

Activities with Webbing – Raccoon Circles

NCCPS 2018

Thanks TONS to all the presenter!!

Great Resource: *The Revised & Expanded Book of Raccoon Circles*, by Tom Smith & Jim Cain

Raccoon Circles are considered to be 15 feet of “tubular” webbing (avoid using “flat” webbing, the kind used for making webbing belts or tie downs for trucks. Flat webbing is too hard on the hands).

Water Knot: This is the best (and only) knot to use when tying webbing ends together if the knot(s) will be under stress (i.e., pulled on). Search for a video on the web for tying this knot if you don’t know how.

FREE PDF of Raccoon Circle Activities from Jim Cain

http://teamworkandteamplay.com/resources/new_rc_document_2011_final.pdf

(You might have to cut and paste this link if you don’t have a PDF reader with the active hyperlink functionality.)

Activities:

Comfort Zones – Webbing Diagram

Use webbing to make two or three concentric circles on the floor/ground. The center circle is the “Comfort Zone” – a place we feel most comfortable. The second circle (surrounding the first) is the “Stretch” or “Learning Zone” – a place we step into where we may feel uncomfortable but we need to go there to learn something new or experience adventure. Past the Stretch Zone is the “Panic” or “Danger Zone” – a place where there is little learning and there is a high probability of physical or emotional harm.

Play: Ask questions related to levels of comfort within the group. Players “answer” by standing within the diagram that represents their comfort with the topic. Spiders? Challenge Course? Speaking in public? Asking for help? Belaying active climbers? Asking questions?



Our Path of Glitches – Webbing Diagram

Watching & Listening: Lay down a spiral (or straight) path of webbing – use at least 30 feet (two Raccoon Circles). Along the spiral, as you are telling the story of our journey in life, make a squiggly section in the webbing and say this is a “challenge,” a “problem,” some sort of “conflict.” We each have a certain way of dealing with these “glitches” – they could serve us or not. After we get past the glitch, life tends to go on as before – unless something changes.

Then, set the webbing back on its path for a few feet. Then put in another glitch – and, life goes on and on. Now, using another webbing to trace the same journey, this is our team building program. When we encounter a glitch during our work we can explore the behaviors that are going on and the choices we are making during the glitch. Then we can explore the possible choices we have related to the glitch and decide how we want to tackle the same type of glitch in the future. Maybe we’ll continue along a different path (move the program webbing piece in a different direction in relation to the life webbing) and choose to be different. And, we can also continue on the same path and keep doing what we’re doing.

NCCPS Teambuilders, the above is a simple recap of what was shared. I hope this is enough info to remember what was presented. Note: As I wrote this I thought of using a straight line as the life journey – I think it will be easier to set down and glitch up. I often struggle with laying down the spiral. Let me know how this goes for you.

Going to the Races (Grand Prix Racing, in *The Revised & Expanded Book of Raccoon Circles*)
(This one is written up in the FREE PDF from Jim Cain – see above.)

Goal Reach

Set Up: Tie at least three webbing lengths together and set this down on the floor/ground in a big circle shape. Each person in play (you need at least 7 players), that wants to attempt the challenge, lays down length-wise (perpendicular) from the outside of the circle and places a water bottle (or something else comparable) on the floor/ground right at the top of his/her head. In other words, each person’s water bottle should be one of his/her body lengths from the outside of the circle.

Play: The goal is, for the group inside the circle, to help each person reach his/her water bottle and bring it back into the circle without reconfiguring the large webbing circle or touching the ground outside the large webbing circle. As the facilitator, spot the participant reaching out for the bottle.

Circle Sit

Set Up: You can do this one with one Raccoon Circle or a number of the webbing lengths tied together (with a water knot).

