

Overcoming the 5 Dysfunctions of a TEAM using Adventure Play

Presenter: Mike Anderson
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Session Description: The true measure of a team is that it accomplishes what it sets out to achieve. Building an effective, cohesive team can be extremely hard to do because of the many personalities involved, varying interpretations of what success is and are people really doing what they are supposed to be doing. With determination and a plan it can be simple and uncomplicated. After a quick overview of the 5 Dysfunctions of a Team model, we will investigate how teams can overcome these dysfunctions utilizing common adventure play exercises. Be prepared for an interactive workshop and a willingness to share examples from your experience.

Who is this Mike Anderson guy anyway: Mike Anderson first walked on the adventure play scene about 13 years ago. During that time he has worked as a rock climbing guide, a ropes course builder, trainer and manager and assisted numerous programs across the country and internationally. All of this experience has allowed him to hone his skills and develop his own style and areas of interest among adventure professionals. Since then Mike has worked extensively in all areas related to adventure play, community building and team development. Mike holds an undergraduate degree in Recreation Administration and a Masters in Education. Mike had authored *The INTERACT Curriculum*, *Teambuilding Puzzles* and is working on a book project that blends conflict resolution, bully prevention and positive discipline (late 2007). Mike is also a contributor to numerous other texts on adventure play including the *Book on Raccoon Circles I and II*, *Playing With a Full Deck*, *The More the Merrier*, *A Teachable Moment* as well as two science based texts.

Some of Mike's specialty areas include insight building, games and initiatives training and conflict resolution programming. Mike has presented workshops on these topics and many others all across the USA, and internationally and has delivered pre-conference and session workshops at many of the adventure and challenge industry's largest conferences. A typical year has Mike traveling over 50,000 miles by air to over a dozen conferences and delivering over 80 days of custom programming all over the world. Mike has delivered programs on two continents, in 4 countries, and 29 states.

Mike is the creator of many classic teambuilding exercises including the Table Web, Adventure Puzzle, Image Chips, the raccoon activities Believe it or Knot and Cutting the Cake, Decomposition Line, as well as Phobia and the Web We Weave. Mike is also responsible for the adaptation of Cup Stacking to a teambuilding activity.

Mike is the owner of and lead trainer for Petra Cliffs, a Vermont based company and senior trainer for Challenge Works, Inc, a California based (Level 3 PVM) ropes course construction company.

To obtain any of Mikes' activities or texts please visit the following websites:

Petra Cliffs	www.petracliffs.com	(802) 657-3872
Challenge Works	www.challengeworks.com	(831) 440-1421

Workshop Agenda

Introduction

What are the 5 Dysfunctions of a Team?

Activities for overcoming the 5 Dysfunctions of a Team?

Overcoming the 5 Dysfunctions- why these activities will help.

