Paradigm Shift
Stepping Stones

Number of Participants: 5-25
Time: 30-45 minutes
Activity Level: Moderate
Props: Stepping Stones (paper plates, carpet squares, pieces of cardboard) 2 ropes or masking tape as a boundary, and throwables

Objective: As a group, the entire team must cross from one side of the room to the other without stepping foot in the “hot lava.”

Set Up:
Place a rope across one side of the room. Place another rope across the other side of the room about 30 feet apart.

Rules:
1. If a participant loses touch with a stepping stone at any time within the hot lava, they lose the stepping stone to the facilitator who keeps in until the end of the activity.
2. If a participant steps off the stepping stone or falls into the lava, the participant must go back behind the starting line.

Description:
At the beginning of the initiative, hand each participant a throwable. Tell them that these throwables are their distractions. These are the things that distract them in every aspect of their life. (Feel free to make the distractions specific to your group. i.e. - What distracts you from being successful in class? What distracts you from completing your goal? etc.) Invite the participants to share what their distraction is to the entire group. After distractions are shared, instruct the participants to throw their distractions in between the two ropes in the middle of the room.

Separate the groups into two equaled numbered teams. Place one team behind one rope, and place the other team behind the other rope. Give each participant a “stepping stone.”

These stepping stones are the tools and resources the group can use to accomplish their goal of crossing the room. As they cross the room, the participants try to pick up all of the “distractions” and carry them along.
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their journey. Following the rules, the group works together (and even with the team on the other side) to get across the room and picking up their distractions along the way.

Variations:
1. If you want your activity to be more goal driven, change the throwables to “goals” or “dreams” instead of distractions.
2. Place a hula hoop in the middle of the room. All participants must step into the hula hoop while on their journey. Once inside the hula hoop, the participants do not need to be on a stepping stone.
3. Use just one team to cross the room. Same rules apply.

Facilitator Notes:
1. This activity works best if you make up a great story to why they are crossing the room, and the dangerous materials (hot lava, terrorists, sharks with lasers on their heads, etc.) which make up the middle ground.
2. Many times, the group will lose several stepping stones early on in the activity. If the facilitator thinks the group can not make it across the room with the stepping stones they have left, the facilitator can return a stone to the group, or ask the group to restart the activity.
3. The groups on the opposite sides of the room can easily work together, but sometimes the participants will turn the activity into a competitive initiative.

Notes: