

## **ENERGIZERS/ICEBREAKERS:**

- **Entourage:** (also called Biggest Fan). We like to cheer each other on, and support each other. This game is a great chance to do that. Here's how it works: find someone, play rock-paper-scissors (with smaller groups play best 2 out of 3). Whoever "wins" goes on to compete with others. Whoever "loses" becomes the biggest fan/entourage of their partner—cheering them on as loud and enthusiastically as they can (can be done silently w/miming for accessibility)! Those two play another pair, and whichever team "loses" joins the entourage of the "winner"—eventually there will be two massive groups of people cheering, and then everyone gets to cheer for the final winner!
- **Forwards, Backwards:** Growing up outside of Boston I learned that there are three types of people in the world: Smaht, wicked smaht, and wicked wicked smaht. Let's see which type we are!
  - **Smaht People:** I am going to say a word and do an action (say "forward," step one step forwards), everyone else will then repeat both the word and the action ("forward," everyone steps forward). Use the words forwards, backwards, left and right. Do this several times, getting a bit faster as you go.
  - **Wicked Smaht People:** Ok, nice job. Y'all ready to take it up a notch? I am going to say a word and do an action. You are going to say and do *the opposite*. (I say "Forward" and step forward, you say "Backwards" and step backwards).
  - **Wicked Wicked Smaht People:** I am *very* impressed—do you think you have what it takes to try the final level? You suuure? Ok: I am going to say and do an action. You are going to say the same action as me but *do* the opposite. (I say "Forward" and step forward; you say "forward" and step *backward*)
- **The Great Moo Off:** Everyone is in a circle, shoulder-to-shoulder. Everyone looks at the feet of someone else. Say "1, 2, 3, look!" On "look" everyone looks up at the face of the person whose feet they were staring at. If you are looking at someone who is not looking at you, you are safe. If you make eye-contact, one of you is out; decide who through a moo-off (you both "mooooo" for as long as you can, whoever stops or takes a breath first is out).
- **People to People:** (check in first that everyone is comfortable with some physical contact with each other) Everyone finds a partner; the leader calls out commands such as "Shoulder to shoulder!" "Knee to foot!" the partners follow them—touching their shoulders together, touching one

person's knee with the other person's foot. The commands stack ie once a knee is touching a foot, they *stay* touching when the next command is given. Eventually shout "People to people!" and everyone runs to find a new partner and begin the next round.

- **Speed Rabbit:** Everyone is in a circle, one person is in the center. This person runs up to someone and says either "rabbit," "elephant," or "bird."
  - Poses:
    - If they say "rabbit" the person they point to makes whiskers and the two people on either side put their hands above their heads and lean to the side to make floppy ears.
    - If "elephant" middle person makes a trunk with their arm, the people on either side make wide ears with their arms.
    - If "bird" the middle person makes a beak with their hands and the other two flap wings with their arms.
  - Play: The person in the center runs up to someone, points and says one of the animal poses, then counts down from ten as fast as they can. If the three people affected (the person pointed to and the two on either side) do not do the correct pose by the time the counter gets to zero, then the person who failed to complete the pose goes in the center and the person in the center takes their place in the circle. As the game goes on, gradually select more people to be in the center at the same time until it is complete chaos!
  - Rounds: Make up your own! (Someone wanna do a Jewish version sometime? Or a radical/anti-oppressive focused one?) Rounds that I have seen before:
    - Celebrity Edition:
      - Taylor Swift: Middle person dramatically screams "Hes the reason for the teardrops on my guitar"/cries/strums guitar, side people shriek excitedly.
      - Justin Bieber: Middle person screams "baby baby baby oh!", side people cross arms and give judgmental looks (can introduce by asking a group, what does Justin Bieber always always have near him? Haters)
      - Beyonce: Middle person does Single Ladies dance move, side people twist hands (showing off not having a ring)
    - Other Round
      - Jello: middle person wiggles like jello, side people put arms in a circle as bowl.
      - Salmon: middle person flops arms and legs like a salmon, side people wave arms like water.
    - Invent your own!

## **TEAMBUILDING INITIATIVES:**

- **The Longest Line:** Maybe my favorite game of all time. You give the following instructions and ONLY these instructions. First, divide the group in half (or more depending on size). It is important NOT to call these teams, it's just a "you stand here, you stand there." Tends to work best if people arrive in pre-existing groups and then you just leave the groups ``organically" separated.
  - Then say:
    1. The name of the game is The Longest Line.
    2. The goal is to make the longest line.
    3. We may use whatever we have brought with us.
    4. We will have 3 minutes to plan, then 1 minute to build per round. We will play 3 rounds. (measure the length of each line in footsteps after each round. Announce the length of each, but DO NOT declare a winner)
  - Cool things that happen in this game:
    - thinking about resources! You think you don't have much then what? A shoelace? A charger cord?
    - The facilitator often has something like a coil of rope with them. If participants ask to use it, repeat the instructions: we may use whatever we brought with us. (Who is "we"? What, even me? Expanding definition of "we") (if they don't ask about the rope, bring up at the end and ask about other times making assumptions and limited "we"s limit us)
    - Was this game a competition? (or, "Who won?") Many answer yes, then push them to think about the directions.
- Eventually they realize (if they haven't during the game) that they could have combined to make one giant line—you split them into groups, but never said they had to compete. Revisit the directions, explore where the idea of competing rather than collaborating came from, and the implications of that (in the activity and in life)
- **How Many Elephants?** Ask the group "How many elephants are in the jar?" and mime putting something in a jar. The answer is that in this game "elephants" are words—the number of elephants is the number of words you used. When you ask "How many elephants?" the answer is 3. Ask several times, each time miming putting things in a jar (this is pure distraction), give them a chance to answer, and then tell them the correct answer. Later in the game as a hint, you can put your hands behind your back to mime putting in the elephants so that the group realizes they do not have to see your hands to answer the question.
- **Dance Telephone:** Everyone is in a line, facing the same direction. The person in the back of the line (with consent) taps the person in front of

them on the shoulder; that person turns so they can see the first person. The first person performs a series of dance moves that they have come up with. Then the second person (consensually) taps the next person in line on the shoulder and does their best to repeat the first person's dance moves (without help from the first person). The next person taps the next on the shoulder and passes the dance moves down the line. Watch as it changes/makes its way to the end! Maybe at the end have the first person repeat their moves so everyone can see how much it changed.

