

# ATTRACT

People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did,  
but people will never forget how you made them feel.

Maya Angelou

There is an art to gathering. If you have ever hosted a family dinner, a birthday party, a meeting or a family reunion, you know that how we gather matters. This is no different for a learning environment, class, or workshop. Where you meet, who attends, what you do, and how you do it are major factors in gathering well. And yet sometimes, the most important consideration to gather gets overlooked – the WHY.

Priya Parker, author of *The Art of Gathering* begins her book with the line “*The way we gather matters.*”<sup>1</sup> For a gathering to shape, influence and

inspire, it needs to have a purpose, not simply be a category such as an “intake meeting”, “orientation night” or “class”. Your purpose helps you determine all the details, big and small and helps you refine choices related to what you want people to feel, do, learn and experience. The **why** behind our gathering sets the stage for all the other

details; details like an opportunity to create an alternate world. For Adult Foundational Learners, the alternative world we create from those first few interactions, meetings, or classes sets the stage for that powerful **why**. It can be the reason people come back, begin again, start believing in their abilities, and change their educational stories.

*“This is the important thing – they need to have a relationship and trust to keep coming.”*

CALP Staff

**90% of what makes a gathering successful is put in place beforehand.**

Priya Parker

One of the key reasons in why we gather and hope to attract Adult Foundational Learners is to build trust and relationship. Relationship building has a significant influence at this stage of a learner’s path: the human to human connection they make in those first initial gatherings is often the catalyst for changes in beliefs, educational stories, and identity.

<sup>1</sup> Parker, P. (2018). *The art of gathering*. New York: Riverhead Books.

**It's all in the details:** the warm welcome, the atmosphere of the room, the food, the coffee/tea and the way the room is set up communicates care from that first step into the room. The details include the way staff take an interest in each person, taking the time to understand what got the participants there and what might keep them away. It's the recognition that the learning community is built through sharing stories, building connections, and creating a safe place for people to authentically be themselves.

The Why and the Way we gather matters.

## Strategies to Attract Learners

The *Gathering to Learn* project wanted to understand what's involved in those first initial sessions and the way CALP learning experiences are planned and shaped. We asked our CALP community: What made those first few classes or meetings places that learners wanted to go? What do CALP staff do that encourages people to try? What are the ways that relationships are built? What are the things that can hold learners back at this stage?

In looking at the most common ways we gather that attracts participants to keep coming back, four themes stood out:

- **Setting up the Environment**
- **The Facilitator/Learner Relationship**
- **The Learning Setting**
- **Celebrating Success**

### Setting up the Environment

How we set up the physical and energetic environment is one of the key elements to attracting participants to the learning community. Peter Block, an influential author and community development consultant, states: *"The room has importance beyond its functionality. Every room we occupy serves as a metaphor for the larger community we want to create. This is true socially and also physically. The room is the visible expression of today's version of the future."*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Block, P. (2008). *Community: The structure of belonging*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler (p. 152)

Some of the ways our CALP community sets up the physical space include things like having books and magazines available in the reception area, as well as coffee/tea/tea and snacks. A welcoming, safe, respectful space is communicated through Land Acknowledgement signage and non-gender washrooms. Orientation nights are enhanced with food and attention to details like lighting, table cloths and being family friendly. Those first few sessions communicate welcome to different learning styles by having fidget tools on tables, teaching in a circle, and having sensitivity to lighting and time. Barriers are removed through free parking, bus tickets and childminding as well as offering options for connection (open on evenings or having spontaneous hours, like a drop in). For rural communities, barriers can be removed by providing gas cards, taxi chits or encouraging carpooling. Meeting at a location that is accessible to the participant is a consideration as well.

*I felt welcomed and encouraged. They made accommodations for me. The teachers were approachable and available. There were evening classes. Teachers understood even when my life was a mess!*

*Participant*

### CALP Staff/Learner Relationship

Another way that CALP staff attract participants to try their program or courses is through the way they build relationship. We heard many different versions of the ways that CALP staff build connection *human being to human being*, instead of the traditional teacher to student power relationship. The way they do this varies and yet the essence of connection is built on curiosity, sharing and encouragement. Stories are exchanged between staff and learners and the learners themselves. Space and attention is given for participants to share their feelings, interests, hopes and fears for the journey ahead. Here are some perspectives from CALP staff on the ways they build relationship.

