



Stronger

A TOOLKIT FOR
TAKING CARE OF
OUR MINDS

carya

How to Use the Stronger Toolkit

Welcome to the Stronger Toolkit! This toolkit has been designed to equip, engage and inspire facilitation and learning in the **Skills for Learning Category** of the Community Adult Learning Program (CALP).

Skills for Learning opportunities are designed to support foundational learners build confidence, develop identities as learners, advocate for themselves, and engage in foundational or other learning.¹ The primary intended learning objective is to help learners build a variety of skills and habits related to increasing their confidence, to setting and achieving their learning goals, and to be successful in further learning. These habits and skills include:

- **Recognizing oneself as a learner.** This is about supporting learners to trust that they already have valuable knowledge and skills that contribute to their learning. It's also about providing relevant learning that can be linked to their knowledge, skills and life context.
- **Taking risks in learning.** Learners grow in their courage by taking risks without fear of shame or judgement. Risk taking is cultivated as learners equip themselves with knowledge and skills while also having their different learning styles and needs understood and met.
- **Actively engaging in the act of learning.** Learners are supported to do this by actively authoring their own learning pathway through clear learning goals. They are also supported to see themselves as having power and responsibility to reach those goals, as they strengthen their abilities to make informed decisions in learning.
- **Developing learning strategies.** Learners gain practical strategies that add to their lives and help them reach their goals. These strategies may include increased organization at home or work; it may also include time management, enhanced memory skills, problem solving, increased self-awareness and self-assessment. This is also about supporting learners to build their confidence and strength to take on challenges and to persevere through setbacks in learning.
- **Building collaboration skills in learning.** Learners are supported to engage and work cooperatively with others in a learning setting. This is also about building and nurturing positive relationships and a sense of belonging in a learning community.
- **Strengthen communication skills in learning.** Both non-verbal and oral communication skills are built upon in a learning setting so that these skills can be applied in a learner's life and everyday tasks.

¹ Community Adult Learning Program Guidelines 2020, Section 5.1.3 Skills for Learning

The Stronger Toolkit invites the exploration of a variety of jumping off points that are designed to support learners to build these skills for learning. The toolkit provides ready to use, **PICK & PULL** sessions that can help you support participants on their journey of self-discovery and learning. The Stronger Toolkit is divided into four main sections:

Taking Care of Our Time



Taking Care of Our Minds



Taking Care of Our Emotions



Taking Care of Our Relationships



Within each of the four sections you will find many interesting, relevant, and engaging topics that explore different areas within the overall theme. Each session plan has been designed to be completed in 1 ½ hour time frame.

- You're invited to browse through the BIG IDEAS and **PICK** a topic that you think will be of interest to YOUR participants. We believe YOU know your participants best, and will select session plans that will be most relevant and meaningful to them.
- Each Session Plan has bullet points to help you decide if the topic and session plan is what you are LOOKING FOR to support your participants.

- Check out the TAKEAWAY, where you will find what participants will learn and experience during the session.
- Next, **PULL** the SESSION PLAN! Here you will find everything you need to facilitate a session. Questions, videos, activities, resources and modifications are all included for each session plan. READY, SET, FACILITATE!

The session plans can be used exactly as they are or they can be used as jumping off points for your own inspiration and creativity. Use whatever works best for you and your participants! Perhaps it is a little of both. Not a relevant video, question or activity for your participants? Change it up! Find one that fits for you.

Quick Tips to Get You Started!

Each session plan is designed for participants to use a variety of foundational life skills. Prior to the CALP 2020 guidelines, Skills for Learning were defined as Foundational Life Skills. These skills included:

- Oral Communication Skills
- Decision Making and Problem Solving Skills
- Creative Thinking and Critical Thinking
- Self-Awareness and Self-Assessment

These skills are listed in each Session Plan for reference.

Each session plan also incorporates a variety of learning styles. While there are many different learning styles, the Stronger Toolkit uses the following: Auditory, Visual, Read/Write and Kinesthetic.

Session plans were designed to invite participation and engagement through different methods such as large and small group discussion, multimedia, personal reflection and hands-on activities.

Each section also includes a reference and resource list, which includes a variety of resources related to the overall theme. This can be found at the end of the themed section.

At the time of this publication all video links in the Toolkit Session Plans were active. Over time these may be removed from the internet. We have noted titles of video links as well as noted when websites were last visited.

A Note on the WHY and the HOW

The inspiration for this toolkit has come from our own context of offering Skills for Learning groups in a tight-knit community neighborhood in Calgary for the past several years. Our best teachers in this process have been the learners we have been privileged to grow alongside, learn from and build relationship with. They have inspired the name of this toolkit, which is STRONGER. We have witnessed that strength walks in the door with each learner. Our hope is that they leave stronger because of what we create and uncover together.

As such, the ideas for many of these sessions have been instigated by the experiences of the learners in our learning communities. Their brave sharing of their stories, hopes and challenges gave us the context to bring ideas to page and later, sessions to life. The majority of these sessions have been used in our own Skills for Learning Community over the past year and we are grateful they gave us space to explore, adapt, and create with them!

We are also grateful for Calgary Learns and their support of this project through an initiative grant. They came alongside our vision of not only developing curriculum for our learning communities but believed that we had something to offer to our collective community of CALP.

Last we are grateful for YOU! For the places you will use this information, the ways you will make it your own, the care you will bring to make the sessions relevant for your specific learning community and your steadfast commitment to bringing learning alive and well for others. We are all STRONGER together!

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Choosing Better Problems



The Big Idea!

The big idea for this session is to invite participants to look at their problems to find the gems! Using the ideas of finding the meaning in our struggles as well as scanning for the positive, people will learn processes to look beyond and beneath the struggle or problem to discover their own strengths, values, meaning and interpretations. By understanding why the struggle matters, or the problem matters, we can find meaning and energy to keep on keeping on.

Choose this session if you are looking for....

- Ways that people can perspective shift if they are facing problems, challenges, or struggle.
- A particularly meaningful session to do mid-way through a course, when the lessons are getting more challenging or when learners are experiencing more demands in their learning journey.
- Concrete practices people can use to unpack their struggles and challenges that affirm what they value, what they are willing to struggle for, and how to recharge their energy towards their goals.

The Takeaway

Participants will have an opportunity to participate in an experiential activity that invites them to look at things from multiple perspectives. They will be invited to reflect on a current problem or challenge and dig into the meaning, values, and alternative viewpoints that can help re-energize or affirm their courage, grit and resilience.

Skills for Learning

Oral Communication

Self-Assessment

Self-Awareness

Critical Thinking

Creative Thinking

Decision Making

Session Plan: Choosing Better Problems



Activity Life Skills Used Learning Styles	Description	Time
Welcome! Session Introduction	<p>Today: Our theme is “Choosing Better Problems.” We are going to do some learning and unpacking of the idea of “Choosing Better Problems” with some different activities and conversation.</p> <p>We are going to have some opportunities to look at challenges, problems and struggles from different viewpoints, as well as find the meaning and values of the struggle.</p>	
Check In and Connection Oral Communication, Self-Reflection, Critical Thinking AUDITORY/VISUAL	<p>Group Sharing: (Whiteboard this or just have conversation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are some of the problems that (this month/or time) brings for you? ○ What are some of the problems that this class or meeting brings for you? ○ Is there anything we notice about these problems we have listed? What are they related to? Can we categorize them? <p>While we can’t take away the ‘problems’ we may be able to see them differently! Let’s start by taking a field trip!</p>	10 min
Field Trip Activity Oral Communication, Critical Thinking, Decision Making AUDITORY/VISUAL KINESTHETIC	<p>Divide into small groups of 2 or 3 people. If you are in a building that people can walk around in or go outside, that is great! If you don’t, this activity can be done within the room you are in.</p> <p>Instructions for Field Trip Activity Each group starts at a different place, in the building, in the room, outside. They are to go as a group and pick 10 things to notice. Beside each thing put either plus or a minus sign for how they see it. For example, they might notice the big bookcase in the hallway. Is it a plus? Or is it a minus? (minus means there is a problem with it). For every example, the group is to explain their choices for seeing it as a plus or a minus. They must have 5 pluses and 5 minuses . They have 10 minutes to do this activity!</p>	15 min (25 min)
Unpacking the Field Trip! Oral Communication, Critical Thinking, Decision Making AUDITORY/VISUAL READ/WRITE	<p>Group Discussion:</p> <p>Make 2 columns on the whiteboard. Have each group explain the pluses and minuses that they have found. (Scanning for the positive/choosing the problem).</p>	15 min (40 min)

	<p>After this is done, ask the group:</p> <p>What are the main themes of each? Were there any things that we saw differently, even within your group? What does this tell us about how we look at things?</p>	
<p>Choosing Better Problems</p> <p>Oral Communication, Critical Thinking</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL READ/WRITE</p>	<p>The idea for this statement of Choosing Better Problems comes from an Author named Mark Manson. You may have heard of his books, as the titles are quite controversial/spicy! Here is his Website:</p> <p>https://markmanson.net</p> <p>Titles of books aside, here is one of the thoughts from his book:</p> <p><i>"Who you are is defined by what you are willing to struggle for...this is the most simple and basic component of life. Our struggles determine our successes. Our problems birth our happiness, along with slightly better, slightly upgraded problems."</i> (p. 40)</p> <p>Give Handout: Choosing Better Problems Read the Mark Manson parts of the handout.</p> <p>Watch Video 1: Mark Manson: Choose Better Problems (9 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F04aND_yIWM</p> <p>What are your reactions to this? True or not true? What would be some 'better problems' or problems based on better values?</p>	<p>15 min (55 min)</p>
<p>Practicing Choosing Better Problems</p> <p>Oral Communication, Self-Assessment, Self-Reflection, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking</p> <p>AUDITORY READ/WRITE</p>	<p>Small Group Discussion: Break into small groups and have people share their thoughts on the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Think of a problem that you see in your work/school, home or community life. Why is this a problem? ○ What is the value associated with the problem? ○ Are there any problems you are having in work/school, home or community life that can be reframed into 'better problems'? 	<p>15 min (1 hr, 10 min)</p>
<p>Scanning for the Positive</p> <p>Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking</p> <p>VISUAL/AUDITORY</p>	<p>So, what about the +'s? Let's look at what Happiness Researcher Shawn Achor has to say. (Review the excerpt on the Handout from Shawn Achor's book.)</p> <p><i>"When our brains constantly scan for the positive, we profit from three of the most important tools available to us: happiness, gratitude and optimism."</i> (p. 108, 109 Happiness Advantage).</p> <p>Video 2: Shawn Achor's TED talk (Watch from minute 5:43 on) (7min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GXy_kBVq1M</p>	<p>15 min (1 hr, 25 min)</p>

	<p>Group Discussion: What did you think of this? What stood out for you? How might you see your challenges differently if you were to scan for the positive? How might you start doing this?</p> <p>Overall Message: How we choose to see things makes a difference, even our problems or challenges.</p>	
Closing	<p>Does anyone want to share what was important to them about our time together? What are you walking away with from today's time together? What was meaningful for you?</p>	<p>5 min (1 hr, 30 min)</p>

Videos

Video 1: Mark Manson: Choose Better Problems (9 min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F04aND_yIWM

Video 2: Shawn Achor's TED talk (Watch from minute 5:43 on) (7min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GXy_kBVq1M

Resources Needed for Session

- LCD projector/laptop to show videos
- Whiteboard or chalk board
- Paper and pens for field trip activity
- Handout: *Choosing Better Problems*
- Additional Handout (optional): *The Most Important Question You Can Ask Yourself Today*

Additional Resources

Mark Manson Website: <https://markmanson.net>

Shawn Achor Articles on Scanning for the Positive:

- <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/inspired-life/wp/2015/06/29/do-these-exercises-for-two-minutes-a-day-and-youll-immediately-feel-happier-researchers-say/>
- <https://www.hopetocope.com/happiness-guru-shawn-achors-tips-to-rewire-your-brain-towards-positivity/>

Modifications

If you would like more READ/WRITE activities, the supplemental articles may be of interest to participants. The group field trip activity could also be modified to be an individual self-reflective activity, where participants journal on their own.

If you would rather put the emphasis on Scanning for the Positive, Shawn Achor's book *The Happiness Advantage* (2010) is an excellent resource for content and ideas.

Choosing Better Problems

From Mark Manson, The Subtle Art (2016)

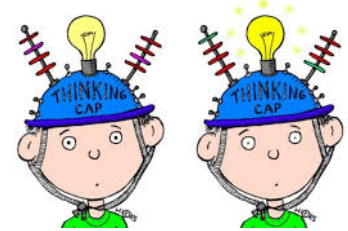
What is objectively true about your situation is not as important how you come to see the situation, how you choose to measure it and value it. Problems may be inevitable, but the meaning of each problem is not. We get to control what our problems mean based on how we choose to think about them, the standard by which we choose to measure them.

If you want to change how we you see your problems, you have to change what you value and/or how you measure failure/success. Values are about prioritization. What are the values that you prioritize above everything else, and that therefore influence your decision making more than anything else? (pp. 76, 79, 87)

- Good Values: Reality based, socially constructive, immediate and controllable (e.g. honesty, innovation, vulnerability, standing up for oneself, standing up for others, self-respect, curiosity, humility, creativity)
- Unhealthy Values: Superstitious, socially destructive, not immediate or controllable (e.g. dominance through manipulation or violence, feeling good all the time, always being the center of attention, not being alone, being liked by everyone) (p. 86 Manson)

From Shawn Achor, The Happiness Advantage (2010)

When our brains constantly scan for and focus on the positive, we profit from three of the most important tools available to us: happiness, gratitude, and optimism. William James quote: "My experience is what I agree to attend to". (p. 97)



pp. 108, 109

"..The people who can most successfully get themselves up off the mat are those who define themselves not by what has happened to them, but by what they can make out of what has happened." (p. 111)

Until we meet again, look at what are problems in your life!

- ✓ Are there ways to reframe them or choose better problems?
- ✓ Are you wasting energy on things that are not really good problems?
- ✓ What happens to your quality of life when you scan for the positive?

Excerpts taken from: https://www.huffpost.com/entry/the-most-important-question_b_4269161

The Most Important Question You Can Ask Yourself Today

*If I ask you, "What do you want out of life?" and you say something like,
"I want to be happy and have a great family and a job I like," it's so ubiquitous that it doesn't even mean anything.
What's more interesting to me is what pain do you want?*

by

Mark Manson, Contributor

Entrepreneur and author

11/13/2013 03:49pm EST | Updated January 23, 2014

If I ask you, "What do you want out of life?" and you say something like, "I want to be happy and have a great family and a job I like," it's so ubiquitous that it doesn't even mean anything.

Everyone wants that. So what's the point?

What's more interesting to me is **what pain do you want?** What are you willing to struggle for? Because that seems to be a greater determinant of how our lives end up.

Because happiness requires struggle. You can only avoid pain for so long before it comes roaring back to life.

At the core of all human behavior, the good feelings we all want are more or less the same. Therefore, what we get out of life is not determined by the good feelings we desire but by what bad feelings we're willing to sustain.

"Nothing good in life comes easy," we've been told that a hundred times before. The good things in life we accomplish are defined by where we enjoy the suffering, where we enjoy the struggle.

People want an amazing physique. But you don't end up with one unless you legitimately love the pain and physical stress that comes with living inside a gym for hour upon hour, unless you love calculating and calibrating the food you eat, planning your life out in tiny plate-sized portions.

People want to start their own business or become financially independent. But you don't end up a [successful entrepreneur](#) unless you find a way to love the risk, the uncertainty, the repeated failures, and working insane hours on something you have no idea whether will be successful or not. Some people are wired for that sort of pain, and those are the ones who succeed.

What determines your success is "What pain do you want to sustain?"

I wrote in [an article last week](#) that I've always loved the idea of being a surfer, yet I've never made consistent effort to surf regularly. Truth is: I don't enjoy the pain that comes with paddling until my arms go numb and having water shot up my nose repeatedly. It's not for me. The cost outweighs the benefit. And that's fine.

On the other hand, I am willing to live out of a suitcase for months on end, to stammer around in a [foreign language](#) for hours with people who speak no English to try and buy a cell phone, to get lost in new cities over and over and over again. Because that's the sort of pain and stress I enjoy sustaining. That's where my [passion lies](#), not just in the pleasures, but in the stress and pain.

There's a lot of self development advice out there that says, "You've just got to want it enough!"

That's only partly true. Everybody wants something. And everybody wants something badly enough. They just aren't being honest with themselves about *what* they actually want that bad.

If you want the benefits of something in life, you have to also want the costs. If you want the six pack, you have to want the sweat, the soreness, the early mornings, and the hunger pangs. If you want the yacht, you have to also want the late nights, the risky business moves, and the possibility of pissing off a person or ten.

If you find yourself wanting something month after month, year after year, yet nothing happens and you never come any closer to it, then maybe what you actually want is a fantasy, an idealization, an image and a false promise. Maybe you [don't actually want it at all](#).

So I ask you, "How are you willing to suffer?"

Because you have to choose something. You can't have a pain-free life. It can't all be roses and unicorns.

Choose how you are willing to suffer.

Because that's the hard question that matters. Pleasure is an easy question. And pretty much all of us have the same answer.

The more interesting question is the pain. *What is the pain that you want to sustain?*

Because *that* answer will actually get you somewhere. It's the question that can change your life. It's what makes me me and you you. It's what defines us and separates us and ultimately brings us together.

