

A Big Year Forgiveness Activity

The Great Egg Drop

Introductory Notes for Facilitator:

The Great Egg Drop is a simple and fun activity for groups. The basics are that each group is given a raw egg, a number of drinking straws (say 20) and a length of masking tape (usually 1m). The group then has a short period of time to design and construct an apparatus from the provided equipment (nothing else can be used) to assist the egg to survive a drop from specified height (head high is a good option) onto hard surface (concrete, paver, tiles etc.) without cracking.



Using your imagination, the activity can be briefed in any number of ways, using the eggs, straws, and tape as metaphors, helping groups think about leadership, team work and so on.

In this particular briefing, we're suggesting using the activity to think about forgiveness and healthy relationships. Forgiveness can help protect the health of relationships (for example inside a family), and the capacity to go on forgiving can be vitally important. In Matthew 18:21-22 Jesus talks about the need to go on forgiving to almost ridiculous lengths.

You can setup the activity to think about relationships within a family, in a group of friends, at work, or school, or any other context.

For our purposes, the straws represent forgiveness; the egg represents the health of the relationship. The more we are prepared to offer forgiveness, the easier it is to keep a relationship healthy. The more straws we are able to use in our structure, the easier it is to keep the egg safe.

The outline below shows an introductory discussion, the activity itself, and then a follow-up discussion. Modify these suggestions based on your setting, your group, and how much support they will need for briefing and debriefing. Don't talk about the egg activity at all until after the pre-discussion (and don't let your participants see the eggs, straws or tape!).

Pre-Discussion

In your group, talk about a time when you had to forgive someone in your family/school/team/workplace. What was it like? Did it help to keep your relationships healthy? What if you had to forgive the same person again? And again? How many times do you think you could go on forgiving the same person? See if you can agree on an average number within your discussion group.

Activity Briefing

We're going to take part in a challenge now to explore the value of forgiveness in keeping relationships healthy.

I'm going to give each group a raw egg. You can name it, put a face on it, whatever you like. But I want you to think of that egg as a relationship in your family/team/work/school/setting. Think of it as your relationship with the person you just talked about needing to forgive.

And I'm going to give you a number of straws. You will get the same number of straws as your agreed you could offer forgiveness. If you said 10 times, you can have 10 straws. If you said 20 times, you can have 20 straws. Those straws represent the forgiveness you're prepared to offer to help keep a relationship healthy. And I'm going to give you 1m of masking tape, call it the love that binds us together.

Your challenge, in the next 15-20-30 minutes is to create a structure using the straws and tape that will help keep your egg healthy when hard times strike. In this case, those hard times will be represented by your egg being dropped from my (facilitator) head height onto concrete/tiles/pavers. It's quite a challenge.

So to summarise: You'll have an egg, straws and tape. You can build whatever you want using that material and no other to help your egg survive intact. Each group will also get one pair of scissors to use in your construction, along with paper and pencil for planning. The scissors, paper and pencil cannot be used in the final structure.

Any questions?

Activity

One by one, drop the structures from the agreed height onto the chosen surface. We suggest you use a sheet of plastic to cover the surface and protect it from raw egg (you can be sure some will survive, but some won't!). Have each structure dropped by the same person (usually you as facilitator), but allow for special instructions from the group (e.g. orientation of the structure at the point of release).

Expect some creative solutions that will push the boundaries of your rules. Feel free to deal with those as you see fit.

Post-Discussion

In your groups:

- What:
 - o What happened to our egg? Did it survive?
 - o If we had our time over, how could we build a better structure?
 - o If we had more straws, could we have done a better job protecting our egg?
- So What:
 - o Does more forgiveness help protect a relationship, like more straws might help protect an egg? Why or why not?
 - o Can you think of a time when you could have gone on forgiving...to protect a relationship?
 - o Read Matthew 18:21-22. How many times does Jesus suggest forgiving? What if we had that many straws? That much capacity to forgive?
- Now what:
 - o Next time you have to forgive someone in your community...how will this activity and discussion help you think about the situation?
 - o What else can help protect a relationship and keep it healthy?