

TOSS AND SURVIVE ACTIVITY

This activity is an active and engaging way to introduce the concept of inclusion (especially with a younger group). It works well with rolled up socks (preferably clean!), crumpled paper, or snowballs.

Have the group circle up. Each person gets two balls.

Say: “You each have two balls in your hands. If a ball hits you, you die. The goal of this activity is to be alive at the end of 30 seconds. Go!”

Now count to 30 seconds out loud and you’ll probably see an all-out snowball fight. If that happens, do it again and again until the group realizes that the best way to survive is for nobody to throw their balls.

Debrief:

- “To those who immediately attacked, why did you do it?”
- “To those who ran away, why did you do it?”
- “To those who held their balls, why did you do it, and what did it feel like to not throw them?”
- “What were your assumptions about this game?” (Usually, assumptions include that the game was competitive, that it meant there were winners and losers, and that folks couldn’t collaborate or communicate)
- “What can these balls represent when you’re on an outdoor expedition with a group of people?”

Conclude: “This is the ultimate metaphor for inclusion. Think of these balls as things we do that make people feel excluded. Though for the thrower it feel like throwing snowballs or paper, for the target/victim it can feel like a rock. Imagine how much more inclusive it would be if you didn’t react based on a knee-jerk and hurl your snowballs. Then everybody could win!”