

A SUMMARY OF GAMES PLAYED AT THE CAIRNS ADVENTURE-BASED LEARNING (ABL) TRAINING, AUGUST 2005 - Compiled by Natasha Hendrick



ABL games & activities are always evolving to meet the needs of the group ... so these game descriptions aren't always as you'll find them in the referenced books ... some I've played at workshops I've attended and kept my own notes, others I've adapted from my experiences of using them. Feel free to change them as you wish ... but not so randomly that you lose the reason why you're playing the game. And don't forget to debrief the activities so that your group learns from their experiences! Happy adventuring ~ NH.

Fill The Space

No Props p13

Invite the group to spread themselves randomly, but evenly, inside the marked activity area. Ask each person to slowly mingle and attempt to 'fill the space'. Next, while people are mingling, ask each person to secretly identify someone on the other side of the activity area. With that person in mind, announce that you would like them to follow as closely behind that secret person as possible. Group must maintain walking pace.

After a few moments, ask group to resume their mingling. Next, ask group to select a second secret person, and have them keep as far away as possible from them (within the boundaries). Or, have the group select a second person, and ask them to try to always keep their second secret person between them and their first secret person as they move about the activity area.

Categories

Quicksilver p85

Ask the group to separate quickly into smaller groups based on categories that you are about to announce. Be upbeat and directive in your presentation; keep the groups moving – as soon as the milling has slowed, give the participants only enough time to look at one another, say 'hi', and then hit them with another categorical split. Generally 10-12 groupings are sufficient. Be careful not to use inappropriate categories considering the age or maturity level of the players. Example categories:

- Clasp your hands and fold your thumbs. Is your right or left thumb on top?
- Fold your arms. Is your right or left arm on top?
- Are you wearing jewelry? What type?
- When you tap your foot to music, do you use the right or left foot?
- What is your shoe size?
- Can you roll your tongue?
- What is your astrological sign?
- What colour underwear do you have on right now?
- Which side of the bed did you get up on this morning?
- How many blood-related siblings do you have in your family?

Name by Name

Quicksilver p126

Inform the group that you have a challenge for them that will help them get to know one another. Have the group stand in a circle. Everyone needs to say their first name out loud. After all the names have been said, announce the challenge. All players must rearrange themselves so that the circle is alphabetical by first name. No talking, no signing or gesturing, no showing ID cards etc. The challenge is for individuals to place themselves in the circle – not have one or two people direct the group. Once the circle is re-formed, have everyone say their name and check the accuracy of the circle. If people are out of sequence, allow people to move a second time (again with no speaking etc). The challenge is to form the circle in the fewest number of rounds.

Gotcha

Group should form a circle, facing inwards and standing side by side. Everyone should hold their right hand out to their right side (about shoulder height) with the palm facing upwards. Next, extend the index finger of the left hand and place the tip of it on to the palm of the person's hand on the left. Everyone is now ready to start. On the command 'go', everyone tries to catch the finger of the person on their right side. Of course, everyone should also avoid being caught by the person on their left. Try the same challenge, but this time reverse the hands.

Evolution

Explain rock/paper/scissors game to all participants. Then explain the challenge is to 'evolve' from an egg-chicken-dinosaur-gorilla-guide (or whatever you dream up!). Demonstrate the actions that must be done at each level – egg = bent over into small ball; chicken = flapping bent arms like wings; dinosaur = use arms as big jaws; gorilla – jump around like a gorilla, making gorilla noises etc (make them up as you go!). Everyone starts as an egg – challenge others to rock/paper/scissors – winner moves to next level – loser drops down a level (unless you're an egg ... there's no where to go!). You can only challenge people at the same level of evolution as you. Once a person makes it to a guide, they can help any eggs stuck by themselves ... or just sit back and watch the mayhem!

Magic Hand Shake

Ask the group to silently select a number between one and ten (inclusive). Group must then find a partner who has selected the same number as them, using only the left hand shake (no talking, no miming or gesturing etc).

