really look at the things you take for granted around you

Progression occurs not just at the individual level but also at the structural level (how you order the games within a session, how you structure the games from session to session)

From session to session, similarity and familiarity bring security, while variation and progression keep things interesting and challenging.

- To train the memory

Procedure:

- The group moves around the space, naming out loud the things that they see (items, people, whatever)
- Facilitator: "STOP, CLOSE YOUR EYES! Point out where the <Insert Item Name Here> is!"
- Open eyes, move around again and repeat.

Observations:

- Great for groups entering a new unfamiliar space (e.g. a performance stage)

### 3. Present your Friend

Aim:

- Gain an in-depth understanding of a person, and sharing to a person
- Really listening to another person's account in order to present them justly
- Gaining confidence in public speaking

Procedure:

- In pairs, each person tells their partner:
  1. Where are you from?
  2. What kind of work do you do? Or your organisation does?
  3. What are some of the challenges you face in your work?
  4. What are some of the successes?
- Present your partner to the group

Observations:

- People are generally more respectful and confident in presenting others
- Hearing the other describe you can feel very reaffirming
- Breaks the assumptions of what we know even for familiar partners

In all activities, intrapersonal or interpersonal crisis may occur, especially with vulnerable individuals. While we continue to be there for the person in need, or deal with whatever situation erupts responsibly, remember the boundaries of your role. If things are getting out of hand, know when and how to get help from the appropriate people.

### 4. Pot of Soup – Animal Game (Kelly)

Procedure:

- In groups of four or five, each group decides an animal sound they will make
- With eyes closed the group is mixed and spread all around the space
- With eyes closed, the individuals must find their group members only by making their respective sounds

In order to express yourself freely, you must feel comfortable in the space. It must feel like home, and you mustn't feel like a guest/ visitor/ stranger

May not work well with difficult kids early on in the sessions

Best to choose a partner that is unfamiliar, but you feel comfortable sharing with

Adapt the questions to the group. No need to follow these questions at all if other things come up during sharing

A nice twist is to have the kids present a friend to their parents.

Everyone looking silly together is a strange yet valuable bonding experience.

## 5. A – 1 Chase

Aim:

- An enlivening game
- A good cardiovascular warmup

Procedure:

- Create two long lines facing each other and label them A and 1
- Facilitator calls out A or 1
- If A is called, all players in A must turn and run to their designated safe zone. All players in 1 must try to tag the As. As that are tagged will join the 1s.
- If B is called, vice versa.
- Facilitator can make the appropriate call in order to stop a team from fully losing.
- Facilitator may choose to substitute hand gestures for A and 1
- Facilitator may substitute A - 1 for names "John - Spock" and tell a story about those two characters to increase the suspense

Observations:

- This game generates the feeling of competition without actually having winners and losers

## 6. Zap

Aim:

- Getting the attention back into the group
- Being alert and focussed to their surroundings and others in the group
- Using eye contact and body language to reinforce communication
- Getting into a rhythm and maintaining energy

Procedure:

- The group is in a circle
- The trainer "claps" (ZAP) to the person next to him/her, that person must pass the ZAP on to the next person in line
- Progression of the game can be as follows
  1. ZAP to pass the clap
  2. Make eye contact with someone across the circle and pass the ZAP to them.
  3. ZIP to change the direction of the clap
  4. BONG to send the clap from across the circle back at them

Observations:

- As many variations and progressions as you can imagine and the group can handle
- Be creative, add rules, perhaps even fun penalties

Adapting games, throwing games that don't work out, and playing games that you didn't think you would play is essential in keeping things fun. But do it thoughtfully.

Even grownups like to scream and run and play.

Great for the hearing impaired

Winners and losers both sometimes experience low self-esteem

Changing the direction of the clap gives a sense of power to children that may normally feel disempowered. However, while a few people may hog the game, this may give rise to the opportunity to talk about how the others feel.



## 7. Reflection on games

### Aim:

- Thinking about what you should be thinking about when you use a game

### Procedure:

- Group work to evaluate a game you know based on the following questions:
  1. What is the strength of purpose of the game?
  2. What physical resources do you need?
  3. How many people are needed for the game?
  4. Weaknesses and risks of the game?
  5. Age or type of group the game is relevant to?
  6. Important instructions for the game?
  7. When might you use it?
  8. When might you not use it?
  9. How could you develop, adapt or improve this game?
- Present the game and the answers to the group

### Observations:

- There are an enormous variety of subtle factors and purposes to each and every game
- Some accidents that fall outside the plan are happy accidents
- The choice of game, or modifications to games must take into account a variety of factors to make it fun, purposeful and still suitable.

