

GROUP DYNAMICS



COMPETENCY CATEGORY: Life Survival Skills

COMPETENCY NUMBER: G.43

COMPETENCY: Demonstrate how to use group dynamics techniques.

OBJECTIVE: Upon completion of this module, students will be able to demonstrate how to use group dynamics techniques.



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LEARNING ACTIVITY G.43-1
“JIGSAW TEAM BUILDING”

OBJECTIVE: To stress the importance of each team member’s individual contributions, and the importance of working as a group

RESOURCES:

- One previously constructed picture puzzle, divided into sets of approximately 10 pieces per student, and then broken apart and allocated to each student for reassembly
- Tape player and cassette tapes

SUGGESTED TIME: 1 hour

DIRECTIONS:

1. Select a solvable picture puzzle. Break it into subsets of 10 connectable pieces each.
2. Distribute a subset to each student (such that the subsets could then be connected to each other).
3. Instruct students to solve their own subset first, and then connect all the subsets appropriately until they have the total puzzle solved.
4. Set a challenging time limit for task completion, and possibly play some energizing music (e.g., the *William Tell Overture*) to create an additional sense of urgency.
5. You may choose to designate a small number of participants as free-floating “troubleshooters” who roam about the room and help those in trouble to see connections within their own subset and from one set to another.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What reactions did you have when you realized your importance to the overall team?

2. What impact did the time deadline have on your effectiveness?

3. What was the impact of having team members available (and willing) to help you?

Note to Specialist: Watch the group dynamics for individualistic behaviors. For instance, some members may be reluctant to give up their puzzle pieces. Others may try to take control of all the pieces and attempt to do the assembly themselves. In your post-activity discussion, ask individuals to consider both their productive and counterproductive behaviors.

(Source: The Big Book of Team Building Games)

LEARNING ACTIVITY G.43-2
“THE KIDNEY MACHINE”

OBJECTIVE: To demonstrate group dynamics used during decision making

RESOURCES: Work Sheet—Learning Activity G.43-2

SUGGESTED TIME: 1 hour

DIRECTIONS:

1. Pass out copies of the work sheet for Learning Activity G.43-2.
2. Divide students into teams of five.
3. Give groups 30 minutes to decide which five individuals the group would choose to receive the kidney machine.
4. At the end of 30 minutes have groups share their decision with the class.
5. Conduct a discussion with the class focusing on the group dynamics that took place as the decisions were made.

LEARNING ACTIVITY G.43-2
“THE KIDNEY MACHINE”
WORK SHEET

DIRECTIONS:

Each participant below needs a kidney machine. Only five machines are available because of the cost of manufacturing them. No more machines will be available in time to save all of these patients. Your panel must decide, based on the information given, which patients will receive treatment and which will not. Those who do not receive treatment will die.

Mrs. Maria Vasquez

29 years old; married, with six children ranging in age from 2 to 10 years; her husband is a printer who, along with his brother-in-law, owns a print shop.

Mrs. Mary Fortran:

31 years old; director of foods research for NASA; a former Rhodes scholar with a Ph.D. in physics; working on a formula for a food capsule to be used in space travel; divorced, with no children.

Mike Carbona:

39 years old; an ex-convict, convicted for tax evasion; served seven years; active in local politics; suspected of having criminal connections; the nine Korean orphans he supports do not know of his former involvement in crime.

Peter Maximo:

9 years old; has an IQ of 160, but is severely mentally disturbed at having witnessed the car accident that killed two of his parents' friends; has not spoken a word for over two years.

- Mrs. Terry McBride: 27 years old; an instructor at a local university working on her M.S. in communication; her husband is partially blind and receives disability payments from the Army; no children; debts include car loans and a 30-year mortgage on a house.
- Dick Constable: 35 years old; a bachelor and federal narcotics agent in Chicago, primarily arresting heroin dealers; active in community youth organizations; engaged to be married.
- Father Mussello: 53 years old; a Dominican priest and headmaster of a parochial school; organizes missions to help with Indian education in New Mexico; counsels juveniles.
- Thomas Washington: 19 years old; a freshman at New York University; lives with his family in New York City; his father died when he was very little; insurance money is paying for his education; a member of a radical group whose avowed purpose is to foster anarchy in America.

