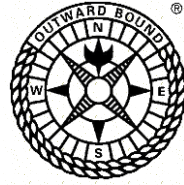


OUTWARD BOUND ROMANIA



Toolkit/ Activity collection

Experiential education including disabled participants

Ability Training



Funded by the



Erasmus+

Program of the European Commission

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„It's not our disabilities, it's our abilities that count." Chris Burke

Introduction

The "Ability" training was organized between 9-19 August 2016 in Romania with the financial support of the Erasmus Plus program.

*The origin of the project is the fact that **people with disabilities** are often subject of discrimination and are often excluded in many areas of the society.*

*The **experiential education** method can be adapted to different target groups, abilities, development goals and it is very effective in development of self-knowledge, self-confidence, and development of abilities.*

*The **goal of the toolkit** is to introduce the readers to the concept of experiential education and it's use with people with disabilities, main principles and models, couple of activities used during the training and in the follow-up local projects. The handbook can be used as a **helping tool for youth workers** and other interested parties in planning and implementation of future projects and activities including disabled participants.*

We're thankful to all the instructors, participants and partner organizations for the support and inspiration during the planning and implementation of the project.

Please use this toolkit responsibly and be aware of your knowledge and skills considering the context of experiential education and disabilities/ abilities. The authors of this handbook are not responsible of incorrect use. We do not hold any credit for the activities and methods which are gathered here.

Enjoy it responsibly!



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Organizers of the training

Outward Bound Romania is a non-profit organization specialized in outdoor activities (education and recreation) that was founded in 1993 as an independent member of the internationally recognized Outward Bound International. Since its inception, Outward Bound Romania has developed safe and quality programs, mostly focused on youth. The primary programs include personal development courses for high school students, courses for educators, youth leadership courses, and courses aimed at orphans, troubled, and economically disadvantaged youth. More than 30,000 young people have participated in our courses to date.

Outward Bound Worldwide

Outward Bound is the pioneer in outdoor personal development. Outward Bound operates in about 30 countries and although every national school differs, every one shares the Outward Bound philosophy and methods. You can see the list of all the schools and centers at the International Outward Bound website.

Mission statement of Outward Bound: to help people discover and develop their potential to care for themselves, others, and the world around them through challenging experiences in unfamiliar settings.

Partners

Georgian Youth for Europe - Georgia

Obcianske zdruzenie Barlicka - Slovakia

Office for Initiatives Promotion - Belarus

"Teljes Élet" Szociális Alapítvány - Hungary

Public Asociation Speranta Center – Republic of Moldova



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What is experiential education?

"Learning by doing with reflection".

Other types of learning theory:

Behavioral Theory:

- External conditioning applied to the person results in change in behavior, or learning
- "The learner is manipulable black box whose external behavior is to be changed"
- It is stimulus an response conditioning Torbert (1972)

Cognitive Theory:

The Black Box

- This theory focuses on how people absorb, process, and retain information.
- Emphasis on memorized information making connections to new material,

Experiential Learning Theory:

- "[Experiential Education theories] tend to be holistic in nature, incorporating cognition and behavior with conscious perceptions and reflections on experience" (Priest & Gass, 1997).

What I hear - I forget Behavior & Cognitive models

What I see – I remember Behavior & Cognitive models

What I do -I learn" Experiential Learning model

"I hear, I know. I see, I remember. I do, I understand."

–Confucius, China's most famous teacher, philosopher, and political theorist



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Assumptions in Experiential Learning:

- Based on the belief that people learn best through direct and purposeful interaction with their learning experiences. (Priest & Gass 1997)
- For example, the best way to learn about making a book shelf is to build one. Reading a book can help, but can't authenticate the experience.
- Learning experiences are realistic
- Learning experiences are physically active
- Learning experiences are meaningful
- Learners must accept responsibility for their own actions
- Learning comes through guided reflection on their experiences. Without reflection, the experience loses much of its value

Experiential education for disabled people

- Goal: integration, personal development, development of self confidence, development of abilities
- Methodology: theory models and activities of experiential education
- Focus - on the abilities of the participants
- Risk assessment before using different activities for certain type of disabilities
- Having helping hands, assistants considering the disability



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The Challenge by Choice Principle

(Rohnke, 1984)

“It is important to be able to say at the end of our activity today that you have challenged yourself in at least one way.” Rohnke

Challenge by choice strives to empower participants by pro-actively informing them that they, not you as the outdoor leader, control a major part of determining the degree of challenge, risk, and competence with which they will engage in the adventure experience. This policy is more than simply not forcing people to be involved. The purpose of advising participants in this way is not to lead them to withdraw from the experience, but to provide them with the opportunities to challenge themselves in the manner they wish, in the amount they would like, and with the type of support they want.

Participants may select levels of involvement, including, but not limited to, full or partial participation or observation in physical, social, and emotional events.

Since, however, non-participation makes learning impossible due to the absence of a common experience, you should encourage participants to engage, but at whatever levels they desire.

Schoel, Prouty, and Radcliff (1988) describe the challenge by choice concept as offering participants:

- a chance to try a potentially difficult or frightening challenge in an atmosphere of support and caring,
- the opportunity to ‘back off’ when performance pressures or self-doubt become too strong, knowing that an opportunity for a future attempt will always be available,
- a chance to try difficult tasks, recognizing that the attempt is more significant than performance results, and
- respect for individual ideas and choices

The challenge by choice concept also extends to participation in debriefings: participants have the right to pass at any point in a discussion.



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The Comfort Zone Model

Comfort Zones: Notes

This model looks at how we respond to unfamiliar situations.

Comfort Zone: where we are most comfortable, the familiar environment of our daily lives

Stretch Zone: a high support and high challenge environment. It may be uncomfortable, but not so much so as to be unsafe, emotionally, physically, mentally, or socially.

Learning about self, others, and interaction with the environment occurs here.

Panic Zone: The circumstances or situation causes stress and fear. No learning occurs here.

If an individual remains in his Comfort Zone, there is little chance to learn substantially from an experience.

The adventure experience takes participants out of their individual Comfort Zones.

Raising awareness when one approaches the panic zone is the first step towards stretching the Comfort Zone.