So what's it going to be?

Mark Manson is an entrepreneur, author and world traveler. He writes on how people can improve their emotional and dating lives, as well as social commentary and various life experiences at MarkManson.net.

The Power of Savoring



The Big Idea!

The big idea for this session is to give participants an opportunity to unpack and practice the concept of savoring, while practicing a variety of Foundational Life Skills. Savoring is a positive psychology concept that has been proven to increase our happiness and well-being. The act of savoring builds out awareness of the things that make us feel good in life that are readily available to us. This might be reliving a positive memory, sharing good news with others, getting in touch with your senses, getting absorbed in something beautiful, or practicing gratitude.

Choose this session if you are looking for...

- Ways for people to reflect on the good things in their lives.
- Opportunities to give people an enjoyable hands on experience with others.
- Tools for people to use in their everyday lives to increase their well-being and happiness.

The Takeaway

Participants will reflect on their personal experiences of savoring as well as be invited to come up with a savoring recipe for their life, identifying 3 – 5 things they can savor in the next week. They will have a savoring experience in class that will help them understand savoring concepts in real time. They will learn how different ways of savoring practices can add to their lives.

Skills for Learning...

Oral Communication

Self-Assessment

Self-Awareness

Problem Solving

Critical thinking

Creative thinking

Decision Making

Session Plan: The Power of Savoring



Activity Life Skills Used Learning Styles	Description	Time
Welcome! Session Introduction	Today: We are going to EXPERIENCE one of the things that we love to do – eat! But there’s a catch – we are going to learn about savoring as well.	
Check In & Connection Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Reflection AUDITORY	What is your favorite meal? What do you love about it? If you were on a deserted mountain cabin for 1 week, what kind of food could you eat day after day?	10 min
Savoring is... Oral Communication, Critical Thinking, Self-Assessment AUDITORY/VISUAL	Group Discussion: What does it mean to savor something? What’s involved? <i>“Savoring is the awareness of pleasure and of the deliberate conscious attention to the experience of pleasure.”</i> (Martin Seligman) What was the last thing you savored? How does savoring something add to our day or our happiness? Why don’t we savor things? What gets in the way? Video 1: What about Bob Clip, “Fay this is Delicious!” (1 min) https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=What+About+Bob+Dinner&&view=detail&mid=5FAC80F0968824BA12B65FAC80F0968824BA12B6&&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3DWhat%2BAbout%2BBob%2BDinner%26FORM%3DVDMHRS What did you notice about how he savored his meal? Have you ever felt the same? Over what?	15 min (25 min)
Planning and Sharing Our Savoring Recipes! Oral Communication, Creative Thinking, Self-Awareness, Self-Reflection AUDITORY/VISUAL READ/WRITE	Review the Happify Info graphic on the large screen (or handout) asking questions throughout. Show Video 2: Travel Alberta clip (5 min) https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=travel+alberta+video&view=detail&mid=B54CCA48AB7C8409A43FB54CCA48AB7C8409A43F&FORM=VIRE Ask: What did you savor about that video? Were there certain scenes that stood out for you? Why? What senses did this video evoke or bring out for you?	30 min (55 min)

	<p>Individual/Pair Activity: Give participants Savoring Handout and recipe cards. Invite participants to write down 3 – 5 things they can savor this next week. Invite them to think about or note how this can add to their happiness. (5 min)</p> <p>Then get them to share in pairs... (10 min)</p> <p>Large Group Sharing: Ask: What did you notice about your partner when they spoke about what they were going to savor? What did you notice about yourself? (5 min)</p>	
<p>Practicing Savoring</p> <p>Oral Communication, Creative Thinking, Decision Making, Self-Awareness</p> <p>KINESTHETIC/AUDITORY VISUAL/READ/WRITE</p>	<p>Grilled Cheese Party! Invite people to set up the different parts of the grilled cheese party.</p> <p>Have people think of different combinations to try. Write these down on recipe cards! (Give them fun names.)</p> <p>Enjoy the meal together and practice savoring – what are they noticing about this experience? What are they savoring with their tastes, smells, sights, etc? Is there something about this experience they are savoring?</p>	<p>25 min (1 hr, 20 min)</p>
<p>Closing</p>	<p>What was interesting or valuable about our time together today? Invitation for you this week to practice savoring – to share your good feelings with others, take mental photographs, congratulate yourself and get in touch with your senses!</p>	<p>10 min (1 hr, 30 min)</p>

Videos

Video 1: What About Bob Dinner Clip (Fay, This is Delicious!) (1 min)

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=What+About+Bob+Dinner&&view=detail&mid=5FAC80F0968824BA12B65FAC80F0968824BA12B6&&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3DWhat%2BAbout%2BBob%2BDinner%26FORM%3DVDMHRS>

Video 2: Travel Alberta Clip (5 min)

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=travel+alberta+video&view=detail&mid=B54CCA48AB7C8409A43FB54CCA48AB7C8409A43F&FORM=VIRE>

Resources Needed for Session

- LCD projector/laptop to show videos
- Recipe cards (or paper)
- Pens/pencils/markers
- Food (if doing the grilled cheese party, you will need a panini maker, different kinds of cheese, bread, butter or margarine, interesting additions like: pickles, jam, apples, mangos, coconut, etc.)
- Handout: *Savoring*

Additional Resources

Happify Infographic on Savoring

<https://my.happify.com/hd/savoring-makes-us-happier-infographic/>

Article: 10 Steps to Savoring the Good Things in Life

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/10_steps_to_savoring_the_good_things_in_life

Modifications

The Practicing Savoring activity can be done with anything – the Grilled Cheese party idea came from one of our groups that we did, but it could be equally fun with making ice cream sundaes or snack salads (with chips, chocolate, gummies).

If you don't want to practice savoring with food, you could set up different stations around the room where people could practice savoring. For example, you could set up a station with different kinds of treats, another with different sensory items like a soft toy, blanket, hand-cream, another with nice music or photography.

Ways to Savor!



Source: <https://my.happify.com/hd/savoring-makes-us-happier-infographic/>

Get Outside Your Comfort Zone and Take a Risk!



The Big Idea!

The big idea for this session is to give participants an opportunity to examine their comfort zones and their willingness to take risks in their lives. As humans, we sometimes get stuck in our comfort zones and miss opportunities for a fuller, happier life experience. Fear can be a contributing factor for us to stay in our comfort zone. This session invites participants to think about what holds them back and how to step into an enriched life.

Choose this session if you are looking for...

- Ways for people to reflect on their comfort zones and what may be holding them back in life.
- Strategies for overcoming our fears of trying something new.
- An opportunity for participants to make a plan to get out of their comfort zone and take a risk.

The Takeaway

Participants will have an opportunity to reflect on their own comfort zones and what has held them back from taking risks. Participants will learn strategies for managing their fears so that they can live a full and happy life.

Skills for Learning

Oral Communication

Problem Solving

Self-Assessment

Critical Thinking

Decision Making

Self-Awareness

Creative Thinking

Session Plan: Get Outside Your Comfort Zone and Take a Risk!



Activity Life Skills Used Learning Styles	Description	Time
Welcome! Session Introduction	Today: We are going to explore the concept of comfort zones and risk taking and how stepping out of your comfort zone can contribute to you having a fuller, happier life.	
Check In & Connection Oral Communication, Self- Awareness, Self-Assessment AUDITORY/VISUAL KINESTHETIC	Group Sharing: Are you a thrill seeker, risk taker? Or are you a steady, stay in your lane/zone type of person? Take a moment to think about where you are on this continuum. Think about the past couple of days, where would you put yourself? (Use a visual line - middle of the table/on the wall. One end is labeled 'reserved'/ follows rules, other end 'risk taker'. Invite people to place sticker, a smartie or marker on the line where they think they fit.) Why did you put your marker there? Has it moved back and forth based on life circumstances, events?	10 min
Risk Taking in Action! Oral Communication, Self- Awareness, Self-Assessment AUDITORY, VISUAL	To begin today we are going to watch a funny video of James Corden taking a risk and getting out of his comfort zone – it's a 10 min video that is hilarious and will set the stage for our discussion today. Video 1: Tom Cruise Forces James Corden to Sky Dive (10 mins) https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=james+cordin+skydiving+with+Tom+Cruise&docid=608016413758327030&mid=9490214F8239C82A32359490214F8239C82A3235&view=detail&FORM=VIRE Group Debrief: Has anyone ever gone skydiving? (or something just a scary?) What was it like? What were your feelings? Tell us about your experience.	20 min (30 min)
Exploring Comfort Zones Oral Communication, Creative Thinking, Self-Awareness AUDITORY/VISUAL	Group discussion: (Whiteboard group discussion) Let's talk a bit more about Comfort Zones.... Selection of Questions (can be done in small groups) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a comfort zone? • Why are we happy in this zone? Or are we happy? • What are the benefits of staying in our comfort zone? • What are the disadvantages of staying in our comfort zone? • When was a time that you tried something new or took a risk? • What pushed you to do it? 	15 min (45 min)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did it make you feel when you did it? • Would you do it again? • Why do we stay in our comfort zones? • What stops us from taking risks? (FEAR) 	
Unpacking FEAR Oral Communication, Creative Thinking, Decision Making, Self-Awareness AUDITORY/VISUAL	Frontload: Let's look at what FEAR really is and is not. We are going to watch a 5 min video of author, Monica Berg, who has written the book "Fear is Not an Option". Video 2: Fear is not an Option (5 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p75DcAoDsto (Start 1:00min in as she discusses religion for the first min) Group Discussion: What did you think about what she had to say in the video? What did you think about the concept that our fears can be a motivation for change in our lives? Read Article: 5 ways stepping outside my comfort zone made me a better person by Sonia Thompson (show on LCD screen or give as handout) https://www.success.com/5-ways-stepping-outside-my-comfort-zone-made-me-a-better-person/ Small Groups: What did you think about the article? Have you ever experienced something like this? When has getting uncomfortable turned out to be an amazing experience?	20 min (1 hr, 5 min)
Breaking out of our Comfort Zones Oral Communication, Creative Thinking, Decision Making, Self-Awareness KINESTHETIC READ/WRITE Group discussion	Handout: 10 Ways to Overcome Fear and Break Out of Your Comfort Zone by Monica Berg. Review as a group. Group Sharing: What are some things you would like to do to get out of your comfort zone? What are the fears holding you back? Handout: Tips from Monica Berg (Name/identify your fear; Create an anti-fear mantra or positive affirmations specific to your fear or fears; Power Pose) You can also use the other handouts for your thoughts or idea of how to create a plan for change in your life. Individually or in small groups, have participants work through these short phrases. Invite group to share what is on their plan.	20 min (1 hr, 25 min)
Closing	What was interesting or valuable about our time together today? What will you take with you from today's session?	5 min (1 hr, 30 min)

Videos

Video 1: Tom Cruise Forces James Corden to Sky Dive (10 min))

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=james+cordin+skydiving+with+Tom+Cruise&docid=608016413758327030&mid=9490214F8239C82A32359490214F8239C82A3235&view=detail&FORM=VIRE>

Video 2: Fear is not an Option by Monica Berg (5 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p75DcAoDst0>

(Start 1:00min in as she discusses religion for the first min)

Resources Needed for Session

- LCD projector/laptop to show videos
- Paper, pencils, pens
- Whiteboard/chalkboard
- Handout: *10 Ways to Overcome Fear and Step out of Your Comfort Zone* (Monica Berg)
- Handout: *Stepping Outside Your Comfort Zone* (Sonia Thompson)
- Handout: *Tips from Monica Berg*

Additional Resources

Links to Articles:

<https://www.success.com/10-ways-to-overcome-fear-and-break-out-of-your-comfort-zone/>
<https://www.success.com/5-ways-stepping-outside-my-comfort-zone-made-me-a-better-person/>

Monica Berg:

- Book: "Fear is not an Option" (2017)

Modifications

For a more Kinesthetic check in and connection, use this modification. Use a long piece of rope or twine (approximately 10ft or longer depending on the size of your group). The rope will be the continuum. Mark one end with a sign that reads 'reserved' and the other end 'risk taker'. Ask participants to place themselves along the rope (continuum) and stand where their level of risk is. Ask each participant to share why they placed themselves at that point on the rope (continuum).

10 Ways to Overcome Fear and Break out of your Comfort Zone

<https://www.success.com/10-ways-to-overcome-fear-and-break-out-of-your-comfort-zone/>

1. Take nothing for granted. I've learned a lot through suffering, as much as I have through success. And I'm grateful for the suffering the most. Going through a divorce, splitting ways with a wayward business partner, and working to the point of sickness...you name it. Suffering has led me to a place where I try to take nothing for granted. When you avoid taking your business and relationships for granted, it's much harder to be complacent.

—Robby Berthume, *Bull & Beard*

2. Switch up your routine. Routines are as much about comfort as they are about efficiency. Each day, I switch up [my routine](#) in small but meaningful ways. I'll walk a new route to work, stop for lunch at different times of the day and take the stairs instead of the elevator. Small shake-ups in my routine lead to [meeting new people](#) and seeing different sights, which help kick-start ideas for both my work and personal life.

—Kim Kaupe, *ZinePak*

3. Move toward your fears. I found that the things I'm afraid to do are often the things that have the greatest potential to expand my life. Now when I feel fear, it's usually an indicator that I need to do that thing I'm afraid of. Making a commitment to lean into that each day has been really uncomfortable at times, but it has also been responsible for a lot of great memories and [a deep level of personal satisfaction](#).

—Mark Krassner, *Expectful*

4. Give up control. It might not be an everyday thing, but [giving up bits of control](#) of my company takes me out of my comfort zone. Hiring someone to run our social media, delegating new inquiries to speak to someone on my staff or letting my employees take the lead on client projects have all taken me out of my comfort zone, which is important.

—Leila Lewis, *Be Inspired PR*

5. Try something new until you feel comfortable. Anything that I struggle with, I keep trying different approaches [until I'm no longer scared of it](#). Sometimes it takes a while to get comfortable, so I try different approaches daily, or just keep at it until it becomes comfortable. Then I move to the next uncomfortable thing.

—Drew Hendricks, *Buttercup*

6. Ask the questions other people don't like to. I want to know what's up with my employees, customers and everything going on in between. This means [having frequent and open conversations](#) with my employees and getting customers on the phone to find out how they liked their experiences with my business. I ask tough questions to address real issues and promote growth for my business.

—Zev Herman, *Superior Lighting*

7. Start conversations with strangers. I really enjoy talking to people, and I've found that [striking up a conversation](#) with the person next to me, while I'm waiting for transportation or enjoying a meal at a lunch place's bar seating, is a great way to overcome shyness with new people. It's also a good way to learn amazing things about the world and the people in it.

—Matt Doyle, *Excel Builders*

8. Agree to something you wouldn't normally consider. Sometimes when someone offers me something that I would normally refuse, I like to surprise myself by [saying yes](#), whether it is something business-related, like trying a new strategy, or accepting an invitation to join an amateur sports team on the weekend. Even if it doesn't work out, I always learn something from the experience.

—Russell Kommer, *eSoftware Associates Inc*

9. Get in front of the camera. I get in front of the camera on a daily basis. Creating videos always challenges me to present information in the best way possible, step out of my comfort zone and put myself out there on the internet. Whether it's on marketing growth hacks or tutorials on how to use my software, my goal at the end of the day is to educate consumers even if that means [getting a little uncomfortable](#).

—Solomon Timothy, *OneIMS*

10. Keep a list of growth goals. I keep [a list of growth goals](#). Things like "practice public speaking," "take a risk," "explore a new and strange idea." I keep the list close by, and I always try to read it at the end of the day. Because I got into the habit of reading the list, I know I'll be accountable to it. It forces me to take these steps during the day.

—Nicole Munoz, *Start Ranking Now*

Stepping Outside Your Comfort Zone

Excerpt by Monica Berg

<https://www.success.com/5-ways-stepping-outside-my-comfort-zone-made-me-a-better-person/>

Have you ever had one of those moments where you experienced life in a way you never imagined possible? A period of unexpected bliss when you wanted to pinch yourself to see if what you were feeling was real or a dream?

It happened to me recently. I was on a farm in rural Argentina eating homemade cheese, salami and flan with a lovely family. We warmed ourselves with the fire from the wood-burning stove as we played with the kids and traded stories about life in our respective countries.

It was a magical afternoon that I will cherish forever. And it was made possible by a decision I made a few years earlier: to embrace [discomfort](#)

I spent much of the first three decades of my life doing whatever I could to stay comfortable. I was careful not to rock the boat, not to do things that made me look silly and check everything off of the “supposed to do” list.

[But living that way left me feeling like a caged bird longing to roam free.](#)

So I started intentionally [making myself uncomfortable](#). It started with small things, like learning to swim and taking surfing lessons. Over the years it grew into bigger adventures, like traveling solo through South America by bus.

Here are five transformational benefits I discovered from intentionally making myself uncomfortable. [And if you start stepping outside your comfort zone](#), you’ll begin to experience them, too.

1. Closed doors begin to open.

I knew something special was happening when I helped teach a tango class in an iconic location in Buenos Aires, the mecca of tango. It was on my third trip to South America when I recognized the payoff of meeting new people in a foreign land, learning a new dance and a new language.

Those new connections and abilities prepared me to [capitalize on opportunities](#) when they presented themselves. Such opportunities would never have come my way had I not immersed myself in the culture. Opportunities I wouldn’t have been equipped to handle had I not pushed myself to dig deeper.