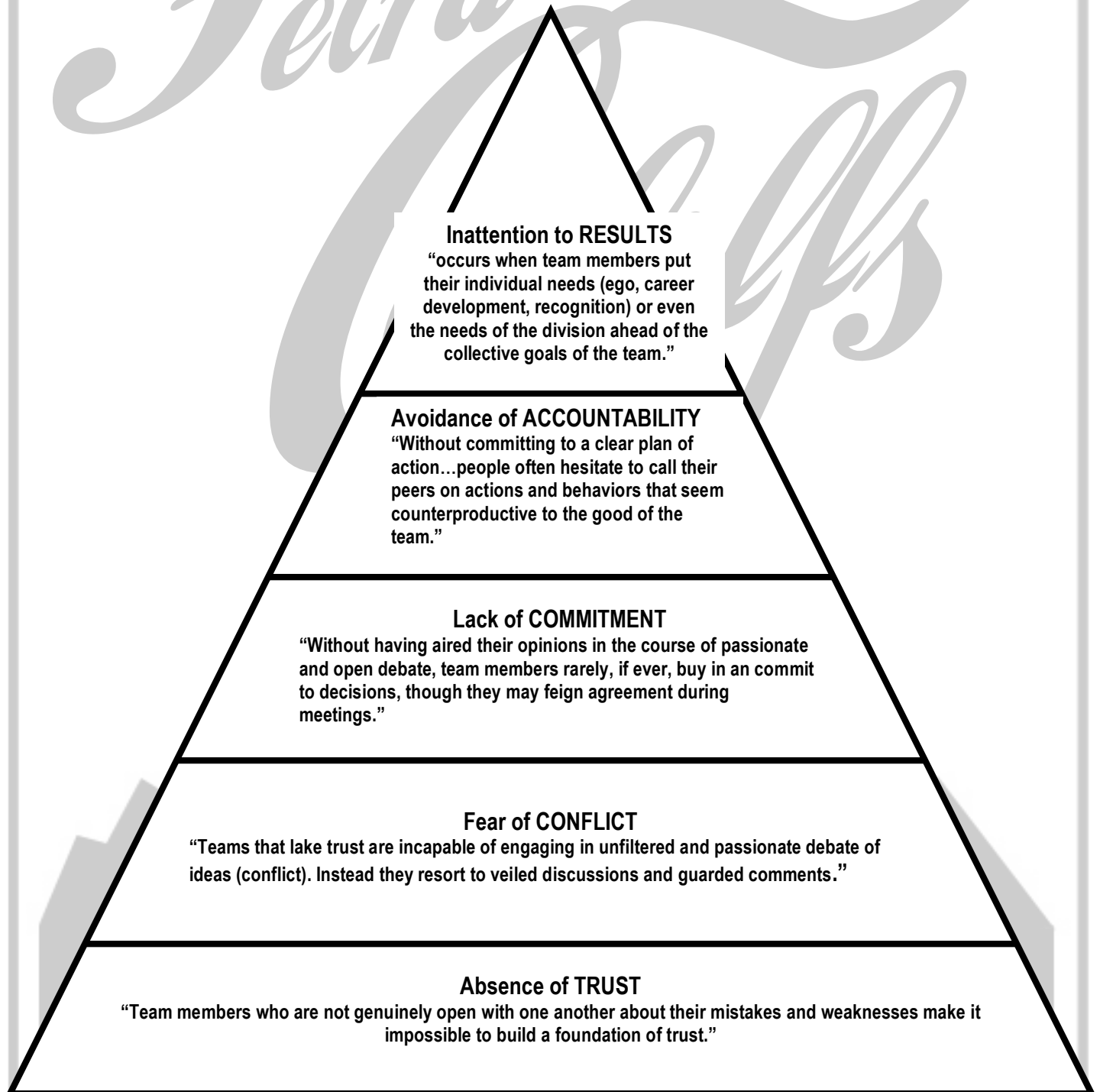
Closing Activity

BURLINGTON VERMONT

The 5 Dysfunctions of a TEAM model

(Taken directly from Patrick Lencioni's New York Times best-Seller, The Five Dysfunctions of a Team)

This book can be found in the Business/Management section at most bookstores ISBN# 0-7879-6075-6 and is also available online at Patrick Lencioni's website, www.tablegroup.com



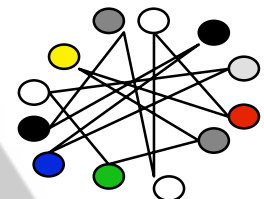
Dysfunction #1, the ABSENCE OF TRUST: The activities selected focus on community building and getting to know each other in a creative environment. Essentially we are working on the ground floor of a structure that is designed to create an environment where team members are willing to be vulnerable and participate in open and honest communication. It has often been said that we can learn more about someone in an hour of play that we can in a years worth of work and I strongly believe that to be true. Simply getting to know one another will not propel you beyond this dysfunction it will however put you on the right track. As with every other process in our lives we must start our journey with a single step. That step is getting to know your colleagues, your office mates, your staff, your support team, your clients and yourself.

