

**Teamwork Teamplay cards-** These were the cards with the icebreaker questions (and other stuff) on them when you first came in.

New version of the cards <https://www.trainingwheelsgear.com/products/teamwork-teamplay-cards>  
Old version (ones we used) <http://realizingdreams.us/product/teamwork-and-familyplay/>

### **Ice Breakers**

**History:** I love Icebreakers mints. For a few years, I just kept tossing the empty containers in a bag, vowing to use them for something someday. Then, the day came! The name said it all!!!

**Target Group:** Any

**Size of Group:** 8 or more

**Props:** Bag containing many Icebreakers® containers, each containing one icebreaker question written on a piece of paper

#### **Introduction/Metaphor:**

I have a serious addiction: Icebreakers® candies...particularly the blue ones. For quite some time, I saved the empty containers, vowing to use them in my group work somehow. Then it hit me...use them for....Icebreakers!!!

#### **Action:**

Depending upon how many participants you have, divide the larger group into smaller groups of two to four. Have each group choose one container. Once each group has a container, have them open it and retrieve the paper inside. Each group should discuss the question written on the paper. You can use general icebreaker questions (i.e. If you could travel to any one country this year, which would it be) or more group-specific questions (Tell about the last time your parents/guardians made you mad). If you want, have each group share a bit about their discussion. Once they are done, have them choose a new container and discuss again. You can also shuffle groups by having one member leave each group to join another after one ice breaker question.

*Variation 1:* Don't partner up. If there are the right amount of participants (you can judge "right amount"), each one can take a container and read a question to the group. Either that person can answer it and the move on or everyone can have the opportunity to answer each question read. Don't let participants open their container until it's their turn (builds suspense!).

#### **Main FVC Connections:**

*Speak Your Truth*

*Hear the Truth*

#### **Debriefing Suggestions:**

As this activity is based on discussions, I generally don't debrief it.

### **Culture Shock**

Divide your larger group into three smaller groups. Give each group a topic to discuss. Have each group determine what information needs to be conveyed about that topic to each of the other two groups. Then, hand each group their "Method of Communication (see below)." Each group may only communicate according to the directions they are given. After several minutes, regather your group and debrief. Possible topics to debrief include how it felt to be communicating the way you were asked, how it felt to be communicated to in the way the other groups were communicating and how does this apply to the population you work with.

**You only like to communicate when you are standing directly in front of the person (or people) you are communicating with and within 3 feet of them.**

**You only like to communicate when you are standing 6 feet away from the person (or people) you are communicating with.**

**You only like to communicate when you are not facing the person (or people) you are communicating with.**

## **Comfort Zone**

### **History:**

**Target Group:** Middle school or older

**Size of Group:** Maximum of about 40

**Props:** Boundary markers, spots or ropes that can be used to create a circle

### **Introduction/Metaphor:**

We all have different “Comfort Zones.” I may be comfortable with something that you are not. This next activity helps us define our own comfort zones while helping us to understand the comfort zones of others. It also helps us identify our “Growth Zones” and “Panic Zones.” What might those mean?

### **The Action:**

Create an area with an inner circle (hula hoop sized or a bit larger) and an outer circle. Leave about three feet of space between the inner and outer circles. These circles may need to be bigger with very large groups.

Explain that the inner circle represents those things that participants are totally comfortable with. For example, *I am completely comfortable with speaking in public so I will stand in the center circle.* This is called the “Comfort Zone.” The area *between* the two circles represents the “Growth Zone.” The Growth Zone is where participants will stand when you call out situations in life that they are not totally comfortable with but might be willing to try. This is where most of our personal growth occurs; in the “Growth Zone.” We are uncomfortable in this zone, but not so much so that we are in the “Panic Zone,” which is *outside the outer circle* and represents those things or situations that would trigger a panic response. For me, skydiving is within the Panic Zone.

Create a list of situations that would create varying levels of anxiety. For example, holding a baby, petting a dog you don’t know or speaking in front of a group. Have group members move to the zone that best represents how they feel about what you say. Encourage participants to look around each time a situation is called out and notice where people are standing. This often sparks mid-action debriefs. I encourage you to create your list based upon the needs of your particular group. Start off with general statements such as those listed above. Based on the reactions from group members, make statements more meaningful (and likely more intense). You can also include the members by asking them if there is anything they would like to know about their peers. If so, call it out!!!

