


# WORKING AS A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM\*

## ▶ ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

 **Time:** 60 minutes

 **Objectives:** By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Discuss behaviors that help or hinder team work
- State the 3 key components of a well-functioning multidisciplinary team
- State 3 ways in which client is impacted by teamwork.

 **Training Methods:** Small Group Activity, Large Group Discussion

 **In This Activity You Will...**

- Divide participants into teams. and provide instructions for group activity (10 minutes)
- Give groups time to work on the squares (30 minutes)
- Lead a debriefing/discussion about the exercise (20 minutes)

 **Materials:**

- 5 envelopes
- 15 shapes (Broken Squares)
- Observer handout - Broken Squares
- Answer key handout - Broken Squares
- Flip chart and easel
- Markers
- Eraser

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## Instructions

1. Introduce session, and explain that an effective team can accomplish more than its individual members can alone. But, to do this, the team must be able to solve problems well.
2. Break into small groups of at least 6 people each.
3. Tell participants to clear their tables.
4. Ask participants to volunteer 1 or more observers and 5 participants. If anyone has done this exercise before, instruct them to be an observer.
5. Explain to participants that they will be working to assemble 5 squares of equal size. Assure them that the shapes do make 5 equal squares.
6. Explain that the rules are that:
  - a. No one may communicate by talking or pointing.
  - b. Participants can give pieces away but no one may ask for a piece.
  - c. Participants may not put pieces in the middle for others to take.
  - d. Anyone can give away any number of pieces, any number of times
  - e. Ask the observer to think about the questions on the Observer Instruction Sheet during the exercise and to enforce the rules.
7. Distribute the envelopes but ask participants not to open envelopes until told to do so. Give observers a minute to read their instructions. Instruct participants to open envelopes.
8. After 15 minutes tell the groups that their time is up. If they have not completed the squares, allow them 5 more minutes with the Observer as a consultant. Explain that the consultant can answer questions but cannot solve the puzzle themselves.

\* This module comes from the Comprehensive Peer Worker Training, Peer Advanced Competency Training (PACT) Project Harlem Hospital Center, Division of Infectious Diseases, 2008.

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## ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY (CONT.)

### Preparation:

- Prepare Broken Squares packets by cutting out the shapes in each square, mixing up the shapes, and placing 3 shapes in each envelope.
- Prepare flip chart for Observer questions
- Prepare handouts

9. Discuss the exercise with the questions from the Observers handout (using the newsprint).
10. Continue processing the exercise with the following questions:
  - a. What behaviors helped accomplish the task?
  - b. What behaviors got in the way of completing the task?
  - c. If anyone has done the exercise before or figured it out quickly ask What was it like to know what needed to be done, but not be able to express it?
11. Ask participants the following questions:

*What are the most important components of a well-functioning team?*

- Each person needs to understand what the overall problem/goal is
- Each person should understand how s/he contributes to the solution
- Each person should be aware of the potential contributions of the others
- Each person should recognize the difficulties (strengths/weaknesses) of others to help them contribute most effectively
- Groups that pay attention to their own problem-solving process are more likely to be effective than groups that do not
- Bottom Line – role definition, communication, clearly defined/ common goal

*What is the impact on the client of a team that is not working well together?*

- Some information not received by client
- Receive conflicting information
- Client may end up trusting certain team members more than others
- Client may leave team/facility
- Mistakes in client care
- These all ultimately have health consequences