- *“We cannot be all things to them, “the fixer uppers”, however, we can acknowledge every circumstance they might be going through.”*
- *“No matter what you are feeling, you are welcome.”*

I am a teacher. That means I shine a light here and hold a mirror there. It means I walk in wonder and sit in truth. It means I love stories and follow where they lead...I’m a teacher because I believe that the obstacle is there to ignite the gifts. And so I devote myself to how and not why.

Mark Nepo,  
The Life You’re Given, p. 185

- *“Sometimes we lead people with vision boards, asking them what excites them or what lights them up. Many of them have never thought about this before or believed that their dreams were possible.”*
- *“I take a very loving, kind, non-intrusive approach. Where appropriate I share my own experiences as a way to build relationship with the learners and show them that struggles are a part of life and we can still carry on.”*

## The Learning Setting

This element of attracting learners details the specifics of those first few sessions. The learning setting, according to our CALP community, involves not only how the room is set up or the structure of the lesson, but also about how it is done. One of the key pieces of feedback that was shared was to **find ways to distance your learning environment from a traditional learning setting**, as this can be a trigger for some of your participants. Create a warm,

*Things that are a MUST: coffee/tea & snacks. People cannot learn when they are hungry.*

CALP Staff

welcoming learning space! Teach in a circle, a horse-shoe or do away with tables altogether. Staff can sit with the participants, instead of the front of the room. Include coffee/tea/tea and snacks, art on the walls, dimmable lighting, lamps, fidget tools, and comfortable seating that fits all sizes of adults. Anticipate needs for food, childminding and transportation and make them visible and accessible.

The learning setting is also enhanced by paying attention to what is done and what is said.

CALP staff model belief in

participants through their language and tone – an encouraging “You can!” or “You’ve got this!” goes a long way in helping participants make that internal shift of believing in themselves. Learning that is fun, relevant and interesting to them also has an impact. We learned in one of our interviews of how a math tutor changed his lesson plans to all sports language and stories as a way to connect with a participant that was an avid sports fan.

Taking the time to really listen to the learner is so important. The value of taking the time to get to know the learner and what’s important to them can’t be underestimated.

CALP Staff

The other piece about the learning setting is **what is available to the learner outside the setting**. Some CALPs, for example, provide options for one-to-one support, with flexible hours and in flexible settings. We also learned that some CALPs embrace a ‘wrap-around’ model, meaning they are strategically located or in relationship with other local resources and supports. These resources can help the learner in many areas of their lives and reduce the

barriers some learners may experience related to food stability, housing, utility payments and health.

### Celebrating Success

One of the inspiring messages we heard from CALP staff was to celebrate early successes right away. Learners benefit from hearing positive, life affirming messages about their abilities, actions and changes very early on in the journey. While the big goal may be for the learner to gain their GED for example, celebrating the early successes of perhaps coming to class on time or two weeks in a row is valuable. One CALP staff said, “*Start at the level they experience success*”. To one learner this may mean simply speaking up in class; to another it may be handing in their first writing assignment. Weaving together all the gems of relational knowledge you gained by getting to know their interests and hopes helps make recognition of their success personal and meaningful.

Anytime we try something new, take a risk, or confront our fears, we straddle an emotional tightrope of being “Brave and Afraid”. There is a certain amount of courage, hope and grit we are accessing to step out of our familiar routines and explore new possibilities for ourselves. Accompanying us on these steps are our fears, our beliefs about ourselves and the realities/complexities of our lives. For Adult Foundational Learners, it is no different. When participants are in the stage of ‘trying something out’, such as your course or learning opportunity, their internal script and beliefs, community pressures and realms of life complexities are right there with them.

## What Gets in the Way? (Participant Barriers and Challenges)

*Many learners have had negative experiences with learning and we try hard to make sure this doesn't reoccur. We don't want to be another piece that adds to their “negative story”. We are trying to help them change their story.*

CALP Staff

### Internal Scripts and Beliefs

A learner’s belief and identity are major influences in this vulnerable stage of their learning journey. They are often still lacking confidence and trust in themselves, you, their abilities and the learning experience itself. One of the CALP staff we interviewed said, “*They are looking to confirm their negative bias of themselves; the slightest thing can sabotage.*” Many come to this stage of the learning with fear, shame and old stories of their educational

journey. Many have never experienced a positive learning community or community in general, and consequently, struggle to find belonging and their place. It's hard for them to trust and it's hard for them believe. One CALP staff's perspective of how a learner thinks at this stage was, "I don't want to" which is really "I don't think I can".

