

TOOLKIT: IMPROV THEATRE FOR NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

**Suitable for educators, trainers, facilitators and
other youth workers**

**arts
for
change.**

 **erasmus+**
meer perspectief

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



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Introduction

Improvistional theatre, commonly known as improv, is a form of live theatre performance where the plot, characters, and dialogue are created spontaneously by the performers. Unlike traditional scripted theatre, improv relies heavily on the creativity, quick thinking, and collaboration of the participants. The essence of improv lies in the unpredictability of the performance, with actors responding in real-time to suggestions from the audience or their fellow performers. This art form is characterised by its emphasis on being in the present moment, embracing uncertainty, and fostering a spirit of teamwork among the participants.

In improv, the performance typically unfolds through a series of unscripted scenes, games, or exercises. Performers often use prompts from the audience or predetermined rules to guide the direction of the scene. The success of improv relies on the principles of "yes, and," where participants accept and build upon each other's contributions rather than negating them. The spontaneity and unpredictability inherent in improv make it an exhilarating and interactive form of entertainment.

Beyond the stage, the principles of improv have found application in various aspects of daily life. The emphasis on adaptability, effective communication, and the ability to think on one's feet makes improv a valuable tool for personal and professional development. Practising improv fosters skills such as active listening, creativity, and resilience in the face of uncertainty. It encourages individuals to be more open-minded, responsive, and better equipped to navigate the unexpected twists and turns that life often presents. Ultimately, the benefits of improv extend beyond the theatrical stage, offering a fun and practical way to enhance interpersonal skills and cultivate a mindset that embraces spontaneity and collaboration.

In May 2023, the Erasmus+ Youth Exchange project “Improv for Change” was held in Dilijan, Armenia. 41 people young people from eight different countries around Europe and beyond, gathered together under the same goal: Sharing the different problems that young people face in their communities, and explore different solutions, using improvisational theatre as their main tool.

The facilitators, an experienced improv theatre team invited by the organiser NGO “Arts for Change”, used a series of methods and techniques derived from improv theatre, in order to address the topic of the project. This document summarises all these activities, methods, and techniques and it is the main outcome of the project.

The activities are divided in nine different categories, depending on the skill they aim to develop. These are getting to know each other (ice breakers), acceptance, collaboration, stepping out of the comfort zone, listening, awareness, expressing emotions and reacting, being vulnerable and creating characters on stage.

Each category consists of warm-ups, exercises, and games that aim to create an inclusive environment and guide the group to the desired skill. A lot of the exercises can be relevant in many different categories. The structure provided here is the one suggested by the facilitators of the project and the authors of this document. One can choose and combine the activities provided here, in any way that serves the purpose.

This document is a toolkit for any organisation, facilitator, trainer, educator, or individual active in the field of youth work.

Improv theatre

Non-formal education activities

Ice breakers



Introduction with a "...”!

Ice breakers

Description

The activity serves as a fun way for the members of the group to introduce themselves. It is usually used at the beginning of the session. Suitable for groups of people who don't know each other. It builds a friendly and inclusive environment.

Objectives

- Welcome every member to the group
- Give the chance to every member to introduce themselves and say how they would like to be addressed
- Build a friendly and inclusive environment
- Start the session in a fun way

Instructions

- In a circle, one by one the members step forward, introduce themselves in the third person (he/she/they) and they say something about their selves. i.e. their favorite hobby/animal/activity etc. (This is decided in advance by the instructor.)
- Then, they mime/act out their favorite hobby/animal/activity
- Everybody says “Hi [Name]!” repeating the mime from that person.
- The instructor starts with an example.



Group size:
5 - 30 people



Duration:
2 - 5 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Create a safe environment
- Encourage creativity

Stretch & Share

Ice breakers

Description

The activity serves as a fun way for the members of the group to warm up physically at the beginning of the session and become familiar to each other. Suitable for small groups. It builds a friendly and inclusive environment.

Objectives

- Warm up physically
- Welcome every member to the group
- Give the chance to every member to introduce themselves, say how they would like to be addressed, and share something about them with the rest of the group
- Build a friendly and inclusive environment

Instructions

- In a circle, one by one the members of the group introduce themselves in the third person (he/she/they), they start a stretch, and they share something about them (i.e. the highlight of their day/week, something they're looking forward to etc.)
- The rest of the group is listening while copying the stretch
- Continue until everyone introduces a stretch

Tip for the instructor

In order to keep the activity within the designed duration, choose in advance the topic and the time of the sharing (i.e. share one negative and one positive thought you had today)



Group size:
3 - 10 people



Duration:
2 - 5 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Create a safe environment for sharing
- Warm up the group physically

Name balls

Ice breakers

Description

This activity aims to increase the focus of the group and warm them up mentally while they are learning each other's names. Suitable for groups of people who don't know each other.

Objectives

- Learn each other's name
- Warm up mentally
- Increase the focus of the group

Instructions

Phase 1 - Your name ball

Standing in circle, the instructor throws to someone an imaginary ball saying at the same time their name (instructor's name). The person who received the ball throws it to someone else while saying their name. Keep passing the ball around with the name of the person who is throwing the ball at the time.

Phase 2 - Target name ball

Similar with Phase 1, but this time say the name of the person that you are sending the ball to (target).

Phase 3 - Someone's else ball

Same as before, but this time say the name of another person standing in the circle (apart from your own name and the target's name).

Tip for the instructor

Increase the difficulty by mixing the balls. All the balls together. Create multiple balls of the same type.



Group size:
3 - 25 people



Duration:
2 - 7 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Learn each other's names
- Increase focus

Cross circle

Ice breakers

Description

This is another activity for increasing the focus of the group while they are learning each other's names. Suitable for groups of people who don't know each other.

Objectives

- Learn each other's name
- Warm up mentally
- Increase the focus of the group

Instructions

- Everyone in a circle. One person (A) starts by calling another person's name (B)
- At that point, A starts walking towards B
- Before A gets to B, B needs to call another name (C) and start walking towards C, so B frees its spot in the circle for A to take
- C then needs to call yet another name and start walking, so B can take C's spot



Group size:
5 - 30 people



Duration:
5 - 7 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Learn each other's names
- Increase focus

Zombie name game

Ice breakers

Description

This activity can work as an energizer and its a fun way to learn each other's names. Suitable for groups who don't know each other.

Objectives

- Learn each other's name
- Warm up physically and mentally

Instructions

- The groups spreads in the room
- One person starts acting as a zombie and chooses another person in the room as the target
- The zombie starts walking towards the target slowly
- The target needs to shout someone's else name before the zombie touches them, and that person becomes the new target
- If the zombie touches the target, the target becomes also a zombie and together they choose another target
- Keep going until most of the group becomes zombies or when you feel that the group is energized enough

Tips for the instructor

Make sure that personal boundaries of everyone are respected and everyone is comfortable. Adapt accordingly.



Group size:
5 - 30 people



Duration:
2 - 5 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Learn each other's names
- Increase focus

Red light/Green light

Ice breakers

Description

This is a classic children's game to cool down at the end of session.