Chris Cavert has spent the last decade telling people “the more I know about you the less likely I am to hurt you” which has become the basis for at least two books that I know of (one of them being a project of mine) and to me, what he means by that is, by simply taking time to learn a bit about those whom we spend the most time with we can begin to develop a sense of trust amongst one another. I’m not suggesting we actually throw ourselves under the bus for our office mates but when we trust our colleagues we can better share what is bothering us. By doing this we become less likely to say something that is hurtful or insensitive because we have a better understanding of who these people are; we have spent time generating commonalities and finding things we have in common. Being able to talk openly and freely knowing that you are not intentionally offending the person or people you are talking to (to me) is the biggest piece to overcoming dysfunction #1.

Dysfunction #1 - Activities for overcoming the Absence of Trust

As If (learned from Chris Cavert’s activity files) Begin this activity by letting everyone know that you plan to give them a relationship to use for the upcoming interaction. Ask your group to greet another person in the room AS IF “you are long lost friends”, “college roommates”, “interviewing for a job”, “someone you are intimidated by”, “a famous musician”, “favorite actor or actress”, “do not speak English”. You can come up with as many different AS IF’s as you wish. This is a great follow up activity to Handshakes.

Sharing Connections (Teambuilding Puzzles) With the group seated in a circle, one person (who happens to be holding a ball of yarn) begins by mentioning various things they enjoy. For example, they might offer, “I like to ride my mountain bike. I enjoy cooking. I like to read.” When one of these statements rings true for another participant in the group, they hold up both hands, and the person holding the ball of yarn rolls this ball over to them while keeping hold of the very end of the yarn. The second person (now holding the ball of yarn) begins sharing some of the activities they enjoy until another participant holds up their hands. And so the ball is passed around the group with each participant becoming connected to the other members of their group by the things they have in common. In most cases, group members only catch and roll the ball once. Each person catching the ball holds onto the string as the ball continues along its path to every other member of the group. After everyone has caught the ball, the final person must keep sharing information until the starting participant can agree with one of his or her comments. At this point, you can reverse the process by discussing personal goals for the day, challenges you are looking forward to, resources needed or other suitable topics. The ball is passed from person to person along the string connecting them. Each person, when they receive the ball, carefully winds the yarn back into place before passing the ball on to the next person in the connection line.



Tiny Teach (Karl Rhonke) everyone has a “thing” they can do, and do well. Maybe you have a trick that people find unique, a skill you consider valuable, perhaps you speak another language, or maybe you do something that is just not “normal.” This is your chance to shine, your chance to share. With a partner, take five minutes and teach one another one thing you find fun and interesting. We will share a few of our skills at the end.

Mike can be reached by phone at 914-393-9140 or 802-657-3872 or via at mike@petracliffs.com. And don't forget to check out our website for upcoming workshops and free, downloadable activity documents. Sign up for our free Pod-cast at www.mikeandken.blogspot.com...new games added bi-weekly.

Dysfunction #2, the FEAR OF CONFLICT: According Lencioni “the failure to build trust is damaging because it sets the tone for [the second dysfunction] the fear of conflict” (page 118). By creating an environment where people feel they can participate in open and honest communication we by default create an environment where “unfiltered and passionate discussion” can take place.

Perhaps the biggest contributor to the Fear of Conflict is our innate desire to assume. In January I had the opportunity to meet Geoff Cox from RSVP Design (the creator of the communication activity Colourblind™), anyway during his workshop he continually encouraged us to pay special attention to our assumptions of the activity, of our group mates and our goal. The list that we were able to create in a few minutes based on our attitudes toward the activity, the other participants, the purpose, the potential value, etc astonished me. We found ourselves moving from an attitude of “we can do this” to “do you suppose were even supposed to try to solve the problem?” Unasked and even more importantly, unanswered questions create culture of distrust and as Lencioni indicates numerous time in his book, distrust discourages conflict. What assumptions are you making that are enforcing conflict or potentially discouraging it and what ramifications are those assumptions having on your team?

The activities highlighted, the Challenge Assumptions puzzle, Keypunch II, Knot Exchange and Not Knots offer groups the opportunity see first hand how well team members communicate and whether or not they feel like they can share differing opinions or varying perspectives on how to solve the puzzle at hand. Think of the implications at work? If you can be open and honest in a metaphorical situation the hope is that the same will occur during critical meetings and brain storming sessions. What is most important is for teams of all shapes and sizes, from the small 3 or 4 person design team at a local studio to a multi-national corporation, to recognize that conflict is unavoidable and it IS HEALTHY. I am not suggesting that there always needs to be discord for a team to be successful and lasting rather differences in opinions and ideas naturally elicit conflict and that conflict must be addressed. Maybe not at that exact time and place but it does need to be discussed and resolved...buried conflict will inevitable resurface and there is a good chance that it will be more ferocious than before.