### Community Pressures

In addition to the internal pressures and dialogue, learners may experience are also the external cultural and community pressures they may feel. Some learners are not coming to your learning experience of their own will, but are being mandated to come by the justice or other government systems. Some are coming to your learning experience and risking their anonymity; this is especially true in our rural and small town CALPs. People feel various kinds of stigma from ageism, to ethnicity, to family history. There are insecurities about what people will think of them; if they become involved, and even if they don't (if they lack supports). Something as unpredictable as the weather can be a major external factor that influences them at this stage.

### Realms of Life

The most significant and complex barrier for Adult Foundational Learners at this stage is what we are calling "The Realms of Life". Learners experience a wide range of challenges related to **basic needs** such as finances, transportation, childminding and food security. **Family life** is impacted by a change in routine and many participants experience childminding issues (i.e. lack of dependable childminding). Some are dealing with work and family schedules; some are dealing with a chaotic home life that makes it difficult to get out of the house. Some are the primary caregiver in their home and are often pulled back into that role. Some are experiencing the serious and complex issues of domestic violence and mental health.

**Employment** is another area that adds complications to a learner's ability to continue to attend. Some learners are pressured to get back to work instead of attending a course and some are forced to find work for financial reasons, instead of taking a course. Job schedules can change suddenly and now taking classes during the day or night are no longer an option. Participants may have been secretive about taking courses or classes and are no longer able to keep both fronts going.

**A learner's health** can also impact their ability to get into the routine of going to a class or learning opportunity. Some participants struggle with a physical illness that trumps all other commitments. Some have medical appointments for themselves or family members that take priority. Others are struggling with energy. As one CALP staff said, "*They may have the time but they don't have the energy.*" Trauma and mental health issues also come into play, and are often triggered by the anxiety and/or memory of learning experiences.

Lastly, **the learner's challenges with learning** can act as a barrier at this stage of the journey. For some, it's hard for them to trust teachers, classes, other students and the learning experience in general - they felt too beaten down by the educational system. Challenges may

be tangible things like the timing or location of the course doesn't work for them. There may be a lack of tutors available to support them. They may have learning differences that are accurate or inaccurate that they carry from the past. They may in a family situation or caregiver situation where everyone else's learning comes first and their own comes last.

The realms and complexities of a learner's life are vast and run deep, as are the internal and external pressures. Thankfully, CALP staff have this understanding and have developed strategies to work with them!

## What Makes a Way? (CALP Strategies to Address Barriers and Challenges)

CALP staff shared three main strategies they use to decrease barriers or address barriers for learners.

- **Intentional Strategies for the Learning Environment**
- **Intentional Strategies to Build Relationship**
- **Intentional Strategies to Support Learners**

There was friendliness. It made me feel at home. I learned about my strengths. There was childminding.

Participant

### Intentional Strategies for the Learning Environment:

One of the biggest ways to open doors for learners is for programs to be affordable and to offer free childminding. The CALP grant can be used to reduce financial barriers in three main areas: 1) reduce or waive fees for learning opportunities when a financial barrier exists, 2) provide on-site-childminding, and 3) cover costs for transportation. Having flexible hours for courses and learning is also key.

Being open on evenings or offering weekend options gives learners more choice and access.

The way the learning environment is structured is also intentional. Providing warmth and welcome, food, coffee/tea, and snacks are all ways to communicate care in tangible ways. Being sensitive to learners' needs is also critical; this includes giving lots of breaks and something called "Shoulder-Time" – being present for learners

*I often think of them as a precious gem. They need such special care and attention. I don't want this experience to become just another negative experience for them.*

CALP Staff

before and after the formal learning time. This time is often when connections are deepened and more knowledge about the learner's circumstances are gained.

### Intentional Strategies to Build Relationship:

Some of the ways we can do this is by being generous with our assumptions of the learner. One CALP staff said: *"I try to never assume. We don't know what's going on for them, what might be happening in their lives. A whole bunch of things could be impacting their ability to learn or even show up"*.

Modelling friendship and relationship building is critical – one of the most repeated statements we heard throughout the research was about how important it is to present yourself as a human being, not just a facilitator. One CALP staff said: *"Showing your own vulnerability or experience creates trust and comfort"*. Added to that is an attitude of curiosity: asking the learner where they want go or what they want to do builds shared understanding of their needs and contexts.