Each experience outside your comfort zone builds upon the other.

And although you might not know where the journey into unfamiliar territory will take you, know that previously shut doors will start to open.

2. You sharpen unused skills.

I attended many tango classes while in Buenos Aires. All of them were in Spanish and spoken at a speed too fast for me to understand anything more than a few words here and there. Attending classes in English would have eased my burden, but the experience wouldn't have been as rich.

Because of the language barrier, I discovered a new way to learn. Instead of getting instruction by listening to the commentary, I adjusted to relying on visual and tactile cues to get what I needed.

[And I learned.](#)

When you live within your comfort zone, it is easy to rely on the way you've always done things as a means to get things done. But what you're used to might not always be available to you. So you learn to adapt and develop new skills to accomplish your goals.

In the end you'll evolve. You'll grow. And once you can tap into your strong suits again, you'll have a more sharpened arsenal with which to tackle new challenges.

Related: [Top of Mind: Why You Should Always Keep Improving](#)

3. You can laugh in fear's face.

While in a small town in Ecuador, I had trouble getting money from the ATM. That meant I didn't have enough cash on hand to pay for my room. And they didn't accept credit cards. In the past, I would have been shy about talking so much in a language I barely knew. The conversation with the property manager wasn't smooth. But in time we found a solution.

That day taught me that [worrying about 'failure' was the least of my concerns](#). I had a problem that needed to be solved. And if I had to look silly, mispronounce words and use a lot of gestures to solve it, no problem.

People often stay within their comfort zone due to fear of failure. They don't want to leave a place where they know how to perform and risk falling flat on their face. But in the world beyond your comfort zone, there's no time to worry about failing. It's about survival. It's about getting where you want to go with as few scars as possible.

Every time you successfully make it through a situation, you recognize the magnitude of what you're able to accomplish [when fear doesn't rule your life](#).

4. You'll have no regrets.

There were many times when being in another country wasn't easy—especially when I was still a beginner in the language. Or during those long bus rides in close quarters next to strangers. Or when many friends and family couldn't understand why I'd choose to wander around another continent by myself for months at a time.

But leaning into that discomfort enabled me to realize some of [my long-held dreams](#), such as visiting Machu Picchu, learning another language and living abroad.

If you'd rather not live a life filled with regret or wondering about what could have been, make it a point to ditch your comfort zone for a bit. When you do [achieve your dreams](#), the euphoria makes up for the discomfort tenfold.

5. You grow into yourself.

One of my favorite pastimes is roaming around a city on foot. I didn't know that about myself until I started traveling outside of resorts. I didn't know how much I loved live music until I started hearing tango bands play every week.

And I had no idea [how much freedom](#) there was in shutting down my extremely active mind and just going with the flow. That is until I planted myself in a world that operated in a different way than what I was used to.

When I started intentionally making myself uncomfortable, I got acquainted with parts of myself that had always existed but had been lying dormant for decades. I discovered more flaws, uncovered new strengths and felt more like *me* than I ever had when living in my 'safe zone'.

And if you'd like to wake up the parts of you that have been lying dormant, [do something you've never done before](#). Don't rob yourself of the chance of getting to rediscover who you are or what you're made of.

It's easy to understand why people enjoy being comfortable. You get in a routine. You feel in control. You can predict what's going to happen. Although stepping outside your comfort zone can look and feel scary, the abundance of benefits that exist on the other side of a little temporary discomfort are totally worth it.

So start making yourself a little uncomfortable. [Say yes](#) to something you might have previously said no to.

The uneasiness will soon give way to bliss.



Tips from Monica Berg

“Fear is not an Option”

1. Name/Identify your fear
2. Create an anti-fear mantra (positive affirmation)
3. Do a Power Pose (Wonder Woman or Superhero Pose)

(cut)_____

Tips from Monica Berg

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(cut)_____

How Critical Thinking Helps Us Make Better Decisions



The Big Idea!

The big idea for this session is to introduce participants to the concept of Critical Thinking and how it can influence our decisions making for the better. People are faced with hundreds of decisions every day, some big and some small. Sometimes we are paralyzed by having to make the 'right' decision that we do not make any decision. Sometimes there is so much to do in our busy hectic lives and so many decisions to make. The concept of "the MOST important task" or M.I.T. made popular by Daniel Pink will be introduced in this session. This strategy helps us prioritize decisions we need to make to get things done, feel a sense of accomplishment and ultimately bring more happiness and peace to our lives.

Choose this session if you are looking for....

- Ways for people to understand how critical thinking can help them make better decisions.
- Opportunities for people to practice critical thinking and decision making.
- A concrete strategy for decision making (M.I.T. / Most Important Task).

The Takeaway

Participants will gain an understanding of Critical Thinking and how it is important in making better decisions. Participants will be given the opportunity participate in a group activity to practice critical thinking and use examples of decisions from their own lives. They will also learn about a decision making strategy called the M.I.T. (Most Important Task). By practicing this concept in this session they will learn how they can incorporate it as a strategy for their own decision making and ultimately help them prioritize the things they need to accomplish in their daily lives.

Skills for Learning

Oral Communication

Problem Solving

Self-Assessment

Critical Thinking

Decision Making

Self-Awareness

Creative Thinking

Session Plan: How Critical Thinking Helps Us Make Better Decisions



Activity Life Skills Used Learning Styles	Description	Time
Welcome! Session Introduction	Today's session is about how to make better decisions and ultimately how get stuff done in your life ...reducing the stress you feel when you have too many things to do and too many decisions to make.	
Check In & Connection Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment AUDITORY	Group Sharing: Have you ever regretted a decision you have made? Does anyone want to share with us about a time that you did not make a good decision. Why did you choose the decision you did? Knowing what you know now, what would you have done differently?	10 min
Decision Making Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment, Critical Thinking AUDITORY/VISUAL	We are going to watch a video of the show America's Funniest Video where we see people making some NOT so great decisions! Video 1: Funny Ideas Gone Bad (3 min) https://www.facebook.com/AFV/videos/funny-good-ideas-gone-bad/2457599934486230/ Group Discussion: How do you currently make decisions in your life? Are you someone who just has a 'feeling' or do you agonize and 'over think'? Do you have a process in your decision-making or do you 'just wing it'? What does the process of decisions making look like? (Whiteboard this)	15 min (25 min)
Critical Thinking Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment AUDITORY/VISUAL	Group Discussion: (Whiteboard this) Has anyone heard of the term CRITICAL THINKING? What do you think it means? We are going to watch a short video from Happify.com about CRITICAL THINKING. Video 2: 5 Tips to Improve Your Critical Thinking (4 min) https://my.happify.com/hd/make-better-decisions-using-this-5-step-process/?et=33676f8f-5d0f-4e9d-ae57-ec6a8de8eb72 Group Debrief: What did you think about the video? Is critical thinking something we all have? Are we born with it? Do you think improving your Critical Thinking would help you make better decisions?	15 min (40 min)

<p>Let's Practice!</p> <p>Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment</p> <p>AUDITORY/ VISUAL</p>	<p>Group Activity and Handout: 5 Step Process of Critical Thinking Ask participants for suggestions/examples of decisions they are facing or they can 'make up' potential decisions that a person would need to make. Work through the 5 step process as a group using the whiteboard. Use 3-4 examples from the group.</p> <p>5 Step Process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Formulate Question 2) Gather Information 3) Apply Information 4) Consider Implications 5) Explore Other Points of View 	<p>15 min (55 min)</p>
<p>M.I.T. (Most Important Thing)</p> <p>Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment</p> <p>AUDITORY/ VISUAL</p>	<p>Frontload: Related to the process of making good decisions is the notion that we are sometimes overwhelmed with everything that we need to do or get done. It can become difficult to make a decision on what to do first or at all. Consequently, nothing gets done at all or we may focus on doing the wrong things.</p> <p>Can anyone relate to this? How has this impacted you or the work you were trying to accomplish? Ask participants to share examples of this from their own experiences. Or facilitator can share an example.</p> <p>Video 3: M.I.T. (Most Important Task) Daniel Pink (2 min) https://www.danpink.com/pinkcast/pinkcast-1-2-a-simple-trick-for-getting-the-right-stuff-done/?fbclid=IwAR0O-Rn3nDHHak8taAlcE0KO0q0f5_hlK-woOvvOA5sFu3qgONsEF-Lx7eA</p>	<p>15 min (1 hr,10 min)</p>
<p>Practicing our M.I.T.</p> <p>Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment</p> <p>AUDITORY/ VISUAL</p>	<p>Group Sharing: How do you think your life would be happier if you used critical thinking to help you make better decisions? Can critical thinking help us to decide what our MIT should be?</p> <p>Personal Reflection Activity: Have participants make a list of everything they have on their to-do list at this time. What is your M.I.T. for today? Why is it your M.I.T.? How did you come to this decision?</p> <p>Group Sharing: How would using this strategy bring more peace and less anxiety to your life?</p>	<p>15 min (1 hr, 25 min)</p>
<p>Closing</p>	<p>What are you leaving with today? What will you remember from today's session?</p>	<p>5 min (1 hr, 30 min)</p>

Videos

Video 1: Funny Ideas Gone Bad (3 min)

<https://www.facebook.com/AFV/videos/funny-good-ideas-gone-bad/2457599934486230/>

Video 2: 5 Tips to Improve Your Critical Thinking (4 min)

<https://my.happify.com/hd/make-better-decisions-using-this-5-step-process/?et=33676f8f-5d0f-4e9d-ae57-ec6a8de8eb72>

Video 3: M.I.T. (Most Important Task) Daniel Pink (2 min)

https://www.danpink.com/pinkcast/pinkcast-1-2-a-simple-trick-for-getting-the-right-stuff-done/?fbclid=IwAR0O-Rn3nDHhak8taAlcE0K00q0f5_hlK-woOvOA5sFu3qgONsEF-Lx7eA

Resources Needed for Session

- LCD projector/laptop to show videos
- Whiteboard/chalkboard
- Handout: *5 Step Process for Critical Thinking*
- Pens, pencils, paper

Additional Resources

Article: How to Improve Critical Thinking Using a Simple 5-Step Process

<https://wabisabilearning.com/blogs/critical-thinking/improving-critical-thinking-5-steps>

Article on Productivity: Eric Barker's "Barking Up the Wrong Tree" Blog (well researched)

<https://www.bakadesuyo.com/search/>

Website: Daniel Pink's PinkCast. Daniel Pink has a large number of short videos (2 minutes or less) related to efficiency, relationships, decision making, planning, organization, etc. <https://www.danpink.com/pinkcast/>

Modifications

Make it personal! You can give participants time to work through the 5 step process with a decision they are currently facing on their own and share in small groups.

You could also look at Daniel's Pink's PinkCast for additional videos or resources related to decision-making and critical thinking.

5 Steps to Critical Thinking

- 1. Formulate Question:** (Define) Know what you are looking for.
What is the reason you want it or need to make a decision about it?
- 2. Gather Information:** (Discover & Dream) What is relevant information? Do you need expert advice or opinion?
- 3. Apply Information:** (Design & Deliver) Ask questions to yourself.
Is this what I want or need? Will this help me? Is it logical?
- 4. Consider Implications:** (Debrief, Discover, Design) What will happen with the decision I make? Who will it impact? Will it be good or bad?
- 5. Explore Other Points of View:** (Debrief) What do other people say about this? Is it different from my own? Does it matter that it may be different?

Source:

<https://wabisabilearning.com/blogs/critical-thinking/improving-critical-thinking-5-steps>

How GRIT Helps Us Reach Our Goals



The Big Idea!

The big idea for this session is to introduce participants to the concept of GRIT. GRIT is a researched practice that can help people reach their goals and not give up. Angela Duckworth, researcher and author, suggests that GRIT can be learned and has nothing to do with our level of IQ, but everything to do with failing and trying again and again. This session will encourage participants to persevere through whatever difficulties they may be facing.

Choose this session if you are looking for...

- Participants to learn and understand the concept of GRIT.
- An opportunity for participants to reflect on and assess their own level of GRIT.
- Participants to understand the connection between GRIT and reaching their goals.

The Takeaway

Participants will have the opportunity to participate in a GRIT quiz to help them assess their level of GRIT. They will also reflect on the ways they can increase their level of GRIT as well as make connections between their level of GRIT and reaching their goals.

Skills for Learning

Oral Communication

Self- Assessment

Self -Awareness

Problem Solving

Critical Thinking

Creative Thinking

Decision Making

Session Plan: How GRIT Helps Us Reach Our Goals



Activity Life Skills Used Learning Styles	Description	Time
Welcome! Session Introduction	Today we are going to be talking about something called GRIT and how it can help us reach our goals and not give up.	
Check In & Connection Self- Awareness, Self-Assessment, Oral Communication AUDITORY	Group Sharing: Invite group to share about a time when something in their lives was a real challenge. Ask: What was it? What did you do? Did you push on through the hard parts or did you say 'forget it' "I'm done". What helped you? What slowed you down?	10 min
Understanding the Concept of GRIT Oral Communication, Critical Thinking, Self-Assessment, Self-Awareness AUDITORY/VISUAL	Group Discussion (Whiteboard): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Has anyone heard of the term 'Grit' before? ○ What comes to mind when you hear the word 'Grit'? ○ What does it look like in someone? ○ What do you observe about them? ○ What characteristics do they have? ○ Where does GRIT come from? ○ How do you get GRIT? Watch Video 1: GRIT – The Power of Passion and Perseverance TED Talk https://angeladuckworth.com (6 minutes) Group Debrief : What did you think about the video? Thoughts? Reactions? Where do you think you are, in terms of GRIT?	20 min (30 min)
Understanding our 'GRITINESS' Oral Communication, Self- Awareness, Self-Assessment, Critical Thinking AUDITORY READ/WRITE	Activity: Let's take a few minutes and do a little quiz. This is located on her website: Self Quiz – Angela Duckworth's GRIT Scale https://angeladuckworth.com Group Share: Any surprises for anyone? Were you where you thought you'd be on the GRIT scale? Or is this new information about yourself? Is there anything that surprised you?	15 min (45 min)

<p>Becoming 'GRITTIER'</p> <p>Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment, Critical Thinking</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL</p>	<p>Group Brainstorm: (Whiteboard)</p> <p>If we'd like to increase our GRIT, are there things we can do? What are they?</p> <p>How can we improve or strengthen our GRIT?</p> <p>Here's an Infographic from Happify.com (a great website!!! that has lots of information/inspiration about how to be happier) https://www.happify.com/hd/grow-grit-infographic/</p> <p>Any thoughts on the infographic?</p> <p>Group Discussion</p> <p>How can GRIT help you get done what you need to? How can GRIT help us reach our goals?</p>	<p>15 min (1 hr)</p>
<p>Inspiration for Our GRIT</p> <p>Oral Communication, Creative Thinking, Self-Assessment, Self-Awareness</p> <p>KINESTHETIC AUDITORY/VISUAL</p>	<p>Creative Activity:</p> <p>Using the supplies provided ask participants to create a 'wordle' collage or cut out words/pictures from magazines to create a word Collage. Words that may speak to them about what GRIT is. (e.g. passion, perseverance, practice, purpose, never give up, don't quit, hope, etc.)</p> <p>They can also include an area or goal that they would like to build their GRIT in or an area where they are proud of their GRIT.</p> <p>Group Share:</p> <p>Ask participants to share their collages with the group.</p>	<p>25 min (1 hr, 25 min)</p>
<p>Closing</p>	<p>What was interesting or valuable about our time together today? What are you taking away with you?</p>	<p>5 min (1 hr, 30 min)</p>

Videos

Video 1: GRIT – The Power of Passion and Perseverance TED Talk (6 min)

<https://angeladuckworth.com>

Resources Needed for Session

- LCD projector/laptop to show videos
- Whiteboard/chalkboard
- Paper, magazines, crayons, makers, scissors
- Self Quiz <https://angeladuckworth.com>
- Happify.com infographic: <https://www.happify.com/hd/grow-grit-infographic/>

Additional Resources

Angela Duckworth:

- Website: <https://angeladuckworth.com>
- Book: “GRIT: The Power of Passion and Perseverance” (2016)

Modifications

One option would be to break the participants into small groups to unpack the discussion on what GRIT is at the beginning of the session. Then the groups could come back together and share their thoughts with the whole group.

If the group is going through a particular challenge together, for example, taking their GED as a group, this session could be tailored for specific conversations about reaching that particular goal – what they need from themselves to achieve it, what they look to from others, how to prepare for setbacks, how to keep going, etc.

Perception – How We See Things Shapes Our World



The Big Idea!

The big idea for this session is to give participants and opportunity to understand how our perception of things impacts our experience. Dr. Wayne Dyer said *“When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.”* Our perceptions of circumstances can change our outlook on many areas of our life and can have either positive or negative effects. Optimism and pessimism are both states of being in the human experience that either open our creative thinking to believing anything is possible or close the door on possibility.

Choose this session if you are looking for....

- An opportunity to explore how perception matters in how we view the world.
- Ways for people to understand how perception is related to our happiness.
- A Self-Awareness opportunity for participants to reflect on whether they are an optimist or pessimist and how that influences their lives and choices.

The Takeaway

Participants will be given the opportunity to examine perception and how it relates to happiness. With the methods of group discussion, multimedia, and experiential activities, participants will dig into concepts of happiness, optimism and pessimism. They will be encouraged to reflect on their own experience with optimism and pessimism. Participants will be invited to participate in a fun 21 day gratitude challenge as a strategy for increasing their happiness and becoming more optimistic.