## 8. Times 4

### Aim:

- Gain insight on what constitutes a dance. Which is anything.
- Ease people into a performance in a not-that-threatening way.
- Building confidence in bite size pieces.

### Procedure:

- In pairs, teach each other 4 movements to create an 8 beat "Dance"
- Set to music and perform in pairs to the group
- Have the group together perform an 8 beat dance

### Observations:

- Don't stress them that they may have to perform. Surprise them with it.
- Remind them that a show may not exhibit quality, but enthusiasm, cooperation or just plain fun.
- May have to manage different levels of skill. In doubt, keep the moves simple

## 9. Trust Walk

### Aims:

- To build trust in pairs
- To be comfortable with proximity and touch
- To become more sensitive to tactile communication

### Procedure:

- In pairs, discuss with partner how they want to be held. E.g.

Important Train the Trainer information HERE!

Children may spontaneously adapt a game. The skilled facilitator must be able to know when to keep it in play, when to stop play, and when to make a suggestion to improve their idea.

"Dance" vs "Warmup" vs "Movement". Choose whichever term seems most applicable to your group

Select relevant (but appropriate music) that they will find fun

Don't forget your bow!

The pairs need to feel comfortable and secure with each other.

Holding shoulder, holding elbow, holding hands

- Lead a "blind" partner silently around the room

Observations:

- May be scary for the blind, but also stressful for the leader because trust is felt to be sacred
- Silence creates an atmosphere that is calming and not disorientating to the blind partner. It also facilitates a greater responsiveness to being guided merely through tactile communication
- Pushing gender boundaries can be detrimental, but can also be very useful in long term groups that must work physically together.

Being sensitive to gender and culture is critical. Mix genders gently, with groups that have mutual respect to the opposite gender. Discussions may be necessary. Be knowledgeable about the cultural norms that exist in the context that you find yourself in. Having a co-facilitator that is also part of the group can be of great help when you don't seem to understand what the undercurrents of the group are.

### 10. Warm up for manipulation

This time we go round the circle and everybody shares 1 warm up exercise, making a monotonous process more interesting and giving a sense of ownership and contribution to the group.

### 11. Manipulation Lvl. 2

Aim:

- Similar to Day 1

Procedure:

- Similar items to Day 1
- but also plate spinning and the devil stick.

Observations:

- Similar items allowed us to practice and achieve the next milestone, while the new items let us experiment and try new things
- For skilled kids, challenge them with more to continually keep them engaged. A co-facilitator helps to engage different skill levels.

### 12. Feedback

Procedure:

- What did you find challenging?
- What did you find interesting?

### 13. Ending with a Hak!

Aim:

- Ending the session with a spirit of togetherness

Weighing out what constitutes appropriate touch and grip positions that offer enough security and support may be tricky.

Facilitator must trust his/her group before pushing boundaries

Ismail: "Grit your teeth and open your eyes as wide as you can"

Encourage them to have a go at the things they haven't tried before

Mistakes are the mother of invention. Be inventive.

Aim to cultivate the social "space" or environment where each individual in the group is reassuring the others. It makes having the limelight on the

Procedure:

- In a circle, jump in with a shout (HAK!)

Warning: For our social circus training, we're being put through the paces relatively quickly; you must adjust progression according to the group or context.

individual less  
intimidating

## Day 3

As the wind lashed at her face, Melody's "witness" ironically circled back to, "why didn't I cut my hair before getting on this ship?"

The seemingly minuscule raindrops, whipped into frenzy, stung as they hit her. But pain aside, nothing annoyed her more than the wet clumps of hair forcing her eyes shut. Halfway up the mast, there was little recourse available to her except to feel for the next rung in the ladder. As she laboured hand over foot up the mast, the wood resembled more and more a recalcitrant 100-foot child, bucking her at every instance it got, threatening to throw her off.

It didn't matter that the rest of the crew held tightly to her safety harness; in her world, there existed only the wood and her increasingly trembling limbs. There was much reason to fear. Thankfully, her "witness", the space in her mind which watched out for all the other spaces, was reliably clear in its wry and often tragically funny assessment of her situation.

"I guess we must become the wood" it commented in light, sardonic tones. And so she did, relaxing her mind to listen to the song of the mast, the song of the waves, dancing to it. Before long, witness and dancer reached the top and she wiped the hair from her eyes.

The horizon resembled the mouth of hell. Like plumes of thick acrid smoke, the sky above the horizon was dense, impenetrable even to the sun. The sea below, a seething, roiling mass of chocolate, endlessly eaten and disgorged. Witness and dancer were silenced.