Another intentional strategy to build relationship is to bring worthiness into the conversation. As identified earlier, many learners are straddling old beliefs and new possibilities during this time. Reinforcing the message that they are worthy of where they want to go can help shape their internal dialogue into new patterns. A CALP staff noted that sometimes they just need to be told it's okay for them do this at this stage in their lives.

Wholehearted living is about engaging in our lives from a place of worthiness. It means cultivating the courage, compassion and connection to wake up in the morning and think no matter what gets done and how much is left undone, I am enough. It's going to bed at night thinking, yes, I am imperfect and vulnerable and sometimes afraid, but that doesn't change the truth that I am also brave and worthy of love and belonging.

Brené Brown, (2016), p.10

### Intentional Strategies to Support Learners:

One could think of this as the "behind the scenes" or the tangible, instrumental encouragement a program can provide. This could look like providing supplies for the class such as books or a backpack. It might be providing financial help, like waiving fees or paying for mileage. It could be facilitating supportive referrals with local partners such as the local food bank, mental health, the library, local employers or resource centers.



This approach also includes the hiring practices of CALP staff. Being sensitive to the needs of the learner and the learning community is conveyed by who is hired, the type of people that occupy positions and the attitudes of the facilitators. We learned through our interviews that it's important to hire for the community, such as hiring Indigenous teachers. We heard again that the attitude of the facilitator is so critical – presenting oneself as a human being, with person-centered actions, authenticity and vulnerability helps strengthen connections in the learning community you are trying to create.

It's more than a backpack. It's the message that someone cares about them and someone's rooting for them.

CALP Staff

Creating a social place for learners is also an intentional strategy that supports learners. Setting up and establishing the classroom as a community where people can be themselves, feel safe and belong is of great value to learners. In their words:

- *They remember my name and say thank you for coming. They are happy that I am there. It does not feel like a clique – I am not an outsider.*
- *It's a place where I can be myself. I feel confident in coming to the group.*
- *I met people I could relate to.*
- *I became more comfortable and secure. The class is like family – these are my friends.*

# ATTRACT TOOLKIT

If you are wanting to learn more about how to attract Adult Foundational Learners to your program, these additional resources may be of specific interest to you. These resources follow the main themes that CALP staff shared for this stage of the learning journey. This toolkit gives you a “taste” of the concept or idea. The links and resources follow each topic in the toolkit.

## The Power of Environment:

It’s more than the room! Creating an environment is about finding tangible and relational ways to convey “Come on in!”, “You are welcome here!”, and “We are so glad you came!” This is not about having or not having an aesthetically beautiful space, but more about the energy and atmosphere you can create using what’s available to you. It’s about being resourceful and using your own energy to evoke invitation, warmth and welcome.

Place and space, while not new concepts, have grown in their breadth, impact and consideration. Well respected Community Developers and Consultants such as Michael Jones (The Soul of Place) and Peter Block (Community: The Structure of Belonging) write extensively on how place, community, identity and physical set up are inextricably linked. “*Place is not merely something we return to, but something we grow out from in order to create other and perhaps even better places in the future*” (Jones, 2014, ix). Mainstream culture has been intrigued with Scandanavian concepts such as *Hygge* and *Lagom*, which loosely translated mean creating atmospheres of togetherness, coziness and balance. Master Facilitator and Strategic Advisor, Priya Parker, describes how to harness the tangible and psychological benefits of gathering and environment in her best-selling book “The Art of Gathering”. She reminds us of the importance of place and space and how aesthetic considerations to group dynamics, space and group size can result in elevated gatherings and deeper connections. To find out more about sizes of groups, which kind of set-up encourages community, and how to “hygge” your space, check out the following resources.

