

Flip the Switch

Bounce Back!

Spatial Requirements: Gym/outdoor space required

Activity Type: Movement/group

Grades: 5-12

Group size: 10 or more

Time: 30 minutes

Introduction: In this collective movement activity, students will work together in three rounds to accomplish their goal. They will strategize and experience setbacks, leading them to face a variety of emotions. This activity helps students to identify how and when they “flip the switch” in a team challenge setting.

Materials:

- 3 balloons per team of 7-10
- 1 reusable grocery bag per team of 7-10
- 1 timer per team of 7-10

Activity:

Prior to this activity, blow up three balloons per team. Place each team’s balloons inside the reusable grocery bags.

Begin this activity by forming the group into teams of seven to ten. Give participants ten seconds to gather into their teams.

Ask for a volunteer referee from each team. The referee must be someone who can count loudly, use a timer, and who is willing to interject when his or her team has a setback.

When you have your referees, explain that the objective of this activity is to keep an object in the air continuously for 60 seconds. The rules are as follows:

1. The object cannot hit anything other than a player’s hands, fingertips, or the ceiling. (This includes walls, tables, the floor, any other body part, etc.)
2. A player cannot hit the object two times in a row.
3. A player cannot hit the object back to the person they received it from.
4. The object cannot be caught, carried, or held.
5. Every person needs to touch the object at least once during the 60-second period.

Explain that when players violate any of these rules, it is called a SETBACK. Their referee will call them on it, and they will be required to begin from the start. All balloons must be returned to the referee. Objects cannot be in play during setbacks.

Tell participants to strategize with their team while you have a brief chat with the referees. Invite the referees to come forward.

Give referees their teams’ reusable grocery bag with the three balloons inside and a timer. Tell them that when you say “Go,” they will remove the first balloon from the bag and throw it to their team. Referees will then begin the timer, intermittently saying the number of seconds out loud so the participants know how long they’ve bounced the balloon.

When the referee observes a setback, he/she must yell "Setback!" and the participants must stop the activity and begin again. The balloon(s) should be returned to the referee.

The referee begins the activity again by throwing a balloon into the group. When the participants make it to 15 seconds, the referee will throw a second balloon into the group. Participants will then be required to bounce this around simultaneously with the first, following the same rules of play.

When the participants make it to 30 seconds, the referee will remove the third balloon from the bag and throw it into the group. Participants will then be required to bounce this around simultaneously with the first two balloons, following the same rules of play.

As the facilitator, you will be stopping the participants every two minutes to allow them to plan before beginning again (regardless of where they are in their counting). During planning sessions, participants can talk but are NOT allowed to practice. Planning and play periods are as follows:

- The first play period will be two minutes.
- The first planning session following this play period will be one minute.
- The second play period will be two minutes.
- The second planning session following this play period will be 30 seconds.
- The last play period, or "overtime," will be two minutes.

When the second play period is over, make an announcement: During the last play period ("overtime"), the new time frame for victory is 30 seconds of successful play instead of 60. (Referees will continue to throw in the second balloon at 15 seconds.)

Processing Questions:

- What were some of the ways your group recovered from setbacks?
- Did you ever feel like giving up?
- Sometimes people facing setbacks allow themselves to give up. When we're faced with the inevitable setbacks life throws at us, how can we keep from giving up?
- What was the key to being successful in this activity?
- How is this game like life?
- Did this game require resilience? How so?
- How are the balloons similar to problems we experience in life?
- Let's look at our definition of flipping the switch. Did you flip the switch in this game? At what point did you recognize that you had to flip the switch?
- How else did this activity tie into flipping the switch?