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## Summary

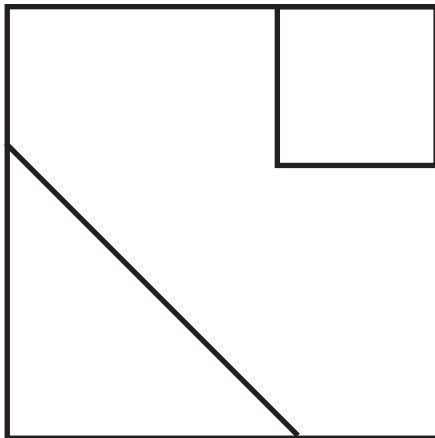
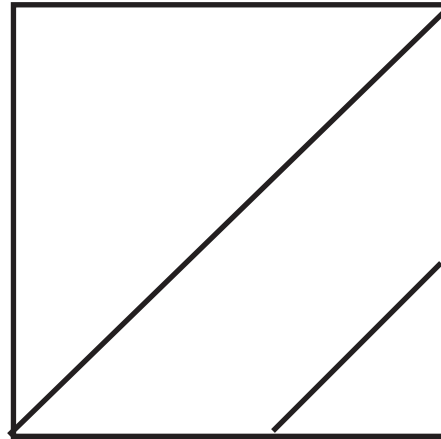
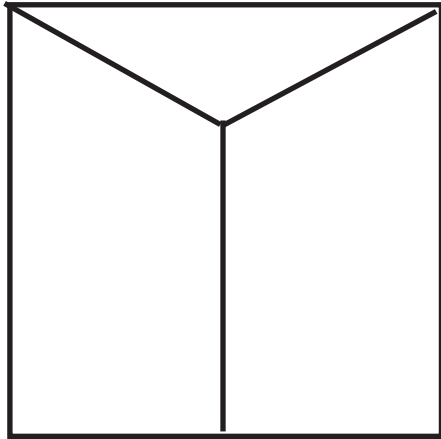
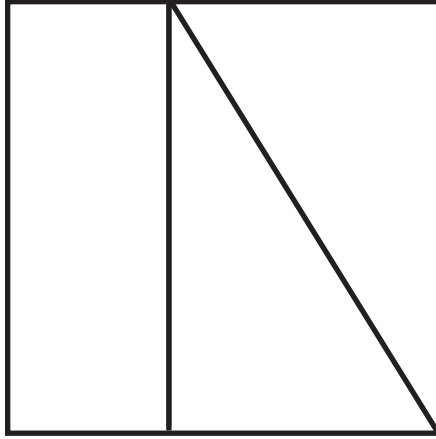
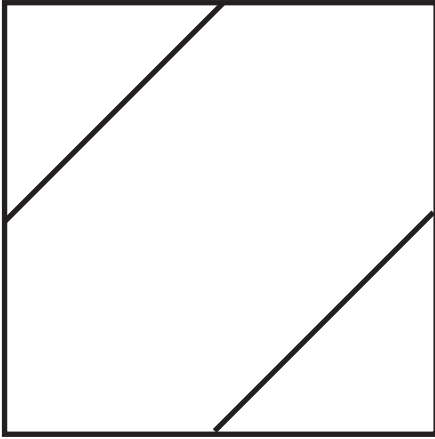
Wrap up session by reminding participants that client health is ultimately affected by how well a team works together. If there is a problem with the team, there will probably be a problem with the client too. If someone is not being heard on the team, it is probably happening with the client too. These issues are even more important for a multidisciplinary team as they are each bringing different perspectives to the table.

\* This module is part of the online toolkit *Building Blocks to Peer Success*. For more information, visit [http://www.hdwg.org/peer\\_center/training\\_toolkit](http://www.hdwg.org/peer_center/training_toolkit). This module comes from the Comprehensive Peer Worker Training, Peer Advanced Competency Training (PACT) Project Harlem Hospital Center, Division of Infectious Diseases, 2008.

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## SESSION HANDOUT #1 of 2

### BROKEN SQUARES



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## SESSION HANDOUT #2 of 2

### BROKEN SQUARES: OBSERVER DIRECTIONS

Your job is to enforce the rules and also to observe what happens. If someone violates a rule, simply point out to them that what they have done is against the rules. As an observer, you might want to look for things like:

1. Who took a leadership role? What did they do?
2. How did the group deal with any frustration?
3. Was there a turning point, or points? What happened?
4. Who was the first to give away pieces?
5. If the group didn't finish, how did it get stuck?

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## SESSION ANSWER KEY

BROKEN SQUARES: PUZZLE KEY