Skills for Learning

Oral Communication

Self-Assessment

Self-Awareness

Problem Solving

Critical Thinking

Creative Thinking

Decision Making



Activity Life Skills Used Learning Styles	Description	Time
Welcome! Session Introduction	Today we are going to be looking at Perception - what it is and how it shapes our world. Related to perception is how we see view our world and the things that happen to us and around us . Are we optimistic or pessimistic?	
Check In & Connection Oral Communication, Self- Awareness, Self-Assessment, Critical Thinking AUDITORY	Group Sharing: Describe your younger self – what did you love to do, who were your heroes? What did you love? What were your strengths as a child? When people described you, what did they say, or what would a good friend have said about you?	10 min
Unpacking Perception Critical Thinking, Oral Communication AUDITORY/VISUAL	Write quote on whiteboard: <i>"When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change."</i> Wayne Dyer Group Discussion: What is perception? How does it influence our thinking? How does it influence our feelings? How does it influence how we behave? What influences our perception? (values, mindset, how we were raised) Can anyone give an example? A person can choose to change their perceptions. Agree/Disagree? Show Video 1: I'm the Greatest.... (1 min) http://www.values.com/inspirational-stories-tv-spots/99-the-greatest What did you think about the video? Did you identify with any part of the video?	15 min (25 min)
Processes in Perception Oral Communication, Self- Awareness, Self-Assessment, Critical Thinking	Group Discussion Let's explore Perception a bit more. If we break it down, it's an active process. It can be changed. What happens first? (<i>Draw simple diagram on whiteboard as discussing each step...</i>) 1. First, we select things that stand out to us (who we are and what is going on inside of us influences this).	15 min (40 min)

<p>AUDITORY/VISUAL KINESTHETIC</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Then, we organize what we see – we use our ideals, our beliefs, our continuums (good to bad) to help us. Finally, we make meaning or interpret what we see. <p>Group Activity: Have people go to the window, open the door to the hallway or go to another room. Give people 20 seconds to look and then come back as a group.</p> <p>Ask the group:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What stood out for you? How did you organize what you saw? What did it mean to you – how did you interpret what you saw? 	
<p>The Way We Look at Things</p> <p>Critical Thinking, Self-Reflection, Oral Communication</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL</p>	<p>Small Group Activity: Break group into 2 smaller groups. Give each group a couple of ‘optical illusion’ pictures. With each picture, everyone in the group says what they ‘see’ (i.e. perceive). You might see two things, but what did you see first?</p> <p>Next, in your small group, invite group to have some discussion around who saw what and maybe ‘why’? What might have influenced them in seeing/perceiving the picture in a certain way?</p> <p>Then we’ll come back together as a whole and share any insights, learnings, etc.</p> <p>Group Discussion How was that? Any surprises? Could everyone see both pictures after a while? Were there any patterns that people noticed? What influenced you seeing/perceiving the picture in a certain way?</p> <p>Scenario Discussion: Let’s try another example of perception – say you were told that this is a terrible meeting room/classroom - what could you perceive that makes it a terrible place to meet?</p> <p>Now say I told you this is a great meeting place/classroom – what could you perceive that makes this place a great place to meet?</p> <p>The difference is what you started with – a mindset of negative (pessimism) or where you started with lack or a positive mindset (optimism) where you started with possibility...</p>	<p>15 min (55 min)</p>
<p>Our Behavior Matters</p> <p>Critical Thinking, Self-Reflection, Oral Communication</p>	<p>Frontload: Let’s watch this Shawn Achor video. He’s a researcher, author, and is considered by many to be a “Happiness Expert”. In this video, he’s talking about Perception and how it’s something that we can change.</p> <p>Video 2: Reprogramming Your Brain to be Happier (5 min) http://bigthink.com/videos/reprogramming-your-brain-to-be-happier</p>	<p>10 min (1 hr, 5 min)</p>

AUDITORY/VISUAL	<p>Group Debrief: What stood out for you in this video? Any surprises? Anything that you found challenging?</p> <p>Key Ideas from video: Notice what you scan your environment for and what you allow in. We can get in the habit of scanning for the bad news and bad stuff, or we can make a choice to choose gratitude and take the stance that no matter what is going on, you have a choice in how you think and act: Your behavior matters.</p>	
<p>Optimism and Pessimism</p> <p>Oral Communication, Critical Thinking, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL</p>	<p>Group discussion: (<i>Whiteboard</i>) What is Optimism? What does an optimist sound like? Behave like? How would you describe pessimism? Or a pessimist?</p> <p>Watch Video 3: Are You an Optimist or a Pessimist? Optimism & Pessimism (LifeisGoodCo) (3 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jClIOXlpXd0</p> <p>Group Share:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Where do you fall? ○ Would you say that you are n Optimist or a Pessimist? ○ Why do you describe yourself this way? ○ How has having either qualities shaped your world? ○ Have you taken risks? ○ Have you held back on dreams for your life? ○ How can we bring more optimism and happiness into our lives? <p>21 Day Gratitude Practice/Challenge Ask participants to recall what Shawn Achor describes in the video as how to become happier and more optimistic. Invite participants to a challenge of writing down 3 things that they are grateful for 21 days.</p>	20 min (1 hr, 25 min)
Closing	<p>What will you take with you from this session? What will you remember? Is there anything you are going to practice, work on, or change?</p>	5 min (1 hr, 30 min)

Videos

Video 1: I'm the Greatest.... (1 min)

<http://www.values.com/inspirational-stories-tv-spots/99-the-greatest>

Video 2: Reprogramming Your Brain to be Happier (5 min)

<http://bigthink.com/videos/reprogramming-your-brain-to-be-happier>

Watch Video 3: Are You an Optimist or a Pessimist? Optimism & Pessimism (LifeisGoodCo) (3 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jCIIOXIpXd0>

Resources Needed for Session

- LCD projector/laptop to show videos
- Paper, pencils, pens
- Whiteboard/chalk board
- Examples of optical illusions for group activity (Optical Illusions handout)

Additional Resources

Shawn Achor

- Website: <https://www.shawnachor.com/>
- Books: "The Happiness Advantage" (2010), "Before Happiness" (2013), "Big Potential" (2018)

Modifications

Alternative Video or if you have additional time on Rational Optimism (4:21)

<https://positivepsycholopedia.com/year-of-happy/optimism-is-hard/>

Group Share:

If you had to place yourself on a diagram like the one in the video, where would you fall?

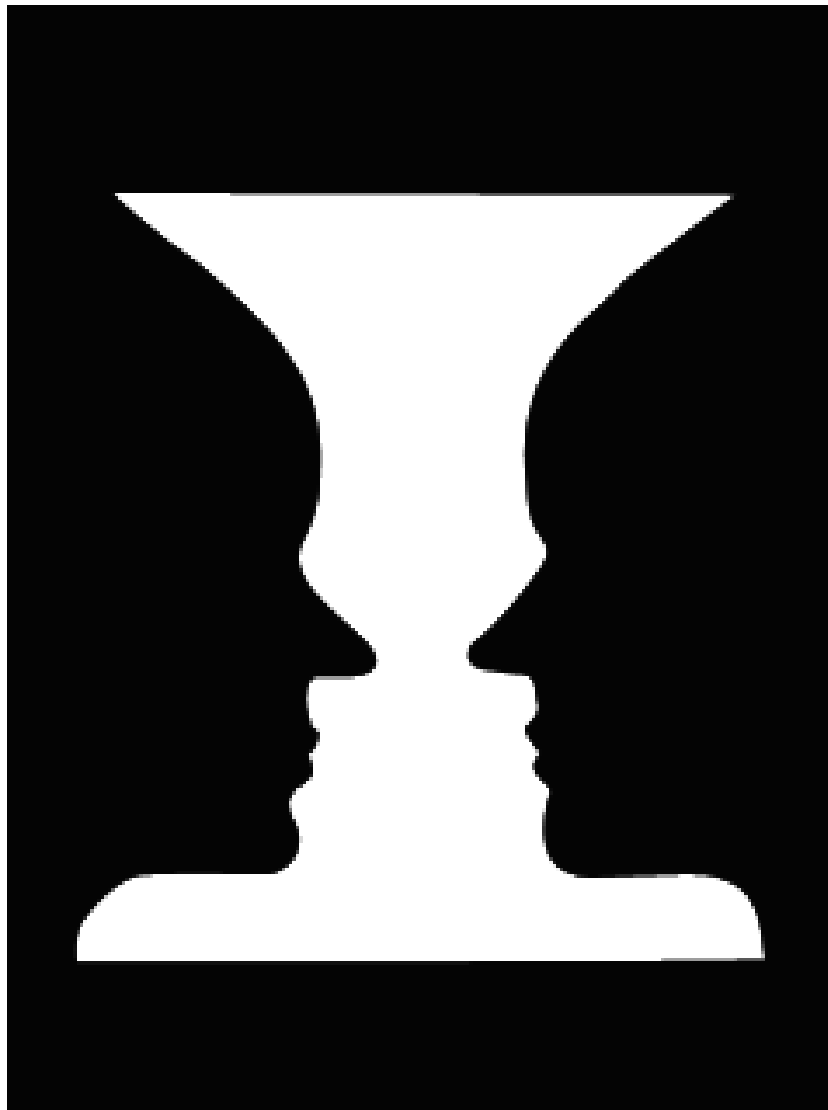
How is where you are on the diagram bringing happiness to your life?

Is it helping you to shape your world in a positive way?

Or is it helping you create the life you want to live?

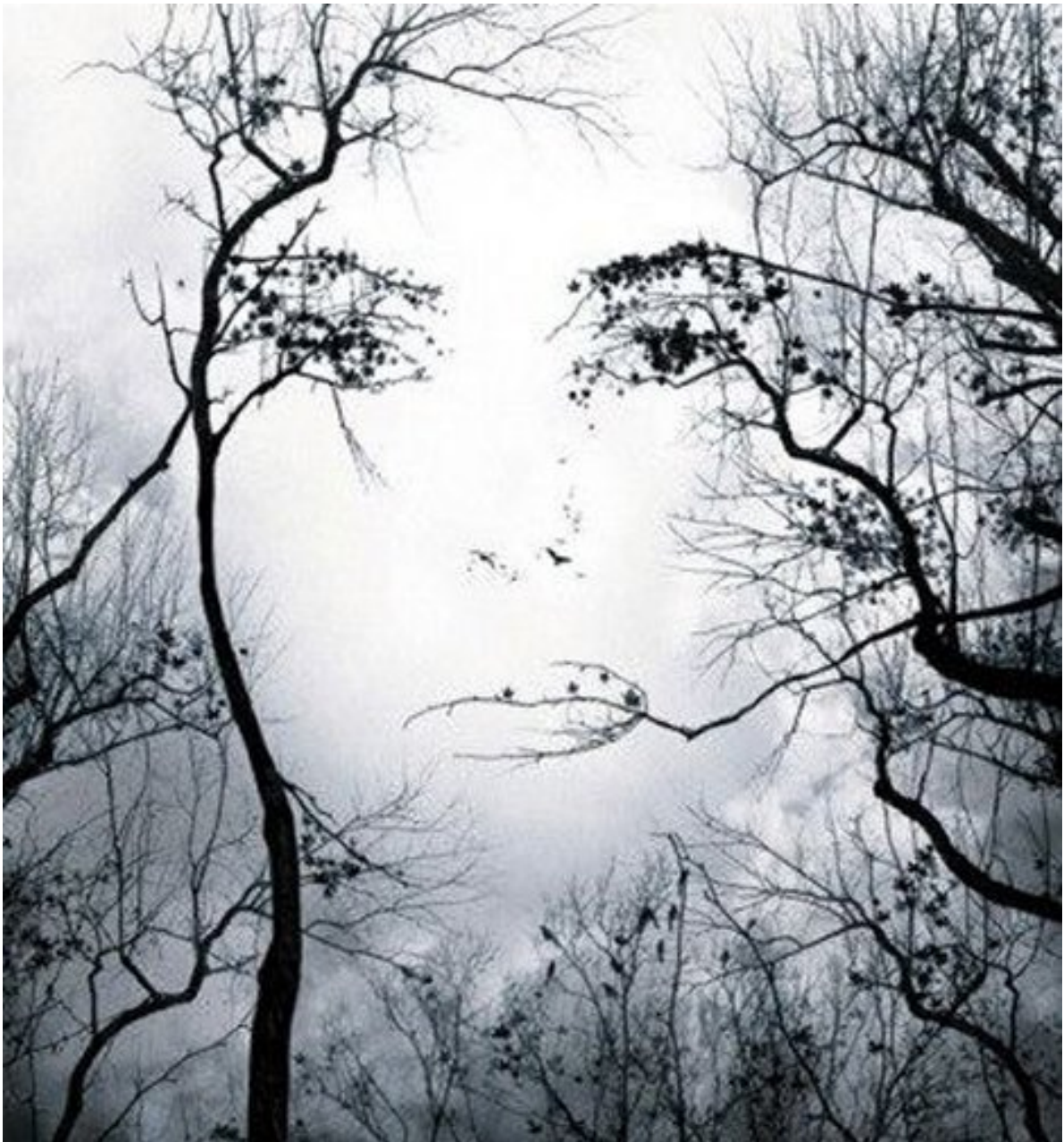
You could also draw a diagram on the whiteboard like the one in the video and have participants come up and place themselves on the diagram. There could be a discussion about why they placed themselves where they did and if that is bringing them happiness and shaping their world positively. In the discussion of optimism and pessimism, you could put up on the screen a photo of Eeyore and Winnie the Pooh as examples of optimism & pessimism.

Optical Illusions: What do you see?











Radical Self-Care – Mindfulness, Rest, Renewal



The Big Idea!

The big idea for this session is to expose participants to deeper forms of self-care. “Self-Care” are buzz words that people often associate with doing good things for our bodies and mind as a way to manage the stress in one’s life: things like getting a massage, having a bath, taking a nap, reading a book or taking a walk. All of these things are indeed self-care and helpful in managing the stress in our lives. Radical self-care goes a little deeper and requires more intention. New research suggests that mindfulness is a superpower to be harnessed that leads people to respond wisely to stressors instead of reacting from a place of emotion. Rest and Renewal are also important tenants of Radical self-care. They are much more than getting enough sleep! They are deeply important to our healthy functioning and our physical and emotional well-being.

Choose this session if you are looking for...

- An opportunity for people to reflect on why self-care is essential to wellbeing.
- Ways for people to understand how Mindfulness, Rest and Renewal can help reduce the stress in their lives.
- Tools for participants to develop their own self-care action plan.

The Takeaway

Through group discussion, multi-media, and experiential activity, participants will uncover why mindfulness can become a superpower in their lives. Participants will dive into the concepts of Rest and Renewal as vital ways to manage the stress in their day to day lives. Participants will walk away with their own personal Radical Self-Care action plan.

