

Just a few "Start the Ball Rolling" Activities ...

What did you say?

Objective: to learn what it might feel like if you have a disability that makes it hard to focus or concentrate when other things are going on in your environment (such as Autism).

Person # 1: Sits at table facing "Scout Master" (person #5) who will read instructions about an upcoming troop activity.

Person # 2: stand behind person # 1 and lightly touch neck with feather over and over.

Person # 3: talk loudly about an activity you just did to person # 1.

Person # 4: lightly pat person # 1 on the head the entire time.

Person #5: read instructions for the upcoming activity and ask person # 1 questions about it in a normal voice.

Discuss outcome: What made it hard to hear the "Scout Master"?

Whoa! Back off!!

Objective: to get a feel for what personal space is. (Aspergers or Autism)

Break up into two groups. Form two parallel lines. Have participants in each line face each other. Instruct participants to start walking toward the person across from them and stop when it becomes too uncomfortable for them.

Discuss outcome:

How many steps did it take?

Did some people get up close and personal?

A true sense of personal space should be to put your arms straight out and turn in a circle. You should not touch anyone else.

How's that again?

Objective: To be able to take someone's differences/abilities into account when working together. (communication, cognitive, developmental disabilities).

Have two participants sit back to back. One is given a piece of paper with an abstract shape on it. The other is given a blank piece of paper and pencil to duplicate his partner's shape by how well his partner explains the shape to him/her.

You can do this by having each participant draw a shape using their dominant hand and then using their non-dominant hand. Eye hand coordination plays a role in how well the two shapes will look,

Discuss outcome: How hard was it to give/get directions? How hard was it to get your hands to draw the shape correctly?

One Hand Down

Objective: Have participants use one hand to tie their shoe, button a shirt, and unscrew jar lid. To experience in a small way what it must be like for friends with a Physical disability.

Discuss outcome: Not so easy, right! What if they couldn't, use either hand?

"start the ball rolling" activities cont.

My Eyes, My Eyes'

Objective: To navigate in the room without using your eyes. (Visual Impairment)
To feel what it must be like to not be able to see.

Have participants team up with one other person. One will be blindfolded while the other person will not be. The "blind" person will be guided into the room (that has been partially rearranged) by the "guide". The guide can tell the blind person which way to move and even hold onto arm.

Discuss outcome: Was it easier to tell person where to go or to guide them?

Say What?'

Objective: To feel what it could be like if you had a hearing impairment. Have the group pair up. One person will put in earplugs while the other person will read from a list of phrases without talking out loud. After 5 min. switch and have other person put in earplugs and try to determine what is being said.

Discuss outcome: What made it easy or hard to determine what was being said?
What would be helpful for the person who couldn't hear to help them understand?

I See Colors!

Objective: To feel what it might be like for a person who's brain mixes things up. (Dyslexia or other Learning Disability).

Put a copy of "colors" sheet in front of participants and ask them to say the name of the color that is written, not the color of the word that is written.

Discuss outcome: Was it hard to follow directions?

Puppeteer

Objective: Person #1 to tie a string to person #2's wrist. Person #1 will control person #2's arm movement using the string and Person #2 will lose control of their arm.

Discuss outcome: How did it make you feel when you didn't have control of your arm?