In the moments Melody took to mark the incoming storm, a subtle observer might notice changes in her which a careless one might miss. While remaining still as a statue (woman and wood still one), the blind fear of climbing, now beaten, emerged once more as trepidation at the terrible vision ahead. Hot anger followed (her defence to helplessness) in fierce denial of the odds. And chasing them all away, in that brief scintilla of time, was an implacable calm as Melody willed herself to grow large enough, strong enough, for the challenge ahead.

The climb down was effortless, a dancer going through her routine, while the witness began to form the words necessary to tell the crew what was coming and what was needed. It was necessary to lie.

Unfortunately, none but the elements witnessed the nobility of her spirit on that mast, and the wind could scarcely bear testimony.

Thus began the Third Day...

The moment we step into the space, Andrea begins a mimicking exercise where we spontaneously follow her large actions. This helps us to get into the correct mood and attitude for the day's activities and is a great way of grabbing the group's attention.

### 1. Name Signs Lvl 3

Aim:

- Similar to name signs lvls 1 and 2
- Getting used to performance

Procedure:

- One person's name sign is repeated around the circle
- As it repeats, each individual in the circle must adapt the name sign, making it bigger and with more dramatic actions

Observations:

- No prescribed way to be "bigger". Subject to interpretation and creativity

### 2. 4 Corners

Aim:

- Good aerobic warm-up
- Enlivening a cold/ resistant crowd
- Working on teamwork and non-verbal communication

Procedure:

- The four corners of the square are safe spots, the catcher stands in the middle.
- Individuals on the corner attempt to swap spots/positions, while the middle catcher tries to intercept the swap and steal a safe spot
- When the number of people at each corner and middle are increased, each group must move as a unit
- No Talking! Corner groups must communicate silently with each other and within the group.

Observations:

- Corner groups must honour the agreement
- Facilitator may have to "force" groups to move

Andrea only lets us enter the circus space once we are together and ready. This way we own the space as a group. Nobody goes in first and gets distracted with their phone and no group begins to form cliques making others unwelcome in the space.

Good activity to identify who is more confident with performing

Can we played with safe chairs, but dangerous

Initially played with 5 people, but can be 5 groups of people (even large groups)

### 3. Trust Train

Aim:

- More difficult trust exercise

Procedure:

- Get into pairs and stand one behind the other. Hands on shoulders
- Person in front closes their eyes
- Person behind is the “driver” (eyes open)
- Driver “drives” their partner using the predetermined signals to move and avoid obstacles
- Exercise can progress with longer and longer trains (3, 4, 5) people
- The driver with eyes open is the last man that sends signals down the line
- Front man rotates to the back and becomes the driver after a while

Feedback:

- Focus is essential so that each individual is concentrating on their task, even if it is to just pass the signal along
- Exercise gives an opportunity to talk about ideas of miscommunication to kids
- Can talk about who is comfortable in which roles, driver and front man. Who is more comfortable in control, who is more comfortable surrendering control, and why.

Progression: At the macro level, progression can be seen as the activities become more challenging across days. “Beep” to “trust pairs” to “trust train”. As the group warms up to each other, they develop on the skills learnt the previous day. But bear in mind that when they first enter the space in the mornings, they may be cold or in their own world.

### 4. Tiled Maze

Aim:

- Build teamwork
- Self organisation of the team in order to solve a problem

Procedure:

- There is a set order to follow moving from tile to tile in order to get from start to finish “safely”
- Team does not know what the order is, and must try to get from start to finish one by one. Each individual must start at the beginning again.
- Cannot speak to one another but can watch and guide each other
- All must get through without mistakes, if not the whole team must try to get through again

Feedback

- Without speaking, they must organise themselves to learn the pattern and guide each other through the maze.

Discuss predetermined signals like push down (on shoulders) to stop. Practise signals with all eyes open

Exercise done in silence to reduce confusion.

Go slow, the signal takes a while to travel down the train

Focus is necessary for trust, trust is necessary for teamwork

Order is intricate, does not repeat tiles but includes diagonals.

When the maze is long, different people know different sections best and can guide.

Discussing frustration and the impact in which your actions and attitudes have on other people.

- Guides must be conscientious and responsible
- Overconfidence when prancing through the maze makes others nervous.