Skills for Learning

Oral Communication

Self-Assessment

Self-Awareness

Problem Solving

Critical Thinking

Creative Thinking

Decision Making



Activity Life Skills Used Learning Styles	Description	Time
Welcome! Session Introduction	Today we will explore something we call Radical Self-Care.....Mindfulness, Rest and Renewal. The way we respond to the stressors of our lives matters! Radical Self-Care is about mindfulness and intention; it's more than a bubble bath!	
Check In & Connection Oral Communication, Self- Awareness, Self-Assessment, Critical Thinking AUDITORY	As we get started: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you think of when you hear the term self-care? • Is this something that you build into your life? • What are some of the benefits of self-care? • What does self-care look like to you? • What is your favorite thing to do for yourself? 	10 min
What is Mindfulness? Critical Thinking, Oral Communication, Self-Awareness AUDITORY/VISUAL	<p>Group Discussion: (Whiteboard) Today we are going to take a look at different types of self-care. We are going to start with <u>MINDFULNESS</u>.</p> <p>Group Discussion/Brainstorm Has anyone heard of Mindfulness? When you hear the word Mindfulness, what do you think of? What is mindfulness? Let's brainstorm a definition together (<i>What is going on in our mind and body</i>) Why would we need mindfulness in our lives?</p> <p>Video 1: Why Mindfulness is a Superpower (Sharon Salzberg) (3 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6T02g5hnT4</p> <p>Group Debrief: What did you think of the video? Have you experienced an emotion due to a situation, then had a negative reaction? (remember the example from the video) How did go for you? How did it make you feel the rest of the day? Did it impact your day? How do you think mindfulness can be a superpower for you? (<i>Ideas: More aware of what is happening in our body when emotions come up, that 'pause' before we think or act, we are able to pause and think and respond wisely</i>)</p>	15 min (25 min)

Mindfulness Practices Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment, Critical Thinking AUDITORY/VISUAL	Group Discussion: In the video they reference a mindfulness practice. What are mindfulness practices? Does anyone have a mindfulness practice? Can you share it with the group? How has it helped you in your day to day life? (<i>Ask for 1 or 2 examples from the group</i>) Meditation is known to be one of the best mindfulness practices. Meditation can sometimes get a bad rap and is thought of as a bit 'woo woo'. As we will see from this next short video, it is an easy and doable practice that has BIG impact over time. Video 2: Meditation 101: A Beginner's Guide (2 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-kMJBWk9EO Group Debrief: What did you think about the video? They describe meditation as exercise for your brain....	10 min (35 min)
Practicing Mindfulness Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment AUDITORY/VISUAL KINESTHETIC	Meditation Activity: Let's exercise our brains!! We are going to practice a simple meditation. If you would like, grab a yoga mat, towel or blanket and find a space on the floor and sit or lay down for the meditation. If this is not comfortable, you can simply stay in your chair. Video 3: 5-Minute Meditation You Can Do Anywhere (Goodful) (5 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inpok4MKVLM Activity Debrief: (Write group suggestions on the whiteboard) How was that for you? How does your body feel? How does your mind feel? How can you build a practice such as this into your day?	10 min (45 min)
Unpacking REST Oral Communication, Creative Thinking, Self-Awareness AUDITORY/VISUAL	Group discussion (Whiteboard): What is Rest? Can rest be more than sleep? (<i>meditation, breathing</i>) What does rest do for our bodies? (How does it make us feel?) What does rest do for our minds? (<i>Peace, calm, creative, ability to think, problem solve, etc.</i>) Video 4: Why Rest is Important (11:00min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKzk6k8_O1w Group Debrief: What are your thoughts now on rest? Is there anything we can add to what we have already talked about? Any surprises?	15 min (1 hr)
Unpacking RENEWAL	Group discussion (Whiteboard): What were some of the other ways of resting he talked about in the video that can bring us renewal? (<i>meditation, breathing, walking</i>)	10 min (1 hr, 10 min)

<p>Oral Communication, Creative thinking, Self-Awareness</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL</p>	<p>Let's brainstorm other ways, things or activities that renew us (Whiteboard)</p> <p><i>(Ideas: Soul filling activities, creativity, gratitude practice, spending time with those you care about, etc.)</i></p>	
<p>Designing a Self-Care Action Plan</p> <p>Critical Thinking, Decision Making, Self-Assessment, Self-Awareness, Oral Communication</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL READ/WRITE</p>	<p>Frontload:</p> <p>Given what we know now about mindfulness, rest and renewal, we are going to learn more about designing a Self-Care Action Plan. Let's watch a video to see what this means.</p> <p>Video 5: A Self-Care Action Plan (5 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0iVTQS8ftg</p> <p>Activity:</p> <p>Using the handout, have participants create their own Self-Care Action plan.</p> <p>Ask participants to share their action plan with the group.</p>	<p>15 min (1 hr, 25 min)</p>
<p>Closing</p>	<p>What was interesting or valuable about our time together today? What will you take with you from today's session?</p>	<p>5 min (1 hr, 30 min)</p>

Videos

Video 1: Why Mindfulness is a Superpower (Sharon Salzberg) (3 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6T02g5hnT4>

Video 2: Meditation 101: A beginners Guide (Happify) (2 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-kMJBWk9EO>

Video 3: 5-Minute Meditation You Can Do Anywhere (Goodful) (5 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inpok4MKVLM>

Video 4: Why Rest is Important (11 min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKzk6k8_O1w

Video 5: A Self-Care Action Plan (5 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w0iVTQS8ftg>

Resources Needed for Session

- LCD projector/laptop to show videos
- Paper, pencils, pens
- Whiteboard/chalkboard
- Yoga mats, blankets, large towels (essential oil diffusers)
- Handout: *Self-care Action Plan*

Additional Resources

Happify Website: A rich resource for self-care, mindfulness, relieving stress, and finding renewal. It is rich with infographics, articles, videos, and other sources.

<https://happify.com/>

Modifications

There are many meditations that are available online. The facilitator may want to change the meditation to better suit the participants.

My Self-Care Action Plan

What are my warning signs that life is getting 'too much'?

What is happening in my mind?

What is happening in my body?

What is happening in my behavior?

What are the things that make me feel better?

What will work for my mind?

What will work for my body?

What will work for my behavior?

Who do I need to call to support me?

I am Responsible for Myself

Self-Care is My Opportunity to Care for Myself

Reframing Failure – Failing Up!



The Big Idea!

The big idea for this session is to give participants an opportunity to think about how they can use mistakes and perceived failures as catalysts for learning and growth. Nothing is perfect in life, including being human. Part of being human is making mistakes and participating in things that sometimes ‘fail’ or don’t turn out the way we wanted them to. To learn, grow, experience, and improve our lives, we need to take risks and try new things. This means being vulnerable and accepting that sometimes your efforts may ‘fail’ or not happen as expected. If we can learn to view the ‘failure’ or mistake as a learning opportunity, a chance to get better through practice, or a catalyst to do something totally different, then our ‘failures’ can become steps to strength, growth, and success.

Choose this session if you are looking for...

- Ways for people to reframe some of the challenges or negative experiences that happen in life.
- Inspiration to shift from a perceiving failure as negative, to failure as a normal part of life and something that can result in new learnings and growth.
- Tools for people to use in their everyday lives to increase their well-being and happiness.

The Takeaway

Participants will explore how ‘failure’ can bring new learnings, growth, and even positive outcomes to their life. Rather than thinking of failure as something to be avoided, people will be encouraged to think about ‘failure’ differently – as a natural and necessary part of life. Failing at something means you tried something and likely learned something!

Skills for Learning

Oral Communication

Self-Assessment

Self-Awareness

Problem Solving

Critical Thinking

Creative Thinking

Decision Making

Session Plan: Reframing Failure – Failing Up!



Activity Life Skills Used Learning Styles	Description	Time
Welcome! Session Introduction	Today we are going to talk about something that many of us like to avoid...failure. It's usually viewed as something negative and something we don't like talking about. But today, we're going to explore failure as something that isn't 'bad'. We're going to examine how failure is often necessary and can be a gateway to new discoveries, improvements, deeper understanding, and building a better life.	
Check in & Connection Oral Communication, Self-Awareness AUDITORY	<p>Frontload & Self-Reflection: Take a moment to think of a time when you felt like you really messed something up...a moment when you failed at something. You don't have to share, but you're invited to write it down on your paper or hold it in your mind.</p> <p>Now, think about it again, but this time focus on what happened afterward. Did your 'failure' result in something positive happening? Maybe you didn't realize it at the time, but perhaps by failing you learned something useful about yourself or about the thing that you tried to do. Or perhaps because of 'failing' in that moment a better opportunity showed up...because of the failure, things turned out even better.</p> <p>Group Sharing: Invite each person to share, not necessarily their failure, but if they can think of something positive that came out of it. Invite people to share or notice what the failures resulted in and what benefits came.</p> <p><i>"Think about your biggest mistakes...They probably taught you more courage, strength, and wisdom than any success could have."</i> -Rachel Simmons, Resilience Expert</p>	15 min
Reframing Failure Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Critical Thinking AUDITORY/VISUAL	<p>Frontload: Ask: How many of us can ride a bike? We may not remember learning how, but it's likely we were nervous, scared....it's likely we fell. In learning how to ride our bike, we failed over and over until we did it. But with each failing we gained some experience, some knowledge, some skill until it added up and we were able to ride.</p> <p>You may have heard of Brené Brown. She's a researcher who's written books on a variety of topics including courage, vulnerability and shame. She reminds us over and over again that failing is okay. In fact she sees failing as a necessary part of learning and living full lives.</p>	15 min (30 min)

	<p>She says: <i>"Failure is part of the ride". She also says: "Failure is an imperfect word because, if you take the time and have the patience to learn from your failures, then they aren't failures any longer—they're lessons".</i></p> <p>Watch Video 1: Brené Brown, YouTube - Fear of Failure Ted Talk (3 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVx7dG0GJU0</p> <p>Thoughts/Comments?</p> <p>Stories and Perspectives: Who has heard of the "Man in the Arena" quote before? It's referenced in the beginning of her book entitled, "Daring Greatly" and reading it can be a powerful reminder that to fail at something just means that we took a risk, we tried something new, and we were brave to participate by actually stepping into the arena! Theodore Roosevelt's "Man in the Arena" quote is an invitation for us to stop thinking of failure as something that's negative, but instead view it as 'daring greatly'.</p> <p>Handout 1: <i>The Man in the Arena</i> Read aloud and invite sharing.</p>	
<p>Benefits of Failure</p> <p>Oral Communication, Self- Awareness, Critical Thinking</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL</p>	<p>Frontload: There's another person who believes strongly that there are many benefits of failure. She is known around the world for her amazing creativity, intelligence and her fantastic story about a wizard. Anyone here familiar with her and/or her books? J.K. Rowling, author of the Harry Potter books.</p> <p>You may not know that she, in her own words, reached EPIC levels of 'failure' as an adult. Here's part of a speech she delivered at a graduation ceremony.</p> <p>Video 2: J.K. Rowling Speaks at Harvard Commencement (watch 7:50-11:15) (4 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHGqp8lz36c</p> <p>Group Debrief: Did anything stand out for you? Surprise you?</p> <p>Key message: One of the things she said was <i>"It is impossible in life to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all; in which case, you fail by default."</i></p>	<p>10 min (40 min)</p>
<p>What Failure Looks Like</p> <p>Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Decision Making</p> <p>AUDITORY</p>	<p>Handout 2: <i>"Who Am I?" Game</i> J.K. Rowling wasn't alone. There have been many famous people who failed over and over before finding success. We're going to play a game called "Who Am I?" to discover some others. Play "Who Am I?" Game (handout for facilitator only).</p>	<p>10 min (50 min)</p>

<p>Reframing Failure: Part 1</p> <p>Oral Communication, Self- Awareness, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Problem Solving</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL READ/WRITE</p>	<p>Paired Activity Frontload: Each pair will be given one card. On the card there's a description of an event or situation that has occurred. On the surface it appears to be a failure. Using your creativity and your ability to think out of the box, come up with as many positives as you can that could result from the failure.</p> <p>Don't worry about the likelihood of it happening or if it sounds silly, this is a practice in reframing failure. Our natural tendency is to see the negative (negativity bias) or another way of wording it, our natural tendency is to see the failures. With practice, we can shift our thinking. We can begin to see failures as learnings, fine tuning skills, and doorways to new possibilities. The more that we practice reframing failure in this way, the easier it gets to see all the benefits that can come from the failure.</p> <p>Handout 3: Scenario Cards Give pairs 5 minutes to discuss the scenario with their partner and make a list of all the positives that could happen as a result (direct or indirect) of the failure.</p> <p>Group Sharing: How many pairs listed more than 3? How was that experience? Was it easy or difficult to think of positives? Did it get easier with time?</p>	<p>20 min (1 hr, 10 min)</p>
<p>Reframing Failure: Part 2</p> <p>Oral Communication, Self- Awareness, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, Problem Solving</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL READ/WRITE</p>	<p>Self Reflection Frontload: Invite participants to think of a past failure, a different one from the beginning of the session. Just as they did in the paired activity, invite them to write down all of the positives that happened because of the "failure".</p> <p>Group Sharing: How was this for people? Easy? Difficult? What did you notice about how you approached this activity now, compared to the beginning of the session? What were some of the things you thought about, said to yourself or looked at differently?</p>	<p>15 min (1 hr, 25 min)</p>
<p>Closing</p>	<p>What was interesting or valuable about our time together today? Do you have any new thoughts or are you feeling differently about failure?</p>	<p>5 min (1 hr, 30 min)</p>

Videos

Video 1: Brené Brown, YouTube - Fear of Failure Ted Talk (3 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVx7dG0GJU0>

Video 2: J.K. Rowling Speaks at Harvard Commencement (watch 7:50-11:15) (4 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHGqp8lz36c>

Resources Needed for Session

- LCD projector/laptop to show videos
- Pens/pencils/markers
- Handout 1: *The Man in the Arena, Theodore Roosevelt*
- Handout 2 (for facilitator): *"Who Am I?" Game*
- Handout 3: *Scenario Cards*

Additional Resources

Video about the Marshmallow Challenge:

https://www.ted.com/talks/tom_wujec_build_a_tower_build_a_team/transcript?language=en

Article about the Marshmallow Challenge:

<https://connectedprincipals.com/archives/3224>

Modifications

The Marshmallow Challenge – this is a great hands on activity that has been used many times with groups of all ages. If you're unfamiliar with the challenge, check out video and article in additional resources above. The challenge could be used at the start of the session as an experiential way to demonstrate the value of failure. It's usually the group that uses failure (when their structure falls) to learn something new and build again, keeping in mind what worked and didn't work. After the structures have been built, spend time debriefing the value of failure. Find out which groups failed more (how many times did they rebuild) and how their failures helped them – what did they learn? Did they change how they built their structure? After group debriefs the experience, you could watch the Ted Talk video about the Marshmallow Challenge to summarize key learnings including value of failure.



The Man In The Arena

"It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly...who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, who spends himself in a worthy cause, who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who have never known neither victory nor defeat."

Teddy Roosevelt

Famous Failures – “Who Am I?” Game

Most success stories of famous people have only occurred because those people kept trying. Even after many setbacks and failures they didn't give up. They persisted and continued to learn and work towards their dream. We've likely heard of their big achievement, but may not have realized there were many stepping stones of 'failure' before they succeeded.

To learn more about these 'famous failures', let's play “Who Am I?”

How to Play:

Divide group into two teams. One person from each team starts. Game host (facilitator) begins by reading out the first clue (e.g. “The failure – his teachers called him ‘slow’”). Whichever player taps table first gets to make a guess. If incorrect, other player guesses. If still incorrect, host gives next clue – “He didn't learn to speak until he was 7 years old”. Whichever player taps table first gets to make a guess, followed by other player if still incorrect. Then next clue and if both players from each team still don't know, rest of team can answer. Continue game using a new player from each team with every round.

If participants are really engaged, enjoying game, invite them to add any 'famous failures' they know of and keep playing!

1. Who Am I?

The failures:

- His teachers called him 'slow'.
- He didn't learn to speak until he was 7 years old.

The success:

- He won the Nobel Prize for Physics.

(Answer: Albert Einstein)

2. Who Am I?

The failures:

- His recipe was rejected 1008 times.
- Restaurant owners kept telling him that his chicken wasn't good enough.

The success:

- Now his recipe is famous and his chicken is known by three letters – KFC
- He's the creator of KFC, a worldwide brand, making billions of dollars/year.

(Answer: Colonel Sanders)

3. Who Am I?

The failures:

- She was fired from her first TV job.
- She was told she'd never make it in television.

The success:

- She became a billionaire through her popular talk show.
- She has her own television network.

(Answer: Oprah Winfrey)

4. Who Am I?

The failures:

- She was struggling as a single mom, barely able to pay her rent.
- Her books were rejected by 12 different publishers.

The success:

- She created the imaginary school of Hogwarts.
- Her famous book series features a wizard named Harry Potter.

(Answer: J.K. Rowling)

5. Who Am I?

The failures:

- He was unable to get a record deal.
- He was encouraged to go back to his old job of driving trucks.
- He was told his dancing was offensive and that he should change it.

The success:

- He is one of the most famous singers of all times.

(Answer: Elvis Presley)

Reframing Failure Session - Scenario Cards

<p>You are a busy working parent and you left your job early to see your daughter perform at her school concert. On the way to the performance, your car got a flat tire and you missed the show.</p>	<p>You're excited to be running for a position on the board at your community association. You've lived in the community for a long time and you know that you'd do a great job if you had a seat on the board. Results were just posted and you discovered someone else got the position.</p>
<p>You're registered to run in your very first 5km race. You've never competed in a sports event before and even your family is surprised. You've been training for months and you can't believe that you're actually going to do it! The night before the race you have trouble sleeping. And in the morning you wake with a stomach ache. You tell yourself that it's just nerves and it'll go away once you start running. Well, it doesn't and after running for a few minutes you start to feel dizzy and are unable to complete the race.</p>	<p>You enjoy baking and volunteered to bring homemade cupcakes for the school event. A friend popped over while the cupcakes were in the oven and you forgot about them. When the smoke detector went off you realized you'd forgotten, but it was too late! All of them were burnt.</p>
<p>You've always thought it would be neat to grow your own food. So, you decide to plan a garden this year. You've spent time watching YouTube videos on how to build a raised garden bed and your neighbour had some leftover wood that they gave you to build it. After some planning and preparation you're ready to build. It takes an entire weekend but you've finally built the garden bed, filled it with dirt, and planted the seeds. Weeks go by and nothing happens. No sprouting and no sign of anything growing.</p>	<p>You've decided to host a holiday dinner at your house. Your sister always does it and this year you asked if you could have it at your house. Everyone agreed and you were looking forward to having your parents, your nephews and nieces, and the whole family together at your place. A few days before, you slipped on some ice and fractured a bone in your foot. It was painful and you didn't know if you'd be able to get everything done for the dinner. You decided to cancel having it at your house and figured your sister would probably do a better job anyway.</p>
<p>Scenario:</p>	<p>Scenario:</p>

Questions to Ask:

1. What was the 'failure'?
2. What good things might have happened because of the failure? Or, were able to happen because of the failure? Try to write down as many as you can! Just thinking about it or talking about it with your partner might lead to more ideas.
3. What learnings might have resulted from the failure?
4. Can you reframe the failure into something else? What would that be?

The Power of Play. Part 1



The Big Idea!

The big idea for this session is to give participants an opportunity to learn about the value of play for everyone, not just children. Play is one of the brain's best forms of exercise: it gives us mental flexibility, opens us up to new ways of doing things. Through discussion, video, reflection, and hands on play activity the many benefits of play will be highlighted. Participants will be invited to consider how their lives might be different if they gave themselves permission to 'play'.

Choose this session if you are looking for...