**Variation 1-** If you don’t have props with you, you can do this activity using the center of the room as your Comfort Zone and moving to the walls which are the most extreme point of the panic zone. Closer to the center is more comfort.

**Variation 2-** If you have a small space, create the Comfort Zones on a table and use have participants respond to questions by placing a personal icon on the spot on the table that represents their answer.

### **Main FVC Connections:**

*Safety*

*Speak Your Truth*

*Hear the Truth*

### **Debriefing Suggestions:**

I generally open discussion during this activity by pointing out observations after each statement or question. This allows members to examine where their comfort levels are in relation to their peers. Keep in mind that revealing fears can be an intimidating task for anyone!

*\*Emotional Awareness*

-What does it feel like to be in situations in which you are in the Panic Zone? Stretch Zone? Comfort Zone?

-Did you take a risk in this activity by disclosing how you feel about particular situations? How did it feel to do that? How did people respond?

*\*Behavioral Control*

-What behavior would we see if you were doing something in your Panic Zone? Growth Zone? Comfort Zone?

-What would life be like if you never tried anything outside your comfort zone?

-What is one activity in your life that began in the panic zone but has moved? How about one that began in the growth zone but moved to the comfort zone?

*\*Positive Relationships*

-Who in your life helps you when you are operating outside your comfort zone?

-How will you support each other in the Growth Zone or Panic Zone?

Locus of Control Variation is on my website, link to it below:

<http://www.outsidetheboxexperiential.com/#!/locus-of-control/c1t43>

## **Transformer Tag**

**History:** The original version of this activity is written up in Cowstails and Cobras (Rohnke, 1977, 1989). I originally learned the Heads, Butts and Guts version of this from Bart Crawford at Project Adventure.

**Target Group:** Upper elementary and older

**Size of Group:** 8 to 25

**Props:** Boundary markers

### **Introduction/Metaphor Suggestions:**

Transformer Tag is one of the most adaptable activities in this book. Through the metaphors and introduction, it can be molded to fit just about any type of group. The activity relies on the concepts of change and transformation. Use these themes to tailor your introduction.

### **The Action:**

Create an area large enough for your group to play a safe, fun game of tag but not so large that they will wear themselves out too quickly or be unable to tag the fastest members of the group. The instructions to the game will depend upon the type of group you are facilitating. For example, if you are working with a group whose members typically make poor decisions (adjudicated youth, anger management, alternative to suspension), you may want to begin by asking them whether they solve their problems using their “heads,” “butts” or “guts.” For each, there is a corresponding sign. If you solve problems with your “head,” simply place one hand on your head. If you solve problems with your “butts” (metaphorically speaking of course), put a hand on your butt. If you solve with your “guts,” a hand on the abdomen is called for. You can discuss what each of these means in terms of problem solving. Once everyone has decided which of the three they are, offer the instructions. Using their free hand, each group member will attempt to tag any group member with a sign different than their own. They must keep their other hand in the position they chose (head, butt or gut). Once someone is tagged, they are transformed to the symbol of the person who tagged them. The game continues until all members of the group are showing the same sign. If you were to use this for a leadership group, you might ask them if they are leaders who lead with their “head, heart or hammer” (fist) and create corresponding signs. Alter to fit your own group.

### **Main FVC Connections:**

*Be Here*

*Safety-* Make sure to manage safety with this fast paced tag game.

*Speak Your Truth-* Members are disclosing information about the way they handle conflict (or other situations). Be sure to acknowledge this.

### **Debriefing Suggestions:**

The debrief for this activity will depend upon the introduction you’ve chosen and the type of group you are working with. In the example above, which may be the most common and likely use of this activity, the focus could be on how folks currently solve their problems (or deal with their anger or other negative emotions) and how they would like to in the future. With any version, you can discuss the fact that others will try to change you. Also, as stated above, members are disclosing how they deal with a situation in their lives. Discuss the pros and cons of each coping strategy.