*Ideal zone for personal/
professional development*

Stretch zone increases or decreases depending upon many factors which include:

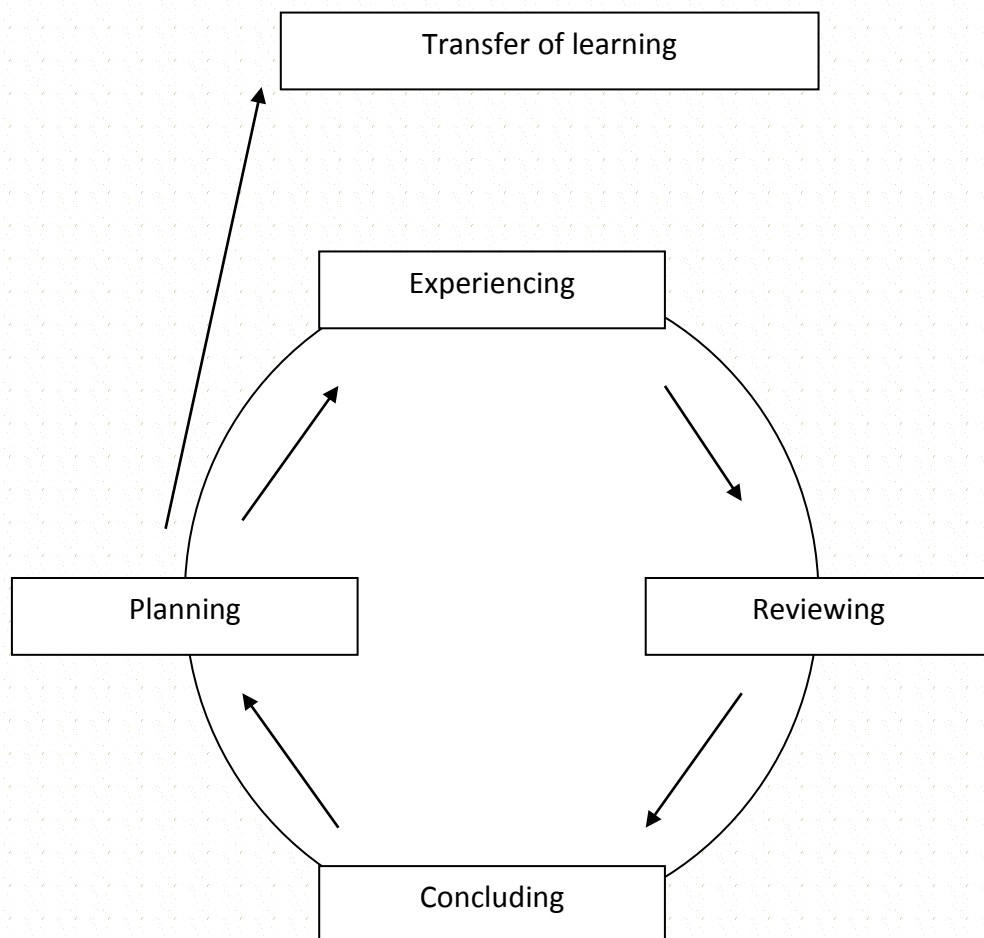
- Environment
- People involved
- Feelings on a particular day
- How people speak and interact with us
- Whether we trust those who are helping us
- Whether we trust the equipment we are using



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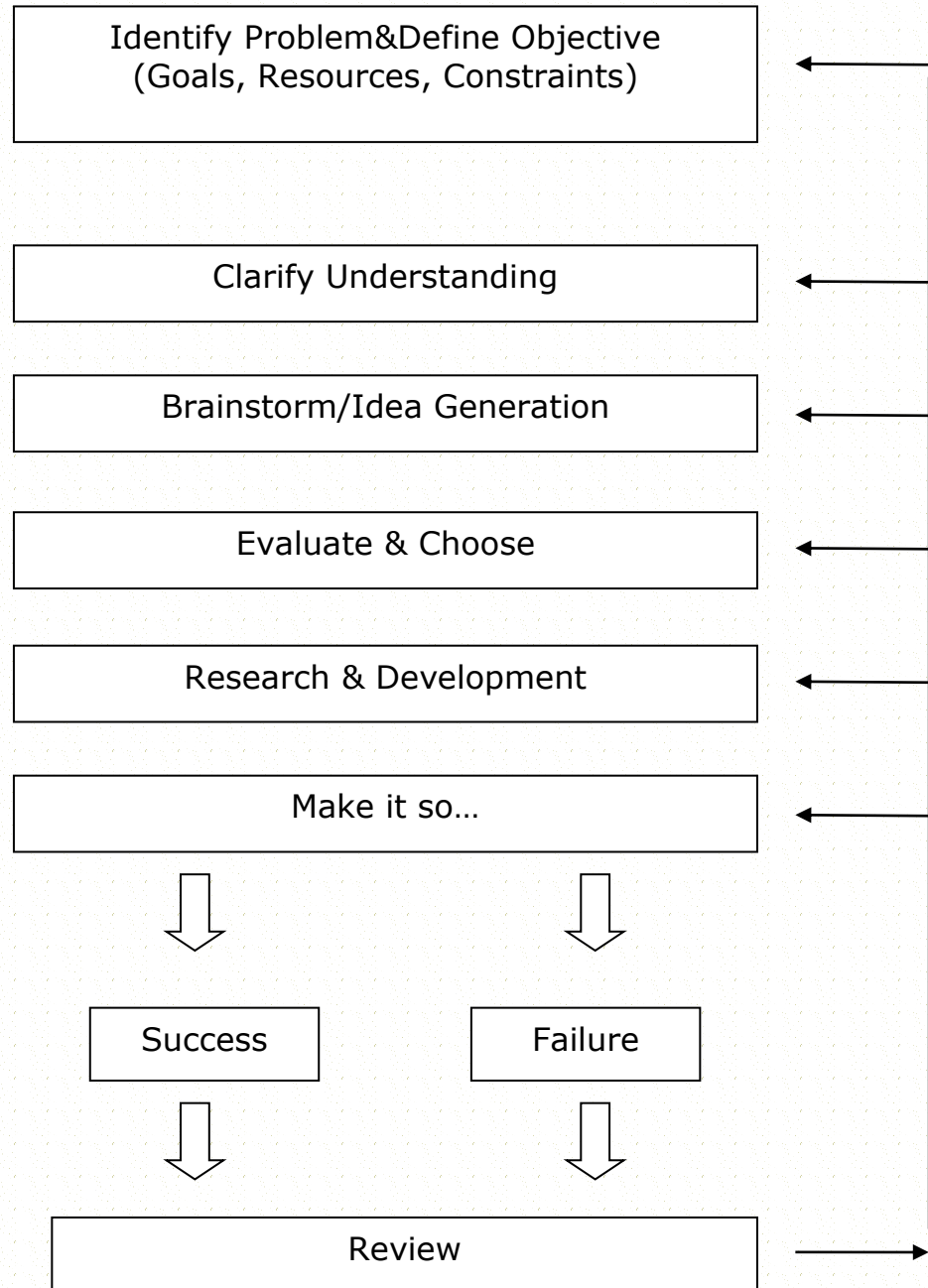
Kolb cycle (Experiential Learning Cycle)