Objectives

- Learn each other's name
- Cool down
- Have fun

Instructions

- One person in the front (finish line) and the rest of the group at the back (start line)
- When the person in the front says "Green light" they turn their back to the players, who start moving forward
- When the person in the front says "Red light" and turns towards the players, if they see anyone moving they call out their name (or ask for their name) and the person starts again from the start line
- The game stops when someone from the players reaches and touches the person in the front



Group size:
5 - 30 people



Duration:
3 - 5 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Learn each other's names
- Be "silly"

Improv theatre

Non-formal education activities

Acceptance



Pass the clap

Acceptance



Group size:

5 - 30 people



Duration:

2 - 3 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Increase focus
- Connection
- Acceptance of failure

Description

This exercise works as a warm up, and builds connection between the group.

Objectives

- Increase focus
- Build connection
- Warm up mentally

Instructions

- In a circle, the instructor starts with turning to the person on the left (A), locking eye contact, and try to clap once in sync (pass the clap)
- Then A turns to the person on the left (B), locks eye contact and together they try to clap at the same time
- Keep passing the clap around the circle. Start slowly and increase speed gradually
- Later introduce clapping back to invert the flow, and finally, clap across the circle

Tips for the instructor

- It is ok if the claps are not synchronized. Focus on the eye contact.
- Highlight that the goal is not to trick or surprise each other. Focus on being kind to each other, connect, and collaborate
- The group should be aware of where the clap is, and make sure that it is passed around the circle equally

Bunny bunny

Acceptance



Group size:
5 - 30 people



Duration:
2 - 3 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Increase focus
- Connection
- Acceptance of failure
- Have fun

Description

This is probably one of the most popular warm up games ever.

Objectives

- Increase group's energy
- Have fun
- Focus
- Being happy with making mistakes

Instructions

Everybody stands in a circle.

Level 1:

One person says "Bunny Bunny" while miming bunny ears with their hands to themselves, and then says "Bunny Bunny" again while miming bunny hands pointing to someone else in the circle. The person pointed to says "Bunny Bunny" to themselves with bunny ears and then "Bunny Bunny" and points to someone else. The game continues with everyone passing around the circle. Try to keep the rhythm "bunny bunny, bunny bunny, bunny bunny, bunny bunny."

Level 2:

Keep the "Bunny Bunny" bit going but now the two people either side of the person saying "Bunny Bunny" turn and face them and say "Ticky Tacky, Ticky Tacky" while jumping side to side with their hands in the air.

Tip for the instructor

For multilingual groups, you can translate the word "Bunny" in other languages, every time you play the game.

Zip Zap Zop

Acceptance



Group size:

5 - 30 people



Duration:

2 - 3 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Increase focus
- Connection

Description

Quick energizer game to unite the group.

Objectives

- Listening and attention
- Group cohesion
- Energizer

Instructions

The group stands in a circle. One player claps at another and says "zip," the person clapped at then claps at someone else and says, "zap" and that person then claps at someone else and says, "zop." The pattern then repeats, "zip," "zap," "zop," and so on.

The key is to be present and ready to respond. Bend your knees slightly, lean forward, and be in it!

Variations

Experiment with other trios of words i.e. Kentucky Fried Chicken. Then combine trios together, as long as you keep the pattern 1-2-3. i.e. Zip - Fried - Zop, or Kentucky - Zap - Chicken etc.

Exaggeration circle

Acceptance



Group size:
5 - 30 people



Duration:
3 - 10 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Increase focus
- Attention to details

Description

This is a simple way to practice acceptance and get some of even the shiest people acting bold in front of the group.

Objectives

- Accepting other people's offers
- Getting out of comfort zone

Instructions

- The group stands in a circle. One player starts a small gesture/expression/sound
- The next player takes it over and makes it slightly bigger
- This continues all the way around until the last person takes it to the extreme!

Tips for the instructor

- Encourage the players to never lose a sense of the original gesture / expression / sound
- Every time, start from a different place around the circle, so everybody gets a chance to play in different intensities.

Hypnosis

Acceptance



Group size:

4 - 30 people



Duration:

5 - 10 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Let off control
- Build trust

Description

With this exercise the group can practice balancing between leading and following.

Objectives

- Let off control
- Build trust

Instructions

Form pairs. Person A holds an open hand, fingers upwards, about 15 - 20 cm from person B's face. Person A leads person B by gently moving around the palm. Person B has to be "hypnotized" by following the palm with their face at a fixed distance. Switch roles after a couple of minutes.

Tips for the instructor

Instruct people to care about the person who follows. Ensure that your partner is able to follow you.

Blind fingertip follow

Acceptance



Group size:

4 - 30 people



Duration:

5 - 10 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Let off control
- Build trust
- Take care of your partner

Description

This is another exercise to build trust and balance between leading and following.

Objectives

- Let off control
- Build trust

Instructions

Form pairs. Face each other and touch tips of the fingers. Person A closes their eyes. Person B guides person A in the room by dragging movement (no pushing). Person A follows with closed eyes, maintaining contact on the finger tips. Take care of your partner and avoid other couples. Swap leaders and followers after a couple of minutes.

Tips for the instructor

Make sure that the personal boundaries are respected and everyone is comfortable with the exercise.

Awesome!

Acceptance



Group size:
4 - 30 people



Duration:
2 - 3 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Accept other ideas
- Build energy

Description

This is a nice way to lift up the mood, energize the group, and practice accepting. Suitable for finishing a session on a high note.

Objectives

- Energizer
- Build a safe environment

Instructions

Standing in a circle, each person will state a small victory/achievement, i.e. "I tied my shoelaces!". Then the rest of the group shouts "AWESOME!" and cheer for that victory / achievement.

Tips for the instructor

Keep the pace and the energy high. Encourage everyone to find something positive to say.

Yes-let's!

Acceptance



Group size:

4 - 30 people



Duration:

2 - 3 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Accept other ideas
- Giving space

Description

This is a very simple, yet effective warm-up that sets a positive tone for the day's activities.

Objectives

- Energizer
- Practice acceptance

Instructions

Players are walking around the room. Anyone can take the initiative to call out an activity for everyone to start miming by shouting "Let's [activity]!". The rest of the group accepts by shouting "Yes, let's [activity]!".

Example:

A: "Let's start eating a sandwich!"

Rest of the group: "Yes, let's start eating a sandwich!"

And everyone starts miming their own interpretation of eating a sandwich, until someone calls out a new activity.

Tips for the instructor

- Suggest walking the room in straight lines, from point to point. This is to avoid ending up walking in a big circle
- Encourage players to only offer one suggestion until they sense that everyone else has had a chance to play. As an alternative, play in a circle, allowing each player a 'turn.'

Improv theatre

Non-formal education activities

Collaboration



Whoosh

Collaboration

Description

This is a simple and fun warm up exercise.

Objectives

- Energizer
- Be in the moment

Instructions

Everybody stands in a circle. Start with one person, who waves both hands to the person on the left, saying "Whoosh!". The next person passes the Whoosh to the next one, and that way the Whoosh is passed around the circle.

There are two other sounds/movements that can be made:

- "Nnnnope": Indicated by saying "Nnnnope" and holding up your hands in a stop sign. The "Nnnnope" changes the direction of the "Whoosh".
- "Weeee!": Indicated by saying "Weeee!" and waving up your hands like throwing something to the person two spots after us in the circle. The "Weeee!" skips the turn of the next person.

Tips for the instructor

- You can invent other sounds and gestures
- Remind the group that it's their responsibility to include everyone in the exercise equally (avoid keeping the moves at one side of the circle only)



Group size:
4 - 30 people



Duration:
2 - 3 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Team awareness
- Collaboration

Describe the object

Collaboration

Description

This exercise uses physicality and imagination to practice team work and attention to details.