*\*Emotional Awareness*

-How did it feel when people were trying to change you? How did you react?

-Have people in your lives tried to change things about you? How has it worked? Were they justified in doing this?

*\*Behavioral Control*

-Which was the most common way that members solved problems, as evidenced by the largest contingent at the beginning of the game? How does that way work in real life?

-Which group won? Is that the group that began with the most? If not, why did that group have the most at the end?

-Are there times in life that your behavior is influenced by the actions of others? When?

-Did you want to “be changed” in this activity? Why not? Do we ever hold on to our ways of dealing with problems even when they don’t work for us?

*\*Positive Relationships*

-Are there times when you need to change things about yourself to maintain or improve a relationship? What is the best way someone can help you to change?

-Have you ever tried push someone else to change? How did you do it? What was the outcome?

## **Everybody's It**

**History:** The original version of this activity comes from Silver Bullets (Rohnke, 1984).

**Target Group:** Any

**Size of Group:** 8 to 25

**Props:** Boundary markers

### **Introduction/Metaphor Suggestions:**

"We each have our own, unique style and personality. Let's express our individuality by coming up with physical signs that represent *who* we are. Each one of us will have our own, personal, unique sign." Continue highlighting the uniqueness of individuals by pointing out the fact that in our society, people are often under pressure to assimilate, or fit in to different groups. Engage the group in a discussion of what groups or social standards they feel pressure to fit into. Ask them how they maintain their individuality under such pressure. Once everyone has chosen a sign, you can check in as to why they chose that particular sign.

### **The Action:**

Set up a boundary large enough for the group to run around but not so large as to exhaust them or allow the fastest members to never be tagged. Have members create a personal sign which will not interfere with running or tagging. After the members have created their personal signs, instruct them that they will all be "it." At the start, each participant displays their own personal sign. As group members are tagged, they are converted to the sign of the player that tagged them. They now must display that sign. This will continue until all members are displaying the same sign. If you choose to highlight the competitive aspect of this game, the person whose sign the group is showing in the end is declared the winner.

### **Main FVC Connections:**

*Be Here*

*Safety-* Physically, as with other fast paced tag games, emphasize safety. Emotionally, group members are disclosing something about themselves through their individual sign and, even metaphorically, it may be difficult to let go of their individuality when tagged!

*Speak Your Truth-* Through the creation of individual signs, participants are sharing a piece of themselves.

### **Debriefing Suggestions:**

This activity calls for self-reflection to create a fitting, personal sign. I often find that more emotionally disturbed kids have difficulties coming up with a sign. Sometimes asking others to offer a sign based on how they see that person is worthwhile. If you do this, emphasize and assess the group's level of commitment to emotional safety first.

On a deeper level, this activity explores the balance we all try to strike in maintaining our individuality while fitting in with other "groups" in our society. Allow this metaphorical connection to guide your debrief.

*\*Emotional Awareness*

-Did you feel confused during this game? How does this relate to feelings of confusion outside this group when others are trying to influence you?

-Why did you pick the sign you did?

-How did it feel to give up your sign and take on someone else's?

*\*Behavioral Control*

-What did you do to protect your sign? What do you do to preserve your identity in the world?

*\*Positive Relationships*

-Is it sometimes good to allow yourself to be influenced or changed by others? Who has been that person in your life and how?

-How have you been an agent of change for others in your life?

## **Rock Paper Scissors Olympic Trials**

History: I learned this activity as Entourage. I can not find it written up anywhere but I keep thinking I've seen it....hmm....

**Target Group:** Any

**Size of Group:** 12 to 45

**Props:** None

### **Introduction/Metaphor Suggestions:**

"Who thinks they are a top notch Rock, Paper Scissors player? Well, Rock, Paper, Scissors will be the newest Olympic sport in the 2015 spring Olympics and they have hired me as the coach! One of my jobs is recruiting. So, today, I am looking to find a champion Rock, Paper, Scissors player. To do this, we will have a RPS tournament!"