Dewey (1938), Kolb (1984)

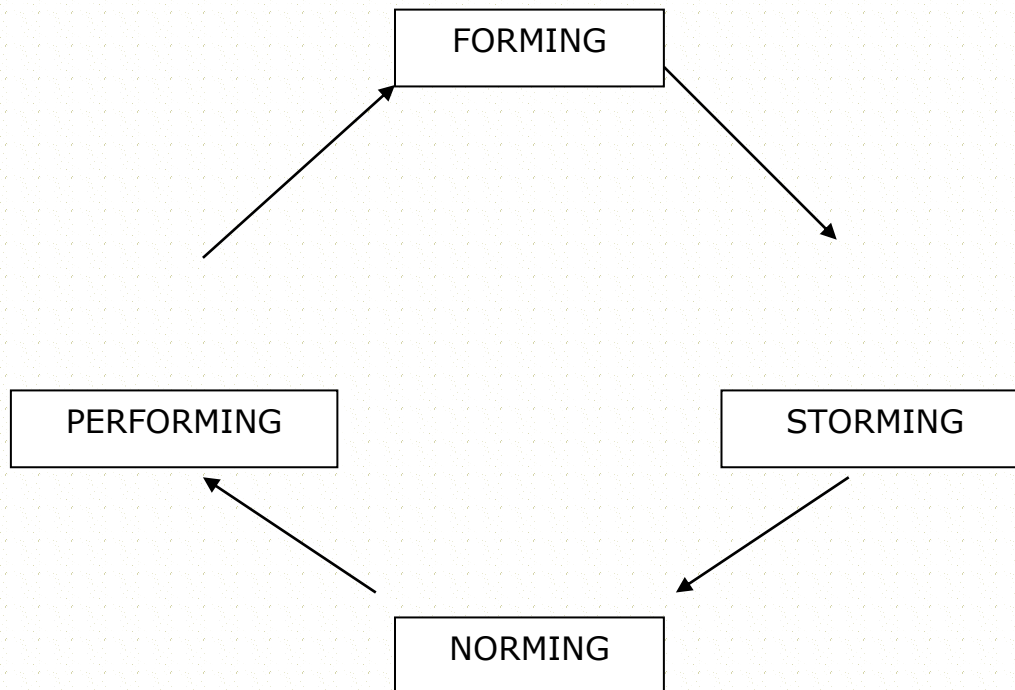


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Solution Focused problem solving



Group Dynamics (Tuckman&Jensen, 1977)



FORMING

- Members in a new group experience discomfort, concern, mixed feelings & doubts
- Typically want to get to know one another better
- Not yet committed to the group's goals



STORMING

- Interpersonal issues come out
- Start to question authority
- Interactions become disruptive, unhealthy, incompatible & ineffective



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NORMING

- The group creates new ground rules for accepted behaviours
- Atmosphere of cooperation forms
- Group's purpose is clear, and a strong team identity emerges
- Attitude of "we" vs "me" prevails



PERFORMING

- Group works very well together
- Productive, focused on accomplishment. Awareness of members' strengths & weaknesses



Guidelines to an effective debriefing

Basic Group Ground Rules adapted from Gass (1995)

- 1. Establish a Full Value Contract and balance this with Challenge by Choice.** This extends to debriefing. Clients have the right to select their own ways of getting involved and may choose to pass during either activities or discussion.
- 2. Single Speaking.** Is a sign of group respect. Having one person speak at a time ensures an opportunity for each person to be heard and for everyone to hear what is being said.
- 3. Non-violence is a must.** Violence is not acceptable.
- 4. Confidentiality.**
 - a) Clients need to understand whether or not information can be shared outside the group
 - b) Promising confidentiality can be difficult, as you may be legally required to report certain issues (ex. abuse)
- 5. Group Position.** Important for effective communication; needs to be in a configuration so that you can see everything; need to provide a setting that encourages discussion.
- 6. Time is critical.** Schedule sufficient time to reflect on the experience. Match the length of debriefing time to the maturity, needs, and abilities of the participants.
- 7. Right to Pass.** Challenge by choice, participants have the right to pass up activities or discussions.
- 8. Participant Responsibility.** They are responsible for their own actions during a program.
- 9. Commitment for success.** Put them in situations where they can learn from the experience.
- 10. Role Clarity.** Establishing your role to eliminate confusion among the group.
- 11. Ethics:** Know your stance on ethical issues and non-negotiable values.
- 12. Be Neutral.** Be an observer and do not take sides. Don't play favorites.
- 13. Construct Change Processes.** DO REVIEW PLAN
- 14. Deal with Resistance.** People don't resist change, they resist being changed.
- 15. Feedback Aids Learning.** Give appropriate feedback to participants from themselves, other participants, and from you.
- 16. Good Listening Brings Useful Questions.** Can't understand the group if you have not listened to them.

Planning and structuring a debriefing

Having aims for your debrief will help to **keep focused**.

By asking yourself the following questions:

1. What are the most important questions to which I want participants to respond?
2. At what level are these questions?
3. What questions should I use to lay the foundation for the important questions to be more easily answered?

Depth of experience: main caution on the depth of the psychological content we expose. If you are not trained to facilitate experiences therapeutically, you should be aiming to remain here and now. So in the focus of the debriefing are the facts of the activity, the affect/effect of them and the possible future consequences. Motto: „only pull apart what you can put back together”.

When to debrief? The evaluation is effective if it's done as soon as possible after the experience is completed.

Where to debrief: debrief in a proximity to the location of the experience. The closer you are, the more participants will be able to visualize and recall the events.

The three questions of the efficient debriefing

..or how to structure a debrief: What? So what? Now what??
(Borton, 1970)

What? The first stage is to look back over the events. This involves the recall of facts in an objective way. It is usually more effective to concentrate on the positive to begin with so that the group will become more comfortable talking about their feelings.