- **Paper Towel Dance Party:** This is a dance party. Everyone has a tissue or paper towel on their heads. While it is on your head, you may dance. If it falls off, you are frozen and cannot move until someone returns the paper towel to your head. (then have a great conversation about ways we try to support each other/what happens if we don't/whatever comes up in your group!)
- **Moon Ball:** Choose a number (often around double the number of people in your group).
  - The group has a ball. If done as a teambuilder, give the ball a name, possibly a value you are focusing on ("trust" or "community")
  - Someone tosses the ball up in the air. The goal is to pass the ball around without it touching the ground.
  - You cannot catch the ball (like volleyball—you must hit or bump it up)
  - Count each time someone touches the ball; you are trying to get X touches without it touching the ground (X=the number you chose)
  - Everyone must touch the ball.
  - You cannot touch the ball twice in a row (If you hit it, someone else must hit it before you touch it again).
  - Debrief: reflect on the activity (see "Debriefs" for question ideas); if the ball has a name, explore that (If the ball is named trust, what did it mean to pass Trust around? What happened when we dropped Trust? How do we keep up or drop Trust in our daily lives? Etc)
- **Winds a Blowin (/West Wind Blows/Move Your Booty)**
  - Everyone is in a circle with spots marked (can be chairs, paper plates, or everyone takes one shoe off). There should be one fewer spots than there are people.
  - The person without the spot stands in the center. They then finish the sentence "The winds a blowin for..." with a statement that is true of them. (ie "The winds a blowin for everyone that likes chocolate ice cream" or "The winds a blowin for anyone nervous about being here today" (typically start more surface level and invite people to go deeper as is comfortable).

- If the sentence spoken applies to you (ie if you like chocolate ice cream) you must leave your spot and find a new spot. The person in the center who shared the sentence is also looking for a new spot. So everyone that that the sentence applies to races to find a new spot, and the person left without a spot is in the center and offers the next statement.
  - The statement you offer must be true of you (I cannot say “Winds a blowin for anyone who has a dog” if I do not have a dog)
  - You cannot move to the spot directly next to the one you are standing in.
  - If playing with more serious questions, give people the option not to move if they are not comfortable sharing that piece of themself.
- Variations:
  - High Five: before reaching a new spot, you must high five at least one other person.
  - One Foot: When leaving your spot you must hop on one foot.
  - Both: you must hop on one foot *and* exchange a high five.
  - Pre-selected statements:
    - A more serious variation, the facilitators have a list of pre-determined statements, typically about a topic they are planning to explore as a group (ie “the winds a blowin for anyone who wants to improve their listening skills.” The facilitators are the ones who offer the statements, but otherwise the game operates the same way.
    - The person left in the center is invited (not required) to share their answer to the question.

## **DEBRIEF TOOLS:**

- **Airplane Debrief!** "We were not actually (doing whatever activity), we were flying a plane. Some of us were pilots, sharing our ideas people, the vocal leaders, the center of attention. Some of us were crew, maybe not sharing as many of our own ideas but bringing the pilots ideas into reality, actively making sure that everyone was where they needed to be and doing in general what you saw needed to get done. Some of us were passengers. This is a very special role that takes a lot of trust. Passengers were able to look at the rest of the group and choose to take a step back, creating space for others to step up as pilots and crew, and trusting the team to keep us flying. These are three really different roles, and all are essential. i.e anyone ever try to fly a plane with all pilots? #toomanycooksinkitchen. And, we all take on all of these roles at

- different points in our days/lives/activities (for debrief think about the one you most inhabited during this activity--or facil could choose to ask about the one you most typically inhabit for a different type discussion!)"
- have people group themselves into pilots, crew, passengers. Then discuss what seems relevant to your group: In what ways did they hold their roles? In what ways did they support other roles? In what ways were they supported?
  - Report back to the whole group. Either keep discussing, or explore new questions as a whole group. Ex: How was the distribution of roles (ie did it seem like the right number/space in each--not too many pilots shouting over each other?)? How were the roles chosen (was it intentional? how does it tie in to how we've been socialized (i.e. are white males all pilots, WOC/QTPOC mainly passengers? really important to unpack!) How might we be more intentional in this division of roles? Are you satisfied/feeling good in your role? How might you challenge yourself to take on a different role?
- **Debrief Ball:** Really cool tool--a ball with different debrief questions on it. You toss it around and answer the question your thumb is touching when you catch it. Obvi doesn't work without a ball, which takes prep, but what I like about it is that it has 3 colors that signify different stages of the debrief: first you answer orange questions which all revolve around description/telling the story of *what happened*/the process of the activity. Then come blue, which is reflecting on the *significance* of what happened--why did the group/individuals make these decisions? What were the impacts? And last, green questions are about "transference"--taking the earlier pieces of reflection and exploring how they apply to life outside the activity. ex: "Obvi you don't speak in animal noises every day, but you do communicate, any lessons about communication you can pull from this experience? You miscommunicated in the activity when...what are other times you've miscommunicated in life? How did you/would you respond?"