## 5. Punch a Jump

Aim:

- An enlivening game after lunch
- Focussing using peripheral vision and observational skills
- Numerical training

Procedure:

- In a circle, facilitator jumps straight up. As he/she lands, the next one in line must jump until it goes back to facilitator
- Next jump in pairs simultaneously and pass it round the circle
- Next jump in threes simultaneously and pass it round the circle

Observations:

- Getting people to work in synchrony and small impromptu teams even though they don't know each other that well.
- Forces groups to quickly work together because of the pace of the game.

Getting the group's attention without scolding them requires you to do something that fascinates them. Making big hand gestures, or a loud noise before you continue talking. Start clapping or stomping feet with your co-facilitator following until the rest follow. Play an instrument, juggle, stand on someone's shoulders. With smaller kids, a quieter option is better, if not they get too loud when they are over-enthused.

## 6. Counting in Pairs

Aim:

- Concentration and focus
- Improvisation of ideas and creativity
- Gentle way of getting them to perform

Procedure:

- In pairs, the individuals take turns to count 1, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3, 1, 2...
- Substitute 1 with a clap/ or a noise
- Substitute 2 with an action/ or a pose
- Substitute 3 with a phrase from popular culture (e.g. "Just do it")
- Practice in pairs and perform for the group
- Can choose a pair for all the others to imitate and adapt upon

Observations:

- While focusing hard on the order of the count, it's easier to lose the fear of looking silly

Must still face the centre of the circle. Use peripheral vision

Combine the flow so that 1 round in ones, next round in twos, last round in threes.

Facilitator may have to demonstrate the first round.

Choose between "Later you will have to perform" and "Surprise! You have to perform"

Collage is a fun way to express serious things

## 7. Collage

Aim:

- Thinking about different perspectives and the role/meaning of your job in a fun and artistic way

Procedure:

- In groups of 4 to 5, answer the following questions by producing a collage
  1. How do you see your role as working with youths?
  2. How do youths see you?
  3. How do you like to be seen by youths?
- Present your collage

Observations:

- We view our role as a friend, a role-model, superhero, mentor
- Youths see us as nerdy, connected, fun to be with, smothering, controlling
- We want to be seen as relevant, available to them, a good memory, a guide, the voice of reason, understanding

## 8. Just moving to music

Aim:

- Loosening up
- Getting back into the space after lunch
- Playing

Procedure:

- Play music, get them to move however they like
- Encourage creativity and any spontaneity that emerges

## 9. Warm up for Balancing

Aim:

- To warm up for balancing

Procedure:

- Individual warm-ups

## 10. Balances

Aim:

- Working physically with others
- Being comfortable with trust, proximity and touch
- Body control and awareness
- Improving verbal and non-verbal communication
- Trust and teamwork

Justice:

- Thigh Stand with only 1 base and 1 flyer.

Circle Pyramid:

- All the bases form a circle facing inwards, all the flyers go left leg up then right leg up.
- Procedure similar to basic thigh stand

Use magazines or anything as scrap material. Also need glue, scissors, markers and mah-jong paper

Possibly instigate a conga line

Teach only what you are comfortable teaching based on what you know and what the group seems capable of achieving.

Because of the increased difficulty, let those comfortable as bases be bases and those comfortable as flyers be flyers.

Balances are done at the end of the day because it pulls together a lot of different skills. Group's focus, trust and teamwork must be there. Also, it acts as the special "present" at the end of the day, an achievement which gives the individuals something to look forward to

## 11. Feedback

Free for all feedback

## 12. Hak

- Let the quietest person stand in the middle
- Circle tries to guess when she jumps and jump together

Want her to be loud in her actions and sound

# Day 4

50 years of experience and what had he gained? A hip that got stiff in the morning? Some days he lamented his age, but most days he did not. A lesson to be learnt there. One of the truths he had collected along the way. Never dwell too long on the things you cannot change.

It was surprisingly easy to keep up with those younger than him. Perhaps he had grown up in a harsher time; where if you didn't toughen up, you would have inevitably fallen out. He didn't envy the relative comforts of the "newer world", he relished what it offered same as any. But he took a quiet pride in what he was, what he'd been through nonetheless. After a while, time has a way of making you comfortable with paradoxes.

While the storm raged around them and everyone was functioning close to a near-panic state. Ismail remained calm, doing the job that needed to be done, lending a helping hand here, dropping a word of encouragement there. Agreed, there was something supernaturally horrific about this storm, but he had entered "crisis" mode in his head, and applied the appropriate principles:

1. Keep the morale up.
2. Remember your aim; don't get carried away sweating the small stuff
3. Take failure in your stride, blame can come later.

