

## Training Programme

### Challenging our own ways of thinking

Day **3**

#### 6 Wobbly chairs

##### Warm Up Exercise

20 min

##### Useful for:

Warming up, building teams, focussing.

##### Resources needed:

One chair for each participant

##### Room layout:

Chairs should be scattered at random across the space. There should be space between all the chairs, and they should be facing in different directions.

##### What happens?

One participant is selected to start the game. Everyone else sits in a chair, which should leave one chair empty. This chair should be at the opposite end of the room from the person who will start the game.

The person starting the game begins by moving towards the empty chair. However, he or she can only walk very slowly, moving one foot in front of each other, keeping both feet in touch with the ground. This should look like a slow shuffle. The others have to make sure that this person does not get to sit in an empty chair. So, as he or she approaches it someone should leave their chair and run to fill the empty chair. This will leave a new empty chair and the 'shuffler' will then attempt to get to the newly vacated chair. However, one of the others should then run to fill this chair and so the game proceeds. Those trying to

prevent the 'shuffler' from sitting cannot return to a chair once they have got up from it. Also they cannot physically block access to a chair by standing in front of the shuffler or encircling them.

Generally, the first round only lasts a few seconds until the 'shuffler' reaches an empty chair. At this point another person is selected to be the 'shuffler'. The rest of the group then have two to three minutes to plan a co-ordinated strategy. Then the game resumes. Once the 'shuffler' has sat in a chair the process is repeated.

There are several rounds, with time for planning the strategy. After a few rounds, reflect on the experienced together.

### **Notes for facilitators:**

At first sight, you think that the person who can only move very slowly will be at a huge disadvantage as the others can move from chair to chair at high speed. In reality, it is very hard for the others to keep the 'shuffler' out of an empty chair. It requires careful co-ordination.

For the big group to succeed they need to concentrate very hard and they need to work as a team. Generally, the big group is dismayed at how easily the 'shuffler' gets to a chair and how often they have to revise their strategy.

The reflection should focus on team working, focus and concentration. The concentration tends to increase as the game goes on. It might be worth stopping and pointing out to everyone how hard they are concentrating and watching each other and discussing: a) how this is a high-functioning learning environment; b) how good it feels to be participating in this way; and c) how this is the level of focus and concentration they should aim for in class.



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Contact: [info@bkj.de](mailto:info@bkj.de)

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