Nail Soup

Al LaFontaine
Heritage Park Secondary, Mission, BC

Topic Areas
Group dynamics
Individual involvement
Self evaluation

Suggested Serving
As a lunch activity with a regular leadership class, or as part of a retreat

Alternative Servings
Can be done in a regular class, without the cooking portion

Attachments/Requirements
A copy of the children’s story ‘Nail Soup’, or the newer version of ‘Rock Soup’. If you are really lucky, you may be able to find a recording of Danny Kay reading ‘Nail Soup’. A large pot of water, with a nail or a rock in it. A stove for heating whatever goes into the pot. X=E – attached
No E’s story – attached
Animal school story – attached
Hoberman sphere - optional
Mark Scharenbroich’s Connections video/dvd - optional
3 way mirror - optional
Leadership in the Movies dvd – optional

Recipe
“Cooking” time
The soup will take less than half an hour, and the lesson can be put into the cooking time, and continued through the meal.

Ingredients
The day before conducting this lesson, assign each of your students an item to bring to the next class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salt</th>
<th>Pepper</th>
<th>Celery</th>
<th>Rice – 1 cup per 5 people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrot</td>
<td>Cilantro</td>
<td>Garlic</td>
<td>Chicken Bullion cube</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>Onion</td>
<td>Lime</td>
<td>Potato – 1 per 4 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noodles</td>
<td>Mushroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Plan on a cup of water per person, and add other ingredients
Process
Have the pot of water at a boil as you begin the class. Explain that this is their lunch today. Have everyone taste the water, and discuss.
As you read the story to the class, add the ingredients, and have some of the class taste after each addition. Have others taste only at the beginning and end, to make observations about the difference that has happened.
Once you have everything in the pot, then everyone eats together.

Discussion Questions

Part of this lesson could include proper table conversation procedure. Ensure each person gets a chance to speak, but also ensure they speak in turns and let the other finish, etc.
Where should their spoon be when they are speaking, vs when they just answer a questions. Teach the difference between having the floor and just responding.

An idea on its own (pot of water with a nail in it) will not get us far. Water alone will keep us alive for several days, but to live longer we need more than just water.
-ideas need more substance to truly nourish us
-list some ideas that became great
  -Anne of Green Gables
  -Gandhi
  -Martin Luther King jr
  -Nelson Mandela
  -Confederation
  -post-it notes
  have students develop a further list

What little we have can add a lot to the big picture.
  -use animal school story

Each of our talents is necessary to the proper functioning of the organization
  -X=E story
  if someone in our class does not do their job, what happens to our project?
  what if someone forgot their ingredient for today’s soup?
    Does this contradict this lesson?

Doing without one of us, we will still survive, but we will not be as good as the whole
  -no E’s story – E is the most used letter in the English language, yet we can create a paragraph without it.
  This answers the question about someone forgetting their ingredient
  have students write their own paragraph with no E’s
What do each of you bring to our
-class
-school
-use Hoberman Sphere here to show interconnectedness of the whole
while sphere is closed, attach a group at your school to each point. They
obviously are not connected to each other. When you open the sphere, you can
now see the connections.
-could also use Mark Scharenbroich ‘Connections’ video here
-could also use the energy stick available from CSLA resource store
-set up the circle, and when one lets go, current is broken. If one steps out, have
students on each side touch a metal chair or desk, and the connection is still made.
We can live without you, but we would rather have you with us.

Clip 42, from Leadership in the Movies, A Walk to Remember, could also be used here
Learn to look deeper, beyond the obvious. The obvious moral to the no E’s story
is about co-operation, but if you go deeper, you find lessons about society, and the
individual, and support, and personal reflection as well.

Clip 45 from Leadership in the Movies, Finding Forrester, may be used here
-use 16 square lesson – the deeper you look, the more you find
everyone sees the first square, and most see the 16 squares, so many will say 17 is
the answer, but as they look more carefully, they begin to see 20, 22, 23, 26 etc
(final answer is 30)

-3 way mirror – infinite solutions, infinite opportunities
set up three-way mirror so you can see yourself in each mirror, and you get the
repetitive reflection going, so you see yourself hundreds of times repeated in the
mirrors.

Motivational quote
Who makxs a group a succxss?

Xvxn though my kxyboard is an old modxl, it works quitx wxll xxcxpt for just onx kxy. I havx trixd to havx it rxpairxed, but it is considxrxd obsolxtx and wx cannot find parts for it. I havx wishxd many timxs that I could gxt it rxpairxed, but wx just cannot find thx parts for it. It is trux that thrxr arx 63 othxr kxys that work finx, but just onx not working makxs such a diffxrncx. Somtimxs it sxxms to mx that our group I likx my kxyboard – not all mxmbers arx working propxrly. You may say to yourslixf “Wxll, I am only onx pxrson. I won’t makx or brxak an organization of 63 pxoplx.” But, it doxs makx a diffxrncxe, bxcause a group nxxds thx activx participation of xvxrxy singlx pxrson. So, thx nxxt timx you think you arx only onx pxrson, and that your xfforts arx not nxxdxd, rxxmbxr my olod kxyboard and say to yourslixf “I am a kxy pxrson in this group and I am nxxdxd by all to makx it work.”

Unique Paragraph

How quickly can you find what is unusual about this paragraph? It looks so ordinary that you would think that nothing was wrong with it at all and, in fact, nothing is. But it is unusual. Why? If you study it and think abut it you may find out, but I am not going to assist you in any way. You must do it without coaching. No doubt, if you work at it for long, it will dawn on you. Who knows? Go to work and try your skill.
Animal School

Once upon a time, in a far away place, the animals had a school. The curriculum consisted of running, climbing, flying and swimming, and all the animals took all the subjects. The duck was good in swimming: better, in fact, than his instructors. He received a passing grade in flying, but his running style just couldn’t get him through the running course. Because he was weak in running, he had to stay after school and take extra lessons. He even had to drop his swimming class in order to practice his running even more. He kept this up until he was only average in swimming. But average was acceptable, so nobody worried about this except for the duck.

The eagle was considered a problem student and was severely disciplined because, even though he beat all the others to the top of the tree in climbing class, he insisted on using his own method. And his swimming method was also very unorthodox, so needed continual corrections by the instructors. The rabbit started out at the top of the class in running, but he had a nervous breakdown and had to drop out of animal school because he could not handle the climbing and swimming. He didn’t even want to think about the flying.

The squirrel led the class in climbing, but his flying teacher made him start his flying lessons on the ground instead of from the top of the tree. He developed muscle damage from overexertion in trying to take off, and his grades then dropped in climbing and running. The deer flat out quit the first day, as flying and climbing just wasn’t going to happen for her.

At the end of the year, an abnormal crocodile who could swim well, run acceptably, climb a little, and fly in certain conditions ended up as the top student.

Not everyone is good at everything. Find each person’s strengths and build on them.