Whatever... There were more principles, he was sure of it, but he couldn't put it down in words. Who cares about the words anyway? He'd spent 50 years making sense of the world around him, and those rather obvious and corny lines had a special, practical meaning to him. That was what experience sometimes meant, and why it was so hard to teach.

The rest of the crew must wonder how he remained so calm, must wonder about the countless storms he's weathered. Well, let them continue to wonder. It would help them get through Day 4...



### 1. Name Signs Lvl. 4

Aim:

- Similar to name signs lvls 1, 2 and 3
- Obtaining a more reflective aspect of performance from the individuals

Procedure:

- Each person says their name and does an action with respect to a specific theme (in our case "mood")

Observations:

- Because our theme was "mood", it allowed for a more personal take on the awareness of what kinds of moods we feel and moods that sometimes represent us.

### 2. Slap slap click click

Aim:

- Keeping rhythm with the group
- Learning names

Procedure:

- Slap your knees, clap your hands, snap fingers twice
- Whole circle gets used to the rhythm
- On the first snap, say your name
- On the second snap, say another person's name
- That person then says their name on the next snap...etc

Observations:

- Helps to loosen up people. As they get used to the rhythm they begin to move and dance

### 3. Trust Exercise "Falling and Flying"

Aim:

- Advanced trust exercise

"Falling" Procedure:

- Group walks all around the room
- Someone calls their name, e.g. "Andrea Falling Backwards / Forwards"
- The group then runs towards that person and catches them as they fall
- Those that are not nearby catching freeze in position

"Flying" Procedure:

- Again the group is walking around the room
- Someone calls out their name, e.g. "Andrea Flying!"
- The group rushes to that person as they fall forwards/ backwards and lifts them above their heads
- Hold them in the air for 3-5 seconds and then lower them feet first back to the ground.
- Continue until everyone who wants to fly gets a go

"Running Fly" Procedure:

- The group is set in a U-shape at one end of the room
- The flyer runs at the group, jumps up and forward into the flying

For children, can adapt the theme to anything such as favourite animal, favourite food, things in the kitchen

If cannot snap fingers, substitute with another action

Walk in silence

Only call when you are near other people, don't intentionally run into a corner alone and call your name!

Hold the person with locked elbows

Running fly is still safer than trust falling of an elevated position

position

- Group catches them and holds them suspended

Observations:

- If some don't call their name, facilitator may have to make have to call for them
- Only progress to this exercise if the group is warmed up with each other and also physically warmed up
- Good game to equalise power differential, e.g. girls can lift boys, weaker kids can lift stronger kids.
- Can develop this exercise into more acrobatic performances with lifts turning into balances

When practising flying, flyer puts hands on someone shoulders and jumps. The rest lift the person from the torso beginning with the hips till the flyer is horizontal. Do not start lifting from the legs. Lift the legs last and lower the legs first when lowering the flyer

#### 4. Documentary

Before lunch we watched the story of the women's circus. Many of them were survivors of sexual assault and the circus helped them to feel good again about their bodies, be comfortable to physical touch and trusting others. The circus was a community and sisterhood of women that gave them the security to take feel strong, take risks and be generous in performance. The circus allowed them to express themselves the way they wanted to be seen and helped them overcome the feeling that they have no rights.

#### 5. Name exercise

Aim:

- Difficult name exercise
- Enlivening game

Procedure:

- A throws the ball to B but calls out C's name
- A then walks to B's position
- B must throw the ball to C and call out D's name
- B then walks to C's position

Observation:

- Good way to mix up the group and shuffle their positions after lunch
- Challenging because you must actively search for the individual that was called when you catch the ball.

#### 6. Group led discussion on rules and guidelines

Aim:

- Train the trainer discussion on how to go about setting and enforcing rules for sessions

Points:

Andrea once did a trust fall off a ladder in order to make a difficult group of boys work together. NOT RECOMMENDED.

The name that is called is an instruction for the catcher to throw to that person next.

Since the positions are always changing, you must be able to match face to name quickly.

- Let the kids decide what rules are appropriate
- Let the kids decide what consequences are appropriate
- Knowing when to enforce rules and bend rules according to the situation.
- Knowing the principles behind the rule and not just following it blindly.
- Consequences must be fair, relevant and even helpful for the kid's development
- Consequences might be a discussion on how well you have been following the rules. Or just having to talk one on one with the "scary" adult.
- Consequences can be self enforced by the group. When someone says "Shut up!", group catches it and says "REPHRASE!"

Alternatively, catch them doing good!

