





Speak up, Speak out!

Self-advocacy training guide

The ability to make, express and assert a choice goes to the heart of what it means to be human. It is essential for decision making and wellbeing. The development and practice of this core skill is fundamental to the realisation by disabled people of their rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Contents

	Foreword	05	
	Introduction	08	
	Who is the Guide for?	10	
	Layout of the Guide and how it can be used	10	
	Section 1 - Planning the training	11	
	The Facilitators	12	
	Promotion and recruitment	12	
	Group size and composition	12	
	The budget	13	
	Support from within the service	13	
	Communication assistants	14	
	Location and venue	14	
	Timing and duration of sessions	15	
	Continuity of support	15	
	Section 2 - Training methods and ways of working	16	
	The principles and values of facilitation	17	
	The power that you have as a facilitator	19	
	High focus / Low focus	20	
	Checklist for planning a session	22	
	Checklist for facilitating an exercise	25	



This icon indicates a clickable link to a page or website throughout the report

	Section 3: The training sessions	27	
	Overall structure of training sessions	28	
	Broad outline and content of the sessions	33	
	Planning your sessions	35	
	Detailed session outlines	38	
	Session 1: Introducing ourselves and getting started	38	
	Session 2: Group agreement and exploring feelings - Happy and calm	39	
	Session 3: Exploring feelings - Disgust and anger	40	
	Session 4: Exploring feelings - Sadness and fear	41	
	Session 5: Asserting choices - the Yes/No Game 1	42	
	Session 6: Asserting choices - the Yes/No Game 2	43	
	Session 7: Asserting choices - Making it real	44	
	Session 8: Asserting choices and ending well	45	
	Section 4 - The exercises	46	
	Group agreement	47	
	Warm-ups and Moving to Music	49	
	Sharing personal information	56	
	Exploring feelings	59	
	Asserting choices	65	
	Ending well	72	
	Appendices	75	
	Appendix 1: Sample promotional flyer	75	
	Appendix 2: Sample agenda for a session	77	
	Appendix 3: Briefing note for other support staff	79	
	Appendix 4: Group agreement	81	
	Appendix 5: Sample session plan with evaluation notes	83	
	Appendix 6: Sample registration form	87	
	Appendix 7: Images of training content	89	
	Appendix 8: Videos	93	

Foreword

Foreword

Derval McDonogh, CEO



I am very pleased to welcome you to this Speak Up, Speak Out! Training Guide. Inclusion Ireland is the national advocacy organisation for people with an intellectual disability. Our purpose is to work towards the full inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities by supporting people to have their voices heard and to advocate for their rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

A central part of our strategy is to develop accessible training and resources and promote models of good practice that strengthen the individual voice and facilitate the development of collective advocacy by people with an intellectual disability locally, regionally and nationally.

The ability to make, express and assert a choice goes to the heart of what it means to be human. It is essential for decision making and wellbeing. The development and practice of this core skill is fundamental to the realisation by disabled people of their rights under the UNCRPD.

It is also fundamental to the implementation of several core HSE policies that impact directly on the life experience of people with an intellectual disability. For example, the ability and confidence to express and assert choices is clearly central to the process of Person-Centred Planning that underpins HSE policies for effective Day and Residential Services.

The ability and confidence to express and assert an opinion is also central to the direct involvement of disabled people in the planning, evaluation and development of these services.

This is an important feature of the standards for New Directions, and one that many Day Services have found challenging to implement.

The Speak Up, Speak Out! training provides a strong starting point on the self-advocacy journey. It is uniquely focused on the development of critical foundational skills that enable individuals to express their will and preference, assert their own authority, and grow their confidence and skills to be in collective spaces advocating with and for others.

In creating this Guide, we worked in collaboration with some phenomenal self advocates and advocacy facilitators across the country. We would particularly like to thank the members of the Sligo Advocacy Group with whom these exercises were created and the videos were made.



There is great work happening in this space right now and we want to acknowledge and thank those people who are flying the flag for person led services and supports.

It is not an easy space to be in at times and people who do this work need support and resources. We look forward to seeing this Guide in action across the country and to taking another step together towards a more inclusive Ireland where all voices are heard, respected and valued.

Derval McDonagh
CEO Inclusion Ireland

Introduction


Introduction

Speak Up Speak Out training is designed to be energising, interactive and fun. The primary learning outcomes are to develop the skills and confidence of people with an intellectual disability to:

- Share personal information.
- Identify and express feelings.
- Say what they don't like, as well as what they do like.
- Speak up about their choices and advocate for them.
- Take leadership roles and work well in a group.

This Guide is based on the experience and learning from advocacy training sessions run by Inclusion Ireland in Sligo over several years. This work was supported by HSE Disability Services and Sligo Leader Partnership Company.

When planning and undertaking this work we found it difficult to get training materials suitable for working with people with intellectual disabilities. Being experienced trainers, we adapted exercises to suit the specific needs of the group. Mindful of this gap in materials we decided to document our work and learning over the period, recording the exercises and methods that worked well. We are still learning and this Guide is intended as a living document that can be informed and further developed as we learn more about your experience of using it in practice.

 It was difficult to accurately describe some of the games and exercises, so we have included short demonstration videos in **Section 4**, that we have made with the help of the Sligo Advocacy Group.

Who is this Guide for?

The Guide is designed for frontline workers in disability services who are comfortable working with groups and want to strengthen the voice of the people that they support.

How the Guide can be used



Section 1 looks at the practicalities of planning the training and **Section 2** gives an overview of the basic skills and ways of working that you will be using. **Section 3** guides you through the process of planning and evaluating each training session and outlines an 8 session training programme. **Section 4** describes in detail the exercises that you will be using.

The programme outline and the description of the exercises is a starting point rather than an end point. We encourage you to adapt and develop your own variations as your work progresses and your practical experience of what works well with a particular group grows.

Section 1

Planning the training

Section 1 - Planning the training

This section outlines the various practical elements involved in planning and organising a programme of training sessions.

The facilitators

A minimum of one person who is confident in their facilitation and group work skills is needed to take a lead in planning and delivering the training. Some people have a natural talent for facilitation however, if you are new to this work, it can be very helpful to develop your skills and confidence by first co-facilitating the training with an experienced facilitator. In **section 2** we have outlined some of the basic skills and tasks of a facilitator.

Promotion and recruitment

Create an Easy to Read flyer that should include information on the purpose of the training, the content, location, facilitator/s, dates, times and location. Consult with a person with intellectual disability to review the ETR flyer to be sure that the information will be understood.

It is also a good idea to arrange a meeting with potential participants as part of the recruitment process. The content of the training can be explained and it's also an opportunity for facilitator/s to introduce themselves. This can help in encouraging people to sign up and attend.

Group size and composition

For a lone facilitator approximately 4-8 participants is a good size. This helps to ensure that everyone gets the attention and support they need to participate effectively.

In a training group it is good to have a mix of people who have

- Different communication styles
- Different experience and confidence in speaking up
- Different experience and confidence of working in groups

People are more inclined to take risks in learning and self-expression if this is modelled by peers. This "peer effect" is helpful in enabling learning and risk taking in the training group.

The budget

The cost of running the training will depend on where it is being held and who is delivering the training. There will be little or no costs if the training is being delivered by staff in a day service or community hub. However, if it is being delivered in the community costs such as venue hire, insurance and refreshments need to be considered.

Other costs can include expenses for materials such as flipchart pads, markers and colour photocopying. If a facilitator is being contracted to co-facilitate or deliver the training this will of course also be a significant extra cost.

Support from within the service

A range of supports need to be taken into consideration depending on the location of the training and the needs of the participants.

It is helpful for key workers and other support staff to have a good general understanding about the methods and learning outcomes of the training. This will make it easier for participants to share information about what they are doing and get support if they want to apply their learning in other contexts. There is a sample briefing note for support staff in **Appendix 3 on page 80**.



It is also important to ensure that the service agrees to provide any practical supports that may be needed for the duration of the training. For example, if the venue is outside the day service hub, participants may be dependent on their service to provide transport to get to and from the training.

It is important that all group members feel that the group is a safe and protected space where they can speak freely. If a person may occasionally need personal care support from a staff member then the staff member should remain outside the room until they are needed.

