



## HEARTBEAT BALL

**Number of players:** 5+

**Space:** enough room to make a standing circle

**Materials needed:** None

### **Procedure:**

For this activity, you will first need to gather a number of objects including a playground ball which will be the central focus of the game. Additional objects can be: a second ball made of soft material, a very large necklace, an empty tin coffee can, a cane or tall stick, a hat, a bag with a stiff circular handle, Frisbee, etc. The game begins with all the players standing in a circle. The leader holds up the playground ball and explains that this is heartbeat ball. The group's goal is to pass the ball in a steady, consistent rhythm around the circle. The sound of the ball being caught should resemble a heartbeat. There should be no talking. The group continues to work on passing the ball until a solid rhythm has been established. Afterwards the leader may introduce new objects into the game that are passed in different ways. As each new object is added the group **MUST** maintain the rhythm and consistency of the heart beat ball while adding the new tasks. The number one priority is always the heartbeat ball. If the heartbeat ball drops to the ground the game stops, the group assesses why the difficulty happened and starts again from the beginning.

### **Possible side coaching:**

"Remember, your number one goal is to maintain the heartbeat no matter what else is going on."

"Each new item is like another problem to solve. How will you make the heart•beat your priority yet take care of the new items?"

### **Variations:**

There is no limit to objects you can add to this game or how they might be passed. [For example, a tin can might get passed with the left foot to the left; a necklace might get put over the neck of the person to the right, etc.] If you play this game over a long period of time, allow students to bring in new objects to add to the mix. If you add a stick or cane, you can add a tapping into the rhythm of the heartbeat.

### **Processing points:**

- What was easy; what was difficult? Why?
- What strategies did you use to make sure the group succeeded?

### **Possible learning areas:**

Group problem solving, focusing, concentration, listening.

**Source:** National Theatre of the Deaf