Dysfunction #2 - Activities for overcoming the Fear of Conflict

Knot Exchange (Sam Sikes) Begin with a pile of string (something thicker than kite string but not as thick as climbing rope works really well...the stings should be about a meter in length) and ask your group to stand together in groups of six. Give half of the group one end of one string and ask them stand so that the intersections of the strings looks like a giant asterisks. Now inform the groups that they CAN NOT let go of the end of the string...it is glued to their fingers...ask the groups to create the biggest tangle they can by stepping over, passing behind, going through, wrapping, etc. Give the groups about one minute to make the tangle. When one minute is up, have the groups place the tangle on the ground, rotate to a new tangle, select and end and as quickly as possible untangle the tangle made by the previous group (same rules apply).



Not Knots (Teambuilding Puzzles)



The object here is to provide the group with some tools to use when they cannot easily form a consensus. Typically, upon analysis, about half of the group thinks the doodle will form a knot, and the other half a straight line. If this is the case, ask participants to partner with another person that has a different viewpoint (i.e. one partner from the KNOT side, and one partner from the NOT A KNOT side). By learning how to listen to a person with a different viewpoint, group members learn how to cooperate.

After this discussion, ask participants to choose sides, with the KNOT decision folks on one side of the knot doodle, and the NOT A KNOT folks on the other side. At this point, it is likely that there will still not be a complete consensus within the group. Prior to slowly pulling the ends of the knot doodle, let the members of the group know that you will pull the knot doodle slowly,

and that they can change sides at any time during the unraveling of the knot doodle (this illustrates the ability to make an initial decision, but still be flexible as more information becomes available).

Challenge Assumptions (Geoff Cox) Begin by dumping each of the puzzles out onto the floor or table. Working in small groups (4-6) ask each group to assemble their puzzle. Encourage them to pay special attention to the assumptions they are making about the puzzle, the process, the directions etc. For this activity I encourage you to have observers with each group so that they can also record the assumptions being made. When the puzzle is complete ask the small groups to spend a few moments in a dialogue about the assumptions they made, where assumptions come from, how to we handle them when incorrect. What applications does this have to the team?

Keypad Too (Sam Sikes) The first time I saw Sam deliver this activity to a group I knew it was going to become one of my new favorites. There is so much going on in this activity but it is really not all that difficult. To begin, you will need to create a large rectangle, the size will vary depending on how many people you have participating. For a group of 20-25 you will need the rectangle to be about 20' long and perhaps half as wide. Anyway, create some sort of boundary for the rectangle and then randomly place carpet or poly spots in the space. Place one per person and one on the outside of each corner. Now, you will need the group to break up into four sub-groups, one into each corner. The rules for the activity are pretty simple, they are: 1) The boundary and spots may not be moved 2) Enter and exit by stepping on a corner spot 3) Spots are the resources used for crossing. Any body part contacting the floor must also be in contact with a spot 4) Illegal contact requires the person to go back to their original beginning spot and reenter 5) A spot is "activated" by contact, once activates loss of contact with that spot will result in the loss of that spot (the facilitator will remove the spot) 6) Loss of too many spots to complete the activity safely (people have to jump or have both feet off the floor at the same time results in "shut down." The group will have all of the spots replaced and opportunity to learn from the experience 7) All participants must be in the square before any exit.

