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# LIGHT & LIVELIES

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“Light & Liveliess” are short games or exercises designed to revive and energize a tired or droopy group. They can be used in workshops, meetings, etc. when there may not be time for a break. Lots of activities can be invented on the spot or retrieved from childhood. Following is a collection of some “Light & Liveliess” to add to your repertoire.

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## THE BIG WIND BLOWS...

**Set up:** Have participants sit in a circle. The leader stands in the middle. Make sure there are no extra seats in the circle.

**Play:** The leader in the middle says, “*The Big Wind Blows for Everyone...wearing glasses,*” for example. Then everyone for whom that thing is true quickly changes seats. The leader also tries to get a seat. The person left standing when everyone else is seated becomes the new leader in the middle. If the leader calls out “*Hurricane!*” everyone changes seats.

**Rules:** 1) The leader must pick something that is also true about him/herself. 2) Players may NOT move to a seat immediately beside them; they must move at least 2 seats away.

**Tips:** The leader may choose things that are obvious/visible (everyone wearing sandals, everyone with gray hair, everyone wearing a watch, etc.) or they may choose invisible things (everyone who’s an oldest child, everyone who’s ever been arrested, everyone who was born in the first six months of the year, etc.)

**Uses:** Gets the blood pumping by moving quickly.

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## TOUCH BLUE

**Set up:** Have participants stand together randomly in a loose cluster.

**Play:** The leader calls out things for people to touch – e.g. “*Touch Blue*” – and all participants touch something blue on another participant. Examples: touch [any color], touch gray hair, touch black socks, touch glasses, touch beards, touch watches, touch someone with blue eyes, touch shoulders, touch elbows, etc.

**Tips:** Works best at a quick pace. Leader should call out different things to touch in snappy succession.

**Uses:** Generates laughter and promotes a sense of togetherness.

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## APPLES & BANANAS

**Set up:** Have participants stand in a circle facing the center. The leader stands in the middle. Ask each person to place their right hand on the shoulder of the person to their right. Say, “*This person is your apple.*” Have them drop their hands and then place their left hand on the shoulder of the person to their left. Say, “*This person is your banana.*” Explain that when the leader points to someone and says “*Apple,*” that person must say the name of the person to their right. When the leader points to someone and says “*Banana,*” that person must say the name of the person to their left. If the person says the wrong name or delays too long (more than 3 seconds), he/she must take the place of the leader in the center, and the leader takes that person’s place in the circle. If the leader calls out “*Upset the Fruit Basket!*” everyone must change places in the circle, resulting in each person having a new “*apple*” and a new “*banana.*”

**Play:** The leader points to one participant in the circle and calls out “*Apple*” or “*Banana.*” The person indicated must immediately say the name of their “*apple*” or “*banana*” as the case may be. Play then continues. Whenever a participant messes up, he/she moves to the center and takes over the leader role.

**Tips:** 1) Pace = quick! Point rapidly from one person to another randomly within the circle. 2) Order = random! Vary the order in which you call out “*apple*” and “*banana.*” 3) Remember to “*Upset the Fruit Basket!*” every once in awhile.

**Uses:** Reinforces names of group members just learning to know each other and stimulates mental agility.

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## GIRAFFES AND ELEPHANTS

**Set up:** Have participants stand in a circle facing the center. The leader stands in the middle. Explain that when the leader points to someone and says “**Giraffe**,” that person immediately raises both arms straight up, imitating the long neck of a giraffe. The two people on either side immediately bend over and grab the knees of the “neck” person, imitating the large, knobby knees of a giraffe. When the leader points to someone and says “**Elephant**,” that person immediately extends one arm out in front, imitating the long trunk of an elephant. The two people on either side of the “trunk” person immediately arc both arms, imitating the large, floppy ears of an elephant. If any person in the triad fails to make the correct motion or delays too long (more than 2 seconds), he/she must take the place of the leader in the center, and the leader takes that person’s place in the circle.

**Play:** The leader points to one participant in the circle and calls out “**Giraffe**,” or “**Elephant**.” The person indicated and the two on either side must immediately make the appropriate gestures. Play then continues. Whenever a participant messes up, he/she moves to the center and takes over the leader role.

