

## HUMAN KNOT



### MAIN FEATURES

Strengthened skills	LEADERSHIP
Suitable for	Teachers, students
Difficulty level	Low
Setting	Group
Number of participants	At least 8
Average duration	15-20 minutes
Special equipment/materials	Yes
Online version	No

### 1. Description

The Human Knot Game (also known as Human Knot Game or Human Knot Activity) is a popular game where people learn to work together. This game is a great icebreaker for a team of new people or as a mutual knowledge activity.

The Human Knot is a team activity requiring group members to form a circle, grab two opposing hands of participants, and then untangle the resulting jumble without loosening their grip.

The Human Node focuses on specific group friends and helps teammates analyze other people's problem-solving approaches and communication styles. A shared sense of purpose helps groups learn teamwork and discuss topics with substance. No player can wriggle through the circle alone. Participants must discuss the best move, agree on a route, try the action, and adjust or group as needed. This is an excellent reminder that the team's success depends on the ideas and contributions of all team members.

## 2. Objective / Benefits

Some benefits of playing the Human Node are better communication skills, greater problem-solving skills, and greater group familiarity. The game puts your teammates in close proximity and starts the conversation. Group decisions become shared. If teams don't act in unison during this activity, the game will result in an unresolved tangle and a bunch of aching arms!

Some advantages of playing Human Knot are:

- It builds teamwork by helping a group learn to work together.
- Focus on communication skills.
- Develop leaders.
- He teaches problem-solving.
- It builds trust.
- Encourages persistence.

## 3. Related SKILLS CLUSTERS

CLUSTER NR 2, LEADERSHIP (skills: Awareness of power dynamics in relationships; Collaborative leadership)

### *Because*

This activity is a great way to improve team cooperation and communication. It gives a better idea of how the team's combined efforts work and is an efficient method of building relationships. And, as a bonus, all this is done in a fun and exciting atmosphere that will surely increase the mood of the participants.

## 4. How to do the exercise

### *Step 1 / Preparation:*

Space required: indoor or outdoor. Smaller groups are more manageable, and format nodes are less complicated. The ideal number of players for this game is 8-12. If the group is huge, divide them into smaller groups. If there are fewer people in a human node, it becomes tough.

### *Step 2/ Heating:*

**Explain the rules.** Participants in this activity will stand up and join their hands together to form a human knot from their arms. The goal of the game is to extricate yourself *without* letting go of the hands you are holding. After extricating yourself, you will again be standing in a regular circle, with

no hands joined in the middle. You cannot release your hands. The palms of the hands can rotate one or the other, and the handles can change, but the contact may be recovered.

**Step 2/ Application:**

1. Let the group form a circle.
2. Tell them to raise their right hand in the air and then grab someone's hand on the other side of the circle from them.
3. Repeat this with your left hand, making sure they grab the hand of different people.
4. Check that everyone is holding the hands of two different people and that they are not holding hands with someone on either side.
5. Now, they must try to extricate themselves to form a circle without breaking the chain of hands. Allow a specific time to complete this challenge (generally ten to twenty minutes)
6. Get participants to take their time to limit injuries. Ask the group not to pull or pull each other, and spot participants as they pass over other participants. Monitor during the challenge and stop them if necessary.
7. If the chain of hands is broken at any time, they must start over.

**5. Final reflection**

The instructor asks participants to share their experience in plenary:

1. Was it your group that was able to untangle your knot? Collect explanations.
2. How did your group decide whether or not you untangled your knot?
3. Have you had any discussions about what it meant to untangle the knot? If so, how, and what, did you decide what "untangled" meant? Did your idea of what it meant to extricate yourself change while working on this activity?
4. What strategies did you use to try to untangle the knot? What difficulties did you encounter and how did you deal with them?
5. If you decided you couldn't untangle the knot, what made you decide you wouldn't be able to? Are you sure your group can never untangle your knot? Why or why not?
6. What could have been done differently?
7. Has anyone emerged as the "leader"? How have leadership roles changed as the business progressed?
8. What skills has this activity developed? How could you transfer these skills to school and life outside of this activity?

**6. Specific materials**

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- A timer If you and your students want a time challenge, you can set a timer on your mobile phone as a time limit.

## 7. Tips and tricks

Since this game requires some flexibility, participants may want to consider stretching first. Players should be prepared to bend, twist, and move in whatever way is necessary to untangle the knot.

**Use the Human Node to learn names.** All you have to do is add a rule stating that players can only talk to other players by saying that player's name first.

To encourage players to use names, you may want to institute a minor penalty for those who don't use names. Whenever a name is not used, players may agree that rulebreakers must do five push-ups after the game, or you may have players who don't use names that help you prepare for the next activity.

**Add player or playing field restrictions.** Care should be taken when using this type of variation. Because players' limbs will be tangled together, it's easy to fall or lose balance, which could potentially hurt someone.

- Every other player is blindfolded. In this way, players who are not blindfolded must help direct those who are, encouraging teamwork even more.
- Obstacles in the path. Uneven terrain can make it very difficult to maintain balance when disconnecting, but you should be careful of tripping hazards. Consider whether to carry out the activity inside a room with gym mattresses or a soft floor.

**Have a human node that reveals group membership.** Especially with large groups, you may need to break down into groups to effectively play the Human Knot game. If this is the case for your group, you can add a competitive challenge by having both teams try to eliminate the other faster.

## 8. References - Web References

<https://studentengagement.iastate.edu/leadership-service-center/leadership-and-service-center-outreach/leadership-and-service-center-resources/icebreakers-energizers-teambuilders/teambuilders/human-knot>

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