

## **FINGER TO PALM**

*Time:* About 3-4 minutes.

*Materials:* Just two hands!

*Directions:* Have participants circle up. Ask everyone to hold up their right hand, index finger pointing up. Explain to them that this will represent the need to keep a clear, focused, 'pointed' mind. Ask them to also hold up their right hand, palm open and flat. Mention that this is to represent or symbolize keeping an open mind or heart. Finally, tell them to place their finger in the open palm, pointing down, of their neighbor to the right. Tell them that on the count of three they are to simultaneously attempt to grasp (but gently!) the finger of the person to their left while escaping the grasp of the person on their right!

*Comments:* Great for a laugh, but it can also serve as a metaphor for a learning experience that is meant to be both meaningful and enjoyable. To make it even more fun I sometimes count to "three," but skip from two to four the first time. Everyone, of course, jumps the gun!

## **FOLLOW ME**

*Time:* A few minutes.

*Materials:* None.

*Directions:* Here's a great way to get people in synch with one another, and also a way to playfully emphasize the need to follow directions and stay together. Lead the group in some kind of "Call and Response" activity by clapping (calling) out a rhythm to which they respond. Start slow and easy and speed it up.

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## **OOH, AHH**

*Time:* About 5 minutes

*Materials:* Functional hearing.

*Directions:* Have everyone circle up, standing (holding hands is optional). Tell the group that you will be sending a sound around the group, and to pass it on (while speed isn't the issue and it isn't being timed I do emphasize doing it quickly). Begin by turning to the person on your right and say "OOH," who then passes it to the person on their right and so on around the circle until it gets back to your. Then change it to an "AHH," sending it around the circle again. When it gets back to you send the OOH once again to the person on your right, and immediately send the AHH to the person on your left. Going in opposite directions, they two will come together at one person about half way around. That person will usually react with confusion, and sometimes even has the presence of mind to keep them going. Either way it's a laugh.

At this point I like to invite the group to do it once again as a friendly competition: Which will win, the OOH or the AHH? Quickly start them in both directions, and wait to see which gets back to you first! Now try reversing the flow. When someone gives you an OOH, instead of passing it on, pass it back to them. When both OOH and AHH are traveling in the same direction, you can play tag, one trying to catch the other.

## **THIS IS MY NOSE**

*Time:* A few minutes.

*Materials:* None.

*Directions:* Everyone partners up. Demonstrate with your partner while explaining as follows: Point to your nose and say something like, "This is my chin." Your partner must then point to *her* chin and say something like, "This is my hip." You then point to *your* hip and say something like, "This is my ear." She then points to her ear..... and so on. The rule is: you must point to whatever it was that your partner just *SAID*, not what she pointed to. Suggest to the group to do a few rounds slowly to get a feel, but then to speed it up and see how they do!

## **BUZZ**

*Time:* About 5 minutes or so.

*Materials:* None.

*Directions:* Have everyone circle up. This is a counting game. We begin at "One" and continue to count as we go around the circle.

The rules are as follows. A "BUZZ!" must be substituted for every number that:

has a 7 in it (7, 17, 27...)

is a multiple of 7 (7, 14, 21, 28...)

is a double digit (11, 22, 33...)

If someone fails to substitute a "BUZZ!" we go back to One.

Fun!

## **PEOPLE TO PEOPLE**

*Time Needed:* 5 - 10 minutes is plenty.

*Materials Needed:* None.

*Directions:* Everyone partners up and forms a circle around whoever is it. One person is in the middle (usually me to begin with so that I can model how it goes) who then calls out combinations of body parts such as:

-Back to Back

-Foot to Shoulder

-Buns to Buns

-Elbow to Knee

- Finger to Ear

-Forehead to Forehead

- Feet to Feet

- Knee to Chin

At any point in time the caller can yell: "People to People." Everyone goes quickly to the middle of the circle and grabs a new partner from the other side, moving back out quickly to form another circle -- including the caller. The one person left without a partner becomes the new caller.

## **PEOPLE TO PEOPLE VARIATION #1**

In this variation, partners do one set of combinations, for example Back to Back. When the next one is called out, for example Finger to Ear, they have to try to do it while still maintaining the Back to Back position. This continues until it is impossible to do any more combinations, at which time the caller yells People to People.

## **PEOPLE TO PEOPLE VARIATION #2**

Divide the group into two circles, inside and outside, with the same number of people. Before beginning, match up everyone participating with a partner, composed of one person from the inner and one from the outer circle. At your signal, both groups begin to walk in opposite directions, clockwise and counter-clockwise. At any given time, yell out two body parts: Knee to Foot, for example. Participants need to immediately find their partner and connect those body parts. Watch closely: whoever gets to their partner last needs to step out and watch.

## ELEPHANTS, GIRAFFES AND MONKEYS

*Time Needed:* About 15 minutes.

*Materials Needed:* None.

*Directions:* Participants circle up. Explain how the game is played. Tell the group that they are all parts of the animal kingdom being visited at a zoo, and that you are the zoo keeper. "When you point to someone and say Elephant! that person has to make an elephant trunk. The people on either side have to quickly make the big ears on either side of Elephant." Show them how to do it. Then point to someone else and say, "Giraffe! That person needs to put their arms high in the air while those on either side bend over and touch the ground in front of Giraffe to make the front legs." Finally, point to someone else and say, "Monkey! That person needs to scratch under their armpits while making a monkey noise. Persons on either side need to make Monkey's long tail!"

Zoo-keeper (initially that's you) points to someone at random and says "Elephant," "Giraffe," or "Monkey" and immediately counts to 5. If someone does not remember their part, he/she becomes zoo-keeper! After a while, or when the group begins to catch on, introduce Kangaroo -- the person in the middle makes a pouch and those on both sides provide the ears; everyone then jumps up and down! Then introduce Seal: while the one in the middle claps hands and barks like a seal, those on the sides hold up an imaginary ball over Seal's nose!

*Comment:* Once everyone seems to be getting the hang of these five animals, ask the group to come up with another one or two animals! Try making the game more challenging by changing categories to farm (instead of zoo), or birdlife, cityscapes or whatever. Also try increasing the number of people required for each pose, or using more than one person in the center of the circle.

## PAIR TAG

*Time:* A quick few minutes.

*Materials:* None.

*Directions:* This works best with a larger group of , say, 25 or more. Get a partner. Decide who will be IT of the two of you. Move well away from your partner. At the signal, the object is to tag your own partner -- nobody else's. Before you can attempt to tag your partner, however, you must turn around three times, in place. This allows your partner to move well away.

What happens in this pandemonious game of tag is that everyone being chased is using everyone else to hide behind and shield them from their pursuer. It's a high energy hoot!

## PARTNER TAG

*Time:* Several minutes is good.

*Materials:* None.

*Directions:* Everyone but two players joins hands and circle up. The two who have been left out also hold hands, with one another. Holding hands, they walk around the outside of the circle. When they decide on a likely place to stop, they break the handhold of two people in the circle. Now the fun begins.

As quickly as possible the pair has to the circle one more time. Meanwhile, the two players whose hands were unjoined have to join hands again, start running around the outside of the circle in the *opposite* direction, and return to their place of origin before the other partners. The first pair to make it back closes the circle. The partners on the outside are left to find another likely place to break into the circle (which really is anywhere).

For variety, you may want to specify some other ways of getting around the circle, such as hopping, jumping, skipping, running backwards, or piggyback. Or even with eyes closed!? Careful not to crash into the other pair!

