

## The Switch Game

<b>Timing:</b>	20 minutes
<b># of Participants:</b>	At least 6
<b>Equipment needed:</b>	A large, empty space in which people can move around without the risk of running into anything. The larger the group, the larger the space needed.

### PURPOSE/DESCRIPTION:

This game is great for moving from the co-sensing phase to the co-presencing phase of a process. It gets people moving, and gets them connected to and present with one another.

### PROCESS:

1. Ask the group to stand up and spread out.
2. Ask them to walk around the space, not going outside of the group, not going too fast, just walking through the space at random, each at their own pace and in their own direction.
3. As they are walking give them the following instructions:
  - *Say hello with your eyes, nothing extravagant, just a silent hello.*
  - *When I say 'switch,' change modes: keep walking, but don't look in each other's eyes, and don't say bello. Perhaps you're in a hurry inside mall or airport, minding your own business and trying to avoid others, not to connect with them.*
  - *When I say "switch" again, go back to the easy walk of connecting in your own silent ways with others.*
4. After the group has "switched" several times, tell them to stop, and find a partner to work with for a few moments. Then give the following instructions:
  - *Look the other person up and down. Become aware of any judgments you've already made about that person—positive or negative, interesting or dull, attractive or unattractive, seasoned or immature. These are your labels and they don't have anything to do with the person in front of you. Bring them to mind and then—sweep them aside. Push them out of your mind.*
  - *Instead, see this person anew. Imagine: this person has a rich and full past, a family, a future, his or her own aspirations and dreams and potentials—a birth—a destiny—and a death. The person before you is an utter mystery to you.*
  - *We are mysteries to each other. Say goodbye with your eyes and move again.*
  - *Stop again, find a partner.*
  - *Bring to mind the judgments and the labels, and sweep them away. Be in the mystery for a moment.*
5. Once the group has worked with a few partners, take a break. Tell them to look around without moving from their place. Say "We are all here, and we are all present. We have brought to mind our preconceptions, our judgments—and we have made new space for each other." Or something to that effect.

Ask the group to silently notice how they feel. What is different? What has changed?
6. Debrief. Stand in a circle and ask the to group to share, "popcorn style" what they noticed during the exercise, and what they notice about the group now.

**POSSIBLE VARIATIONS:**

- **“pick a point”** on the wall and go straight to it with all intensity
- **“backwards”** — go backwards. Use your hearing, your sense of warmth, your other senses
- **“slow”** — when looking in eyes, slow it way, way down, as in slow motion
- **“wink”** — wink at each other
- **“touch”** — touch fingertips, elbows, hips, necks
- **“stop and go”** — Starting and stopping together.

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