

ENERGIZERS

Using energizers in the middle of sessions or in breaks between workshops during a long day, is a great way to give participants the opportunity to rise energy levels, be active and creating a good atmosphere for learning. Moving, playing around and having fun stimulates the brain, and the more fun the participants have, the more they are able to learn and remember!

CAT AND MOUSE

Materials: none

Players: 12-20

Time: 10 minutes

How to play: Choose a cat and a mouse. The rest of the group stands in 3 or 4 rows facing the same direction, arms held out. The cat has to catch the mouse by running in and out of the rows (they cannot go under the arms). The cat can clap whenever it likes to make the standers turn 90°, still in rows all facing the same way, so it can get to the mouse. The mouse can say "Piv, piv" when it wants the standers to turn. When the cat catches the mouse, different players are chosen to be cat and mouse. The game can also be played with the group of people standing in a circle.

User comment: I have been playing this game since I was a child, at school, at 4H-meetings, at camp, etc. It was fun then, and it's still fun today!

COUNTING GAME/THE ALPHABET GAME

User comment: I played this game at the RYEurope Rally in Latvia 2017 – it was challenging, but managing the challenge gave an extreme sense of achievement!

Material: None

Players: 10 – 15

Time: 15 minutes

How to: The whole group has to count to 30 (depends on how many participants attend) without talking to each other. They have to communicate nonverbally. When two people say the same number at the same time the game starts from the beginning again. They are standing in a circle and they are not

allowed to count in line. Everyone has to say a number so that the game is finished.

Variation: The whole group has to say the entire alphabet without talking to each other, and with their eyes closed. When two people says the same letter at the same time the game starts from the beginning again.

ATOMIC GAME

Materials: none

Players: 10-100 persons

Time: 10 minutes

How to play: The facilitator of the games says atoms (groups of people) consisting of an x amount of people needs to be created. If there are 11

participants and the facilitator says that atoms of the size of four people – then the three last persons to form an atom of four have lost the game and is out - 8 participants are then left. The facilitator then says that atoms of three people needs to be formed – and again to people loses. The winner is the last two persons to stay in the game.

Variation: If there's a big group it can be split in to smaller equally sized groups, and everyone can stay in the game even if it's not enough participants to form a group with the number of people the facilitator asks for.

User comment: I have played this game at almost every event throughout the years, where there have been playful participants. It never gets old! Easy to do, *and* fun!

FRUIT SALAD

User comment: My first meeting with “fruit salad” was at school when I was about 7 years old. Back then it was fun, and when I grew up and started to facilitate I realized it's also a great way to bring a group together. All in all, fun and useful!

Materials: Chairs for everyone

Players: 8 – 20

Time: 15 minutes

How to play: The group sits on chairs in a circle. There should be one chair for each player in the circle, with the facilitator standing in the middle. Each person is assigned the name of a fruit (e.g. apple, banana, orange, etc.) by the facilitator. There should be 4 or 5 people with each fruit name. When the facilitator shouts out the name of a fruit, all people with that fruit must change places, leaving on person in the middle (the facilitator takes one of the empty chairs). When a player's fruit is called, he/she must move to a new

seat. They are not allowed to end up sitting on the chair they were sitting on when their fruit was called. The person who fails to find a new chair is left in the middle and he/she chooses the next fruit. If somebody shouts, “*fruit salad!*” then the whole group must swap places.

Variation: Instead of fruit, the facilitator can say “everyone with green socks/blond hair/glasses change places” or “everyone who likes to read/has been to Africa/have been leading a workshop” etc. This way the group can get to know each other a little better while moving around.

ELECTRIC SHOCK

User comment: I've been participating in this game several times over the years, and I've learned that a little competition always gets the energy up! Good for short breaks.

Materials: a scarf/a flower or something that can be picked up

Players: 8-50

Time: 5-10 minutes

How to play: The group is split up in two (or more) teams, and the two teams hold each other's hands. They should stand in two rows next to each other. 5 meters in front of them is an item. One person squishes the last person of each team's

hand, and they the next persons hand and so on, so it starts an electric wave. When the first person in each row, who feels the wave he/she will run to get the item. The team who gets the item wins.

CATERPILLAR

Materials: none, however a lot of space is needed

Players: 10-30

Time: 5 minutes

How to play: Participants are split up in two teams. They stand in a row with their hands on the shoulders on the person in front of them. Now the two teams have to catch the other caterpillars tail, when they catch it the team who caught the other teams tail, will gain a person. The winning team is the team who end up with all the people.

User comment: I played the "rock, paper, scissors" version of this game at the RYEurope Conference in Estonia 2017. Cheering and trying to win is truly fun, and gets the energy flowing.

Variation: The participant starts out solo, playing "rock, paper, scissors". The one that loses has to go behind the winner and put their hands on his or her shoulders. The winner continues competing the other, while the rest of the "caterpillar" (the previous losers) cheer for the winner. In the end there will be two long "caterpillars" competing each other.

UNTIE THE KNOT

User comment: I've been playing this game since I was a child, at scouts, 4H, etc. – and it never gets old. Easy to understand, easy to do, and very funny!

Materials: none

Players: 10 – 30

Time: 10 – 20 minutes

How to play: One person is send outside the door and remains there until the others are ready. The rest of the group, stand in a circle holding each other's hands. Without letting go of

the other people's hands, everybody tries to move around to "tie a knot". Once everybody is happy with the knot, the person outside the door is called in to untie the knot.