Dysfunction #3, the LACK OF COMMITMENT: Commitment to a team or project does not mean that everyone is in absolute agreement. In fact achieving absolute agreement (consensus) is very time consuming and may even lead to more tension and distress amongst team members. I have included activities for this section that in some small way both make the individual more recognizable and at the same time allow them to be successful even if they make a dramatic mistake. In these situations (as most in office projects) there is not too much that is absolutely up to a single individual. What activities like the Images of Organization, Euro Traffic Circle and Pizza Tossing demonstrate is that each and every member of the group may have a different idea of what success is and may interpret the task at hand in different ways and they can be engaged even if they do not agree with the approach being taken to solve the problem. Lencioni says in his book, "the two greatest causes for the lack of commitment are the desire for consensus and the need for certainty." (Pg. 207)

Dysfunction #3 - Activities for overcoming the Lack of Commitment

Euro Traffic Circle (Bill Michaelis): Place a circle or hoop of some sort on the floor in the center of a circle of people. Invite everyone to select a partner across the circle from where they stand. This simple task requires each partnership to pass through the traffic circle, touching floor within the traffic circle with body part (the foot seems to work the best) at precisely the same time as your partner and end in your partners starting position as quickly as possible without any accidents.

Images of Organization: This deck of cards contains 16 images that in some way depict both positive and negative images that exist within any organization. Begin by placing each of the 16 cards (for larger groups use multiple of each image) and ask the group to simply look at the images for a moment. Examine them. When you see an image (possibly you see two) that most appropriately illustrates what you see occurring within your group, select it and share. The conversations that follow up Images of Organization are fantastic for discussing the potential lack of commitment of an individual or of a team.

Pizza Tossing (Jim Cain)- begin by standing in a circle of about 6 people each holding onto the raccoon circle. With your palms face up, your arms out straight in front of you (elbows locked) try to toss the webbing up into the air and catch it as a group (like you were tossing a pizza) and catch it without it touching the floor. Oh yeah, you cannot move your feet either. For a greater challenge, try to rotate the "pizza" or try flipping the pie.

Dysfunction #4, the AVOIDANCE OF ACCOUNTABILITY: The hardest part of any relationship, personal or professional, is calling attention to the unacceptable behavior that has presented itself. In our personal lives it often takes years of friendship before we get to a place where we are comfortable telling our friends that we find their

behavior unacceptable for fear that if we do call them out they will no longer want to be our friend. Furthermore if we do not call them out on said behavior it becomes even more aggravating the next time you are witness to it. In our professional lives we often believe that unless we are the big boss it is not our place, duty or responsibility to confront the behavior in question. With activities like the Traffic Jam, the Tarp Game and Count 6 you can build upon the progress made in overcoming dysfunction #3 and hold people accountable for their performance in the new set of activities. It only takes one incorrect move to make Count 6 not work, or a pull or tug that has a bit too much force to make the ball fall through hole number 5 on the Tarp Game. According the Lencioni it is our responsibility to call attention to behaviors that are not consistent with the expectations set forward by the company, no matter what. Now, you need to understand the holding other staff members accountable does not mean that you are encouraging conflict or even creating it. Think of holding others accountable as “professional peer pressure” that is making sure that everyone involved in the office is held to the same professional standards be it dress code, delivery of goods, meeting deadlines etc. Doing so promotes an environment where each individual holds a valuable piece of the company puzzle.

Dysfunction #4- Activities for overcoming the Avoidance of Accountability

Traffic Jam: This activity requires a minimum of six participants with three standing on the left end of the pattern, facing the center, as do three other participants on the right end of the pattern (also facing the center). For groups larger than six simply expand the pattern accordingly with a potential maximum of six people per side for a total of 12.

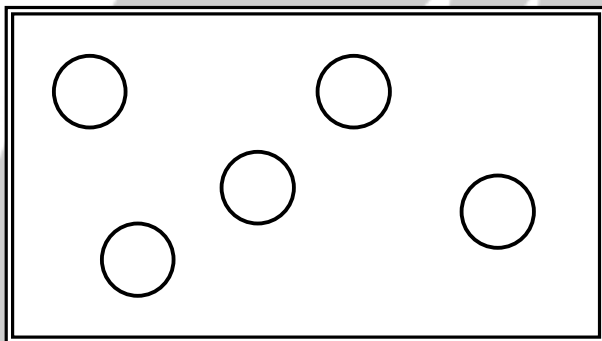


The challenge is for each group to pass the members of the other group, and find themselves at the opposite end of the pattern. There are only two legal moves:

1. You can move forward into any open space.
2. You can only step around a member of another team if there is an open space behind them.

