1.2. DISABILITIES RACE

Aim
To make people realise what it is like to have certain limitations.

Resources needed
- Paper
- Pens
- Felt-tip pens
- Paint
- Blindfold
- Rope
- Pendulum
- Earplugs
- Balloons
- Birthday candles

Group size
Five to 40 people

Time needed
Two hours

Step-by-step description
1. If necessary, divide the group into smaller groups of about five to eight persons.
2. Explain to the group that they should accomplish several tasks in one hour. Some tasks are group tasks and should be done by the whole group, none excluded. Others are permanent tasks, like a balloon that may never touch the ground but should all the time be kept in motion, or a pendulum that should remain swinging. Examples of group tasks may be:
   - paint a group portrait;
   - keep the pendulum swinging;
   - pass through an obstacle run (climbing through a hoop, over a chair, under a table, etc.);
   - make a song about the training;
   - pass a stick every 10 seconds;
   - by the end, everyone should have a clown’s face (grease paint or masks);
   - fold paper boats;
   - keep a birthday candle burning (one has to be lit with the other);
   - keep a balloon afloat.
3. In addition, some people in the group are rendered “disabled”. They are blindfolded, have to wear earplugs, are tied to another person, are only allowed to speak in a language other than the common language, are not allowed to say yes or no, are not allowed to speak at all, cannot use their right arm, etc. Explain again that all tasks should be performed in one hour, and that you are not allowed to obstruct other groups.
4. Despite all these disabilities, the group should still perform all tasks. There should be an observer with every group to see if all rules are obeyed and all tasks are performed by the whole group.
5. After one hour the groups present the results of their work and discuss how hard or easy it was to accomplish.

Reflection and evaluation

- How did it feel to be without any disabilities?
- What was it like to have certain disabilities?
- Did you function as a group?
- Did the group support the individuals with certain disabilities?
- Did being disabled mean that these people also did not take the initiative?
- In what other ways can you experience disabilities?