Communication assistant

If a person needs support from a staff member to communicate, then that staff member may stay in the room with the consent of the person. We have also often found that peers can be very helpful in facilitating communication.

The role of any communication assistant is to facilitate communication by the person, and not to communicate on behalf of the person. It is important that this is clearly understood and that the facilitator manages this boundary carefully. The ideas and opinions of the person themselves are essential to the training process.

Location and venue

The training may take place in a centre where participants regularly attend or in an external community setting. Either way, the following factors need to be considered when deciding on a venue.

- The room is accessible and comfortable.
- Accessible bathrooms are on the same floor.
- Access to the room can be controlled by the facilitator and/or the participants so that there are no unwanted intrusions or distractions.
- Participants feel safe in the room and are not concerned about being seen or overheard by other people who may be elsewhere in the venue at the same time.
- Refreshments can be organised or provided.
- Sound acoustics are good, and the layout allows people to move freely.

If the budget and logistics of travel allows, there is a distinct advantage to running the training in a community setting that is independent of disability services. In line with New Directions, participants normally value the opportunity of gathering in a community space and having the opportunity to meet and be among people who are not connected with their service.

Timing and duration of sessions

Morning time tends to work the best.

In part 3 we have allowed for roughly 1 hour of training content in each session and a tea break of 20-30 mins either at the beginning or end of the session.

If you have 2 hours available, this will allow you to cover a lot more content and benefit from the momentum that builds through the various exercises. We have found that two hours with a refreshment break is very manageable for most participants, because the training content is energising and interactive. Longer than 2 hours can be too demanding for some people in terms of concentration and maintaining focus.



Continuity of support

When planning the training it is essential to plan for continuity of support when the training finishes, so that participants can continue to practise and develop the skills that they have been learning. This is particularly true when the main objective of the training is the formation of an advocacy group.

If an external facilitator is delivering the training, then it is strongly advisable that they should co-work with a frontline worker who can sustain and further develop the work.

Section 2

Training methods and ways of working

Section 2 - Training methods and ways of working

As a facilitator your job is to make it as easy and enjoyable as possible for each person in the group to learn and develop the skills that are the focus of the training. The methods used in this training are experiential, interactive, creative and fun. These methods include drama, role plays, moving to music, working with photos, and group discussion.

Principles and values of facilitation

Facilitators should demonstrate, verbally and non-verbally, their commitment to the following principles:

Listening: facilitation means listening to what people are saying and tuning in to what they are not saying. This includes being aware of verbal and non-verbal means of communication.

Confidentiality: to participate fully, people must be confident that everything of relevance can be discussed freely without inappropriate reporting outside the group. Group members will normally decide what level of detail can be reported to those not in the group.



Prendiville, P. (2002) Developing Facilitation Skills, A Handbook for Group Facilitators. Combat Poverty Agency. [Click here for PDF version](#)

Respect: a facilitator must acknowledge and respect each individual and prevent other group members from undermining the basic respect that should be accorded to each individual in the group.

Equality: each person is regarded as having an equal right to contribute, to influence, to determine the direction of the group as another. Equality also relates to respect, valuing of personal experience and participation.

The value of personal experience: each member's contribution to a discussion/skill-sharing activity is equally valid and valuable.

Group process: facilitation requires giving attention to how the group operates. This includes attempting to resolve conflict or any other difficulty that might arise in the group.

Trust and safety: to ensure maximum participation, the facilitator must encourage the development of trust and safety.

Inclusion and encouragement: everyone in the group must be included and encouraged to participate, to share ideas, suggestions, solutions and take initiative.

The importance of a positive/beneficial experience: facilitators must recognise that everyone is entitled to a positive experience in the group. This means the facilitator meeting realistic individual needs and/or being aware of and challenging unrealistic expectations of the group or the facilitator.

Participation: facilitation succeeds when there is a genuine belief in the value of responding to stated needs in relation to the work of the group. Consultation with group members on direction, pace, content and method with an openness to change is vital.

The power that you have as a facilitator



It is important to be aware of the power and influence that you have as a facilitator in a training group. This is well described by Patricia Prendiville on **page 20** of her book:

"How the facilitator interacts with group members strongly influences the group process. It is not only what the facilitator says, but how they behave that is important. People take in messages (verbal and nonverbal) from each other all the time. The non-verbal can either enhance or contradict a point being communicated. Saying you are not angry, while clearly giving off the body message of a stiff back and hurt expression are contradictory signals."

As well as being aware of and sensitive to non-verbal signals such as body language, group members are also aware of the amount of time and attention that different people in the group get. It is important to model inclusion and respect by trying to ensure that your attention as a facilitator and the attention of the group is fairly equally shared amongst all of the participants.

Some participants, particularly those with communication challenges, will need more time to actively participate in exercises. This may mean there are silences. As a facilitator with a busy agenda, you sometimes have to learn to sit on your hands.

It is important not to prompt or give cues about what you think the 'right' answer is to a question. The essence of this training is allowing time and creating space for a person to communicate what they themselves think.

One facilitator that we spoke to described this very well when she told us: "You have to learn to listen for the whisper". When a person is quiet or shy their personal opinion, even if it is strongly felt, often first emerges as a throwaway comment or something that is "half-said" or very quietly said. It can be very helpful for a facilitator to use their power by affirming this "whisper" when it emerges.

The more a personal voice is affirmed, the more a person will grow in confidence to express it. This doesn't mean that a facilitator has to agree with the opinion expressed. What you are affirming is the right to express and explore an opinion.

Actively taking part in exercises and games is also a good way of breaking down some of the power imbalance between you and the participants. It can be really helpful to encourage participation, when people see you taking a risk and making a fool of yourself first!

High focus / Low focus

In planning and facilitating training exercises it is particularly important to be aware of the extent to which attention is focussed on any one individual in a particular game or exercise. This "high/low focus" approach, is described by Christine Poulter in her book: 'Playing the Game'¹. We have found this concept of focus very useful to consider when planning a training programme that gradually builds opportunities for people to take risks with self-expression.

Poulter notes that *"most people only have confidence when doing something they can manage quite easily and often lose it when faced with a new task or experience. The task of the session leader is to work in a way which develops the confidence of everyone in the group"*.

Poulter uses the term *"focus"* to describe the level of attention that is focussed on an individual in the group when they are playing a game. *"Careful planning can ensure that a player's self-confidence is not shattered at an early stage. This can happen if a player is placed in a 'high focus' situation before s/he is ready for it"*.

¹ Poulter, C. (1990) Playing the Game

Poulter describes the following levels of focus:

Low focus: working in pairs or very small groups - here the players tend to forget they are performing and concentrate on the task in hand

Passing high focus: the focus is on one player at a time but passes quickly from one player to another. For example a ball passing game, or a game where each person seated in a circle briefly makes a gesture or says something.

Shared high focus: working in pairs or threes in the centre of the group. The level of attention experienced is higher but it is shared.

Volunteer high focus: a person chooses to perform in the centre of the group.

High focus: a person is chosen (or required by the game) to perform in the centre of the group.



Checklist for planning a session

Impairments and Sensitivities - When you are planning an exercise, make sure that you adapt it and accommodate for impairments and sensitivities that individual participants may have. E.g. impairments relating to mobility, sight, sound, and literacy or sensitivities about things like noise, colour, touching etc.

Enable choice making - Be alert to any opportunity where you can encourage and enable people to practice making personal choices and expressing themselves. For example, when using name badges, we always offer people a choice of different coloured markers. This simple exercise in choice and listening to the expression of a personal preference is surprisingly affirming for people and important to them.

Delegate tasks - Delegating tasks, no matter how small, can have a lot of significance for participants in terms of expressing and affirming their identity. It can also help them to gain more confidence in taking on roles as well as developing their leadership potential. Some may prefer to do practical tasks such as managing registration, helping with refreshments, other participants may like to lead out on various exercises they have become familiar with.

Manage boundaries - Some participants may be inclined to make personal disclosures that they later regret or inappropriately share information about other people that is of a sensitive nature. When you are planning a session, be aware of situations or exercises where this might arise, and plan how you will respond if it does.