A note of caution: If you reach a position from which you cannot move forward, and the system becomes ‘locked,’ the entire group must return to the beginning and try again. There is no penalty for trial-and-error solutions, but try to be as efficient as possible and learn from any mistakes that happen. To prove that your team knows how to solve the puzzle you will need to demonstrate the solution perfectly.

Groups achieving success to this challenge can be further challenged by demonstrating that they can repeat their performance, but this time, without talking. As a final, high level challenge, invite your group to complete this activity efficiently without breathing! That is, asking everyone in the group to simultaneously take a breath and hold it, start and complete the relocation, before anyone needs to breath again.



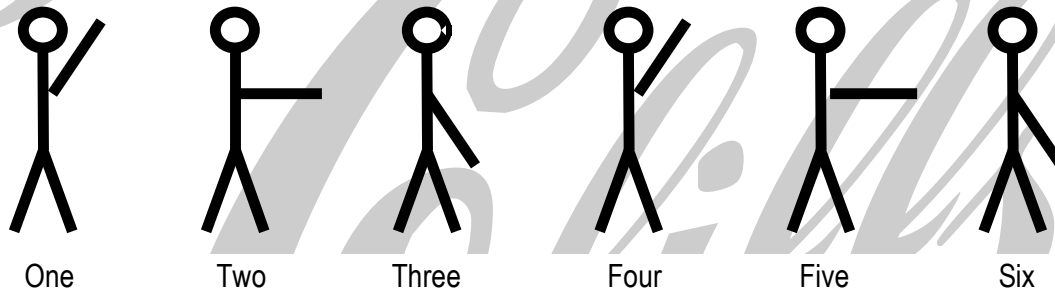
The Tarp Game (Tom Heck) This activity has become one of my new favorites and to be totally honest deciding what section of this workshop it best fit was really difficult as it fits so well into so many programs. Anyway, you will need approximately a 6’ by 8’ (2 meter by 3 meter) vinyl tarp. I use those cheap blue tarps from the hardware store. You will also need to cut between five and seven randomly spaced circles (varying in size) in the tarp (see the cut out diagram on the next page). Be careful to spread them out pretty evenly and make sure that you are not cutting right next to the edge of the tarp (see the diagram below for a good reference).

Ask the participants to grab the edges of the tarp with both hands. With a 6x8 tarp you can have up to 16 or so adults so plan accordingly. Trust me when I say this, let the group “do the thing the really want to do with the tarp” (shake it, and I mean shake it a lot). Now that they have that out of their system, begin with one ball and just have them roll it around the tarp without it falling off or through any of the holes. After a minute or so, give them the next task, which is to the ball around each of the holes (circumnavigate) again without the ball falling through any of the holes or falling off the tarp. Once one ball has been accomplished consider adding additional round objects (bearings, marbles and balls made out of alternative materials

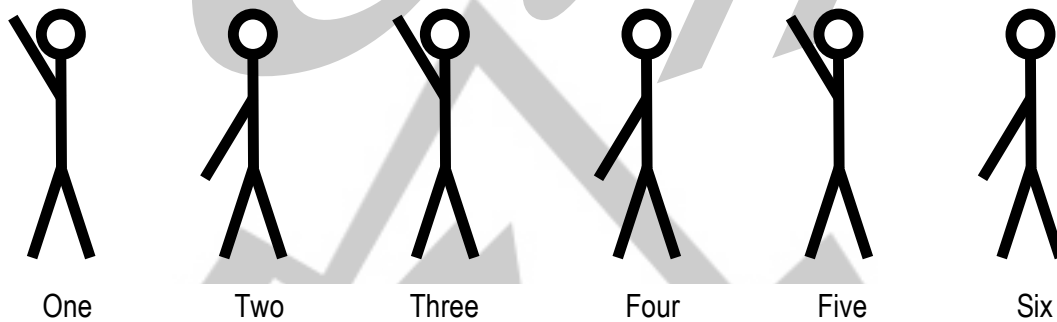
work very well). You can provide the following info before things get too crazy or save it for another time (perhaps when the activity begins to go a little crazy and tempers are starting to flare). 1) Big, over-exaggerated movements cause the ball to go completely out of control, whereas small, minor corrections make it much easier to control. 2) Everyone's actions on the tarp affect how the ball moves... a small tug on the opposite end of the tarp is felt throughout the tarp (the ripple effect).