**Tips:** 1) Pace = quick! Point rapidly from one person to another randomly within the circle. 2) Order = random! Vary the order in which you call out “**Giraffe**,” or “**Elephant**.”

**Uses:** Stimulates mental agility and gets people moving.

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## MAGAISA TAYO

**Background:** This song comes from the Philippines. The language is Tagalog. The rough translation is “how beautiful, how beautiful it is when we all live together in harmony.” The words written phonetically are:

//Ma-ga-i-sa Ta-yo Ma-ga-i-sa  
Na-na-na Na-na-na-na Na//  
//Na-pa-ka-gan-dang Pag-mas-dan  
Kung Ta-yo y Ma-ga-i-sa//

**Set up:** Have the song written out in large letters on newsprint or posterboard ahead of time. Have participants stand in a circle facing the center. Teach the song to the group. You might start by saying the words so that the pronunciation is clear. After several times through singing the song, teach the motions. Instruct participants to raise their left hands to shoulder level, palms up. Using your right hand, moving in a circular direction (clockwise), pat your right thigh, then your left thigh, then your own left hand, then your neighbor’s left hand, to the rhythm of the song.

**Play:** The song starts rather slowly so people can get the hang of the motions. Each round of the song goes a little faster.

**Uses:** Great fun, generates laughter and good spirit.

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## MESSAGE CIRCLE

**Set up:** Have participants form a straight line with the tallest person in the center and graduating down to the shortest people on either end. Then wrap the line around to form a circle, each person facing the back of the person in front of them.

**Play:** Begin massaging the shoulders of the person in front of you. After a few minutes, switch directions, massaging the person who has been massaging you.

**Tips:** If people are too spread out and find it difficult to reach the person in front of them, have everyone take a step *towards the center of the circle*. Moving forward only gets the whole group going in circles!

**Uses:** Loosens and relaxes stiff muscles, renews energy, and promotes a sense of caring.

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## IN THE OCEAN, ON THE SHORE

**Set up:** Stretch a long rope or strip of masking tape on the floor down the center of the room. Have participants stand along one side of the line. Explain that they are currently standing “**On the Shore**.” Have participants jump across the line. Now they are standing “**In the Ocean**.”

**Play:** The leader calls out “**In the Ocean**” and “**On the Shore**” in rapid succession, varying the order, and participants jump to the appropriate side of the line. A participant who jumps to the wrong side of the line is out.

**Uses:** Gets the blood pumping and the mind alert.

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## HOKEY POKEY

**Set up:** Have participants stand in a large circle.

**Play:** Sing the Hokey Pokey: “ya put your right hand in, ya put your right hand out, ya put your right hand in and ya shake it all about; do the Hokey Pokey and ya turn yourself around; that’s what it’s all about.”

- left hand
- right foot
- left foot
- head
- back side
- whole self

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## ROCK-A-MY-SOUL

**Set up:** Have participants stand in a large circle.

**Play:** Sing Rock-a-my-Soul: (Clap) “Rock-a-my-soul in the bosom of Abraham (3x); Oh, rock-a-my-soul”  
(Stretch arms up as high as possible, stand on tiptoes) “So high, can’t get over it”  
(Bend from waist down to floor, touching toes) “So low, can’t get under it”  
(Stretch arms out as wide as possible) “So wide, can’t get around it”  
(Bring hands together and thrust out in front) “Ya gotta go through that door”

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## SHING, SHONG, BOING

**Set up:** Have participants stand in a large circle. Explain the three possible movements/sounds to pass around the circle: “shing” “shong” and “boing.” Swinging both hands towards the person next to you (on either side) while saying “Shing” passes to that person; Swinging both hands forward from your body towards anyone else in the circle (except the two people on either side of you) while saying “Shong” passes to that person; Raising both hands (one on each side of your head) and wiggling them while saying “Boing” bounces the pass back to the person who passed it to you. You may not “shing” or “shong” to the person who passed to you; you may “boing” as much as you like. If anyone does a motion or sound incorrectly they are out.

**Play:** pass the “shing,” “shong” or “boing” around the circle. Try a test run first. Then see how fast the group can go.

**Uses:** increases mental agility; good for laughs