(Source: *Communicating in Small Groups*)

LEARNING ACTIVITY G.43-3
“SILENT OBSERVER”

OBJECTIVE: To observe and critique communication skills

RESOURCES: Work Sheet—Learning Activity G.43-3

SUGGESTED TIME: 45 minutes (observation and notetaking)
1 hour (class sharing and discussion)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Pass out copies of the work sheet for Learning Activity G.43-3.
2. Tell students that they are to “silently” observe a conversation between two people for a minimum of 20 minutes (sample settings: mall, cafeteria, work)
3. While observing the interaction between the two people they are to use the work sheet for Learning Activity G.43-3 to record their observations.
4. Have students share their observations with the class.
5. Facilitate a class discussion about the impact of communication skills on group dynamics.

LEARNING ACTIVITY G.43-4
“JOE DOODLEBUG”

OBJECTIVE: To demonstrate brainstorming

RESOURCES:

- Work Sheet—Learning Activity G.43-4
- Paper and pencils

SUGGESTED TIME: 1 hour

DIRECTIONS:

1. Have the class divide into groups of three or four.
2. Hand out copies of the problem sheet and state that it contains all the necessary information. The problem is why Joe has to take four jumps to reach the food, which is only three feet away. The groups have thirty minutes to come up with an answer. Explain that you will give hints at five, ten, fifteen, twenty, and twenty-five minutes if the groups have not solved the problem.
3. After five minutes give the first hint, after ten minutes the second, after fifteen minutes the third, after twenty minutes the fourth, and after twenty-five minutes the fifth hint.
4. At the end of thirty minutes stop the groups and give them the answer. After clarifying the answer, discuss why it is sometimes necessary to move outside one's belief system to solve a problem. Some of the following questions may be used:
 1. Was it difficult for the members of your group to work together? Why or why not?
 2. Did all members of the group listen to each other? How did this affect the group decision?
 3. How were controversies handled?

(Source: This exercise, originally by Rokeach, was adapted from *Joining Together: Group Theory and Group Skills*)

LEARNING ACTIVITY G.43-4
“JOE DOODLEBUG”
WORK SHEET

A Lesson in Creative Problem Solving

DIRECTIONS: Your group will be given 25 minutes to solve the problem which is described below. Your specialist will give you hints to help solve the problem after 5, 10, 15, 20, and 25 minutes. After the 30 minutes are up, the answer to the problem will be given to all groups. Please do not share your answer with other groups.

PROBLEM: Joe Doodlebug has been jumping all over the place getting some exercise when his master places a pile of food three feet directly west of him. Joe notices that the pile of food is a little larger than him. As soon as Joe sees all this food, he stops dead in his tracks facing north. After all his exercise Joe is hungry, and he wants to get the food as quickly as possible. Joe examines the situation and then says, “I’ll have to jump four times to get the food.”

QUESTION: Why does Joe **have** to take four jumps to get to the food?

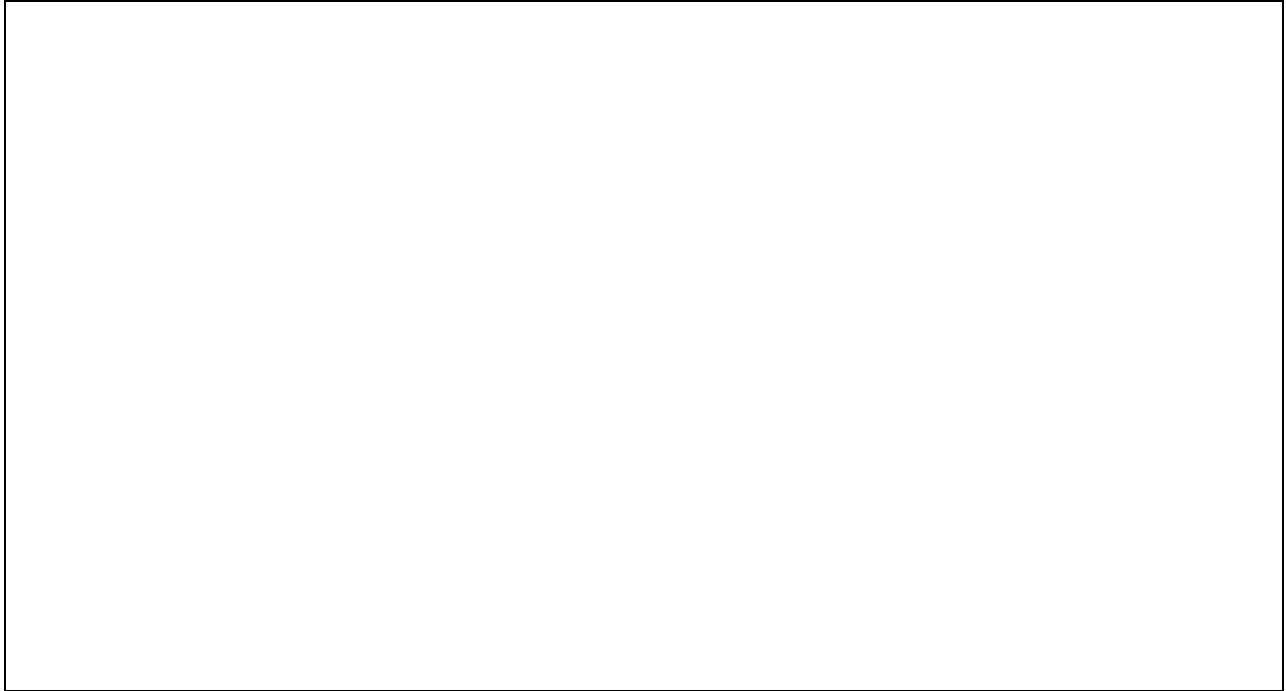
Maybe you should know a few things about Joe. He is a strange sort of imaginary bug who can and cannot do the following things:

Hints:

1. He can jump only in four different directions: north, south, east, and west (he cannot jump diagonally, such as southwest).
2. Once he starts in any direction, he must jump four times in that direction before he can change direction.
3. He can only jump—not crawl, fly, or walk.
4. He cannot jump less than one inch per jump or more than ten feet per jump.

5. Joe cannot turn around.

Now—it's up to your group to come up with the correct answer. Write the answer and explanation on a sheet of paper and return it to your Specialist.



LEARNING ACTIVITY G.43-5
“CHAIN GANG TAG”

OBJECTIVE: To demonstrate group dynamics in relationship to a controversial issue

RESOURCES: Heavy string or rope to mark boundary lines

SUGGESTED TIME: 1–1 ½ hours

Note to Specialist: This activity simulates the effects of group dynamics. The activity is best conducted outside, so you might prepare your students the day before by advising them to dress appropriately.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Form a group of approximately fifteen students. Mark out boundary lines to form a square fifteen yards on each side. Mark off the sides with string by tying the string to four markers (rocks, wood, students, etc.) at the corner of the square.
2. Select one student to be “it.” This individual should then attempt to tag any other person in the “arena.” As soon as tag is made, “it” and the person tagged are given a rope approximately ten yards long with fifteen (or however many students are involved) loops tied into it to serve as handles. Those two students must now be joined together by holding on to any two of the handles on the rope. The two are now known as the “chain gang.”
3. The two students should then work together to try to tag the other students as they can. The game is over when all students are tagged. (If the chain gang is having difficulty tagging the other students, bring in the boundary lines of the square.)
4. If any member of the chain gang breaks loose from the rope, the chain gang cannot tag any other students.
5. Any member of the chain gang may tag a student.

6. Students may go over, under, or around the chain gang to avoid being tagged.
7. Students may not force their way through the rope or cause the rope to come loose from the chain gang by the use of force.
8. Once students are tagged, they become part of the chain gang and take hold of one of the handles.
9. If a student goes outside of the boundaries, he/she is automatically part of the chain gang.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Was it harder to stay away from the chain gang when it was smaller? Why?

2. What are some of the chain gangs (things that are difficult to avoid) in our lives?

3. What were some of the strategies used to stay away from the chain gang?

4. (If the boundary lines of the square were shortened.) How did the untagged students feel?

5. How is the chain gang activity like the pressures we feel concerning drug abuse, alcohol, etc.?

LEARNING ACTIVITY G.43-6
“JOURNAL WRITING”

OBJECTIVE: Students will demonstrate their writing skills by creating a journal entry centered on a topic assigned by the Specialist

RESOURCES: Work Sheet—Learning Activity G.43-6

SUGGESTED TIME: 1 hour

DIRECTIONS:

1. Provide students with the topic they are to use for this journal writing activity. The topic should relate to this module.
2. Assign the page range for the journal writing assignment.

This range could vary depending on the timeframe provided for the assignment, the writing skills of the entire group, a small group of students, or individual students. This assignment can be individualized by the Specialist by placing the page length in the blank space on the work sheet.