Variation: Everybody closes their eyes, moves around a bit, and grasps two random hands. Once everybody is holding on to two hands, the group tries to untie the knot. (This way no one needs to go outside)

SKIRACE

Materials: None

Players: 10 – 30

Time: 5 minutes

How to play: The

participants form a circle. The facilitator explains that this is

a ski race and begins by explaining the different moves. First everyone has to put their ski gear on: suit, shoes and a helmet. The skiers have to stand in downhill ski position, and when the facilitator says “large/small jump” everyone has to jump, when the facilitator says “left/right turn” the participants has to lean to either side. The race goes faster and faster with jumps and turns coming closer and closer, and ends with a photo finish (where the participants has to turn their heads to the camera smiling).

User comment: This game is so unbelievably funny! I’ve participated in it at several RYE events, and I can’t help but laugh every single time. It really gets the pulse and laughter going!

A + B

Materials: none

Players: 6-50

Time: 5 - 10 minutes

User comment: I remember playing this in gym classes when I was younger, it was always super chaotic, but so much fun. If you need to get a good pause from long sessions, this is a good choice for a break!

How to play: Everybody choose a person who is going to be their A and one who will be their B. You want to get as close to A as possible, and as far from B as possible. On the count of 3 everybody starts running after their A and escaping their B. The game finishes after some time of running around, or you can do the opposite – getting as close to B as possible and as far away from A as possible.

COCONUT

Materials: none

Players: as many as you like

Time: 2 minutes

How to play: The players say; “my head feels like a coconut”. Then they get up and spell COCONUT with their arms/body - just like the

YMCA! If introduced early at the event, participants can yell “coconut” throughout the week if they feel like they need a short break.

User comment: I have experienced several variations of this game in my years of youth work, and even though it seems so simple, it is a very good way to get a quick, short break when participants are tired.

SPIRALS

Materials: none

Players: 10-15

Time: 5 minutes

How to play: Everybody forms a straight line and hold hands. The person at one end starts rolling up the line without letting go of the next person's hand. Everyone follows along until a large spiral is formed. Now the person who started the spiral must clamber out. Everyone must follow without letting go of each other. This can be played in one big group or in smaller groups that competes.

User comment: I don't remember where I first participated doing this game, but I do remember it was a super way to get the whole group energized after a long session with thinking, talking and discussing! A very easy and refreshing activity.

ZIP ZAP SPOINK

User comment: This game was a regular at my local 4H club and was always a hit. Simple, yet confusing: someone always makes mistakes but that's okay because everyone gets a good laugh!

Materials: none

Players: 8-20

Time: 15 minutes

How to play: Everyone stands in a circle. One person bends down and pick up an invisible gun. The person can only shoot the gun to his/her left or right, right next to him/her. When shooting left you must make "a gun" with your fingers and point to the left saying "zip". Shooting to the right, you must point to the right and say "zap". When being zipped or zapped you have "the gun" and you have to shoot someone new as fast as possible still pointing and saying zip or zap. If you say the zip and point to the right you start over. After some rounds and everybody understands the game spoink is added. When you spoink

someone you can shoot someone who is not next to you, but it is important to point so everybody knows who you spoink.

Variation: when a mistake is made you die. The winners are the two left in the end.

PENGUINS AND FLAMINGOS

Materials: None

Players: 10-100

Time: 10 minutes

How to play: Choose a penguin. The penguin shuffles round quickly and penguin like, arms by his side. Everyone else is a flamingo and can only move slowly, gracefully, swooping their wings. The penguin has to catch the flamingos. When a flamingo is caught it miraculously becomes a penguin and madly shuffles round catching flamingos until everyone is a penguin.

User comment: I can't remember where I first played this game, but it's as funny as it sounds. A good way to create a good atmosphere!

CIRCLE AND KNEES

Materials: none

Players: 10-100

User comment: I've been playing this game over and over with several different groups of people, and it always amazes me how this actually works. It's very funny!

Time: 10 minutes

How to play: Everybody stands in a circle, shoulder to shoulder. Then you turn 90° so that everyone is looking at the back of somebody's head. Everyone takes one step in to the circle. On the count of three everyone sits down on the knees of the person behind them.

FINGERS ON A STICK

Materials: One rolled piece of A4 paper, broom stick, hoop, or other long light items.

Players: 4 - 10 people

Time: 10 minutes

How to play: Everybody put their pointing finger under the stick in a 40-degree angle, standing an equal number opposite of each other. Now the task is to get the stick from arm height down to the ground by moving the fingers down at the same time without dropping it. If the group easily gets this done, give them the same task but tell them they have to close their eyes or look away when lowering the stick.

User comment: I first played this game at the RYEurope Autumn Seminar in Slovenia 2015. It seems so plain and simple but is really difficult. A good way to challenge the participants!

PASS THE BALL

User comment: This game is hilarious. I have both facilitated and participated in it, and it is a true challenge. If the group is very big, you can add another ball and start at opposite sides of the circle!

Materials: A ball (or a bottle with some water in it)

Players: 15 - 25

Time: 10 – 20 minutes

How to: The participants form a circle or a line. The first person takes the ball and puts it between his or her knees and tries to pass it on to the next one. Helping out by using hands is not allowed! When the ball has been passed to all the participants, the first person now has to pass the ball while holding it close to his/her chest with her chin. Helping out by using hands is still not allowed. When the ball has been passed, the first person now has to pass the ball by

holding it under the arm. This can also be done as a competition between two smaller groups, to see who can pass the ball the fastest!



For more methods to get your group energized

<https://www.ecyc.org/projects/ecyc-game-book-0>

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/introduction-to-the-2012-edition>

<https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/>