

❖ Ensemble Challenges

These are two common activities I use to challenge individuals and the group to build their strength and antifragility from within.

Distraction Game

The distraction game encourages the group to look within the circle for support during a group jam or while learning a rhythm while you attempt to distract them with your voice, body, or off beat rhythms. After you have taught a rhythm or started a jam, you become the distractor whose job it is to trainwreck the rhythm. Encourage your group to use each other to stay on their patterns.

Rules:

1. You can't close your eyes and have to look at someone (or everyone) in your ensemble.
2. You can't stop drumming and you can't laugh.

Be Annoying	Use Your Voice/Body	Play Over Top	Shake It Up!
Ask them what annoys them and then act it out.	Sing a lullaby off tempo. Tell them a funny story or recite a poem. Do a funny dance.	Play a funky complementary rhythm while they continue to play the rhythm you taught.	Play some poly rhythms or something off tempo to try to shake their soul.

The HOT SEAT!

The hot seat is a tool you can use after you teach a rhythm, song or sequence. It's an opportunity for you to get really detailed about technique, rhythms and improvisation and demonstrate how constructive feedback can be safe and helpful. Although our final principle is about creating interdependence, there is a strong benefit in having the group witness and support individual growth.

Choose a student that wants to get "grilled in the hot seat" and have them come and sit in your seat. Have them demonstrate one of the following:

Demonstrate a rhythm	Call & Echo	Jepordy	Create on the spot
Get detailed about the technical aspects of a particular rhythm they've learned. Slowly increase the tempo.	Play a series of progressively harder rhythms, movements and vocals for them to repeat. Don't move on until it's correct.	Ask a series of rapid fire questions about the concepts they've learned.	Have them create a rhythm (or series of rhythms) on the spot. Eg. Play a four beat rhythm that includes a clap and an accent note.