Count Six (Teambuilding Puzzles): Welcome to 'Count Six.' An innocent enough challenge with just the right amount of movement, that is difficult to perform flawlessly. Begin by assembling your team, have them all facing in the same direction; towards the front of the room. With the facilitator standing in front of the group, and also facing forward, demonstrate with the **right hand** the following motions as you count to six. See the illustrations on the next page.

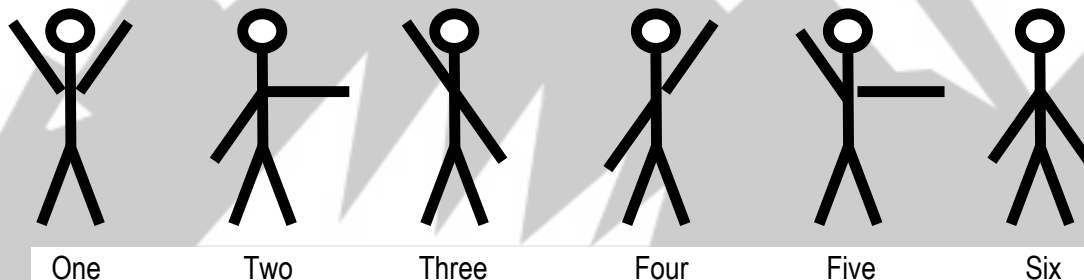
The illustration here shows a rear view of the stick person facilitator



Next, demonstrate the **left hand** movements, as you again count to six.



Finally, inform the group that everyone is going to perform Count Six with **both hands**. Like this:



At this point, some laughter and general confusion occurs. Inform the group that their job is going to be to help each other be successful in this task. Working together in groups of six people, they have exactly four minutes to practice and demonstrate their proficiency in performing Count Six.

Dysfunction #5, the INATTENTION TO RESULTS: I have a question for you? Can you think of any team that exists for the sake of existing? Can you think of a team that has no specific purpose, no specific goal, no product to be deliver, no customers to serve? The answer is probably NO. So now that we can agree that all teams exist for the purpose of achieve some sort of goal, some sort of advanced result in something let's talk about what causes teams to fail at it. We are going to work backward a bit here. Let assume that you office staff trust one another and are not fearful of productive conflict. They do commit to projects and when things fall through the crack they hold each other accountable. So what would cause a team to fall apart in the final stretch? The answer is dysfunction #5: The

inattention to results. Be it the status of the team they belong to or their own personal status within the organization. Lencioni mentions a couple of specific examples on page 217 of his book. He mentions teams that are a part of a bigger organization that seem to be totally content with the prestige of that organization and he also mentions "altruistic nonprofits that believe the nobility of their mission is enough to justify their satisfaction." He goes on to say that "political groups, academic departments and prestigious companies are also susceptible to this dysfunction." In addition to team satisfaction he speak about individual status that "refers to the tendencies of people to focus on enhancing their own position or career prospects at the expense of the team." To me, that translates into people who use the success of the organization as "stepping stones" for their own career. The activities highlighted in section 5, Balloon Switch, Just One Word and Colourblind all have the ability to highlight the contributions of the individual as directly related to the success of the team as a whole.