The group agreement is an important tool for managing these and other boundaries. For example when you are discussing what it means to “Respect each other”, you could explain that: Some things that a person may want to talk about are not for the whole group and agree that, if this happens, the facilitator will suggest that the person can talk about it afterwards with the facilitator or with their support worker.

Telling stories

Telling stories is another good way of managing the personal disclosure boundary. It is often much easier and safer for people to tell a fictional story than to say that a story is really about themselves. The telling of a story also helps people to separate themselves from their own experience, and see it in a new way.

For example, when you are coming up with ideas for a yes/no game role play, bullying might come up as an example of an issue. The facilitator can then keep the focus on fiction and storytelling by giving participants different names and encouraging everyone in the group to participate in developing a story about standing up for yourself when you are being bullied. This gives people the freedom to practise and experiment with scenarios without having to personally disclose the extent to which it relates directly to their experience.



Checklist for facilitating an exercise

Explain the exercise - use plain English. Speak slowly and give one clear instruction at a time. Say why you are doing the exercise (learning outcomes). This helps to make the learning conscious.

Model the exercise - when an exercise is being done for the first time it is helpful for participants if the facilitator performs it first. It is normally easier for people to understand what they have to do when they see it being done, and it can be easier to demonstrate a task than to describe it. It is also good for participants to see the facilitator take a risk and make a fool of themselves first!

Communication - where possible give or show examples of what you mean. Some participants may use sign language such as Lámh. You may often find that other participants can understand and communicate better with their peers than you can. Draw on this skill to try to ensure that everyone in the group is heard and understood.

Encourage participation - always support and encourage participation but never put pressure on people to participate. Some people may choose to stay at the edge of the group for several sessions before plunging into an exercise.

Be patient - some participants, particularly those with communication challenges, will need more time to actively participate in exercises. This may mean there are silences. As a facilitator with a busy agenda, you sometimes have to learn to sit on your hands.

It is important not to prompt or give cues about what you think the 'right' answer is to a question. The essence of this training is allowing time and creating space for a person to communicate what they think.

Applause - affirmation is extremely important in encouraging self-expression and building confidence. No matter how tentatively a person performs a high focus exercise, we always encourage an energetic round of applause or clapping in the group. Applause also helps to keep the emphasis on performance and “acting”. Regular applause and affirmation are very important in building a culture of support and safety within the group.

Distress - Participants may sometimes get upset, particularly when the session is dealing with emotions. If this happens, the facilitator should acknowledge their upset, and offer to support the person after the session. The person might also chose to sit outside the group for a while. They should have the option of sitting with a support worker outside the group while the facilitator continues the session.

Debriefing - Recapping at the end of an exercise, encourages people to reflect on their experience. Regular discussion and naming of the reason for the exercises and the skills that are being developed helps to make the learning process conscious for people. It also helps to make the learning space safer for people and encourages them to take playful risks in self-expression.

Section 3

The training sessions

Section 3 - The training sessions

Introduction

This section gives a broad outline of the theme of each of the training sessions and the relevant exercises.

The session outlines are a guide and should be used flexibly and creatively. We recommend that you stay with the same overall structure for each session, but the content and duration of each part can be adapted depending on how the participants are engaging with the work on any particular day. For example, if the group energy seems to be very low, you might choose to extend the warm up. As you grow in confidence and familiarity with the exercises, you can also begin to develop and test your own variations.

Overall structure of training sessions


While the training content of sessions varies from week to week there is a routine structure to each session. This familiar routine helps people to feel comfortable and secure in the group as the programme of training progresses through the weeks.

The key elements of this structure are:

1. Meet and greet and registration.
2. Tea and coffee.
3. Warm-up.
4. Sharing of personal information.
5. What we did last week and agenda for today.
6. Training content - inputs / exercises.
7. Check-out and close.

Meet and greet and registration

The facilitator greets each participant on arrival, warmly welcomes them, and thanks them for coming. The importance of this simple exercise in respect cannot be overstated. It makes people feel valued, included, respected and welcomed.

 We use an Easy to Read registration sheet so that participants can tick off their name or a volunteer can support a participant in doing this. This role can also be rotated among group members. See **Appendix 6** for a sample sign in sheet.

Name labels can be helpful in the first week or two if people don't already, know each other. Explain that labels help people to remember each other's names. It is also very helpful for the facilitator!

White sticky labels are good to use along with coloured markers. Encourage participants to choose their favourite colour of marker. Ask if they want to write it themselves, or if they want you to write it for them. It is surprising how this simple exercise of choosing a colour can be quite effective in affirming people's right to a choice and self-expression.



Tea and coffee Break

This is optional. We normally include a Tea and Coffee break. It gives group members time to socialise informally and share information about any news they have. It is a chance for those who like doing practical tasks, to help out with the refreshments. If anybody's birthday falls on a training day, it's also an excuse to have cake and celebrate!

For a 1.5 hour training session where people are travelling to the venue, we have found it useful to do the tea break at the beginning, at the same time as the meet and greet and registration. This is a good incentive to arrive on time and it also means that you normally get at least an hour for the core training content.

If people are already in the venue, then you might want to take the break at the end. If you are planning a 2 hour session, then it is good to schedule the tea and coffee break somewhere in the middle, as people will need a break.

Warm-up

It is always good to have a warm-up at the start of sessions to raise the energy level, relax any tension that people may be feeling, and get people's attention focussed on the group. Warm-ups also help to break the ice when new people join the group.

What we did last week

Recapping the content of previous sessions at the start of each session helps participants to recall activities and exercises undertaken. Consistently using the same name for exercises also helps people to remember them.

The Agenda

The agenda for sessions will have the same items on it, apart from the training content. The agenda can be shared in Easy to Read format on a flip chart sheet or on a screen.

Regular items on the agenda include:

- a) Meet and Greet.
- b) Warm-up.
- c) What we did last week.
- d) Agenda for today.
- e) Sharing of personal information.
- f) Training content.
- g) Check-out and Close.



Sharing personal information

Sharing information about yourself is an essential part of speaking up and speaking out. In this part of the session, we use different methods to encourage people to share some personal information about themselves and the things they like and don't like (e.g. food, colours, activities, music, TV programmes etc.). This also helps people to get to know each other and feel more relaxed about speaking up in the group.

Training content

This will change from week to week as outlined in the session plans.

Checkout and close

First recap on the content of the session and name the skills/knowledge that are being developed. Then give each person a chance to express how they are feeling and/or something that they liked or didn't like about the session. Depending on the content of the session, you could ask one of the following kinds of questions:

- One thing that you liked about today was...
- One thing that you did not like about today was...
- One word that sums up how you felt about the session.
- Act out a feeling about today's session - e.g. happy sad, calm etc.

Again, the important thing is that people get a chance to express an opinion in the group and to have that opinion valued.

In the early stages, you might also suggest that if people feel too shy to say something about the session in the group, they can have a chat with the facilitator or their support worker after the session.

Saying good-bye to each participant is as important as meeting and greeting them at the start. Ensure that you say goodbye to each participant and thank them for coming.

Broad Outline and Content of the Sessions

Introduction



The session content below, and the exercises described in **section 4**, are a guide. They can be used flexibly and creatively. It may not always be possible or desirable to achieve the suggested content within the timeframe of the session.

For example, you might choose to introduce one feeling per session rather than two or you might decide to spend 2 or 3 sessions with Making it Real roleplays before you end the training programme.

The detailed session outlines, provide a menu of exercise suggestions that you can adapt to the needs, interests and experience of your particular group. The content and duration of each part can be adapted depending on how the participants are engaging with the work on any particular day.

For example, if the group energy seems to be very low, you might choose to extend the warm up, or you might choose to add another energiser half way through. There are many different ways to arrive at the same outcome. As you grow in confidence and familiarity with the exercises, you can begin to develop and test your own variations. It is important however, to stay focussed on the same learning outcomes for each exercise.

On the next page there is a summary outline of the content of what a typical 8 session introductory programme might look like. Each session is approximately one hour. However, with refreshments included before or after the sessions, it is suggested to allow for 1½ hours.