„recount the main events leading to the end of the project”

„what was the best/worst/more interesting/most involved moment?”

„what were the stages you went through in managing this event?”

So what? Once the facts are discussed the next stage is to find out what people think or feel about them. This stage is in the NOW. It involves ideas and opinions. People are able to build on the events described to grasp some meaning to them.

„what kind of communication helped/hindered?”

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*„how did your risk taking change throughout the session?"
"what could have increased this level of support you received?"*

Now what? This stage looks into the future. It is about change and development and is focused on action.

*„what will you do differently next time?"
„what will you do the same?"
„how will you tackle this next time?"*

Reviewing methods

Color: Choose a color that describes your experiences and explain why.

One Word: Use one word to describe your day and explain why you would choose that one word.

In the Hat: Write how you feel/ a problem/ a fear on a piece of paper. All the papers are put in a hat and are pulled out one by one. They can either be discussed by the entire group, or a single person can discuss what is written (not their own piece of paper). This brings different ideas to problems and can offer solutions.

Awards: Give each participant an award for their achievement - they can be humorous or serious or both.

Plays/Skits/Songs/Poems: Dramatic productions are good for younger groups, they can often re-act their experience more effectively than they can describe it verbally.

Draw: Draw a picture describing your day or an experience. Present it to the group.

List: The individual can list 2 or 3 things they can improve on to increase group efficiency. List 2 or 3 things the group can improve on.

Image of Nature: Find something from the environment that represents how they feel. This will get them more aware of the natural environment and how they view it.



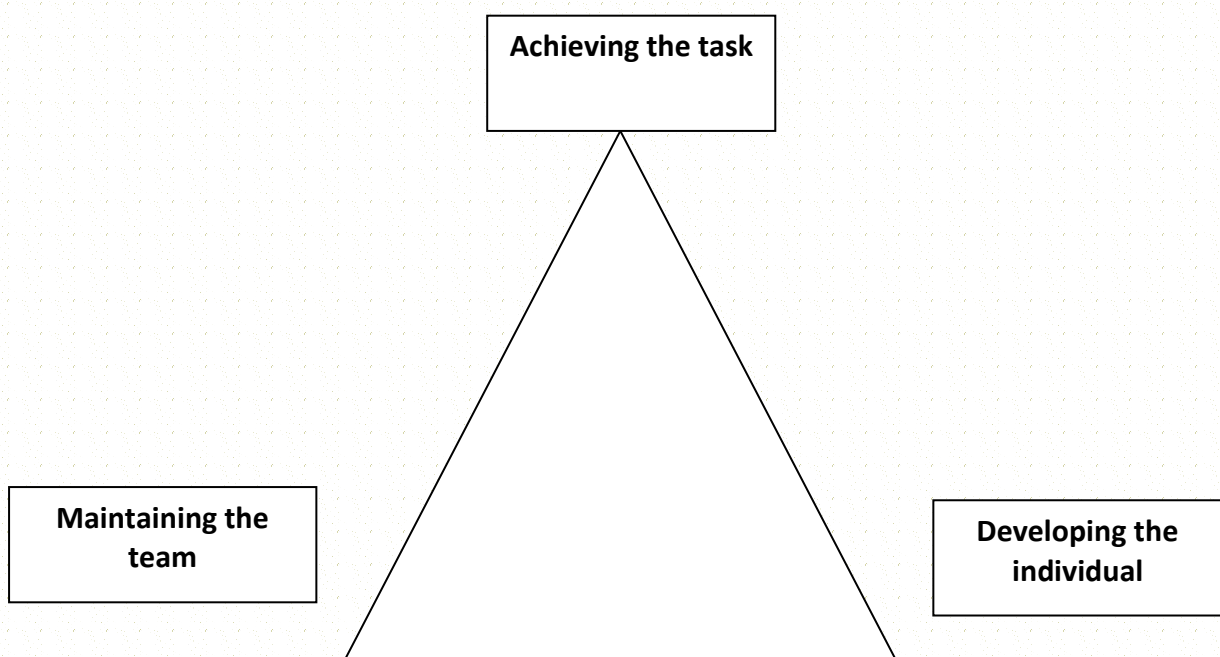
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John Adair's Leadership model

John Adair, 1988

A leader has three main interrelated areas in which to work:

The task to be done
The individuals to work through
The team



To achieve the task, the leader must be aware that the team needs to work together in harmony and with a sense of team spirit, and that the individual in the team has personal needs which must also be met.

He or she must therefore develop the individual and maintain the team.

A breakdown in one area will affect the others. It will hamper progress and prevent the effective accomplishment of the task.

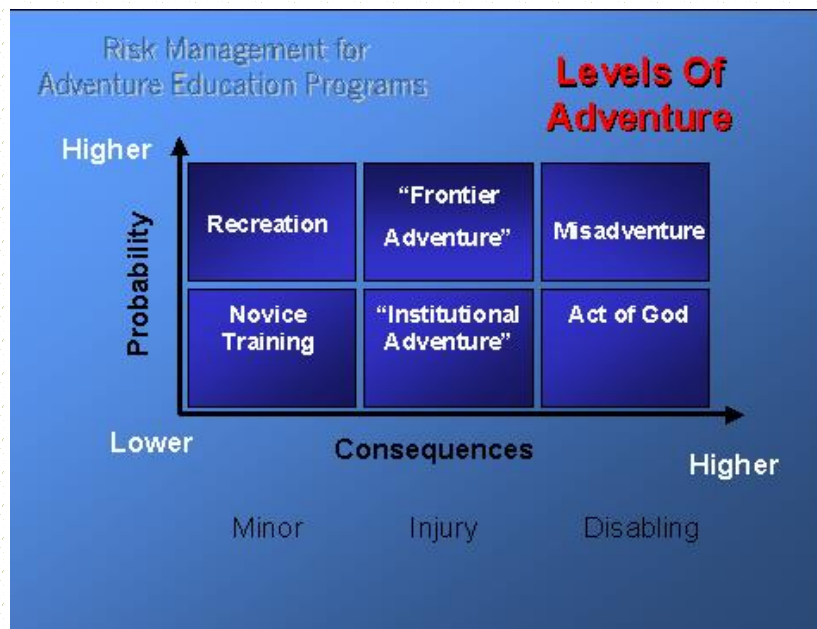
Risk Assessment

Tools for Managing Risk

Level of Risk

Depending on the goals of the program different levels of risk may be acceptable. For example taking children on an introductory course would have a different risk tolerance than a program where instructors were being trained to manage mountain ascents in the Himalayas.