- Simple ways for people to lighten their load and have a bit of fun through creativity and play.
- An opportunity for participants to experience the power of play.
- Tools for people to use in their everyday lives to increase awareness and participation in play.

The Takeaway

Participants will reflect on their personal experiences of 'play' and explore the mind/body benefits of making time to 'play'. The session includes a hands-on activity to experience 'play'. Through video, discussion, reflection, and activity the concept of play will be explored. Participants will be invited to consider how their daily life might be different if there was more engagement with play.

Skills for Learning

Oral Communication

Problem Solving

Self-Assessment

Critical Thinking

Decision Making

Self-Awareness

Creative Thinking

Session Plan: The Power of Play. Part 1



Activity Life Skills Used Learning Styles	Description	Time
Welcome! Session Introduction	Today we are going to talk about play, what it is and why it's important. We'll meet Stuart Brown, an expert on Play and the founder of the National Play Institute. And we'll explore what's involved in play and how we can bring more of it to our daily lives.	
Check In & Connection Self- Awareness, Critical Thinking, Oral Communication AUDITORY/VISUAL	Can you remember the last time you played this month? (Invite people to share.) What about during the past week? (Invite people to share.) The last 24 hours? (Invite people to share.) Brainstorm (white board): What is play? What is play to you? What is it for adults? For children? How do families play? How do communities play? How do Canadians play?	15 min
Unpacking Play! Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Critical Thinking AUDITORY/VISUAL	Frontload: Let's meet Stuart Brown, founder of the National Play Institute, and hear what he has to say about PLAY. Video 1: ABC News on Dr. Stuart Brown's book on PLAY (5 min) http://www.nifplay.org/institute/about-us/ Group Discussion: Comments? Thoughts? What stood out for you in the video? Based on the video, what are some of the benefits of Play? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's one of the brain's best forms of exercise: gives us mental flexibility, opens us up to new ideas and ways of doing things. • It produces lightheartedness, empathy, hopes for the future. • Play is important all throughout life, not just for children. • Play produces sense of community and belonging. • Play lights our brain up! Releases endorphins. What about the non-verbal language of play? How did the animals in the video show each other they wanted to play? If you have pets, they probably do certain things to let you know it's 'playtime'. How do we, as humans, signal we want to play?	15 min (30 min)

<p>A Deeper Dig into Play</p> <p>Oral Communication Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL</p>	<p>Frontload:</p> <p>While we have ideas about play and have learned some things about the benefits of play, we are going to learn more about the categories of play in this next video. The hope is that by learning the many ways of playing we will find more opportunities to bring it and its benefits into our lives.</p> <p>Video 2: Stuart Brown TED talk (watch up to 16:18) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HHwXlChcTHc</p> <p>Group Debrief and Discussion:</p> <p>Any comments on the video? Did it teach us anything new about play?</p> <p>There are many different types of play. What are they? (Whiteboard each type and ask for examples)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body Play (defying gravity – remember the goat?) • Object Play (manipulation of objects) • Social Play (belonging, teamwork) • Rough and Tumble Play (dive, hit, whistle) • Spectator/Ritual Play • Imaginative Play (can be done solo) • Story Telling Play <p>Which of these are you most drawn to? (Invite people to share why.) How might you bring this type of play into your life now? This week?</p>	<p>25 min (1 hr, 5 min)</p>
<p>Experiencing Play</p> <p>Oral Communication, Self- Assessment, Self-Awareness, Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL KINESTHETIC READ/WRITE *Depends on game you choose</p>	<p>We've talked quite a bit about play: what it is, what it looks like and why it's good for us. But we can't fully understand play unless we experience it. So, let's play a game! Before we begin, take a minute to check in with how you are feeling and what your energy is like – just note it.</p> <p>(Pictionary, Charades, Cadoo, etc. - any interactive group game)</p> <p>Activity Debrief (Explore responses to the game):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Had you played it before? What did you like about it? • What kind of play was it? • Do you feel any different from before the game? How so? (Increased energy? Lightheartedness? Improve mood?) • What were the benefits of playing together? <p>We only played for a short time – so let's try and remember, we don't need a lot of time to engage in play and feel its benefits!</p>	<p>20 min (1 hr, 25 min)</p>
<p>Closing</p>	<p>What was interesting or valuable about our time together today? Invitation for you to think about ways that you can bring more PLAY to your day. How will you play this week?</p>	<p>5 min (1 hr, 30 min)</p>

Videos

Video 1: ABC News on Dr. Stuart Brown's book on PLAY (5 min)

<http://www.nifplay.org/institute/about-us/>

Video 2: Stuart Brown TED talk (watch up to 16:18)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HHwXlcHcTHc>

Resources Needed for Session

- LCD projector/laptop to show videos
- Pens/pencils/markers
- Game materials (Pictionary, Cadoo, charades)

Additional Resources

Stuart Brown:

- National Institute for Play Website: <http://www.nifplay.org/institute/about-us/>
- Book: Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul (2009)

Video: Played (21 min)

<https://vimeo.com/390338096?ref=fb-share&1&fbclid=IwAR0HqnzyY1qaUxqar0yl5XjMXYOYvVbDEKTIoI9-O7O4NoQUWqFhPV6dGpA>

Modifications

One of the modifications you could use for this session is to have people gather in small groups and share their 'play stories' – how they played as a child, who their heroes were, what games they liked to play. They could also share how they play now, what they are drawn to, and what limits their play.

Another modification would be to stop the Stuart Brown TED talk as he goes through the different types of Play and unpack that as a group, asking for examples, thoughts and preferences on that category.

If you are a cohort that meets regularly, you could also inquire about the ways you play as a learning community, how you could play more, and what this would add to the learning environment.

The Power of Play: Part 2



The Big Idea!

The big idea for this session is to continue exploring play and the many benefits it provides. It's not just for kids! Play is an important element of our well-being throughout our lifespan. Play improves how our brain functions. It stimulates creativity, improves our memory, nurtures our critical thinking and helps us learn problem solving skills. The session will give participants an opportunity to think about the many different ways that play can be added into one's daily life so they can experience the many benefits of play.

Choose this session if you are looking for....

- Simple ways for people to lighten their load and have a bit of fun through creativity and play.
- An opportunity to experience the power of play.
- Ways for participants to learn about different styles of play and to increase their self-awareness of their unique play personality.
- Tools for people to use in their everyday lives to increase awareness and participation in play.

The Takeaway

Participants will reflect on their personal experiences of 'play', explore mind/body benefits of 'play', and discover their own 'play personality'. By increasing self-awareness of the play personalities, participants will realize additional opportunities for play in their lives. This session can also work to challenge someone who is curious to try other styles of play.

Skills for Learning

Oral Communication

Problem Solving

Self-Assessment

Critical Thinking

Decision Making

Self-Awareness

Creative Thinking



Activity Life Skills Used Learning Styles	Description	Time
Welcome! Session Introduction	Today we are going to continue exploring play. Last session we defined play and discussed the many benefits of play. We met Stuart Brown (through video), an expert on Play and the founder of the National Play Institute. Today we're going to focus on preferences for play and ways to increase play in our lives.	
Check In & Connection Self- Awareness, Critical Thinking, Oral Communication AUDITORY	Can you remember your favourite activity to do as a child? What was it? What did you really like about it? After everyone has shared their childhood activity, ask: Does anyone still do the childhood activity they mentioned? If not, does your child do it? Could you do it with your child? Or perhaps, you do a totally different activity but it fulfills similar play needs? What does your childhood activity tell you about yourself as an adult? What clues does it give you about who you are, what motivates you, how you like to be creative?	15 min
Bringing Play Alive! Oral Communication, Critical Thinking, Self-Assessment, Self-Awareness AUDITORY/VISUAL	Frontload: We're going to unpack the ways that play comes alive in our lives, particularly when there is an element of risk or the unknown. To get us thinking about that, let's watch a quick video that illustrates this! Video 1: Kevin Hart and Jimmy Fallon ride a roller coaster (start at 1:26 - approx. 3min) https://youtu.be/OPdbdjctx2I Group Discussion: Comments/Thoughts on video? What happened for Kevin and Jimmy? How do you think they felt? Before the ride? During? After? Pair and Share: Have you ever gone on a rollercoaster or a similar ride or tried an activity that you felt nervous about? (sledding, riding bike, riding horse, jumping into water, etc.) You are invited to share the memory with the person next to you. The following questions can be answered if you like, while you share! (Facilitator to write questions on whiteboard - approximately 10 minutes to discuss the following questions)	20 min (35 min)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the activity? • How did you feel? Before doing it. During. And after. • Were you with someone? Did you laugh together, talk about it? 	
Showcasing Our Play! Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment, Creative Thinking, Decision Making AUDITORY/VISUAL KINESTHETIC	Creativity Activity: After discussing with your partner or small group, share what you learned from each other with the group. One of the ways you can do this is by making a poster, picture, poem, skit, story. Do it however you wish! You can take notes, draw pictures, list words, draw a scene, whatever you wish....have fun! Group Sharing: Invitation for each pair to share what they've learned. Summarize learnings: So, what did we discover? (possible answers...) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play can be challenging, fun, create anxiety, forget about worries. • Play experiences can be bonding, create closeness in relationship. • Play can result in feelings of accomplishment, changes in self image. • Play can happen in all sorts of ways. There's no 'right or wrong' way to play. No 'best' type of play. • We're all different and have different preferences. The same is true for play. Just like we talked about, some of us enjoy rollercoasters and some don't. That would NOT be everyone's pick for play. 	20 min (55 min)
Our Play Personalities Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment, Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking AUDITORY/VISUAL READ/WRITE	Frontload: Stuart Brown says: <i>"As we grow older, we start to have strong preferences for certain types of play over others. Some things float your boat, others don't. Over the years, I've observed that people have a dominant mode of play that falls into one of eight types. I call these play personalities."</i> Provide Handout: The Power of Play (the Eight Types of Play Personalities are on the 2 nd page). Review together. Ask participants to put a check beside the ones they identify with or highlight what parts they identify with. Group Sharing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which one do you identify with the most? Stuart Brown would call that your 'primary' play personality. • Which is your Second? • Are you surprised? Or does it confirm something for you? • How would you benefit by playing more in this particular way? What might it change or bring about in your life? Discussion of people's play personalities and share examples. <i>"According to Stuart Brown, while we're all a mix of these personalities, and our preferences might change over time, or be different in different contexts, most of us do have dominant types. He believes that identifying</i>	20 min (1 hr, 15 min)

	<p><i>your own types can be useful for self-awareness and finding greater satisfaction in your play. I imagine that it can also be very useful in understanding our friends who might have very different play personalities to us, even though we're engaging in the very same play activity together!"</i></p> <p>Source: https://thinkingplay.wordpress.com/2017/07/19/what-is-your-play-personality/</p>	
<p>More Ways to Play!</p> <p>Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment, Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL READ/WRITE</p>	<p>Frontload:</p> <p>As we've discussed last session and today, engaging in play is so important. Play provides so many benefits. As children, play was central to our day – we learned and developed through play. As adults, it can be easy to dismiss play and forget how good it is for us!</p> <p>Today's session acts as a reminder to bring play back into our lives. We know it's good for us, so let's give ourselves permission to play. Every day, everywhere there are opportunities to find play. What are some? (colour, paint, make jewelry, string with cat, throw ball, fly kite, hide and seek with kids, Pictionary with friends)</p> <p>Review Handout: 10 Ways to Have More Fun and Play More as Adults (Source: https://daringtolivefully.com/more-fun-and-play-for-adults)</p> <p>If time allows, can review handout together and invite participants to circle the ones they want to try.</p>	<p>10 min (1 hr, 25 min)</p>
Closing	<p>What was interesting or valuable about our time together today?</p> <p>Are you interested in adding more play to your day?</p> <p>Anything specific you'd like to try this week?</p>	<p>5 min (1 hr, 30 min)</p>

Videos

Video 1: Kevin Hart and Jimmy Fallon ride a roller coaster (start at 1:26 - approx. 3min)

<https://youtu.be/OPdbdjctx2I>

Resources Needed for Session

- LCD projector/laptop to show videos
- Pens/pencils/markers
- Handout: *The Power of Play* (including Play Personalities on second page)
- Handout: *10 Ways to Have More Fun and Play More as Adults*

Additional Resources

Articles and additional sources on the Power of Play:

- <https://thinkingplay.wordpress.com/2017/07/19/what-is-your-play-personality/>
- <https://wanderlust.com/journal/the-importance-of-play-in-adulthood/>
- <https://www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu/practice-play-dr-stuart-brown>
- <http://ecdss.ca/go-play/>
- <http://www.nifplay.org/institute/about-us/>
- <http://www.nationalgeographic.com.au/videos/natures-weirdest-events/what-is-animal-play-3271.aspx>

Play Personality Test:

- <http://www.reimagineplay.com/blog/2016/12/23/2v782j0j10judiutvwfdmtnxlsgrk6>

Modifications

This session plan does not have any Kinesthetic learning experiences for participants. This could be modified by incorporating a few body breaks that are 'play related'. For example, you could do a body break to the song "The Hokey Pokey" or do the "Chicken Dance".

Additionally, the discussion of the Play Personalities could be tailored to reflect on how people's play personalities show up in your specific learning space or learning community. You could also discuss ways to incorporate play and play personality preferences into your learning community.

THE POWER OF PLAY

Play – Stuart Brown (2009)

In a broad sense, play is what lifts people out of the mundane...but what happens to play in our lives?



As children, we don't need instruction on how to play. We just find what we enjoy and do it....At some point as we get older, however, we are made to feel guilty for playing. We are told that it is unproductive, a waste of time, even sinful. The play that remains is, like league sports, mostly very organized, rigid, and competitive. We strive always to be productive and if an activity doesn't teach us a skill, make us money or get on the boss's good side, then we feel we should not be doing it...

The skeptics among the audiences I talk to will say, "Well, Duh. Of course you will be happy if you play all the time. But for those of us that aren't rich, or retired, or both, there's simply is not time for play." Or they might say that if they truly gave into the desire to experience the joy of free play, they would never get anything done.

This is not the case. We don't need to play all the time to be fulfilled. The truth is that in most cases, play is a catalyst. The beneficial effects of getting just a little true play can spread through our lives, actually making us more productive and happier in everything we do. (pp. 6, 7)

7 Properties of Play

- ★ Apparently Purposeless. Done for its own sake ...
- ★ Voluntary. One cannot be forced to enjoy play ...
- ★ Inherent attraction. Play is no to do list, no task and no burden ...
- ★ Freedom from time. You lose yourself in it ...
- ★ Diminished consciousness of self. We stop worrying about whether we look good or awkward, smart or stupid.
- ★ Improvisational potential. We aren't locked into a rigid way of doing things. We are open!
- ★ Continuation of desire. We find ways to keep it going and when it is over, we want to do it again.

Play Involves:

- ★ Anticipation (waiting with expectations, curiosity, a little anxiety) which leads to...
- ★ **Surprise** (the unexpected, a discovery) which produces...
- ★ Pleasure (a good feeling) and next we have...
- ★ **Understanding** (the gaining of new knowledge, blending ideas) that leads to...
- ★ **Strength** (mastery that comes from knowing more about the world works) which results in...
- ★ Poise, Grace, Contentment, Composure, and a Sense of Balance in Life

(Source: Scott Eberle)

“There’s no way to really understand play without remembering **the feeling of play**. If we leave the emotion of play out of the science, it’s like throwing a dinner party and serving pictures of food.” (p. 21)

As we grow older, we start to have strong preferences for certain types of play over others. Some things float your boat, others don’t. Over the years, I’ve observed that people have a dominant mode of play that falls into one of eight types. I call these play personalities.

— Stuart Brown, *Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul*

8 Play Personalities

- ★ **The Joker...** “A joker’s play... revolves around some kind of nonsense.... Parents make infants laugh by making silly sounds, blowing raspberries, and generally being foolish... Later, the class clown finds social acceptance by making other people laugh.”
- ★ **The Kinesthete...** “Kinesthetes are people who like to move...includes athletes, but also others... who find themselves happiest moving as part of dance, swimming, or walking... While kinesthetes may play games, competition is not the main focus — it is only a forum for engaging in their favorite activity.
- ★ **The Explorer...** “Exploration becomes their preferred avenue into the alternative universe of play... Exploring can be physical—literally, going to new places... it can be emotional—searching for a new feeling or deepening of the familiar, through music, movement, flirtation... It can be mental: researching a new subject or discovering new experiences and points of view...”
- ★ **The Competitor...** “The competitor loves fighting to be number 1. If games and keeping score are your thing, this may be your primary play personality. The games can be solitary or social—either a solitary video game or a team game like baseball—and they may be actively participated in or observed as a fan.”
- ★ **The Director...** “Directors enjoy planning and executing scenes and events... They are born organizers. At their best, they are the party givers, the instigators of great excursions to the beach, the dynamic center of the social world. At worst, they are manipulators.”
- ★ **The Collector...** “The thrill of play for the collector is to have and to hold the most, the best, the most interesting collection of objects or experiences. Coins, toy trains, antiques, plastic purses, wine, shoes, ties, video clips of race-car crashes, or pieces of the crashed cars themselves, anything and everything is fair game for the collector.”
- ★ **The Artist/Creator...** “For the artist/creator, joy is found in making things. Painting, print-making, woodworking, pottery... furniture making, knitting, sewing, and gardening... Artist/creators may end up showing their creations to the world... or may never show anyone what they make. The point is to make something... or just to make something work... someone who enjoys taking apart a pump, replacing broken parts, cleaning it, and putting back together a shiny, working perfectly mechanism...”
- ★ **The Storyteller...** “Storytellers are, of course, novelists, playwrights, cartoonists... but they are also those whose greatest joy is reading novels and watching movies, people who make themselves part of the story, who experience the thoughts and emotions of characters in the story. Performers of all sorts are storytellers... through dance, acting, magic tricks, or lectures... the realm of the storyteller is in the imagination, they can bring play to almost any activity. They may be playing a recreational game of tennis, but in their mind, each point is part of an exciting drama.”