Objectives

- Team work
- Attention to details

Instructions

- Everyone stands in a circle
- Someone creates an object, mimes holding it, and passes it to the next person
- The next person manipulates the object in a similar manner and “observes” (adds) another detail about it. i.e. color, scratches etc. Ideally mentioning previous details as it goes.

The goal is to create something from scratch, bit by bit, by accepting and complementing other player's additions.

After a few details are added on the object, start creating a new object from the next person in the circle.



Group size:
4 - 7 people



Duration:
5 - 7 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Attention to details
- Give space to others

Moving truck

Collaboration

Description

This exercise uses miming and physicality to help people practice connection and collaboration.

Objectives

- Team work
- Connection
- Space awareness

Instructions

The instructor asks for X number of people to move some objects from an imaginary truck. People need to move together creating the illusion of the object through collaborative mime. i.e. Instructor: "I'd like 3 people to move a sofa from the truck."

Tips for the instructor

Experiment with different number of players and a variety of objects. Highlight details you noticed from player's actions that helped making the object more "real".



Group size:
8 - 10 people



Duration:
5 - 7 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Attention to details
- Build connection
- Working in teams

Tug-of-war

Collaboration

Description

The classic children's game but instead of promoting competition, it requires collaboration.

Objectives

- Team work
- Sacrifice ego
- Connection
- Space awareness

Instructions

Divide the group in in two teams. Play a fake Tug of War (without a rope, just miming) encouraging the acting as a unit over the desire to win, having the courtesy to loose, in order to portray an interesting story. Play a best of 3 game and experiment how you can build up the drama.

Then divide the group in smaller teams and explore different competitions people can portray. i.e. arm wrestle, chess, ping ping etc.

The key here is that everyone needs to be on the same page in order to make the game look realistic.

Tips for the instructor

Highlight the elements that can make a fake competition realistic. i.e. expressions, emotional reactions, matching energy, patience and connection with our partner.



Group size:
2- 30 people



Duration:
5 - 7 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Working in teams
- Sacrificing ego
- Acting as a unit

One word at a time proverb

Collaboration

Description

This is a fun collaborative game/exercise where players work together to create proverbs on the spot.

Objectives

- Team work
- Sacrifice ego
- Connection

Instructions

Everybody stands in a circle. Go around the circle, each person adding a word to a sentence that will make up a wise proverb. After the sentence is completed, start a new one with the next person in the circle.

Ask for other styles of sentences i.e. motivational quotes, slogans, commercial titles etc.

A sentence makes sense when it is complete. It includes articles and connecting words. The goal is to create a complete sentence together. Even if some of us need to say just an “and”.

Tips for the instructor

- The obvious answer (word) is usually the best answer
- Highlight the importance of embracing a role and give at any moment what the team needs



Group size:
4 - 8 people



Duration:
5 - 7 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Working in teams
- Sacrificing ego

I am a tree

Collaboration

Description

A very popular and fun exercise, to practice collaboration. It can be used as an energizer as well.

Objectives

- Team work
- Energizer

Instructions

The players stand in circle. Player A goes to the middle, strikes a pose and says who or what they represent. For example, A lifts their arms over their head and says "I am a tree." A second player arrives (B), adds something to the picture by striking another pose, saying also who or what they are. A third player (C) enters the scene, adds something more, and completes the suggestions from A and B.

Now that the scene is finished, player A leaves the stage taking one of the other players with them. The other player stays on the stage and repeats their sentence (without changing their pose) As a result he offers a suggestion for a new scene.

Keep making scenes of 3 people. Do the final scene without limit, until all the players add something to the scene.

Tips for the instructor

Encourage people to support their partners.



Group size:
8 - 15 people



Duration:
3- 5 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Having fun
- Working in teams

Two lines layup

Collaboration

Description

A classic exercise aiming to practice collaboration and accepting on stage.

Objectives

- Team work
- Acceptance

Instructions

Form two lines, line A and line B. A person from each line steps on "stage". The person from line A initiates by stating a feeling about something, i.e. "This painting is beautiful!". Then, the person from line B replies to the statement by accepting it and adding something to it, i.e. "Thanks, my mother painted it for me".

In order for a scene to be clear and make sense, the players need to be on the same page. This is achieved by accepting each other's offers (that here we have a painting and it is beautiful) and react to it, making it look real.

Tips for the instructor

Encourage the players to give simple answers and give time to their partner to respond.



Group size:
6 - 20 people



Duration:
5 - 10 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Accepting other ideas
- Working in pairs

Improv theatre

Non-formal education activities

Stepping out of comfort zone



8 count shakedown

Stepping out of comfort zone



Group size:
4 - 30 people



Duration:
1 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:
• Energizer

Description

A fast and effective energizer.

Objectives

- Energizer

Instructions

Everybody stands in a circle. Count from 1 to 8 whilst shaking your left hand, then right hand, then left foot, then right foot.

i.e.

Right hand: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8

Left hand: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8

Right foot: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8

Left foot: 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8

Do the sequence again, counting up to 4, then up to 2, and finally up to 1. End with a jump, high volume, and energy.

Look up & scream

Stepping out of comfort zone



Group size:

4 - 8 people



Duration:

2 - 3 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Energizer

Description

Another energizer aiming to release energy and activate the body.

Objectives

- Energizer

Instructions

Everybody stands in a circle looking down. The instructor counts to 3, and everybody looks up directly at someone else. If eyes meet (two people looking at each other) they shout to the top of their lungs and leave the circle. Repeat until everyone has gone.

Tips for the instructor

Adapt if there's an odd number of people (join or leave the circle).

Alien dance

Stepping out of comfort zone



Group size:
4 - 10 people



Duration:
10 - 15 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Being comfortable while exposed
- Build trust
- Maintain composure under pressure

Description

A fun exercise that can get even the shiest person in the room performing in front of the whole group.

Objectives

- Be brave to jump in
- Relax in front of audience
- Connect with your teammate

Instructions

Everybody stands in a circle. One person creates (acts as) an alien creature using physicality and sounds. They “dance” as that alien in the middle of the circle until someone else jumps in imitating the same alien species. Both aliens recognize each other and make eye contact. The first alien moves out of the circle, prompting the second player to create a completely new alien species and a new dance starts. It goes on until everyone has gone at least once in the middle of the circle.

Tips for the instructor

- Ask the players how they felt being in the middle of the circle (comfortable, uncomfortable) and why they felt that way
- Ask them if it was easier to copy or start a new alien dance and what made it easier or harder

Dance circle

Stepping out of comfort zone



Group size:
4 - 10 people



Duration:
5 - 10 min



Materials:
Speaker/Sound
system



Concepts & Skills:

- Being comfortable while exposed
- Build trust
- Maintain composure under pressure

Description

A fun energizer that encourages shy people to be more outgoing.

Objectives

- Warm up
- Be comfortable with physicality

Instructions

Everybody stands in a circle. The instructor plays some music from a speaker and appoints a lead dancer. The lead dancer improvises dance moves and the rest of the group copy the lead dancer. After a while, point to someone else to become the new lead dancer.

Performing with a group can be useful for shy people. If everybody is doing it, we don't feel that exposed.

Tips for the instructor

Ask the players what was easier for them, to follow, or to be the dance leader.

5 things

Stepping out of comfort zone



Group size:
4 - 10 people



Duration:
5 - 10 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Maintain composure under pressure
- Reacting fast
- Be comfortable with mistakes

Description

A fun word association game.