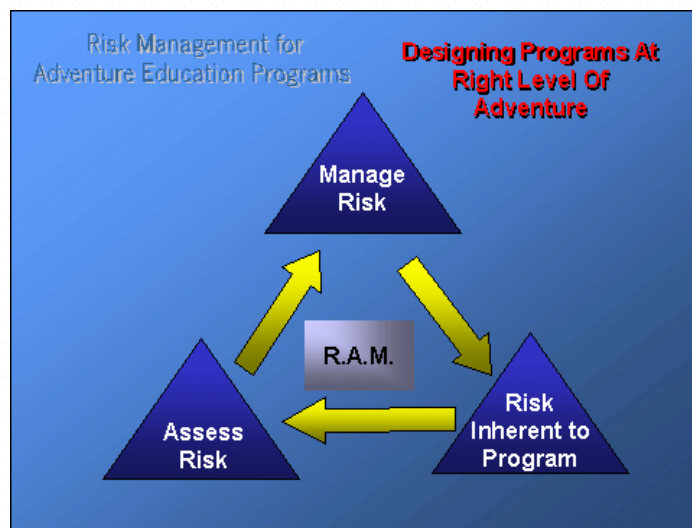
There is always some inherent risk in any activity and one can never say the Outward Bound or any other activity in life is absolutely safe. This chart help assess what level of risk is acceptable for given the goals of the program.



Risk Assessment Cycle

At whatever stage one starts thinking about how to do an activity there will be some Risks inherent to it. The following diagram shows the Risk Assessment and Management System of identifying risks and deciding how to manage them so that they are consistent with the program goals.

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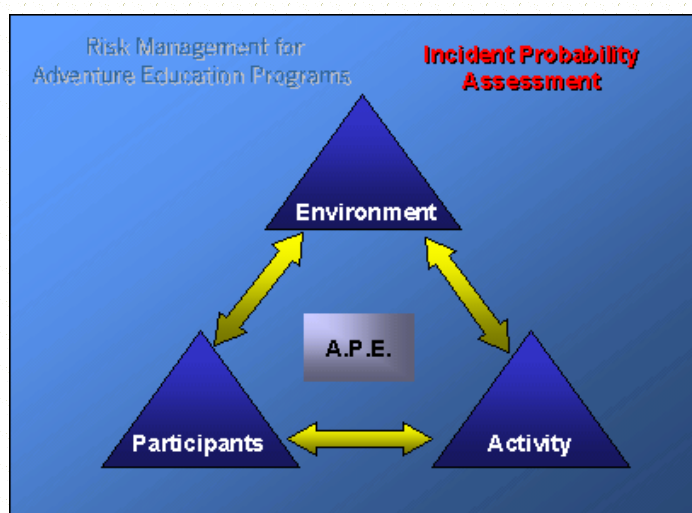
Assessment of Risk

To assess what might go wrong in any given activity requires some careful thought but also considerable experience of the kinds of hazards that arise in adventure activities. Reading reports of past incidents and instructor manuals can help develop this experience. To make this analysis of what might go wrong more systematic one can think of the three sources of risk:

Activity - the things that typically might go wrong

Participants - their unique skill and knowledge level

Environment - the weather or surface conditions, equipment etc.



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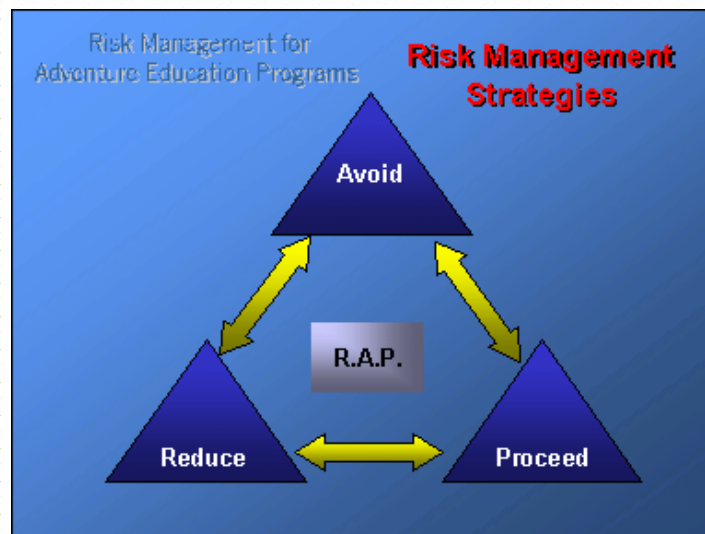
Management of Risk

If the consequences of the risks identified above are unacceptable for the goals of the program then other Management of Risk strategies are devised. This may either be to:

Reduce the risk by additional precautions

Avoid the risk entirely

Proceed because the risk seems acceptable



Summary

This Risk Assessment and Management System is remarkably simple, which makes it more likely it will be remembered by staff and used when needed. However the complex and interactive nature of hazard that can arise require much training in being able to anticipate all the issues that might arise. Whatever these hazards are they will fit within this simple theoretical framework.

Risk assessment of an activity

Name of the activity:.....

Sources of risks (Hazards)	Probability (1- low, 2 - medium,3 - high)	How to avoid it
Participants - their unique skill and knowledge level
Activity - the things that typically might go wrong
Environment – the weather or surface conditions, equipment etc.		

Sources (books, web pages)

English:

1. David J. Exeter: Learning in the Outdoors, The Outward Bound Trust UK.
2. Simon Priest, Michael A.Gass: Effective Leadership in Adventure Programming. Human Kinetics, 1997. <http://www.humankinetics.com>
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4. Niko Shad, Werner Michl: Outdoor-Training. Luchterhand, 2002.
5. Hubert Kölsch, Franz-Josef Wagner: Erlebnispädagogik in Aktion. Luchterhand, 1998.
6. Bernd Heckmair: Konstruktiv lernen. Beltz Verlag, 2000.
7. Rüdiger Gilsdorf, Günter Kistner: Kooperative Abenteuerspiel. Kallmeyersche, 1995.