### **The Action:**

Begin by dividing your group into pairs. Make sure that everyone knows the rules for "Rock, Paper, Scissors." If you don't know the rules, here they are: Rock beats scissors, scissors beats paper and paper beats rock. These are displayed through physical symbols (see below): scissors is the peace sign (two fingers) turned sideways (to look like, well, you guessed it...scissors), rock is simply a fist and paper is a flat hand palm down. Competing players will say "rock, paper, scissors, shoot!" in unison, at which point, each will throw the symbol they've chosen resulting in either a tie or a winner/loser outcome. Tell your group that the loser of each first round will be so in awe of the person who beat them, that they will become their adoring fan and cheering section. They stand behind the winner cheer as the winner takes on another player. Whoever wins that round inherits their opponents cheering section as well as their defeated opponent to be added to their own cheering section. The cheering section gathers around their player and cheers them on in the next round of RPS. This process continues until there are only two players left with about half the group routing for one and half for the other. At this point, I often mediate a best of five series (first to win three rounds is champion). At the end, all hail the champ and newest member of the 2015 Olympic RPS team!

### **Main FVC Connections:**

*Be Here*

### **Debriefing Suggestions:**

While this activity can be a simple warm up with no processing, it does offer some interesting opportunities to create a more significant, meaningful experience. The "winner/loser" aspect is carried further in the expectation that group members support the person who just beat them! How hard is that to do? While I usually don't state it in the introduction, this activity is about being a good sport and supporting others; losing gracefully so to speak.

*\*Behavioral Control*

-Did anyone use a particular strategy while playing?

*\*Positive Relationships*

-How did it feel to have to cheer for someone who just defeated you? Was it easy or hard? If it was easy, are there times in your life when supporting an "opponent" would be needed and may be more difficult for you? Why?

-How did it feel to have so many people cheering you on?

-In this activity we are "fickle." Our allegiance shifts after each round. Have you had real life experiences where people kept shifting their allegiances?



## The Way I See It...\*

During this activity, the facilitator gives a single set of directions to all members. Even though everyone hears the same thing and attempts to follow the same directions, the results often look quite different in the end. This provides an excellent metaphor for how we all interpret our worlds differently.

**Target Group:** Any age group

**Size of Group:** Any size group

**Props:** One sheet of paper per participant

### **Objectives**

**Activity Goal:** Understand perspective and how we all interpret our worlds differently

### **Main FVC Connections:**

Speak Your Truth

Hear the Truth

**Keys to Success Connections:** Emotional awareness, behavioral control, building positive relationships

### **Facilitator Guidelines**

#### **Introduction/Metaphor**

“We don’t see the world *as it is* but rather, *as we are.*’ What does this quote mean? Let’s see how differently we interpret our world.”

#### **Action**

With your group seated, give one piece of paper to each participant.

Request that your group members do not look at each other or at what their peers are doing during the activity. If possible, arrange them so that they are not facing each other and cannot easily see each other’s papers.

Ask them to fold their papers in half. Sometimes, participants will question which way to fold their pieces of paper to which I respond “yes.”

Next tell them to tear off the upper right-hand corner of the paper. Again, you may hear requests for clarification. Resist answering!

For the next step, ask them to fold the paper in half again and tear off the upper right-hand corner of the paper.

Repeat these directions for a third time. [Ed. note: the previous instruction or all the steps? Can you clarify?]

Have group members unfold their papers and compare them with those of the other participants.

### **Debriefing**

#### **Questions for When the Focus Is on Emotional Awareness**

- Did you feel confused at all during this activity? How did you deal with that?
- How does it feel when someone else doesn’t seem to understand your point of view?
- Why do we interpret things differently than other people?

#### **Questions for When the Focus Is on Behavioral Control**

- How did you decide what I meant by “fold your paper in half?” Why did you decide that? Why did you not all do it the same way?
- Did you look at what others were doing (or were you tempted to) during this activity? If so, why?

### ***Questions for When the Focus Is on Positive Relationships***

- How does having different interpretations of our worlds play out in relationships with other people such as parents, friends, boyfriends or girlfriends?
- Is it ever beneficial that we all interpret our worlds differently? How can this contribute to developing relationships?

