Art4Wellbeing

Project nr. 2025-2-NL02-KA210-YOU-000368916

Session 1 Opening Session: Safety & Group Cohesion

Building a Safe Space Together Through Art

Main Objective
Create a safe, inclusive and welcoming space, get to know each other, establish group agreements and explore expectations and anxieties for our journey together.

Target Group
Young people (14–30)
Adaptable for diverse groups

Total Duration
90 minutes

Materials (overall)
- Image cards / photos
- Large paper, markers Sticky notes
- Art materials (colours, pens, paper, scissors, glue)
- Printed handouts (optional)

1.1A Name & Movement Circle
Warm-up — 10 min



Purpose
- Break the ice and energize the group
- Learn each other's names
- Create a playful and inclusive atmosphere

Instructions
- Stand or sit in a circle.
- Each person says their name with a simple movement (gesture/sound).
- The group repeats the name and movement together.
- Continue around the circle.

Facilitator Prompts
- "I'll start. My name is ..." (show a movement).
- "Now it's your turn! When you say your name, add a movement."
- "Let's all repeat together!"
- "Feel free to be creative – there is no right or wrong!"

1.1B Choose Your Image
Icebreaker — 15 min



Purpose
- Share something about yourself in a creative way
- Discover common interests and diverse perspectives
- Encourage active listening and respect

Instructions
- Spread image cards on a table or floor.
- Invite participants to choose one image that resonates with them today.
- In small groups or in the whole circle, each person shares: Why did you choose this image?

Facilitator Prompts
- "Take a few moments to look at the images. Choose one that speaks to you today."
- "What does this image represent for you?"
- "Share as much or as little as you feel comfortable with."
- "Let's listen without interrupting. Thank you for sharing!"

1.2 Safe Harbor
Group Agreement — 25 min



Purpose
- Create a safe, respectful and supportive learning space
- Establish shared group agreements
- Build trust and responsibility within the group

Instructions
- In small groups, discuss: "What do we need to feel safe and respected in this group?"
- Write ideas on sticky notes.
- Share in the big group and create a common poster.

Facilitator Prompts
- "What helps you feel safe and comfortable in a group?"
- "What agreements can we make together to support everyone?"
- "Let's combine our ideas into a group agreement that we all commit to."
- "These agreements will guide us throughout our journey."

1.3 Tree of Expectations & Anxieties
Main Activity — 30 min



Purpose
- Explore personal expectations and anxieties
- Visualize our shared journey
- Strengthen group cohesion through openness

Instructions
- On a large paper, draw a tree (roots, trunk, branches, leaves).
- Invite participants to write their expectations on leaves and their anxieties on roots.
- Add and discuss: trunk (what gives us strength) and branches (hopes for the future).

Facilitator Prompts
- "Think about this journey: What are you looking forward to?" (leaves)
- "What concerns or worries do you have?" (roots)
- "What gives you strength?" (trunk)
- "What do you hope to gain or achieve?" (branches)
- "You can write words, draw or use symbols."
- "Would anyone like to share?"

1.4 Session Evaluation & Closing
Reflection — 10 min



Purpose
- Reflect on today's session
- Give feedback and capture key takeaways
- Close the session in a positive and energizing way

Instructions
- Invite participants to share one word, symbol or gesture about how they feel today.
- Use a quick evaluation (e.g. sticky note: one thing I enjoyed, one thing I learned, one question I still have).
- End with a group cheer or a closing gesture.

Facilitator Prompts
- "What is one word that describes how you feel after today's session?"
- "What did you enjoy the most?"
- "What did you learn?"
- "Is there anything you are still curious about?"
- "Let's close with a group cheer/gesture to celebrate the beginning of our journey!"

Remember: Be inclusive | Encourage creativity | Ensure a respectful space | Follow safeguarding guidelines