

Session 9: Problem solving

Aspire Programme

TIMES	WHAT	DETAILS	EQUIPMENT NEEDED
10	Ice Breaker	Toilet tag- Same rules as stuck in the mud, but players turn into 'toilets' when tug,	
15	Connect	"Hot and Not"- Highlight of the week (hot) and lowlight/challenge (not). Connect, and try to learn more about their lives as people. Frontload: Problem solving	Talking object e.g. rubber chicken (if needed to encourage one person talking at a time)
10	Loosener/deinhibitizer	Human Knot- Group joins each other in a knot by grabbing hands across the circle from them. Challenge is completed when group unravels to stand in a circle!	
5	Debrief	Action replay- Team takes turns to re-tell (1 sentence at a time) the story of the activity just passed.	
15	Main activity	Traffic Jam- team lines up on the floor spots, with the middle one empty. Participants must work together, and cross over each other to complete the challenge.	Floor spots.
15	Discussion activity/debrief	What happened? Did we finish the challenge? How did it go? Why did it go the way it went? What worked/didn't work? What led to the end result? What did problem solving have to do with the activity? What does problem solving consist of?	Workbook:

Purpose: To identify and examine problem solving. To break it down, and discuss what problem solving is, and what some skills are that are important to problem solving (breaking down the overall problem and solve it step by step)

Activity briefs:

Toilet tag:

Stuck in the mud rules.. Establish group boundaries. Pick 2 taggers to tag everyone else, and equip them with boffers (optional). If someone is tagged, they must bend their knees and stick up a hand in front of them- becoming a toilet. Team must free them by squatting near their knee and 'flushing' them.

Human Knot:

Gather group shoulder to shoulder into a tight circle. Ask everyone in the group to shake the hand of someone across the circle from them. Once everyone has grabbed someone's hand, ask them to grab the hand of a different person with their other hand. Everyone should have a tangle of hands in the middle. At this stage, facilitator should acknowledge/introduce the game ("Looks like we're in a human knot!") and then simply instruct the group to untangle WITHOUT letting go of either hand. Facilitator shouldn't solve the problem for the group.

Action Replay:

Gather group into a semi tight circle. This debrief activity should only take a short time. It should help the group to reflect quickly on the activity just been, and provide a platform to look forward at a future challenge. Ask the group members to take turns saying a sentence each in telling the story (or 'action replay') of the activity/experience just passed. E.g. "First we shook each others hands." "Then we had to untangle ourselves and we struggled for a bit." "After a while we learnt that we could step over John's arm and it freed up Amy"... etc. Everyone should contribute, and continue saying a sentence each until the whole experience is covered. Encourage group to be descriptive- use details!

Traffic Jam:

Place down some floor spots in a single file line- one more floor spot than there are participants. Ask the group to stand on a floor spot, although the middle one must remain free. This will mean that there is half of the group on each side of the middle, and each side must face the middle, so it looks like this: >>> O <<< (the arrows represent participants and the way they are facing, the 'O' represents the empty space.) The objective is for the whole team to 'pass through traffic' and reach the spot opposite them on the other side of the middle. The end should look like this: <<< O >>>. At the start, select one participant to stand outside of the line (facilitator can replace them in the line) and direct the group. They must use names to direct people, asking them to move, to complete the challenge. The rules of the game are strict: Participants must keep facing the way they were at the start (either < or >) and can only move onto the free space, and only one person per space. Participants may only move one at a time. Participants may only step forwards, if they can't move forwards legally, it's 'traffic jam' and then the whole group must reset. Participants may only ever move one step at a time UNLESS they are facing

someone who is going in the opposite direction who has the free space behind them, then the participant may go around their opposite and onto the free space (From this: O > < To this: < > O). The director/participant outside the line can rotate, either by choice of the facilitator or by group election. Provide space to plan, and work things out as a team. Provide at least 2 mins of team planning time prior to starting the activity.

Equipment: Floor spots (carpet squares, ice cream container lids, and small squares of material- even shoes all work really well)

MAIN ACTIVITY DEBRIEF CYCLE: **Workbook**- Problem solving

Sit down in a circle with the group

Reflect

-What happened?

What was this activity? What did you have to do? What was the end result?

Analyse

- So what?

How did you feel about what happened? What did you think was going on? What worked well/what were the challenges? What does problem solving have to do with this activity? What skills did you use in this activity? Are these the same skills for problem solving? What skills do you think are important to good problem solving?

Relate/Apply

- Now What?

If you had to do this activity again, what would you do differently? How can we use the skills/values from this activity as a group in the future? Where in our lives do we use problem solving, and why is it important to problem solve?