**Games to Illustrate the virtue of Humility**

from *The New World Order Games Manual*, by Linden Qualls

**Ego-Balloons**

This game was created for our lesson on humility. I explained that egos and lower selves can become too large and inflated, like a balloon. We need to keep them “under control” and “in line”. So for this game, 2 teams would each be given an equal sized blown up balloon. Each team lined up across from each other. The goal was to be the first team to get the balloon down their own line without it hitting the floor or going out of reach. It is hard to control the lower self and the ego, so to make it hard to control the balloon, the team members could only use heads and feet to maneuver the balloon. Each team member could touch the balloon with their head or feet as many times as needed to get it to the next person. No one is to be skipped. If hands or arms were used, or the balloon hit the floor or went out of reach, it was brought back to the start. Youngest ones can be placed at the very beginning and end of the line, since the first one begins the race and the last one catches it, these are the easiest spots to be in.

Please note that the age and number of the children and the size of the balloon will greatly influence control. The less air, the faster it will fall. Teams should have different colored balloons so they never get mixed up. Encourage the winning 1agamesrules.doc 103 28-Apr-15 team to show humility by not boasting. You can also completely dispense with the race idea, and just make the control of the balloon the only challenge.

*Variations:*

Same rules apply—if the balloon goes out of reach or hits the ground, it goes back to the beginning.

Team members sat down on the floor, and could use hands and feet. They could slide about in their efforts to control the balloon. (Older groups may be able to use only feet for this version and the one below.)

They then did the same as above, but had to be on their backs, with their legs in the air. They could also scoot if necessary.

Team members laid on their stomachs, and could use only hands. They could slide on their stomachs if needed to.

Team members stood in their lines and were allowed to use hands—but each could only bat the balloon once. No child was to be missed. If this proves too hard, let them hit it twice.

Team members stood up and had to pass the balloon down the line by squeezing it between their stomachs. No hands or feet could be used.

Team members stood up and had to pass the balloon down the line by squeezing it between their knees. No hands or feet could be used.

Spread team members out down the line. Members have to hold balloons between their knees and hop to the next person in line. Or they can hold it between their ankles and hop. You can also try it as a relay race across a distance.

Do the same as above, but no hopping is allowed. Team members must therefore waddle, and it looks really funny. You can also try this one as a relay race across a distance.

Team members sit down (girls with skirts or dresses can’t do this one) in a line, as you would on a toboggan sled. Then kids scoot a little to create some distance from each other and they lay on their backs and put their feet and legs up in the air. I then placed the balloon in between the feet of the first person in line, and the goal is to pass the balloon all the way down the line to the last person just using the feet. One always passes to the person behind them and they rock on their back (no touching the balloon with hands) and try to place the balloon between the feet of the person behind them. (If you want to continue and go the opposite direction, just have everybody rotate direction, and start with the person who was originally last.)

Students were divided up into groups of 2 or 3. They stood facing each other very close, with arms around each other. The balloon was placed at the bottom of their feet between them, enclosed by their bodies. No hands or forearms were to be used. The goal was to squirm and wiggle it up so that it was between their faces. Taller kids just bent lower at the end point. If the balloon escaped, they had to start over.

One day, there were only 3 kids, so we improvised. I also played, to make 4. We spread out, and had to get the balloon down the line, then back up again to the first person. There was no race, but keeping the balloon under control was challenge enough.

The ego is the animal in us, the heritage of the flesh which is full of selfish desires. By obeying the laws of God, seeking to live the life laid down in our teachings, and prayer and struggle, we can subdue our egos. We call people 'Saints' who have achieved the highest degree of mastery over their ego. (From a letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, January 8, 1949)

.......the ego can and should be ever-increasingly subordinated to the enlightened soul of man. This is what spiritual progress implies. (From a letter dated 14 December 1941 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)

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**Magical Clay**

Out of the wastes of nothingness, with the clay of My command I made thee to appear....... ~Baha'u'llah: Persian Hidden Words, # 29

Out of the clay of love I molded thee..... ~Baha'u'llah: Arabic Hidden Words, # 13

First we talked about how we should strive to have our lives and souls as clay in the hands of God, molded by His teachings and wisdom, not by the media or by selfish or unwise people. This means allowing that we be guided by God and not by our lower nature, knowing that God knows best, sacrificing our lower nature to our higher, spiritual natures, and giving up our will to Gods’ when we are tempted do wrong or behave selfishly. Those students who were to be clay were to be totally selfless/submissive as clay is, surrendering their will to the artist, letting oneself be molded by the artists’ vision and will. This is a metaphor of how we should allow our lives to be molded by God’s will, surrendering our will to His, so He can mold us in His image, direct and change us the way He sees fit.

Aid me, O my Lord, to surrender myself wholly to Thy Will....~Baha'u'llah: Gleanings, page 311

Help me to be selfless at the heavenly entrance of Thy gate, and aid me to be detached from all things within Thy holy precincts. ~`Abdu'l-Baha: Selections from the Writings of `Abdu'l-Baha, pages 319-320

Self-sacrifice means to subordinate this lower nature and its desires to the more godly and noble side of our selves. Ultimately, in its highest sense, self-sacrifice means to give our will and our all to God to do with as He pleases. Then He purifies and glorifies our true self until it becomes a shining and wonderful reality. ~Shoghi Effendi: Living the Life, pages 18-19

Children volunteered to be artists and then requested a certain number of others to be their clay. The artists were asked to mold them into a new creation which illustrated a virtue such as love or kindness, a Bahá'í principle such as unity, a thing from nature, or man-made object. No one knew what the creation was, ----not even the clay children knew what they were being molded into . After the artist was done, we had to guess. Some of the positions were hard to hold and harder still to interpret, but we had a pretty good time anyway. If we just could not guess, the artist gave us clues as to whether it was a virtue, natural, or man-made object. There is also a lesson in this activity for the sculptors---to be gentle and not abuse their power in any way, as humans often do when given authority over powerless people.