Objectives

- Warm up
- Free your mind
- Commit to the moment
- Support your teammates

Instructions

Players stand in a circle. One player initiates by pointing at another and asking them to say 5 things as fast as they can based on a category of their choosing:

i.e. "Please tell me the titles of 5 songs you like" or "Please tell me 5 different ways to drink a coffee"

As the player names off each one, the rest of the group will count along, cheering when five have been said. The player who just named off five things will then point to another player and name a new category.

Tips for the instructor

Encourage speed and not cleverness. The more enthusiastic and attentive the player's teammates are, the better the player will do. Support! It's not necessary to be clever, either, or witty. Just to sell the idea and commit. There are no wrong answers.

Greetings

Stepping out of comfort zone



Group size:

5 - 30 people



Duration:

5 - 7 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Adaptability
- Being comfortable in unexpected situations
- Explore physicality and emotions

Description

This is an exercise to experiment with acting and expressing emotions.

Objectives

- Commit to the moment

Instructions

People walk around the room. The instructor asks them to greet each other with different themes or emotional undertones.

i.e. "Greet each other like you're in a hurry and your late for your appointment.", or "Greet each other like you couldn't wait for the moment to see them".

Tips for the instructor

After the exercise ask the players if they noticed any similarities or differences in the way different people embodied/act out the suggestions.

Two lines: Name the action

Stepping out of comfort zone



Group size:
6 - 20 people



Duration:
8 - 12 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Adaptability
- Being comfortable in unexpected situations

Description

A classic exercise that encourages commitment to the moment and acceptance.

Objectives

- Commit to the moment

Instructions

Form two lines, line A and line B. A person from each line steps on "stage". The person from line A initiates by miming a repetitive action. Then the person from line B says something mentioning the action that is being done. The person from line A agrees and makes a comment about the action.

The key detail is acceptance. If player B mentions an action that is not the one that player A had in mind, it is fine. Player A should accept it. Try not to change the action on purpose. Find a way to show that whatever you are miming is exactly what player B mentioned. It might be a bit challenging, but this is also the most fun part!

Tips for the instructor

Encourage the players to start with simple actions and lines.

3 Headed Expert

Stepping out of comfort zone



Group size:

3 - 4 people



Duration:

3 - 5 min



Materials:

3 chairs



Concepts & Skills:

- Adaptability
- Being comfortable in unexpected situations
- Stay connected
- Fast reactions
- Having fun

Description

This classic improv game illustrates the frustration and fun the interviewee/s get from answering questions one word at a time. Very fun to watch.

Objectives

- Collaboration
- Listening
- React to the unexpected

Instructions

Three players sit next to each other and play as one entire person with an expertise. The expert is being interviewed, and the players speak one word at a time to answer the questions. The host will get a suggestion of an unusual expertise (i.e. expert pirate ducks). Combining that with the rule of one word at a time makes things weird and fun! The interviewer can call out any strange answers, as if they were really interviewing one expert.

Tips for the instructor

- Take the unusual expertise as a suggestion from the audience
- The interviewer can be the instructor or a forth player
- The interviewer can come up with questions or take some questions from the audience

Improv theatre

Non-formal education activities

Listening



Alien Tiger Cow

Listening

Description

A fun way to get the team comfortable around each other and outside their shell.

Objectives

- Warm up
- Group awareness

Instructions

Everyone in a circle. There are 3 things a player can be:

- An alien: hold you index fingers up next to your head, as little antenna`s and say `Bleeb bleeb`, bending inwards into the circle;
- A cow: bend forward, hold your right hand on your tummy and go `Moooo`
- A tiger: push your right hand forward, imitating a claw and roar.

On the sign of the instructor, every player decides to become one of the three. The idea is for everyone to become the same, which obviously won't be the case, the first time. Re-do this until everyone is in sync.

Tips for the instructor

- You can invent your own animals (or things)



Group size:
5 - 30 people



Duration:
5 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Group awareness

Bunny bunny

Listening

Description

This is probably one of the most popular warm up games ever.

Objectives

- Increase group's energy
- Have fun
- Focus
- Being happy with making mistakes

Instructions

Everybody stands in a circle.

Level 1:

One person says "Bunny Bunny" while miming bunny ears with their hands to themselves, and then says "Bunny Bunny" again while miming bunny hands pointing to someone else in the circle. The person pointed to says "Bunny Bunny" to themselves with bunny ears and then "Bunny Bunny" and points to someone else. The game continues with everyone passing around the circle. Try to keep the rhythm "bunny bunny, bunny bunny, bunny bunny, bunny bunny."

Level 2:

Keep the "Bunny Bunny" bit going but now the two people either side of the person saying "Bunny Bunny" turn and face them and say "Ticky Tacky, Ticky Tacky" while jumping side to side with their hands in the air.



Group size:
5 - 15 people



Duration:
5 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Group awareness

Cross circle

Listening

Description

This is another activity for increasing the focus of the group while they are learning each other's names. Suitable for groups of people who don't know each other.

Objectives

- Learn each other's name
- Warm up mentally
- Increase the focus of the group

Instructions

- Everyone in a circle. One person (A) starts by calling another person's name (B)
- At that point, A starts walking towards B
- Before A gets to B, B needs to call another name (C) and start walking towards C, so B frees its spot in the circle for A to take
- C then needs to call yet another name and start walking, so B can take C's spot



Group size:
5 - 15 people



Duration:
5 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Group awareness

Free association

Listening

Description

This is a classic word association exercise.

Objectives

- Mental warm up
- Be in the moment
- Listening

Instructions

Everyone stands in a circle. One person starts by saying a word to the person on their left. Then that person thinks of a word that is associated with that word and says it to the person on their left.

Tips for the instructor

- Encourage players to say the first word that comes in their mind. Don't overthink it.
- Variation: Try the same exercise but in rhythm. Establish at the beginning a rhythm (by snapping the fingers, or swinging the hands). In order to stay in rhythm, the players need to say the first think that comes in their mind.



Group size:
5 - 15 people



Duration:
5 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Be in the moment
- Build connection

I said Y because you said X

Listening

Description

Another word association exercise with emphasizing on memory.

Objectives

- Mental warm up
- Be in the moment
- Listening

Instructions

Everyone stands in a circle. One person starts by saying a word to the person on their left. Then that person thinks of a word that is associated with that word and says it to the person on their left. Once the circle is completed, roll back by each person, justifying why they said their word, in the form of "I said Y because you said X", until it reaches the beginning.

Tips for the instructor

- Encourage players to say the first word that comes in their mind. Don't overthink it.
- Increase difficulty by doing two or more complete circles before you roll back
- Try creating two circles (one clockwise and one counter clockwise) and switch from one to another when you reach the beginning



Group size:
6 - 15 people



Duration:
5 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Be in the moment
- Build connection
- Active listening

Association patterns

Listening

Description

This is an association exercise with the use of patterns.

Objectives

- Mental warm up
- Be in the moment
- Listening

Instructions

Everyone stands in a circle. One person points at someone else and says a word. Keep pointing after the word is said. The person who was pointed at, now points at someone else and says another word. Avoid pointing at someone who already received a word. Once the cycle is completed and everyone received a word, repeat the whole chain a couple of times and then once more without pointing. Finally, repeat the chain once more while people are walking the room.