Web pages:

<http://wilderdom.com/experiential/>
with links to: Wilderdom Outdoor Education
James Neill homepage

www.agelesslearner.com/intros/experiential.html

www.aee.org: Association for Experiential Education

Collection of activities

Six Thinking Hats

Aim of the activity: technical learning, communication and stimulation of creativity

Target group of the activity: over 10

Activity description, instructions:

There are six metaphorical hats (we use M&M s candies) and each defines a certain type of thinking. You can put on or take off one of these hats to indicate the type of thinking you are using. This putting on and taking off is essential, because it allows you to switch from one type of thinking to another. When done in a group, everybody should wear the same hat at the same time. The principle behind the 'Six Thinking Hats' is parallel thinking which ensures that all the people in a meeting are focused on and thinking about the same subject at the same time. In this system, thinking is divided into six categories with each category identified with its own coloured metaphorical 'thinking hat'.

- **The white color** calls for information known or needed – gathering just the facts. The white hat covers facts, figures, data and information. Too often facts and figures are embedded in an argument or belief. Wearing your white hat allows you to present information in a neutral and objective way. Questions you might ask while wearing your white hat include:
 - What information do we know about the right to *employment of persons with disabilities* ?
 - What information is missing?
 - What information would we like to have?
 - How are we going to get the information?

- **The yellow hat** - Calls for optimism, positive aspects. The yellow hat is for optimism and the logical positive view of things. Wearing the yellow hat allows you to look for benefits, feasibility and how something can be done. Questions you might ask while wearing the yellow hat include:
 - What are the benefits of this option?
 - Why is this proposal preferable?
 - What are the positive assets of this design?

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- How can we make this work?
- **The black hat** - Judgment, caution and evaluation. Wearing the black hat allows you to consider your proposals critically and logically. The black hat is used to reflect on why a suggestion does not fit the facts, the available experience, or the system in use. Wearing your black hat you might consider the following:
 - Costs. (This proposal would be too expensive.)
 - Regulations. (I don't think that the regulations would allow ...)
 - Design. (This design might look nice, but it is not practical.)
 - Materials. (This material would mean high maintenance.)
 - Safety issues. (What about handrails?)
- **The red hat** - The red hat covers intuition, feelings, hunches and emotions. Usually, feelings and intuition can only be introduced into a discussion if they are supported by logic. Often, the feeling is genuine but the logic is spurious. Wearing the red hat allows you to put forward your feelings and intuitions without the need for justification, explanation or apology. Putting on the red hat, you express what you feel about the project. Examples:
 - My gut-feeling is that this will not work.
 - I don't like the way this is being done.
 - This proposal is terrible.
 - My intuition tells me that prices will fall soon.
- **The green hat** - The green hat is specifically concerned with creating new ideas and new ways of looking at things:

The green hat makes time and space available to focus on creative thinking. Even if no creative ideas are forthcoming, the green hat asks for the creative effort. Often green hat thinking is difficult because it goes against our habits of recognition, judgment and criticism. Typical questions include:

- Are there any other ideas here?
 - Are there any additional alternatives?
 - Could we do this in a different way?
 - Could there be another explanation?
- **The blue hat** (is the moderator, in our case, one of the trainers)- Controlling the sequence of thinking The blue hat is the overview or process control. It is for organizing and controlling the thinking process so that it becomes more productive. The blue hat is for thinking about thinking. Wearing your blue hat,

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you might:

- Look not at the subject itself but at the 'thinking' about the subject.
- Set the agenda for thinking
- Suggest the next step in the thinking, " I suggest we try some green hat thinking to get some new ideas"
- Ask for a summary, conclusion, or decision, "Could we have a summary of your views?"

For effective communication, it is necessary that all participants wear a hat of the same color at the same time. The facts can not be argued with emotional arguments, creativity should not be killed by pessimism, fewer advantages must not bury caution. "What hat wearing now?" Would be good to ask the presiding someone's scratchy group. "Yes it down and be in consonance with us all!"

The rule applies with one exception: blue hat is the boss who must always maintain control of the meeting and to direct change hats.

Equipment for the activity: chairs, M&M candies.

Safety: the game is safe as it requires no movement, is just as important to keep the group under control when discussions turn into arguments aggressive

I am the bunny

Aim of the activity: evaluating the activity in terms of participants' personal feelings

Target group of the activity: best for children

Activity description

Instructions: The participants were asked to imagine how they keep on hand a rabbit, and the rabbit representing them today.

The task was for the participants to say how the rabbit felt during the activity.

Equipment for the activity: nothing

Safety: none

Eiffel Tower

Aim of the activity: team building and cooperation

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Target group of the activity: children

Activity description, instructions: The whole activity can be based on a virtual trip around the world. Such a scenario was also visiting the Eifel Tower, the condition of the game was that participants divided into two groups to build a tower. As the participants were an early age, we tend to avoid introducing additional rules. The main task was to build them for 30 minutes, a tower taller and how resistant from 5 flipchart paper and 4 lanes of tape.

Equipment for the activity: flipchart paper, scotch tape

Safety: -

Parachute

Aim of the activity: team building, cooperation, development of attention and orientation in space.

Target group of the activity: children

Activity description, instructions: Players must take parachute with both hands. They must keep a ball on a parachute, because the parachute has a hole in the middle that ball not to fall down. The ball must not fall down and always be on the move.

Equipment for the activity: Parachute and ball

Safety: We made sure that between young children is an adult or an older child.

Injured bunny

Aim of the activity: energize the injured bunny- to stimulate creativity and imagination for the further activities and to have fun

Target group of the activity: youth

Activity description, instructions: In a circle we imagine I have an injured bunny in hands, I do some action to bunny (such as to pet or kiss or touch his imaginary ears, touch his imaginary paw, etc) and pass to the person that is on my right side, the same procedure will do the person near me until everyone is done and touch the bunny and the last person pass me the bunny.

The bunny is no more injured we cured the bunny.

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Equipment for the activity: -

Safety: I customize the energizer normally the bunny from energizer was not injured so with this detail people were more careful and used slow or were more carefully.

Beautiful Box

The aim of the activity: to empower and make more confident the youth with disability by creating beautiful boxes from old or used boxes

Target group of the activity: children, youth

Activity description, instructions:

The activity consists in making up normal or dirty boxes, shoes boxes in nice colorful boxes. Everyone could chose to work in pairs or 3-4 people or more

The instructions were that could do anything with the box even to cut it and glue it again, people were free to choose whatever they want to do with the box, just use creativity and make it beautiful so that in the future can use them for presents or in order to keep different objects inside it.

