



NY WEST ODP

Problem Solving



Activity 1: TWO CIRCLES GAME

(if gym is not available to run this game, then replace it with “finding the path” in class room)

Create 2 - 15x15 Boxes on the floor
Split players in to 2 teams (more for 13/14's).

Select one person from each team to be a cat and one to be a mouse. Have all other players on each team link arms (each team in their own box). The mouse will stand outside of the circle. The opponent's team cat will come in to the box and will start on the side of the circle opposite the mouse. When the activity starts, the job of the cat is to chase the mouse while the circle of linked players moves around the box to help protect the mouse. The first cat to tag a mouse gets a point for their team. If, as the game is progressing, the mouse runs out of the box or the circle is broken, the point goes to the other team. If a cat goes out of the box, the cat must restart chasing on the opposite side of the box from the cat.

Version 2: The cat and mouse have a ball at their feet.

Version 3: Put a ball in the circle - the ball cannot stop moving or go out of the circle.

Activity 1B: FINDING THE PATH (*replacement Game for Two Circles*)

- Use tape to create a grid on floor. (a grid that is 10 blocks by 6 blocks is good for a group of 10-12 people. Each box should be (1ft by 1 ft so that a player can stand totally inside the grid) – **SEE BELOW**
- Draw the same grid on a piece of paper
- Create a path (on your paper) from one end of grid to the other, by marking boxes that are adjacent or diagonal to each other. The path cannot go backwards. **DO NOT DRAW PATH ON FLOOR.**
- keep the path out of site of players
- The task is to find their way along your path successfully

Instructions:

- 1) Divide group in to 2 teams
- 2) Instruct the group that they cannot communicate with each other verbally or nonverbally during the exercise. They must be silent and cannot write notes, make maps, or place any objects in the grid.
- 3) Tell them that the goal is for the group to figure out the path through the grid and for everyone in consecutive order to walk the path correctly.



NY WEST ODP Problem Solving



- 4) The first person steps in to the grid. When they step into a box that is on the correct path remain silent and let them continue. If they step in to a block that is not on the path, say “NO”. At this time, the player must step out of the grid and go to the end of the line.
- 5) The next person in line then steps in to the first box and tries the same way to determine the correct path.
- 6) If some players have made it through and one player steps in to a wrong grid even by mistake, everyone who has made it through has to go back to the beginning and go block by block.
- 7) The teams will travel through the path only 1 person at a time.
- 8) Each person individually on team must show knowledge of the complete path for team to succeed.

Example of Grid (path should not be visible to players):

Start					
	Block	Block	Block		
				Block	
		Block	Block		
		Block			
		Block			
			Block		
				Block	
			Block		
			Block		

--If you have more than 14 players make 2 grids and 2 different paths

Rationale:

These exercises help to teach players the importance of group problem solving. How do we accomplish a goal in unison? How do people take leadership positions both verbally and non-verbally? In previous weeks we have done exercises that dealt with group communication and processing in different settings. Hopefully they have learned lessons from previous exercises. Now evaluate: How did the group react when there was a setback? What did it feel like to go back to the beginning and have to start again? Did teams have weak links? How did they deal or direct them? Was their group dissension? Group leadership style? Individual leadership style?

Lessons from these games may be seen during soccer games in that the demand for problem solving from each player is essential. Similarly the understanding of each



NY WEST ODP Problem Solving



teammate's role on the team, as well as their own, is vital to team success. Players must understand their roles and accomplish their tasks in their roles, without trying to do "everything" on the field. Additionally, in order for the players to first understand these roles and tasks, communication must come from someone.

These problem solving exercises are designed to help players become more aware of the importance of communication (in all forms), aware of situations confronting them, able to make quick decisions within a team environment. They particularly relate to speed of play --- how fast a decision can be made by the individual player and their teammates on the field. If players are aware of what is around them, aware of the strengths and weaknesses of players on the field, and can communicate quickly in an understandable way to teammates, their team's speed of play and overall success will increase.

Further, players in these games must learn from each others successes and failures. Doing this will maximize the learning curve for each player and the entire team. These same lessons apply to the game on the field as well.



NY WEST ODP Problem Solving



Activity 2: SLIDE BY SLIDE

Block out a grid (see below) on the floor with tape. The grid should have 1 more square than there are players. Number the squares in the grid consecutively, but only up to the number of players.

Grid looks like this: (each box in grid should be approximately 1ft x 1ft)

8 players set up floor like this

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	

9/10/11 players set up floor like this

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
{10}	{11}	

12/13/14 players set up floor like this

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
10	11	12
{13}	{14}	

Instructions:

- Tell each player to stand in a box
- Give each player a piece of paper with a number (not the box number they are standing in).
- The group task is to rearrange themselves so that everyone is standing in the box corresponding with their number.

The rules for movement are

- Only 1 person can be in a box at a time
- A person can only move in to an empty space
- Only vertical or horizontal movements are allowed; (people cannot move diagonally, or more than one space at a time)
- The game ends when everyone is lined up in order.

Version 2: Have teams compete with selves to better their own time

Version 3: Have teams compete about other teams in a race to finish.