## Resources for the Power of Environment:

- Book: Parker, P. (2018). *The art of gathering*. New York: Riverhead Books.
- Videos by Priya Parker:
  - TED Talk: [https://www.ted.com/talks/priya\\_parker\\_3\\_steps\\_to\\_turn\\_everyday\\_get\\_together\\_into\\_transformative\\_gatherings/transcript](https://www.ted.com/talks/priya_parker_3_steps_to_turn_everyday_get_together_into_transformative_gatherings/transcript)
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nggucaseto>;
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXPDpAreaXg>

- Book: Block, P. (2008). *Community: the structure of belonging*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers Inc.
- Video by Peter Block: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwahGcEiAr0>
- Book: Jones, M. (2014). *The soul of place*. Victoria, British Columbia: Friesen Press.
- Using the Power of your environment to promote positive change: <https://psychcentral.com/blog/using-the-power-of-your-environment-to-promote-positive-change/>
- Scandanavian Lifestyle TED talk: Planting Seeds of Happiness: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=biQGa89O5O4>
- Say Hello to Hygge Video: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/life/say-hello-to-hygge-the-danish-secret-to-happiness/>

### Trust Building:

Trust is built on significant moments of authenticity, both of self and others. To trust is to be able to rely on the integrity of a person or thing; to have confidence in. Professor and researcher, Brené Brown developed the acronym BRAVING in order to understand the anatomy, or the basic structure, of trust.

- **B:** First is the idea of healthy **B**oundaries which are essential, invisible borders that we create in order protect us and keep us safe. Respect for those boundaries need to come from self and others.
- **R:** **R**eliability is the sense that we will do what we said we will do, understanding our own abilities and limitations.
- **A:** **A**ccountability is about owning our mistakes.
- **V:** The **V**ault creates confidentiality.
- **I:** Living in **I**ntegrity means walking in our values; choosing the honorable and just path over ease.
- **N:** **N**on-judgemental attitudes allow the conversations to be open, honest, authentic.
- **G:** **G**enerosity includes empathy, demonstrating a motive of compassion and goodwill.

Over time, an environment of trust will be cultivated while keeping these seven key objectives in mind.

### Resources for Trust Building:

- Book: Brown, B. (2015). *Rising strong*. New York: Random House.
- Handout: Brené Brown, The Seven Elements of Trust: <https://daretolead.brenebrown.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/BRAVING.pdf>
- Video: Brené Brown, the Anatomy of Trust: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HX7pxiwzSzQ>
- ATTRACT: <https://humanparts.medium.com/my-classroom-is-not-a-safe-space-406927bfeab6>

### Trauma:

Science has discovered that the neurons in our brain are in constant motion of connection and reconnection as we take in new information and continue to learn. This concept is called neuroplasticity.

Jenny Horsman, a university professor and a community-based researcher, understands and teaches that the environment in which an individual is placed in can alter his or her learning experiences. During, or in the aftermath, of a violent or traumatic occurrence the natural human response is to either fight, flight, or freeze. These are not optimal learning conditions. The “fight, flight, or freeze” response can get in the way of the learning process, make it difficult to learn, and even cause continued hardship to the individual. During periods of trauma, it is vital for those affected to stay connected in community, and for the learning environment to remain uncompromised, safe, and relaxed.

### Resources for Trauma:

- Jenny Horsman, “ Creatively exploring and addressing the impact of violence on learning”: <https://jennyhorsman.com/>
- Neuroplasticity: <https://www.britannica.com/science/neuroplasticity>

### Unconscious Bias and Assumptions:

An unconscious bias is an unintentional belief or presumption that an individual is holding onto. Studies show that our minds automatically label people into rigid, categorical confines such as

age, race, religion, sexuality, education, ability, etc. Operating in this unconscious classification informs judgement and can impact friendships, community, and workplace associations.

There are some easy methods to overcome unconscious bias, beginning with examining your internal conversation to understand why you have made the assumptions you have made and asking yourself if they are valid beliefs. Some of the ways to do this are to step outside your comfort zone and associate with people who are not stereotypically the same as you. Knowing what your core values are and if they include aspects of respect and equality is another marker. And sometimes it's simply having the courage to be honest and acknowledge where you might have made unconscious assumptions and then take steps to remove the bias.

### Resources for Unconscious Bias and Assumptions:

- Avoiding Unconscious Bias at work: <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/avoiding-unconscious-bias.htm>
- Unconscious Bias: Surfacing Hidden Assumptions: <https://www.employerscouncil.org/unconscious-bias-surfacing-hidden-assumptions>
- How to Recognize and Overcome your Unconscious Bias: <https://www.theguardian.com/women-in-leadership/2015/dec/14/recognise-overcome-unconscious-bias>

### Presence and Energy:

To be “present” is to be in the moment; to have an authentic and real experience. Professor and social psychologist, Amy Cuddy, has studied the idea of “presence”: what it means; how it looks; how to receive; and how to respond in those moments, creating genuine connection. Presence is not a permanent or fixed state. There can be moments when you are not present – moments of distraction and interruption – and this is okay, natural even. But if you are trying to build a real connection with someone or hoping to engage someone in your project or idea, then it's important to be present.