Tips for the instructor

- Encourage players to say the first word that comes in their mind. Don't overthink it.



Group size:
6 - 15 people



Duration:
5 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Be in the moment
- Build connection
- Active listening
- Recognizing patterns

3 lines repeating (1/2)

Listening

Description

The classic 3-lines scene exercise, focusing on listening and being in the moment.

Objectives

- Be in the moment
- Listening

Instructions

Make two lines, line A and line B. A person from each line will step on the “stage” and they will have a scene with three lines (sentences). Their objective is to platform (establish: WHO they are to each other, WHERE they are, WHAT they do there).

However, before they say their next line, they need to repeat the line said by the other person.

Example:

- Person A starts with an action: i.e. painting a wall
- Person B enters the stage and says a line that adds information to the scene: i.e. “Omg! Our new house looks beautiful!”
- Person A breaks character and repeats the line said by person B. Then goes back in character and says a line that adds even more information in the scene: i.e. “Yes honey, I chose the same colors we had in our wedding!”



Group size:
6 - 15 people



Duration:
10 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Be in the moment
- Build connection
- Active listening

3 lines repeating (2/2)

Listening

- Then person B repeats the last line of A (out of character) and says another line (in character) finishing the scene: i.e. "20 more rooms to paint and we are done! "

After the scene is done switch lines and a new pair of players steps in.

The goal here is to slow things down, and encourage the players to listen actively what their scene partner said, before they respond to it.

Tips for the instructor

After every line that is repeated, you can ask the person who repeated the line to identify what information has been established so far in the scene (some of the WHO, WHERE and WHAT of the scene). Then they can add something more, or whatever is needed in the scene, with their next line.



Group size:

6 - 15 people



Duration:

5 min



Materials:

-



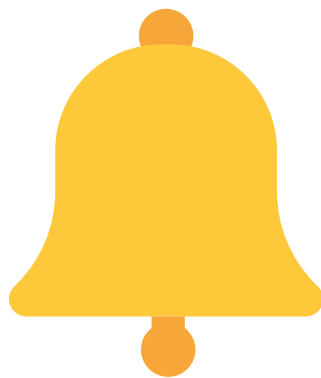
Concepts & Skills:

- Be in the moment
- Build connection
- Active listening

Improv theatre

Non-formal education activities

Awareness



Group figures

Awareness



Group size:
6 - 30 people



Duration:
5 - 7 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Group awareness
- Give what the group needs

Description

This is a fun exercise that uses physicality to increase group awareness and collaboration.

Objectives

- Group awareness
- Collaboration
- Acceptance

Instructions

People start walking the room. The instructor shouts the group size and an object.

i.e. "In groups of 4, form an sunflower!"

Then the group needs to form smaller groups of that size and make together that object using their bodies.

It's important that the exercise is done in silence and there's no verbal communication between the team members while they form the objects. The goal is to observe what everyone else is adding in the team, accept it, and add whatever is needed to complete the object.

Tips for the instructor

- Experiment with different sizes of groups and a variety of objects
- At the final call, ask the group to form an object all together (in a single group)
- Ask them to observe and be aware of their team members, and add whatever their team needs

Collaborative environment

Awareness



Group size:
4 - 10 people



Duration:
10 - 15 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Attention to the surroundings
- Attention to details

Description

With this exercise the group will try to create together an imaginary room. A great way to practice being aware of our surroundings and team members.

Objectives

- Environment awareness
- Collaboration
- Acceptance
- Attention to details

Instructions

Define a space on stage that the room will be created, with clear entrance and exit. The first person enters the room from the entrance, creates (interacts) with an object in that room and exits from the exit door. Then one by one, each person enters the room, interacts with previously created objects (i.e. a cup, a trash can etc.) and creates one more new object in the room, before leaving through the exit door.

Pay attention to the details like, how the doors work, and the position of the objects after the previous person left the room. When you add new objects in the room, try not to “erase” (cancel) whatever was already established by the previous players.

Tips for the instructor

Encourage players to give their best and pay close attention to the details.

Only X walking

Awareness



Group size:
4 - 15 people



Duration:
10 - 12 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Build connection
- Group awareness
- Take initiative when needed

Description

A warm-up exercise to practice awareness through non verbal communication.

Objectives

- Group awareness
- Collaboration
- Be in the moment

Instructions

Start walking the room. The instructor shouts a number and from then on, there can only be that amount of people walking at any given time. People should start or stop walking at random to force other people to take the responsibility to maintain the numbers. After a while, the instructor shouts a new number and so on.

The goal here is to be aware of our surroundings, act as a group, and step in when the group needs it (to maintain that number of people walking).

Tips for the instructor

- Encourage players to activate their peripheral vision
- Start with small numbers to make it easy, and increase difficulty by time

Walk the room enhancing details

Awareness



Group size:
4 - 15 people



Duration:
10 - 15 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Build connection
- Group awareness

Description

This is another group exercise, to practice paying attention to the details and be in the moment.

Objectives

- Group awareness
- Be in the moment
- Attention to details

Instructions

Start walking the room (no talking). Start paying attention to sounds you hear and little gestures you see from other players. Then, start copying these sounds and gestures and naturally amplify them.

The goal is to have the whole group to escalate slowly the same pattern by the end, like a big chain reaction.

Tips for the instructor

After reaching a peak, go back to neutral and start again.

Music director

Awareness



Group size:
4 - 15 people



Duration:
10 - 15 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Build awareness
- Adapt to dynamic environments

Description

This is a fun exercise done in pairs, to practice being aware, and reacting to the changing environment.

Objectives

- Environment awareness
- React to the unexpected

Instructions

Form two lines, line A and line B. Person A will go on "stage". Person B will start creating sound effects and background music from the sideline. Person A will get inspired by this, and start moving around the stage assuming a physicality, according to the sounds and music. Person B changes the sounds and music as the time goes, and person A reacts to that accordingly.

Let the scene go for about a minute. Then the players go to the end of the opposite line and a new pair begins.

Peas in a pod (1/2)

Awareness



Group size:
4 - 12 people



Duration:
10 - 15 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Build awareness
- Be in the moment
- Team work
- Attention to details

Description

A classic technique that can make the life of performers easy, if they just rely on each other.

Objectives

- Collaboration
- Awareness
- Empty your mind

Instructions

Form pairs. One pair at a time goes to the “stage” and assumes a neutral position, locking eye contact. They observe each other, looking for small characteristics, micro expressions, movements, and sounds. They start copying whatever they observe. This continuous give and take leads to amplifying the details that the players observe to each other. They slowly sync into a character defined through physicality and sounds. This helps them create unique and distinct characters just by relying on each other.

This technique is used in improvisation theatre to help the players create distinct characters out of nowhere, just by observing each other. In this setup, it helps the group to empty their mind and focus on each other. It also helps the more shy people feel comfortable performing on stage, since they don't need to think about what to do or say. They just have to look at each other.

Peas in a pod (2/2)

Awareness



Group size:
4 - 12 people



Duration:
10 - 15 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

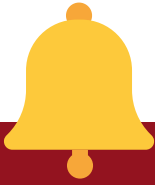
- Build awareness
- Be in the moment
- Team work
- Attention to details

Tips for the instructor

- Encourage the players to start slowly and take their time. Don't force leading each other. Let the amplification come naturally.
- Remind the couples to keep the eye contact. Players tend to forget that when they step on stage
- After a while, you can use music to inspire the players at the beginning of each try

Slide show presentation

Awareness



Group size:
6 people



Duration:
10 - 15 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Build awareness
- Be in the moment
- Team work
- Have fun

Description

A classic and fun game, where a slide show presentation is created on the spot!

