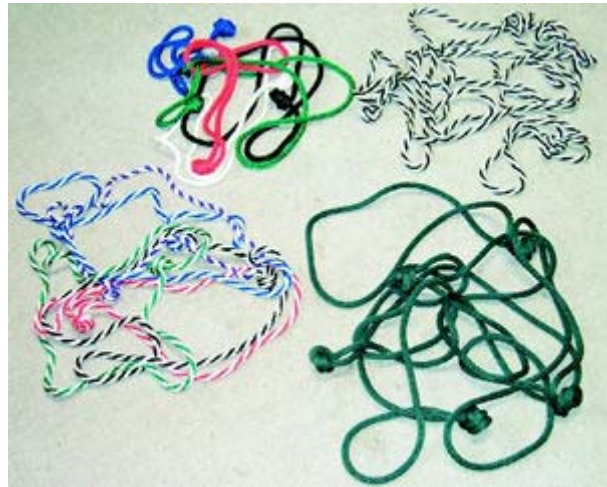


**2B or KNOT 2B** is a super activity for building group consensus. It is a simple activity that builds useful skills. 2B or KNOT 2B encourages group members to participate and it is an excellent introduction to problem solving techniques. It is also an activity for group problem solving and decision making that requires little or no physical activity, making it available for populations with limited mobility and high mobility alike.



### Equipment

A series of 4 independent rope rings held together by a fifth rope ring. Tubular webbing, climbing ropes, shoe laces and even belts can also be used in place of ropes.

### The Challenge

For the group to decide as a whole, which rope loop is holding together all the other rope loops, without touching any of the ropes.

### Typical Presentation, Storyline or Metaphor

Your rescue team has been called for a mountain climbing rescue. The equipment has been flown in to assist your efforts, but your climbing ropes have been badly knotted. Since time is limited, you must determine, as a group, which single knot to untie, so that all the remaining ropes are unconnected.

### Variations

The length of the ropes used for 2B or KNOT 2B is typically somewhere between 7 and 15 feet. If you choose to use 165 foot (50 meter) climbing ropes, you can cover a much larger area, and include more twists and turns in the rope. This size may be appropriate if you happen to have more than 15 people in a single group.

Color or pattern changes in the ropes can also provide additional challenges to the activity. The Teamplay version of 2B or KNOT 2B uses four varieties of increasing difficulty. The first puzzle has five ropes that are different solid colors (blue, red, green, etc.) The second version has five ropes with different striped colors (blue and white, red and white, etc.) The third version has five ropes that are all the same solid color (blue). And the final version has five ropes that are all the same striped color.

## **Important Points**

One of the first skills that 2B or KNOT 2B provides, is the opportunity for the group to reach a consensus as a whole. It is important early in a challenge and adventure program for participants to realize that their comments and opinions are valued. Secondly, 2B or KNOT 2B provides a very visual method of identifying problem solving techniques to the group. If you happen to have five ropes and ten participants, you can ask groups of 2 to analyze a single rope. Their objective is not to determine which rope is the right one, only whether or not the one rope they are reviewing is the correct rope. This demonstrates that a large problem can be broken into a series of smaller, more manageable pieces.

Two other problem solving techniques go hand in hand. First the group can decide as a whole which rope is the right one, or they can attempt to identify any ropes that are NOT the correct rope. This process of solving a problem by elimination be a useful point to discuss during the debriefing stage of this activity. Another variation is to have teams working on individual ropes, and then to have various teams check each other's work, before reporting back their findings. This type of support encourages the group to watch out for each other.

Finally, by using a series of increasingly complex ropes (varying the color, adding more ropes), the group learns how to use a simple skill learned early in the process, for attacking even more difficult problems. If you want to reinforce to the group that this process has actually occurred, try repeating the original solid colors version after the most difficult version with all ropes of the same striped color. Typically the group has acquired an advanced technique, and some consensus "speed" in the process.

It can be beneficial to use a visual prop to explain how the one rope is holding the other four together in the 2B or KNOT 2B puzzle. A key chain ring with 4 additional rings makes a good model. It is best to place the 2B or KNOT 2B puzzle on the ground before the group arrives. This insures that the puzzle is visible, and that group members will not be able to observe which rope is the correct rope during the construction of the activity.

## **Discussion and Debriefing Topics**

Did you find this activity easy or more difficult than you initially thought? Were you able to judge for yourself which rope was holding the others together? Were you willing to bet your next paycheck that you were right? Were you able to accomplish this task quickly? Did you experience any frustration as other group members struggled to identify the correct rope for themselves? Which series of ropes were the hardest to solve?

## **Activities Using Similar Skills and Follow-on Activities**

### **Not Knots - *The Challenge***

Using a single piece of rope, create a series of loops, twists and turns in the rope, and place the rope on the ground so that it is not immediately obvious whether the rope will create a knot when the two ends of the rope are pulled in opposite directions. The challenge is for the entire group to decide, without touching the rope, whether a knot will be formed when the rope is pulled, or

whether the loops, twists and turns in the rope will simply unwind, leaving a straight piece of rope. Achieving group consensus is the ultimate goal of Not Knots.

### **Moving Towards Extinction - *The Challenge***

For all group members to have both feet inside any circle at various times during this activity. Begin the activity with about a dozen circles, and remove at least one each turn, until only one circle remains. Each time the facilitator calls, “check - in,” group members must place both feet inside a circle. After this, participants begin to mingle about in the general area of the circles, waiting for the next check-in time. Reinforce the basic requirement that both feet must be within the circle every so often.

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For these and other exceptional teambuilding activities, consult the [Training Wheels Inc.](#) website, and also try the award winning adventure-based teambuilding book, *Teamwork & Teamplay* ISBN 0-7872-4532-1 (available from [Kendall/Hunt](#)), by Jim Cain.

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*Teamwork & Teamplay*, by Jim Cain, was awarded the Karl Rohnke Creativity Award by the Association for Experiential Education. You can obtain a copy of the award winning adventure-based book directly from the publisher, Kendall/Hunt, at (800) 228-0810, or at [www.kendallhunt.com](http://www.kendallhunt.com)

You can also find exciting adventure-based activities and equipment at **Training Wheels Inc.**, featuring many of the Teamwork & Teamplay props, including **2B or KNOT2B Ropes**. Visit [www.training-wheels.com](http://www.training-wheels.com) or 888-553-0147.