According to Stuart Brown, while we’re all a mix of these personalities, and our preferences might change over time, or be different in different contexts, most of us do have dominant types. He believes that identifying your own types can be useful for self-awareness and finding greater satisfaction in your play.

Guidelines for Play – how to bring it back into your life! (pp. 206-216)

1. **Take your play history.** The primary purpose of the play history is to get us back in touch with the joy that we have all experienced at some point in our lives. Find that joy from the past and you are halfway to learning how to create it again in your present life. ...One of its goals is to create a general mental picture of your play attitudes and color them with emotion-laden scenes...Start this exercise by spending some time thinking about what you did as a child that really got you excited, that really gave you joy.
Here are some additional questions:
 1. When have you felt free to do and be what you choose?
 2. Is that part of your life now? If not, why not?
 3. What do you feel stands in the way of your achieving some times of personal freedom?
 4. Search your memory for those times in your life when you have been at your very best (these are usually authentic play times and give clues as to where to go for current play experiences).
 5. How and why did some kinds of play disappear from your life?
2. **Expose yourself to play.** Every day, everywhere, there are opportunities to find play; throw a tennis ball for a dog; pull string in front of a kitten; browse in a bookstore. Here's an old piece of advice that is trite but true: stop and smell the flowers.
3. **Give yourself permission to be playful, to be a beginner.** Probably the biggest roadblock to play for adults is the worry that they will look silly, undignified, or dumb if they allow themselves to truly play. Or they think that it is irresponsible, immature, and childish to give themselves regularly over to play....The thing is this: You have to give yourself permission to improvise, to mimic, to take on a long-hidden identity. Let your body respond to lessons learned from nature but long suppressed.
4. **Fun is your North Star but you don't always have to head north.** Some of the really transforming acts of play aren't purely fun. Camping requires packing to the trip and unpacking afterwards.
5. **Be Active!** One of the quickest ways to jump-start play is to do something physical. Just MOVE. Take a walk, do jumping jacks, throw a ball for the dog. Motion is perhaps the most basic form of play.
6. **Free yourself of Fear.** Fear and play cannot go together. Developmentally we all need 'secret spaces' in which we can be safely alone and give ourselves over to needed fantasies if we are to adapt to a challenging world. Find your own secret space.
7. **Nourish your mode of play and be with people who nourish it too.** Practice play. Understand what type of player you are and find ways to engage in your play. Find the play that feeds your soul, build an environment where people understand your need and get out there and make it a priority to stay play-nourished.



10 Ways to Have More Fun and Play More as Adults

By Marelisa Fabrega

(Source: <https://daringtolivefully.com/more-fun-and-play-for-adults>)

“You’re an adult now, and the time for playing and having fun is over, right? Wrong! Adults can, and should, play and have fun. In fact, there are studies that show the many benefits of playing for adults, which include increased creativity, productivity, and feelings of well-being.

Adults need play. Below you’ll find ten ways in which adults can play more and have more fun.

1. Set the Goal of Playing More. Start by setting a goal to have more fun. When we think of setting goals we usually think of serious things, such as losing weight, quitting smoking, making more money, or starting a small business. However, the goal of having more fun is just as important as those more adult-sounding goals. After all, what’s the point of being thin, having more money, and having your own business if you’re not enjoying yourself?

2. Decide What Fun Means For You. A lot of the time adults can’t even remember what they like to do. Or maybe they’ve outgrown the things that they liked to do in the past and they haven’t gotten around to identifying new things that they enjoy. If this is you, there are two steps you need to follow:

- First, sit down and make a list of the things that you enjoyed doing as a kid. Then, go over your list and highlight those things that still sound appealing.
- Google “fun ideas for adults” or “bucket list ideas”. You’re looking for ideas on fun things you may want to try. Once you have your list, just like before, highlight the ideas that sound most interesting.

3. Set a Fun Minimum. Just as you tell yourself that you’re going to exercise for at least half-an-hour a day (I sincerely hope that you’re telling yourself this), tell yourself that you’re also going to do something fun for at least half-an-hour-a-day. In addition, do the following:

- Set aside one day a week in which you’re going to have a minimum of two hours of fun.
- Set aside at least two weeks a year which you’re going to devote entirely to having fun.

4. Put Fun In Your Schedule. If you don’t schedule something, it’s unlikely to happen. Therefore, if you want to play more and have more fun, you have to schedule it.

5. Create a Play Drawer. A while back the book “Simple Abundance: A Daybook of Comfort and Joy” by Sarah Ban Breathnach spent several months on the New York Time’s bestsellers list.

One of things that Ban Breathnach recommends in her book is to create a comfort drawer to “stockpile small indulgences” for “those nights when you feel as if you’d like to pull the covers over your head and never come out.” It should include items to pamper yourself, however you view pampering.

Using the comfort drawer as inspiration, create a play drawer for those times when you need a break from work and you just want to be silly for a while. Here are some ideas for things you can include in your play drawer:

- Jigsaw puzzles.
- Coloring books for adults - adult coloring book sales are skyrocketing.
- Play-Doh - there’s play dough for adults now, but I think the kids’ version is great.
- LEGO.

When you have a few minutes to spare, open your drawer, pick something, and play.

6. Combine Fun With Other Activities. Think of the things on your to-do list, and then look for ways to make them more fun. For example, I've already mentioned exercise. When most people think of exercise they think of self-sacrifice and drudgery. However, exercise can be fun.

Here are some ideas:

- Shop around for an exercise class that you enjoy. Try SoulCycle, Zumba, pole dancing, and so on. Don't stop until you find a class that feels like play to you.
- Join a sports team. If you loved to play soccer or baseball as a kid, find a team for adults and join.
- Gamify your exercise. As an illustration, if you jog, get an app that lets you pretend that you're being chased by zombies. You'll be staying fit, surviving a zombie apocalypse, and having fun, all at the same time.
- Remember bouncy castles? Those were so much fun! The adult equivalent is a mini-trampoline! And it turns out that rebounding is one of the best exercises that there is.

7. Have More Fun at Work. In my post, 25 Ways to Have More Fun at Work, I explain that fun and humor in the workplace have many benefits.

Gather the studies out there that show how having fun at work has a positive impact on the bottom line, and prepare a presentation for your boss. In addition, volunteer to create and head a "fun committee". You'll start having more fun at work, and your co-workers will love you for it.

8. Have Play-Dates With Your Significant Other. Date-night doesn't have to be dinner and a movie. Instead, you can go to a theme park, go on a scavenger hunt, or play paintball. After all, as you'll be strengthening your relationship by keeping playfulness alive.

9. Befriend a Fun Person. The people you hang out with will have an enormous impact on your life. If you need to relearn how to relax, be more spontaneous, laugh more, and simply be more willing to play, look for someone who's already doing these things. Then, follow their lead.

10. Hang Out With a Kid. Little kids innately know how to play and have fun. When I need to have more fun, I visit my nephews. They never disappoint. In fact, I visited them on Wednesday of last week. We juggled, played a game that involved hopping around the house, and even danced to Joey Montana's song, "Picky". It was fantastic!

Conclusion

As an adult, you have every right to enjoy yourself. In fact, adults need play.

George Bernard Shaw once said,

*"We don't stop playing because we grow old;
we grow old because we stop playing."*



The Power of Possibility and a Growth Mindset



The Big Idea!

The big idea for this session is to expose participants to new ways of thinking. Using the themes of possibility thinking and growth mindsets, participants will have opportunities to understand ways they can think differently about the challenges they face. They will learn phrases, practices, habits and attitudes that they can incorporate into their lives to help them with the hard challenges or old beliefs that hold them back. They will learn strategies that will support them to keep on keeping on, in the face of challenges, failure, or setbacks so that they can ultimately grow their skills, adapt and flex when things don't go according to plan and reach their goals.

Choose this session if you are looking for...

- Participants to experience alternative ways to look at problems, setbacks, challenges and failures.
- An opening conversation and reflection opportunity to discuss attitudes around success and failure.
- Strategies that support participants in their thinking, attitudes, habits and actions as they move towards their goals.

The Takeaway

Participants will walk away with an understanding of their own behaviors and attitudes towards challenges, failures and setbacks. They will be equipped with new knowledge and strategies that will help them adopt Growth Mindset habits and to reframe the 'impossible' into 'what's possible now' and "I'm not there....yet".

Skills for Learning

Oral Communication

Self-Assessment

Self-Awareness

Problem Solving

Critical Thinking

Creative Thinking

Decision Making



Activity Life Skills Used Learning Styles	Description	Time
Welcome! Session Introduction	Today we are going to talk about the power of possibility – unpacking this could look like having a Plan A, B, <u>and</u> C! It could look like considering options or other perspectives to a challenge. Being open to possibility is also connected to having a ‘growth mindset’. Through conversation and activities, we’ll explore what it means to dwell in possibility, have a ‘growth mindset’ and how that might show up in our own day to day lives.	
Check In & Connection Self- Awareness, Critical Thinking, Oral Communication AUDITORY/VISUAL READ/WRITE	To get us started today, we are going to watch a short video called “The Power of a Single Word” . Video 1: The Power of a Single Word (3 min) http://www.supersoul.tv/supersoul-short-films/the-power-of-a-single-word-by-jason-perez Connection: To start us off, what’s one of your favourite words? A word that when you hear it or say it, it inspires you, makes you happy, means something significant to you...(you can whiteboard these).	10 min
Understanding POSSIBILITY in Possible New Ways! Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Critical Thinking AUDITORY/VISUAL	Group Discussion: Today our word is ‘POSSIBILITY’. When you hear that word, what do you think of? What does possibility mean to you? (Brainstorm on whiteboard) Frontload: Someone who’s spent a lot of time teaching this subject is Benjamin Zander. (Give brief background and show video.) https://www.benjaminzanderspeaker.com/ Video 2: Benjamin Zander – The Art of Possibility (5 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nTav0D3YIN4 Debrief: Thoughts on the video? How might possibility thinking be an important piece of having a Growth Mindset? (We’ve not yet defined ‘growth mindset’ so might just be a guess at this point.)	15 min (25 min)

<p>Assessing Our Mindsets</p> <p>Oral Communication, Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL READ/WRITE</p>	<p>Frontload: Let's dig into the idea of what it means to have a "Growth Mindset". Is anyone familiar with the term? What does it mean to you?</p> <p>Someone who knows a lot about a Growth Mindset is Carol Dweck. She is a Stanford professor and is the author of "Mindset – The New Psychology of Success". She has spent decades researching this phenomenon and exploring why it's so important. She defines it like this: <i>"The passion for stretching yourself and sticking to it, even (or especially) when it's not going well, is the hallmark of the growth mindset."</i></p> <p>Whiteboard the visual below: We can think of Mindset as occurring on a continuum:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Fixed Mindset -----Growth Mindset</p> <p>Based on the words alone, what kind of orientation do you think you have the majority of the time? What makes you put yourself there?</p> <p>Reading excerpt: Jonathan Fields, in his book "How to Live a Good Life" (2016), describes how mindset influences behavior in the following scene:</p> <p>"Watching the scene unfold, as a dad, was on the one hand fascinating and on the other hand incredibly frustrating and sad. Two kids, maybe 10 or 11 years old, were playing a game together. Round one, the kid on the left soundly trounces the kid on the right. Round two, same thing, though the kid on the right is doing a little better. Halfway into round three, it's getting obvious that the kid on the right is on a pathway to losing yet again. This time, instead of finishing the game and taking the hit, he cuts it short, proclaiming, "This sucks. I always hated this game anyway. I wanna do something else."</p> <p>Truth is, this is not just about kids playing a game. I'm guessing you've seen this same scene unfold with adults in nearly every part of life. In fact, it's a safe bet we've all been that kid on the right at many moments in life. And there's a good chance we'll be him again.</p> <p>It's all about what happens when things stop coming easily... We hit a point where things start to feel a lot harder. We keep trying to find a way through, and when it doesn't come easily, instead of leaning into it, we stop trying, we stop taking risks and start to blame everyone and everything but ourselves. It's rigged. The equipment or tool or computer or fill-in-the-blank is inadequate. It's impossible; nobody can do it.</p> <p>We stop attempting anything that's not within our realm of talent, where we're more or less guaranteed not to fail. We walk away from more and more of life's invitations to evolve, grow, and rise." (pg. 87-88)</p>	<p>25 min (50 min)</p>
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	Group Sharing: Have you ever felt like that? Can you remember the last time you experienced this? What was going on for you? What were some of your thoughts and attitudes related to this?	
A Deeper Dig into Mindsets Oral Communication, Critical Thinking, Self-Awareness AUDITORY/VISUAL READ/WRITE	Video 3: Growth Mindset vs Fixed Mindset (Sprouts) (5 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUWn_TJTrnU Debrief: Thoughts/Comments on video? How do people with a fixed mindset talk to themselves? How do people with a growth mindset talk to themselves? How does this inner talking influence our decisions, choices, and goals?	15 min (1 hr, 5 min)
Steps to Growing Our Growth Mindsets Oral Communication, Critical Thinking, Self-Awareness AUDITORY/VISUAL READ/WRITE	Large Group Discussion: Handout: <i>How Can We Change our Mindset?</i> Review handout together. When you add 'yet' to the situation, do you feel differently? How so? Let's try that on with something you are working on – a challenge, some hard work, a skill. (Invite participation and write statements on the board.) Pairs or Small Group Discussion: Handout: <i>Positive Mindsets</i> In pairs or small groups, review handout together including the question at the bottom.	20 min (1 hr, 25 min)
Closing	Does anyone want to share what was important to them about our time together? What are you walking away with from today's time together? What was meaningful for you?	5 min (1 hr, 30 min)

Videos

Video1: The Power of a Single Word (3 min)

<http://www.supersoul.tv/supersoul-short-films/the-power-of-a-single-word-by-jason-perez>

Video 2: Growth Mindset vs Fixed Mindset (Sprouts) (5 min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUWn_TJTrnU

Video 3: Growth Mindset vs Fixed Mindset (Sprouts) (5 min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUWn_TJTrnU

Resources Needed for Session

- LCD projector/laptop to show videos
- Whiteboard or chalkboard
- Paper and pens
- Handout: *How Can We Change our Mindset?*
- Handout: *Positive Mindsets*

Additional Resources

Books:

- Benjamin Zander: “The Art of Possibility” (2002)
- Carol Dweck: “Mindset: The New Psychology of Success” (2007)
- Jonathan Fields: “How to Live a Good Life” (2016)

TED Talk: The Power of Believing that you can Improve

https://www.ted.com/talks/carol_dweck_the_power_of_believing_that_you_can_improve

Modifications

One way to give people an experience of their mindset would be to play a game, do a puzzle or give them a challenge of some kind (assembling something with minimal instructions). This could engage Kinesthetic Learners and provide a ‘real time’ experience of what a fixed mindset or growth mindset feels like. You could assign people to approach the task with either a Growth Mindset or a Fixed Mindset and then debrief what that experience was like.

You can also tailor this session to your unique learning community. For example, if you are a tutor working with a participant or a group working towards a common goal like passing an English Level Exam, you could use your situation and your participant contexts to unpack possibility thinking and a growth mindset in a very specific way.

How Can We Change Our Mindset?

Step 1 – Figure out whether you're more fixed or growth mindset.

You may already have a sense of your view on challenge and growth. If not, when you come up against challenges, ask yourself the following questions:

- *Do you feel overly anxious, or does a voice in your head warn you away?*
- *Do you feel incompetent or defeated right away?*
- *Do you look for an excuse?*
- *Do you become defensive or angry instead of learning from the feedback?*

Step 2 – Train the growth mindset.

Don't worry if you're more on the side of the fixed mindset. With practice and time you can train yourself to become more growth-minded. Much of it has to do with the way you frame challenge in your mind and the way you speak to yourself.

- ❖ Exercise: Over the next couple of days, any time you find yourself thinking "I'm not good at this, I can't do it, I don't have the capacity to [fill in the blank]," add the word *yet* to the end. Remind yourself that your ability to do almost anything is about your willingness to learn from mistakes and challenges.

(Source: Book: How to Live a Good Life, by Jonathan Fields (2016), pg. 91)



Positive Mindsets



1. **Be Open:** This means to be curious, accepting and present to whatever is happening right here, now. “Give yourself permission and time to experience the richness of the present moment.” (p. 200). This also means not ruminating about the past or worrying about the future.
2. **Be Grateful.** This means noticing, being aware, even ritualizing your gratitude through journaling. Describe why each good thing happened. Appreciating what has come our way without the heavy load of indebtedness or being ‘polite’. (p. 42)
3. **Be Curious:** This is about possibility, mystery, fascination, challenge, and effort. “You’re pulled to explore, to immerse yourself in what you’re just now discovering.” (p. 43)
4. **Be Kind:** Kindness is the other side of gratitude; it’s when you take action to do things for others. Appreciate your own kindness. (p. 187)
5. **Be Real:** Give yourself permission to play and get immersed in what you love. You be you! Create opportunities every day to do what you do best. Know your strengths! (p. 88, 189)
6. **Be Sincere:** Experiment with elevating your positivity ration (3:1). “What you’ll strive for is more frequent heartfelt moments of positivity. Not negativity – or even neutrality – masquerading as a smile... Although it might be easy to express positivity in words or with smiles, if we don’t actually feel the positivity we express, we may actually be doing more harm. In short, your body knows when you’re cheating and punishes you for it.” (p. 35)

Which of these do you already practice or live?
Which one might be a challenge or invitation for you to try?