Sessions	Summary of training content in each session
Session 1	Getting started: introducing ourselves and how we will work together
Session 2	Group Agreement - Exploring feelings 1 - Happy and Calm
Session 3	Exploring feelings 2 - Disgust and Anger
Session 4	Exploring feelings 3 - Sad and Afraid
Session 5	Asserting choices 1 - the Yes/No Game 1
Session 6	Asserting choices 2 - the Yes/No Game 2
Session 7	Asserting choices 3 - Making it Real
Session 8	Asserting choices and ending well



Planning your sessions

Beginnings - Facilitating the first two or three training sessions

In the first 2 or 3 training sessions you are working to build a culture of safety, trust, and playfulness within the training group. Participants may never have worked in a circle before and for some this can be quite challenging.

This early group formation work is essential so that participants will:

- Have fun and keep coming back.
- Feel valued, respected and included in the group.
- Feel safe enough within the group to begin to take the kind of playful risks that are essential for developing new skills.

In the first few sessions you are also observing how different participants tend to behave within the circle. For example:

- Who is quiet, shy, or introverted.
- Who is a natural performer.
- Who tends to dominate or talk at length.
- Who is good at minding the group.
- Are there any obvious inter-personal conflicts within the group.

As a facilitator you can use the group rules to address and manage any issues that you notice arising from these observations.

You will be encouraging fun, and a basic fairness which ensures that everyone gets the same opportunity to “have a go”. You are taking the temperature of the group and trying to ensure that your attention as a facilitator and the attention of the group is fairly equally shared amongst the participants.

We strongly recommend that in the early training sessions, facilitators should stay with variations of *Moving to Music* and *Sharing Personal Information*, until a culture of trust, playfulness and safety has been well established within the group. It is not advisable to progress to the content of Session 2 *Exploring Feelings* until this has happened.

Take account of diverse needs

Adapt exercises to accommodate for impairments or sensitivities that individual participants may have. E.g. impairments relating to mobility, sight, sound, and literacy or sensitivities about things like noise, colour, touching etc.



- ensure information materials are accessible and in an Easy to Read format including the use of flip charts, power points, and any other presentations.
- when planning physical exercises be aware of mobility, sight, and other impairments which may inhibit participation. Some people may need support or prefer to stay sitting. They can also participate in the exercise by moving in their chairs.

Session plan

When you are planning, it is important to draw up a detailed personal plan for each session with notes and reminders for yourself about things that you want to pay particular attention to and with approximate timings for each part of the session.

If you are doing an exercise for the first time, you might want to copy the detailed instructions into your session plan. As you get familiar with the exercises, you will begin to develop your own shorthand for the session plan.

The session plan will help you to:

- Remain clear about the overall objectives of the session.
- Keep on track during the session.
- Develop a sense of what is realistically achievable in any one session.

It will also help you to evaluate the session and make personal notes about:

- What worked well.
- What you would change if you were doing it again.
- Things you have observed about the engagement of individual participants that you may want to pay attention to when facilitating similar exercises in the future.

An example of a personal session plan with some evaluation notes is included in



Appendix 5.

Detailed session outlines



Click on the page number below to go to page

Session 1 - Getting started Introducing ourselves and how we will work together	
Learning outcomes	Participants will:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start to get to know each other. Understand what the training is about. Become familiar with the structure of sessions and working in a group. Begin to express themselves vocally and physically. Have fun!
Content	
Welcome and registration	Facilitator welcomes participants and supports them to register. See page 29.
Introducing ourselves	Exercise: Pass the hat. See page 56. The facilitator welcomes everybody, introduces her/himself and starts the session with this easy information sharing exercise.
Warm-up	Exercise: Start the engine - See page 50. This is an easy low focus energising exercise to get started.
	Exercise: Mirror image - See page 51. This gets participants to practise copying each other.
What this training is about	Input: See Appendix 7 for images of the training content, explaining that we will be learning in different ways through exercise, drama, discussion and fun!
Sharing personal information	Exercise: Pass the hat. See page 56. This exercise introduces participants to speak up about things they like and don't like.
	Exercise: Moving to music 1. See page 52. This exercise is good for encourage participants to take the risk of performing in a group.
Check-out and close: See page 32.	

We strongly recommend that in the early training sessions, facilitators should stay with variations of *Moving to Music* and *Sharing Personal Information*, until a culture of trust, playfulness and safety has been well established within the group. It is not advisable to progress to the content of Session 2 *Exploring Feelings* until this has happened.



Click on the page number below to go to page

Session 2 Group agreement and exploring feelings - Happy and calm	
Learning outcomes	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get to know each other better. • Begin to perform and name feelings in the group. • Begin to learn by experience how feelings can help or block speaking up. • Learn about rules that will help the group work well together.
Content	
Welcome and registration	Facilitator welcomes participants and supports them to register. See page 29.
Warm-up	<p>Exercise: Mirror image, see page 51. This exercise encourages people to pair with someone they don't know well.</p> <p>Exercise: Start the engine - see page 50 or Moving to music 1 - see page 52.</p>
What we did last week	Recap on the last session, encouraging participants to remember different things covered.
Agenda for today	Preparing and presenting the agenda, see page 78 .
Sharing personal information	Exercise: Pass the hat, see page 56 and for variations on this exercise, introducing participants to practise speaking up about things they like and don't like.
Group agreement	Input: Introduce the sample group agreement. See Appendix 4 to discuss 'What will help us to work well together and make it safe to speak up?'
Exploring feelings	<p>Input: Name and briefly demonstrate the six feelings that we will be working with and explain why practising feelings is important for speaking up and speaking out. See page 59.</p> <p>Exercise: Introduction to each feeling, 'happy', see page 61. Facilitator models 'happy' and gets everyone to copy. Keep the mood upbeat. When planning this exercise also check on the variations, see page 63.</p> <p>Debrief: After the exercise, do a quick debrief with the group about how feeling happy can help or block speaking up.</p> <p>Exercise: Introduction to each feeling, 'calm', see page 61. Introduce 'calm', using the same process, as above.</p> <p>Debrief with the group, as above, asking how 'calm' can help or block speaking up.</p>
Check-out and close: See page 32.	



Click on the page number below to go to page

Session 3 Exploring feelings - Disgust and anger	
Learning outcomes	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a feeling in the group and connect it to a situation. • Begin to recognise that each person expresses feelings in their own unique way. • Gain confidence in expressing feelings and learn how feelings can help or block speaking up. • Begin to feel more comfortable speaking up in the group and saying what they like and don't like. • Begin to feel more comfortable in a high focus situation.
Content	
Welcome and registration	Facilitator welcomes participants and supports them to register. See page 29.
Warm-up	Exercise: Moving to music 1 or 2. See page 52 and page 54.
Sharing personal information	Exercise: Pass the hat. See page 58 for variations on this exercise, introduce participants to practise speaking up about things they don't like or may disgust them.
What we did last week	Recap on the last session, encouraging participants to remember different things covered.
Agenda for today	Preparing and presenting the agenda, see Appendix 2.
Exploring feelings	<p>Exercise: Introduction to each feeling, 'disgust' - see page 61. When planning this exercise, check variations - see page 63. Finish this exercise by getting people to 'shake out the feeling' - see page 62.</p> <p>Exercise: Introduction to each feeling, 'anger'. Introduce anger using the same process, as above - see page 61. Finish by getting participants to 'Shake out the feeling' - see page 62. Debrief by asking participants how feeling 'angry' can help or block speaking up.</p> <p>Exercise: Moving to music - see page 52. Doing this exercise is an option to lighten the mood with some lively music before closing.</p>
Check-out and close: See page 32.	



Click on the page number below to go to page

Session 4 Exploring feelings - Sadness and fear	
Learning outcomes	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain confidence in expressing feelings and explore how sadness and fear can help or block speaking up. • Practise shaking out “sticky” feelings. • Begin to feel more comfortable speaking up in the group and saying what they like and don’t like. • Begin to feel more comfortable in a high focus situation.
Content	
Welcome and registration	Facilitator welcomes participants and supports them to register. See page 29.
Warm-up	Exercise: Moving to music 2 - see page 54. Increase the high focus for anyone who is willing by encouraging them to perform in the centre of the circle.
What we did last week?	Recap on the last session, encouraging participants to remember different things covered.
Agenda for today	Preparing and presenting the agenda, see Appendix 2.
Sharing personal information	Exercise: Pass the hat and What I don’t like - see page 56. Do a quick round of likes and dislikes to a chosen theme. Connect the likes /dislikes to disgust and have some fun with it.
Exploring feelings	<p>Exercise: Introduction to each feeling, ‘Sad’ - see page 61. When you are planning consider variations to the exercise - see page 64. Finish by getting participants to ‘Shake out the feeling’ - see page 62.</p> <p>Debrief: Do a quick debrief with the group about how sadness can help or block us speaking up.</p>
	<p>Exercise: Introduction to each feeling, ‘Fear’ - see page 61. Using the same process, as above. Finish by getting participants to ‘Shake out the feeling’ - see page 62.</p> <p>Debrief: Do a quick debrief with the group about how fear can help or block us speaking up.</p>
Check-out and close: See page 32.	



