Virtual Training Icebreakers

1. **"Ball Toss" Introduction |** The trainer selects a participant by "tossing them the ball" and asks them to introduce themselves by typing their name in the chat window. That person "then tosses the ball" to another participant. The person who "catches" the ball introduces themselves and then tosses the ball to another participant until everyone has had a turn.

2. **Ask a Question |** Display a slide with an image and a question. Ask participants to answer the question using whiteboard/annotation tools or by chat. Debrief by calling on a few people to share why or how their response relates to the program content.

   - Objective: Connect people to session content and practice using the platform tools
   - Connect: Start the conversation among participants while establishing an interactive environment
   - Tools: Slide, Whiteboard tools, Chat, Audio

3. **Which Image Best Describes You? |** Arrange 9-12 images on a slide. Ask participants to select the image that best describes them in their job role or personal life. Call on participants to share and explain why they chose their image. Note connections and commonalities.

   - Objective: Create a safe learning environment where people share and connect through stories
   - Connect: Think creatively together and learn how others think and relate
   - Tools: Slide, Whiteboard tools, Webcam, Chat, Audio

4. **One Random Object |** Learners select a random object within their reach and explain what it looks/feels like; the other learners guess the object. (Optional: Ask questions that require a yes or no answer.) Encourage learners to choose an unusual item.

   - Objective: Give learners the opportunity to talk about something less personal instead of sharing personal information under the spotlight; prepare learners to speak about training-related topics
   - Connect: Engage in humorous dialogue; allow learners who may not feel comfortable sharing their life stories to talk about a strange paperweight, for example, instead
   - Tools: Audio, Webcam, Chat

5. **Social Questions |** Ask a lighthearted question, allowing learners to respond if they feel comfortable. Asking a variety of questions helps everyone get to know each other a little better. The question could be as simple as asking where learners would rather be at that moment or as imaginative as asking them to describe their dream house in detail.

6. **Two Lies, One Truth |** Ask each learner to share two truths and one lie about themselves in random order. As learners take turns sharing, encourage other learners to openly speculate about which statements are true. Everyone will have an opportunity to try to pull a comical act of deception on their classmates and share their sense of humor. Use polling to vote on which statement is false. After the participant reveals the lie, move on to the next participant.

7. **Who's Done What? |** Before your class, compile a list of ambitious and common goals. The goals can relate to work, personal achievements, or common "bucket list" items. During class, have learners find three things on the list they've done. If someone hasn't done any of those things, allow them to add their own unique experience. Learners will be curious about people who have accomplished things they want to do, and people who have done them will be eager to share their stories.

8. **Introduce Each Other |** Pair up participants (using breakout rooms) and give them a list of questions to ask each other. Convene in the main room and ask participants to introduce their partner.

9. **Show a Map |** Show a map on the screen and ask participants to introduce themselves by identifying where they are on the map. Ask questions about the nature of the work in that state/county/city, interesting facts about or experiences of living there, etc.

10. **Would you Rather? |** Put participants into breakout rooms and ask them a series of "Would you Rather" questions – these can be a mix of work-related (Would you rather work in IA or Ongoing CPS? CPS or YJ? Urban or rural?) and fun questions (see below). Have a recorder for each group report out when the larger group reconvenes.

   - Would you rather always win pie-eating contests or always win wheelbarrow races?
   - Would you rather be a deep-sea diver or an astronaut?
   - Would you rather be able to hear any conversation or take back anything you say?
   - Would you rather be invisible or be able to read minds?
   - Would you rather be the most popular or the smartest person you know?
   - Would you rather be the sand castle or the wave?
   - Would you rather give up your computer or your pet?
   - Would you rather never use the internet again or never watch TV again?
   - Would you rather not be able to use your phone or your e-mail?

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