Sources:

1. https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/are_you_getting_enough_positivity_in_your_diet
2. Barbara Fredrickson: Positivity (2009)

Using Our Minds to Create Meaningful Memories



The Big Idea!

The big idea for this session is to introduce participants to the notion that our memories are linked to our happiness and wellbeing. Meik Wiking, a happiness researcher from Denmark, has written a book titled “The Art of Making Memories: How to Create and Remember Happy Moments” (2018). One of the ideas in his research is that in times of struggle or hardship we can recall past happy memories to influence our present reality. This strategy can be used by participants at times of struggle and challenge as a way to build their resiliency and confidence.

Choose this session if you are looking for...

- Ways for people to gain new perspective on their current situation.
- Strategies for people to increase their happiness or wellbeing.
- An alternative way to reframe of our present experiences by tapping into the power of our lived experience.
- Ways for people to understand they have the ability to contribute to their happiness.

The Takeaway

Participants will gain an understanding of what memories are and their characteristics. They will have the opportunity to get a glimpse into the research being done on memories and their link to happiness and wellbeing and apply this knowledge to their own personal memories and what stands out for them. Participants will link the idea that creating happy memories can help them through times of struggle or hardship in their lives.

Skills for Learning

Oral Communication

Self-Assessment

Self-Awareness

Problem Solving

Critical Thinking

Creative Thinking

Decision Making

Session Plan: Using our Minds to Create Meaningful Memories



Activity Life Skills Used Learning Styles	Description	Time
Welcome! Session Introduction	Today's session is about using our minds to create meaningful memories as a way to create and remember happy moments and strengthen us in the present . In times of struggle or hardship, we can recall past happy memories to influence our present reality. We can use this strategy as a way to build our resiliency and confidence.	
Check In & Connection Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment AUDITORY	To get us started: What is one of your favorite childhood memories? Can you describe the taste, sound, smell, sight, and feeling? If you can't think of a favorite childhood memory, can you recall a good memory from this past year or month?	10 min
Elements of Memory Making Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment, Critical Thinking AUDITORY/VISUAL	Group Discussion: (Whiteboard) What do you think goes into making memories? What makes a memory? What are the elements or characteristic of memories? Why do we remember some things and not others?	10 min (20 min)
The Art of Making Memories Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment, Critical Thinking AUDITORY/VISUAL	Frontload: There is a book that is relatively new, published in 2019, and it's called "The Art of Making Memories: How to Create and Remember Happy Moments" . It's written by Meik Wiking (Pronounced: Mike Viking). He is the CEO of the Happiness Research Institute in Copenhagen. This is the 3 rd book that he's written – his others are about The Art of Hygge (the Danish word for Cozy, Comfort, Togetherness) and The Art of Lykke (the Danish word for Happiness). Here's what he had to say about the art of making memories. Video 1: How to Create a Catalogue of Happy Memories in your Mind (CityLine Toronto) (7 mins) https://www.msn.com/en-ca/video/lifestyle/how-to-create-a-catalogue-of-happy-memories-in-your-mind/vi-AAJyaog Debrief: How many of the qualities did we name?	20 min (40 min)

	<p>(From the video: Using all the 5 different senses. Smells. Sound. Or your firsts. Or saying it! Say, you will want to remember this. Create a museum of memories; mementos. Pay attention. Build in triggers that help you associate stuff with the moment you want to re-experience. Surround yourself with stuff that remind of you of happy memories. Curating the Happy 100! once a year and decide which were the 100 happy moments.)</p> <p>What did you think about what he said? Any surprises? Affirmations of something you already knew?</p>	
<p>Application of the Art of Making Memories to OUR Memories</p> <p>Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment, Creative Thinking</p> <p>KINESTHETIC/AUDITORY</p>	<p>Your Turn To Practice! (Pair/Small Group Activity):</p> <p>Divide into pairs or small groups.</p> <p>Here is the invitation: Think back to your past year, or last 6 months. What is a memory that stood out? In pairs, with a partner, can you describe this memory and why it's a memory to you? Can you describe the 5 senses? What you paid attention to? Maybe you have a memento from this memory? Each person has 4 minutes to describe the memory and then we will switch!</p> <p>What was that like to relive that memory? What was it like to be the listener? What can we take away from this activity?</p>	<p>20 min (1 hr)</p>
<p>Practicing Memory Making by Reflecting</p> <p>Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment</p> <p>AUDITORY READ/WRITE</p>	<p>Self-Reflection Activity: When you think of memories of a special event, time, or holiday...what do your memories include? More stress than bliss? Or more busyness than presence? More pain than joy?</p> <p>Worksheet & Self Reflection: For this activity, we are going to get a chance to think or reflect a bit more about our memories.</p> <p>Handout: Creating Meaningful Memories. Give people time to write down their answers (5–7) minutes to work on it. Then, invite people to share in the large group.</p>	<p>20 min (1 hr, 20 min)</p>
<p>Closing</p>	<p>What was this self-reflection like for you? How might we use what we learned today? What memories are we making together? How can we be more intentional about this?</p> <p>Your challenge for this week: Look for the memories!! Look around your house! Or look at your pictures from this past year. Can you pick out 1 or 2 things that have some of the characteristics of memory making that we learned about today?</p>	<p>10 min (1 hr, 30 min)</p>

Videos

Video 1: How to Create a Catalogue of Happy Memories in your Mind (CityLine Toronto) (7 mins)

<https://www.msn.com/en-ca/video/lifestyle/how-to-create-a-catalogue-of-happy-memories-in-your-mind/vi-AAJyaoq>

Resources Needed for Session

- LCD projector/laptop to show videos
- Whiteboard/chalkboard
- Pens or pencils
- Handout: *Creating Meaningful Memories*

Additional Resources

Miek Wiking:

- Book: “The Art of Making Memories” (2019)
- Website: <https://www.meikwiking.com/>

Modifications

You could adapt this session plan specifically for any holiday season or specific times that hold lots of memories for participants, both happy and stressful. You could also invite participants to collage their past memories instead of writing about them on the handout.

CREATING MEANINGFUL MEMORIES!!

What are your favorite SOUNDS of this event/time/season/holiday?

(Think about favorite songs, the tones in people's voice, certain instruments like piano, violins, chimes.)

What are your favorite SMELLS of this event/time/season/holiday?

(Think about what smells that make you think of this specific time.)

What are your favorite SIGHTS of this event/time/season/holiday?

(Think about what you love about your neighborhood, the city, your home, different buildings, nature during this time.)

What are your favorite TASTES of this event/time/season/holiday?

(Think of your favorite recipes, drinks or dishes that you like to eat/make during this time.)

What are the positive FEELINGS that this event/time/season/holiday creates for you?

(e.g. Do you feel happy when you are with your family? If it's Christmas, do you feel peaceful when you see the lights on the houses on the street? Do you feel gratitude?)

What are your positive BELIEFS of this event/time/season/holiday?

(What are your beliefs about this time? They may be religious, or about goodness, being human, being generous, being kind.)

Why Worry? Practices for Honoring Anxiety



The Big Idea!

The big idea for this session is to invite participants to the idea that their worry and anxiety are emotions that are present to alert them to the question of what needs to get done in their lives. This session draws from the work of Karla McLaren, an author and educator who prescribes to an empathetic approach to the emotions that live in all of us. According to McLaren, it is important to view our worry and anxiety as friends trying to tell us that something must be done. Anxiety in this session is not being discussed in relation to anxiety disorders but instead from the standpoint that it is an emotion that comes forward in our body when there is fear of the unknown.

Choose this session if you are looking for...

- Opportunities for participants to understand the emotions and messages of Worry and Anxiety.
- Ways for people to reflect on their experiences of Worry & Anxiety in new ways.
- Strategies to manage Worry and Anxiety and to respond to the gifts of these emotions.

The Takeaway

Participants will unpack the emotion of anxiety and its relationship to the emotion of fear. Participants will also uncover what anxiety may be trying to alert them to in their lives. They will walk away with strategies that will help them manage the worry and anxiety they may be experiencing in their lives so that they feel empowered to act on messages these emotions deliver.

Skills for Learning

Oral Communication

Problem Solving

Self-Assessment

Critical Thinking

Decision Making

Self-Awareness

Creative Thinking

Session Plan: Why Worry? Practices for Honoring Anxiety



Activity Life Skills Used Learning Styles	Description	Time
Welcome!	Today we are going to explore how to better understand our emotions of worry and anxiety . We will look at why they might be showing up and causing all sorts of emotional chaos in our day to day lives as well as how to work with these emotions. All emotions carry messages for action – let's find out what worry and anxiety carry!	
Check In & Connection Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment, Critical Thinking AUDITORY	Invitation for participants to share: What keeps you up at night? What is going through your mind? What do you do when you cannot sleep? (Watch TV, read, lay there and watch the clock?)	10 min
Unpacking Anxiety and Worry Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment, Critical Thinking AUDITORY/VISUAL	Frontload: To give us a good idea of what anxiety looks like, we are going to watch a short children's video of Piglet from Winnie the Pooh. Video 1: Anxious Piglet (from cartoon Winnie the Pooh) (4 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vNjpbmVqnfc Poor Piglet - he sure has a lot of worry and anxiety going on in his life! Group Discussion: (Whiteboard) Anxiety and worry are emotions all of us feel at one time or another... What do you think is its purpose? What is it alerting or signaling us to? How does it show up in your body? How does it show up in your mind? How does it show up in your behavior? **Important to share with participants: Anxiety and worry in this session is not being discussed in relation to anxiety disorders but from a standpoint that worry and anxiety are emotions that come forward to us when there is a fear of the unknown or something you need to prepare for in the future.	15 min (25 min)

<p>Understanding the Messages of Worry and Anxiety</p> <p>Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment, Critical Thinking</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL</p>	<p>Frontload: To help us understand these emotions of Worry and Anxiety a bit better, we are going to watch a video from Author and Educator, Karla McLaren. (Pull up Karla McLaren’s website and share a bit more about her.) https://karlamclaren.com/</p> <p>Watch Video 2: Anxiety and the Future (8 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s3_aYbNfe9o</p> <p>Group Discussion: How is Fear different from Worry and Anxiety? How do you tell the difference?</p> <p>Karla McLaren describes fear as an emotion that is in the present moment...something your body is asking you to react to immediately as it is alerting you to a potential threat or danger.</p> <p>What is the emotion of anxiety wanting you to acknowledge in your mind?</p> <p>What do you think of the notion that worry and anxiety are emotions that are signaling to you that you are not prepared for something that is coming up and that something needs to get done?</p>	<p>15 min (40 min)</p>
<p>Practical Application</p> <p>Oral Communication, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment, Critical Thinking</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL READ/WRITE</p>	<p>Individual Reflection:</p> <p>Handout: <i>Reflection Questions on Fear, Worry and Anxiety</i></p> <p>Have participants work through the first 3 reflection questions individually.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Think of a time when you experienced fear...describe it. 2) Was this experience really fear or was it worry and anxiety? 3) How will you be able to distinguish between fear, anxiety and worry? <p>Group Share: Invite participants to share their reflections and how they may be able to recognize the differences between fear, anxiety & worry.</p>	<p>15 min (55 min)</p>
<p>Honoring our Emotions</p> <p>Oral Communication, Creative thinking, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL</p>	<p>Group Discussion: (Whiteboard)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we honor, learn or listen to our emotions of worry and anxiety? What do we need to do? • Can anyone remember from Karla McLaren’s video? <i>(Stop procrastinating, asking yourself “what needs to get done”, being aware of the emotion and what it is alerting you to do)</i> <p>Group Brainstorm: Ask group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What might be some helpful/practical ways to listen to your anxiety? • What actions could be taken? <p>Brainstorm suggestions and write them on the whiteboard.</p>	<p>15 min (1 hr 10 min)</p>

	<p><i>(Ideas could be writing a list of what needs to get done, make a plan of how you could accomplish what needs to get done, what or who do you need to support you to get the thing done?)</i></p> <p>Circle Back Activity: Have participants go back to their worksheet and reflect on question #4. "What are the ways or actions I can do to listen and honor what my worry and anxiety are trying to alert me to?"</p> <p>Group Share: Invite participants to share their reflections.</p>	
<p>Listening to Our Emotions and Our Bodies</p> <p>Oral Communication, Critical Thinking, Self-Awareness, Self-Assessment</p> <p>AUDITORY/VISUAL</p>	<p>Group Discussion: (Whiteboard) Let's go back to how the emotions of worry and anxiety show up in your body and mind (refer back to whiteboard responses from the beginning of the session.)</p> <p>What things can we do for ourselves to lessen the physical and emotional responses to worry and anxiety? (Whiteboard)</p> <p>Why would this help us? <i>We can think more clearly which helps us to make a better or clearer choice in the action that needs to be taken. We are better able to "make a plan".</i></p> <p>Article/Handout: Let's look at an article from Happify.com on how mindfulness strategies can be helpful in managing our emotions of worry and anxiety. <i>Show article on the screen and go through as a group discussion.</i> Link: 8 Mindfulness Exercises that will calm you down instantly. https://my.happify.com/hd/8-mindfulness-exercises-that-will-calm-you-down-instantly/</p> <p>Handout with the article's 8 mindfulness strategies for the participants to take home.</p>	<p>15 min (1 hr, 25 min)</p>
Closing	<p>What was interesting or valuable about our time together today? What will you take with you from today's session?</p>	<p>5 min (1 hr, 30 min)</p>

Videos

Video 1: Anxious Piglet (from cartoon Winnie the Pooh) (4 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vNjpbmVqnfc>

Video 2: Anxiety and the Future (Karla McLaren) (8 min)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s3_aYbNfe9o

Resources Needed for Session

- LCD projector/laptop to show videos
- Paper, pencils, pens
- Whiteboard/chalkboard
- Handout: *Reflection Questions on Fear, Worry and Anxiety*
- Handout: *8 Mindfulness Exercises*
- Link: <https://my.happify.com/hd/8-mindfulness-exercises-that-will-calm-you-down-instantly/>

Additional Resources

Karla McLaren:

- Website: <https://karlamclaren.com/>
- Book: “The Language of Emotions: What Your Feelings are Trying to Tell You” (2010)
- YouTube Channel with multiple videos about emotions: Emotion Dynamics
<https://www.youtube.com/user/KarlaMcLaren>

Modifications

One option is that you could end the session with a mindfulness meditation or breathing exercise. If participants would like further discussion about FEAR you could watch Karla McLaren’s video about Fear:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n03BnmjCJwA>

Reflection Questions on Fear, Worry & Anxiety

- 1) Think of a time when you experienced FEAR...describe it here.

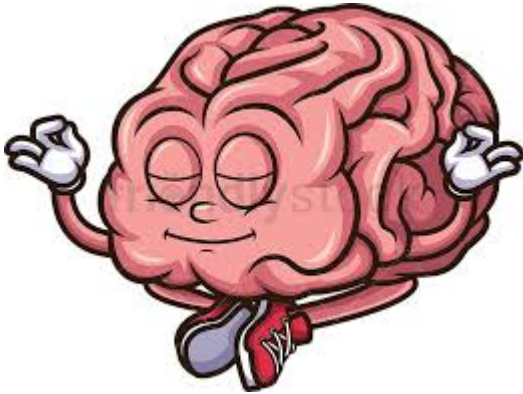
- 2) Was this experience really FEAR or was it WORRY and ANXIETY?

- 3) How will you be able to tell the difference between FEAR, WORRY and ANXIETY?

- 4) What are the ways/actions I can do to listen and honor what my worry and anxiety are trying to alert me to?

8 Mindfulness Exercises That Will Calm You Down Instantly

1. **Inhale Calm, Exhale Stress** - Try focused breathing



2. **Just One Question** - Ask yourself: What do I need to do most right now?

3. **Watch The Clouds** - Literally watch the clouds change and use it as a visual metaphor for how your negative thoughts can change to more positive ones...just like the clouds change.

4. **Do Something You Have Been Avoiding** - Unburden your mind by doing the things you have been avoiding.

5. **Tell Yourself Something Kind** - Break the cycle of negative self-talk. Think of one nice, true thing about yourself...repeat it over and over to yourself!

6. **Find a Touchstone** - Find something from nature that you can keep with you as a reminder to stay in touch with the feelings being in nature provide (i.e. rock, leaf, seashell)

7. **Check In With Your Gut** - Listen to your wise inner voice, asking yourself *"If there were no wrong choice, the option that feels the most right and true to me is _____."*

8. **Focus on What is Right** - Stay grounded by what is going right for you in THIS moment. Find 3 things, focus on those.

<https://my.happify.com/hd/8-mindfulness-exercises-that-will-calm-you-down-instantly/>

Taking Care of Our Minds

References and Resources



Books (Alphabetical Order)

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Fields, J. (2016). *How to live a good life: soulful stories, surprising science and practical wisdom*. Carlsbad, California: Hay House Inc.

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