

# Closing Activities & Songs

Here are a few ideas for closing activities and songs that will make your next closing ceremony even more significant. You can find even more in each of books authored by Jim Cain. Visit [www.teamworkandteampplay.com](http://www.teamworkandteampplay.com) for more information.

## Raccoon Circle Gear Clusters

One of my favorite closing songs is the title theme from the Disney movie, The Lion King. Invite groups of 6-8 people to gather around a knotted Raccoon Circle (15 feet of tubular climbing webbing, tied into a circle with a water knot. If you are unfamiliar with Raccoon Circles, visit the Teamwork & Teampplay website and download the Raccoon Circle activity information there.)

Begin by having everyone grasp the Raccoon Circle with both hands and lean back gently (swaying to beat of the beginning song music). With the next set of lyrics, have all group members grasp the Raccoon Circle only with their left hand, and then pinwheel towards the right (counterclockwise). When several Raccoon Circles are present, they will look like giant rotating gears. Invite group members to high five other participants from nearby gears. Then reverse directions, holding onto the Raccoon Circles with the right hand and pinwheeling each gear to the left (clockwise), again high fiving other members of the group as they pass.

Next, invite everyone to face the center of the circle, lean gently back, bend their knees and slowly lower themselves to the ground and then back up. Try this again with every member of the group closing their eyes. Finally, try it one more time, with all members of the group going down and up twice, without talking, and with their eyes closed. This is a great chance for members of the group to feel the connection with other members of their circle.

I like to create a place for group members to thank others for being part of their group, by saying, “if there is someone in your group that has been kind to you this week (day, conference, session, etc), I am inviting you to tell them so right now. If they saved a seat for you at dinner, or told you some great ideas, or included you in their discussion, you should let them know.”

Finally, repeat the clockwise and counterclockwise gear rotations from above, to complete the song and this activity.

## A Circle of Connection

Thanks to Dick Hammond for sharing this activity that really connects everyone together. You can use this activity anytime during a camp, conference or active learning session.

The leader begins by introducing themselves to the group, and sharing some information about themselves, such as “I learned how to facilitate a group during this conference. I enjoyed meeting several new friends. I danced!”

To use this activity for a closing session, encourage participants to share examples of what they have learned, new friends they have made, or what they are most looking forward to when they return.

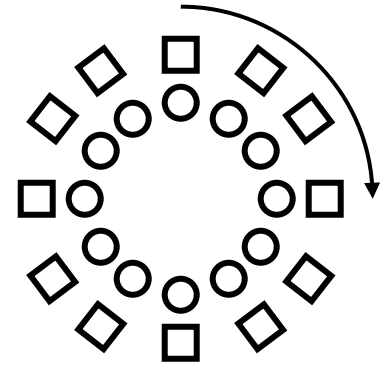
At some point, one of these events is sure to also be shared by at least one other member of the group. When this happens, this first person to link elbows with the previous person, introduces themselves, and begins to share some of their interesting hobbies. The activity continues until all members of the group have ‘linked together.’ The final task is for the last person to continue sharing until the first person can link with them. At this point, there is an opportunity to say, “...and by the way. Those things which link us together, bring us a bit closer together as well!”

From the Teamwork & Teampplay website at: [www.teamworkandteampplay.com](http://www.teamworkandteampplay.com)

## A Circle of Kindness

The formation for this activity is two concentric circles, both facing towards the center. One half of the group forms the inner circle. The second half of the group forms the outer circle, with one member of the outer circle standing behind each member of the inner circle.

Members of the inside circle close their eyes, and the outer circle has the opportunity to express a positive comment to their inside circle partner. For tactile audiences (in other words, where appropriate), the outer circle can place their hands on the shoulders of their inner circle partners, and whisper into their ears. Typical comments might include, “it was great meeting you, thanks for joining our group this week, I am looking forward to working with you, thanks for your help with the problem solving activity - I couldn’t have done it without you!” This activity however is NOT a two-way conversation - the only response from the inner circle is “thank you.” This avoids breaking the mood with laughter, giggling or any other fun but disruptive conversation.



When finished, outside circle participants move one person to their left, until they have encountered all the inside circle participants. Then the inner and outer circles trade places and the process is repeated.

## Song – Oh How Lovely is the Evening



This song is not only a beautiful closing tune, but has a very nice bit of choreography too. Start with three concentric circles of singers. The inner circle should have at least 15 people, with more in the next circle, and still more in the final outer circle. Begin by teaching the lyrics (they are very simple), and then teach the choreography (shown below to the right of each lyric).

The beauty in this song emerges when it is sung as a round. The inner circle begins by holding hands and moving counterclockwise (to the right), when they reach the second line of the verse, they reverse directions and move clockwise (to the left) – and the second circle begins the first line, moving to the right, while holding hands.

When the inner circle finished the second line of the verse, they stand still and swing their arms, while singing the ‘ding – dong’ portion of the lyrics. At the same time, the middle circle begins moving to the left (clockwise) and the outer circle starts the song, moving to the right (counterclockwise).

Repeat the song three times. When the inner circle reaches the ‘ding – dong’ part for the last time, they keep singing ‘ding – dong’ until ALL three circles are done. Finish with the entire group holding the last word.

You can hear a segment of this song, recorded by the Buckeye Leadership Workshop singers, in MP3 format, by clicking on the song icon here. If you would like more information about the Buckeye Leadership Workshop (annually held in March), visit their website at [www.buckeyeleadership.com](http://www.buckeyeleadership.com). To purchase a copy of either of their two song-filled CD’s, contact Bill Henderson at 419-645-5186 or [henderson7@ag.osu.edu](mailto:henderson7@ag.osu.edu).

Lyrics

Choreography

Oh how lovely is the evening, is the evening.

Walk counterclockwise (to the right)

When the bells are sweetly ringing, sweetly ringing.

Walk clockwise (to the left)

Ding, dong, ding, dong, ding, dong

Stand still, facing the center, and swing arms forward on ‘ding’ and backward on ‘dong’

## Song – When I’m on my Journey



This is an Appalachian Highlands song that dates back more than one hundred years. When settlers from that region continued their journeys west, or when family members concluded their time here on earth, this song was sung not as a sad lament, but as a joyful sendoff to those that were traveling on. It is especially beautiful with harmony.

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### Chorus

When I’m on my journey don’t you weep after me.  
When I’m on my journey don’t you weep after me.  
When I’m on my journey don’t you weep after me.  
I don’t want you to weep after me.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Verse

High up on the mountain, leave your troubles down below.  
High up on the mountain, leave your troubles down below.  
High up on the mountain, leave your troubles down below.  
I don’t want you to weep after me. (Chorus)

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Verse

Every lonely river must flow down to the sea.  
Every lonely river must flow down to the sea.  
Every lonely river must flow down to the sea.  
I don’t want you to weep after me. (Chorus)

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Verse

When the stars are falling and the thunder starts to roll.  
When the stars are falling and the thunder starts to roll.  
When the stars are falling and the thunder starts to roll.  
I don’t want you to weep after me. (Chorus)

Chorus (hummed, instead of words)

Chorus, very softly

Tag Ending, the very last line.... “I don’t want you to weep, after me.”  
Hold the final word ‘me’ for a full breath.

For more community and teambuilding activities, visit the Teamwork & Teamplay website, or contact Jim Cain at 585-637-0328 or [jimcain@teamworkandteamplay.com](mailto:jimcain@teamworkandteamplay.com)