Toe Touche

No Props p19

Divide group into pairs – perhaps using a category such as 'find a partner with similar colour eyes to you'. The duo stands back to back, and on an appropriate signal, both participants hop around 180 degrees to face one another and engage in a dance-like combat. They attempt to 'tag' the toe of their partner gently before one of their own feet gets tagged. Be sure to explain to the group that you said 'tagged' not 'stomped'. Play best of three.

Shape Shifter

Ask group to sit on ground in circle and have them relax into most comfortable position. Next, ask them to secretly select a person across from them in the circle. On 'go' the group must shift into the stance / body-position of their secret person.

Speed Rabbit

Cowtails & Cobras II p63

Have the group stand in a circle, facing the centre. Ask the game initiator to stand in the centre of the circle. His/her job is to point to a person in the circle, and say either: (i) elephant; (ii) rabbit; or (iii) cow. The signified individual, and the people to that person's immediate right and left, must perform a symbolic pantomime sequence before the centre person can count to 10. If the sequence is not done correctly or in time, then the offending person (one of the three) must take the place of the initiator in the centre of the circle. If the sequence is performed correctly, the initiator points to another person in the circle ... and so on ... until someone eventually makes a mistake, or doesn't complete the sequence within the allotted time.

The animal sequences are as follows:

ELEPHANT: The centre person extends her right arm forward, palm down, hand lightly cupped like a trunk, brings the left hand under the right arm and up to pinch the nose and flaps right arm up and down. The left and right people must flap the elephant's 'ears' by waving their outstretched arms next to the centre person's ears.

RABBIT: Centre person hops up and down. The person to the right stomps her right foot. The person to the left stomps their left foot.

COW: Centre person interlaces fingers of both hands and presses both palms out away from her body, resulting in both thumbs pointing to the ground. The side people must grab the thumbs and mime milking the cow.

Or, make up your own animals, mimes and sounds!

Boop

Bottomless Bag Again p67

Have group divide into smaller groups of 5 or 6. Have them blow up and tie off one balloon per group. Ask each group to join hands in a circle and try to keep their balloon aloft by batting the balloon (they mustn't let go of hands). Start by announcing the group may hit the ball with hands only (hands must remain joined). Then switch to alternate body parts eg balloons can only be touched with heads, knees, noses, chest etc.

Balloon Frantic

Bottomless Bag Again p66

Ask each person to inflate a balloon and tie off neck. Inflate a few extras (6-8) for replacements. Ask each player to throw their balloon in the air and have the group keep each balloon off the ground. To make it more difficult, insist that every balloon must be kept moving at all times. Time how long the group can keep the balloons airborne.

Fire in the Hole

Bottomless Bag Again p67

Ask participants to divide into groups of 4-6, each person has an inflated balloon. The groups should stand in circle, so that each person is facing the back of the person in front of them. Place the balloons between each person in the group, at about mid-torso level. On signal, have the group initiate a group squeeze – bang!

Negotiation

No Props p39

Split group into 3 or 4 smaller groups. Explain that each group is to meet in a separate corner and decide on one physical gesture, secretly, which they can demonstrate to the other groups. For example, a group may choose to stick out their tongues and wave their left hands high. After a few minutes, each group returns to centre and assumes a position where every other group can see them. On 'go' every group simultaneously demonstrates their gesture for everyone to see, while at the same time noting what the other groups are doing.

After the first round, explain that the goal of the activity is to achieve consensus among all of the groups, by way of having every group demonstrate the same gesture in the fewest possible rounds. The groups return

to their corners between each round to discuss their choice of gesture for the next round. [A more difficult challenge is to allow combinations of the original gestures in addition to the original gestures.] They are not permitted to communicate with the other groups. Limit the number of rounds to 8, by which time you have managed to stimulate lots of discussion about decision-making, loyalty and goal-setting.

Amoeba

Fun Stuff III p27

Ask the group to stand close-in-a-cluster ... as close as they can get without touching one another. Encircle a rope about the group on the ground (ie the rope's circumference outlines the standing participant's feet). Ask the group to step out of the established amoebic circle. Subsequently, on a timed basis, try to re-establish the in-circle positioning as quickly as possible without touching one another. Time the attempt. Add 5 secs for each touch. Repeat 3 or 4 times to establish group's best efforts.

