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⑩ Learning to juggle

Learning something to make you think about your learning

Aims
- To experience learning
- To reflect on your learning
- To share and compare with others

Group
- Any

Needs
- Three juggling balls for each participant
- An instruction video on juggling with three balls (you can find them on Youtube.com)
- Computer equipment (computer, data projector and internet connection) to show the video
- Instruction sheet on how to juggle with three balls (you can find them on the internet)

Time
- 2 hrs

Step by step

The facilitator introduces participants to the aims of the exercise and explains that they will have to learn to juggle within a limited time frame. Each participant gets three balls and is invited to start learning to juggle. They have different options to help them learn:
- watch the instruction video
- read the instruction sheet
- go to a teacher who will instruct them
- find their own way of learning

They will have half an hour to learn how to juggle.

Debriefing

In small groups (four – six participants), look back at the experience:
- How did you start to learn? Did you make a plan or did you just start doing?
- Which of the different learning options did you choose and why?
- Are you satisfied with how far you got?
- What were the difficult moments?
- How did you try to overcome those moments?
- Did you ask for help from others?
- Did you look at the others? Did they have different strategies?

Debriefing

· Can you connect this experience to how you normally learn?
· How do you think you can further improve?
· What would be your next steps?

Adaption

· You should pay special attention to your target group so as not to exclude anyone because of the level of difficulty of the learning task. This difficulty or access level should be suitable for all the participants, taking into account different aspects such as language for the instructions, physical obstacles for juggling or dancing, comprehension level, etc.
· Here we took juggling as a learning challenge, but of course you could take other practical skills, such as a specific dance (e.g. waltz, tango), folding origami, knotting a tie, etc.
· A variation on this exercise could be to work with board or card games. You need six to ten (depending on the group size) of these games. Put them on separate tables and tell participants that they have 30 minutes to learn at least three new games. The same evaluation questions can be used afterwards.

Tips

There is a real chance that there will be people in your group who already know how to juggle. One option, then, might be to suggest they try a higher level of juggling (four balls or variations with three). You then have to be prepared to have instructions for that higher level. Another option could be to invite them to function as a teacher for the others.

You need someone in your team who can juggle (or dance or ...) to be the teacher.

Created by Paul Kloosterman, www.salto-youth.net/ find-a-tool/351.html