

## Icebreaker: Fantastic Four

1. Break the group into groups of 4.
2. Each team must come up with four things that they all have in common. They may be as simple or as complex as they want (example: we all like Mexican food, we all watch American Idol, we all like to swim...)
3. When the group has completed their list, they are to write a short paragraph that introduces all members of the group (name and who they are with) and explains what they all have in common.
4. When they read the paragraph to the whole group, they must alternate saying each word in the paragraph (first person says, "Hello", second person says "our", third person says "names", fourth person says, "are") and repeat, through the whole paragraph.

Optional: Challenge them to be the group who can say their paragraph the quickest, while still keeping it loud and clear enough that we can all hear and understand it.

Virtual twist: Send participants into breakout rooms in their groups. Remind the participants that they will each need a copy of the paragraph to read out.

***[Shout-out for this activity goes to the City of Sacramento, Parks and Recreation]***

## Grouping activity: Hoot and Holler

Cards printed ahead of time with little pictures/names on them of different groups of animals (or in a pinch, count off by names)

Frogs

Monkeys

Bears

Dogs

Roosters

Sheep

Cats

Etc.

Everyone closes their eyes and starts making their sound. Advise them that keeping safe, and moving slow, is important!

Their job is to find each other by sound and link up, keep making noise, until they have all of their fellow creatures.

## Community builder: If you knew me you would know...

Group stands in a circle. Everyone decides something that maybe most people don't know about them yet because they don't know them very well (like how many siblings they have, or an issue they care a lot about)

Participants take turns saying, "If you knew me you would know..." and then filling it in with something about themselves. Work around the whole circle of people, sharing, "if you knew me would you know..." and filling in what they want to share about themselves.

Go around the circle a few times, as much as you have time for. When you're close to finishing, announce the last round before it starts.

Virtual twist: Assign participants a number so they know what order to go in while sharing.



## Icebreaker: I've Done That!

Goal: To give people a chance to introduce themselves and share an interesting factoid that makes them unique.

For groups of: 12-50

Directions:

1. Everyone will think of something that they have done that possibly no one else in the room has done. (If they are struggling, you can suggest things like: exotic locations, met famous people, or just unique life experiences—surgeries, accidents, opportunities, etc, that no one else will have had)
2. Everyone stands up.
3. One by one, each person introduces themselves and explains their unique thing (My name is Joe, from Sac High, and I have climbed the Great Wall of China).
4. If anyone else in the group has done this same thing, they will say, 'I've done that,' then the speaker may not sit down yet and has to wait until the turn has gone around the circle and comes back to them again.
5. If no one says, 'I've done that,' then the speaker may sit.
6. Continue all the way around the circle, and then continue on with anyone left standing until every last person is seated.
7. If someone is struggling, give them other 'easier' ideas: maybe they take a certain class that no one else does, they have eaten dinner with their parents, etc.

Virtual Twist: Assign an order by giving participants a number and reminding them to remember who goes before them. Have everyone raise their hand instead of standing.

## Energizer: Finger Palm

1. Ask the group to form a circle.
2. Everyone puts out their hands to their sides: one hand is palm up, the other is one finger pointing down.
3. Everyone in the group must do the same hand on the same side (like all right hands do the palm, and all lefts do the finger pointing down)
4. Then they place their pointing finger in the palm of the person next to them.
5. When you say go, their job is to try and grab the person's finger that's resting in their palm, but also not to have your own finger get grabbed.

Silly, fun. Play it a couple times.



## **Energizer: Count the fingers DUEL**

Fun and easy activity that youth and adults love. It is very simple but should definitely be modeled first as it can be confusing in explanation.

### **DIRECTIONS**

1. Participants are paired off (twos only), partners facing each other, with hands behind their backs.
2. When facilitator yells 'go', each participant sticks out any number of fingers (from 0-10)
3. Each person in the pair must try and be the first to count all of the fingers (theirs and their partners) and yell out the correct number of how many combined fingers there are now in front of them.
4. The first person to yell the correct number is the winner.

### **VARIATION #1: Lightning speed single elimination tournament**

Play the original version a couple times and then announce a tournament:

1. Everyone starts in pairs, BUT this time, if you lose, you sit down, if you win, you find a new partner and get ready for the facilitator to yell 'go'.

[Facilitator can step in if there is one odd person remaining after an elimination. Or there can be a group of three]

2. Continue in this format until you have one final pair—the Championship Bout. Build it up, get the crowd to cheer. You could even make it a best-of-three series if you like.

### **VARIATION #2: Do this with groups of 3 or 4, instead of pairs**

## **Energizer (and grouping activity): Groups of...**

Goal: To quickly warm up a room, energize, mix up a room into groups, get people comfortable with different people

Works with: Groups of 20 or more

1. Ask everyone to stand up
2. Explain that there will be no talking.
3. "I will call out a number, like this, 'Groups of...SIX'. When I do, you must quickly create a group of that many, no more, no less, but without talking.
4. When I call out a new number, you may need to split up, or you may want to stick with your group, but you don't have to stay loyal to your current partner or partners.
5. (You may need to try one as an example, to help explain the concept.)
6. Get them ready, then start. Alternate small numbers, big numbers, keep it high energy.
7. With very large groups, you can try outrageously large numbers like 17, or 23.
8. If you need to end with a certain size group, then end with that number.
9. If you are doing this as an energizer, then your last challenge to them will be to form one large group, with everyone connected.