The Clock

No Props p37

Invite your group to form a circle, sitting on the floor with their butts on the ground. Each person should be close enough to hold onto their neighbours' hands. With hands held and butts on the ground, this is the starting position. Explain to the group that on the signal 'go' they are to stand up (holding hands at all times), rotate a full 360 degrees back to their original positions, then change direction and rotate back to their spots, where they will stop and sit down. Their goal is to complete this routine in the fastest possible time. Ensure the group is sensitive to not whipping their slower colleagues around the circle at 'break-neck' speed.

Blindfold Shapes

Have group space themselves evenly along a long piece of rope (approximately 1.5m-2m spacing between people). Ask them to close their eyes (or use blindfolds). Use sighted spotters to keep group safe. Challenge the group to move themselves into a specified shape (eg square, equilateral triangle, pentagon, 5-pointed star etc).

Hog Call

No Props p28

Ask your group to form a line (you may choose to use Mute Line-Up for example). Now fold the line in the middle so that everyone ends up facing another person to form a pair. Explain that you would like each pair to share a matching set of words or sounds (eg peanut-butter, coca-cola, sun-shine, little-lamb etc). In addition, each person in the pair should choose one of the words or sounds as their own. After a moment, ask each pair to announce their word and ensure there are no duplications.

Indicate that each line represents a group that will move to opposite ends of the playing field. When they get there, each person turns away from their partner and closes their eyes. Once eyes are shut, have participants mill around and mix themselves up. Also, to keep safe, participants need to walk with "bumpers up" (ie hands up about face height, palms facing outwards). The object is to have each person find their partner by shouting their "word". When the pairs finally find one another, invite them to open their eyes and enjoy watching the melee of name shouting around them.

Your Add

Bottomless Bag Again p48

Ask the group to find a partner (eg Magic Hand Shake). Tell them to stand facing one another and put their hands behind their backs, and on the word 'show', both players thrust their hands forward with from 0-10 fingers extended. The first player to come up with the calculated total for all fingers is champion. Play best of three.

Wiggle Waggle

Fun Stuff III p61

Teach the wiggle waggle position ... put your hands in front of your face palm to palm, then cross your centre fingers; if the folded centre finger on your right hand is closest to your face, your left hand will rotate clockwise and your right hand counterclockwise ... and there you have it! (You know what I mean!) Once everyone has achieved some level of success, ask them to quickly choose a partner ... give each other a high-five ... hold it ... then do the wiggle waggle. Suggest using both hands with their partner if they are successful.

Out of Kilter

Back Pocket Adventure p72

Ask the group to find a partner. Have them grab one another's wrists or hands, and lean backwards until they find that if it were not for their partner's support they'd topple over. Move around a bit and try different positions ... one leg up, one hand etc

Yurt Circle

Cowtails & Cobras II p73

Ask group to join hands and expand their people-circle outward until everyone feels some pull on their arms from the people on their left and right. Starting with any convenient person, have the group number off by twos around the circle ie 1-2,1-2,1-2, etc. Encouraging the group to move slowly and deliberately, ask all the #1's to lean in toward the centre of the circle, and all the #2's to lean out. Each person should have their feet placed about shoulder width apart. If the group cooperates they will achieve a remarkable lean. After some practice, ask the #1's and #2's to try and reverse their position.

Circle to Circle

Silver Bullets p60

Ask the group to form a hand-in-hand circle. Place two large hoops together between two people (resting on their clasped hands). See how quickly the participants in the circle can get the hoops to travel around the circle (ie people passing through the hoops) and back to the originating point – send one hoop each way. Hands must remain joined.

Two-Person Trust Falls

Cowtails & Cobras II p51

Ask participants to form groups of three. One person (the faller) stands between the other two people. The faller needs to secure her arms across her chest to ensure they don't throw out arms and elbows. The falling person also needs to keep their knees and body straight. Calls are initiated by the faller and completed by the catchers:

Faller: "Catchers ready?"