Objectives

- Collaboration
- Awareness
- Have fun

Instructions

The game is played with six players, one as the storyteller and everyone else as part of the slide show. The instructor gets a recent vacation, adventure, or a recent event as a suggestion from the audience. The storyteller begins telling a story inspired by the suggestion. Every now and then says "CLICK" and the players form a static picture (a slide) inspired by the story so far. The storyteller can comment on the slide and then continue the story until the next slide. Continue until the story and the slide show is finished.

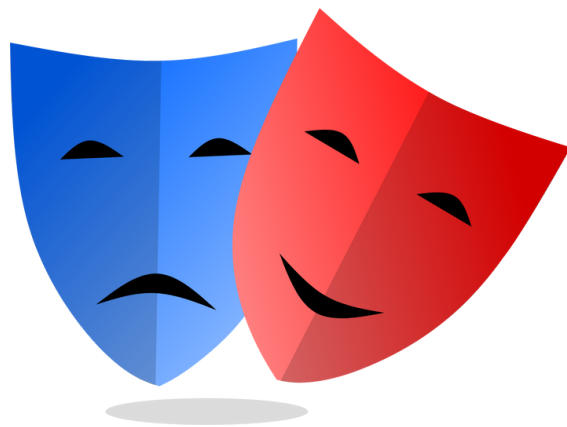
Tips for the instructor

- Encourage the players to "play" with each other: the slide show players are inspired by the storyteller, but the story teller can be inspired from the slide show players too, in order to continue the story
- Variation: Let the slide show players start with a slide and then the storyteller trying to explain what is happening in the picture

Improv theatre

Non-formal education activities

Expressions, Reactions & Emotions



Walk the room with emotions

Expressions, Reactions & Emotions

Description

A classic warm up exercise to explore emotions.

Objectives

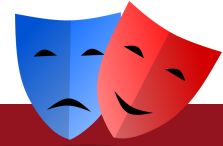
- Individuality when expressing emotions

Instructions

People walk around the room. The instructor shouts emotions and the players need to embody these emotions and continue walking the room.

Tips for the instructor

- Remind the players to use both their physicality and facial expressions
- Encourage the players to spot any similarities and differences in the ways people embodied the same emotions (it's important to understand that different people can express the same emotion very differently)



Group size:
6 - 30 people



Duration:
5 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Alternative ways of expression
- Individuality in expressions

Emotional association

Expressions, Reactions & Emotions

Description

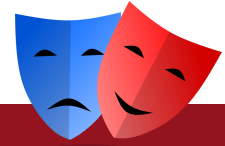
With this exercise the group will create different characters, put them in different situations, and try to explore how the characters feel in these moments.

Objectives

- Understanding the source of emotions
- Creating interesting characters

Instructions

Everybody stand in circle. One person starts by saying who the character is, through a name or an archetype. i.e. "Lucia", or "a newspaper reporter". The next person says where this character is. i.e. "at a dance class", or "in the streets where a protest is happening". The next person says how this character is feeling i.e. "anxious", or "excited". Finally, the fourth person says why this character feels like that i.e. "She's anxious because she doesn't think she's a good dancer", or "the reporter is excited because she finally got a case in the field". Start again from the person next to the one who started before, so it goes 1-2-3-4, then 2-3-4-5 and so on.



Group size:
6 - 8 people



Duration:
10 - 12 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Alternative ways of expression
- Individuality in expressions
- Exploring the source of emotions

Character on a bench

Expressions, Reactions & Emotions

Description

Another exercise to explore expressing emotions through physicality and facial expressions.

Objectives

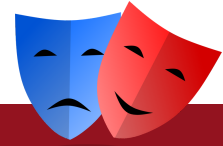
- Understanding the source of emotions
- Creating interesting characters
- Individuality in emotional expression

Instructions

Form two lines, line A and line B. Person A goes on “stage” and assumes a neutral expression. Person B starts narrating from the sideline, giving inside to the audience on how the character A is feeling. Then, person A starts acting as this character, displaying those emotions with body language and facial expressions, as the narration progresses. Keep the scenes short, up to one minute. At the end, persons A and B swap lines.

Tips for the instructor

- Keep it simple: one or two emotions per scene
- Remind players from line B to give enough time for the the players in line A to react and embody the emotions, before they give them more
- Remind players from line A of their stage position: to make sure that their expressions and physicality can be seen from the audience



Group size:
6 - 15 people



Duration:
10 - 15 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Alternative ways of expression
- Individuality in expressions
- Exploring the source of emotions

Emotional copycat (1/2)

Expressions, Reactions & Emotions

Description

This is another exercise to practice building interesting characters based on emotions.

Objectives

- Understanding the source of emotions
- Creating interesting characters
- Awareness

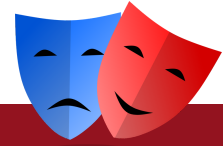
Instructions

Form two lines, line A and line B. A person from each line steps on "stage". Four actions will happen per scene:

- Player A shows a big emotion with a facial expression and a posture (static)
- Player B copies the emotion and the posture, and adds a gesture
- Person A repeats the emotion and the gesture and adds a phrase
- Person B repeats the emotion, the gesture and the phrase

At the end the players go at the back and swap lines.

The goal here is to pay attention to whatever our partner is adding to the scene (emotion, physicality), and complement that by adding something new (i.e. a phrase that justifies that emotion).



Group size:

6 - 15 people



Duration:

10 - 15 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

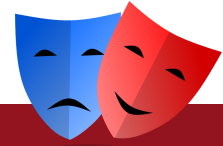
- Alternative ways of expression
- Individuality in expressions
- Exploring the source of emotions

Emotional copycat (2/2)

Expressions, Reactions & Emotions

Tips for the instructor

- Remind the players to keep it simple, adding one small, distinct thing at a time
- Remind them to give space and time to each other to react after each addition
- Take your time, it's more important to be relaxed and follow the steps than rush the exercise
- If you feel that the scene was rushed and the steps were not followed, don't hesitate to give recommendations and ask the players to try it again



Group size:

6 - 15 people



Duration:

10 - 15 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Alternative ways of expression
- Individuality in expressions
- Exploring the source of emotions

Emotional 3 lines scenes (1/2)

Expressions, Reactions & Emotions

Description

The classic three line scenes exercise, focusing this time on emotions.

Objectives

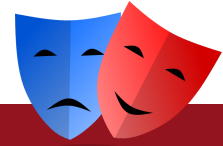
- Understanding the source of emotions
- Creating interesting characters
- Collaboration

Instructions

Form two lines, line A and line B. Every pair of players will perform a short scene. Their objective is to platform (establish: WHO they are to each other, WHERE they are, WHAT they do there, how they feel):

- Player A steps on “stage” and embodies a big emotion, shown by physicality and facial expressions
- Player B joins the stage and tries to match the emotion by copying the physicality and expressions. Then player B says a line, adding information to the scene (one or more of the WHO, WHERE, WHAT, and EMOTION).
- Player A answers with a line, adding more information to the scene
- Player B responds with a line, ending the scene with adding whatever else is needed to platform.

Try to justify the emotion that started the scene.



