



# Crossing rivers

A Govert van Ginkel © game



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minutes  
up to 1 hour

# Crossing rivers

## OBJECTIVE

To create self-awareness around behavior, reveal hidden patterns that prevent cooperation and break through system blindness.

## PROCEDURE

In an open space draw two lines or indicate in some other way two imaginary lines across the floor, each line being on one end of the space. These lines will form the banks of a river. The distance between the two banks/lines is at least twice the number of participants in one group times 3 feet. Divide participants in minimally three groups and space them apart along an imaginary or drawn line on one side of the space you are in. You can play it with as many people as you like but will need at least 6 participants.

## STORY

As a group you have been walking through the jungle for days and have not been able to find any food. You are famished. You've arrived at the bank of a wide river that stretches for miles to both sides. On the other side of the river you see bananas, mangos and all kinds of food for the taking. Wondering if you could make it swimming you notice pairs of eyes sticking out of the water. Crocs! Swimming is not an option. When you look around to see how you could cross the river the only thing you can find are Water Lily leaves. As you know these can carry a man's weight. Each participant gets 1 Lily leaf (letter size piece of paper). You need to get across as fast as you can as some in your group are near starvation.

## FACILITATION

Allow participants to have their adventure together by limiting the information to what they "need to know" to play the game. Once you say "Go" it is up to them to figure it out. Discussion questions are meant to give insight after the game has finished.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

First share the answers in the original groups, then harvest the most interesting ones with the group as a whole.

- How did you discuss in your group the ways in which you could get across?
- Did you actively participate?
- Was there any form of leadership, who took action and what did this mean?
- Which feelings came up for you as you saw things develop?
- Was there any competition in the group or with others groups?
- If you looked for cooperation in or outside the group how was this done and what did it result in?
- What needs were met or remained unmet?
- Seeing what happened what would you like to do differently to create a more enjoyable outcome?

## MATERIALS REQUIRED

1 piece of letter size paper per participant. Chalk, tape or anything you can imagine to indicate the banks of the river.



## TIME REQUIRED

20 minutes to 1 hour depending on how deep you want to take the discussion.

## SOURCE

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