Click on the page number below to go to page

Session 5 Asserting choices - the Yes/No game	
Learning outcomes	Participants will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak up about what they like and don't like. • Practise saying yes or no with feeling. • Practise winning and losing a conflict between two people. • Practise standing up for themselves.
Content	
Welcome and registration	Facilitator welcomes participants and supports them to register. See page 29.
Warm-up	Exercise: Moving to music 2 - see page 31. Increase the focus of anyone who is willing.
Sharing Personal Information	Exercise: Pass the Hat and variations of this exercise - see page 56. Do a quick round of likes and dislikes on a chosen theme. Encourage participants to choose a theme they would like to share information about.
What we did last week?	Recap on the last session, encouraging participants to remember different things covered.
Agenda for today	Preparing and presenting the agenda, see Appendix 2.
Asserting Choices	Exercise: Yes/No Game with feeling - see page 65. Participants practise saying Yes/No as a group with each of the six feelings. Do a quick debrief by asking what feelings made it easy to say yes or no.
	Exercise: Yes/No Game 1 - see page 66. Introduce the game and explain that everyone gets a chance to win and lose. Debrief with participants asking them what feelings helped them win the game and how it felt to lose.
Check-out and close: See page 32.	



Click on the page number below to go to page

Session 6 Asserting choices 2 - the Yes/No game	
Learning outcomes	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak up about what they like and don't like. • Practise saying yes and no with feeling. • Practise winning and losing a conflict between two people. • Practise standing up for themselves. • Learn about the feelings that help them to stand up for themselves and the feelings that make it hard to stand up for themselves.
Content	
Welcome and registration	Facilitator welcomes participants and supports them to register. See page 29.
Warm-up	<p>Exercise: Moving to music 2 - see page 31.</p> <p>Increase the focus for anyone who is willing by encouraging them to perform in the centre of the circle and be copied by the whole group.</p>
Sharing personal information	<p>Exercise: Pass the hat and variations of this exercise - see page 56.</p> <p>Do a quick round of likes and dislikes, encouraging participants to choose the theme.</p>
What we did last week	Recap on the last session, encouraging participants to remember different things covered.
Agenda for today	Preparing and presenting the agenda - see Appendix 2.
Training content: Asserting choices	<p>Exercise: Yes/No with feeling - see page 65.</p> <p>Practise saying Yes/No as a group with each feeling, followed by one person modelling the feeling and others copying. Finish with doing the calm feeling.</p> <p>Do a quick debrief by asking what feelings made it easy to say yes or no.</p>
	<p>Exercise: Yes/No Game 2 - see page 68.</p> <p>In this version of the Game participants are encouraged to experiment with different feelings of the Game.</p> <p>Debrief with the group what feelings can help or hinder winning the game.</p>
Check-out and close: See page 32.	



Click on the page number below to go to page

Session 7 Asserting choices - Making it real	
Learning outcomes	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak up about what they like and don't like. • Role play winning and losing a conflict between two people. • Practise standing up for themselves. • Learn about the feelings that help and make it hard to stand up for themselves.
Content	
Welcome and registration	Facilitator welcomes participants and supports them to register. See page 29.
Warm-up	<p>Exercise: Moving to Music 2 - see page 31.</p> <p>Increase the focus for anyone willing to perform in the centre of the circle and be copied by other participants.</p>
Sharing Personal Information	<p>Exercise: Pass the hat and variations of this exercise - see page 56.</p> <p>Do a quick round of likes and dislikes, encouraging participants to choose the theme.</p>
What we did last week?	Recap on the last session, encouraging participants to remember different things covered.
Agenda for today	Preparing and presenting the agenda - see Appendix 2.
Training content: Asserting Choices	<p>Exercise: Saying Yes/No to the boss - see page 69. In this game the facilitator plays the role of the boss while all the participants defeat the boss. The challenge for the group is to stay calm while the boss uses every emotion to win.</p> <p>Debrief with the group what helped to win the game and the feelings expressed.</p> <p>Exercise: Making it Real - see page 70. This exercise involves role playing scenarios where a participant wants to do something and a boss or authority figure won't let them.</p> <p>Debrief with the group what helped or stopped the person from getting what they wanted and how this can happen in real life situations.</p>
Check-out and close: See page 32.	



Click on the page number below to go to page

Session 8 Asserting choices and ending well	
Learning outcomes	<p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practise asserting choices in real life situations. • Learn about giving feedback. • Reflect on next steps.
Content	
Welcome and registration	Facilitator welcomes participants and supports them to register. See page 29.
Warm-up	Exercise: Moving to Music 2 - see page 54. Increase the focus for anyone willing to perform in the centre of the circle and be copied by other participants.
Sharing personal information	Do a quick round of likes and dislikes to a chosen theme, possibly exploring their day service as a theme - something I like and don't like about my day service.
What we did last week?	Recap on the last session, encouraging participants to remember different things covered.
Agenda for today	Preparing and presenting the agenda - see Appendix 2.
Training content: Asserting choices	<p>Exercise: Exercise: Yes/No 3 – Making it real - see page 70. Role play scenarios where you want to do something and an authority figure won't let you. Perhaps develop stories based on the previous round of likes and dislikes.</p> <p>Debrief with the group what helped or hindered the person getting what they wanted and how this can relate to real life.</p>
Ending Well	<p>Exercise: Evaluating the training - see page 72. A voting exercise and group discussion to evaluate participants' experience of the training.</p> <p>Exercise: Next steps - see page 74. Group discussion about the possibility of continuing the group and/or expanding the group to include more people.</p>
Check-out and close: See page 32.	

Section 4

Exercises

Section 4 - Exercises

In this section we describe each of the exercises that we use in the training. For some of these exercises we have also added video links that illustrate the exercises in practice.

The first exercise describes how to set up a group agreement and this is followed by five categories of exercises:

- Warm-ups.
- Sharing personal information.
- Exploring feelings.
- Asserting choices.
- Ending well.

Group Agreement

The group agreement enables the facilitator and the members of the group to take responsibility for how the group works. It is an important tool for managing boundaries so that the group is a safe and enjoyable place to work and learn. (See the Manage boundaries section in the Checklist for planning a session)





Instructions:

- Print off copies of the group agreement (or prepare a powerpoint based on it).
- Explain to the group that we want to discuss and agree some rules so that the group is a safe and enjoyable place to learn new skills.
- Go through each item in turn, facilitate a discussion about what it means, why it is important, and check that everyone agrees that we will work this way.
- Check if there are any other rules that people think are important, and that we should add to the list.

Note: As we mentioned earlier under “Managing boundaries”, when you are discussing what it means to “Respect each other”, you could also explain that: Some things that a person may want to talk about are not for the whole group and agree that, if this happens, the facilitator will suggest that the person can talk about it afterwards with the facilitator or with their support worker.

Warm-ups and Moving to Music

Each session should start with a warm-up. As with all of these exercises, be aware of any mobility and communication issues that you may need to take account of when planning the exercises for each session.



Learning outcomes

Participants will:

- Get the energy going and have some fun.
- Build confidence in self-expression.
- Encourage risk taking in self-expression.
- Build a culture of trust, safety and affirmation in the group.

The warm-ups are also helpful for the facilitator to observe who is comfortable with performance and self-expression and to get a sense of the mood of participants on any given day.

As well as being good for warming-up at the start of the training session, these exercises are also very useful in encouraging risk-taking in self-expression.



Exercise: Start the engine

This exercise is fun, energising, and breaks the ice. It is something that everyone can do while sitting or standing up. It gets people using their voice and performing whatever movements they are comfortable with to a basic rhythm. It also creates a nice sense of group togetherness.

