ENERGIZERS AND TENSION REDUCERS

Murder

1. Have the group members form a large circle. Instruct them to close their eyes.

2. Walk around the circle and tap one group member on the back. He is the murderer.

3. The group is to then mingle and all members are to shake hands with one another. The murderer then "kills" the other members by winking at them as he shakes their hand. Once "killed," the group member must "die with feeling" after he has shaken hands with the "murderer."

4. Once group members think they know who the "murderer" is they say "I have an accusation to make." If no one else has an accusation that person "dies" for lack of a second. If someone else in the group does have an accusation the two count to three and point to the suspected murderer.

5. If the two members point to the same person, then that person is "dead" and the game may be repeated. However, if the two members point to different people then they "die," and the ice breaker continues until the murderer is caught or all the other group members are "killed."

Gilligan's Island

1. Obtain a regular sized sheet of poster board. (This size works well with a group of about ten (10) people, but the size of the poster board or paper may vary depending on how many members are in the group.)

2. The goal of the group is to situate all of the members on the piece of poster board in such a way that no one is touching the floor. This may be done by people standing close enough together so that they all fit on the paper, by people leaning and/or being carried by each other, or through and other conceivable method.

Skin the Snake

1. Have the members of the group line up in a single file line.

2. The person at the front of the line puts his right hand through his legs and takes hold of the left hand of the person behind him. The second person, while holding the right hand of the person in front of him with his left hand, puts his right hand through his legs and takes the left hand of the person behind him.

3. This set-up continues right down the line.
4. The person at the end of the line, after everyone is holding hands, lies on his back. The person ahead of him will walk backwards over the person lying down (stepping to, either side of his body), still holding hands.

5. The rest of the line proceeds to walk backward and each person lies on his back, holding hands the whole time with the people directly in front of and behind him.

PEOPLE TO PEOPLE

(medium activity level - the more the better) Players pair up and stand in a circle, facing one player in the center who is the caller. The caller yells out body parts as directions (e.g., elbow to knee or ear to foot, etc.), and players follow the directions by matching body part to body part, After three or four matches, the caller yells "people to people," which is the signal for everyone to scramble to find a new partner. The person left alone becomes the caller!

HA HA HA

(moderate activity level. The more the better) Each person lies down with his head on the stomach of another person, forming a long chain. First person says “Ha.” Second says, “Ha, Ha” Third person says, “Ha, Ha, Ha” etc.

CATCH THE DRAGON’S TAIL

(high activity level) Players get into single file lines of about six to eight people and put their arms around the waist in front. The last person in line puts a handkerchief in the back of his belt. The dragon, being in good health, lets out a roar to signal the start, then it begins to chase its tail! The goal is for the person at the head of the dragon to get the handkerchief. The goal is also not to let the handkerchief be gotten! When the head finally does get the tail, she becomes the tail and it starts all over!

SKIN THE SNAKE

(medium activity level) Players get into teams of up to 25, lined up single file. Each player reaches back between his legs with his left hand to grab the right hand of the person behind him. When the chain for each team has been formed, the leader will give the starting signal. That's when the last person in each line lies down on her back; the person in front of her backs up, straddling her body, and lies down on his back. This goes on as the whole team backs up and lies down (everyone's still holding hands). When the last person to lie down has touched her head to the ground, she gets
up and starts forward, pulling everyone back up and along, and everyone "Skins the Snake," First team up, wins!

**ROCK/PAPER/SCISSORS**

(medium activity level) Players divide into two teams, and each team chooses its symbol (rock, paper, or scissors). Then the teams line up face to face, take 3 giant steps toward each other, and on the 3rd step, show their symbol. The conquering team chases the other team to its safety line and tries to capture new members! Variation: wizards, elves, giants where wizards beat giants, giants beat elves, and elves beat wizards!

**BLOB**

(high activity level) The Blob begins as 3 players are holding hands. If the Blob catches you, you become part of it. A big Blob can break up into small Blobs. Set boundaries!

**EVERYBODY'S IT**

(high activity level) Players need to remember two rules:

1. Everybody's it -and
2. when a player is tagged, she is frozen.

**WHAT’S THE NAME OF THE GAME?**

**JOE AND THE BUTTON FACTORY**

(medium activity level) Players stand in a circle, facing in, and in unison they say, 'Hi! My Name's Joe, and I work in a Button factory. One day, my boss came up to me and said, 'Are you busy, Joe?' and I said, 'No,' and he said 'Push the Button with your _____. Each player takes a turn filling in the blank, and all of the players do the action, adding each new action to all the others.
STAND OFF

(Low activity level) Partners stand facing each other, one arms length apart. Each player has feet together, and each player’s goal is to knock the other off balance by slapping palms. The first player to move his feet loses. Variations: This comes from the martial art of aikido. Partners stand as described above, but instead of slapping palms, they place their palms together and try to press their partners off balance. Moves are smooth, no jerks allowed!

MIRRORS

(low activity level) What do you say to a person who points to hew elbow and says, “This is my nose!?” Well, you might point to your head and say, “This is my elbow!!” Then she would probably point to her toe and say, “This is my head!!”. It’s a New Game and it’s a test of your hand-eye-mouth coordination to see how long you can go on saying the name of the body part your partner just pointed to while you are pointing to a completely different part of your own body!

SHUFFLE YOUR BUNS

Allow 10 to 15 minutes for this extremely active exercise.

1. Students form their chairs in a circle, placing them very close together.

2. Up to three volunteers stand in the middle, leaving their chairs empty.

3. The group left sitting practices shuffling their buns by quickly moving in unison, clockwise, one chair at a time. Repeat until they can move smoothly. Once the seated participants can rapidly perform this skill, the volunteers are ready to begin.

4. The facilitator says GO and the seated students begin moving from seat to seat in a clockwise manner. The object for the volunteers is to attempt to find an open seat. This will be quite a challenge, as seats are vacant for only a brief instant.

5. When a center student eventually acquires a seat, the participant to his or her left now must go into the circle and seek a new chair.
MIME

1. Form standing circles with groups of 8-10 students. Students are to remain quiet during this activity.

2. Each member of the circle performs a mime to a theme. Examples of themes include sporting events, items to take on a vacation or the process of getting ready for school in the morning.

3. The first person continues their mime until the group signals their understanding of the mime with a nod. The second person repeats the first mime and then adds their own. The third person repeats the prior mimes and adds their own, etc.

Using a prop, such as a three foot dowel, yard stick or scarf can help in providing security for the participants. The quiet encouragement provided by the participants helps to build a level of trust between group members.