## ICEBREAKER: “The Clap”

DURATION: 15-20 minutes

NUMBER: A group of 10-30 (or even 40 if they are patient and relatively cooperative).

### DIRECTIONS:

Direct group to form a circle.

### STAGE 1

Instruct the group that you will be sending a clap around the circle. It will pass left to right or right to left, each person sending it on to the person next to them.

Clearly model the guidelines as you explain them:

1. You must turn to the person you are sending it to.
2. You must make eye contact.
3. You must clap and point your hands towards them.

Start it and let the group take it once around the circle (or twice if they’re moving pretty slow). This is usually pretty simple and easy.

### STAGE 2

1. Once the clap has arrived back to you, say, ‘Now for the next round, when the clap comes to you, you can do one of two things, you can pass it on, OR, you can turn and send it back.’
2. Model this clearly. Have the person next to you send you the clap, and give it right back to them, with clear eye contact and pointing your hands at them.
3. Start the clap around again. Be sure and coach actively to keep up good form (“Make sure you’re making eye contact” or “Point your hands at them”). It will be even more important in Stage 3.

NOTE: The clap may get stuck at one part of the circle. If this happens and one side is constantly neglected, pause the activity and ask the neglected side how they are feeling. They’ll respond with frustration, etc. Remind the group that it still needs to get around eventually so everyone gets a chance.

4. Encourage the group to try and get faster and faster. Once they’re moving it around and back and forth pretty quickly, gaining confidence, and having fun with it, move on to Stage 3.

### STAGE 3

1. Once stage 2 has gotten going fast, take the clap when it comes to you and shoot it across the circle. Model very clearly: take a step forward, make eye contact, and point with your hands and arms at your (startled) target. Remind the group at this point how important eye contact and pointing is. More coaching and encouragement is required as they wrestle with this new task. People will make mistakes, get confused, etc.
2. If they really work at it, this can get going pretty fast. If they need incentive, show them a high-functioning example: Pause and ask for a few volunteers (4 or 5) to step into the middle and play it by themselves while the rest of the group observes. This small group will get cracking pretty quick. Ask them to step back and ask the whole group to see if they can go this quickly. Other suggestions:

--Have the group reshuffle if certain parts of the circle seem consistently slow or low energy.



--Ask them questions about what they need to do to make it go faster (readiness is important, following the clap with your eyes as it moves around, standing on the balls of your feet instead of leaning back)

3. Stop the activity whenever the group seems ready to quit, hands are tired, or they've had a good laugh about something.

### Possible Debrief

1. What was this experience like for you? What were you feeling at different times? What was the group's reaction to sending the clap across the circle?

2. What made this a challenging exercise? What is required of each member for the clap to move quickly?

3. What can we learn from this about working as a group? About paying attention? About focus? Why are eye contact and paying attention so critical?

4. What happens in a group discussion when everyone is really focused on these things?

## TEAM SCAVENGER HUNT

*Divide into groups of 5-8 people. Play either Game A or B.*

*A) GAME A: Tape a box in the center of the room. All groups form along outside of room, same distance from the box. One by one an item is called out and each group must find it among their participants and someone must race it into the center. First group (or first two) to get item into the center, gets a point. NOTE: Participants are not allowed to run to center until item is out of their pocket, wallet, etc.*

*B) GAME B: Give out whole list, yell 'Go'. The first group to gather all of the items wins. You must have a **separate item** for each thing on the list.*

*Virtual Twist: There are no teams in a virtual setting, it is every person for themselves. When the object is retrieved, they must "raise their hand" using the Zoom reactions. The first person to do so and present the object wins the points.*

A SHOELACE

SOMETHING ELECTRONIC

SOMETHING ROUND

SOMETHING WITH 'YDN'

ON IT

AN AIRPLANE

SOMETHING THAT MAKES

NOISE, making noise

SOMETHING WITH

ADVERTISING ON IT

A BUCKLE

A BOW

A PICTURE OF SOMEONE

FAMOUS

17 CENTS (exactly)

SOMETHING STICKY

A "HAIR ITEM"

A BAG

5 KEYS (exactly!)

SOMETHING WITH A HOLE

IN IT

A RECEIPT

A LIST

3 DIFFERENT BUSINESS CARDS

A MEMBERSHIP CARD

A PHOTO OF A CHILD

Picture of a pet

A CALENDAR

A PARKING PASS

AN ID BADGE

MATCHES/LIGHTER

Item of food not provided today by YDN

Something with a cartoon character on it (mickey mouse, power puff girls, Barney, etc



## **Icebreaker: FILL IN THE BLANK**

*After you share one with a partner, mark the circle next to it. You may only mark one that you share (not what your partner shares). Then find a new partner and share a different one and fill that circle in. Fill them all in and you're done!*

- ☐ My full name is \_\_\_\_\_, but most people call me...
- ☐ A nickname I have had in the past (for better or worse) is...
- ☐ When I need down time, I like to...
- ☐ A really bad movie/TV show I like to watch is...
- ☐ A good movie I've seen recently was...
- ☐ An interesting place I've been to is...
- ☐ Something that makes me laugh is...
- ☐ I'm really good at...
- ☐ I'm really bad at...
- ☐ Something that people do that drives me **mad** is...
- ☐ Some of my favorite foods are...
- ☐ The most I've paid for a pair of sunglasses is...
- ☐ Something a lot of people don't know about me is...
- ☐ Twenty years from now, I'd like to be...

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