Group size:
6 - 15 people



Duration:
10 - 15 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Alternative ways of expression
- Individuality in expressions
- Exploring the source of emotions

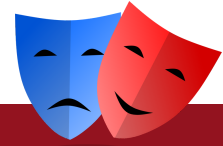
Emotional 3 lines scenes (2/2)

Expressions, Reactions & Emotions

The goal here is for the players to collaborate and be on the same page, in order to create a clear and realistic scene. This is achieved by accepting whatever our partner added to the scene (emotion, location, relationship), justify it, and add something more to it. If for example we see on stage two characters crying, we want to know why the characters feel that way and what is the relationship between them.

Tips for the instructor

- Remind the players to keep it simple, add one thing at a time. Especially at the beginning, the simpler the better
- Remind the players to give space and time for their partner to process what is happening and react, before they add something more. Imagine a scene as a ping-pong match. If you hit the ball, you need to wait for the ball to come back to hit it again!



Group size:
6 - 15 people



Duration:
10 - 15 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Alternative ways of expression
- Individuality in expressions
- Exploring the source of emotions

Improv theatre

Non-formal education activities

Being vulnerable



Emotional cacophony

Being vulnerable



Group size:
6 - 30 people



Duration:
8 - 10 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Alternative ways of expression
- Individuality in expressions
- Exploring levels of emotions

Description

This is an exercise to “push” the group out of their comfort zone and make them notice that everybody expresses their emotions in different ways and intensities.

Objectives

- Explore emotional levels
- Individuality in emotional expression

Instructions

Form two lines facing each other. Make sure that the lines are even and pairs are formed. Turn back to back. The instructor shouts an emotion and an intensity level, i.e. “Surprise, level 5”. Use an intensity scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is the most subtle form of that emotion and 5 is the most intense one. Then, the players embody this emotion with the given intensity level (still with their backs turned on each other). Then, the instructor counts down from 3 and people turn and face their pair, showcasing that emotion. Lines rotate, new pairs are formed, and another emotion and intensity level is given by the instructor.

Tips for the instructor

Encourage the group to spot similarities and differences in the way they embody the emotion and intensity with their pair. Two players can show “Anticipation” in different ways and level 5 of one player might look as level 3 for someone else.

Lock eyes

Being vulnerable



Group size:
6 - 15 people



Duration:
8 - 10 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Exploring your boundaries
- Experiment with feeling exposed

Description

With this exercise we explore the limits of feeling exposed by using the power of the eye contact.

Objectives

- Be comfortable with feeling exposed

Instructions

Form two even lines facing each other, such that couples are formed. When the instructor says "Go" lock eyes with your pair. Keep the eye contact in silence for 30 seconds. Then the lines rotate, new couples are formed, and start over again.

This is a simple exercise, without acting or complicated rules. But for a lot us, eye contact can be very intense and 30 seconds might look like a long time. It makes us feel exposed, uncomfortable, vulnerable, and we feel the need to turn our look away. This is absolutely normal. The goal here is to embrace that, and experience how these feelings change over these 30 seconds.

Tips for the instructor

Encourage the group to relax, breath normally, and experience how they feel. Ask them if it felt easy or difficult, and if these feelings changed over time. Increase the time for more intensity.

Gradient laughter

Being vulnerable



Group size:
6 - 15 people



Duration:
8 - 10 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Experiment with feeling exposed

Description

This is an exercise inspired by laughter yoga and laughter therapy.

Objectives

- Be comfortable with feeling exposed

Instructions

Form a circle. Encourage everyone to take a comfortable position (sit on the ground if possible). Start with complete silence, looking at each other. Then everybody starts with a fake smile. Then people start giggling with low energy and volume. In harmony, the group starts escalating to a full blown laughter at maximum energy by the end.

Tips for the instructor

- Encourage the group to take their time and let the laughter build up organically and influence each other
- After the exercise discuss in the circle how the group felt. Was it comfortable? Did it feel forced? How did these feelings change by the end of the exercise?

Coffee house

Being vulnerable



Group size:
6 - 10 people



Duration:
8 - 10 min



Materials:
2 chairs



Concepts & Skills:

- Be yourself
- Express your ideas
- Answer truthfully

Description

Improv players put parts of their selves in the characters they create. This is an exercise that amplifies this trait.

Objectives

- Share your opinions
- Be vulnerable
- React honestly

Instructions

Two players go to the “stage” and sit on chairs facing each other. The instructor gets a topic as inspiration from the audience. Then, the players have a normal conversation about this topic as their authentic selves, trying not to worry about people watching them. Try to have a normal conversation, don't act as characters.

Tips for the instructor

Encourage the players to:

- Share their opinions: focus on things you already know, avoid small talk questions
- Get out of their head and react: What do you see? How do you feel about that? Don't be in your head thinking what to say. Focus on each other and share your feelings
- Be vulnerable: honest reactions are endearing

Performatic poetry

Being vulnerable



Group size:

6 - 30 people



Duration:

8 - 10 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Be in moment
- Commit
- Have fun

Description

A classic improv game where players create poems together on the spot!

Objectives

- Be comfortable in front of audience
- Have fun

Instructions

The instructor asks for five volunteers to play the game. The players form a line at the back of the stage facing the audience. The instructor gets a suggestion from the audience which will be the title of the poem. Then, one by one the players step forward and say a line from the poem and act it out. No rhythmic or metric is needed, just overly dramatic performance.

Tips for the instructor

Remind the players that there are no wrong answers, as long as they commit to their performance and acting.

What makes you feel vulnerable?

Being vulnerable



Group size:
6 - 10 people



Duration:
8 - 10 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Recognize your vulnerabilities
- Feel comfortable to share them with other people

Description

An honest discussion where the group opens up and share their vulnerabilities.

Objectives

- Unknowledge and embrace your vulnerabilities
- Share yourself with others
- Listen

Instructions

Form a circle and make sure that everyone takes a comfortable position (sit on the ground if possible). Discuss with the group what situations make you feel vulnerable, what it means to feel vulnerable to you, and how you cope with it. It is an honest casual conversation.

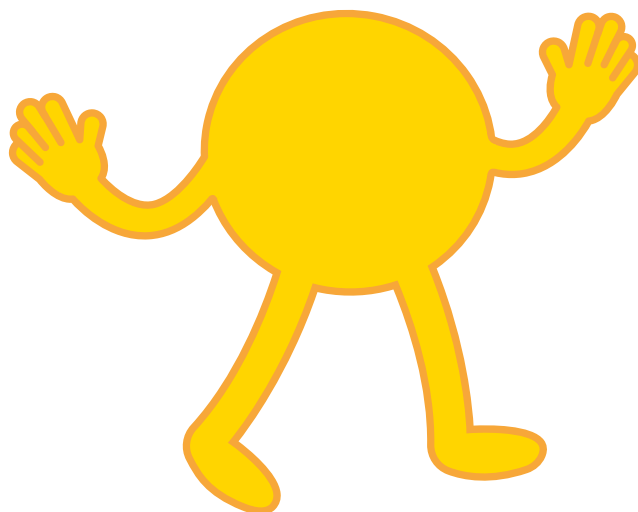
Tips for the instructor

- Mediate the conversation
- Give space and encourage everyone to share something

Improv theatre

Non-formal education activities

Characters & Platforming



Characters, walk the room!

Characters & Platforming

Description

A dynamic and fun exercise aiming to explore different ways to create characters on stage (physicality, voice, imitating other people, status, emotions etc.)