Amy Cuddy teaches that body posture and language is essential in being present and communicating authentically with others and within ourselves. Simple stances, eye contact, facial expressions, and arm movements can communicate all sorts of messages. Our bodies unconsciously position themselves in postures that reflect our attitudes and thoughts. Wide, open stances demonstrate power and authority; while small, closed stances tend to demonstrate weakness and incompetence. Interestingly, by consciously focusing on body

posture, our minds and thoughts shift into the aligned expression. For instance, by deliberately creating the wide, open stance of power and authority, our thoughts will begin to alter accordingly, and we will exude confidence. It's important that we are aware of our own body posture and what it may be communicating, as we talk with people about various learning opportunities or invite participation in community activities.

### Resources for Presence:

- Book: Cuddy, A. (2015). *Presence: bringing your boldest self to your biggest challenges*. New York: Little, Brown and Company
- Videos (Amy Cuddy):
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATo9sYax-AQ>;
  - [https://www.ted.com/talks/amy\\_cuddy\\_your\\_body\\_language\\_may\\_shape\\_who\\_you\\_are/up-next](https://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_may_shape_who_you_are/up-next)

## ATTRACT Checklist

These are the broad themes, suggestions and practices that have come from our CALP community related to the ATTRACT aspect of the Learning Pathway.



**The following checklist can serve several purposes for you. It can provide you with:**

- ✓ A quick assessment of the different elements that can encourage people to begin learning with you
- ✓ A tailored strategy of things to try out, change, tweak or consider
- ✓ A regular review of your progress
- ✓ A conversation tool to use in your team or network to assess priorities

Areas to Consider	Yes	No	Not possible	Let's do this!	Priority rating
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>					
Is what you offer affordable? Can you offset potential financial barriers like parking, transit, childminding and fees?					
Do you have flexible hours? (evening, office hours, not too long of sessions, spontaneous hours)					
Do you provide food, snacks or refreshments?					
Is your building accessible? (think about access for wheelchairs, strollers, people with mobility issues)					
Is parking easy for people with vehicles?					
Do you offer comfortable seating for all types of people?					
Do you provide soft lighting or dimmable lighting? Rooms with sunlight?					
Do you teach in a circle or horseshoe?					
Do you provide fidget tools and ways for different types of learners to stay focused/calm?					
Do you smile, laugh and greet people by name?					
Do you give body breaks?					

Areas to Consider	Yes	No	Not possible	Let's do this!	Priority rating
Do you stagger the learning activities so that there is variety for all kinds of learners?					
Is your space welcoming and acknowledging of the Land, different gender orientations, family life, cultures, learning styles?					
Are there tutors or support available in real time?					
Do you provide free supplies and equipment for learning? (i.e. Free backpack, books, pens, paper, printing, computer use)					
<b>BUILDING CONNECTIONS</b>					
Do you make learning fun? (Think about HOW you do this...)					
Do you find ways to learn about people's interests and lives?					
Do you build connection among other participants through stories, games, and conversation starters?					
Is your language and energy positive, affirming, encouraging and hopeful? (Think about HOW you show this...)					
Do you regularly communicate warmth and affirmation to people individually and as a group?					
Do you stop to take a break or check in on how people are doing?					
Do you ask people what they need?					
Do you acknowledge barriers and challenges that learners are facing? (HOW do you acknowledge and support them?)					
Are you generous with your assumptions about learners and their life circumstances? (HOW do you know you are?)					
Do you celebrate small and large successes individually and as a group? (HOW?)					
Do you give "shoulder time" (are you there before group and/or after group so people can stay and connect with you/others?)					
Is your staff team representing and sensitive to the community you are building?					
Do you present yourself as a human being, not solely a facilitator/staff?					



Areas to Consider	Yes	No	Not possible	Let's do this!	Priority rating
Do you communicate and help learners make connections to other agencies or resources that might be of help to them? (i.e. Food bank, counselling supports, mental health)					
Can you partner with other agencies (food bank, grocery store, service groups) to provide your program or participants with extra food?					

Your Notes: \_\_\_\_\_