### 7. Bamboo Bridges

Aim:

- Getting people to work together but without touching
- Getting people comfortable with proximity
- Getting people to focus and to use their bodies in different ways

Procedure:

- Using thin 1m long strips of bamboo
- Held between two people only using fingertips
- Players must move around, twist and turn to music without dropping the stick between them
- Increase the number of players to form chains and larger circles
- Eventually form 1 large circle, tie the group in the knot and let them get out of it

Observations:

- When 1 person is not focussed, or is trying a new creative action, the whole group is affected and must accommodate
- Being pulled in different directions and getting blamed for it gives an opportunity to talk about being in an uncompromising position

### 8. Pot of Soup – "Di-Di-Diu"

Aim:

- Enlivening game requiring focus and eye contact
- To be noisy

Procedure:

- One player in the circle is trying to send a "telepathic signal" to someone else. He/ she puts two fingers of both hands to his/ her forehead and says "di-di-di-di-....Diu!"
- The two players sitting adjacent to him/her must turn towards him/her and say "Bee Bo Bee Bo ..." in order to generate energy for the player to "Diu!" (they must also make twinkle star gestures at the individual)

Breaking the sticks into shorter segments makes it more difficult and subtly gets players used to proximity without touch

This way they still remain involved.

Base: Don't link arms or pull the flier, just hold the fliers arms to guide and stabilise.

- On “diu!”, the player shoots out the signal to someone else in the circle who immediately picks up the “di-di-di-di”

### 9. Ah- So- Ko

Aim:

- Enlivening game requiring focus and memory/ mindfulness

Procedure:

- Say: “Ah” and do action: Point (at anyone)
- That person must quickly say: “So” and do the action: Salute (using either hand to point to the person on their left or right)
- That adjacent person being pointed at then says: “Ko” and does a chest height Salute (using either hand to point to the person on their left or right)
- The person which the chest height Salute points at then begins with “Ah”
- This game can be played with people going “out” when they make a mistake or a maximum of 3 mistakes. However, when they are out, they still remain in the circle which makes things more confusing for those still playing.

Observations:

- The penalty for going out keeps you engaged and involved in the game.
- When the group is warm and supporting enough, you feel more secure to make mistakes and still laugh it off

Constantly assess the energy and enthusiasm of the individuals and the group as a whole and adjust your game selection accordingly

### 10. 55 Claps

Aim:

- To get them back into the group again after the break

Procedure:

- “Give me 1 clap!”
- “2 claps”
- “5 claps” in the rhythm = 1 and 2 and 3, 4, 5
- “11 claps” in the rhythm = 1 and 2 and 3, 4, 5 and 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10, 11
- “55 claps” in the same rhythm as before but you start with 1 finger clapping then two until the whole hand is clapping

Observation:

- Great way to get children’s attention when they’re in their own world.

### 11. Warm ups for Balancing

Aim:

- To warm up for balancing
- Get used to touch

Procedure:

Spotters are needed to prevent falling left and right

Base1: Hands must be placed directly under shoulders, knees directly under hips

Base2: Back must be slightly arched for flyer to stand

- Individual warm-ups and Partner warm-ups e.g. Tango
- Partners stand back to back with arms out and holding hands
- They then turn towards each other with one arm going down and the other going up until their heads are facing the direction opposite to the initial direction of turn

## **12. Balance – Sunbaking**

Aim:

- To get used to relying on and supporting each other

Procedure:

- In pairs standing back to back
- Base's butt must be positioned below flyer's butt
- Base leans forwards while flyer leans backward over base's back
- Flyer can then put his/ her feet on base's thighs and base can hold flier's feet

Observation:

- Really requires trust. The position the flyer is in feels very vulnerable. Especially for women.

## **13. Balance – Sarah Lee**

Aim:

- Pulls everything about teamwork, focus, trust and communication together

Procedure:

- Base1 is on hands and knees on the ground
- Base2 stands facing Base1 with hands on Base1 shoulders
- Base3 stands on Base1's hips and has hands on Base2's shoulders
- Flier stands on Base2's hips and puts hands on Base3's shoulders

Observations:

- This one looks really impressive and dangerous
- The feeling of achieving something on this level feels amazing when the whole team is working together

## **14. Manipulation Lvl. 3**

Aim:

- Similar to Day 1 and 2

Procedure:

- Similar items to Day 1 and 2
- but also Poi and Diabolo.

## **15. Feedback using only 1 word**

## **16. Ending with a Woosh!**

Aim:

- To close with a feeling of togetherness

Procedure:

- Holding hands together in a big circle
- Rush in to the centre of the circle while saying “Woosh!” and bring hands up high

As the progression of activities across the days become more challenging, we can see how important it is as a facilitator to create an atmosphere of safety and encouragement in order for trust, teamwork and courage to develop.

