**Getting Your Group into Groups**

For many facilitators this is a really challenging thing to do. People will often be a bit resistant, might even grown or give you a dirty look, but once pushed most people really like meeting others. It is a vital part of Living Smart and good adult learning principles – we learn from each other as well as the “presenter”. Avoid falling into the trap of letting people just talk in the table groups too much.

Here are some methods.

1) Playing cards. You need to wait until everyone is there so you can count the exact number of people you have. If you want groups of three, simple get out three of each number (eg 3 ones, 3 twos, 3 threes . .) until you have one card for each person. Hand them out randomly and people have to find their match and a spot to sit. (there will be total chaos while they are doing this but let them work it out)

You don’t need to use playing cards. You can also use those free post cards you get from cafes, phamplets related to the topic you are working on, information sheets on your topic, a quote or statistic related to your topic with a number on each one so you end up sharing three different quotes, a jigsaw with a picture or quote related to your topic, three things from nature (gumnuts, leaves etc), or different animals (you have to make the noise of the animal – total chaos!)

2) Group people based on how quickly they achieve a task. This well matches those more active (who will finish the task earlier) with those more reflective (who will take more time) and means that you do not have to

3) Mood line can get groups up and moving. You can get people to line up by height, name (alphabetical) who came the furthest to get there, birthdays, how many people in your extended family . . . . . ) Try it silently for a thrill! Either group in threes based who you are standing next to or wrap the ends of the line so you are paired with someone at the other end of the line.

4) Sometimes a simple counting off (eg for ten groups count 12345678910 then start again) is simple and easy way if you have forgotten your cards!.

5) Get people to move table groups. Eg put something under each chair and that person moves clockwise. Or get the person with the longest hair to move clockwise and the shortest hair counter clockwise.

6) Sometimes you can say “Go and find someone you have not spoken to yet” (and be prepared to join with anyone left out or facilitate them into a pair – some people have lots of childhood hurts over being left out

DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER GREAT WAYS????