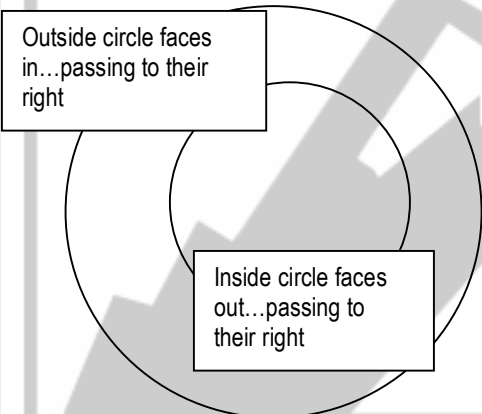
Dysfunction #5- Activities for overcoming the Inattention to Results

Just One Word (Teambuilding Puzzles) Using the eleven letters shown you should be able to create just one word. The letters to use are as follows:

T O W E R S U N D O J

Colourblind (Geoff Cox) In this task group members are seated comfortably on the floor or at a table. Participants are instructed to know by voice where each member of the team is sitting at the table. The task is for the group to determine what two or three shapes are missing from the set and furthermore determine what color the missing pieces are. The group is told that there are six shapes, five colors of each shape. Depending on the group size (a minimum of five and maximum of 28). To do this they are given a blindfold and told that each of them will be given a few pieces of the puzzle. They are responsible for these pieces and cannot pass them off to another team member. Once the activity begins the only question the team can ask of the facilitator is "What color is this" and the facilitator will answer accordingly. This activity can take up to an hour to complete and frustration levels can escalate quickly. It is helpful to have a member of the team act as an observer to record some of the specific comments of the team.

Balloon Switch (Rhonke and Cavert): First you'll need to have everyone blow up a balloon to about the size of their own head and then write their first name on the balloon (last initial too if needed). After the balloon energy has faded a bit get the group to make two circles - one inside the other, the inside circle facing the outside circle. Each player should pair up with



Outside circle faces in...passing to their right

Inside circle faces out...passing to their right

someone across the circle from him or her. For the first round the idea is for each circle to move their balloons around their own circle as fast as possible - players start with their own balloon, passing their balloon to the right and eventually getting their own balloon back. When all the players in both circle have their own balloon the time stops (it started when you said "GO!"), You can do a "better your time" round next to improve the process. Then if your group is ready to up the challenge (after you ask them of course) add the "switch." Each player is going to change places with the player across from them after you say "Switch." I like to let them practice this part before any balloon moving. This takes some good communication and planning (with more than just the partner) to make this happen. When the group is ready give them one last parameter, "after the switch the balloons in each circle must continue in the same direction they were going before the switch." (This is where the fun is!). So, the idea here is that the two circles will start moving their balloons on your "GO" and

when you say "Switch" (after about the time the balloons make it half way around the circles) they must hold the balloon(s) they have, make the switch, and then continue the balloons moving around the same direction they were going. (The challenge is realizing that if they are moving the balloons to the right at first, after the switch they will be passing them to their left - the "balloons" have to move in the same direction. Some players get it and others don't - this is something that will need to be worked out. Hopefully your group will be motivated to achieve "Switching Balloons" smoothly. (Note: this description was taken directly from www.fundoing.com as the directions were just too well written to try and rephrase or re-word. Thanks Chris)

Mike can be reached by phone at 914-393-9140 or 802-657-3872 or via at mike@petracliffs.com. And don't forget to check out our website for upcoming workshops and free, downloadable activity documents.

Sign up for our free Pod-cast at www.mikeandken.blogspot.com...new games added bi-weekly.

The origins of the above activities can be found in the following texts:

Teambuilding Puzzles by Mike Anderson, Jim Cain, Chris Cavert & Tom Heck

Raptor by Sam Sikes

Feeding the Zircon Gorilla by Sam Sikes

Executive Marbles by Sam Sikes

the EMPTY bag: Non-Stop, No-Prop Adventure-Based Activities for Community Building
by Dick Hammond & Chris Cavert

The Book on Raccoon Circles by Dr. Jim Cain & Dr. Tom Smith

The Book on Raccoon Circles Revised and Expanded by Dr. Jim Cain & Dr. Tom Smith

Playing With a Full Deck by Michelle Cummings, M.S

The More the Merrier by Chris Cavert, Faith Evans & Sam Sikes

Affordable Portables: A Working Book of Initiative and Problem Solving Elements by Chris Cavert and Friends

Teamwork & Teamplay by Jim Cain and Barry Jollif

Coulorblind™ created by Geoff Cox of RSVP Design, Ltd.

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