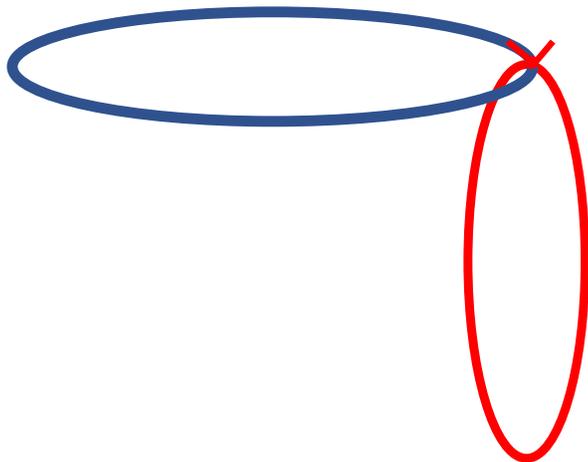
Play: Gather your group around the circle you tied together. Each player holds the webbing with both hands about shoulder width apart, their feet also about shoulder width apart or a little more (not less). The first step is to practice leaning back with straight arms and legs so everyone is “committed” to the lean. Before trying to sit together as a group, be sure to let them know this is a little tough on the knees, so if someone needs to challenge out, do this and readjust the circle. Then, ask the group to try and sit down and stand back up together, while leaning back away from the center of the circle.

Facilitate this with care and purpose. Why are we doing this and what safety concerns should we keep in mind?

Loop the Circle Variation

Set Up: Tie one or more webbing lengths into a circle – depending on the size of your group. Have two or three webbing lengths ready to add into the activity.

Play: Have your group(s) hold their webbing circle up in the air about waist high – each person holding on with two hands. Now, starting with one additional webbing length, tie this webbing into the webbing circle – think of it as like tying a string on to a key ring. (Maybe a graphic will help?)



Without letting go of the webbing circle (Blue), the group moves the webbing loop (red) around the circle of players and webbing back to its original starting position. Add more “loops” to the circle to make it more interesting.

Outside In & Inside Out

(This one is written up in the FREE PDF from Jim Cain – see above.)

Yoga Stretching

Participate: Holding onto a webbing circle (tie more webbing lengths into the circle if you have bigger groups) with one or two hands, share and lead different yoga positions and stretches

Step to The Line

Set Up: Lay down four webbing lengths parallel to each other (see diagram below). If you have a larger group, tie more webbing lengths together to make the lines longer.



Play: The group is divided in half. One half of the group stands behind one blue line and the other half stands behind the other blue line – all players are facing the green lines. The facilitator asks questions that start with:

Step up to the (green) line if... (for examples):

- You are a bit nervous about the program today.
- You like climbing off the ground.
- You are comfortable speaking in front of large groups.

As Drew facilitated, *“When you’re at the line, BE WITH the people there. Look up and down the lines to see who is there. You don’t need to say anything, simple be there with them.”*

After about 10 seconds you can say, “Go ahead and step back across the blue lines.” Then ask another question. Start simple and move to more thought provoking requests. This is a nice one for finding common traits among players.

Team Untieum' (I think this one's called, Team Overhand Knots, from one of Sam Sikes' books – can't put my hands on it right now.)

Set Up: Tie four or five overhand knots into a length of webbing (15 feet long) – tie the knots about three feet apart from one another. Make one of these knotted webbings for every four to five players.

Play: Have a player hold onto a webbing length about three inches from one of the knots – one player per knot. Then, challenge each group on a webbing to untie all the knots without letting go of the webbing. The free hand can be used to help manipulate the webbing while untying.

High Wire

Be sure to practice the Circle Sit (above) before doing this one – you want to teach the group how to get the webbing circle really tight by leaning back away from the center of the circle.

Tie two or three webbing lengths into one big circle (using water knots). You need lots of willing participants to hold and stretch out the circle – enough to support the weight of the Tight Wire walker. In my experience with high school students you need 15 to 20 circle holders to hold up to 150 pounds.

The gist, as you remember, is pulling the circle of webbing tight enough for a player to sand on the webbing and then walk around the webbing while being spotted by at least two players from the inside of the circle and two on the outside of the circle – more spotters is even better.

Have FUN out there my friends.

Keep me posted.

Chris Cavert Ed.D

chris.cavert@gmail.com