LEARNING ACTIVITY G.43-6
"JOURNAL WRITING"
WORK SHEET

NAME:

DATE:

TOPIC:

DATE DUE:

PAGE LENGTH:

LEARNING ACTIVITY G.43-7
“SERVICE LEARNING”

OBJECTIVE: Students will participate in a service learning activity assigned by the Specialist

RESOURCES: Learning Activity G.43-7

DIRECTIONS:

1. Identify the type of support linkage which could be used to reinforce the key concept(s) in this module with students (See “Types of Support Linkages”).
2. With your students, identify the school and/or community resources which could be contacted to create a Service Learning Activity for this module (See “Community Resources”).
3. With students, brainstorm, organize, implement and evaluate the effectiveness of the Service Learning Activity using the “Service Activity Action Plan.”

TYPES OF SUPPORT LINKAGES		
Direct Services to Students	Consultative and Technical Assistance	Information and Referral
Community agencies	Professional organizations	Career counseling centers
Parents and personal advocates	Service organizations	Work experience and job placement services
Local education agency support/auxiliary staff	Parent organizations	School and private psychologists
Volunteer and service organizations	Advisory groups	Tutors
Placement services	State education agency personnel	Recreational programs
Postsecondary programs and personnel	Business/industry personnel and programs	Employers
Transitional services	Other vocational support service teams	Employment Services
Other school-based personnel	Local colleges and universities	Community agencies for counseling or health services
	Vocational education research and development resource center(s)	New schools (transfer students)
		Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
		Job Training Partnership Program

Source: *HANDBOOK FOR VOCATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICE TEAMS IN MARYLAND*

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Federal and State Agencies provide services to their local and regional offices. Such services include financial support, job training and placement programs, housing, health, youth programs, consumer information, and legal aid. Examples include:

- legal services
- armed services
- state employment services
- state agency or school for the visually impaired
- State Department of Welfare
- mental health agency
- Department of Immigration
- Veterans Administration
- Social Security Administration
- Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA)
- Community Action Program
- law enforcement agency
- legal and judicial agencies
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- public health service
- social services
- adult continuing education programs
- Office of Economic Opportunity
- civil service programs
- Rehabilitation Services Administration
- employment services
- Parks Department
- public health programs
- Adult Basic Education programs
- migrant programs
- military service representatives
- Planned Parenthood
- correctional facilities
- Governor's/Mayor's Committee for Employment of the Disabled

Community agencies and organizations provide such services as youth recreation, counseling and tutoring, employment and job training, foster care placement, and leadership development. Examples include:

- Chamber of Commerce
- YMCA/YWCA
- drug and alcohol abuse centers
- Red Cross
- child abuse/women's centers
- urban league
- adult continuing education programs
- student financial aid programs
- League of Women Voters
- mental health clinics
- probation and parole services
- children and youth services
- foster homes
- halfway houses
- community action programs
- migrant programs
- bilingual programs
- dropout prevention programs
- parent-teacher organizations
- American Legion
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Salvation Army
- JAYCEES
- Optimists
- Goodwill Industries

Citizen and special interest groups typically offer scholarship programs, legal aid, daycare, and transportation. Examples include:

- Lions Club
- canes
- Rotary
- churches
- women's and men's clubs in the community
- crisis intervention centers
- hospitals
- Girl Scouts
- Campfire Girls
- Big Brothers and Sisters
- Boy Scouts
- Indian guides
- Knights of Columbus
- Sertoma
- Elks
- retired citizens
- Volunteer tutor groups

Business, industry, and labor organizations are good sources of field trips, guest speakers, job opportunities, and occupational and product information. Examples include:

- Trade and labor unions
- Advisory committee members
- Employers
- Personnel offices
- industrial supervisor

Source: Sarkees-Wircenski, M. & Scott, J. VOCATIONAL SPECIAL NEEDS

SERVICE ACTIVITY ACTION PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITY/IDEA	
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS	RESOURCES NEEDED

PERSONNEL/AGENCIES/ COMMUNITY	REPRESENTATIVE INVOLVED RESPONSIBILITIES
POSSIBLE BARRIERS	CREATIVE SOLUTIONS
TIMEFRAME	

READING ACTIVITY G.43
“IT’S MY STEREO – IT’S MY RIGHT!”

OBJECTIVE: To read for comprehension and recall

RESOURCES: Reading Activity G.43

SUGGESTED TIME: 1 hour

DIRECTIONS:

1. Distribute copies of Reading Activity G.43.
2. Direct the students to read the activity.
3. Have students answer the recall questions.
4. Have students share their answers with the class.
5. Discuss the Reading Activity with the class.