It is low focus and low risk. Everyone stays in their place in the circle and performs the same action, if they choose.



Instructions:

- Explain that the exercise is about learning a simple tune and then moving different parts of their body to the tune.
- The facilitator starts to hum the tune and then ask everyone to join in so they get the hang of it.
- While continuing to hum the tune lead the group in doing a series of actions, one at a time. Here are a few to get started:
 - shake one hand; shake the other hand; now, shake both hands.
 - shake one foot; shake the other foot; now shake both feet;
 - move head to the left and to the right and shake your head
 - shake everything!
- Finish with a round of applause.



Variation

When people have grasped the essentials of the exercise and are comfortable performing it, the Facilitator can vary the game to increase the focus and develop leadership.

- Look for a volunteer to lead some actions from where they are sitting or standing; everyone copies and applauds at the end. Do a few rounds, asking if others would like to take a turn leading.



Exercise: Mirror image

This low focus exercise helps to develop the skill of observing and paying attention to other people. It is also a good preparation for learning how to copy other people in the Moving to Music and Exploring Feelings exercises.



Instructions:

The facilitator asks for a volunteer to demonstrate the game in the centre of the circle. The facilitator explains that one person is a leader and the other person is a follower. The leader has the power and the follower has to copy every move that the leader makes. Like looking in a mirror.

- The demonstration begins with the volunteer as the leader, while the facilitator follows. After a while the facilitator briefly reverses the roles.
- Then the facilitator divides the group into pairs where each person takes a turn at being the leader and the follower.
- Finish with applause.





Exercise: Moving to music 1

This exercise is a popular warm-up exercise that gets people to start taking some risks in self-expression. It is fun, energising, and breaks the ice. It's something that everyone can do while standing or sitting down.



Materials: speakers and a music source (ipod, Spotify via phone, CD etc).



Instructions:

- Asks participants to choose a lively song (have one ready just in case the group is very shy).
- Get everyone to stand or remain sitting in the circle and start the music.
- The facilitator makes a move to the music and everyone copies their moves.
- After each move lead an applause to affirm everyone's participation.
- Continue the exercise in this way until the song finishes.
- Asking participants to choose the music encourages them to take the risk of sharing information about the music that they like, and having other people dance to it. Continue asking for different volunteers until everyone has had a turn to choose.



Variation 1 - Volunteers lead the moves

The exercise can easily be developed to gradually increase the focus on participants and build their confidence in physically expressing themselves in a group. As always, it is important that participation is voluntary. Participants will decide for themselves when they are ready to take the risk of making a move.

- the facilitator looks for a volunteer to do a move from where they are standing;
- the volunteer makes a move, everyone copies their move and applauds at the end.
- the facilitator asks for more volunteers and completes a few rounds until everyone who wants to has had a go.

Each person is taking the risk of expressing themselves in a group by moving their body in their own unique way. The applause at the end affirms every person's movement and the choice of music.

At first, it is important to keep this moving along fairly quickly, so that people don't have to stay in the spotlight for too long. The volunteer, is not only the centre of attention, but people are also copying their movements.





Exercise: Moving to music 2

As participants begin to feel more comfortable moving to music in the group, this exercise can be adapted to make it more challenging, further developing the confidence and visibility of participants, moving from 'low focus' to 'high focus'.



Materials: speakers and a music source (Ipod, Spotify via phone, CD etc).



Instructions:

- The facilitator first performs a move in the centre of the circle and everyone copies them.
- Give volunteers a choice of performing in the centre, or from where they are in the circle.
- Everyone copies and then applauds.
- Ask for more volunteers to do the same and continue until everyone who wants to has had a go.

Again, it is important that this is a voluntary choice. It may take several weeks before everyone in the group is comfortable performing in the centre. This is higher focus so the risk for the performer is greater and the applause is an important affirmation for the people who take the risk of performing.



Variation 1 - The volunteer chooses who goes next

- Once everyone is comfortable standing in the centre, the person who is in the centre chooses the next person to come into the centre to lead the move.

This variation develops observational skills as well as leadership skills. The members of the group have to become aware of who has already had a go and who has not.

Sharing personal information

Likes and Dislikes

These exercises, help the group to get to know each other better and begin to build trust and safety in the group. They also help to build confidence in making choices and saying what you think. Like all other exercises, participation is voluntary, the option is always there to “pass” and the group will respect this choice by applauding.

Key messages in these exercises are:

- You are the only person who knows the answer to this question.
- There is no right or wrong choice or answer.
- Everyone is different and it's OK to be different.



Learning outcomes

- Building confidence in speaking up about what you like or don't like.
- Practising “saying what you think.”



Exercise: Pass the hat

This exercise can of course be done without a hat or an object. However, it's often easier for people to speak up in a group if they have an object or some kind of a prop like a hat or a soft object, something that is easy to hold and to pass on. This exercise also gets people to practice listening and not speaking over each other. You can only speak when you have the object.



Materials: a hat or soft object.



Instructions:

- People stand or sit in the circle.
- Explain that when each person has the hat it's their turn to speak. The facilitator, first models the exercise.
- For example, ask each person to say, 'My name is... and I am from ...' when they have the object in their hand.
- Ask everyone to applaud after each person has spoken.

Examples of other kinds of information that can be shared are:

- Favourite colour, activity, place, music, where you are from, what you had for breakfast, favourite TV show, etc.

You can also ask the group to come up with ideas for information that they would like to share.





Variation: What I don't like

The basic exercise can be repeated but this time asking people to share information about what they don't like. It is often harder for people to say what they don't like and this is a very important skill to practice. Things like colours and food are a good starting point for expressing dislikes.



Variation: Using photos as prompts

When people are sharing personal information, it is helpful to have pictures to prompt them to think of responses. Pictures and photos are also helpful if people don't use speech to communicate.



Materials: pictures of different kinds of things on a table in the middle of the circle. Any set of images could be used - food, animals, music, outdoor activities, etc.



Instructions:

- The facilitator describes the photos as s/he is placing them on the table.
- Ask people to gather around the table, choose a picture, and sit down.
- Be aware that some people may need support to choose a picture.
- Ask each person to say 'My name is ... and I chose this picture because I like ...'.
- The group applauds and goes to the next person so everyone has a turn.

When people say what their favourite picture is the facilitator can also ask them to share a bit more information about it. Some may like to say something, others may not. And remember, some may 'pass', choosing not to participate.

Exploring Feelings



These exercises encourage people to practice expressing feelings in front of others, in a way that's playful, and safe. The participants also learn by experience, how different feelings can help you or block you when you're trying to "speak up". We have found the following six basic feelings useful to work with: Happy, sad, angry, afraid, disgusted and calm.



Learning outcomes

Participants will:

- Gain confidence in expressing feelings.
- Perform a feeling in the group and connect it to a situation.
- Begin to recognise that each person expresses feelings in their own unique way.
- Learn how feelings can help or block them when speaking up.

The first step is to have fun with the physical performance and expression of feelings. Physical expression (just doing it) is in many ways a lot easier than vocal expression. As well as being fun these exercises are also giving people permission to practice the expression of feelings in group situations.

It is important to ensure that people learn to act these feelings and don't get stuck in a particular emotion when it is not connected to an immediate experience. If you see this happening encourage them to try a contrasting emotion.

For example, if sadness appears to be overtaking a person because they have acted it out, ask them to "shake it out" and return to calm. You can also ask them to perform a contrasting emotion such as happy or calm.

Participants may be comfortable with some emotions and not with others. For example, even though we are just acting, some participants may find the expression of anger by other participants upsetting, particularly if the person expressing it becomes very loud. The facilitator needs to be aware of the impact of this on some participants and also needs to encourage over time an understanding that we are just acting or playing.

In many of the exercises people are asked to 'copy' a feeling when it's being led by the facilitator or a volunteer. At the start, it is often safer and easier for people to copy because they don't have to take immediate responsibility for what they are doing.

Some will copy the action as it is being done, others will begin to perform the feeling in their own way, and some may choose not to participate for now. It may take some people a bit longer to feel comfortable enough in the group to perform.