## Day 5

There comes a point by which you know the worst is over.

The torrents of the day are suddenly replaced with a strange sort of calm even though the rain is still falling. The frantic tension of crisis after crisis is replaced by the managing of obstacle after obstacle. Perhaps it is just practise, or desensitisation, but before we knew it, we could see the moonlight silvering the waves.

We had missed seeing the sun that fifth day, but we could still feel the adrenaline coursing through our bodies, keeping us warm in the midst of what had become a drizzle.

It was a time of automatons once more becoming human. It was a time of reflection and silent celebration. It was a time to come out of the rain.

### 1. Name Ballgame

Aim:

- Getting to know each other’s names.
- Helping the group be loud
- Building concentration and focus with simple catch and throw tasks.

Procedure:

- In a circle, everyone has one hand in the air.
- Facilitator starts with a juggling ball, says someone’s name and throws to that person.
- They catch the ball, say someone’s name and throws to that person. It is preferable for each pass to be towards someone at the far side of the circle.
- As the ball is passed around, each person lowers their hand until each person has received the ball once only
- Revise the path in which the ball travels. Remembering that the same person passes to you and that you throw to the same person.

Remember it’s easier to throw to someone across in the circle.

Variations:

- Everyone holds a ball and moves around, loudly call the name you're supposed to pass the ball to and then throw, wherever they are.

Observations:

- Organised chaos
- A game that we played on Day 1, but with added variation and challenge.
- Really kickstarted the morning in an enlivening way

## 2. Name Tagging

Aim:

- Reinforces the importance of knowing names in order to not get tagged
- Naming under stress
- Focus on where people are in your surroundings

Procedure:

- Group stands in a circle in order to learn the game
- One person is "It"
- "It" walks towards someone and that person quickly calls someone else's name to avoid being tagged
- The person whose name is called is now the new "It".
- The new "It" must look at another person and walk towards him/her until they call another name

Progression:

- Not played in a circle once game is learnt, everyone moves around but does not run.

Observation:

- Great game to loosen up people because they panic and look silly

The scouts have great games! Use google and youtube for ideas while keeping in mind your objectives and considerations

The "It" must make eye contact and cannot change selection of who they want to catch.

## 3. Broken Television

Aim:

- To illustrate how misunderstandings occur
- Getting them to perform in the guise of a game

Procedure:

- Get into groups of 4 or 5
- One group stands in a line with their backs to the first person
- Facilitator whispers a scenario to the first person
- They tap the next person on the shoulder and act out that scenario
- The person then performs for the next person in the line
- The last person has to perform the scenario and has to try to guess it
- Each group has a turn and a new scenario is given

Acting can be in the form of a charade, or directly acting the scenario given

- Examples of scenarios are:
  1. Drag queen rollerblading down the Esplanade
  2. Boxer eating soup with his gloves on
  3. Scuba diver mowing seaweed

Observations:

- The more ridiculous the scenario, the funnier the performance and the more it encourages people to guess outside the box
- Great for getting ideas and developing characters for performance

#### 4. Blind Drawing

Aim:

- Developing clarity and precision in communication
- Listening and interpretation skills

Procedure:

- Sit in pairs, back to back
- A is given a pen and paper
- B is given a drawing
- B, without turning around, describes the drawing
- A has to draw the drawing described without looking at B's drawing
- A can ask question to clarify
- After a given amount of time, the group looks at all the pictures

Progression:

- In groups of 3, have two artists
- Artists can no longer ask questions to clarify
- Have the whole group become artists and just have one individual describe a picture

Observations:

- 1 description can have multiple interpretations

Accurate communication requires shared sets of meaning. Language is a shared set of meanings but sometimes have subtly different interpretations for different people

#### 5. Inclusion/ Exclusion

Aim:

- To experience being labelled.
- To experience inclusion and exclusion

Procedure:

- Everyone stands in a circle
- Labels are attached to everyone's back, but you cannot see your own. Others are not allowed to tell you what's on your back either.
- "Walk around and look at everyone's label"
- "Imagine you're on a ship, and you need to survive with these people for the next few months"
- "Now get into groups of four. Choose who you want to be with"

Drawing may be a composition of shapes and patterns or be more challenging.

Artists should be seated so they can't look at each other's drawings to compare

This exercise is for trainers and mature individuals only.

