WHAT IS IT?

The following games are designed to help the group focus and work together. Alternatively if the group’s attention starts to drift, or when they’re over-excited, use these games to help focus attention back to the room and get everyone ready for the next task. These games are useful for encouraging the participants to think as a group and work as a team. Make up your own rules and adapt them to suit your group... but here are just a few to get you started.

FIND OUT MORE

- Visit the Dialogue Education website http://www.dialogueaus.com
- See ‘Games to Focus’
- See ‘Meditations’
- See “Community of Inquiry Stimulus”

TIPS

- To encourage a group to manage their own behaviour offer them these games to help the group focus.
- If the group struggles to achieve the objective of a game return to it again at the end of the session and ask the group to come up with three “top tips” or strategies.

Guidelines

- No of participants; Any
- Age: Suitable for any age
- Preparation time: None
- Delivery time 5 min each
- Materials: None
Reason Chains
In a circle an appointed leader begins the chain with an event e.g. "Kate went to the police station". The participants around the circle continue the chain by giving an explanatory reason for the event. E.g. "Kate went to the police station because she crashed her car". The next person gives a reason for that reason, and so on until the group can't go any further. E.g. "Kate crashed her car, because she was driving too fast"; "Kate was driving too fast because she was in a rush"; "Kate was in a rush because she was late for work"; "Kate was late for work because her alarm didn't go off" ... This game demonstrates the role of reasons in discussion and story-telling.

You Missed A Bit
To recap or to conclude, ask the group to tell the story of the day / session / piece of stimulus starting from the very beginning. One person starts but every time someone thinks they've missed a bit they interrupt with 'You missed a bit...' and take up the telling of the story including the extra piece of information. This exercise builds up a detailed picture of the groups’ collective memory, supporting their reflective thinking.

Zip-Zap-Boing!
Everyone stands in a circle. Miming a ray-gun you send ‘Zips’ around the circle to your right, ‘Zap’ changes direction and can be sent anywhere in the circle and ‘Boing!’ [putting your hands in the air] deflects the ‘Zip’ back to the person who sent it to you. If anyone makes a mistake they are out.

Stuck In The Mud
A game of ‘Tag’ except that once someone is tagged by the ‘Tagger’ they are stuck in the mud. They freeze where they are with their legs shoulder width apart. The only way they can be freed is by someone crawling underneath their legs. The aim is for the ‘Tagger’ to get the whole room stuck in the mud.

I Am An Egg
There are three stages of evolution: egg [cupped hands]; bird [hands held together by thumbs flapping like a bird’s wings]; omnipresent being [hands in a prayer]. In pairs everyone must duel with one-another to decide whether or not they move up or down the evolutionary chain. A duel consists of putting your hands behind your back and producing either 0 – 5 fingers. The first person to add up the combined total of fingers and shout out the answer wins. A draw means you both stay on the evolutionary level that you are already at. If you win you evolve a level. If you lose you devolve a level. Omnipresent being is the highest level; egg is the lowest level. Keep playing until everyone has duelled with everyone else and then note the number of fully evolved omnipresent beings at the end.

Moose, Moose, Moose
Before you begin everyone is in a circle and takes it in turns to say what animal they are. They repeat their animal name three times as you move around the circle ‘Elephant, elephant, elephant’; ‘Bee, bee, bee’ etc. When the game begins someone stands in the middle of the circle. They must say someone else’s animal name three times very quickly. The person who’s animal name gets called out must say their animal name once – but they must try and say it before the person in the middle has finished saying the name three times. E.g. ‘Elephant, elephant, ele...’ ‘Elephant!’ ‘...phant’. If they manage this the person stays in the middle. If they do not then they must take their place in the centre.

Walking to Running
Everyone starts off walking very slowly around the room. They must not bump into anyone else and must not walk in a circle, they can move anywhere. As the facilitator you then encourage them to speed up their walk until they are briskly bustling all over the room. You increase their speed until they are all running around the room. If anyone bumps into anyone else they are out and must sit by the wall. Opposites Game You continue with the Walking to Running game but this time everyone has to do the opposite of what you ask. When you shout ‘GO’ they must all stop, when you shout ‘SLOWER’ they get faster etc. Make it harder by adding more actions like claps, jumps, whoops etc.