“IT’S MY STEREO – IT’S MY RIGHT!”

Sherry and Jan lived in an apartment house near State College. Many of their neighbors were students. The two girls, though, worked at a shopping mall. They were very popular, and often friends and people from work came over to their parties. These parties sometimes would last until three or four in the morning. The girls didn’t have to be at work until noon. Even noon was too early for them sometimes; they thought of themselves as “night owls”.

Jan loved music. They both did, but Jan knew more about stereos. She read all the charts on sound systems from many different companies. She knew exactly what would give her the best quality sound at any volume. As you might guess, she had one of the best home stereo systems money could buy. She was proud of it, too. Jan didn’t mind showing it off a little when friends came over. At their late night parties, sometimes Jan and her roommate would put on the latest CDs and turn the stereo up as loud as they could. The speakers could handle any volume. And soon they would get a call from a neighbor who was studying. Someone would turn it down. For a while this was fine, but then it would be turned up again.

There were many students in their building. The girls received calls almost every night. It was getting to be a habit. The angry neighbors called at all hours; some were trying to study; some were trying to sleep. Jan told Sherry that it was their right to do anything they pleased. They had as much right to listen to music as the others had to sleep.

Soon all the neighbors got together for a group meeting. Sherry and Jan were invited to attend. And they did.

The neighbors were angry and frustrated but they tried to work something out so everyone would be happy.

After everyone had their say, a group compromise was reached. Sherry and Jan agreed to turn the stereo down at 10:00 p.m. so that the other tenants could not be disturbed.

Things went well...for a while. On Thursday night things began to get a little crazy. A bunch of friends dropped in with pizza and before you knew it the police came at 1:00 a.m. and warned them that the landlord had received several complaints. The officer did not give them a fine, but said that the next time it happened it would cost them \$250.00. Jan was cocky with them and slammed the door. The neighbors called them again the following week when there was a really loud and late party. Sherry hung up on them.

Two days later the landlord, Mr. Yates, came to the door. He had the same policemen with him. He read the part of the lease that said that loud noise was not allowed. The police were there to make sure that the girls received the notice from Mr. Yates. They were ordered to leave because they had broken their lease. Mr. Yates gave them two weeks to find another place to live.

MATH ACTIVITY G.43
“COSTLY LESSON”

OBJECTIVE: To practice addition, subtraction, and multiplication

RESOURCES: Work Sheet—Math Activity G.43

SUGGESTED TIME: 1 hour

DIRECTIONS:

1. Distribute copies of the work sheet to each student.
2. Have students complete the questions on the work sheet.
3. Review the answers with your students.

MATH ACTIVITY G.43
“COSTLY LESSON”
WORK SHEET

DIRECTIONS: This activity will give you practice with addition, subtraction, and multiplication.

1. Jan and Sherry played their stereo late at night and disturbed the neighbors. The police fined them for being so noisy. The fine was \$250.00. The day after they were fined, Jan and Sherry had a loud party. Eight neighbors called the landlord. They decided to have an attorney represent them in court. The attorney charged them \$135.50 and there were charges of \$58.75 for court costs. How much did Jan and Sherry owe for their case?

2. Jan borrowed 5 CD's from Dave. They cost \$18.69 each at the Song Mart. Jan broke 2 of the CD's, put a big scratch on one, and lost the other 2. She gave Dave \$28.00 to pay for the CD's. Did she give him enough money? (Explain your answer.) They were stolen from her car. She gave Dave \$28.80 to pay for the CD's. How much does she still owe?

3. Jim Brown lives next door to Jan and Sherry. He is kept awake each night by their music and parties. He has started to keep a chart of when they are loud and wake him up. Use this chart to answer the questions below the chart.

<u>Went to sleep</u>	<u>Wakened by noise</u>	<u>Fell back to sleep</u>	<u>Got up next a.m.</u>
Sunday 11:00 p.m.	1:00 a.m.	3:00 a.m.	6:30 a.m.
Monday 10:00 p.m.	10:30 p.m.	12:00 a.m.	7:00 a.m.
Tuesday 11:30 p.m.	2:30 a.m.	4:00 a.m.	7:15 a.m.

a. How many hours of sleep did Jim get Sunday night?

b. How many hours was Jim awake because of the noise on Tuesday night?

c. Which night did Jim get the most sleep?

d. Which night did he get the least sleep?