Do the exercise without any communication, only the facilitator speaks



- “Now get into two groups. They need not be even numbers”
- “Now sit in a circle. Take off your label, look at it and tape it to your chest”
- Example of labels:
  1. Honest, Generous, Faithful, Rich
  2. Deceitful, Thief, Smelly

Observations:

- Useful with a debriefing session to talk about how you felt when you were ostracised, how you felt when you were unaware of your label, and how you felt when you were made aware of your label.
- How human nature judges the labels sometimes, without getting to know the person
- Understanding how discrimination arises
- Understanding how different people interpret different labels may be surprising

Exclusion happens a lot in youths. Social circus training is all about inclusion.

## 6. Strip the willow

Aim:

- Dispel the negative attitudes and mood from the previous exercise
- Feel cheerful and together again

Procedure:

- It's a dance.
- In two rows facing each other, or multiple rows of two
- To music, the first two in the row begin to dance
  1. Bow
  2. Link arms and skip in a half circle
  3. Switch to the other arm and skip in a half circle in the other direction
  4. Link arms as in 3. And skip around each other in a full circle
  5. At the end of 4, link arms and do half circles down the line with others in the group
  6. Once the pair reaches the end of the row they run down the middle of the row till they reach the front again, peel to the outside of the row and run to the back, the other pairs follow them as they peel to the back.
  7. Once at the back, the first pair links hands in “London Bridge” fashion and the rest following run through until the 2<sup>nd</sup> pair is at the front
  8. The 2<sup>nd</sup> pair starts from step 1.

As a general pattern, mornings are used for building connection with the group so that the group will be looser and more comfortable to work together for more challenging activities in the afternoon.

## 7. Pass around a rhythm

Aim:

- Working together spontaneously without organisation
- Being creative and laughing at each other

Procedure:

- 1 person start with an action and each subsequent person must add 1 action to the series and perform the previous actions
- As a progression, use objects or include other people in your action

Observation:

- It spontaneously builds up a narrative sometimes and can become a show

## 8. Warmups for performance

Aim:

- Warm ups and partner stretching similar to day 4.
- Get used to touch

Procedure:

- Individual warm-ups and Partner warm-ups e.g. Tango
- Partners stand back to back with arms out and holding hands
- They then turn towards each other with one arm going down and the other going up until their heads are facing the direction opposite to the initial direction of turn

## 9. Performance

Aim:

- To know what pressure is
- To pull together everything you've learnt

Procedure:

- In groups of about 6, create a performance using everything we've learnt and any props.
- Incorporate these 3 stimulus into your performance
  1. Patting a cat
  2. Swimming through chocolate
  3. Looking through a keyhole
  4. Hearing and explosion

Observations:

- Stimulus used is simple, familiar, but also evocative and easy to interpret in various ways

In a social circus, the performance is not the goal of the training. Instead the process of building confidence, trust and cooperation is more important. Don't work towards the show, although the show may be used as motivation and gentle pressure. Only perform if the group is ready and the audience will be understanding

Groups may choose not to use the stimulus, but it helps to generate ideas

## 10. Post Its

Aim:

- To reflect on the things we brought to the sessions and what we have taken away from the sessions

Procedure:

- From the postits from day 1, walk up and take back the post its that you wrote about what you bring to the session and what you hope to take away.
- Stick what you bring on the front of your shirt and what you took away on the back
- Go around exchanging postits with others

Observations:

- Great way to share and acknowledge each other's strengths

## 11. Reminders

Aim:

- Wrap up exercise
- To thank others for the memories we shared

Procedure:

- Each individual selects a magic marker
- Each individual has a coloured sheet of paper and writes their name on it
- Pass your sheet down the circle and write comments, thanks and acknowledgements on the sheets that come your way.

Observations:

- Great way to have something concrete to take back

## 12. Pulling Together

Aim:

- To illustrate that the energy of the group is enough to support your weight if all do their part and trust together
- To feel the energy of the group

Procedure:

- A rope is firmly tied in a loop
- Each individual grips onto the rope with both hands
- Individuals must be standing nearly shoulder to shoulder
- Individuals slowly lean out, pulling on the rope until arms are locked
- Similar to Adagio, individuals lean back, release one hand, and return that hand to the rope
- With two hands on the rope, simultaneously and gradually lower your body until you're nearly squatting and then rise up again, all the while leaning out and keeping the rope taut.

Observations:

- Counterbalancing within the whole group and working together allows you to trust your whole weight onto the rope
- Great way to feel the energy of the group, and then let go as a way to wrap up all the sessions.

The length of the rope may need to be adjusted and retied so that everyone can grip on and still be taut

In a manner of speaking, social circus is all about giving the people the opportunity to feel success