Ask for help in case it is need.

Watch your fingers and others fingers - don t cut fingers only papers or plastic .
Have fun and be creative.

Equipment for the activity: Shoe boxes, different colorful papers, tape, glue, scissors

Safety: there was a rule- don t cut fingers only papers or plastic

Basketball game

Aim of the activity: Coordination improvement (playing the ball and pushing the wheelchair in the same time), teamwork/teambuilding, socialization, concentration and focus development, active movement, having fun and motivation for keep going on even when something doesn't work from the first shot.

Target group of the activity: adults with wheelchair

Activity description, instructions: Playing a basketball game, a bit unusual, being split in two teams, each one having a ball, and on the road till the basket they will

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encounter some obstacle they have to pass while pushing the wheelchair and dribbling the ball, in the end finishing with throwing the ball through the basket. Each participant had to pass all the obstacles going back to the team and the next one starts the race, doing the same thing, till each member of the team reaches to do the activity and gets back to the team. The team that has more baskets scored, wins.

Equipment for the activity: milestones, Basket ball.

Safety: Turning the wheelchair in small steps or taking the ball in lap when turning avoiding to fall or trip into the ball and not racing on the way back when turning. As well avoiding to lean too much on the backrest of the wheelchair when throwing the ball to the basket so they would not fall, for that they had to move a bit closer to the basket and throw the ball with both hands from the chest.

Bocce

Aim of the activity: Supporting each other in the same team, focus and patience improvement, communication development, balance.

Target group of the activity (age, disability etc.): adults with wheelchair

Activity description, instructions: The teams have 2 members each, and each member has 2 balls of the same color. Both teams are lined up at the same level, and at 5 m distance ahead there is a small ball positioned in the middle. The field is limited with a plastic pipe so the balls can't go very far when thrown. Each member of the team, at a time, has to throw the 2 balls one by one, slowly on the floor and let them roll till it reaches a close place near the small ball in the middle. The aim is that the ball of the participant has to be as close as possible to the small ball in the middle. Which team has one ball the closest, wins. Each team member has to encourage and prepare a strategy of ball throwing so they reach the small ball.

Equipment for the activity: 3 plastic pipes, 1 small ball, 8 colored balls (having different colors by pair)

Safety: For those who have no good balance, to lean on one side so they can slowly throw the ball on the ground, not to lean too much forward and if so, to lean their chest on the legs.

Autumn "Scavenger Hunt"

Aim of the activity: to communicate, complete the task by recognizing the objects on the picture, then sort them following the right category, to work as a group.

Target group of the activity: youth with disabilities

Activity description, instructions

"Find and bring back the..... (object seen on the picture)"

"Give me the..... (heavy, big, small..) one"

Equipment for the activity: BoX, fall objects, pictures, 4 small containers, whistle, couterclock, chocolate and chips as reward.

Safety: they have required permanent assistance and supervision during the game.

The Bunny Game

Aim of the activity: socialization, communication, team-work, having fun

Target group of the activity: youth

Activity description, instructions "Catch the bunny and do something nice to it, like this!" Singing for the bunny and than doing the same for the student next to them.

Equipment for the activity: scarfs, bunny ears (for the singing and role-playing part)

Safety: not to hurt themselves and others.

Map the School Ground

Aim of the activity: know the surroundings of the school, develop orientation skills

Target group of the activity (age, disability etc.): children with disabilities

Activity description, instructions

The participants divided into groups.

You will have to complete all the tasks around the school. Be attentive, listen to your fairy and play fair:

1. Put the building of the school on the map!

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2. Establish where does the sun rise from and where does it set. Put it on the map!
Draw it!
3. Find the tree whose leaves you have in your hand! Glue them on the map on the place where the trees are!
4. Find a magical place on the map and make a sign!
5. Find 3-5 things your all team members have in common (you all like something, or you do something, etc)
6. Find out what is in front of the school! (a symbol of the school) What is behind the school? Put them on the map!
7. What neighbors does the school have?

Equipment for the activity

- small boxes (can be small juice boxes)
- leaves from the trees around the school (5-6 kinds of leaves from different sides of the school area)
- toothpicks for gluing each leaf on it so it can be put up as a tree (optional)
- glue/ tape
- drawing pencils
- cardboard
- objects for the monuments around the school
- other objects for what they find around the school

Safety

- at least one adult with each group
- established ground rules from beginning (to prevent unacceptable behavior)
- no sharp objects being uses to cut or get injured
- exploring a safe area (ex. between the boundaries of the school ground), mainly a flat area on asphalt

Find the Leaf! Find the tree!

Aim of the activity: observe the trees around us, the seasonal changes, the particularities of each leaf, develop observation skills

Target group of the activity: children with disabilities

Activity description, instructions

Preparations:

1. The facilitator collects about 25-30 leaves of each kind from trees around the city. Preferably autumn.

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2. Keep leaves between books, newspapers for 2-3 days.
3. When they are ready, collect them together in paper bags. Put aside an example of each type of leaf.

Steps:

First stage – Collect leaves

1. Announce the kids that they will collect leaves. The trees have lost their leaves and the kids will have to identify them.
2. Put all the leaves you have mixed on a newspaper/ blanket in the middle of the kids.
3. Divide kids in 2-3 teams. Each team will have to find in the pile of leaves the leaf the facilitator will show at a certain time. Help each kid find a leaf of that kind. Repeat it till all kinds of leaves were found.
4. The groups will have to work together to make posters of their leaves.
5. Let the posters dry.

Second stage - exploring:

6. Each group/ kid will take the poster they made and try to find the trees that have those leaves in the city.
They can choose where they go in the city.
7. They will have to make pictures of their group at the trees they find – bring a sister leaf as well.
8. Discussion.

!!!! If you have a botanical book with trees, look for each leaf to what tree it belongs to, or go to a botanical garden (if you have in the city) and find out what are the names of those tree.

Equipment for the activity

- 6-14 types of leaves from the trees in the area you intend to explore (the city, the botanical garden, a park, forest)– about 25-30 pieces of each type – at least 5 leaves over the number of participants
- glue
- paper/cardboard
- pencils/pens
- newspapers
- botanical book with trees from the area (if available) or print outs

Safety

- have at least one adult in each group of 3-4 kids
- explore an area which is safe (not populated of a lot of people and a lot of cars)
- makes sure at least one of the kids in the groups knows to read if you want to give them the task to discover how are the trees called.