Exercise: Introduction to each feeling

Always introduce a new feeling gently at first, and observe carefully how people in the group are responding. The easiest feelings to start with are happy and calm. We are using 'happy' as an example to illustrate this exercise. You should use the same format when introducing each of the other five feelings.

Happy

Sad

Angry

Afraid

Disgust

Calm



Instructions:

- Name the six feelings that we will be working with, and explain that the reason for the exercise is to explore how feelings can help or block us from speaking up.
- In the circle where people are sitting or standing, the facilitator performs 'happy' and asks the group to copy her/him.
- Ask for volunteers to perform their version of 'happy' from where they are sitting or standing and encourage others to copy.
- After each volunteer performs, everyone applauds before the next person takes their turn.
- The option is always there to choose to pass and not participate for now.



Debrief

At the end of this exercise facilitate a brief discussion about how this particular feeling can help or block you from speaking up.



Exercise: Shaking out the feelings

It's always good, after expressing and playing with a feeling, to 'shake out the feeling' being performed and return to 'calm'. This is particularly true of the more "sticky" feelings that can linger after a performance, such as anger, fear and sadness. The facilitator explains this, and then demonstrates it by shaking their arms vigorously, taking a deep breath, and performing calm. They ask everyone in the group to copy.



Variation 1: Making the feeling bigger or smaller

Once people are comfortable with performing 'happy', you can increase the energy by making the performance of a feeling bigger. This encourages a sense of play, it can be fun and releases a lot of energy. It gives permission for shyer people to amplify their expression of the feeling in a safe way.

- The facilitator makes the performance of 'happy' in a big way, becoming more animated as they express 'happy'. Everyone copies and applauds.
- Ask for volunteers to have a go at performing their version of 'happy' in a big way. Everyone copies and applauds when people take their turn.

If the performance of the feeling appears to be a bit loud or disturbing for some members of the group, you can encourage the group to make their expression of the feeling quieter or even silent for the time being. This can also help people to learn how feelings are primarily expressed and felt in the body rather than the voice.

- The facilitator makes the performance of 'happy' in a quiet or silent way, everyone copies and applauds.
- Ask for volunteers to have a go at performing their version of 'happy' in a quiet or silent way. Everyone copies and applauds when people take their turn.



Debrief

As the session progresses you can encourage people to notice how a feeling affects their body by observing the difference between the physical experience of making a feeling big or small.

Some feelings like sadness or calm are naturally quiet and small, other feelings like anger or happy are naturally loud and big.



Variation 2: Connecting a feeling to a situation

Ask each person to name a situation that brings up a particular feeling. For example, if you are introducing 'happy', ask a volunteer to name one thing that makes them happy and then perform happy in the group. The group copies. A key message here is that feelings often tell us what we like and don't like.



Variation 3: Performing in the centre

Once everyone is comfortable performing from where they are, you can begin to give people a choice of standing in the centre when they are performing the feeling.

This is a high focus variation which requires the person to take more of a risk expressing themselves. Over time you would hope that each person might feel safe enough in the group to take the risk of performing in the centre.

- The facilitator first models the exercise by performing the feeling in the centre.
- Facilitator invites a volunteer to perform the feeling in the centre of the circle.
- Everyone copies the feeling and applauds each person as they take a turn.
- Everyone shakes out the feeling and returns to 'calm'.
- Continue with the exercise until everyone, who wishes to, takes a turn to come into the circle.



Debrief

At the end of this exercise facilitate a brief discussion about how people felt about performing in the centre.



Variation 4 - Choose the next person

Ask a participant when they've performed a feeling to 'choose' who goes next. This can only happen when everyone is happy to take a turn in the centre of the circle.

This variation develops observational skills as well as leadership skills. The members of the group have to become aware of who has already had a go and who has not. In the debrief, you can help people to become aware of this.

Asserting choices

These games give people a chance to practice being assertive in a way that is safe and fun. People learn by experience how different feelings can help or block them in asserting their choice.



Learning outcomes

Participants will:

- Speak up about what they like and don't like.
- Practice saying yes and no with feeling and learn about the feelings that help them to stand up for themselves and the feelings that make it hard to stand up for themselves.
- Practise winning and losing a conflict between two people.
- Practise standing up for themselves and being assertive.
- Practise talking about real life situations where a person feels ignored/not listened to when they look for what they want.



Exercise: Yes/No with feeling

This is an energising warm up that recaps all of the feelings that we have explored and prepares people for the Yes/No game. It gives people a concrete experience of saying yes and no with different feelings.



Instructions:

- The facilitator stands in the centre of the group and models saying **yes** in a happy way and the group copies.
- Then **no** in a happy way and everyone copies.
- The facilitator quickly repeats this process for each of the other 5 feelings, ending with Calm.
- Once people have got the hang of the exercise, the facilitator can also look for volunteers to perform in the centre.



Exercise: Yes/No Game

The game is played by two people. Each person gets the chance to practice winning and losing a conflict about a simple choice. Before the game starts it is agreed between the two players who will win and who has to lose so there is no judgement.

This makes the game safer for people, it encourages less assertive people to be more expressive and it gives otherwise dominant people an experience of having to give in.

The game/exercise can also be entertaining for the group as they observe players getting animated, saying yes or no loudly or angrily and sometimes moving into the other's personal space.

For people who are non-verbal, gestures can be used.





Instructions:

- The facilitator first demonstrates the game with a volunteer.
- Look for two volunteers to stand in the circle.
- Agree what players will say Yes and No and who will win and lose.
- One person starts the game by saying Yes and the other person saying No, each tries to dominate the other by repeatedly saying Yes or No.
- Let the game run for a while until the players are fully engaged; then signal for the agreed loser to give in, allowing the other person to win.
- The group applauds.
- The players shake out any feelings that might have come up and the whole group expresses the feeling of calm.
- The winner remains in the centre and becomes the loser in the next round when the game is played again.
- Continue in this way until most people have had a turn at winning and losing the game.



Exercise: Yes/No 2 - Using different feelings

Once the group are used to the basic rules of the Yes/No game, and each person has played it several times, the facilitator can begin to debrief the players about the feelings that they are using to try and win the game. A further variation is to get them to re-run the game trying out a different feeling.



Instructions:

- Ask for volunteers to play the game where the feelings of each player are instinctive.
- After letting the game run for few minutes, debrief with the players, asking them what feelings they were using in the game.
- The facilitator asks one of the players to try acting out a different feeling like calm while the other person agrees to stay with the same feeling.
- After running the game, debrief by asking the players what it was like using a different feeling.

This variation goes to the heart of the purpose of the training. People are becoming aware of their feelings in conflict situations, and they are learning which feelings are most helpful for them, when they are trying to assert themselves.



Exercise: Saying Yes/No to the boss

This is an enjoyable warm up which introduces the idea of a conflict situation with an authority figure, and leads nicely into Making it Real. In this warm up exercise, the group collectively defeat the boss in a Yes/No game.

The facilitator explains to the group that s/he will pretend to be the boss.

- The group decides whether they want to say yes or no (in this example they choose No).
- The facilitator stands in the centre and says Yes while the group continue to say No.
- The facilitator, while playing the boss, uses different feelings to try and win, before eventually giving in.





Exercise: Yes/No 3 – Making it Real

In this exercise, the facilitator begins to introduce real life scenarios of conflict situations with an authority figure. For example, where one person wants to do something, and another person, such as a staff person or a family member, is blocking them.

The 2 players run this scenario like a role play, improvising dialogue as they try to get their way. When we are introducing this game, the facilitator always takes on the role of the boss and always loses.





Instructions:

- Ask the group to think of real life examples where you want to go somewhere or do something, and somebody is stopping you
- Agree to go with one scenario and explain how this will be acted out in a role play.
- Look for a volunteer to run the scenario with the facilitator as a role play. For example the volunteer wants to go out for a coffee but the boss says no.
- The role play starts with the volunteer repeating she wants to go for coffee, arguing why she should be supported to do this and the person playing the role of staff repeatedly saying no and asking why.
- The boss has to give a reason for saying no - e.g. no staff
- The facilitator steps out of role and asks the group for ideas to help the volunteer win the argument e.g. she can bring her mobile phone with her, has a friend who'll go with her and support her to get taxi home etc.
- The volunteer wins and the group applauds.
- The boss and the volunteer, step out of their roles, shake out their feelings and return to calm



Debrief

Do a quick debrief with the volunteer and the group using simple questions such as:

- What helped the volunteer to win this argument?
- What feelings did s/he use?
- Can you think of other real life situations like this? (these ideas can then be used as a scenario for another role play).

