

Energizers and Icebreakers

Recommended Age: 10+

Goals

- To build rapport and get to know youth.
- To refocus group by pausing for a body movement activity or game.

Seven Natural Ways of Healing

Instructions

- Ideally, get youth to stand in a circle.
- Use words from the language for the natural ways of healing, if known to you, or ask youth if they know these words in their language.
- Lead by doing or saying the following:
 - **Indigenous knowledge explains there are seven ways of healing that bodies naturally do. Talking, laughing, crying, yawning, shaking, yelling, and sweating.**
 - **Let's try them together!**
 - **Everyone start talking. (Talking can turn into singing easily.)**
 - **Let's try laughing together. Try a nervous laugh, how does that sound? Now, try a deep belly laugh. Great!**
 - **Now, what can crying look like or sound like? Try it, even if it's not for real. Good job!**
 - **Now, let's yawn. We're so tired and need to take air in. Yawn big. See if it's contagious.**
 - **Let's shake ourselves up. Shaking can turn into dancing so easy. Do your best shake or dance.**
 - **Let's all yell Boozhooo! (Greeting in Anishanaabemowin)**
 - **Anybody feel sweaty after all that? That's good. Sweating is another way of changing energy, releasing, and healing.**

Debrief

- **It is important to listen to our bodies because they naturally know what to do to take care of us. When we feel the need to talk to someone, have a good laugh, or cry, we should do it.** We can give ourselves permission to do these things, even if others don't understand. It is part of our healing.
- Sometimes, we find ourselves shaking our leg, yawning, or sweating. These are things we can't really control. Ever try to fight a yawn? It's hard to do. **Our body takes really good care of itself and is connected to all other parts of our health – the mental, emotional, and spiritual.**
- Indigenous knowledge understands the natural ways of healing and they are built into Indigenous ways of life. There is Pow Wow dancing, the Hoop Dance, and the Sundance ceremony. There are healing lodges actually called Sweat Lodges and the Shake Tent ceremony. Talking Circles and Drum groups are common. **There are lots of diverse healing practices Indigenous Nations use throughout Manitoba that incorporate the Seven Natural Ways of Healing.** People are often singing, drumming, dancing, laughing, sweating, yelling, and even yawning and crying as they participate. It is about letting go of what we don't need and calling in the new energy we need to carry on in a healthy way. For information about these Indigenous practices, ask the Medicine People in your community or look for local Indigenous organizations to learn from. See Elder Margaret Lavelle, *Seven Natural Ways of Healing*, on CBC Radio: Unreserved for more information.

Winds of Change Energizer I

Instructions

- Youth stay seated.
- The facilitator says, “The winds of change blow for anyone who... (insert statement here)” and then does an action.
- Everyone who shares that statement stands up, then performs whatever action is called for.
- Then, the facilitator says another statement.

Examples of statements are:

- Has more than 2 siblings - hop on one leg
- Ate cereal today - rub their belly
- Heard a song today - play air guitar
- Has a piercing/new hair cut - make a thumbs up
- Learned something new today - give the person next to you a high five
- Has gone for a bike/boat/skidoo ride - clap your hands
- Is wearing black/white/striped socks - show us
- Has gone hunting/fishing - turn around in a circle
- Makes music - pump your fist
- Plays sports - dribble a basketball
- Runs fast - run on the spot
- Journals - write your name with your finger
- Create your own - create your own

Winds of Change Energizer II

Each person needs a chair for this activity.

- Youth stay seated in the circle.
- One chair is removed and a facilitator stands in the middle of the circle.
- The one standing says a statement that is true for them. “The winds of change blow for anyone who... (insert statement here).”

- Everyone else who that statement is true for then gets up and runs to another chair (ideally, not the chair on either side of them). The last one standing becomes the facilitator and says, “The winds of change blow for anyone who (insert another statement here).”

Examples of statements are:

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Write Your Name Energizer

In this energizer, ask youth to pretend to write their name using various body parts. For example...

- Finger
- Elbow
- Stomach
- Head
- Foot
- Nose
- Bum

Being a Kid Energizer

Contributed by Colby Tootoosis, Activist & Speaker, Poundmaker Cree Nation

Goal

- To allow youth to be a kid and to reaffirm life.

Instructions

The younger youth set the pace and the number of body parts you do.

- Ask youth to stand up.
- Then, read the following and give youth time to make the movements:
 - First, please stretch high like a tree. Sway side to side.
 - Now, make an eagle and fly.
 - Now, roar like a bear and stomp.
 - Now, touch the ground and bless yourself.
 - Now, touch your heart. Tap it and be grateful for all the truth and love in your heart.
 - Now, touch your mind and be grateful for all the thoughts you have. And recognize that you are not your thoughts, you are a spirit.
 - Now, touch your body and be grateful for all the things your body does. You are not your body, you are a spirit.
 - Now, touch your belly and be grateful for all the food the land provides.
 - Now, touch your butt and be grateful because it helps you sit and rest.