Find your pair

Aim of the activity:

To improve creativity, cooperation, monitoring capabilities, to give attention to little details.

Target group of the activity: any age with disabilities

Activity description:

Close their eyes, then I put a sign on their forehead. Without talking to each other they had to find their partner who had the same sign. One person had to make a movement the other one had to imitate the same thing like there was a mirror between them.

Equipment for the activity: -

Safety:

Give attention not to touch each other or hurt each other physically, just act like if there were a mirror between the two person.

Drawing together

Aim of the activity:

Working in a group, team-building, creativity, cooperation, imagination

Target group of the activity: any age with disabilities

Activity description:

The groups decided who's gonna draw. That person got blindfolded and pulled out one object from the facilitators bag, so no one could see it, then drew that thing down on the paper. The participants needed to guess what could it be. If they're guess was wrong, the other team could guess, too. If they were right they got the point.

Instructions

Find one member in each group who would like to draw. That person is going to be blindfolded while choosing one object from my bag, then draw it down to the members in the group. If the group guesses which they get the point, if they don't, the other group can guess, too.

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Equipment for the activity

Paper, pencil, bag, objects in the bag (for example: paper butterfly, toy, candle, etc.)

Safety

Not everyone likes to be blindfolded, so it's not necessary it is enough just to close their eyes. Make sure not to put dangerous objects in the bag, or things they could wound their hands, for example scissors.

Zigzag Circle

Aim of the activity: trust development

Target group of the activity (age, disability etc.): all ages

Activity description, instructions:

Everyone stands in a circle and tightly holds hands. Every second person "falls" backwards while the other players "fall" forwards. Then, players switch directions. The feet remain in a standing position and don't move. Goal: Trust that the decision works.

Skiing

Aim of the activity: trust development

Target group of the activity (age, disability etc.): all ages

Activity description, instructions:

Two long wood boards with loops with enough room for 3 to 4 people are used as skis. The skiers must work together to ski a distance of 5 to 15 meters and then ski back to the starting point. Use a stop watch to time each team. Purpose: Players must plan and move together to reach the goal.

Equipment for the activity: two long wood boards with loops

Safety: it is good to do it on a straight floor so the stability is better than on grass. Also, a safeword is good if somebody from participants feels it is necessary to stop.

The ping-pong ball shouldn't fall

There was a big wooden plate, and on that plate there was a ping-pong ball. There was only one team. The goal was to hold the plate together and bring the wooden plate to the destination without the Ping-Pong table falling off.

Equipment for the activity

Wooden plate, Ping-Pong ball

Safety

I cleaned their path. I made sure that nothing was in their way.

Tale of industrialists

Aim of the activity:

The aim was to use their fantasy. Improve their imagination skills. It was also a goal to improve their memory.

Target group of the activity: any age

Activity description, instructions:

Sitting around a table and make up a tale. One person starts off and each member has 3 minutes to extend the story. Then the next person comes. The activity can take up about 30 minutes.

Equipment for the activity

Chairs

Safety

Safety was not relevant in this activity

Traffic lights

Aim of the activity: development of attentation, warm-up

Target group of the activity: children

Activity description, instructions:

1. On the word 'red', the children must stand very still.
2. On the word 'amber', they can walk around.
3. On the word 'green', they should run. If any of the participants do the wrong thing at the wrong time, they are out of the game and are taking a judge role for the rest of the game.

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4. The leader of this game can make things confusing by shouting 'Speed camera', slow motion, 'roundabout', sit and spin, etc.

Shopping bag

Aim of the activity: memory game

Target group of the activity: any age

Activity description, instructions:

1. Put the students in groups of 8-10 people.
2. The first person in the group starts by saying the following sentence: "Yesterday I went to the market and I bought some fish."
3. The next person in the group repeats the first sentences and adds another thing that they bought. eg, "Yesterday I went to the market and I bought some fish and some bananas."
4. Each person in turn repeats the sentence and adds another item.

Name game

Aim of the activity: memorising names

Target group of the activity: any age

Activity description, instructions:

Everyone is standing in the circle. First person says his/her name, after that second person has to repeat first name and adds his/her own name, and it continues till the last person.

Sinking ship

Aim of the activity: warm-up, dividing the big group in small groups

Target group of the activity: any age

Activity description, instructions:

Ship is sinking, and will survive that boat, where will be certain number of people.

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Participants has to make groups of said numbers if there will be more or less in the group, they loose. The groups formed can stay as they were formed for the next activity.

Poisoned river

Aim of the activity: team building

Target group of the activity: any age

Activity description, instructions:

Groups have to pass playground, but they can't stand on the ground, they use plates as steps. The number of plates should be one less then teh number of participants in the group. Also there is a chance to lose plates (steps) and the game becomes harder and harder. If someone will stand on the ground instead of plates, the whole team has to start passing from the beginning. Who passes the playground first, will win.

Electric wall

Aim of the activity: team building

Target group of the activity: any age

Activity description, instructions:

There are tied ropes between the trees on the high of the hips. One rope for each team. All the members have to pass over this rope without touching. If somebody will touches, whole team starts from beginning.

Water balloon game

Aim of the activity: team building

Target group of the activity: any age

Activity description, instructions:

Everybody has to find a partner. They stand face to face. One of them has a water balloon. One throws to his/her partner a balloon and partner has to catch it. Then they have to make one step back, to make distance longer between them. Then they throw again, if balloon breaks, the pair will lose.

Making lines of the participants according to the time of their travel and distance

Aim of the activity: getting to know each other

Target group of the activity: any age

Activity description, instructions:

The participants communicate with each other about the distance they were travelling from and after finding their place they will stand in a line. The order will be checked by the leader.

In other types of group the line can be done based on age or any other criteria which goes for this group.

Solo activity

Aim of the activity: reflection

Target group of the activity: any age (rather for adults, rather for people with physical disabilities).

Activity description, instructions:

After deeper activities, with more challenges, usually on the last day of a program there is a time frame given to the participants (2 hours, half a day) what they spend somewhere in a free space. Reflection questions about their experience are given and sheet of paper to write letter to themselves (optional) to send them later by post, or open any time later where they can think about more.

Descriptions based on the reports of participants about their local projects within the Ability project.