Ending Well



Exercise: Evaluating the training

Doing an evaluation or review of the training is good practice and important for both the participants and the facilitator. Participants look back at what they have learned and what they have liked or didn't like about the training. This helps to inform the facilitator about what they might change or improve when running the training again.

This exercise is a fun way of getting participants to think back on the training and put a value on certain aspects of it.



Materials: Images of the five different elements of the training
See **Appendix 7**; Images of training content





Instructions:

- Explain the importance of reviewing the training and doing this exercise to get their views so we can make the training better.
- Place the five images of different aspects of the training on a table one at a time and explain them.
- Ask participants to gather around the table and give each participant fake money (3 x €20 notes).
- Explain they have to spend their money on any 3 of the 5 images on the table.
- Support participants, if necessary with this exercise, reminding them of the exercises and activities. For example if they found exercises on feelings very useful in helping them to speak up they might put €20 or €40 on this image. If they didn't like an exercise they don't put any money on that image.
- Be aware that some participants may need physical support to place their money on an image.
- When everyone has placed their money on 3 images, review each image in turn.
- Ask who put their money on a particular image and explore why they chose it and how, if at all, this aspect of the training helped them to speak up.
- Then ask if anyone didn't put any money there - and check if there was something about this aspect of the training that they didn't like.

Be aware it may be challenging for some to reflect on the training content and to be critical. Don't force anybody to speak, some may choose their images and not respond.

The facilitator can also comment on how they found the course, what they have learned and might do differently the next time they run it.



Exercise: Next steps

Over the course of the training, not all participants will have developed their confidence at the same pace and/or taken the same kind of risks in self-expression and asserting their choices. It may be apparent that further sessions using the same training content, would be useful to further build participants' confidence and skills.

Before discussing this in the group, the facilitator needs to know if they have the time and if the necessary resources are available to continue.

A number of options could be considered:

Repeat the same training with the same group while introducing more challenging variations. If some participants do not wish to continue, it could be open to others to join, keeping the group small enough for the facilitator to manage.

Having done the review of the 8 sessions, facilitate a group discussion to discover how participants feel about each of the following options:

1. Have no more sessions.
2. Continue with more sessions - along the same lines.
3. Invite more people to join the group.
4. Further develop this group as an advocacy group.



Appendix 1

Sample promotional flyer

Sample promotional flyer for Speak Up, Speak Out! training



(The organisation) is running a Speak Up, Speak Out! training programme to support people with intellectual disabilities to speak up for themselves.



When?



What time?



Where?



What the training is about

- Getting to know new people.
- Learning how feelings can help or stop you from speaking up.
- Saying what you like and don't like.
- Becoming more confident in standing up for yourself.

During the training we will do drama, role plays, exercises and have fun while we learn!

More information?

If you would like to know more about this training we would be very happy to talk to you.

Contact: Name / phone number

The closing date to let us know you would like to sign up for this training course is:

We look forward to hearing from you.



Appendix 2

Sample agenda for a session

Sample agenda for a session



Meet, greet and registration.



Warm-up.



Check-in / sharing personal information.



Recap from the last session.



Training content for this session.



Check-out and close.



Appendix 3

Briefing note for other support staff

Briefing note for other support staff

What is Speak Up, Speak Out!

Speak Up, Speak Out! is a personal development and assertiveness training course that has been designed by Inclusion Ireland to be engaging and accessible for people with an intellectual disability.

The primary learning outcomes for the training are to:

- Build confidence and skills in sharing personal information.
- Develop skills and confidence in naming and expressing feelings.
- Build participants' confidence to speak up about what they don't like, as well as what they do like.
- Build participants' confidence and capacity to speak up about their choices and assert them.
- Develop participants' leadership skills and their ability to work well in a group.

The training is designed to be playful, energising, interactive and fun.

It is also intended that the Speak Up, Speak Out! training could be a useful precursor to the formation of an advocacy group by:

- Supporting the development of essential advocacy skills in a group setting.
- Building a relationship of trust between the facilitator and participants.

You can watch a 3.5 minute video that gives a flavour of the training by clicking below.



Appendix 4

Group agreement

Group agreement



Start on time and end on time.



Respect each other.



Listen to each other.



Only 1 person talking at a time.



Support each other.



Have Fun!

Appendix 5

Sample session plan with evaluation notes

Sample session plan with evaluation notes

Objectives

Participants will:

The primary learning outcomes for the training are to:

- Get to know the facilitator.
- Get to know one another better.
- Take some low level risks in self expression.
- Have fun and begin to feel that the group is a safe place where they can play and take risks.
- Have a better understanding of what the training is about and how we will work together as a group.

Facilitator will get a better understanding of the training needs, interests and capacity in the group.

Session Outline

Tea and Coffee

1	<p>Meet and greet: 1-1 greet and self introductions - Name labels (Markers and sticky labels) - Photos and photo consent for Easy to Read registration sheet.</p> <p>(20 minutes)</p> <p>Played music and got people to choose their favourite songs during the coffee break at the start - this worked well.</p>
2	<p>Warm up: Starting the engine – (followed by applause)</p> <p>(5 minutes)</p> <p>Hard to facilitate and hum at the same time! Possibly get one of the participants to maintain a hum. Popular and effective vocal and physical warm up.</p>



3	<p>Meet and greet: 1-1 greet and self introductions - Name labels (Markers and sticky Labels) - Photos and photo consent for Easy to Read registration sheet.</p> <p>(20 minutes)</p> <p>Played music and got people to choose their favourite songs during the coffee break at the start - this worked well.</p>
4	<p>What the training is about and how we will work together.</p> <p>Using the Powerpoint, and drawing briefly on some of the things that we have already done today e.g. (expressing yourself with your body, speaking up in a group) and touching on some other things we will practice (sharing information about ourselves, feelings, making choices and speaking up). Using drama games, having fun, and always having the choice not to take part. Followed by time for any questions - Finish with a round of how feelings can help you or block you from speaking up</p> <p>(20 minutes)</p> <p>Input was fine - maybe use bigger images so that people can identify the feelings that are illustrated more easily. The round of feelings and speaking up was a little bit too abstract at this stage.</p>
5	<p>Physical self-expression - Moving to music – Move and copy + option to volunteer</p> <p>(15 minutes)</p> <p>This worked well, and got the energy flowing again, with each participant choosing a favourite song, initiating a movement and being copied – some people get the notion of copying better than others. I noticed that X liked the attention on her but only for brief spans of time. The circle was a little tight. I think that it might help the copying if we widen the circle and encourage more of a focus on the person who chooses the song. The wider circle will also create more of an arena for games at a later stage.</p>

6	<p>Sharing personal Information - 2 Rounds of information sharing using photos: My favourite activity is... and an activity that I don't like is... – Check with participants, about themes for information sharing next week (20 minutes)</p> <p>A little bit rushed - It was difficult to get the group to focus on each individual - next time might pull the table back and make it a proper round using the hat - use of hat would also give people more control over how long they want to stay in the spotlight - next time put a bit more emphasis on listening and paying attention to each person in the group. Hit a bit of a road block with saying what you don't like - Agreed with the group that this was harder and explained that we will be doing more work on this in later sessions.</p>
7	<p>Checkout-facilitator summarises what we've done, highlighting what we've done the learning and asks everyone to say a quick word about something that they liked or didn't like.</p> <p>The music was a big hit.</p>
<p>Overall a good start - good buzz and atmosphere - people definitely enjoyed themselves.</p>	

Appendix 6

Sample registration form

Sample registration form

Name / Photo	Centre	Jan 12	Jan 19	Feb 02	Feb 16	Mar 02	Mar 16	Mar 30	Apr 06
									
									

Appendix 7

Images of training content

Images of training content



Moving to music.



Exploring feelings.



Sharing information about ourselves.



Yes - No Game.

Yes/No - Making it Real



Appendix 8

Videos

Videos



Click on the image below to play the video.



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