Catchers: "Ready to catch"

Faller: "Ready to fall"

Catchers: "Fall away"

Trust Wave

Line the group up in two lines, facing one another, about one arm's length apart. Have them extend their arms out towards the person opposite them, at shoulder height. One person volunteers to be the runner – her aim is to run between the two lines of people as fast as possible. Obviously, the group must raise their arms out of the runner's way ... JUST before she gets there. The initial call sequence (see above) must be used prior to every runner's run.

Willow in the Wind

Ten to fifteen people stand shoulder to shoulder in tight circle with one person (the faller) standing rigid and trusting in the centre. Remaining rigid, the centre person falls slowly in any direction (AFTER the starting call sequence – see above). Before faller moves very far off plumb, the catchers redirect the faller's impetus to another arc of the circle. This fall-catchshove sequence continues in a gentle fashion until it becomes obvious that the centre person is relaxing (but remaining rigid!). Change people in the centre until everyone who wants to has had the opportunity to be 'shoved around'.

Island Moonball

Quicksilver p165

You will need a moonball (beach ball) and enough hula hoops (or rope loops) so that all players can have one foot inside a hoop to start. A good ratio seems to be 2-4 people per hoop. For the first round set the hoops out in a circular pattern with about 2m-3m between the hoops. Working together the whole group must try to record the largest number of hits before the moonball hits the ground. Whenever the moonball hits the ground the score returns to zero. All players must have one foot in a hoop. Once a player has put a foot inside a hoop she cannot change hoops until the next round. Any player within a hoop may hit the ball, but two players from the same hoop may not hit the ball consecutively. If players from the same hoop make consecutive hits, the score returns to zero. The team will have 3 rounds of 2 minutes to achieve their highest score. Once a round starts, the time is running and does not stop even when the ball is on the ground. The first 2 minute round is played using whatever pattern you laid out. Between each two minute round, the group has one minute for strategising and discussion. During these strategy breaks, players can move the hoops, rearrange the number of people in a hoop, re-distribute players etc.

Spider's Web

Quicksilver p114

The objective is to move the group through a nylon / elastic fabricated web without touching the web material. To make the event more challenging, the rule that a body can only pass through each web opening once can be applied. Use elastic or nylon cord – the stretch characteristics allow the web to remain taut, but will stretch if fallen on. Remember people of all sizes must be able to fit through the web gaps. Create the web between two trees. Note that hoola hoops can be used as an alternative. DO NOT allow people to dive through the web.

Stepping Stones

Quicksilver p186

You need one prop less than the number of people (eg carpet squares, rubber deck spots, piece of paper) and two pieces of rope, or another suitable method for identifying the take-off point and safety zone. The group is assembled at the take-off point and must get across to the safety zone without touching the ground. Anyone touching the ground between the boundaries must return to the start. A prop can only move in the forward direction. If a prop is not continually touched it is confiscated from the group. Be sure to set the boundaries far enough apart so the group will need to recycle some of their props in order to cross the gap.

Over, Under, Through and O.U.T.

Fun Stuff III p29

You need 3 trees so situated so they form approximately an equilateral triangle. Make sure that there are no protruding rocks etc in the area and surrounding the trees. Get some bungee cord / rope and arrange three rectangular “windows” between the three chosen trees, as follows:

WINDOW ONE (under): Stretch a length of rope between two of the trees and continue the cord around the third tree and back to the start at the same height so that it parallels the ground and is 40cm above the ground. Use the popular any-do-it knot to secure the rope!

WINDOW TWO (through): Stretch another piece of rope about the three trees at a height of 80cm – this forms the top of the second window.

WINDOW THREE (over): Stretch the third piece of rope about the three trees at a height of 130cm – this forms the top of the third window.

The objective is to get the group out of the interior triangular space as quickly and efficiently as possible through one of the windows. The windows must be used alternately and in sequence ie over, under, through. If someone touches a section of the rope, they must retreat to the triangle’s interior and try again. Or, you can simply assign a time penalty for each touch, and add the penalties to the total time.

Players can choose which window they would like to go through, but the windows must be attempted one at a time, and in sequence.

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