Objectives

- Explore different types of characters

Instructions

Walk around the room. The instructor shouts prompts of archetypes, physicality, status, emotions, real people in your life etc. Then the group embodies a character using these prompts and continues walking the room as this character. Examples of prompts:

Archetype: "Walk the room as a superhero"

Physicality: "Walk the room by letting a specific part of your body lead you i.e. your elbow"

Status: "Walk the room as a Queen/King or as an office assistant"

Emotions: "Walk the room as if you just heard the happiest news of your life!"

Real people you know: "Walk the room as your professor in high school"

Tips for the instructor

Ask from the group to identify what were the strong characteristics of the characters they created. What made these characters memorable?



Group size:
6 - 30 people



Duration:
8 - 10 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Explore different characters
- Experiment with physicality, voice, expressions

Characters endowment

Characters & Platforming

Description

This is an exercise that challenges the group to collaborate and create beautiful and interesting characters for their teammates.

Objectives

- Be kind to each other
- Team work

Instructions

Everybody stands in circle. Person 1 says an adjective (i.e. clever). Person 2 (the next one in the circle) says a profession (i.e. baker). Person 3 gives a name (i.e. Carla). Finally, person 4 acts out a quick scene portraying that character (in the case of the example: a clever baker named Carla). Move along, starting the same sequence but from person 2, until everybody gets a chance to act as a character.

Tips for the instructor

The goal here is to be kind to each other when we create the characteristics. Make the life of your teammates easy and help them create characters that will make them shine. Avoid adjectives like "stupid" or "drunk". Help them play to the top of their character's integrity.

Remind the acting players to use the tools they practice in the previous exercise (physicality, emotion, voice etc.).



Group size:

6 - 8 people



Duration:

8 - 10 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Understanding the background and motives of other people

Platforming: What?

Characters & Platforming

Description

A classic three line scene exercise, focusing on one of the basic elements of an improvised scene: What is happening in the scene?

Objectives

- Collaboration
- Acceptance
- Be in the moment

Instructions

Form two lines, line A and line B. Player A steps on “stage” and starts miming a repetitive action. Player B joins the stage, copies the action and says a line related with the action that is being done. Player A answers with a second line and player B finishes the scene with the third line. At the end the players go at the back, they swap lines, and a new scene starts.

It's important here to accept whatever our partner gave to the scene, even if it doesn't match the idea we initially had. If for example player A starts miming chopping woods with an axe, but player B sees it as hammering nails with a hammer and says “Hammer one more nail on the floor and we are done!”, now the characters are hammering nails on the floor.

Tips for the instructor

Tell the players to try to talk only about what is happening in the scene. i.e. cooking, sheltering from the rain etc.



Group size:
6 - 15 people



Duration:
8 - 10 min



Materials:

-



- Concepts & Skills:**
- Collaborating in teams on stage

Platforming: Where?

Characters & Platforming

Description

A classic three line scene exercise, focusing on one of the basic elements of an improvised scene: Where the scene is happening?

Objectives

- Collaboration
- Acceptance
- Be in the moment

Instructions

Form two lines, line A and line B. Player A steps on “stage” and starts miming a repetitive action. Player B joins the stage, copies the action and says a line related with the location of the scene. Player A answers with a second line and player B finishes the scene with the third line. At the end the players go at the back, they swap lines and a new scene starts.

It's important here to accept whatever our partner gave to the scene, even if it doesn't match the idea we initially had. If for example player B says “What a lovely day to be at the beach!”, now the two characters are at the beach, even if player A imagined the scene to be in a basement.

Tips for the instructor

Tell the players to try to talk only about the location where the scene is happening. Feel free to use physicality and interact with the environment to manifest that location.



Group size:
6 - 15 people



Duration:
8 - 10 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Collaborating in teams on stage

Platforming: Who?

Characters & Platforming

Description

A classic three line scene exercise, focusing on one of the basic elements of an improvised scene: Who the characters we are watching are to each other?

Objectives

- Collaboration
- Acceptance
- Be in the moment

Instructions

Form two lines, line A and line B. Player A steps on “stage” and starts miming a repetitive action. Player B joins the stage, copies the action and says a line adding information about who the characters are to each other. Player A answers with a second line and player B finishes the scene with the third line. At the end the players go at the back, they swap lines and a new scene starts. It can be as simple as “Hey brother!” or “Good morning Ms. President”.

Like before, it's important here to accept whatever our partner gave to the scene, even if it doesn't match the idea we initially had.

Tips for the instructor

Tell the players to try to talk only about the character's relationship, how they feel about each other, and what is their role in each other's life.



Group size:
6 - 15 people



Duration:
8 - 10 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Collaborating in teams on stage

Platforming: Why?

Characters & Platforming

Description

A classic three line scene exercise, focusing on one of the basic elements of an improvised scene: Why whatever is happening is happening?

Objectives

- Collaboration
- Acceptance
- Be in the moment

Instructions

Form two lines, line A and line B. Player A steps on “stage” and starts miming a repetitive action. Player B joins the stage, copies the action and says a line adding information about why this action is happening. Player A answers with a second line and player B finishes the scene with the third line. i.e. if the character is cooking, talk about hosting friend over for dinner. At the end the players go at the back, they swap lines and a new scene starts.

Like before, it's important here to accept whatever our partner gave to the scene, even if it doesn't match the idea we initially had.

Tips for the instructor

Tell the players to try to talk only about why whatever is happening is happening.



Group size:
6 - 15 people



Duration:
8 - 10 min



Materials:
-



Concepts & Skills:

- Collaborating in teams on stage

Platforming: Complete!

Characters & Platforming

Description

A classic three line scene exercise, aiming to create the base reality of an improvised scene (platforming): WHERE the scene is happening, WHO the characters are to each other, WHAT they are doing, and WHY this is happening.

Objectives

- Collaboration
- Acceptance
- Be in the moment

Instructions

Form two lines, line A and line B. Player A steps on “stage” and starts miming a repetitive action. Player B joins the stage, copies the action and says a line adding information in the scene. Player A answers with a second line, adding more information, and player B finishes the scene with the third line, adding whatever else is needed. At the end the players go at the back, they swap lines and a new scene starts. Try to define all the elements of the scene (Where, Who, What, and Why) using three lines and an action.

Be in the moment, accept whatever our partner gave to the scene, and work together to build a realistic and interesting scene!

Tips for the instructor

Tell the players to add at least one element (Where, Who, What, or Why) with each line said.



Group size:
6 - 15 people



Duration:
8 - 10 min



Materials:

-



Concepts & Skills:

- Collaborating in teams on stage

Acknowledgements - Thanks

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the following individuals and organisations who have played a crucial role in the completion of this document.

First, to the facilitating team of the project “Improv for Change”, whose experience and knowledge provided the base for the creation of this toolkit.

To our partner organisations for their commitment and effort, and especially to Youth Mix, the host organisation of the project “Improv for Change”, who provided essential support and guidance through the whole process.

To the Erasmus+ programme and the Dutch National Agency who recognised the value in the project “Improv for Change” among several others and funded it.

We would like to express our gratitude to the members of our organisation “Arts for Change”, whose efforts and commitment transformed the project from an idea to a lifelong memory.

Finally, our deepest appreciation to the 41 participants of the project “Improv for Change”, who trusted us, became part of this journey, and created an unforgettable experience. Their input was significant for the creation of this toolkit.

